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A GENDER INCLUSIVE PRIVATE SECTOR FRAMEWORK FOR THE PACIFIC

SOLOMON ISLANDS COUNTRY ASSESSMENT

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In this publication, \$ = United States dollar unless otherwise specified. SI\$ = Solomon Islands dollar.

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ii. ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	-	Asian Development Bank
ASGIP	-	Agriculture Sector Growth Strategy and Investment Plan (Solomon Islands)
BPA	-	Beijing Platform for Action
CEDAW	-	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
DBSI	-	Development Bank of Solomon Islands
ECD	-	Early Childhood Development
EIU	-	E-commerce Implementation Unit
GDP	-	gross domestic product
GEWD	-	Gender Equality and Women's Development
GIPS framework	-	Gender-Inclusive Private Sector framework
ICT	-	information and communication technology
ILO	-	International Labour Organization
LMU	-	Labour Mobility Unit (Solomon Islands)
MAL	-	Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (Solomon Islands)
MCILI	-	Ministry of Commerce, Industry, Labour and Immigration (Solomon Islands)
MDPAC	-	Ministry of Development Planning and Aid Coordination (Solomon Islands)
MFMR	-	Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (Solomon Islands)
MSME	-	micro, small and medium enterprise
MWYCFA	-	Ministry of Women, Youth, Children, and Family Affairs (Solomon Islands)
NFIT	-	National Financial Inclusion Taskforce
NSEEWG	-	National Strategy for Economic Empowerment of Women & Girls
NSO	-	National Statistics Office (Solomon Islands)
NWFIP	-	National Women's Financial Inclusion Policy (Solomon Islands)
PPA	-	Pacific Platform for Action on Gender Equality
PSDI	-	Pacific Private Sector Development Initiative
SICCI	-	Solomon Islands Chamber of Commerce and Industry
SINPF	-	Solomon Islands National Provident Fund
SITESA	-	Solomon Islands Tertiary Education and Skills Authority
SIWIBA	-	Solomon Islands Women In Business Association
STEM	-	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
UN Women	-	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNCDF	-	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNDP	-	United Nations Development Programme
WAES	-	Women Agricultural Extension Services

1. INTRODUCTION

The private sector plays a crucial role in fostering economic growth and development. It is increasingly recognized that a gender-inclusive private sector is essential for sustainable and equitable progress. The Pacific Private Sector Development Initiative (PSDI) works with Pacific governments and private sector actors to promote an enabling environment that supports gender-inclusive private sector development and recognizes the valuable contribution of women as employees, consumers, entrepreneurs, and leaders, across all facets of the private sector.

To facilitate this work, PSDI has developed a comprehensive Gender-Inclusive Private Sector (GIPS) framework, to assess the level of gender inclusivity within the private sector enabling environment in the Pacific. The GIPS framework was developed through extensive literature review, consultations with stakeholders, and assessment of existing frameworks and relevant available data.

Great strides have been made in the Pacific over the past decade to address barriers to gender-inclusive private sector development, including through legislative and policy reforms. These reforms have included streamlining business registration and licensing processes, including through the introduction of online platforms, and have increased accessibility to services and information for women in rural and remote areas. Notably, many Pacific countries have enacted legislation and regulations to improve women's access to credit and capital by introducing secured transactions frameworks and alternative assessments of creditworthiness.

Building upon an analysis of the legal, structural, and cultural barriers that impede women's participation and advancement within the private sector, the proposed framework consists of seven dimensions (Figure 1). These dimensions serve as entry points for establishing an enabling environment that supports gender-inclusive private sector development.

The proposed framework serves as a checklist for Pacific governments to evaluate their progress in creating an enabling environment that supports gender-inclusive private sector development. It assesses the existence of conditions necessary to enable and support women's economic participation and advancement. Specifically, it prompts governments to assess whether they have taken the required steps to generate a policy, legal, regulatory, and institutional context that fosters equal participation and opportunity for women and men in the private sector.

While this framework has been developed for use across Pacific countries, it is essential to acknowledge the different levels of economic development within the region. Some conditions supporting gender-inclusive private sector development may be feasible across most, if not all, Pacific countries, while others may only be realistic within the region's larger, more developed economies.

The country-level framework assessment For Solomon Islands, summarised in Table 1, was compiled based on a thorough review of publicly available sources, including legislation, policy, and strategy documents, as well as government reports. Additionally, valuable insights were provided by Pacific government officials to supplement desk-based research, ensuring the accuracy and relevance of PSDI's country-level assessments.

By employing this framework and assessment, Pacific governments can gauge their progress and identify areas that require further attention and improvement in creating a gender-inclusive private sector enabling environment. This assessment will contribute to the ongoing efforts to empower women economically and drive sustainable development in the Pacific region.

Figure 1: The Gender-Inclusive Private Sector Framework



Source: Pacific Private Sector Development Initiative.

Table 1: Solomon Islands Framework Assessment Summary

Dimension	Entry Point and Assessment
1. GENDER EQUALITY CONTEXT	Constitution
	Global gender equality commitments
	National gender equality policies and legislation
	Sex-disaggregated data
2. WORKPLACE ENVIRONMENT	Global labor conventions
	National labor legislation and policies
	Access to formal care services
3. BUSINESS ENABLING ENVIRONMENT	Business and/or company legislation
	Business registration
	Support to women entrepreneurs
	Engaging the informal economy
4. FINANCIAL INCLUSIONS AND ACCESS TO CAPITAL	Financial legislation and policy
	Access to capital
	Access to retirement funds
5. PARTICIPATION IN KEY ECONOMIC SECTORS	Sector policies and strategies
	Gender-responsive procurement
	E-commerce
	Trade policy and programs
6. TECHNOLOGY AND THE FUTURE OF WORK	Digital access, legislation, and policy
	Planning for the future of work
7. LEADERSHIP, VOICE, AND CONSUMER RIGHTS	Strategies for private sector leadership
	Voice in private sector policy and planning
	Promotion of consumer rights

Meets or exceeds framework assessment criteria

Partially meets framework assessment criteria

Does not meet assessment criteria or there is insufficient evidence to form an assessment

Source: Pacific Private Sector Development Initiative

2. PRIVATE SECTOR AND ECONOMY CONTEXT

Solomon Islands is an archipelago consisting of six major islands and more than 900 smaller islands. In 2019, it had a population of 720,956 people, with 49% women and 95% Melanesian (Government of Solomon Islands, National Statistics Office [NSO] 2023). The country is divided into nine provinces, with the capital city of Honiara having 18% of the population. There has been significant rural-urban migration to Honiara, resulting in a higher growth rate for the city (Government of Solomon Islands, NSO 2023).

Three-quarters of the population is under 30 years old (Government of Solomon Islands, NSO 2023), but education is not compulsory, and attainment rates are low, particularly for girls. In 2015, only 20% of girls completed junior secondary school, and 7% completed senior secondary school (Government of Solomon Islands, Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development 2017). Various factors, such as lack of basic facilities, safety risks, school fees, and high dropout rates due to pregnancy or marriage contribute to this situation (United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women [UN Women] 2022). However, the literacy rate among young women aged 15–24 is slightly higher than that of young men, with urban women having a higher literacy rate than rural women (Government of Solomon Islands, NSO 2023).

Solomon Islands is a patriarchal society with strict social hierarchies where men hold most leadership positions (Government of Australia, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade 2020 and Homan et al. 2019). Women have limited representation in the National Parliament and Provincial Assemblies, senior public service positions (UN Women 2022), and senior positions in both private and state-owned enterprises (Pacific Private Sector Development Initiative 2021). Despite some provinces having matrilineal property inheritance traditions, women's property rights and roles in land and resource management are often disregarded (Tavola et al. 2016).

