

# Gender Assessment

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## **FP037: Integrated Flood Management to Enhance Climate Resilience of the Vaisigano River Catchment in Samoa**

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**GREEN  
CLIMATE  
FUND**

## Gender documents for FP037

### E) Gender Assessment and Proposed Gender Action Plan

#### *Integrated Flood Management to Enhance Climate Resilience of the Vaisigano Catchment in Samoa*

##### I. Introduction

The proposed project is designed to support the Government of Samoa's efforts to reduce the immediate and secondary impacts of recurrent flood in the Vaisigano river catchment that is part of the greater Apia catchment area. The key issue to be addressed by the proposed project is expected to be the increased resilience of infrastructure and the built environment to climate change. The direct beneficiaries will be approximately 26,000<sup>1</sup> people in the Vaisigano river catchment who will benefit from activities conducted in the area, as well as an additional 37,000 people who are expected to benefit from the learning generated from this project.

The Samoan economy was severely impacted by the global economic and financial crisis in 2008; by a 2009 tsunami, and Tropical Cyclone Evan in 2012. While the economy has shown signs of recovery since 2012, real economic growth has been modest over the last five years. An analysis of three successive household income and expenditure surveys (HIES) carried out over twelve years indicate a return to pre-crisis patterns of economic growth and production, consumption as well as poverty<sup>2</sup>. The economy of Samoa has traditionally been dependent on agriculture, fishing, remittances and development assistance. The agriculture and fisheries sectors employ two thirds of the labour force and contribute to 90% of exports, however they only constitute around 10-11% of GDP. The remaining 34% of the labour force is engaged in industry, construction and services. Services comprise over 70% of GDP<sup>3</sup>. In 2012, the overall labour force participation rate was 58%, which disaggregated to 74% for men and 38% for women<sup>4</sup>.

It is recognized that extreme poverty as defined in the Millennium Development Goals (people living on an income of less than US\$1.25 per day in purchasing parity terms), is not present in Samoa. However, in order to measure relative hardship, the MDG1 and SDG1 goals have been localized through the development of national basic-needs poverty (hardship) indicators. The basic needs poverty lines are indicators of the relative level of hardship or well-being experienced by households in Samoa in the context of meeting a family's basic-needs or a minimum standard of living<sup>5</sup>. The proportion of the population of Samoa below the basic needs poverty line was 18.8% in 2014, a significant improvement over the figure in 2008 when 26.9% of the population was considered to fall below the basic needs poverty line. However, in geographic terms, the incidence of basic needs poverty is greater in the Apia Urban Area at 24%, and the nearby North West Upolu region at 23.7%. By contrast, the incidence of basic needs poverty is now lower in rural Samoa (13.6% and 12.5% in the Rest of Upolu and Savai'i respectively)<sup>6</sup> than in urban areas. This is usually ascribed to the strength of Samoa's village systems and traditional social safety nets, and the ability of rural households to grow much of their own food.

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<sup>1</sup> Beneficiaries were calculated based on the number of people in exposed area [26,528 people] according to the RiskScape platform. RiskScape is a collaboration between New Zealand's GNS Science and the National Institute of Water & Atmospheric Research (NIWA). RiskScape provides a modular framework to estimate impacts and losses for assets exposed to natural hazards, including floodings. The software combines hazard, asset and vulnerability modules through a data selection process to quantify a range of economic and social consequences. NIWA's generous contribution is here acknowledged.

<sup>2</sup> Moustafa, Ahmed; *Samoa Hardship and Poverty Report: Analysis of the 2013/14 Household Income and Expenditure Survey*, 2015, Government of Samoa Bureau of Statistics, UNDP

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*

<sup>4</sup> Amosa, Desmond and Samson, Michael; *AusAID Pacific social protection series: poverty, vulnerability and social protection in the Pacific- Samoa Country Case Study*, AusAID, 2012

<sup>5</sup> The Basic Needs Poverty Line is made up of two components: the cost of a minimum food basket; and an amount of expenditure for essential non-food basic items.

<sup>6</sup> Samoa Bureau of Statistics, *Household Income and Expenditure Survey, 2013-2014 Tabulation Report*, 2016

In addition to the higher incidence of poverty in urban areas, it is clear from successive disasters (Cyclones Ofa (1990), Val (1991) and Evan (2012)) that the Apia Urban Area is particularly vulnerable<sup>7</sup>, a view confirmed in assessments carried out on the effectiveness of a range of national initiatives for climate change adaptation related to flood management. For example, the post disaster needs assessment (PDNA) survey following Cyclone Evan in 2012, noted that the urban areas of Apia were particularly vulnerable to the effects of flooding. This assessment suggested that since a flood in 2001, little had been done to mitigate this area's vulnerability, and concluded that a range of factors were at play in the Vaisigano catchment in 2012: intense rainfall within a saturated catchment; intermittent blocking of river channels at several locations by debris and logs; and increased (regulated and non-regulated) urban settlement and development within the floodplain<sup>8</sup>.

