

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 ¹ 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 slow. A few professionals have participated in gender responsive budgeting meetings and workshops at the regional and international level but there is still a lot more that needs to be done in terms of building capacities to be able to take this further.

e. To what extent are the MDGs utilized as the national framework for development? What attention is given to Goal 3 on gender equality? Is national-level data available to effectively monitor the achievement of the targets under MDG3? Are gender perspectives and the concerns of women considered in all other MDGs?

The national vision stipulated in the Strategy for the Development of Samoa is "Improved quality of Life for All". In an opening statement from the Minister for Finance, he said that

¹ Ministry of Finance, 2008 Strategy for the Development of Samoa 2008-2012

"Achieving the national vision will result in the attainment of Samoa's Millenium Development Goals" ². 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 economy but also more so beneficiaries of the economy. In terms of national level data to monitor the achievement of the MDG targets, this is made available through the data from the different line ministries including the data collected by the Bureau of Statistics on the census and other national surveys that they do conduct such as the Demography and Health Survey and the Household Income Expenditure Survey to name a few. Examples of data collected and compiled by other line Ministries include the Education Digest which is published annually, and several data collected by the Ministry of Health in line with their mandates. There is also already an initial report on MDGs and this is used to measure progress made over the years in the achievement of the MDGs. There are also indicators that have been developed for the SDS and these are reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that the SDS targets are being met.

f. In which sector areas have specific policies, strategies and/or action plans for promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment been developed and implemented? To what extent are gender perspectives and the concerns of women routinely taken into account in legislation, policy-making and programme development in other sectors, so that inequalities and gaps are identified?

It has been said that gender issues and concerns of women are being mainstreamed in the various sectors such as it is done in the Strategy for the Development of Samoa. The Review of the Strategy for the Development of Samoa 2005-2007 shows some significant changes in the various sectors. For example, in the Communications Sector, Telecommunications has improved considerably since 2005. "Total tele-density has reached 56 telephones per 100 people and it has more than doubled the anticipated rate. Competition in the cellular mobile telephone service has forced down prices. International telephone costs have dropped by more than 50% [although] ...local rates have increased" (MOF 2008:15) The National Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) policy was launched in March 2005 ³. Several projects have begun as a result of this policy. Of particular interest are the Tele-Centres targeting women to be the users and managers of these tele-centres in the village communities. These developments have a positive impact on the empowerment of women as access to information and enhanced communication through the use of technology also means better access for women.

In the Public Administration Sector, the improvements in the daily management and provision of service delivery in government ministries, the improvement of the performance management systems within government through the availability of Strategic documents for planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of programme delivery and service provision have all contributed to an enhanced public administration sector⁴. Although these developments are for all – men and women, it is a step in the right direction in terms of

² Ministry of Finance, 2008, Strategy for the Development of Samoa 2008-2012.

³ Ibid.p5.

⁴ Ibid.p6

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 measures that will ensure that women and children are getting the health services that they need and that the quality of the services shall be improved through the exercise of the monitoring and regulatory function of the Ministry of Health within the health sector. Efforts to strengthen and improve primary health care services and health promotion and preventive programmes with a particular focus on addressing non communicable diseases, baby and child health and nutrition, adolescent health, maternal health (including early detection of cervical and breast cancer) and care of the elderly have certainly all since 2005⁵. These are some developments which have taken place in the Health Sector in line with the Strategy for the Development of Samoa 2005-2007.

In Education, focuses on strengthening community support in education; improving teacher Quality; improving curricula and assessment practices; improving teaching materials; improving school facilities and equipment; strengthening the Ministry of Education; and developing sport have certainly progressed. These were areas of priority for the Education sector since 2005 and to date.⁶

Relative to addressing women's concerns these have all been addressed and considered in most all of these developments. Women at large are consulted in the developmental phases of these initiatives and their views are considered in the design of policy and programme interventions in these sectors and others.

g. What types of significant partnerships have been established with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society groups, as well as the private sector and other stakeholders, in support of different aspects of national efforts on gender equality and empowerment of women- through, for example, advocacy, participation in planning, implementation and monitoring of policies and programmes and service delivery?

