



PACIFIC PREVENTION SUMMIT



**What Works: Preventing Violence Against Women and Girls
Where We Play, Pray, Learn and Engage Together**

*Reflections from the Pacific Prevention Summit:
Pathways to Stop Violence Before It Starts*

Supported by the Pacific Partnership to End Violence Against Women and Girls (Pacific Partnership)



Pacific Partnership to Prevent Violence Against Women and Girls (Pacific Partnership)

The Pacific region has some of the highest rates of violence against women recorded in the world – twice the global average with an estimated two in every three Pacific women impacted by gender-based violence. Along with high rates of violence – a violation of human rights – women and girls in the Pacific region experience constant and continual inequalities including low levels of participation in decision-making, limited economic opportunities, and restricted access to rights.

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

To achieve this, the Pacific Partnership aims to transform the social norms that allow violence against women and girls to continue; to ensure survivors have access to quality response services; and to support national and regional institutions to meet their commitments to gender equality and prevention of violence against women and girls. Working with partners, the programme promotes equal rights and opportunities for all Pacific people, through innovative approaches to education, access to essential services, and policy development. The programme is funded primarily by the European Union, and the

Governments of Australia and New Zealand, and UN Women, and is implemented by the Pacific Community, UN Women, and the Pacific Islands Forum.

The three key outcome areas:

- **Outcome 1:** To enhance Pacific youth's formal in school and informal education on gender equality and prevention of violence against women and girls. This outcome is funded by the European Union and coordinated by the Pacific Community's Human Rights and Social Development Division.
- **Outcome 2:** To promote gender equitable social norms at individual and community levels to prevent violence against women and girls, and to ensure survivors have access to quality response services. This outcome is funded by the European Union, and the Governments of Australia and New Zealand, and UN Women, and is also coordinated by UN Women.
- **Outcome 3:** To empower national and regional civil society organisations to advocate, monitor and report on regional institutions and governments commitments to enhance gender equality and prevent violence against women and girls. This outcome is funded by the European Union and coordinated by the Pacific Islands Forum.







Background: A Journey to a Prevention Approach in the Pacific

Violence against women and girls (VAWG) is one of the most widespread violations of human rights worldwide and in the Pacific, 2 in 3 women will experience physical or sexual violence from an intimate partner in their lifetime – double the global rate of violence.

Groundbreaking work to end violence against women and girls has been ongoing in the Pacific for since the 1980s. Across the Pacific, there have been significant investments made in establishing high quality response services and prevention approaches, with much of this work being led by the Pacific Women's Network to End Violence Against Women (EVAW); women's rights movements, civil society and crisis centres. While it is critical that response services are in place, they alone will not stop violence completely. Rather, a combination of both response and prevention interventions are required to stop violence from happening in the first place. To prevent violence and to make lasting, positive changes in the lives of women and girls, strategies are needed that address the root causes of violence and promote women and girls as nothing less than equal members of society.

Tailored prevention models -- such as community education models, Male Advocacy and the Warwick

Principles: Best Practices for Engaging Men and Boys in Preventing Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) in the Pacific – and many others have been developed to address the root cause of violence against women and girls. As a result of their effective advocacy coupled with the national and regional accountability mechanisms to international conventions such as the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Platform for Action (BPA) and the Pacific Platform for Action (PPA), Pacific Island Governments have enacted gender-responsive legislation and Family Protection/Peace Acts.

Between August 2015 and February 2016, Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAWG) partners and UN Women conducted primary prevention of VAWG workshops with UN Women's Pacific Fund grantees and key stakeholders across six Pacific countries. In 2016, a three-day consultation brought together key stakeholders from the region to discuss prevention programming practice and hear from global practitioners and researchers working on violence prevention. Forty-two participants attended from across seven countries.





Eight key themes emerged from the Summit that are essential to consider in prevention efforts across the Pacific:

1. If we are to stop violence, we must first understand it;
2. Changing harmful social norms that condone and/or perpetuate violence against women and girls is fundamental to gender equality and ending violence against women and girls;
3. Violence prevention work requires accountability to the feminist movement to ensure that our work is grounded in the lived realities, ideas and leadership of women and girls.
4. Effective prevention programming requires a community-based approach, ensuring that concepts used are well understood by communities and are relevant to their experience;
5. Prevention requires an intersectional approach that is inclusive of diverse women and girls;
6. Programming must be contextually appropriate for the Pacific, and must recognise the diversity of the region;
7. Integration of prevention and response is critical to ending violence against women and girls in the Pacific;
8. There is a need to develop enabling infrastructure to support high quality prevention programming.