This proposed project will support the Government of Samoa to reduce the impact of recurrent flooding in the Vaisigano river catchment, and in particular in the greater Apia Urban Area. In conjunction with government co-financing, GCF resources will be used to address key technical, capacity and information based barriers to designing and implementing an effective flood management system. The proposal has three interlinked project outputs:

1. Capacities and information base strengthened for GoS to pursue integrated approach to reduce flood-related risks in place
2. Key infrastructure in the Vaisigano Catchment are flood-proofed to increase resilience to negative effects of excessive water
3. Drainage in downstream areas upgraded for increased regulation of water flows.

This gender assessment provides an overview of the situation in Samoa, identifying gender issues and other vulnerabilities relevant to the project, and gender-mainstreaming opportunities. It is based on:

- A desk review of relevant national policy documents, the Strategy for Development of Samoa 2016-2020 and relevant sector plans or draft sector plans, including the Community Sector Plan to ensure congruence with Samoa's expressed national priorities;
- Lessons learned and recommendations from past assessments and studies on gender equality undertaken by the Government of Samoa, UN agencies, development partners, civil society organizations and academic organizations, and information available from programs and projects currently being implemented;
- Stakeholder consultation, recognizing that detailed community consultations on particular activities are expected to be carried out in the implementation phases of the project; and
- Integrating gender and other vulnerability considerations to the proposed indicators, targets and activities, and identifying opportunities for greater leadership and participation in decision making by these particular groups in Samoa.

## II. Resilience of vulnerable communities in the Vaisigano Catchment

A common denominator in all of the assessments done in the context of climate change in Samoa is the vulnerability of the Apia Urban Area in the Greater Apia Catchment.<sup>9</sup> The Post Disaster Needs Assessment for Tropical Cyclone Evan noted that flooding is a particular risk for the urban areas of Apia, with impact after the cyclone visible from the upper catchment to the lower catchment. The assessment recommended an integrated flood management approach for the Vaisigano river, given the interactions between the natural and the built physical environment, and the gamut of development activities within the catchment.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Project Concept Note: *Integrated Flood Management to Enhance Climate Resilience of the Vaisigano Catchment in Samoa, 2016*

<sup>8</sup> Government of Samoa, *Samoa: Post-disaster Needs Assessment: Cyclone Evan 2012, 2013*

<sup>9</sup> Feasibility Study

<sup>10</sup> Government of Samoa, *Cyclone Evan Post Disaster Needs Assessment Report, 2013*

The 2007 Samoa Flood Management Action Plan notes that prior to 2007, while detailed historical records were limited, severe flooding of the Vaisigano river was reported in 1939, 1974, 1982, 1990, 1991, 2001 and 2006. The 18 villages of this proposal are part of the Vaimauga West District which has an overall population of 24,105 in 51 villages in 2011. The total population for the 18 target villages was 8,651 with 4,318 females roughly 50% of the population according to the 2011 population census. The 2014 School to Work Transition Survey listed 2,392 youths defined as those between the 18 and 35 years age bracket for these villages.

While the Vaisigano catchment is regarded as physically vulnerable to floods, the communities and families within this area have a varied ability to withstand and bounce back from disasters, depending on a range of vulnerability and resilience factors. Family and community structures are a significant source of resilience in Samoa, with evidence of strong levels of social cohesion, with communities supporting their members and extended families in disaster times. For example, following Cyclone Evan in 2012, many families were hosted by extended family and/or host families, especially in rural areas which had no formal evacuation centres. This type of assistance was found in both urban and rural settings, however the sense of solidarity and collective was relatively more pronounced in rural areas, as more people in urban areas had originally lived somewhere else, and as a result had relatively less access to family and community networks.<sup>11</sup>

In Samoa, vulnerability in disasters is most often identified around women, the elderly, children and youth, and people living with disability.<sup>12</sup> A further category of families and individuals who have been banished from communities may also be especially vulnerable in disasters. A majority of judicial processes in Samoa still happen at the village level, and it is possible for villages to banish individuals or families as a form of punishment. Data on the prevalence of banishment is not available, however the 2013 Post Disaster Needs Assessment on Cyclone Evan noted that while it was not possible to assess how often it occurs, the existence of families and individuals who are outside of community structures is concerning if the government depends heavily on these structures to provide social assistance, both in normal and post-disaster contexts.<sup>13</sup>

### III. Gender equality and social inclusion in Samoa

Samoa traditional culture, *fa'asamoa*, including the social structure at the village level, plays a central role in the Samoan way of life. Regardless of modernization influences, the strength of the *fa'asamoa* remains through the extended family, headed by a matai or chief who is appointed by family consensus. Villages are governed by *matais* through the village council and hierarchy of committees. The *fa'asamoa* provides for the distinct and different roles of men, women and children in society, including the role of Village Women's Committees in providing advice to the village council. This stratification of Samoan society provides both significant strengths and challenges in relation to gender equality in Samoa.<sup>14</sup>

