

**GOVERNMENT OF SAMOA QUESTIONNAIRE**  
**IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BEIJING DECLARATION AND PLATFORM**  
**FOR ACTION (1995) AND THE OUTCOME OF THE TWENTY-THIRD**  
**SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2000**

**PART 1:**

**Highlight major overall achievements and obstacles encountered in the implementation of the Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly.**

**a. Has a national policy on gender equality and the empowerment of women been adopted and at what level? Was a strategy or plan of action developed to support the implementation of the policy? What mechanisms were established for monitoring and how are different actors held accountable for its implementation? Is there a national coordinating mechanism at the highest level to ensure that the policy is implemented in all sectors?**

A Draft National Policy for Women 2007 - 2017 was developed in 2006/2007. This document highlights issues on the advancement of women and on achieving gender equality to be addressed in the next 10 years. The document draws light on what the issues are, the desired outcomes in terms of what the different policies seek to address and the objectives for the different policy areas in line with the issues that have been identified throughout the text.

To support the implementation of the Draft Policy for Women 2007-2017, a National Plan of Action for the Advancement of Women 2008-2012 is now in place. This Plan identifies the priority areas on the advancement of women that will be addressed in the next 5 years and the outcomes and outputs to be achieved over the next 5 years in line with the Policy. This National Plan will be implemented through a series of annual work plans in line with the national budgeting process whereby the relevant government Ministries will identify the activities that would contribute to the achievement of the 5 year outputs and outcomes for women as stipulated in the National Plan of Action for Advancement of Women 2008-2012. Coordination and monitoring of the implementation of the Policy is done by the Division for Women of the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development through the CEDAW Partnership Committee.

**b. What impact does CEDAW and the concluding comments of the CEDAW Committee have on the promotion of gender equality? How is implementation of the Convention progressing?**

The CEDAW Convention and the Concluding Comments of the CEDAW Committee provide a framework for the work on gender equality in Samoa. The government commitments to achieving gender equality and realising the advancement of women is also done in the context of the government obligations having ratified CEDAW. Efforts to amend legislations and to develop new legislations are also under way given the desire to achieve legislative compliance with CEDAW. In saying that therefore, CEDAW has a lot of positive impact on the promotion of gender equality although it also has some negative implications in terms of the Convention being imposing and foreign.

**c. What are the main legislative and policy-making achievements in the promotion of gender equality**

**and women's empowerment over the past decade? Please provide details.**

In 2006 a Legislative Compliance Review for Samoa and other Pacific Island countries that have ratified CEDAW was conducted by UNIFEM and UNDP. In 2006, a Legislative Compliance Review on CRC was also conducted for Samoa as part of its preparatory work to answer to the UN CRC Committee. These Review Reports form the basis for the amendments and development of new legislations that have now begun. A Family Safety Bill (Domestic Violence Bill) is being developed. Efforts to amend the relevant existing legislations are also under way.

**d. To what extent have gender perspectives and the concerns of women been taken into account in preparation of budgets at national, regional and local levels? Has this resulted in increased resources for gender equality? Describe efforts to increase and track budgetary allocations related to achieving gender equality and empowerment of women. Have gender-responsive budgeting procedures been introduced and to what effect?**

In Samoa there is a general assumption that the budget for the national women's machinery is the one which would sufficiently take into account gender perspectives and concerns of women. This has a lot to do with the general understanding at national level of gender mainstreaming and what this means for development and economic growth as a whole. The national women's machinery therefore continues to advocate for gender equity so that the struggle for gender equality becomes everyone's business as it benefits the girl child in the long run and not just the national women's machinery. It must be noted however that the Strategy for the Development of Samoa makes reference to the National Policy for Women 2007-2017 and the National Policy for Children 2007-2017<sup>1</sup> which although not yet endorsed by Cabinet, provides the overall direction for the work on the advancement of women and the protection of children in Samoa. This is indeed a major achievement and a reflection of the advocacy efforts on the part of the national women's machinery and its key partners in the work for women. Advocacy efforts will continue to ensure that this focus on the national women's policy is reflected at the sectoral and ministry levels through the allocation of resources for the implementation of the National Plan of Action for Women 2008-2012.

Relative to an increase in budgetary allocations, this is one of the areas addressed in the National Plan of Action for Women. Likewise, gender responsive budgeting is also addressed in the Plan as the realisation of this initiative at the national level has been very

"Achieving the national vision will result in the attainment of Samoa's Millenium Development Goals" <sup>2</sup>. In this context, the position of Samoa is such that the implementation of the national development plan is the way forward in terms of achieving the MDGs in Samoa. Relative to Goal 3 on gender equality, this is specifically addressed through the National Policy for Women 2007-2017. The whole policy document is about promoting and realising opportunities for women in the different areas of development in order to achieve gender equality. This Policy for Women provides the direction for the work on the advancement of women so that can not only be contributors to the economconD.Monad6

improving the quality of life for all and certainly a step in the right direction in terms of mainstreaming gender.