What Works: Reflections from

Taking into account the breadth of work underway from the 1980s through to 2016, primary prevention efforts have increased. Pioneer women's activists who first developed service provision for survivors of violence are being joined by newer partners from diverse fields, including the education, faith and sports sectors, in efforts to prevent violence. The increasing number of new actors in the EVAWG field brings new opportunities, and the need to ensure that all actors are working from a common framework and principles.

More recently, from 2018 to 2023, the Pacific Community (SPC), the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) and the UN Women Fiji MCO have co-led a bold and ambitious regional EVAWG programme, of which both services and prevention are significant components. The Pacific Partnership to End Violence Against Women and Girls (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.

In April 2023, the co-delegates of the Pacific Partnership co-convoked a regional Pacific Prevention Summit to create space for the Pacific Partnership regional partners and stakeholders to reflect and dialogue on primary prevention approaches and what is working.

This document is a synthesis of the lived experiences, evidence and dialogue shared by national governments, civil society, sport stakeholders, faith partners, education colleagues, activists and academics represented at the Summit.





the Pacific Prevention Summit



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Overall Approaches For Prevention

What Works

- **Effective prevention approaches are**
 - Based in human rights, survivor-centered, do no harm and feminist principles;
 - Long-term and intensive;
 - Intersectional and inclusive, ensuring all are engaged including women and girls with disabilities, women in rural and maritime areas, young women, adolescent girls, older women, women in all their diversities- sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics (SOGIESC) etc.;
 - Addressing the root causes of violence, which are gender inequality and patriarchy
 - Transforming social norms through country and culture contextualised approaches in education, in religion and faith and on the playing field.
 - Accountable to women's rights organisations and the lived experiences of women and girls in all their diversity;
 - Linked to the delivery of essential services and response to survivors who experience VAWG;
 - Derived from a well-conceptualised theory of change;
 - Homegrown or adapted to the unique and diverse local contexts across the Pacific;
 - 'Whole-of-community' approaches that engages everyone in society; and
 - Multi-pronged operating across multiple levels of society from individual to community to societal.



- Centering and build upon existing work that has proven measures of success in changing negative attitudes and social norms that enable violence to occur, including alignment with Pacific Prevention Principles identified in 2016 and the Warwick Principles to Engaging Men and Boys released in 2019.
- Based in partnership approaches that uphold equal power sharing and co-creation/co-design in partnership with EVAWG and women’s rights organisations that hold knowledge and expertise as well as women and girls themselves.
- Recognising that schools are one of the first institutions of formal learning and engagement for children hence, social norms transformation work in the education sector is critical.



What are the gaps

- Research and evidence-generation efforts that are decolonial, locally-led, intersectional and holistic for all forms of violence¹.
- Prevention efforts that address structural, systemic violence including gender-related discrimination within institutions and structures that do not foster an enabling environment for all women and girls.
- Tailored interventions and approaches for adolescent girls, women and girls with disabilities and women and girls of diverse sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics (SOGIESC).
- Tailored prevention interventions and approaches that address the unique factors that lead to diverse forms of violence, including sexual violence.
- Prevention efforts that change harmful social norms that lead to violence and uphold positive social norms on bodily autonomy and integrity and sexual and reproductive justice.
- Engaging men as advocates
- Programmes that address male perpetrators



¹ Forms of violence include physical, sexual, emotional/psychological, economic and coercive control.



What are the priorities

- Resourcing and prioritising practice-based learning, acknowledging that our learning and knowledge on what works to prevent VAWG comes from communities, grassroots initiatives and women and girls themselves.
- Increased investment in primary prevention interventions and research to understand what works and what does not work to prevent VAWG in the Pacific's diverse contexts, including lessons learned and best practices outlined by women's rights and EVAWG experts and organisations across the region.
- Increasing research efforts that better understand and articulate the impact of all forms of VAWG on women and girls.
- Holistic approaches that prevent VAWG in communities and societies.
- Strong communications and social norm change strategies to foster behaviour change.
- Tailoring prevention approaches to diverse contexts within the Pacific that face different factors that lead to violence.
- Sustained investment in the Pacific Partnership and what's working in its approaches.