The CEDAW Partnership Committee is the national level forum where engagement with NGOs, civil society groups and the private sector takes place. This forum consists of government, non government, civil society and private sector organizations whose focuses relate to and or are on different areas for the advancement of women. This group meets on a monthly basis but given the reducing budget lines they now meet every two months. The CEDAW Partnership is tasked with the coordination, promotion, implementation of the Convention and provision of advice on law reform that affect women as necessary. It is also responsible for the overall monitoring of implementation at national level through the work

⁵ Ministry of Health 2009, Updates provided for this questionnaire.

⁶ Ministry of Finance, 2008, Strategy for the Development of Samoa 2008-2012.

of the national women's machinery. ⁷The 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. ⁸ 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 (8th 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 Taking Action to Eliminate Violence Against Women and Children”***. This followed on from the International Women's Day programme held earlier in March and the focus being ***“Financing for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Children”***. ⁹From these attempts a Men Against Violence Advocacy Group has now been formed. These men are not just men who are professionals and have careers at national level. This group also include men who are chiefs and traditional leaders and the rationale behind the focus on the traditional leaders and village chiefs is the fact that they have a strong influence in the villages and in a position to influence to behaviour change and practices in the villages and families when it comes to violence in the homes. For the commemoration of International Women's Day in Samoa this year, the focus on engaging men has continued and the Men Against Violence Group had looked at a Constitution and Plan of Activities that they would seek funding to implement.

This is not to say that this is the first time men have been engaged to end violence and combat HIV/AIDS. For some years now, the national women's machinery continues to conduct programmes engaging men through the participation of young couples to address reproductive sexual health issues including HIV/AIDS. Between 2001 and 2005, the Ministry was also responsible for an AusAID funded Pacific Children's Programme, a

⁷ Division for Women, MWCSO 2009.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

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,¹⁰ 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.

¹⁰ 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 4th 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 2000¹¹. 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 MWCSA is also growing and expanding very fast with the high demand from women who need credit to support income generating initiatives and small family businesses. This programme is a reflection of commitment from government to support the women who are unemployed and are not able to access credit from the financial institutions to support their business ventures.

In terms of benefits for women in the workforce, amendments are in the pipeline for the review of the Labour and Employment Act¹² to ensure **Maternity Protection for female workers in the Private Sector** so that they can be granted 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

¹¹ Interview with South Pacific Business Development Personnel, 2009.

¹² Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Labour 2009, Updates provided for this questionnaire.

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 legislation¹³.

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 4th 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.¹⁴

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ 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*.¹⁵

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 policies in institutions like the IOT.

¹⁵ 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. This being so, gender issues supported by gender sensitization workshops for staff involved are built into programmes. There is careful monitoring to ensure there is no gender stereotyping in teachers guides and other learning materials.¹⁶ A good example of this is the ESPII project, jointly funded by GoS, ADB, AusAID and NZAID, under which gender sensitive curriculum and learning materials will be developed for primary schools.

Parent/ societal values, attitudes and expectations

Samoa women have experienced significant changes in their economic, social and political lives over the last half century. There has been an increased participation of women in paid employment, increased interest and participation at the national political level, and more women holding senior management positions in the Government.¹⁷ Other developments have been decreased fertility rates and related reduction in family size.

The steady success rate of females in sciences and commerce has also helped remove the image that females are meant to be teachers, secretaries and nurses only. In the non-formal sector, there has been a general shift away from home economics activities to ‘income generating activities’.¹⁸ In the late 1990s Polytechnic’s (now, the IOT) Gender Equity Project saw an increase in young girls attaining certificates in carpentry, refrigeration, electrical fitting and machining, and maritime studies.¹⁹

Equity is one of the five key concepts under MESC’s SPP July 2006 – June 2015. Equity calls for the system to treat all individuals fairly and justly in the provision of services and opportunities. Policies, strategies and practices, will be identified and articulated appropriately to avoid treatment that may disadvantage any social group.

A **National Sports Policy** has been completed, training on sports management has been carried out, and coordination between MESC, SASNOC, the South Pacific Games (SPG) Authority and individual sporting bodies has been strengthened. Furthermore the NUS offered the Diploma in Sport and Fitness Education in partnership with a New Zealand tertiary provider and will continue to develop the sports programmes. Facilities for the South Pacific Games in 2007 were all successfully constructed. The critical challenge now is the devising of appropriate strategies for the sustainability of these facilities.

The development of the Strategy for Post School Education and Training (PSET) is also another positive achievement in this area. This provides for the recognition of informal training targeting women for example.