The economy of Solomon Islands relies heavily on (i) the primary sector, with agriculture, fishing, and forestry accounting for about one-third of gross domestic product (GDP) (World Bank n.d.); and (ii) principal exports that generate revenues. The services sector contributes nearly 50% to GDP (ADB 2023a), including tourism that prior to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic accounted for about 10% of GDP and 10% of employment (International Finance Corporation 2021). The informal sector is estimated to contribute the equivalent of one-third to GDP. Since independence in 1978, GDP growth has generally been positive but highly variable, with periodic contractions because of political unrest, including as recently as 2021, and other unforeseen events such as the COVID-19 pandemic. The economy is recovering slowly, and annual GDP growth is predicted to be 2.5%–3.5% during 2023–2024 (International Monetary Fund 2023 and Asian Development Bank [ADB] 2023b).

As documented in the 2019 census (Government of Solomon Islands, NSO 2023), the labor force participation rate (LFPR) among working-age¹ Solomon Islanders was 55%, with a higher rate among men (59%) than among women (52%). In the decade from the 2009 census to the 2019 census (Government of Solomon Islands, NSO 2009), the size of the national labor force increased 30%, but the overall LFPR declined from the 2009 rate of 63%. During this period, the total number of economically active women increased 25%; this included a significant increase of 106% in urban areas and a modest increase of 8% in rural areas. The LFPR for urban women remained essentially the same (48%–49%), but rural women's LFPR dropped from 66% in 2009 to 54% in 2019. In addition to rural women migrating to urban areas, significant increases from 2009 to 2019 in the numbers of women not in the labor force in urban areas (114%) and rural areas (75%) appear to have contributed to the changes (or lack of changes) in women's labor force participation.

¹ Working age is defined in the 2019 census as people aged 12 years and older.

In 2019, the national unemployment rate (8%) resulted from higher unemployment in urban areas (12%) compared with rural areas (6%). These rates were significantly higher than the rates recorded in the 2009 census: 2% at the national level, 7% in urban areas, and 1% in rural areas. Throughout, unemployment rates for women and men were similar.

Based on 2019 census data (Government of Solomon Islands, NSO 2023), fewer than half of employed Solomon Islanders were paid workers (45%), including 66% of employed men and 34% of employed women. Paid work includes employees, employers and self-employed people working in the public, private, and civil society sectors.² Of employed urban women, 67% had paid work, 73% worked as employees, and 25% were self-employed. In rural communities, only 22% of employed women had paid work and 52% were self-employed. Women who are employers accounted for 2%–3% of women with paid work.

Per the 2019 census, the remaining 66% of employed women in Solomon Islands were engaged in unpaid work, compared with 45% of employed men. This included 33% of employed urban women and 78% of employed rural women. Women accounted overall for 55%–56% of unpaid family workers, unpaid workers producing goods for sale, and unpaid subsistence workers. In rural areas, 48% of employed women were engaged in unpaid subsistence work, compared with 34% of men.

A large majority of employment in Solomon Islands is in the informal sector (International Labour Organization 2023). Much of this employment is people engaged in agriculture, fisheries, forestry, and related activities (including subsistence work); this includes 74% of employed women and 58% of employed men (Government of Solomon Islands, NSO 2023). Women tend to be responsible for producing the majority of subsistence foods and also make up the vast majority of local market vendors, while men are more involved in the production, sale, and marketing of cash crops (Government of Australia, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade 2023).

Employment in nonagricultural activities, however, is predominantly in the formal sector, accounting for 25% of all employment (Government of Solomon Islands, NSO 2023). However, based on 2019 census data, only 19% of all employed women worked in the formal sector, compared with 31% of employed men. While this included 50% of employed urban women, it only included 8% of employed rural women. The remainder of working women (and men) were engaged in vulnerable work in the informal sector or in informal employment in the formal sector, without formal work arrangements or job security and, as noted above, often unpaid. For example, in 2013, nearly one-third of nonagricultural employment was classified as informal; in 2020, the Government of Solomon Islands reported that 85% of women relied on informal selling to generate income (UN Women 2022).

The low level of women's participation in the formal sector reflects cultural and gender norms that constrain women's roles and opportunities. Gender norms, particularly in rural areas, dictate that women's responsibilities revolve around unpaid care work and subsistence activities to ensure food security. Low education achievement limits the work opportunities of many women to poorly paid, non-skilled labor, largely in the informal sector. Many women also opt to work in the informal sector to better balance their economic activities with their family responsibilities. And within the formal sector, women frequently experience discrimination in obtaining work due to a shortage of jobs as well as discrimination in opportunities for advancement (Government of the United States, Department of State 2021). Data from 2012 demonstrate the significance of the gender pay gap in the Solomon Islands: women employed in the public sector earned 12% less than their male colleagues, while those in the private sector earned 62% less (ADB 2021). Further, the number of young Solomon Islanders that leave school and want to enter the labor market each year exceeds the limited number of available jobs in the formal sector (International Labour Organization 2023), leaving young people the choice of working in the informal sector or being unemployed.

² While available 2019 census data do not allow for disaggregation of paid work by public or private sector, in 2009, women held 25% of private sector and 36% of public sector wage jobs (UN Women 2022).

Women are underrepresented among business owners and operators in Solomon Islands. In 2020, 23% of business name owners were women,³ with most doing business in the entertainment and catering, insurance, health, retail and wholesale, and education sectors (Pacific Private Sector Development Initiative 2021). In a 2015 enterprise survey, 47% of firms had female participation in ownership, although the firms surveyed were limited to formal registered firms with five or more employees and at least 1% private ownership (World Bank 2015). Recent reforms to legislation, regulations, and procedures to establish, register, and operate a business that are more adaptable to the needs of women entrepreneurs would likely reveal (in updated surveys for formal and informal enterprises) an increased role for women entrepreneurs.

3 Multiple people can own a given business name, so these data do not necessarily equate to the proportion of businesses owned by women.

3. SOLOMON ISLANDS FRAMEWORK ASSESSMENT

Dimension 1: Gender Equality Context



- 1.1 Constitution
- 1.2 Global Gender Equality Commitments
- 1.3 National Gender Equality Policies and Legislation
- 1.4 Sex-disaggregated Data

1.1: Constitution

Assessment criteria

The constitution specifically prohibits discrimination based on sex and sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

Solomon Islands country assessment

Partially meets assessment criteria

The constitution prohibits discrimination based on sex but not sexual orientation and/or gender identity, and/or recognizes customary law as a valid source of law.

- **Relevant legislation and policy**

- The Constitution of Solomon Islands (1978)

Section 15 (1) of The Constitution of Solomon Islands (1978) establishes the prohibition against discrimination determining that ‘subject to the provisions of subsections (5), (6) and (9) of this section, no law shall make any provision that is discriminatory either itself or in its effect’. Section 15 (4) states “in this section the expression discriminatory means affording different treatment to different persons attributable wholly or mainly to their respective descriptions by race, place of origin, political opinion, colour, creed, or sex.”

While Article 15 of the Constitution prohibits laws that are discriminatory or have a discriminatory effect, there are many exemptions to this rule. Clause (5) of the same article provides that this anti-discriminatory provision does not apply to personal laws, including marriage, divorce, and inheritance; customary law; and land tenure, which adversely affect women (Asian Development Bank 2018). Customary law, and how it relates to land tenure, traditionally involves village chiefs, who are mostly men.