Developments have also taken place in other sectors such as Health and Education to name a few. In the Health Sector, the realisation of the realignment in the Health Sector as a result of the public sector reforms now sees a separation of the Ministry of Health as the policy making and regulatory body from the National Health Services which manages and implements all the public health services throughout the country. This realignment is definitely a step towards improving service delivery and from a gender perspective it is one

of the national women's machinery. <sup>7</sup>The CEDAW Partnership has been instrumental in the development of the National Policy for Women and the subsequent National Plan of Action. They are also responsible for the annual planning of activities to implement this National Plan for Women.

There is also the National Government Women Representatives (GWRs) Forum which consists of Village based government women representatives whose role is to lead the implementation of village based developments for women and for the villages at large. The GWRs are responsible for the planning, implementation and monitoring of village based programmes and activities for women. They are responsible to the national women's machinery and they bring to the table the issues and concerns of village women and those at grassroots level. <sup>8</sup> They are therefore consulted on the development of new policies, programmes and services that would have an impact on their role and the work on the advancement of women at village level in general. Monitoring reports on implementation that are submitted by the GWRs are used to inform policy advice and interventions at national level for the work that they do in the villages.

**h. What efforts have been made to actively engage men and boys in the promotion of gender equality, including, for example, in eliminating violence against women and combating HIV/AIDS? What successes have been achieved and what constraints have been identified?**

Since 2007, the national women's machinery has been focusing its advocacy efforts on the elimination of violence against women and children to commemorate International Women's Day (8<sup>th</sup> March) and National Women's Day (second Monday of May), given the increasing number of reported cases of violence against women and children by the media. In 2008, the focus for the commemoration of National Women's Day therefore was "**Men**

regional project which addressed Violence Against Children. This programme facilitated the engagement of men as traditional leaders and as young people to become agents of change in the drive to end violence against children. Through the use of the Community Strengths Based Approach,<sup>10</sup> men at all levels through the village based and national level advocacy programmes were targeted to take the lead in ending violence against children and violence in the home in general for studies have found that children were more likely to be abused by people they know and or are family as opposed to strangers. As a result more traditional village based leaders now have an understanding of the issues of child protection and are taking some positive measures at village level to facilitate better protection of children. These are realised through the practice of village curfews and the application of strict village rules to be observed in order to ensure the protection of children. The use of the Strengths Based Approach in addressing issues of a sensitive nature such as violence against women and children has proven to be a best practice in Samoa as not only does it build on the strengths that exist, it also provides an opportunity to acknowledge weaknesses and shortcomings of communities in addressing these issues.

Barriers in the work on engaging men and boys are often linked to attitudes and availability of resources. While there is a need to engage men and boys in addressing these issues, there is a need to continue our advocacy, education and awareness efforts on why it is important to engage men and boys.

**i. What is the impact of climate change and food and energy crises on the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women? What steps are being taken to reduce the potential risks for and impact on women and to engage women effectively in prevention and mitigation processes? Have social protection measures been put in place to reduce the impact on women and have measures been adopted to support women farmers?**

Like the rest of the world and particularly in the less developed world climate change and energy crises is also having its toll on women. Women are responsible for planting and cooking and climate change impacts on their efforts to grow food thus reducing their produce to feed their families. Women also fish for subsistence living and for a lot of the women, this is also their main source of income. In saying that, climate change and energy crises contribute to the vulnerability of women given their traditional roles as food producers in their families. It also means that women become more burdened with the responsibilities as they take up more time doing these chores. To help address the impacts of climate change, women have been consulted on the development of national strategies and plans for disaster management and disaster risk reduction in Samoa. They have also been the target of education and awareness programmes by the Environment Sector in order to minimise the risks and impact of climate change. Relative to social protection measures, the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources are leading the way in terms of coordinating technical assistance from the different government sections through community education and awareness programmes educate communities on how they can make use of their skills and knowledge to create and or facilitate the availability of social protection measures within communities. These social protection measures include strategies for Risk Reduction and capacity building for post disaster recovery processes in order to build community resilience to the impacts of climate change.

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<sup>10</sup> Approach adopted by the AusAID funded Pacific Children's Programme 2001-2005.

**j. What is the impact of the financial crisis on the promotion of gender equality? What measures have been taken to reduce the negative impact on women's access to resources, income and social protection? To what extent have measures to revive growth mobilized women's economic potential?**

The impact of the financial crisis on the promotion of gender equality relates to the availability of resources to support the programmes and initiatives to promote gender equality. This has resulted in reducing budgets and we have had to make do with the resources available. Access to credit for women has also been affected and while the microfinance schemes targeting women continues, the continuation of these programmes is also in question given the global financial crisis as these are all outside funded initiatives.

Availability of markets for women's businesses is also affected. Many women are involved in garment making and handicraft production. The market for these are the tourists and relatives living abroad that visit the islands as well markets overseas where some of these products are being exported to. These opportunities have all been affected by the financial crisis. Remittances from overseas are one of the major sources of income for many Samoans. The fact that employment overseas is affected by the financial crisis has direct implications for women who bear most of the domestic duties and who are responsible for feeding their families.