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

¹⁶ *ibid.*, p.61

¹⁷ *ibid.*, p. 43.

¹⁸ *ibid.*, p. 47

¹⁹ *ibid.*, p. 58

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 Study²⁰

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

²⁰ 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 experiences. The social and economic costs to society of not recognising the marginalisation of boys in specific actions now would be unthinkable in the next five to ten years. Actions could begin by redefining the focus of the MDGs and

EFA to fit Samoa's issues associated with boys rather than girls.

C. WOMEN AND HEALTH

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 4th World Conference or other contexts?)

The Ministry of Health (MOH) Act 2006 mandates the Ministry to provide Health Services Performance, which include Nursing and Midwifery Services. The Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs) on the other hand are now formally recognised under the Healthcare Professional Registration and Standards Act 2007. This mandates the MOH to regulate and monitor service provision for these critical areas in maternal health, in the sector, to ensure quality midwifery and TBA services.²¹

Safe Motherhood is a global initiative defined as a woman's ability to have a safe and healthy pregnancy and delivery of a healthy baby. Safe motherhood is achieved through improving the social economic status of women and providing high quality maternal health services accessible to all women. In Samoa there is a strong cultural system of assistance in childbirth (30%) provided by the community through traditional birth attendants (TBAs) whose role in Samoa has been retained and encouraged through the Ministry of Health with the provision of training to register TBAs. The safe motherhood program in Samoa consists of the combined efforts of the MOH and its coordination in terms of quality and safe care with the National Health Service, NGOs, Private Practitioners and TBAs.²²

A focus of the Ministry of Health now is ensuring that protocols and standards of care and safe practice are maintained and periodically reviewed, ensuring that there is continuing appropriate professional education as well as collection and analysis of data to enable review and monitoring of safe health systems.²³

²¹ Ministry of Health, 2009, Updates provided for this questionnaire.

²² *ibid.*

²³ *ibid.*

A series of Government of Samoa and UNFPA funded Maternal/Reproductive and Sexual Health Programs were implemented from 1996 until present focusing on improving obstetrics training of relevant health personnel, building capacity of Faculty of Nursing & Health Science regarding the delivery of the midwifery training, and the improvement of linkages between the formal public and the private health sectors including the traditional healers and the TBAs. A National Adolescent and Reproductive Health Program funded by UNFPA and the MOH targeting youth including young women of childbearing age started in 2001 up until present.

A Draft TBA Guidelines have been developed recently in consultation with TBAs from Upolu and Savaii. This guideline aims at ensuring safe practice and care as well as strengthening collaboration between TBAs and modern midwives.

Reviews of the Safe Motherhood Policy, Nutrition Policy, and Breastfeeding Policy are in the pipeline with the development of a Reproductive Health Policy and Strategy underway. Further to that is the review of the HIV/AIDS Policy which is in its final stage.

One of the main areas of ensuring safe practice is the credentialing system that is a mechanism to assess and recognize the competency and capability of nurses to practice as Clinical Nurse Consultants & Midwives as Clinical Midwifery Consultants, particularly in health centers and district hospitals in rural areas. The credentialing system for Nursing & Midwifery Practice is in place.²⁴

Maternal health is also a key priority area considered under the National Women's Policy and Plan of Action coordinated and implemented by the MWCSO. Antenatal and post-natal care for all eligible women in Samoa is free of charge at all public health facilities.

Ongoing efforts to **strengthen and improve primary health care services and health promotion and preventive programmes** included a variety of activities, such as workshops addressing non communicable diseases, baby and child health and nutrition, adolescent health, maternal health (including early detection of cervical and breast cancer) and care of the elderly. Immunization programs for tuberculosis, diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, poliomyelitis, hepatitis, measles and rubella aimed at achieving more than 95% coverage. Effective use of the media for health awareness programs was supported through training workshops for staff and stakeholders; and environmental health services legislation was enforced. The effectiveness of preventive programmes was monitored, reviewed and evaluated.²⁵

Human resource development efforts focused primarily on current working conditions and incentives for medical personnel, which were reviewed during the doctors' strike in September 2005. There is an acknowledged need for improvements to retain doctors and attract overseas doctors and specialists to cover the skills shortage. Undergraduate and postgraduate training continued with donor support, as did the visitations by medical specialists in such fields as urology, cardiology, surgery, orthopaedic, ophthalmology and psychiatry. Training of nurses, which make up the largest health workforce at the National

²⁴ Ministry of Health 2009, Updates provided for this questionnaire.

