

OUTCOME XM-DAC-41146-TON_D_1.1

By 2027, more people, particularly those at risk of being left behind, benefit from more equitable access to resilient, and gender-responsive, quality basic services, food security/nutrition and social protection systems. [PCF Strategic Priority 2: People]

This outcome is on track. The signing of an MOU between the Government of Tonga and UN Women to develop the Tonga National Prevention of VAW Framework illustrates a concerted effort to address GBV at multiple societal levels, engaging various sectors in transformative initiatives. The agreement to develop this framework indicates political will protect the human rights of women and girls and to put in place measures to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls. The Women Affairs Division, Ministry of Internal Affairs launched the Tonga National Service Delivery Protocol (SDP) for Responding to Cases of GBV, in March 2021, which marked a pivotal shift in the interagency response among social services, police, health, and legal/justice providers. The implementation of this protocol, supports the provision of clear definitions, guiding principles, and minimum standards, and will led to a more coordinated and standardized approach in responding to GBV cases, emphasizing confidentiality, informed consent, and interagency cooperation. The implementation of the Tonga National Service Delivery Protocol (SDP) for Responding to Cases of Gender-based Violence continues to be supported by UN Women through the rollout of training for essential frontline service providers in 2023. This included the upskilling of new staff at the Tonga Women and Children Crisis Centre, the Training of Trainers on GBV Counselling. The SDP benefits women and girls who have experienced violence in Tonga by providing definitions, guiding principles and minimum standards for all government and non-government organisations involved in responding to cases of GBV. The protocol outlines the need for confidentiality and procedures for information sharing, as well as clarifying that victims’ informed consent must be central to all actions taken by service providers (including for police, who must explain their ‘No Drop’ policy in relation to filed complaints). Processes for making referrals are documented, with specific detail of coordinating referral services for all the island groups outlined. However, UNFPA’s Health Facility Readiness and Service Availability Assessment has found that none of the facilities visited were assessed as GBV service ready. UNFPA is finalising the Minimum Health Standard Operating Procedures for Clinical Management of Rape, Sexual Violence and Gender-Based Violence to support the National Service Delivery Protocol. The Ha’apai Psychosocial and Mobile Counseling team boosted support and advocacy for GBV survivors in rural areas through the “Leaving No One Behind” initiative in Niua Fo’ou. All three branches reported that their island communities are increasingly becoming aware of their services and locations. The Vava’u and Ha’apai branches made considerable efforts to ‘leave no one behind’ by reaching remote communities on their respective islands. Ensuring accessibility for all, they offer a toll-free helpline The Ha’apai Psychosocial and Mobile Counseling provided direct psychosocial support to 51 women and 44 children (25 girls, 19 boys) from Matuku, ‘O’ua, Ha’afeva, and Tungua. UN Women provided technical and financial support to WCCC to support these activities. These initiatives have ensured that women and children in remote communities receive the necessary psychosocial support, showcasing a proactive and inclusive approach to service provision. The Tonga Women and Children Crisis Centre (WCCC) and the Women’s Affairs and Gender Equality Division (WAGED) have improved staff knowledge and skills through training to work towards improved service delivery, aligning with the SDP, GBV counselling, and the Family Protection Act. This highlights a performance enhancement in service provision to GBV survivors. This was achieved by the participation of

22 government ministries / departments, and 5 CSOs in a series of workshops as part of integrating gender and women's empowerment into national planning processes. The post workshop data reflects that the majority of participants' expectations were met and there was an overall improved understanding of gender mainstreaming (89%). Respondents acknowledged key learnings to include understanding the relationship between gender mainstreaming and its link to gender responsive budgeting, the need for gender audits of corporate plans, recognition that gender activities/work is being undertaken by some sectors however it is not articulated in the corporate plans, recognition that improved coordination and more opportunities for training and networking were needed to maintain the momentum post workshop, UN Women partnered with the National Planning Office of Tonga to co-facilitate at the workshops. New essential frontline service workers in GBV response services at the Tonga Women and Children Crisis Centre have had their skills and knowledge enhanced through attendance at the Training of Trainers on GBV Counselling. 8 women and 3 men church members increased their knowledge of the prevention of gender-based violence through attendance at the Gender Status Card (GSC) training in Tonga as well as learning more about the role churches can take to prevent GBV in their communities. 18 rural women leaders on Tonga's northernmost island, Niua Fo'ou are more confident and skilled to provide advocacy services around GBV after they participated in a training by WCCC as Focal Point Advocates (FPA). This was part of WCCC's Niua Fo'ou 'Leaving No One Behind' initiative. There are no changes on the ToC or strategy for 2024. Tonga's approach in 2023, from enhancing institutional protocols and training to fostering community-based advocacy and support, shows progress towards a more responsive, inclusive, and supportive framework for addressing gender-based violence and promoting gender equality.