To address these issues, the Micro Finance Facility is available for unemployed women to develop their income generating initiatives to assist them and their families in these difficult times. A number of opportunities through grants and donor funded programmes are also available and they promote women's access to resources and income generating initiatives.

## **PART 2:**

**Provide specific examples of achievements, including policy development, legislative change, advocacy, awareness-raising, capacity-development and programmes and projects undertaken on the implementation of the critical areas of concern of the Platform for Action (except for critical area H – covered in part 3), as well as areas requiring further initiative and action identified in the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly. Obstacles and remaining gaps and challenges in relation to the critical areas of concern should also be identified and a summary of lessons learned provided.**

## **CRITICAL AREAS OF CONCERN OF THE BEIJING PLATFORM FOR ACTION:**

### ***A. WOMEN AND POVERTY***

**A. Examples of successful policies, legislative change and programmes and projects – successful actions and specific commitments (resource allocation, legislative change, policy & programme development made at the 4<sup>th</sup> World Conference or other contexts?)**

The South Pacific Business Development (SPBD) Micro Finance Scheme which targets the unemployed women is one of the successful programmes addressing women and poverty. Since the programme began in 2000 SPBD now covers about 66 percent of the total villages in Upolu (one of the two main islands of Samoa) and about 40 percent of the total villages in Savaii (other main island of Samoa). This programme is very popular with the unemployed women of all ages as the service is not only village and community based, the programme also facilitates a strong culture of teamwork, support and networking building on the strengths of community mobilisation and village settings to promote and support the programme. Last year (2008) in July, SPBD celebrated the achievement of twenty million in Samoan currency (SAT20,000,000) total disbursement of loans by SPBD since it began in 2000<sup>11</sup>. This programme continues to date and it is anticipated by the Acting General Manager of SPBD that the clientele of SPBD will continue to grow in future.

The Government since 2004/2005 through assistance from ADB had also begun a similar micro finance programme in partnership with one of the local Women NGOs. The programme however has now moved back to Government and the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development is now working with the Development Bank of Samoa (DBS) to deliver this micro finance programme. Like the SPBD Programme, this programme by DBS and MWCSO is also growing and expanding very fast with the high demand from women who need credit to support income generating initiatives and small



period. This provision will also include parents who adopted children but subject to the provision of legal documents. The Review of this legislation shall also take into account the need to comply with the ILO Convention so that the annual leave entitlement of 15 at the anniversary of one's employment instead of the 10 annual leave it currently provides. In addition, protection of workers with disabilities will also be considered in the course of the review of this legislation<sup>13</sup>.

Another important piece of legislation that needs to be noted here is the Occupational Safety and Health Act 2002 as coverage now includes the public sector and it is an indication of more specification and protection in terms of health and safety issues to both private and public sector workers.

**B. Examples of obstacles encountered and remaining gaps and challenges?**

Obstacles encountered in the context of the microfinance schemes is the usual risk of women who may not be able to pay back the loans, especially when there are problems with the business or when the business simply fails. The strength of the group guarantor scheme helps out with this issue and it is one of the strengths of the SPBD Micro finance programme. The government programme is also adopting a similar model to reduce the risk of arrears and unpaid loans.

**C. Lessons learned and successful interventions.**

The village based service is a successful strategy that provides opportunities for women in poverty. The use of a Strengths Based Approach which builds on the existing strengths in communities to deliver such programmes is also a best practice that SPBD for example has benefited from, and one which the Government Micro Finance Facility is now adopting, using the strengths of the village women's committees and traditional settings to deliver the Micro finance programme for women's community based organizations.

A lesson learnt is the need to have a good monitoring and follow up framework. Through regular contact and a good follow up system, SPBD has been able to expand and maintain a high level of clientele. There is also a very positive work culture and good communication practices between staff and the women in the programme and this is what also contributes to the successes on the ground of the programme.

***B. EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF WOMEN***

**A. Examples of successful policies, legislative change and programmes and projects – successful actions and specific commitments (resource allocation, legislative change, policy & programme development made at the 4<sup>th</sup> World Conference or other contexts?)**

A National Education for All (EFA) Programme and Action Plan is now in place in line with the outcomes of the Global EFA Conferences and the World Declaration at the EFA Conference held in Dakar 2000 and the MDGs. The Education Sector are using these documents to assist the Sector in ensuring that the Education for All Goals are achieved by 2015 and the EFA Action Plan recognises the right to education for all children including those with disabilities, as a basic human right.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture, 2009, Updates provided for this questionnaire.