²⁵ Ministry of Finance, 2008 Strategy for the Development of Samoa 2008-2012.

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.²⁶

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.²⁷

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.²⁸

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.²⁹

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 led to the development of a communication strategy for the MOH (2006) and the fashioning of the postgraduate diploma in Health Management mentioned above. Assistance from the AusAID-funded Samoa Health project enabled the Ministry of Health to carry out in collaboration with the National Health Service a comprehensive review of procurement processes in FY2007. Procurement was seen as a vulnerable area that urgently needed

²⁶ *ibid.*p11.

²⁷ *ibid.* P12.

²⁸ *ibid*

²⁹ *ibid*

strengthening. The recommendations and findings of that review are being used by the National Health Services to strengthen its procurement of drugs and medical supplies.³⁰

Work continued in the area of health statistics with the establishment in 2006 of a Principal Health Data Manager position, and with ongoing efforts to strengthen and upgrade the Patient Information System, as well as the establishment of a community health information system to capture quantitative data on health services carried out in communities and outside hospitals by National Health Service health staff such as immunisation services and others.

The Ministry of Health is now establishing a system to collect health related data from the rapidly increasing private sector to obtain more complete information on the health status of all the people in Samoa as well as the demand for health care provided by the private sector.

It is regionally recognized that in small developing island countries like Samoa, without strong medical resources, nurses and midwives work in isolation from doctors and other medical professions and so require additional skills and recognition in order to work or teach how such professional practice at an independent level should occur.

Within the health sector in Samoa, it is recognized that in order to achieve higher levels of care for safe motherhood and care for young children, credentialing of nurses and midwives requires strong partnerships between the medical profession and the NUS Faculty of Nursing and Health Science. The potential to further develop the Oceania University of Medicine Samoa (OUMS) to be able to assist in credentialing of nurses as well as doctors, other medical professions is another avenue that is recognized.

Breast and cervical cancer are emerging areas of concern for women in Samoa.³¹ The biggest impact in reducing rates is through encouragement of pap smears and breast screening for early detection. A National cervical screening program is required as well as the initiation of well women's check ups, which include pap smears and breast screen. At the moment, pap smears are done every Wednesdays up at the TTM Maternity Ward and are done on a daily basis at the Samoa Family Health Association. These tests including STIs and HIV/AIDS are also conducted at the Antenatal Clinic in Motootua.³²

C. Lessons learned and successful interventions.

As of above.

D. VIOLENCE AGAINST 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 4th World Conference or other contexts?)

A Domestic Violence Policy has been drafted. Work on a Domestic Violence Bill for Samoa is also under way.

³⁰ Ibid, p12

³¹ Draft National Policy for Women 2007-2017.

³² Ministry of Health 2009, Update provided for this questionnaire.

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.³³ 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 53rd 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.³⁴

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 development of a Community Facilitation Package on Violence Against Women. This package is modelled on the Community Facilitation Package on Child Protection which was developed under the AusAID funded Pacific Children's Programme. The Facilitation Package builds on the strengths of communities to promote prevention of Violence in families and communities. The Package works to facilitate learning and understanding of issues surrounding violence as well as the identification of the strengths and positive practices within communities that promote the prevention of violence. It engages

³³ Division for Women, MWCSO 2009.

³⁴ *ibid.*

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

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 4th World Conference or other contexts?)

Participation of women in the economy continues to be supported by national level and village based programmes. Women's village based groups continue to demand the village based Skills Building Programme for the purposes of facilitating income generating initiatives for unemployed women. This Skills Building Programme is further supported and sustained by the micro finance programmes that now exist and are also village based. The more successful micro finance scheme is the one by the South Pacific Business Development Company that now has over 4,000 clients utilising this scheme to fund economic development projects.³⁵ A more recent attempt led by government through assistance from the Asian Development Bank now also provides micro financing for village women and again it is an opportunity to support the Skills Building Training that a lot of the village unemployed women have participated in. Other support services available also include the work of Women in Business although they have a much smaller coverage compared to the South Pacific Business Development Programme.

The above said programmes have made a difference in the lives of unemployed but economically active women who are not making a visible contribution to the economy

³⁵ Interview with South Pacific Business Development Personnel, 2009.

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 Act³⁶ 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 MAKING

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 4th World Conference or other contexts?)