1.2: Global Gender Equality Commitments

Assessment criteria	Solomon Islands country assessment
<p>The government has ratified and/or is a signatory to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and has agreed to implement the commitments outlined in the Beijing Platform for Action (BPA), and Pacific Platform for Action (PPA).</p>	<p style="background-color: #92d050; padding: 5px;"><i>Meets or exceeds assessment criteria</i></p> <p>The government has ratified or is a signatory to CEDAW, BPA, and PPA; has agreed to implement the commitments outlined in the BPA and PPA; and has produced a national report (CEDAW or BPA) within the past 5 years.</p>

The Government of Solomon Islands has actively engaged in fulfilling its commitments to key global gender equality conventions. Notably, the government acceded to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in May 2002. It has submitted several periodic reports, including the combined initial, second, and third report in 2013 (United Nations CEDAW 2013). In addition, an NGO Shadow Report, led by the National Council of Women and the Women’s Rights Action Movement, provided an alternative assessment for the period from 2002 to 2014 (Christian Care Centre et al n.d.).

The government’s commitment to CEDAW continued with the submission of a follow-up report in 2017, addressing the CEDAW Concluding Observations report (United Nations CEDAW 2017). In June 2023, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women issued a list of issues and questions, as part of ongoing monitoring. The report highlighted key concerns, including temporary special measures, women’s involvement in peace and security, and the allocation of resources for gender equality work at various administrative levels. The government will respond to these questions as part of a combined report that is currently under development.

Solomon Islands endorsed the BPA at the Fourth World Conference of Women in 1995. The government has submitted country reports for previous reviews, such as the [Beijing +25 National Review Report](#) for the 2014-2019 period. While a report for the B+20 review was not submitted, a national review on the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action, along with outcomes from the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, was submitted in May 2014.

Lastly, the Ministry of Women, Youth, Children, and Family Affairs (MWYCFA) responded to a survey in 2005 as part of its engagement with the Pacific Platform for Action (PPA) and is engaged in regional gender equality mechanisms and forums.

1.3: National Gender Equality Policies and Legislation

Assessment criteria	Solomon Islands country assessment
<p>The government has a dedicated ministry or department for gender equality and women’s empowerment and has adopted policies and/or legislation on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gender equality, • gender-based violence, and • women’s economic empowerment. <p>In addition, there is evidence that policy and/or legislation is being implemented, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • resources, such as budget and/or staff, are allocated towards the policy implementation, • a monitoring and evaluation framework is in place, and • review and/or reporting on implementation progress is undertaken. 	<p><i>Meets or exceeds assessment criteria</i></p> <p>The government has a dedicated ministry or department for gender equality and women’s empowerment, has adopted policies and/or legislation in each area, and there is evidence that policy and/or legislation is being implemented.</p>

- **Relevant legislation and policy**

- [National Gender Equality and Women’s Development Policy 2016–2020](#)
- [The Family Protection Act 2014](#)
- [Solomon Islands Domestic Violence Counselling Guidelines](#)
- [National SAFENET Standard Operating Procedures](#)
- [The National Strategy for Economic Empowerment of Women & Girls 2020–2023](#)

- **Gender equality**

The [Ministry of Women, Youth, Children & Family Affairs \(MWYCFA\)](#) is a dedicated ministry for gender equality and is committed to upholding, promoting, protecting, and fulfilling the rights of women, youths, children, and families in Solomon Islands. The ministry’s objectives include advancing gender equality and enhancing women’s development by ensuring the active contribution and meaningful participation of both Solomon Islands women and men in all spheres and at all levels of development and decision-making.

There is a national gender equality policy currently in place for 2022–2027. The policy was revised, reviewed, and approved by cabinet in July 2023.

- **Gender-based violence**

The [Family Protection Act 2014](#) was enacted by the National Parliament of Solomon Islands to provide for the protection of families from domestic violence and to promote the safety, health, and wellbeing of victims of domestic violence. The act prohibits conducts or threats of such conduct committed by a person against another person, including physical, sexual, psychological, and economic abuse. It defines the types of relationships in which domestic violence can occur and provides options for women to take out Police Safety Notices and Protection Orders, pursue court cases, and obtain other services such as counselling. The act has led to increased awareness

and understanding of family violence among service providers, communities, and individuals. It has also led to improved coordination among service providers, increased access to services for survivors of family violence, and improved data collection and monitoring of family violence cases.

Since it commenced, a range of actors have been working to implement the varied provisions of the Family Protection Act. A 2019 report, *Women's experiences of family violence in the Solomon Islands*, analyses the implementation and monitoring of the Family Protection Act 2014 (Ride and Soaki 2019). It highlights achievements such as increased awareness of family violence, improved coordination among service providers, enhanced access to police services, and improved data collection and monitoring.

In December 2020, the *Report of the review of the implementation of the Solomon Islands Family Protection Act 2014* was published (Gibbs 2020). This report showcases community action against domestic violence, increased awareness, significant progress in implementation, ongoing challenges, recommendations for the future, and optimistic about a domestic violence-free Solomon Islands.

Additionally, there are guidelines and manuals to prevent and address gender-based violence, including the [Solomon Islands Domestic Violence Counselling Guidelines](#) and [National SAFENET Standard Operating Procedures](#). These documents provide guidance and procedures for various aspects of addressing domestic violence.

- **Economic empowerment of women**

The [National Strategy for Economic Empowerment of Women & Girls 2020–2023](#) (NSEEWG) is a key outcome of the Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs' National Gender Equality and Women's Development Policy 2016–2020. The strategy builds on the first national strategy which was first implemented from 2015–2019. The 2015–2019 strategy was reviewed in 2020 to assess its effectiveness across its five strategic focus areas. A new 2020–2023 strategy was then developed to address the gaps and areas for improvement identified through the review of the 2015–2019 strategy, and pave the way for women and girls in Solomon Islands to realize their economic potential.

The NSEEWG 2022–2023 includes specific actions, targets, and timeframes across its key strategic focus areas, as follows:

- (i) Supporting gender mainstreaming as an approach to working with the whole of government.
- (ii) Addressing financial inclusion especially targeting the informal sector.
- (iii) Enterprise development and improved employment opportunities.
- (iv) Creating an enabling environment through legislation and policy changes.
- (v) Institutional strengthening of Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs.

The strategy is scheduled for review in 2024. The review process will involve several important steps including discussions at the provincial level and in Honiara, as well as talks with communities and provincial governments. In early 2024, the revised strategy will go through a standard validation process and receive approval from the cabinet, following established procedures.

- **Monitoring and evaluation framework**

There is no existing monitoring and evaluation framework for the Gender Equality and Women's Development (GEWD) Policy for 2016–2020. The planned development of the GEWD policy for 2021–2027 has been postponed until 2024.

- **Budget**

Each policy lacks a designated budget. Instead, two primary budget categories are mentioned:

- **Recurrent Budget (Annual Budget):** This allocation covers the administrative expenses associated with running the Ministry of Women, Youth, Children & Family Affairs (MWYCFA).
- **Implementation Budget:** Funds allocated under this category, including grants like Women's Assistance Grants and National Women's Grants, are reserved for the execution of specific policies. However, funding in this category is reported to be minimal.

- **Staffing**

MWYCFA currently employs seven dedicated staff members, who are responsible for various policies and initiatives.

1.4: Sex-disaggregated Data

Assessment criteria	Solomon Islands country assessment
<p>The government has systems in place to support gender-inclusive private sector policy and planning including the collection, analysis, and report of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> sex-disaggregated data on labour force participation, sex-disaggregated data on employment status, and sex-disaggregated data on micro, small and medium enterprise (MSME) ownership. 	<p style="background-color: #92d050;">Meets or exceeds assessment criteria</p> <p>The government collects, analyzes, and reports sex-disaggregated data for all data points outlined in the assessment criteria and the data is publicly available.</p>

- Labor force participation**

The 2019 Solomon Islands Census includes sex disaggregated data on labour force and economic activity. Data on the labour force in Solomon Islands is disaggregated by various factors such as age, location, and occupation. The data disaggregated for sector is categorised under employment (employed persons in major industries by urban-rural area and sex).