Strategies to promote gender equality are outlined in Government ministries' corporate plans and in NGO's strategic plans. All these contribute to the overall *Strategy for the Development of Samoa*. Other strategies are included in Samoa's response to global frameworks such as the *UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women* (CEDAW), EFA, MDGs and the *Commonwealth Plan of Action on Gender Equity 2005 – 2015*.<sup>15</sup>

Samoa's gender policies and strategies during the last decade focused on the wellbeing, participation and advancement of women and girls, a concern that it echoed in the CEDAW, EFA, MDGs and the *Commonwealth Plan of Action on Gender Equality*.

**Community support for education** has been built through a January 2007 national conference on partnerships for literacy, implementation of the school improvement model and formulation of new strategies for enforcing education legislation. **Teacher quality** has been improved through continuing pre-service and in-service training, institutionalization of a revised performance management system for teachers and formulation of a National Teacher Development Framework. Teaching is being actively promoted as a career choice through marketing on television. The National Curriculum Policy Framework (NCPF) has been implemented and the initial review of the primary curriculum has been completed. Education for All (EFA) has been developed through the establishment of some community learning centres to be further consolidated in the new SDS period under the Education Sector Program. The consultations for the development of the Samoan Culture Policy have been completed and the compilation of the National Monolingual Dictionary is underway.

**Improving teaching materials** has involved the development of suitable teaching materials such as Samoan readers, multi-grade modules and Samoan sign language – in consultation with knowledgeable local stakeholders. The use of media for educational programs delivery has been strengthened during the SDS period and the use of computers and internet facilities in schools has been developed. The **upgrading and refurbishing** of selected schools under the Education Sector Project Phase 1 have been completed, as well as a new teacher's resource Centre at Malifa. School committees have been strengthened to maintain school buildings and facilities. Consultations amongst all stakeholders have been developed to **strengthen the Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture (MESC)**. The school improvement model has been strongly supported through the development of school self-assessments at the end of each school year and the subsequent drawing up of school improvement plans for implementation the following year. The Samoan Qualification Authority (SQA) has been established and the National University of Samoa and the Samoa Polytechnic were merged in 2006. Technical and vocational training has been supported with the Institute of Technology continuing to offer a range of courses from applied trades to maritime training. The Australia Regional Technical College started operations in late 2007. The review of the Education Strategic Plan (1995 – 2005) has been completed, and a new education sector plan (2006- 2015) is now operational.

Gender stereotyping in education has diminished as a result of curriculum review, gender sensitization workshops, affirmative action and the development of gender equity polices in institutions like the IOT.

<sup>15</sup> Adapted from – E Lameta and Q Reid-Enari, *Boys and Achievement*, Apia, 2005.

Curriculum development is an area which is usually supported by bilateral aid programmes.

**Issue 1:** *There is gender disparity at the secondary level, with more females enrolled in secondary schools than males. This gender disparity is carried through to tertiary level.*

Strategy 1(a): National and international policies and frameworks focus on improving the situation of women and girls, which does not reflect the situation in Samoa. The Government needs to redefine focus of national policies and plans on issues associated with boys.

Strategy 1(b): MESC to undertake research as to why there is low access/attendance and achievement by boys.

**Issue 2:** *There is gender disparity in repetition rates for Years 5 and 8 and the survival rate from Year 1 to 8, with females doing better.*

Strategy 2(a): Teachers to identify strengths in students and encourage students to pursue and participate in programmes which develop these strengths further, for example, in arts, sports, agricultural science, and music.

Strategy 2(b): Parents, communities and the church to provide care qualities for boys. MESC to conduct awareness campaigns and programmes for parents to encourage equality of treatment between girls and boys.

### **C. Lessons learned and successful interventions.**

#### **‘Boys and Achievement’ Research Study<sup>20</sup>**

There is an emerging awareness and concern over the underachievement of boys and recognition of the need for a gender inclusive response in national initiatives that provides more choices and opportunities for not only women, but also men, youth and children. One of the goals of education in MESC’s current SPP is to address this situation because it impacts on the make up of the work force and all other aspects of society. MESC undertook a study into ‘Boys and Achievement’ in 2005.

Gender based data in achievement is limited. Gender equity in education is most commonly reported in terms of enrolment patterns and achievement in primary levels in Years 4 and Year 6 for English, Samoan and Numeracy. Achievement in the senior secondary school levels based in the Samoa School Certificate Examination, the regional Pacific Senior Secondary Certificate is not disaggregated by gender. EFA plans and MDGs’ focus on girls does not fit Samoa’s identified needs in relation to the underachievement of boys. It is fair to say that the achievement of boys in Samoa does not have documented profile to any extensive level.

The gender difference in educational access, participation and achievement has been shown to favour girls over boys. Given the youthful nature of Samoa’s population with

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<sup>20</sup> Adapted from – E Lameta and Q Reid-Enari, *Boys and Achievement*.