The Government of Samoa is committed to gender equality through the enactment of national legislation, specific policies and programme implementation. Samoa is a signatory to a range of international and regional commitments, including the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Platform for Action, the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality, the revised Pacific Platform on the Advancement of Women and Gender Equality, and the Sustainable Development Goals. While government support for gender equality has been demonstrated through these commitments, and through the implementation of a range of programmes such as the *Samoa Women Shaping Development (SWSD)* and the *Samoa Disability Program*, progress continues to take time. In 2012, on receipt of Samoa's fourth and fifth periodic CEDAW reports, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women noted the progress made by Samoa between 2005 and 2012, including legislative reforms undertaken and policies adopted over that period. However it also expressed its concern and offered recommendations in a number of principal areas including the domestication of CEDAW into national

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<sup>11</sup> *ibid*

<sup>12</sup> Feasibility Study 2016, *Post Disaster Needs Assessment for Cyclone Evan 2013*, and *EWACC Socio-cultural gender considerations 2014*

<sup>13</sup> Government of Samoa, *Cyclone Evan Post Disaster Needs Assessment Report, 2013*

<sup>14</sup> *Samoa Women Shaping Development Country Plan Summary – Samoa, 2013*

law, and measures to prevent and address violence against women and girls. In the time since 2012, there has been further progress including in the implementation of temporary special measures aimed at increasing the number of women in parliament, and the establishment of a national human rights institution.

Under the *Strategy for Development of Samoa*, the Community Sector Plan will be aimed at strengthening social, environmental and economic well-being of villages and communities, including the most vulnerable groups in Samoan society. The plan is currently being finalized, however indications are that it will take a thematic focus to its work, and continue to build on families as the organizing unit in Samoan communities.

#### Gender Inequality Indices

There are several global or international indices in existence that have been developed to quantify the concept of gender inequality. The United Nations Development Programme uses the Gender Inequality Index (GII) and Gender Development Index (GDI).<sup>15</sup> The GII is a composite measure that shows inequality in achievement between women and men in reproductive health, empowerment and the labour market while measuring achievement in human development in three areas: health, education, and command over economic resources. The GDI considers the gender gaps on human development between men and women.

Samoa has a GII of 0.457 as of 2014 and ranks 97 out of 142 countries assessed. The GDI value as of 2014 is 0.956, which places Samoa in Group 2, which comprises countries with medium to high equality in Human Development Index achievements between women and men (absolute deviation of 2.5 – 5 per cent).<sup>16</sup>

While the international rankings provide a snapshot of Samoa's measures in gender equality as compared with other countries, they don't always capture the complex and changing roles of women in Samoa, in an atmosphere of increasing urbanization, and the shift to monetization. Nor do they give a deep understanding of the intersections of gender inequality with a range of other dimensions of vulnerability and resilience. Some of these aspects are explored below.

#### Poverty

As noted earlier in this assessment, Samoa uses a basic needs poverty line to measure hardship. This is made up of two components – the cost of food and an amount of expenditure for essential non-food basic needs. It is intended to represent the minimum expenditure per week, month or year that is required by an individual, household or family to provide a basic low-cost, minimally nutritious diet (this component is known as the food poverty line, and is used as a measure of severe hardship), and essential non-food basic needs such as housing/shelter, clothing, utilities, school fees, health and transport, and to meet family, community or church obligations.

The latest household income and expenditure survey (HIES) of 2013/14 shows that the incidence of severe hardship as measured by the food poverty line has declined between 2002 and 2013/14, dropping from 10.6% of the population in 2002, to 4.6% in 2008 and then to 4.3% in 2013/14. However, while severe hardship declined significantly in Savai'i and the Rest of Upolu, it increased in the Apia Urban Area and North-West Upolu. This trend is repeated for the incidence of hardship (basic needs poverty) too, with the incidence now lower in rural Samoa than in the urbanized areas of Apia and North-West Upolu<sup>17</sup>.

Although there are clear disparities in hardship levels between geographic areas of Samoa, there does not appear to be a significant difference in the levels of hardship experienced by female headed households. The average wages and salaries received per capita per week tends to be lower for female-headed households across all expenditure deciles, and gender based disparity tends to be more significant in the higher expenditure deciles compared with lower expenditure deciles, likely

<sup>15</sup> United Nations Development Programme. Human Development Report. <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/table-4-gender-inequality-index>.