- Employment status**

The 2019 census data for Solomon Islands offers a comprehensive view of employment and unemployment. It covers age, gender, payment status, types of employment, major occupations, education levels, major industries, and province distribution. Unemployment data includes age, urban and/or rural areas, provinces, educational attainment, official and expanded unemployment rates, and youth unemployment rates.

Additionally, the data distinguishes between the formal and informal sectors, with breakdowns by urban and/or rural areas, age, and gender. It also highlights gender-specific and location-specific information. Overall, this dataset is a valuable resource for understanding employment dynamics in Solomon Islands.

- MSME ownership**

Data on business ownership, disaggregated by factors such as sector and location, is collected by the Business Registrar (Company Haus), which is part of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry, Labour and Immigration. Sex-disaggregated data is available on company directors, shareholders, and business name owners, and is further disaggregated by sector and location. According to the latest data from Company Haus (provided to the authors), women comprise 25% of company directors, 27% of company shareholders and 28% of business name owners. This data will be publicly available from 2024.

Dimension 2: Workplace Environment



- 2.1 Global Labor Conventions
- 2.2 National Labor Legislation and Policies
- 2.3 Access to Formal Care Services

2.1: Global Labor Conventions

Assessment criteria	Solomon Islands country assessment
<p>The government has ratified fundamental labor conventions. including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equal Remuneration Convention 1951 (No. 100), • Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention 1958 (No. 111), • Workers with Family Responsibilities (No. 156), and • Violence and Harassment Convention 2019 (No. 190). 	<p>Partially meets assessment criteria</p> <p>The government has ratified fundamental labor conventions including at least one of the conventions listed in the assessment criteria.</p>

The Government of Solomon Islands has ratified 8 of the 10 fundamental labor conventions including two of the four conventions included in the GIPS framework evaluation criteria:

- Equal Remuneration Convention 1951 (No. 100). Ratified in April 2012.
- Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention 1958 (No. 111). Ratified in April 2012.

The Government of Solomon Islands has not ratified the Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention (No. 156) or the Violence and Harassment Convention 2019 (No. 190).

It should be noted that ratification of global conventions brings reporting requirements that smaller countries find difficult to manage and this contributes to decisions on whether to ratify additional global conventions.

2.2: National Labor Legislation and Policies

Assessment criteria	Solomon Islands country assessment
<p>The government has adopted national legislation and/or policy (that covers the private sector) on two or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • non-discrimination in employment based on sex, • equal remuneration, • paid maternity leave, • paid parental and/or family leave, • protection against sexual harassment in the workplace, and/or • gender-based violence in the workplace. <p>In addition, there is evidence that policy and/or legislation is being implemented, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • resources , such as budget and staff, have been allocated for implementation; • a monitoring and evaluation framework is in place; and/or • review or reporting on implementation is undertaken. 	<p>Partially meets assessment criteria</p> <p>The government has adopted national legislation and/or policy in at least one of the areas outlined in the assessment criteria. There is evidence that policy and/or legislation is being implemented or is in place for these areas, but it applies only to the public sector.</p>

- **Relevant legislation and policy**

- [Labour Act 1996](#)
- [Employment Act 1996](#)

The [Labour Act](#) and the [Employment Act](#) are the primary labor laws of Solomon Islands. The Labour Act (Chapter 75) is a comprehensive legislation that covers various aspects of labour and employment relations, such as wages and hours of work, minimum wage, and the employment of women (Part VI). The Employment Act (Chapter 72) only applies to a specific category of employee. It covers those not employed by the government, casual workers, domestic servants, and those not employed in agriculture or fishing and outlines specific provisions, including those relating to redundancy payments and pension benefits for those employees.

The government has sought technical support from the International Labour Organization to conduct a review of the country’s labor laws, encompassing the Labour Act and Employment Act. This review aims to ensure alignment with international standards and the objectives outlined in the National Development Strategy 2016-2025, as well as to tackle labor market issues and challenges effectively.

- **Discrimination in employment**

The Labour Act states that “no employer shall discriminate against any worker on the grounds of sex.” However, the same legislation also prohibits women from working at night (Section 39) and working in underground mines (Section 40).

- **Equal pay for work of equal value**

No applicable provisions located although Solomon Islands has ratified the global convention on equal pay (see assessment of framework entry point 2.1, page 13)

- **Maternity, paternity, and parental and/or family leave**

There is a legal requirement for employers to provide maternity leave in Solomon Islands. According to the Labour Act of Solomon Islands, women are entitled to a minimum of 12 weeks of maternity leave. During this period, women’s employment cannot be terminated, although they can be fired if they are unable to return to work after the designated maternity leave period. The law mandates that women receive not less than 25% of their normal wage during their maternity leave.

- **Sexual harassment in the workplace**

No applicable provisions located. However, some private sector organization have policies and guidelines in place such as Solomon Airlines, Soltuna, and Solomon Water.

- **Gender-based violence in the workplace**

The Family Protection Act (FPA) applies to the workplace only within the context of spouses working together in the same workplace. In cases involving strangers, a different set of laws applies. Under the FPA, there is a requirement for family relations to be established for its provisions to take effect.

2.3: Access to Formal Care Services

Assessment criteria	Solomon Islands country assessment
<p>The government has costed legislation, policies, and/or programs in place (including in partnership with the private sector) to support and expand access to affordable care services (including childcare, aged care, and disability support) that are available to public and private sector employees.</p>	<p>Does not meet assessment criteria</p> <p>The government has no current plans to develop legislation, policy, and/or programming to expand care services or there is insufficient evidence to make an assessment.</p>

- **Relevant legislation and policy**

- National Health Strategic Plan 2022-2031
- National Disability Development Policy 2022-2031

Like many Pacific island countries, the responsibility for caring for children, the elderly, and individuals with disabilities in Solomon Islands has historically rested with families, predominantly led by women. However, the trends of urbanization, migration, and the increasing participation of women in the workforce have made it challenging to consistently manage care within the family unit.

- **Aged care**

The Ministry of Health and Medical Services has responsibility for aged care in Solomon Islands. There is no formal policy on aged care services or a dedicated team with responsibility for developing policy or managing services for the elderly in Solomon Islands.

The National Health Strategic Plan refers to the need for health infrastructure to be accessible by the elderly but does not include specific provisions or activities relating to aged care services.

- **Childcare**

The Ministry of Women, Youth, Children, and Family Affairs (MWYCFA) oversees the Children’s Division and enforces the Child and Welfare Act of 2017 in Solomon Islands. However, there is currently no specific national law or policy for childcare services. MWYCFA recognizes the need for the government to prioritize childcare and seeks concrete evidence to support increased attention and resources in this area. There is also no provision for childcare services in the Education Act or the Early Childhood Development (ECD) policy.

Although the government hasn’t yet established a childcare policy, private sector organizations are recognizing the need and taking action. Soltuna’s *Pikinini Kea Haus* is a prime example—a corporate-sponsored childcare center and the first of its kind in Solomon Islands. It helps working women with young children access jobs and income.

- **Disability care**

In December 2022, Government of Solomon Islands launched the National Disability Development Policy 2022–2031 and Rehabilitation Strategic Plan 2022 - 2031. The 10-year policy and strategic plan are designed to ensure that Solomon Islanders living with disabilities can live a normal life, access services, and participate meaningfully in the development of the country. The 2019 Census provided comprehensive sex-disaggregated data on people living with disabilities in Solomon Islands with the government acknowledging that more needs to be done to support people with disabilities including an inclusive education policy and special facilities and resources in schools and work places.

A copy of the National Disability Policy could not be located to assess whether it includes costed provision of formal care services for people living with disabilities.