19.5 being the median age, the limitations of our economic base, and keeping in mind the traditional philosophies stressing the importance of the collective and notions of servitude, there is an urgent need to address the conditions within which boys find themselves both in education and in society. In education their underachievement at the basic levels in Years 4 and 6 means they have a very weak base to work from. Their diminishing participation in secondary and post-secondary opportunities would have to be a feature of a weakened primary base. All of which contribute to diminished capacity to fulfill traditional expectations of provider, server, and leader, and diminished power to take control of lifestyles and living conditions. Samoa's youthful population around half of whom are males require specific policies and strategies aimed at changing the conditions resulting in their marginalisation from a very early age, for their school age years and post school experi



University of Samoa Faculty of Nursing and Health Science, also continued. This period saw the introduction of postgraduate nurse training in specialist areas including midwifery, mental health and paediatric nursing. The Oceania School of Medicine Samoa continued with increased numbers of Samoan students enrolling. In the first half of 2007, a comprehensive Human Resources for Health Policy and Plan of Action was developed, and will be followed by the development of a comprehensive data base to capture information on human resources in health as the basis for reviewing and managing this policy and action plan.<sup>26</sup>

**Health facilities and equipment** at the Tupua Tamasese Meaole National Hospital have been upgraded with World Bank assistance. The Malietoa Tanumafili II secondary referral hospital in Savai'i was also renovated with assistance from JICA. The 3 district hospitals at Poutasi, Lalomanu and Safotu have been refurbished with World Bank support; and the birthing units for Lufilufi and Fusi district hospitals have been upgraded. Construction of the nurses' home at Foalalo was completed in 2007 with assistance from the EU.<sup>27</sup>

The **financing of health services** has been reviewed and an assessment made of the viability of a health insurance scheme, with a proposal from the National Provident Fund approved but on hold given other commitments. The overseas treatment policy has been in operation since 2002, and is costing close to SAT\$10 million (in FY2006/07), and was reviewed in 2006. Laboratory services and pharmaceutical drugs supply have improved as a result of increased funding, with in-depth forensic audits on procurement and supply being undertaken in early 2007 with assistance from the AusAID funded Samoa Health Project. Better storage facilities will be implemented in the new SDS period under the Sector program.<sup>28</sup>

Several other bills were passed in this period including: Nursing and Midwifery Act 2007, Health Care Professions Registrations and Standards Act 2007, Pharmacy Act 2007 and Dental Practitioners Act 2007. The Medical Practitioners Act was reviewed and a Bill prepared following extensive consultations. This Bill is currently (December 2007) undergoing legislative parliamentary processes. The nursing and midwifery standards and professional code of conduct was reviewed and standards and code of conduct drafted for medical practitioners, allied health professionals as well as dentists and pharmacists.<sup>29</sup>

### **B. Examples of obstacles encountered and remaining gaps and challenges?**

A Performance Management Review of MOH was carried out in early 2006 prior to the separation between the MOH and NHS. Main findings of this review highlighted the need for improved management techniques and for greater inter divisional communication. This





Samoa is one of the implementing partners for the Pacific Prevention of Domestic Violence Project, a regional Project led by the Pacific Commissioners of Police and funded by NZAID. This project has brought about the establishment of the Domestic Violence Unit within the Ministry of Police and Corrections Services. This unit handles all Domestic Violence cases and makes referrals where appropriate for such cases. The same regional project provided funds for the work on the domestic violence legislation mentioned above.

A UNFPA Gender Based Violence Project which has put into action the recommendations from the Samoa Family Health and Safety Study (Domestic Violence focussed) which was conducted in Samoa in 2000. This project focuses on strengthening legal and policy frameworks addressing gender based violence, including enhancing awareness and understanding of the issue.

In 2008 the Division for Women of the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development continues to coordinate, implement and support programmes focussing on the elimination of violence against women. Since 2007, the focus of the commemoration of International and National Days for Women in Samoa had been on the same issue. Last year, the theme for the celebration of National Women's Day was ***“Men Taking Action to Eliminate Violence Against Women”***. A positive outcome of this focus and emphasis was the formation of a Men Against Violence Advocacy Group in Samoa.<sup>33</sup> This group will facilitate the mobilisation of men in Samoa to join forces with women and all parties concerned to end violence against women and violence in the home in general. The long term vision of the Ministry is that this group will eventually become an entity on its own independent of the Ministry but very much working in collaboration to achieve the outcomes for women and children in the context of ending violence.

In celebrating International Women's Day this year, the focus on ***“Sharing Responsibility to end Violence Against Women – Combating Violence Together”*** was the local theme, in line with the CSW theme for the 53<sup>rd</sup> session. The programme, like it has been done in previous years, is a week long combination of video spots, village based advocacy processes with the village councils and workshops at the national level. Meetings of the Men Against Violence Advocacy Group will also be part of this programme, the focus being on the development of the Workplan for the Group as a way to determine and identify some possible sources of funding and support for the work of the Group.<sup>34</sup>

One of the developments which the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development is proposing to do through the Gender Based Violence Project is the

community leaders, women, men and young people in dialogue so that they have an understanding on how they can collectively achieve the outcomes for preventing and addressing issues on violence. For this Ministry, this is one of the best practice models that we have developed and used successfully because it takes away the focus on outsiders telling communities what and how it should be done, instead it puts the emphasis on the community people themselves as the experts and the ones who know better how to deal with the issues related to and on violence. It is therefore a best practice model because it adopts a Strengths Based Approach where we build on the strengths of communities and then collectively work out how we can address the weaknesses that contribute to practices that lead to violence.