Emerging issues requiring further exploration, innovation and solutions



- In the wake of COVID-19 and other external factors, it is key to understand how women and girls are affected by a changing economic landscape (e.g. housing, food and water security; gender pay gap; unemployment; social protections that are gender neutral; macro-economics).
- The interplay of climate crisis, disasters and emergencies with the safety of all women and girls and gender-related discrimination is an urgent issue to better understand and respond to.
- The impact of digital technology on women's status and safety including technology-facilitated gender-based violence, gender digital divide and the digital economy.
- Better understanding and exploring of the evidence-base on perpetrator programming and intentionally and carefully considering perpetrator-based work in VAWG response efforts.
- Increasing our understanding of unpaid work, including care, domestic and communal work and how this affects power dynamics within households and communities.

WHAT WORKS: WHERE WE

PLAY

PREVENTING VIOLENCE AGAINST
WOMEN AND GIRLS WHERE
WE PLAY, PRAY,
LEARN AND ENGAGE



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Where We Play

What Works

- **Investing in evidence-driven solutions based on formative research.** The analysis of the barriers, motivations and opportunities for women and girls uncovers programming approaches that have the best chance of success and accounts for risks.
- **Deliberating designing programmes** across a range of sport and physical activity options to promote gender equality and prevent violence against women and girls. This includes transformational coach training and ongoing mentoring, dedicated curriculums that combine sport and social change elements, safeguarding policy and processes, community engagement, and close partnerships with EVAWG organisations to ensure support for survivors and alignment with EVAWG best practice.
- Taking a ‘whole-of’ **sport** approach that ensures all people at all levels of sport organisations are engaged in embedding safeguarding and gender equality approaches all activities from grassroots to elite levels. This includes engaging male allies and taking a twin track approach to inclusion.
- Taking a ‘whole-of’ **community** approach to engage leaders, family and peers in valuing women and girls’ participation in sport. One approach that has worked is engaging trained and genuine athlete ambassadors in advocacy.
- **Joining up approaches** that engage multiple organisations (for e.g. sport, gender equality, faith, health, education etc.) that together have capacity, networks, skills and resources to create individual, organisational and societal change. This includes working together to influence policy, leveraging the region’s sporting events and working with services that provide services for youth who have left school early or are not involved in other formal structures.
- Proactive efforts to **support women in leadership roles** in sport organisations through affirmative action (quotas and target setting), mentoring and sponsorship and building supportive organisational cultures.
- Exploring **innovative ways to fund sports and physical activity initiatives** led by people who cannot access typical grants mechanisms, for e.g. the Play for Equity Fund.



What are the gaps



- **Safeguarding and inclusion policies and practices** that are Pacific driven, comply with global standards, are consistently applied across all levels and types of sport and physical activity programmes and events; and link with local, established, specialised ending violence against women and girls service providers.
- **Visibility of women in sport in all their diversity** through authentic, diverse storytelling and positive social norms promoted through media, breaking down perceptions of who can access and thrive in sport and physical activity.
- **Intersectionality approaches** that are truly championed through proactively funded, twin track approaches, including investing in affirmative action for people with disabilities, SOGIESC and women in rural and maritime areas.
- **Women's leadership** in sport across the spectrum of leadership positions with supportive workplace cultures that ensure leaders participate fully.
- **Equal pay and benefits** for female athletes and female sports personnel in all roles
- **Practical support for participation** including sufficient equipment, facilities, appropriate uniforms, safe transport, and menstrual hygiene management, specific needs of people with a disability and consideration of the unpaid burden of care on women and girls





What are the priorities

- **Support for scaling and sharing promising practices** in leadership, safeguarding, community engagement, safeguarding, programming and funding , building the organisations opportunities to learn, grow and expand both within their sport code and across diverse sports.
- **Pacific driven network of sport and gender equality partners** to advance action and thought partnership in EVAWG and sport. This includes developing a community of practice both within and beyond sport, for communicating and sharing regularly.
- Investment in **mainstreaming coach, administrator, official and board training in safeguarding and inclusion**, include how to make referrals to disclosures.
- **Prioritising fairness, inclusion and non-discrimination** to ensure women and girls in all their diversity can engage in safe, inclusive, accessible sport and physical activities.

Emerging issues requiring further exploration, innovation and solutions

- **Survivor centred and trauma informed approaches** that centre evidence and knowledge on VAWG and what works and linking into humanitarian responses.
- **Interlinked approaches** with communities, faith settings and traditional institutions.
- The **impact of climate crisis** on women and girls and the unique impact in sport.
- **Brisbane 2032 Olympics and Paralympic and associated Games Legacy programme** as well as other events in Oceania, present an opportunity to amplify efforts through collaboration and investment in gender equality and preventing violence in and through sport.