Dimension 3: Business Enabling Environment



- 3.1 Business Legislation
- 3.2 Business Registration
- 3.3 Support to Women Entrepreneurs

3.1: Business Legislation

Assessment criteria	Solomon Islands country assessment
Business laws allow men and women to start and operate a business in the same way, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • women can register a business in their name, and • women can sign a contract in the same way as a man. 	<p>Meets or exceeds assessment criteria</p> <p>Business laws allow men and women to start and operate a business in the same way.</p>

- **Relevant legislation and policy**

- Companies Act 2009

No provisions in the Companies Act prohibits or restricts the ability of a woman to register a business in their name. A woman can sign a contract in the same way as a man.

3.2: Business Registration

Assessment criteria	Solomon Islands country assessment
<p>The government has adopted policies, systems, and processes to make business registration more accessible to women entrepreneurs, including three or more of the following reforms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislation, regulations, and/or procedures are in place that facilitate access to national identification card (or equivalent) required for registration. • Online business registration applications are enabled. • Sex-disaggregated data is collected and used. • The cost of registration is reduced and/or fee-free registration is offered for women. • Clear and simple instructions on the registration process are provided (including infographics and/or instruction videos). • Outreach and/or information sessions for women on business registration are held (including in rural areas). • Information and support is provided in locations and at times that are accessible for women. • Research is conducted to better understand the barriers to women registering a business. <p>In addition, there is evidence of increased registration by women entrepreneurs following these reforms.</p>	<p><i>Partially meets assessment criteria</i></p> <p>The government has adopted 1–2 reforms to improve the accessibility of business registration for women entrepreneurs.</p>

- **Relevant legislation and policy**

- [Companies Act 2009](#)

Overall, Solomon Islands’ government policies and programs related to business registration do not explicitly target women but do not appear to present significant barriers to women entrepreneurs either.

- **Identification requirements**

Under Solomon Islands legislation, there are no specific provisions requiring national identity documents be presented when registering a business. However, in practice, people wishing to register a business are required to present valid ID to verify their name and identity as part of the business registration process. This presents a barrier for those without valid ID, which is more likely to be those in rural areas, particularly women. ID requirements also present barriers to obtaining a Tax Identification Number (TIN), which is required to operate a business in Solomon Islands.

- **Fees**

The incorporation fees for limited companies and business registration are uniform, with no reduced fees for specific individuals or business types, including women-owned businesses.

- **Accessibility**

The registration process is currently explained in English, with no visual aids or videos available for those with low literacy levels. However, information sheets are posted for public access, and assistance is provided by Company Haus officers for individuals with lower literacy levels.

- **Information sessions**

The Company Registry Office does not provide specific information sessions on business registration. However, the Inland Revenue Department organizes information sessions on tax reforms and compliance, primarily aimed at the private sector. Collaborations with the Solomon Islands Chamber of Commerce indicate efforts to engage with the business community.

- **Business promotion and awareness tours**

Company Haus conducts business promotion and awareness tours in various provinces and Honiara. These events cover essential topics related to business registration, fees, requirements, and benefits. While these sessions are informative, the lack of funding in some instances hinders their effectiveness.

- **Monitoring and data**

Company Haus has recently commenced the systematic collection of sex-disaggregated data during the business registration process (see Dimension 1.4, page 13). Company Haus compiles quarterly and annual reports, including details on registry results. These reports are shared with government officials, which helps ensure accountability and transparency in the registration process. It is not clear if or how this data is used to inform policy or programming to support women's entrepreneurship.

3.3: Support to Women Entrepreneurs

Assessment criteria	Solomon Islands country assessment
<p>The government is implementing two or more of the following policies or strategies to encourage women’s entrepreneurship:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an MSME strategy (or similar) that proactively promotes the establishment, operation, or growth of women-owned and/or led businesses, including for the informal sector; • a competition policy that considers how to make markets more open to, and work more effectively for, women-owned and/or led businesses; • simplified tax regimes that apply to MSMEs, such as lower tax rates, tax exemptions, and/or other incentives; • a commercial dispute resolution process that is efficient, inexpensive, and accessible to women-owned and/or led businesses, including arbitration or mediation; • programs to support women’s entrepreneurship, such as training and/or mentoring, and business incubators and/or accelerators; and/or • grants or other financial support (including tax concessions) for women-owned and/or led businesses. 	<p><i>Does not meet assessment criteria or there is insufficient evidence to form an assessment</i></p> <p>The government has not adopted any policies and/or strategies to support women entrepreneurs, or there is insufficient evidence to make an assessment.</p>

- **Relevant legislation and policy**

- Solomon Islands Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise (SMEs) Policy and Strategy,

- **MSME policy and/or strategy**

The Solomon Islands Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise (SMEs) Policy and Strategy, launched in 2016, outlines government support for MSMEs through various initiatives, including training and advisory services. However, the MSME Policy lacks sex-disaggregated data and specific targets for fostering new businesses. There is limited analysis of challenges faced by different groups, including women entrepreneurs.

- **Government programmes to support MSMEs and/or entrepreneurship**

Government support to MSMEs is provided through the Business and Cooperatives Development Division’s two units: the Business Unit and the Cooperative Society Unit. The Business Unit provides support and advisory services to micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), including various business associations, such as women’s groups

and community associations. The Cooperative Society Unit is responsible for registering, auditing, and promoting cooperative societies as a business model, with a particular focus on rural areas. This unit collaborates with other divisions to provide training and financial guidance to registered cooperative societies. However, the extent to which these functions specifically target and support women entrepreneurs within Solomon Islands remains unclear. There's a need for more transparency and data regarding the effectiveness and inclusivity of these government programs for women entrepreneurs.

- **Competition policy and/or framework**

A competition policy was endorsed in 2018 and work is currently being undertaken around drafting a competition and consumer protection bill.

- **Simplified tax regime for MSMEs**

MSMEs in Solomon Islands are subject to the same tax rules and obligations as larger businesses. The Inland Revenue Division (IRD) provides information to help businesses comply with their tax obligations. All businesses in Solomon Islands must lodge an income tax return and pay tax on the profits of their business. The corporate tax rate in Solomon Islands is 30% for resident corporations and 35% for non-resident corporations. There are no special tax incentives or exemptions for MSMEs, except for a minimum tax of 0.5% of turnover not exceeding SI\$20,000 (Deloitte 2020).

- **Alternative dispute resolution mechanisms**

Solomon Islands has a Trades Dispute Panel which conciliates or, if necessary, arbitrates on industrial disputes between employers and employees and was established as a practical measure to avoid industrial disputes having to go through the formal court process which can be both time consuming and costly. There is no court or alternative dispute resolution mechanism dedicated solely to commercial disputes.

3.4: Engaging the Informal Economy

Assessment criteria	Solomon Islands country assessment
<p>The government has policies and programs in place to support those operating in the informal economy, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • data, policies, and/or strategies that relate to the informal economy and/or informal businesses; • services and support for entrepreneurs operating in the informal economy, including grants or other financial support; and/or • infrastructure delivery or other services, such as improved market facilities, rural roads, electrification and/or lighting, security, and safe, efficient public transport. 	<p><i>Partially meets assessment criteria</i></p> <p>The government has policies and programs in place to support (directly or indirectly) those operating in the informal economy in 1–2 areas.</p>

- **Relevant legislation and policy**

None located.

- **Policy on the informal economy**

Currently, there is no standalone policy on the Informal sector in Solomon Islands. However, the informal economy is referenced in MSME strategy, National Development Strategic Plan 2016–2035, Women’s Economic Empowerment Policy, and the National Gender Equality and Women’s Development Policy.

The government is working with the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to develop a national action plan to facilitate the growth and formalization of informal firms. The national action plan will present a framework for coordinated action across government at all levels to make formalization more feasible. A pre-validation technical workshop was held in July 2023 to progress development of the national action plan.

- **Data on informal employment and businesses**

Data on informal sector employment are limited. This is largely due to budgetary constraints faced by the National Statistics Office compounded by lack of technical capacity to conduct such surveys.