**B. Examples of obstacles encountered and remaining gaps and challenges?**

One of the biggest obstacles that we continue to face is the differing attitudes towards violence against women. While there are people who now see this as a problem, there are also others who continue to see this as very much a private issue which should be treated as such. There is also the challenge of financing these efforts. While there is general acceptance of violence against women as an issue, this general acceptance is not reflected in the resources and financial commitments made to eliminate violence against women.

**C. Lessons learned and successful interventions.**

As of above.

***E. WOMEN AND ARMED CONFLICT***

Not applicable in our context.

***F. WOMEN AND THE ECONOMY***

through their participation in the village economy. The micro finance programme is one of the better programmes in that women who are not able to start a business venture because of the strict lending criteria of the financial institutions can now do so with these micro finance schemes.

**B. Examples of obstacles encountered and remaining gaps and challenges?**

**Resource constraints:**

Obstacles in this area are the same as has been identified under the other areas. Resource constraints continue to affect coverage and programme implementation. Programmes and interventions therefore need to utilise cost saving measures in order to address gaps in programme implementation due to resource constraints.

**Maternity Protection for female workers in the Private Sector:**

Government through the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Labour (MCIL) in its efforts to review the Labour and Employment Act<sup>36</sup> is proposing to grant 3 months maternity leave for women in the private sector with 6 weeks on full pay and two third for the rest of the above period. This will include parents who adopted children but subject to the provision of legal documents.

**Annual Leave:**

MCIL has identified the contradiction of annual leave entitlement under the Labour Act 1972 which is ten (10) after a year and ILO conventions which is fifteen (15). Efforts to revise legislation to comply with this ILO requirement is also a remaining gap in ensuring appropriate and adequate protection for women in the workforce.

**C. Lessons learned and successful interventions.**

The role of the traditional structures in supporting village based programmes is noted. There is a need to utilise these structures to facilitate support for village based developments for women. It must be noted that utilising these structures requires much capacity building so that communities are equipped with the knowledge to make good use of these developments as well as skills in order to better support these village based developments to their advantage.

The enactment of the Occupational Safety and Health Act in 2002 extending its coverage to the public sector is an indication of more specification and protection in terms of health and safety issues to both private and public sector workers.

MCIL recognizes the need to make a provision under the Labour Legislation to protect workers with disabilities including women with disabilities.

**G. WOMEN IN POWER AND DECISION MAKEjge.**



There is also a need to strengthen monitoring and evaluation in this area. The need to make the connections between what has been evaluated and policy development in the work on the advancement of women is also a challenge that needs to be addressed.

**C. Lessons learned and successful interventions.**

The work on promoting women's human rights needs to build on the strengths within communities relating to women's status and place in society. This way, human rights of women is not seen as a foreign concept but rather an aspect and part of life that has always existed for Samoan women. It is also the way to minimise misconceptions of the work on women's human rights so that opportunities may be made available for women to become contributors to and beneficiaries of development in this area and in all areas.

***J. WOMEN AND THE MEDIA***

**A. Examples of successful policies, legislative change and programmes and projects. – successful actions and specific commitments (resource allocation, legislative change, policy & programme development made at the 4<sup>th</sup> World Conference or other contexts?)**

Relative to Broadcast Media, there is now a Government Broadcasting Policy 2005 and a Broadcasting Bill 2008 is being drafted. This piece of legislation will allow the establishment of a Broadcast Regulator that regulates the broadcast (radio and television) market, while the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology focuses on policy development and the administration of the legislation. This is in line with the public sector reforms which focus on enhancing service delivery and strengthening policies and legislations to support service delivery.<sup>39</sup>

There are now 3 recognised television stations in Samoa. This has meant a wider reach to women both in rural and urban areas through the media. Women now have a lot more access to information through the television and this is a positive development for women.

**B. Examples of obstacles encountered and remaining gaps and challenges?**

No obstacles were identified in this area.

**C. Lessons learned and successful interventions.**

Women and the media is a global issue and there is a need to learn from the experience of other countries' in dealing with this issue. There is also a need to take on board Christian and cultural values in the developments in this area.

***K. WOMEN AND THE ENVIRONMENT***

**A. Examples of successful policies, legislative change and programmes and projects. – successful actions and specific commitments (resource allocation, legislative change, policy & programme development made at the 4<sup>th</sup> World Conference or other contexts?)**

A number of developments, projects and initiatives have taken place in this area. The role of women in environmental management is increasingly recognised and as a result, women are targeted a lot more in projects focusing on environmental conservation and protection. The

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<sup>39</sup> Ministry of Communication and Information Technology 2009, Information provided for this questionnaire.