³⁶ Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Labour 2009, Updates for the CEDAW Partnership.

Issues of women in power and decision making are being addressed in the National Plan of Action for Women 2008-2012. More Women and more young women also have taken up leadership positions in government Ministries and bodies. This shows a shift in attitudes and mindsets of decision makers as consideration of leadership and decision making by women is increasingly recognised.

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

- Attitudes and beliefs on the gendered roles of women.
- Attitudes of women themselves about their gendered roles and the implications on women taking up leadership roles and positions of power.

C. Lessons learned and successful interventions.

As of above.

I. HUMAN RIGHTS 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 4th World Conference or other contexts?)

A Draft National Policy for Women 2007-2017 is ready for submission to Cabinet for their endorsement. This document provides the overall direction for gender equality and empowerment of women in Samoa in line with CEDAW, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Pacific Platform for Action.

This policy provides for the first time a framework for the work on the advancement of women at all levels and bringing Samoa closer to realizing its ultimate goal encompassed in the vision of the Strategy for the Development of Samoa 2008-2012 which is **“Improved Quality of Life for ALL”** through **“Ensuring sustainable economic and social progress”**.³⁷

The National Policy on Women is developed in the context of eliminating all forms of discrimination against women in Samoa, in all areas and in different circumstances as appropriate in accordance with the Constitution of Samoa and regional and international instruments in which Samoa is a party to. The ultimate goal of this policy is **“To ensure that all women of Samoa have access to and utilization of ALL opportunities for an improved quality of life”**.³⁸

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

Obstacles encountered in promoting women’s human rights relates to attitudes and beliefs and the gendered role of women in Samoa. These continue to have negative implications on the exercise and realisation of women’s human rights. There is also a need to amend existing legislations in order to strengthen protection and application of women’s human rights in Samoa in line with its regional and international obligations.

³⁷ Draft National Policy for Women 2007-2017.

³⁸ *ibid.*

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 4th 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.³⁹

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 4th 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

³⁹ Ministry of Communication and Information Technology 2009, Information provided for this questionnaire.

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.

Efforts of the Disaster Advisory Committee through the Disaster Management Office at involving communities in particular community women at designing disaster management and disaster risk reduction strategies is also one of the developments in this area that is worth mentioning. These efforts are building on the Family and Community Wellbeing Programme driven by the Ministry of Women and it is an opportunity to explore and address the gender implications of disasters and climate change with communities. The good thing about this attempt to bring on board communities and in particular women in this process is the focus on building women's capacities to understand how these aspects of the environment affects them and how they can respond to not just through disaster risk reduction strategies but through their participation and involvement in the recovery processes in the aftermath of any disaster.

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

The vulnerability of Samoa to the impacts of climate change and sea level rise is a serious concern because 70% of its population and infrastructure are located on low lying coastal areas (SPREP,1994). Samoa's economy largely depends on its natural resources, which rely on good stable climatic conditions for growth and sustenance.⁴⁰

Evidence of growth in vector borne and water borne diseases reconfirms the already changing climate and the impact it has on the health sector. Climate Change and climate variability will favor conditions for the occurrence and spread of these diseases. Other health impacts would result from the impacts on ecological and social systems. These impacts would include changes in local food production and under nutrition, and various health consequences of population displacement and economic disruption.⁴¹

Forest and trees are, if anything, more important to island states like Samoa for their role in watershed management, environmental protection, provision of wood and non-timber resources, and as a reserve of biodiversity. Forests are under stress due to clearing for agriculture and shelter and the visits by Tropical Cyclones. Forest protection is to be promoted to conserve our indigenous species and maintain biodiversity habitats for our existence (MNRE NAPA).⁴²

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.⁴³

⁴⁰ Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA) 2004.

⁴¹ *ibid.*

⁴² *ibid*

⁴³ *ibid*

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.⁴⁴

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.⁴⁵

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.⁴⁶

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 4th 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

⁴⁴ *ibid.*

⁴⁵ *ibid.*

⁴⁶ *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 together all the government and non government organizations whose organizational focuses were on the different articles of the CEDAW.