<sup>16</sup> <http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr14-report-en-1.pdf>; <http://hdr.undp.org/en/composite/GDI>

<sup>17</sup> Moustafa, Ahmed; *Samoa Hardship and Poverty Report: Analysis of the 2013/14 Household Income and Expenditure Survey*, 2015, Government of Samoa Bureau of Statistics, UNDP

reflecting a higher concentration of women in low-paid jobs and junior positions. Despite this, the disparities are not extreme.<sup>18</sup>

### Health

Noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) are among the leading causes of ill health and death, along with injuries in Samoa. Over the past two decades, Samoa has witnessed almost epidemic rises in coronary heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure and mature-onset diabetes. The escalation of NCDs has been linked to changing diets, increased use of tobacco and alcohol, and limited public understanding of the associated health risks. Obesity is the single most serious threat to health in Samoa, contributing to diabetes, cardiovascular disease, hypertension, loss of mobility and premature death from one or more of these causes. The 2014 NCD Risk Factors STEPS Report indicated that 90.4% of women surveyed were overweight or obese (with a body mass index greater than 25), while 79.8% of the men surveyed were overweight or obese.<sup>19</sup>

Occasional outbreaks of infectious diseases – including typhoid and viral infections – have been reported in recent years. MNRE noted an association between heavy rainfall and confirmed typhoid cases in 2010.<sup>20</sup>

Samoa is experiencing a range of climate change-induced impacts, many of which are increasing the burdens on the public health system. The most significant include the increased prevalence of climate-related water-borne, vector-borne and food-borne diseases, as well as traumatic injuries and deaths from extreme weather events. Increased mental health problems (from loss of land, livelihoods and population displacement as well as the mental health impact of natural disasters), compromised food security and heat-related illnesses. It is important to note that these problems are likely to be borne disproportionately by certain vulnerable sectors of the population – the very poor, young children, the elderly, people with disabilities, people with pre-existing illnesses (e.g. NCDs) and certain occupations such as outdoors workers.<sup>21</sup>

Records kept by the Ministry of Health National Disease Surveillance & International Health Regulations Division in the weeks and months after Tropical Cyclone Evan in December 2012 showed a sharp increase in the number of diarrhea cases presenting to the Tupua Tamasese Meaole Hospital, almost double the number for the same period in previous years. The bulk of the cases were in children under the age of 5. There was a similar spike in the number of clinically diagnosed cases of typhoid at the hospital.

Between 2009 and 2013, the *Integrating climate change risks into the agriculture and health sectors in Samoa (ICCRAHSS)* project was implemented through a partnership between the Government of Samoa and UNDP. This focused on building the capacity of sectoral planners and policy advisors in a range of agencies including MNRE, MAF, MOH, NHS and public health and agricultural extension workers to be able to identify climate-induced risks in their fields, and to be able to prioritize, plan and implement effective adaptation measures with community involvement. The terminal evaluation of the project found it to be satisfactory or moderately satisfactory. However, the project's impact on the incidence of people falling ill to climate change related illnesses was found to be limited owing largely to its scale, and the lack of evidence that the Government had adjusted public expenditures in the short term to enable district health care centres to cope with increased demand for disease prevention. The project did make an important contribution in demonstrating to district level health care providers the link between the incidence of disease and sickness to weather, and the involved district hospitals have used this information to adjust community outreach programs.

### Education

Samoa has had the Compulsory Education Act in place since 1992, which stipulates that children between the ages of 5 and 14 must be at school. In 2009 the Government put in place the Education

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<sup>18</sup> *ibid*

<sup>19</sup> Government of Samoa *NCD Risk Factors STEPS Report 2014*

<sup>20</sup> *Technical Feasibility Assessment*, quoting MNRE *Synthesis Report of the Evaluation and Analysis on the Linkages between Seasonal Climate Variability/Change and Climate-Health Diseases 2008-2010 in Samoa*

<sup>21</sup> World Health Organization, *WHO Multi-Country Cooperation Strategy for the Pacific 2013-2017*

Act 2009, which allows for parents of children not in school to be fined.<sup>22</sup> The Government also introduced the School Fee Grant Scheme in 2010 to cover the full payment of fees, and as a result it is expected that more than 90% of the 2008 primary school cohort would have completed school by the end of 2015. Samoa achieved a 100% net enrolment rate in 2014, and 98% literacy in 2011.<sup>23</sup>

Gender parity in education enrolment has been achieved in Samoa, however there is growing concern over the performance of boys in school, with males less likely to complete secondary and tertiary education.<sup>24</sup> Girls are more likely to attend secondary school (71.5%) compared with boys (65.8%), and women also outnumber men in university (6.5% compared to 5.7%).<sup>25</sup> It is notable however that the gains for girls in education outcomes is not repeated in comparable gains in employment and earning overall, although as discussed in the section below, leadership by women in professional spheres in Samoa is now almost at parity (47%).

#### Political Participation and decision making

Women's political participation has historically been low in Samoa, as it is in all of the Pacific island countries. To address this, in 2013 the Samoa Parliament unanimously passed the Constitution Amendment Act (2013) that introduced a 10% quota of women representatives into the national Legislative Assembly. The system uses a "floating" five reserved seats for women. If no women are elected during the elections, the amendment is activated and five seats are added to the Assembly, bringing the total to 54 seats in Parliament. If one woman is elected then four seats are added and Parliament has 53 seats and so on. When extra seats are added, they are filled by women who have already run in open constituencies. The unsuccessful women candidates who receive the highest percentage of votes in the election will fill the requisite number of reserved seats<sup>26</sup>.