The Government in further demonstration of its commitment to environment conservation and sustainable development adopted 13 international and 5 regional agreements. Implementation of the various conventions and protocols are at varying stages of progress. A number of government policies and regulation have also been endorsed and implemented.<sup>44</sup>

### **C. Lessons learned and successful interventions.**

The need to involve communities and in particular women in these environmental sustainability programmes is a must. Government Ministries play a coordinating role and are there only for a short term. The long term sustainability of programmes and initiatives lies with the involvement and participation of communities. Without meaningful community participation and community engagement in these processes and programme, efforts to ensure environmental sustainability is in question.

Substantial international assistance (technical and financial) is likely to be needed to facilitate detail assessment and design appropriate strategies to cope with impacts of climate change and climate variability. Already communities and government are engaged in some action but it would need to be refined to ensure benefits of climate change are considered.<sup>45</sup>

Efforts to address Climate Change should not be treated in isolation from other efforts ie. Sustainable development and poverty reduction, but rather compliment it. Samoa depends on imported fuels for most of its energy needs. Rural people depend on dry wood and crop residues for firewood. The droughts in 2002 and 2003 lead to rationing of electric power. Frequency in drought due to climate change will leave Samoa with diesel as the only option but then operation cost will be high and it will affect usage rate. Investment in other forms of renewable energy is recommended.<sup>46</sup>

## ***L. THE GIRL CHILD***

### **A. Examples of successful policies, legislative change and programmes and projects. – successful actions and specific commitments (resource allocation, legislative change, policy & programme development made at the 4<sup>th</sup> World Conference or other contexts?)**

There is now a Draft National Policy for Children 2007-2017. The policy document is still in draft form as it is yet to obtain Cabinet endorsement however, the work on children which includes the girl child continues. A National Plan of Action for Children 2008-2012 in line with this Policy document is in place and implementation has begun. This Policy for Children outlines the various issues that need to be addressed relating to their social and legal protection.

A successful project which needs to be noted here is the Pacific Children's Programme (PCP). This is an AusAID funded project that was coordinated by the Ministry of Women in Samoa in collaboration with the Partnership Committee on the Convention on the Rights of the Child. This regional project was the vehicle in which the issues of child protection and

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<sup>44</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>45</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>46</sup> *ibid.*

issues for the protection of the girl child have been realised. The work of PCP was definitely an overwhelming experience for all who have led and taken part in the project and the Ministry of Women will continue the legacy of PCP in Samoa for many years to come. The assistance of the Government of Australia has helped realise the vision of PCP in Samoa and is now beginning to become a reality through the National Plan of Action for Children 2008-2012. The use of the Community Strengths Based Approach which has been trialled and proven successful through the years of PCP has been owned by the Ministry and has been adopted and used in several contexts of programme development and delivery. Sustainability of the work of PCP now continues with the work of the Division for Women on CRC and the memory of PCP as a success story in Samoa and in the Pacific region will live on.

**B. Examples of obstacles encountered and remaining gaps and challenges?**

Resource constraints and commitment to the work of women and children including the girl child continues to be an obstacle. While documents are in place to provide the direction for the work on women and the girl child, commitment in terms of resource allocation is still an issue that we continue to advocate for. The commitment to the work on women and children made at the national level through the Strategy for the Development of Samoa needs to be reflected in the sectoral plans and budgets so that the issues are being addressed.

**C. Lessons learned and successful interventions.**

As of above.



**PART 3:**

**Include information on institutional development of those structures and measures countries have put in place to support promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment. This part covers the critical area of concern H in the Platform for Action: Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women, and chapters V on Institutional Arrangements and VI on Financial Arrangements, as well as actions identified in the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly. Include also information on national machineries, capacity-building programmes for line ministries, resource allocation, statistics and indicators, monitoring and accountability mechanisms and partnerships should also be described in this section.**

*a. What national mechanisms exist for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women – for example ministry, national commission, parliamentary committee? What mandates and resources do these bodies have and have these increased in the period under review? How do these bodies work together? Describe the location of the national mechanisms and the access to decision-making processes. What networks have been established and how effective are these networks? What resources do the national mechanisms have in terms of staff and financial support? What percentage of financial resources comes from international or bilateral donors or other external sources?*

In Samoa's context, we have a Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development. Between 1991 and 2003, we had an independent Ministry of Women Affairs. In July 2003 as result of the public sector reforms, the Ministry of Women Affairs amalgamated with the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Division for Youth of the abolished Ministry of Youth, Sports and Cultural Affairs to form the existing Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development (MWCSO). The different mandates for this Ministry include the following legislations. Other mandates are listed under 'Other Mandates' below.