- **Government services and support to informal businesses**

As noted in the assessment of framework entry point 3.3 (page 21), there is limited publicly available reporting on government services and support for businesses. It is not clear whether informal businesses have access to available government support. It is worth noting that COVID-19 stimulation package support for MSMEs was focused on loan repayment relief and tax concessions and included no specific measures to support informal businesses

(Government of Solomon Islands 2020), suggesting that general government support to MSMEs is limited to formally registered businesses.

In general, informal businesses in Solomon Islands often face challenges when seeking access to finance. Many financial institutions and support programs require businesses to be registered, which can be a hindrance for informal enterprises, especially when applying for loans from banks. However, there are a limited number of services and support options available to informal businesses, primarily through development partners and other nongovernment actors.

- **National policy or plan for infrastructure development**

The Solomon Islands National Infrastructure Investment Plan 2013 outlines the government’s priorities for infrastructure development over a 5-to-10-year period. The plan includes a set of 14 criteria for prioritization of investment including “specifically looking at how projects will benefit women, children and disabled people.” Each major project outlined in the plan includes an assessment of whether it will specifically support the activities of women using a five-point scale.

The plan includes projects that are likely to benefit (directly and indirectly) those operating in the informal economy, including projects to improve roads, water and sanitation, and wharves.

Dimension 4:

Financial Inclusion and Access to Capital



4.1 Financial Legislation and Policy

4.2 Access to Capital

4.3 Retirement Funds

4.1: Financial Legislation and Policy

Assessment criteria	Solomon Islands country assessment
<p>The government has adopted legislation or policies that will increase access to capital and/or financial services and products for women in both of the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A financial inclusion policy and/or strategic plan for government-owned banks includes objectives and targets to increase women’s access and use of financial services and product. • Policy and/or guidance requires financial institutions to collect and report sex-disaggregated data. 	<p>Meets or exceeds assessment criteria</p> <p>The government has enacted legislation or policies that will increase access to financial services and/or products and capital for women in both of the areas outlined in the assessment criteria.</p>

- **Relevant legislation and policy**

- [National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2021-2025 \(NFIS 3\)](#)
- [National Women’s Financial Inclusion Policy 2016-2023](#)

- **Financial inclusion policy**

Financial inclusion in Solomon Islands, is guided by two policies—the [National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2021-2025 \(NFIS 3\)](#) and the [National Women’s Financial Inclusion Policy 2016-2023](#)—making it one of the only countries in the region to have a dedicated women’s financial inclusion policy.

NFIS 3 is aligned with the country’s broader development goals and aims to increase the active users of financial accounts from 283,954 to 400,000 by 2025, with a focus on achieving gender parity. The National Women’s Financial Inclusion Policy complements NFIS 3 by addressing key areas, such as access to financial services, financial literacy, and sex-disaggregated data.

In 2022, the first national goal of increasing active financial users was Partially meets assessment criteria, with 249,291 users, of which 136,842 were women (Central Bank of Solomon Islands 2023). However, there was a 10%

decline in active users compared to the previous year, likely due to the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on financial participation. It's important to note potential double-counting in the data.

Regarding the second national goal, there was an increase in the number of access points, with 870 access points by the end of 2022 (Central Bank of Solomon Islands 2023). This represents more than half of the target of 1155 access points, mainly driven by the expansion of EFTPOS terminals and merchants. However, the challenge of decentralization remains, as most access points are concentrated in the capital city, Honiara. Efforts to capture other financial service providers' access points are expected with revised reporting templates in 2023.

The National Women's Financial Inclusion Policy (NWFIP) further underscores the commitment to closing the gender gap in financial inclusion. The NWFIP addresses key areas, including access to financial services, financial literacy, savings clubs, and sex-disaggregated data. It aims to empower women economically and financially, with a vision of building a more inclusive and sustainable financial system.

The National Strategy on the Economic Empowerment of Women and Girls 2020-2023 also includes financial inclusion as one of five strategic areas of focus with targets to expand savings clubs and financial literacy programs for women.

Overall, the financial inclusion policy in Solomon Islands has shown progress in expanding access to financial services and making efforts to include women in the financial sector. However, challenges such as the impact of external factors (e.g., COVID-19) and the need for better geographical distribution of access points need to be addressed to ensure its continued success. Further, the focus has been on financial inclusion for individuals with limited attention on increasing the financial inclusion of MSMEs, including those owned and operated by women.

- **Policy on sex-disaggregated data**

The National Women's Financial Inclusion policy includes sex-disaggregated data collection and reporting as one of its key policy areas. CBSI has recently launched a digital and financial survey that includes a reporting template that is provided to financial institutions to provide data including the use of digital financial products. CBSI will use this data to measure progress towards the goals outlined in the policy.

The new survey will expand the availability of data to analyse financial inclusion in Solomon Islands. Existing available data indicates progress in women's financial inclusion in Solomon Islands, with notable increases in access to formal bank accounts, overall financial accounts, active users of financial accounts, and women's membership in savings clubs (Alliance for Financial Inclusion 2017).

4.2: Access to Capital

Assessment criteria	Solomon Islands country assessment
<p>Access to capital by women-owned businesses is facilitated and monitored through at least two of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • legislation that mandates equal access to property and inheritance, • a secured transactions framework, • loan products and financial services that are accessible or targeting women and/or women entrepreneurs, and/or • reporting of sex-disaggregated data on loans to MSMEs. 	<p><i>Meets or exceeds assessment criteria</i></p> <p>Access to capital for women entrepreneurs is facilitated and monitored through two or more key reforms.</p>

- **Relevant legislation and policy**

- [The Constitution of Solomon Islands \(1978\)](#)
- [The Secured Transactions Act \(2008\)](#)

- **Equal rights to inheritance and land**

Under Solomon Islands law, both men and women have equal rights to inherit assets and own land, as guaranteed by the Constitution and relevant acts like the Married Women’s Property Act and the Intestates’ Estates Act (World Bank 2020). However, under Customary law, which predominantly governs land ownership, gender inequality persists. Customary law tends to follow a patrilineal system where only men can own or control land, and women’s access to land relies on their husbands or male relatives. Women often lack secure land tenure and decision-making power (UN Women 2022).

Efforts have been made to address this inequality through laws like the 1996 Land and Titles Act, which recognizes customary landholding groups. Nevertheless, the implementation of these laws has been slow, and there’s a lack of awareness and recognition of women’s land rights among customary leaders and communities. Gender disparities in land rights remain a significant challenge in the country (Food and Agriculture Organization 2010).

- **Secured transactions framework**

In Solomon Islands, a secured transactions framework was established by the Secured Transactions Act 2008. This framework regulates, creates, and registers transactions related to interests in movable property. An online registry, launched in 2010, complements this framework, allowing for the filing and searching of notices of security interests in movable property.

While there is evidence of lending using movable assets in Solomon Islands, it’s unclear whether sex-disaggregated data on this practice is available. A report by the Asian Development Bank (2012) noted that the Secured

Transactions Act 2008 has made it easier for people to secure business loans using movable assets as collateral but does not provide sex-disaggregated data.