The CEDAW Partnership Committee is chaired by the MWCSD and membership include the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture, Public Service Commission, Office of the Attorney General, Ministry of Justice and Courts Administration, Ministry of Police and Correctional Services, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Labour and Samoa Land Corporation. NGOs include the National Council of Women, Inailau Women's Leadership Network, Mapusaga o Aiga (Family Haven), Samoa Women's Committees Development Organization, Samoa Public Servants Association, Women in Business Development Inc, Samoa Registered Nurses Association, Samoa Association of Women Graduates and Samoa Victims Support Group.

In 2005, the MWCSD in collaboration with the CEDAW Partnership developed the Draft National Policy for Women 2007-2017 through a series of consultations and participatory processes. In 2007 a National Plan of Action for the implementation of this Policy document was developed also by the MWCSD in collaboration with the CEDAW Partnership and is now ready for submission to Cabinet for their endorsement. These documents were developed in addition to the ongoing and existing programmes and activities that each of the member organizations is responsible for in line with their organizations' respective focuses.

Further to institutional mechanisms since 2004 there is now a National Government Women Representatives Network. These are village based positions nominated by the Women's Committees from each of the traditional villages. Their role is the coordination of programme implementation, monitoring and evaluation at village level. There is a total of 188 Government Women Representatives and they are responsible to the MWCSD through a Performance Management System that was designed for them. While these Government Women Representatives are paid less than their male counterparts in the villages, the important thing is there is now such a position which recognizes the important role of women in leading village based developments. Personnel costs for the work on the advancement of women within the MWCDS also include costs for these Government Women Representatives.

Similar to the village based Government Women Representatives, there was also a Women's Advisory Committee which consisted of representatives from selected villages. This Advisory body is a policy making forum and given the existence of the Government Women Representatives, the composition of the Women's Advisory Committee will change and will bring on board national level representation from both the Government and Non Government Organizations working on women's issues.

In terms of resources, the total budget for the MWCSO for the 2008/2009 financial year is a total of \$5,869,325. The total budget allocation for the operations and implementation of the advancement of women activities is 18% of this amount. 79% of this amount is personnel costs while the rest is operating costs. Transactions on behalf of the state that the Ministry is also responsible for is \$1,676,386. Transactions specifically for the advancement of women is approximately 8% of this amount. These costs all come from the domestic budget.

Since 2007, a UNFPA funded Gender Based Violence Project began and is housed with the MWCSO. The total budget for this assistance comes to about \$400,000. Apart from this project, there is very little available financial assistance from the international community on the work on the advancement of women in Samoa. Assistance that is provided is often very minimal and is only made available upon request and sometimes there is no financial assistance available at all.

b. Have focal points for gender equality and empowerment of women been established within line ministries, and in which ministries? What support is provided from within the ministries? What support (training, advice, etc) is provided by the national machinery? How effective are these focal points?

The establishment of gender focal points is one of the things that we are proposing in the National Plan of Action for Women 2008-2012.⁴⁷ Before this happens, we see very much the representatives of each of the organizations in the CEDAW Partnership forum as the gender focal points at this stage. The support available for these gender focal points include training and technical advice from the MWCSO where needed. We also see the role of the gender focal points to be pushing for the inclusion of CEDAW activities in the context of their organization in their Organization's budget. These activities are based on the National Plan of Action for Women 2008-2012.

c. What monitoring mechanisms have been established to measure progress in implementation –in relation to national policies, strategies and action plans as well as international commitment? How is accountability for promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women established across all ministries? How is coordination achieved? What role does the highest level of government play?

There is now a National Plan of Action for the Advancement of Women in Samoa 2008-2012. This Plan provides a Framework for tracking progress made in the priority areas on the advancement of women for Samoa. The work of the CEDAW Partnership also provides a forum for obtaining updates to monitor what actions are being taken by the different government Ministries and the women NGOs to implement the different areas of CEDAW. The National Plan of Action for Women is implemented through a series of annual plans and this annual planning coincides with the national annual budgeting process. This is strategy to ensure that all the relevant government Ministries are indeed budgeting for the achievement of CEDAW targets in their respective Ministry budgets. This is the first year this process of incorporating CEDAW activities into the line Ministry budgets has been formalised with the availability of the National Plan of Action for Women. Otherwise, we had in the past encouraged our government partners and NGOs to cost some of the CEDAW activities where relevant in their budgets in line with their organization's respective

⁴⁷ Draft National Plan of Action for the Advancement of Women 2008-2012.

focuses. Coordination for this work is done through the MWCSO at the CEDAW Partnership Committee level.

d. What levels of capacity for promoting gender mainstreaming have been achieved? Through which mechanisms? What are the remaining challenges in the area of capacity building?