**MWCSO Mandates:**

1. Ministerial and Departmental Arrangements Act 2003
2. Ministry of Women Affairs Act 1990 and Amendment Act 1998
3. Ministry of Youth Sports and Cultural Affairs Act 1993 (*provisions pertaining to Youth*)
4. Ministry of Internal Affairs Act 1995
5. Public Service Act 2004
6. Public Finance Management Act 2001

**Other Mandates:**

7. Government's Strategy for the Development of Samoa (SDS) 2008 - 2012
8. UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) ratified by the government of Samoa in 1992
9. UN convention on the rights of the Child (CRC) ratified by the Government of Samoa in 1994
10. Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)
11. Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action
12. Pacific Platform for Action
13. Commonwealth Youth Programme, UNICEF/UNFPA/UNDP Country Programme Action Plans 2008 – 2012
14. Cabinet Directives
15. Memorandum Of Understanding (MOUs)
16. National Policies

Another institutional mechanism within the Ministry is the CEDAW Partnership which

consists of both government and non government organizations. This forum is the technical working group for CEDAW which includes Beijing as CEDAW is the overarching framework for the work on gender equality and the advancement of women in Samoa. It was an effort which recognized and acknowledged the existing work on the advancement of women in all areas, and the CEDAW Partnership was to facilitate better coordination, implementation and monitoring of the Convention in Samoa. It was also an attempt to bring

In terms of resources, the total budget for th



where data is fragmented throughout the different Divisions, the exercise of asserting a technical position through policy development and strategic planning can be quite challenging without a centralised system of data.

Relative to the national planning by the Ministry of Finance as the central planning agency, a set of indicators has been developed to monitor progress of the Strategy for the Development of Samoa and these have been used to further inform policy interventions and planning at the national level.

**f. Provide information on the roles of different stakeholders. For example, what role does Parliament play in the promotion and monitoring of gender equality and women's empowerment? How could this role be strengthened? Describe the role of NGOs in planning and implementing the follow-up activities. Do NGOs participate formally in the mechanisms established to follow up the Fourth World Conference on Women and support reporting and implementation of CEDAW?**

The work on the advancement of women builds on the existing and ongoing work of government ministries and NGOs. In saying this, the Ministry of Health for example continues to focus on the health of women; Ministry of Education also continues to focus on education and training for women and the same goes for other Government Ministries and bodies. Relative to the involvement of NGOs, their contribution and participation in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of these efforts also follows the same pattern that is adopted for government Ministries. The CEDAW Partnership that was referred to earlier is the forum whereby the NGOs are brought on board as mentioned. NGOs had also been part of the preparation of Samoa's first CEDAW Report in 2000. It is anticipated that they will also form part of the group that will be tasked with the development of Samoa's second CEDAW Report which will be the Combined Fourth and Fifth Periodic Report this year. They were al



## **2. Elimination of Gender Based Violence;**

### ***Outcome:***

. Women and in particular the girl child are protected from all forms of violence and enjoy their rights and freedoms through the elimination of gender based violence (GBV)

### ***Output:***

- 1) Law Enforcement agencies including the pulenuu, government women representatives and village councils have the capacity to deal effectively with cases of gender based violence through an Interagency Response System
- 2) Men and boys become actively involved in the elimination of gender based violence.

### ***Indicators:***

1.1) Number of trainings conducted for law enforcement officers working with victims of GBV.

Target: At least 2 Trainings (per annum) of law enforcement officers on working with victims of Gender Based Violence.

1.2) Reduction in gender based violence reported cases.

2.1) Support for the Men Against Violence initiative is made available.

2.2.) Programme of Activities for the Men Against Violence Initiative is developed.

2.3) Enhanced coordination of Men Against Violence programmes and activities across the sectors.

Target: At least 50% reduction in gender based violence reported cases.

## **3. Increasing participation of women in decision making;**

### ***Outcome:***

3.1. Women and girls benefit from good local (village) community based governance

### ***Output:***

Local communities are able to facilitate the participation of women and girls living in remote areas in community based programmes.

### ***Indicators:***

1) Percentage of Women and girls participating in village based activities.

Target: At least 75% of Women and girls participating in village based activities.

## **4. Increasing participation of women in economic and social development;**

### ***Outcome:***

Women including those with disabilities rural and elderly are able to contribute to as well as benefit from economic and social development at different levels

***Output:***

Strengthened local economic and social development initiatives for women through the implementation of the Local Governance Strategy.

***Indicators:***

Percentage of women participating in leadership and decision making processes/initiatives at village level.

Target: At least 30% of women participating in leadership and decision making processes/initiatives at village level.

**5. Improving the Health Status of Women.**

***Outcome:***

Women's health status is improved with the reduction of Non Communicable Diseases (NCDs) and Communicable Disease (CDs)

***Output:***

Women and girls live in safe and clean environments through enhanced community participation in the ANM Programme.

***Indicators:***

- 1) Percentage of households under the ANM program with sanitary toilets.
- 2) Percentage of households with safe drinking water
- 3) Percentage of households with sanitary garbage/waste disposal

**d. Outline explicit new commitments that will be made to accelerate implementation.**

Implementation of the National Plan of Action for the Advancement of Women and the National Policy for Women 2007-2017.