In the general elections of 2016, four women were elected to Parliament, and the special measures were activated to result in a total of five women MPs out of a parliament of 50 seats.

While participation in parliamentary politics by women in Samoa has been low, leadership by women in government administration and business has been significant. As far back as the 1990s, women CEOs have driven public sector reform in Samoa. The Commonwealth Secretariat notes that women have been represented at the highest levels in the public sector for decades, and although early appointments tended to be political, increasingly such appointments are merit-based and draw from a wide pool of qualified professionals.<sup>27</sup> By June 2014 the total number of public sector employees under the Office of the Public Service Commission was 4,132. Of these, 166 were senior executive appointments, including Chief Executive Officers (CEO), Deputy CEOs and Assistant CEOs. Women held 52% of all senior appointments, although they were much better represented at the DCEO and ACEO level.<sup>28</sup>

Another measure of women's role in decision making, is women's share of managerial positions in the labour force more broadly. According to a joint Asian Development Bank / Secretariat of the Pacific Community publication, 47% of managerial positions, including politicians, senior government officials, and corporate and general managers, in Samoa are women.<sup>29</sup>

At the level of village governance, the Ministry of Women and Community Sector Development (MWCSD) coordinates a network of Government Women's Representatives (GWR) who are liaison officers between government and the village. Each GWR is nominated by their own village women's committees, and nominations are submitted to Cabinet for endorsement. GWRs play the role of village level focal points for the advancement of women, and the protection of children.

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<sup>22</sup> Government of Samoa – Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture, *Samoa: Education for All 2015 National Review*, 2015 Apia

<sup>23</sup> Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat *Regional MDG Tracking Report 2015*, PIFS, Suva

<sup>24</sup> *ibid*

<sup>25</sup> Samoa Bureau of Statistics *Samoa Labour Force Survey 2012*, Apia

<sup>26</sup> Pacific Women in Politics website; [www.pacwip.org](http://www.pacwip.org) accessed 5 September 2016

<sup>27</sup> Commonwealth Secretariat; *Status of Women's Leadership in the Public Sector in Pacific Small Island States*, 2015

<sup>28</sup> *ibid*

<sup>29</sup> ADB/SPC, *Gender Statistics: The Pacific and Timor-Leste*, Asian Development Bank, 2016

There are 326 villages both traditional and non-traditional that make up the settlements of Samoa and there are 102 GWRs serving the traditional villages of Upolu and 86 GWRs for traditional villages in Savaii. Non-traditional villages do not have Cabinet endorsed GWRs, but they do have village mayors (mostly male) who are also managed by MWCSO.<sup>30</sup>

GWRs are responsible to the Village Women's Committees, and are expected to be at the forefront of any village based development program, particularly those targeting women and children. The responsibilities of the GWRs are set out in the *Ministry of Women Affairs Act 1990, Amendment Acts 1998 and 2009*, described in detail in more Section III of this document.

### Labour Force Participation

The Samoa Labour Force Survey 2012, categorises the working age population into two main groups – economically active (labour force) and non-economically active (not in labour force). The non-economically active group includes people who are engaged in subsistence agriculture exclusively or 'mainly' for consumption. Accordingly, the non-economically active population was reported to be 79,657 (67.8% of the total working age population) of whom 44.7% were male and 55.3% were female. Further, 83.9% of the non-economically active population was located in rural areas, while 16.3% were located in urban areas.

A total of 34,530 persons aged 15 and above were reported to be employed, of whom 63.1% were male and 36.9% female. The majority of employed people were located in North West Upolu (39.6%) and the Apia Urban Area (28.7%), and in all regions, employed males were around double the number of employed females.

### Access to Resources

The matai system is integral to providing access to land, an important issue due to Samoa's limited area, population growth and the role of subsistence agriculture. The Council of Chiefs can grant access to land and sea, and approximately 65% of the population derives their livelihoods from matai land. The matai also oversees land rights and titles, which follow a parental lineage<sup>31</sup>.

Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) analysis notes that Samoan women generally have limited access to customary land and are largely excluded from dealings in customary land, such as customary leases. Although women have equal rights over freehold land, in practice since freehold land constitutes approximately 4% of total land, obtaining credit remains difficult for most people.<sup>32</sup>

The villages at the heart of this proposal are located in urban or peri-urban areas, and as such there may be some variance from traditional village governance and distribution of resources. For example, the market analysis conducted for this proposal notes that the 18 communities are more likely to live on freehold land than on customary lands, with 58% of households in the Apia Urban Area located on freehold, 12.5% on leased land, and 29.2% on customary land. This is likely to give households more autonomy on what they might develop on their respective lands, compared with those on customary land.

### Gender Based Violence

Gender based violence is a limiting factor on the choices available for women and girls, and on their participation in economic and leadership roles. The Samoa Family Health and Safety Survey conducted in 2000 by the Government of Samoa, SPC and UNFPA using the WHO methodology, showed that 41% of women surveyed had experienced physical violence at the hands of an intimate partner, while 20% had experienced sexual violence in their lifetime. An updated survey is planned, and the early steps to implement it were underway as at 19 September 2016.