- **Government and/or financial institutions loan products targeting women-owned businesses**

The government, through the Central Bank of Solomon Islands (CBSI), has established multiple financial facilities aimed at improving access to finance for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) as part of the MSME Working Group initiatives under the National Financial Inclusion Taskforce (NFIT). These initiatives primarily assist financial service providers like commercial banks, credit institutions, and development banks in offering low-interest rate loans and collateral support, making it easier for small businesses to secure credit. Key programs include:

- **SME Credit Guarantee Scheme:** This scheme facilitates access to credit for women-owned businesses that are eligible for a 95% guarantee of their unsecured loan as compared to 90% guarantee for male-owned businesses. By the end of 2022, 93 SMEs had been granted guarantees totalling SI\$23.5 million including 14 women-owned and 15 jointly owned SMEs (Central Bank of Solomon Islands 2023).
- **MSME Credit Line Facility:** Administered by the Development Bank of Solomon Islands and initiated by the Ministry of Commerce, Industry, Labour and Immigration (MCILI), this facility focuses on sectoral credit funding for MSMEs operating in sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, tourism, and agro-forestry. With SI\$14 million allocated in total, the program places particular emphasis on supporting women. If women don't have sufficient collateral to secure a loan, MCILI provides funding to secure loans, and they also have a reduced interest rate (5% for women and 8% for others). In 2022, 42 SMEs accessed the facility, with 40 being men and 3 women, including 2 young entrepreneurs.
- **Export Finance Facility:** In collaboration with MCILI, CBSI has established an Export Finance Facility to aid MSMEs and small businesses involved in export activities. This facility addresses working capital needs for exporters across eligible sectors, facilitating export processes and providing funds for equipment and export-related expenses. No sex-disaggregated data is available on the recipients of this support.
- **Solomon Islands National Provident Fund:** SINPF also provides credit through its subsidiary company, Solomon Finance Limited, that provides small business loans of between SI\$20,000–300,000 secured by the Solomon Islands National Provident Fund balance, which is accessible to male and female members.

As noted in the assessment of Dimension 3, some government-owned banks or other financial institutions offer loan products or financial services targeting women-owned businesses in Solomon Islands, such as the Development Bank of Solomon Islands (DBSI). DBSI is a government-owned bank that provides loans to micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), including women entrepreneurs, in various sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, tourism, and manufacturing.

- **Sex-disaggregated data on loans to MSMEs**

As noted above, there is some sex-disaggregated data available on government supported loan schemes.

4.3: Retirement Funds

Assessment criteria	Solomon Islands country assessment
<p>Legislation governing retirement funds includes two or more of the following provisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contributions from all sectors and types of employment are permitted, • contributions by informal workers are permitted, • de facto spouses have rights to access partner’s fund benefits, and/or • there is clarity on divorced spouses’ rights. <p>In addition, there is evidence that retirement fund policies and operations support implementation of these provisions.</p>	<p>Meets or exceeds assessment criteria</p> <p>Legislation governing retirement funds includes two or more of the provisions outlined in the assessment criteria.</p>

- **Relevant legislation and policy**

- Solomon Islands National Provident Fund 1973

The Solomon Islands National Provident Fund (SINPF) was established under the Solomon Islands National Provident Fund 1973 and commenced operations in 1976.

SINPF is a defined contribution fund. According to the SINPF Act, any employee can contribute. For voluntary contributions, you must be 16 and older. For benefits, you can withdraw your savings at 50, or at 40 if you are not employed.

According to the SINPF Act, contributions are permitted from all sectors and types of employment. A 2018 amendment to the SINPF Act facilitated the establishment of YouSave, a voluntary savings scheme that allows people between the ages of 16 to 70 to contribute. The scheme targets those who are self-employed and/or working in the informal economy and since its establishment it has attracted 18,858 members and introduced measures to expand membership and contributions including reducing minimum deposit size and facilitating payments through mobile phones (PSDI 2022). The latest available data from SINPF shows that the scheme has been effective in targeting women with more women members than men (57% to 43%), although the total fund value for women in the YouSave scheme is lower than men (SINPF 2018).

The SINPF Act includes some provisions that restrict access to retirement fund benefits for women. For example, the legislation does not include references or provisions for access to partner fund benefits for anyone other than the legal spouse. It also does not provide clarity on access to retirement fund benefits for divorced spouses.

Dimension 5: Participation in Key Economic Sectors



- 5.1 Sector Policies and Strategies
- 5.2 Gender Responsive Procurement
- 5.3 E-commerce
- 5.4 Trade Policy and Programs

5.1: Sector Policies and Strategies

Assessment criteria	Solomon Islands country assessment
<p>Sector strategies or policies for at least the country's three largest sectors have specific measures and targets to increase opportunities and access for women and women-owned or led businesses in sectors, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sex-disaggregated data or analysis on the role of men and women in the sector, including participation in key value chains and markets; • specific measures or targets to increase opportunities and access for women as employees, entrepreneurs, and leaders; and/or • gender-responsive budgets. 	<p>Partially meets assessment criteria</p> <p>At least one sector strategy or policy includes specific measures and targets to increase opportunities and access for women and women entrepreneurs.</p>

- **Relevant legislation and policy**

- [Solomon Islands Agriculture Sector Growth Strategy and Investment Plan \(ASGIP\) 2021-2030](#)
- [Solomon Islands National Fisheries Policy 2019-2029](#)
- [Solomon Islands National Forestry Policy 2020](#)

- **Agriculture**

The [Solomon Islands Agriculture Sector Growth Strategy and Investment Plan \(ASGIP\) 2021-2030](#) places a strong emphasis on promoting and empowering women in the agriculture sector. It is guided by principles that ensure equal participation and benefits for women, along with youth and individuals with special needs.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAL) aims to operate as an accountable and gender-inclusive institution. Several key components of the plan highlight its commitment:

- **Gender-Sensitive Value Chain Approach:** The plan acknowledges the importance of considering women's roles in the agricultural value chain, moving beyond a sole focus on production.

- **Increased Female Representation:** MAL seeks to boost the number of female professionals in its workforce, especially in the extension department. This will be achieved through non-discriminatory career advancement policies.
- **Women Development:** A dedicated section within the plan recognizes women’s crucial role in food security and commercial agriculture. To support women farmers, MAL plans to establish Women Agricultural Extension Services (WAES), employing more female extension staff and providing tailored training opportunities.

The ASGIP is committed to enhancing women’s participation and empowerment in the agriculture sector by recognizing their contributions and addressing their specific needs. The plan outlines concrete steps to achieve these objectives, emphasizing inclusivity and gender sensitivity throughout the agricultural value chain.

- **Fisheries**

The Government of Solomon Islands has taken positive steps to promote gender equality in the fisheries sector. The Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR) has initiated training programs aimed at enhancing gender equality and fostering inclusive participation in the sector, particularly for women (Pacific Community 2021). This training equips provincial fisheries officers and project-based staff with an understanding of gender equality concepts and how to integrate them into their work.

The Solomon Islands National Fisheries Policy 2019-2029 sets out a vision of a sustainable fisheries sector that meets the socio-economic needs of all Solomon Islanders. Within this policy, women’s inclusion and their roles in the fisheries sector are explicitly acknowledged in two key areas:

- **Policy Area 1 (Inshore and Inland Fisheries):** This section commits to gender-equitable approaches in the management of inshore and inland fisheries, with the aim of improving livelihood opportunities for both rural men and women.
- **Policy Area 3 (Aquaculture):** The policy seeks to provide equal opportunities for men, women, and vulnerable groups to participate in and benefit from the aquaculture sector.

However, while the policy recognizes the significance of women in the fisheries sector and provides some analysis and data on their roles, it lacks specific actions or targets to advance gender equality further.

- **Forestry**

A report on women’s rights in Solomon Islands forestry legislation, policy and practice found that injustices against women and girls are particularly pronounced in the logging sector (Minter 2021).

The Solomon Islands National Forestry Policy 2020 does not have any explicit provisions to support increased participation by women in the forestry sector. The policy does include a guiding principle of stakeholder participation and respect for human rights.

The policy includes a series of 17 goals including Goal 6: Capacity building for gender equity and community empowerment. The goal includes actions to promote gender inclusive technical capacity, finance and business capacity and environmental knowledge but does not include any specific targets, actions, or outcomes for women’s participation. The policy also includes a goal relating to the forestry workforce that does not include any reference to the role of women or targets for their participation.