Levels of capacity for promoting gender mainstreaming has been achieved through the ad hoc training programmes that relevant staff have been able to attend. These trainings have provided staff with the basic information to promote and push for gender mainstreaming where appropriate. Attempts at gender mainstreaming have been through the national planning processes, the national budgeting processes and the sectoral planning processes. These are opportunities where the staff of the MWCSO have taken the lead to promote and push for gender mainstreaming in line with the Ministry's mandates. There remains to be challenges in this area. There is little or no consistency in terms of sustaining the knowledge on gender mainstreaming. There is also still some resistance to the process and it comes down to the need for training and capacity building. Resistance is often caused by a lack of and limited knowledge of the issues of gender mainstreaming and more generally what gender mainstreaming is about and so without the proper training the process of gender mainstreaming will continue to be undermined at all levels.

e. Has a core set of indicators been established and where is responsibility for monitoring located? What gaps and challenges remain in relation to data and statistics? In which areas is lack of sex-disaggregation still a problem? In which areas do new types of data need to be collected? To what extent are the national statistical office and the statistical units in line ministries aware, committed and capable of providing the required data? In which sectors and to what extent, is sex-disaggregated data being used effectively to inform policy-making and planning?

The National Plan of Action for the Advancement of Women adopts a Results Based Approach and by use of this approach, some indicators have been developed to monitor progress and what changes have been achieved over the 5 years of implementing this plan. Monitoring for these indicators remains with the MWCSO as the national focal point for CEDAW.

In terms of what gaps and challenges exist in relation to data and statistics, there continues to be a missing link between data, policy development and programme design and interventions. Related to this is also the need for the MWCSO to work a lot more closely with the Bureau of Statistics in order to facilitate better data collection that the MWCSO as users can use for policy development and planning purposes. There is a big improvement in the availability of sex Disaggregated data. The challenge is the absence and limited availability of the gender analysis of this sex disaggregated data which then produce the gender disaggregated data that is required to inform policies and strategic planning. There is a need for the national women's machinery to work closely with the national statistics office to ensure that they as data producers are producing data that the national women's machineries as users can use and need to use.

There is a general understanding that all policies and plans are to be informed by the relevant data of the situation analysis in the various sectors. This is the case in the areas of Health and Education where there are centralised data systems which then inform strategic planning and policy development. In the case of the National Women's Machinery on the other hand

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 also part of the Delegation that went to New York to answer to the first CEDAW Report in 2005.

PART 4:

Provide information on the remaining key challenges and constraints in the reporting state as well as any plans for future actions and initiatives to address these and to ensure full implementation of the Platform for Action in each of the critical areas of concern. Reporting states are encouraged in particular to indicate any new commitments they will make to accelerate implementation of the Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly at national level over the next 5 years.

a. List any further actions and initiatives which the Government intends to take to fully implement the Platform for Action and outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly beyond 2010.

Government is in the process of reviewing its legislations now that the Executive Director for the Law Reform Commission is on board. The review of the legislations related to women will be done in the context of the Legislative Compliance Reviews that have been undertaken on CEDAW and CRC against Samoa's legislation.

b. Describe the priority areas that have been identified for improving implementation in the next 5 years.

Priorities for women identified to be addressed in the National Plan of Action for Women 2008-2012 include:

1. Strengthening national mechanisms for the empowerment of women and girls;
2. Elimination of Gender Based Violence;
3. Increasing participation of women in decision making;
4. Increasing participation of women in economic and social development;
5. Improving the Health Status of Women.

c. Give examples of measures with targets and timeframes which will be taken in each of these areas.

1. Strengthening national mechanisms for the empowerment of women and girls;

Outcome:

1.1. Women are increasingly protected by the availability, application and enforcement of relevant policies and legislations

Output:

1.1.1. Women are better protected through the amendment of relevant legislations in line with the CEDAW and CRC Legislative Compliance Reviews.

Indicators:

1) Proportion of proposed amendments endorsed by Parliament.

Target: 50% of proposed amendments endorsed by Parliament.

Domestic Violence Bill

- Sexual Harassment Regulations
- Maternity Benefits under Labour & Employment Act
- Review of Child Labour provisions under Labour and Employment Act
- Enforcement of Compulsory Education Act

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.