WHAT WORKS: WHERE WE

PRAY

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Where We Pray

What works

- **Long-term**, evidence-based community-based social norms change interventions that are adapted to local faith and community contexts; engage men, boys, and masculinities; and promote healthy relationships, as seen through House of Sarah and SASA! Faith community mobilization programming.
- **Unpacking and integrating** gender and theology through models such as Gender Equality Theology
- **Interlinkage** between prevention and response efforts delivered through coordinated, multi-sectoral service providers for safe shelter, crisis counselling, health, police and social welfare and faith leaders.
- **Resourcing** dedicated gender and safeguarding desks/units alongside broad gender integration and championing across faith institutions.
- **Faith leadership** and advocacy campaigns led by faith organisations, such as Break the Silence Sunday
- **Increasing and prioritising** women leaders and theologians within faith institutions and faith settings;
- **Gender policies and protocols** within faith settings that promote and secure the safety and well-being of women and children, including those with disabilities, diverse SOGIESC and other intersectional identities
- **Partnerships** between faith settings, faith organizations and gender justice/EVAWG organisations as well as schools and traditional institutions
- **Fostering** a community of practice at community-level that engages and supports the leadership of men, women, girls and boys on the issue of gender justice and EVAWG
- **Engaging** FBOs in humanitarian and disaster response work as done in Vanuatu



What are the gaps

- **Strengthening relationships** between EVAWG service providers and faith communities, including national level service delivery protocols and capacities to refer to specialised services (counselling, shelter etc.) using a human rights and survivor-centered approach
- **Capacity and resources** (financial, material, technical, research etc.) to advance gender justice and EVAWG dialogues to rural and maritime areas.
- **Coordination and integration** and more detailed mapping of faith-based organisations (from regional to local levels) to better understand who is doing what, where and how (with what approaches, tools and guidelines).
- **Corrective** gender injustice discrimination for women faith leaders.
- **Intersectional and inclusion** in the disaster response work.
- **Safeguarding** and other polices such as gender, child protection, sexual harassment, policies in the churches.
- **Theological research** on VAWG in the Pacific.
- **Strengthening** the roles and functions of National Council of Churches in coordination work on EVAWG in faith spaces.





What are the priorities

- **EVAWG approaches** in faith spaces that apply an evidence-based approach to transforming health and respectful relationships in order to address intimate partner violence and violence within the home.
- In relevant faith communities and settings, **continue** the Gender Equality Theology model and roll-out and Gender Status Card methodology and Social norms change work done by the churches.
- **Increased faith leadership** and advocacy on preventing VAWG for all women and girls ensuring intersectionality and inclusion of all forms of violence against all survivors in all their diversity (addressing root causes and contributing factors such as drug use).
- **Supporting** a regional, inter-faith community of practice on faith approaches to end violence against women and children.
- **Explore increased engagement** and contextualisation of gender justice faith approaches in school settings.
- **Foster and encourage** gender justice curriculums and interventions in faith-based training and education programmes, including theological colleges.

Emerging issues requiring further exploration, innovation and solutions

- **Addressing intersectionality** in faith contexts and settings to forward positive masculinities and femininities for all, including supportive and welcoming spaces for people of diverse SOGIESC
- **Supporting faith settings** and faith-based organisations in their critical role to respond to disasters and emergencies, including climate change efforts acknowledging the relationship between ending violence and climate crisis
- Faith based organisations play a critical role in supporting seasonal workers and the Pacific diaspora during times of crisis, as there is a need to **build the support system** around this issue.

**WHAT WORKS:
WHERE WE**

LEARN



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Where We Learn

What works

- Use of cultural stories, folklore and legends to **contextualise learnings** for schools and communities in human rights (HR), social inclusion (SI), gender equality (GE) and ending violence against women and girls.
- **Multisectoral and Intergenerational collaboration** used in Social Citizenship Education (SCE) which include parents, teachers, students, faith leaders, community members, government agencies and other stakeholders.
- **Contextualisation of intervention approaches** to suit country and cultural contexts.
- **Use of the holistic 'whole-of-school' approach** to ensure students are exposed to the SCE messages in the school, home, church and the wider community.
- **Development** of learning materials for both teachers and students to support them with the learning of GE, HR, SI and EVAWG.
- Student after school clubs **provide a platform for students** to practice what they learn and be good examples and advocates in their communities.
- **Capacity building** of youths and community leaders to be advocates of GE, HR, SI and EVAWG
- **Informal education complementing formal education** on HR, GE, SI and EVAWG.