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<sup>30</sup> Laqeretabua, Ana, *Economy Wide Integration of Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Management/Disaster Risk Reduction to Reduce Climate Vulnerability of Communities in Samoa: Socio-cultural gender considerations*, USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific, 2014

<sup>31</sup> Amosa and Samson, 2012

<sup>32</sup> Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, *Gender Profile Samoa*, 2013

In 2013, the Family Safety Act 2013 was passed, which is designed to provide for greater protection of families, and the handling of domestic violence and related matters. It introduced a broad definition of “domestic violence” which includes physical, sexual, emotional, verbal and psychological abuse; as well as intimidation, harassment and stalking. “Domestic relationship” was also defined to encompass a range of relationships in addition to marriage, including living together in a relationship in the nature of marriage, parents of a child, or family members related by blood, marriage or legal or customary adoption.

Gender based violence is also of particular concern in disaster and emergency situations. Global evidence shows that sexual and gender based violence increases during and after disasters. In situations of disaster, gender based violence is a pervasive factor which heightens existing vulnerabilities. Many people are displaced during and after disasters, and displacement can lead to an increase in violence, and the visibility of pre-existing violence, due to over-crowded and unsafe living conditions in evacuation centres, temporary housing and shelters. Following Cyclone Evan in 2012, there were no specific incidence of sexual or gender based violence attributed to the disaster were recorded. However, communities and service providers raised concerns about the increased risks of such violence following the disaster. The police Domestic Violence Unit responded to 53 incidents from December 21 2012 to January 16 2013, noting that the Domestic Violence Unit had been merged into general policing operations in the first week after the cyclone.

Women staying in shelters can be exposed to rape, harassment, discrimination and violence, and have limited access to reproductive health services. Government services such as police and health services may be less effective following disasters due to overworked staff and strained resources, as well as damage to critical infrastructure. Medical services already overwhelmed by the emergency do not always meet the needs of survivors of violence. The loss of homes, livelihoods, community and family protection increase vulnerability to violence, as do increased levels of poverty and scarce resources.

#### IV. Mechanisms to address gender inequality in Samoa – legal and administrative framework

Samoa sets out its national development plans in four year cycles, under the title of the *Strategy for Development of Samoa (SDS)*. The eighth SDS will run from 2017 to 2020, and identifies the four priority areas of development (economic, social, infrastructure and environment) and the key outcomes to be achieved for Samoa. The SDS is aligned with the global Sustainable Development Goals, and the SIDS Accelerated Modality of Action (SAMOA) Pathway. Under the SDS, there are 14 sector coordinating groups, each of which is responsible for a key outcome. The second priority area of the SDS on social development includes actions to better include vulnerable groups (women, youth, people with disability, the elderly, children and disadvantaged people), in village governance, community climate and disaster resilience actions, economic empowerment and family and community safety. Further, the Community Sector will have an increased role in supporting other sectors planning and implementation actions to strengthen the inclusion of vulnerable groups.

The *National Policy for Women 2010 – 2015* identifies issues related to gender equality at all levels and attempts to encompass a number of key areas where Samoa is not yet in full compliance with international norms and standards of gender equality. It is comprehensive and reflects the fact that gender mainstreaming needs to be considered not only in community development and social cohesion, but in relation to all sectors addressed under the SDS. A new policy – *the Gender Equality Policy* - is currently being developed, and is awaiting endorsement as of mid September 2016.

#### Government Women’s Representatives

The *Ministry of Women Affairs Act 1990, Amendment Acts 1998 and 2009* establishes the position of *Sui Tamaitai o le Nuu* (Government Women’s Representative). One of the requirements of the *Sui Tamaitai o le Nuu* in accordance with the act is that she be a member of the village women’s committee and may be appointed for a term of three (3) years. The duties of the *Sui Tamaitai o le Nuu* include:

- i) to promote the advancement of women in her village through the implementation, coordination and monitoring and evaluation of, and provision of assistance to, all

- programmes, activities and development projects for women that are economically viable, socially beneficial, culturally appropriate and environmentally sensitive;
- ii) to ensure the free flow of information between the Women's Committees of her village and the government through the Ministry;
  - iii) to report to the Ministry on the progress of implementation and monitoring of programmes, activities and development projects;
  - iv) to record and register births and deaths in her village where appropriate in accordance with the provision of the Births, Deaths and Marriages Act 2002;
  - v) to collaborate closely with the Village Women's Committee and *Sui o le Nuu* on promoting the wellbeing and health of the village through the *Aiga ma Nuu Manuia* programme and other relevant programmes and development projects;
  - vi) to promote good governance in women's committees and all other women's groups in her village;
  - vii) to provide at all times assistance that may be requested through the Ministry for the successful implementation and completion of government programmes and development projects, locally and nationally; and
  - viii) to perform any duties that promote and support government policy related to the work on the advancement of women in her village.<sup>33</sup>