What are the gaps

- **Increasing targeted trainings** for the community members to better inform them.
- **Lack of coordination** between the necessary supporting organisations including government agencies.
- **Parents groups to be better supported** with development of action plans to implement awareness activities in the communities.
- **Lack of mechanisms** and platforms to share best practices.
- **Dedicated project/country staff** and personnel to implement whole of education approaches.
- **Translation of learning resources** into local languages for better teaching and learning process.



What are the priorities

- **Mainstreaming of SCE concepts** in curriculum in project countries.
- **Longer term investment** for improvement of curriculum and national roll out of SCE programmes in pilot countries.
- **Research** like longitudinal studies and evaluations to be carried out to inform the future phases of the SCE work.
- **Development of policies** to guide whole of education approaches at different levels of implementation.

Emerging issues requiring further exploration, innovation and solutions

- **Research** into how the root causes of VAWG, namely patriarchy, impacts learning and methods to promote home grown solutions.
- **Continued engagement** of men and boys in prevention in school settings.
- **Increased focus** on integration of disability approaches and methods in prevention in school settings.



**WHAT WORKS:
WHERE WE**

ENGAGE



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Where We Engage

What works

- 'Whole-of-government' and 'whole of community' approaches and policy efforts that engage all sectors/settings, civil society, and all government counterparts to prevent violence against women and girls.
- Meaningful partnership between civil society and government to forward comprehensive approaches on prevention.
- Community-based interventions that are tailored and adapted to the unique contexts they reside in and based on core principles and best practices for prevention.
- Community-based approaches that engage everyone in a community with tailored approaches for different ages, genders and cultural contexts.
- Centering root cause analysis of VAWG for effective policy driven decisions, gender-responsive budgeting and normative efforts to create an enabling environment for all women and girls.



- Strong legislative and policy frameworks that support all aspects of gender equality and equity including women's economic empowerment, safeguarding of girls and boys, preventing sexual harassment in the workplace, women in leadership and prevention and response of VAWG.
- Comprehensive policy approaches on gender equality and equity and the status of women and girls that include resources/budgets, strong M&E frameworks and coordination for implementation.
- Gender, EVAWG and child protection capacity strengthening, sensitization amongst all political leaders, Parliamentarians and traditional leaders in order to advance political will and prioritization of EVAWG at the policy level.
- Integration of climate change and disaster risk reduction into all aspects of prevention programming and policies noting the interlinkages of climate crisis with the safety and wellbeing of women and girls.





What are the gaps

- Resources (budgets and personnel) for gender equality and EVAWG efforts at community and policy levels.
- Accountability for implementation of gender equality and EVAWG policies, laws and protocols.
- Ensuring political will and action for EVAWG to ensure the issue remains a priority on the policy agenda at national and regional levels.
- Resources and prioritization of monitoring, data and evidence generation especially with regards to policy implementation and gender statistics.
- Resources to support community-based interventions for primary prevention that are aligned with best practice, locally led by women's rights organisations/civil society and inclusive of all women and girls.
- Engagement of private sector, media and other non-traditional partners in prevention efforts.
- Resourced spaces for sharing of information and knowledge, fostering a learning community and forwarding practice and research efforts for primary prevention.





What are the priorities

- Ensuring EVAWG remains on the policy agenda at both national and regional levels.
- Ensuring accountability and implementation with tangible actions for EVAWG-related policy, laws and protocols at national and regional levels.
- Resourcing increased capacity for monitoring, evaluation, data and evidence on the impact of prevention policies on the quality of women and girls' lives.
- Resourcing and supporting community-driven, tailored, locally led, decolonial and Pacific homegrown prevention approaches in partnership with EVAWG experts and civil society organisations.
- Ensuring any prevention approach, policy or programme embraces inclusion with tailored approaches for diverse women and girls across the Pacific.

Emerging issues requiring further exploration, innovation and solutions

- Critically reflecting on donor funding modalities to ensure that donor contributions align with priorities set out by Pacific communities, civil society, governments and key stakeholders themselves.
- Centering the importance of local knowledge based in on the ground expertise.
- Centering and compensating civil society and community experts in EVAWG, including advocates and women and girls themselves, for their time, effort and expertise.



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The logo for the Pacific Prevention Summit features the words 'PACIFIC', 'PREVENTION', and 'SUMMIT' stacked vertically in a stylized, blocky font with intricate patterns. To the left of the text are three upward-pointing triangles in shades of purple, blue, and green. To the right is a colorful hibiscus flower. The entire logo is set against a white, torn-paper-style background.

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