#### V. Gender and social inclusion in the context of climate resilience programmes in Samoa

Climate change is a multidimensional problem that is a priority on the international development agenda, and clearly recognized in the *Strategy for Development of Samoa* as Key Outcome 14 – Climate and Disaster Resilience. While affecting people generally, these conditions can render certain groups in the community particularly vulnerable. As projections indicate that climate change will cause less secure means of subsistence, more vulnerability to poverty and hunger, exacerbation of social inequalities (including gender inequalities) and more environmental degradation, it is likely that the poorest and most vulnerable groups in a society will be most affected.<sup>34</sup>

In the case of Samoa, a 2012 study on social protection noted that particular vulnerabilities were emerging from the transition to a cash economy, urbanization and changing societal norms. It found that vulnerable individuals are more likely to be living below the poverty line and may not have access to basic needs and services. They are more susceptible to, and less easily able to recover from, adverse shocks and natural disasters. In Samoa vulnerability is linked to an inability to participate in income generating activities. The study identified six vulnerable groups – women, youth, children, older people, people living with disability, and households in rural areas.<sup>35</sup>

It also noted that Samoa's income inequality is on par with other middle-income countries. In Samoa inequality is mitigated by traditional systems that oblige better-resourced people to share what they have with their families and communities. However, the trend towards increased monetization is widening the gap between those operating in the cash economy and those depending on subsistence activities. This, accompanied by rural-to-urban migration, is straining traditional ties to the family group (*aiga*) and collectivism.<sup>36</sup>

The ability to participate in income generating activities by these groups, will therefore strengthen their resilience and ability to withstand and recover from disasters. It will be important to ensure that project activities firstly do not harm the income generating activities of vulnerable groups in the target villages, and secondly, wherever possible, the project should undertake to strengthen or add to these activities.

Women and men work together to fulfil the needs and contribute to the wellbeing of their families and communities; however, they often perform different activities on a day-to-day basis to meet these needs, and in order to integrate gender into climate change projects, it is necessary to recognize the

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<sup>33</sup> Ministry of Women Affairs Act 1990, Amendment Acts 1998 and 2009

<sup>34</sup> UNDP Resource Guide on Gender and Climate Change, 2009

<sup>35</sup> Amosa and Samson, 2012

<sup>36</sup> *ibid*

different roles, priorities and needs of men and women, and the ways in which both perspectives are valuable.<sup>37</sup>

While there is some analysis of the vulnerabilities of particular groups in Samoa, it is important to recognize the capabilities of these groups and individuals in addressing the risks of climate change and disasters in their own communities. It is particularly important to recognize and effectively utilize these capabilities when it comes to designing project interventions. Ensuring the participation of so called vulnerable groups is not only a matter of social justice and respect, but also of responsible and effective project design and implementation.

The *Climate Resilience in Samoa: Capacity Assessment and Enhancement Report* (2012) commissioned by the Ministry of Finance as part of the Pilot Programme on Climate Resilience, noted that there had not been a comprehensive vulnerability assessment for the whole of Samoa, and that the assessments conducted to that date tended to focus on physical vulnerability rather than social or community vulnerability. The lack of ongoing in-depth engagement with communities had led to a lack of genuine ownership, which was further exacerbated by the project by project nature of climate change interventions.<sup>38</sup>

Recommendations from that exercise were largely specific to the Pilot Program on Climate Resilience, however, there are two that resonate for climate and disaster resilience projects more broadly. These included building on existing community engagement approaches and capacity of CSOs and MWCSD; and taking a long-term view of programs, and building engagement accordingly. It will therefore be important to ensure that engaging with identified vulnerable groups in the project is a priority, and that as much as possible, activities to strengthen their resilience specifically in relation to climate and disaster risk and more broadly to be able to withstand and recover shocks, through improved livelihoods, should be built in.

## VI. Gender analysis & recommendations

The gender analysis undertaken at the design phase of this project acts as an entry point for gender mainstreaming throughout implementation. Consultations took place with a range of stakeholders and partners during the initial mission by the design team, and included representatives from the Ministries of Finance, Foreign Affairs, Natural Resources and Environment, and Health. In addition, there were discussions with development partners, existing climate resilience projects, the Samoa Umbrella of Non-Government Organizations (SUNGO). The analysis also drew substantially on documentation from existing climate and disaster resilience projects. The Economy Wide Integration of Climate Change and DRR/DRM to Reduce Climate Vulnerabilities of Communities in Samoa project has thematic and geographical overlaps with this proposed project, and the stakeholder consultations for relevant villages in the Vaisigano catchment area were also reviewed as part of this analysis.

The gender analysis enabled:

- Assessment of the activities that respond to the continuing threat of floods in the Vaisigano river catchment, including gender roles and responsibilities, decision making, and resource use and management raised by the project;
- Initial engagement, development and input into the design of activities;
- Demonstration of the need for gender-disaggregated data and indicators to establish a baseline in which to measure improvements and identify areas of focus; and
- Establishment of recommendations to help incorporate the Gender and Social Inclusion Plan into the implementation of the project.

Addressing gender dimensions within the project design and implementation, this proposal identifies and integrates interventions to encourage gender responsive and transformative results. As women are key players in their communities, it is integral to the success of the project that women are encompassed throughout the entirety of this project. Further, as this assessment has discussed, it is

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<sup>37</sup> Secretariat of the Pacific Community, *Pacific Gender and Climate Change Toolkit*, 2013

<sup>38</sup> Kenny, Gavin. 2012 *Climate Resilience in Samoa: Capacity Assessment and Enhancement*, Earthwise Consulting for Samoa Ministry of Finance

likely that gender equality concerns are not the only marker of exclusion or vulnerability, and it is therefore important to build on and leverage the Government's approach of addressing the family as the key unit in Samoan communities, in order to target the most vulnerable including women, young people and children, the elderly, and people living with disability.

It is recommended that the project design will take into consideration gender and social inclusion implications including:

- The differing needs in flood disasters faced by women and men, as well as elderly people, people living with disability and youth and children;
- Analysis of the gendered division of labour (e.g. gender-differentiated roles, responsibilities, and needs);
- Women's access to, and control over, environmental resources and the goods and services that they provide;
- Identification of gaps in equality through the use of sex and age disaggregated data enabling development of action plans to close those gaps, devoting resources and expertise for implementing such strategies, monitoring the results of implementation, and holding individuals and institutions accountable for outcomes that promote gender equality;
- Ensure equitable participation by women, men, youth, elderly people and people living with disability at both macro and micro level climate resilience processes;
- Promote advocacy and awareness adjusted to most effectively reflect gender-specific differences. Strategies used in the project should be tailored, taking into account such differences, including on the risk of increased gender-based violence following disasters.
- Include all stakeholders involved in the project to develop awareness raising / training aimed at drawing attention to the implication of climate resilience adaptation and gender equality;
- Identify specific strategies to include or target women and young people in particular for income generation activities in the Vaisigano catchment area;
- Undertake community discussions and dialogue in relation to gender and social inclusion in climate and disaster resilience.

In addition to the recommendations listed above, it will be important to ensure that the gender and social inclusion aspects of the project are tailored specifically for a Samoan context. In order to do this, the following approaches are also strongly recommended:

- Recognize the centrality of the family unit to the organization and working of Samoan communities;
- Build on the projects, structures and initiatives being rolled out by the Government of Samoa and other development partners, in order to maximize the use of resources, and for greatest efficiency and effectiveness;
- Assess how gender is currently being mainstreamed in differing Ministries and sectors, to most effectively develop needs assessments, enable planning, and be effective in monitoring and evaluation;
- Link income generating activities identified by women and youth with projects and initiatives active in the Vaisigano catchment area, such as the Small Business Incubator for example.

### VIII. Demographic information on Vaisigano catchment<sup>39</sup>

The Vaisigano river flows through the villages of Maagiagi Uta; Papauta; Tanugamanono; Lelata; Maluafo; Faatoia; Aai o Niue; Leone; Vinifou; Matautu Uta and Vasigano. In addition, there are 3 nearby low lying villages Vaipuna, Vaiala Uta and Levili which are directly affected when the river floods as witnessed during Cyclone Evan flooding. These 14 villages are extremely vulnerable to flooding from the Vaisigano River. In addition, the four villages of Vailima, Avele, Letava and Vaoala are included in the GCF activity target group due to the important roles they play in terms of preserving the water catchment areas of the Vaisigano river. The land use practices of these four villages greatly influence what could potentially flow down-stream during heavy rain.

The eighteen villages are part of the Vaimauga West district, and according to the 2011 census, had a population of 8651, with 4318 females. According to the 2014 School to Work Transition Survey, there were 2392 youths in those villages. It is estimated that there are around 1400 households in the eighteen villages, with the largest being Vailima, Faatoialemanu and Matautu Uta.

Source	School to Work Transition Survey -2014	2011 Population Census		
	Youth Population	Total Population	Male	Female
Vaisigano	86	267	134	133
Matautu Uta	258	811	397	414
Vaipuna	110	416	224	192
Valala Uta	53	192	93	99
Vinifou	38	110	53	57
Levili	25	96	48	48
Leone	154	609	307	302
Aai o Niue	39	179	97	82
Faatoialemanu	325	1088	545	543
Maluafo	19	71	34	37
Lelata	47	231	119	112
Tanugamanono	174	606	323	283
Papauta	97	448	184	264
Maglagl Uta	56	251	133	118
Vailima	420	1447	729	718
Avele	181	677	342	335
Letava	108	379	176	203
Vaoala	202	773	395	378
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,392</b>	<b>8,651</b>	<b>4,333</b>	<b>4,318</b>

<sup>39</sup> Meredith, P. Meredith S, *Market Analysis of a Diversified Market and Livelihoods within the Vaisigano Catchment* [draft], Wiz Consult, 2016

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