5.2: Gender Responsive Procurement

Assessment criteria

The government has adopted gender-responsive procurement legislation, policy, and/or programs that include specific measures to promote and enable women-owned and/or led businesses to participate in public procurement processes for goods and services, such as:

- advertisements for public tenders include text encouraging submissions by women-owned businesses,
- women-owned businesses participate in information and/or training sessions on developing submission for public tenders,
- an inclusive evaluation framework is used, and
- sex-disaggregated data on public procurement outcomes is gathered and reported.

Solomon Islands country assessment

Partially meets assessment criteria

The government has a procurement policy or processes in place that encourage women-owned and/or led businesses in at least one of the areas outlined in the assessment criteria.

- **Relevant legislation and policy**

- [Public Financial Management Act 2013](#)
- [Public Financial Management \(Procurement\) Regulations 2021](#)

Government procurement is governed by the [Public Financial Management Act 2013](#) and the [Public Financial Management \(Procurement\) Regulations 2021](#). The Regulations specify that procurement should be conducted in accordance with the principle of equity supporting equality of opportunity in general and ‘*providing economic opportunities for all Solomon Islands including women, youth and people with disabilities.*’

The regulations require that all tenders are advertised in a local newspaper with national circulation and on a government website with free access but include no other provisions to support the participation of women-owned businesses in government tenders.

There are existing initiatives designed to assist local businesses in understanding and navigating the public procurement process. For instance, the SIG Procurement Workshop training, held annually in partnership with both Government of Solomon Islands and the Solomon Islands Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SICCI), provides training opportunities for SICCI members and non-members from various sectors, including construction, wholesale and retail, manufacturing, services, and finance, among others (Solomon Islands Chamber of Commerce and Industry 2022). Notably, almost 50% of the participants in the last training were women. Another example is the SIIP Skills Series Training Program.

5.3: E-commerce

Assessment criteria	Solomon Islands country assessment
The government has established a legal, regulatory, and policy environment to promote e-commerce that includes specific targets to support the participation of women-owned and/or led businesses, such as improving access to digital infrastructure, training, and mentorship.	<p><i>Meets or exceeds assessment criteria</i></p> <p>The government has established a legal, regulatory, and policy environment to promote e-commerce that includes specific targets to support the participation of women-owned and/or led businesses. This includes measure such as improving access to digital infrastructure, training and/or mentorship, or grants or other financial support.</p>

- **Relevant legislation and policy**

- Solomon Islands National E-Commerce Strategy 2022-2027

The Solomon Islands National E-Commerce Strategy 2022-2027 aims to improve the country's economic prospects by creating jobs, boosting economic growth, and facilitating trade. It acknowledges the vital role played by women entrepreneurs in various sectors, especially in agriculture and local markets. Women are active participants in growing, selling, and marketing agricultural products and contribute significantly to tourism revenue and the market vendor community.

The strategy takes a gender-sensitive approach by setting specific targets for women's participation in various action areas, such as e-commerce skills development, especially in rural areas, catering to the unique characteristics of each region and focusing on marginalized groups, including rural women and young entrepreneurs.

Monitoring the strategy's implementation will occur at both the outcome and action level, with key performance indicators to measure progress. The E-commerce Implementation Unit (EIU) will oversee progress through field surveys, data from lead agencies, and collaboration with the Solomon Islands National Statistics Office, reporting regularly to the National E-commerce Steering Committee.

Despite the strong policy settings, the Inclusive Digital Economy Scorecard for Solomon Islands shows a slight decrease in the percentage of women participating in the digital economy from 78% in 2020 to 76% in 2021 and 2022 (United Nations Capital Development Fund n.d.) (see also the assessment of Dimension 6 of the framework, page 35).

5.4: Trade Policy and Programs

Assessment criteria

The government has adopted a trade policy and/or programs that include specific measures and targets to increase women-owned businesses' participation in trade and access to international markets, such as identifying and addressing barriers, training, or encouraging women's business networks.

Solomon Islands country assessment

Does not meet assessment criteria

Trade policy and/or programs have no specific provisions for women and/or women-owned businesses.

- **Relevant legislation and policy**

- The Solomon Islands Trade Policy Framework

The Solomon Islands Trade Policy Framework seeks to promote inclusive economic growth as a key policy priority. Women's groups were consulted as part of the process of developing the framework including participation of representatives from Solomon Islands Women In Business Association (SIWIBA), Malaita Council of Women, Mothers Union (Buala) and Western Province Council of Women.

The document does not include any sex-disaggregated data or analysis on the role (or potential role) of women in trade including in sectors where women are well represented. No specific measures or targets relating to the inclusion of women or women-owned businesses were identified.

Dimension 6: Technology and the Future of Work



- 6.1 Digital Access, Legislation, and Policy
- 6.2 Planning for the Future of Work

6.1: Digital Access, Legislation, and Policy

Assessment criteria	Solomon Islands country assessment
<p>The government has adopted legislation, policy, or programs to support women and girls' digital access, including two or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the collection, analysis, and publication of sex-disaggregated data on digital access including smart phone ownership and internet use; • information and communication technology (ICT) and/or broadband policy or programs that include specific measures and targets to reach women including in rural and remote areas; • programs to promote digital literacy and ICT education for women and girls; and/or • the development and implementation of policies, legislation, regulations, or institutions to address ICT-mediated abuse (intimidation, harassment, violence, surveillance, fraud, and/or illegal data retention) and to strengthen protection measures and reporting procedures. 	<p>Partially meets assessment criteria</p> <p>The government has adopted at least one of the reforms outlined in the assessment criteria.</p>

- **Relevant legislation and policy**

- The National ICT Policy 2017.

- **Data on ICT use**

The Government of Solomon Islands, through the National Statistics Office, collects sex-disaggregated data on mobile phone ownership and internet usage through census data and reporting by the Telecommunications Commission of Solomon Islands.

The 2019 census collected data on mobile phone ownership, condition and internet use with data disaggregated by gender, province, and age. Data revealed that a higher percentage of men (54%) in Honiara own mobile phones compared to women (46%). Similarly, in Malaita province, 61.9% of men own mobile phones, while only 38.1% of women do. In Guadalcanal, 59.6% of men own phones compared to 40.4% of women.

The Telecommunications Commission of Solomon Islands (TCSI) records data on mobile phone subscribers and in 2020, reported 428,909 mobile subscribers and 133,148 mobile 3G and 4G subscribers (TCSI 2021).

- **National ICT policy**

The National ICT Policy 2017. There is also a 5-year ICT Strategy in place 2019–2023, The ICT Policy states: ICT for Equity: “Promote access to and use of ICT in Solomon Islands to further the goals of gender equality, women’s empowerment, and inclusive development”.

In 2020, Solomon Islands adopted the United Nations Capital Development Fund’s (UNCDF’s) Inclusive Digital Economy Scorecard and has produced three scorecards (2020, 2021 and 2022). The scorecard measures progress across four pillars: (i) infrastructure, (ii) policy and regulation, (iii) skills, and (iv) innovation and includes a ‘Women Inclusiveness Score’. While the overall scorecard rating shows continuous improvement from 39% in 2020, 41% in 2021 and 43% in 2022, the score for policy and regulation (covering government promotion, existing regulation and policy promotion) decreased from 62% in 2021 to 56% in 2022 (Government of Solomon Islands, Ministry of Communication and Aviation 2023).

- **Programmes to build digital literacy skills**

No evidence was found of digital literacy programmes.

The inclusive Digital Scorecard also includes an assessment of skills that covers basic financial and digital literacy skills. The overall score for skills was 53% in 2022 with 42% for digital literacy skills.

- **Legislation and/or strategies to address and/or prevent ICT-related abuse**

Solomon Islands does not have a dedicated cybercrime policy or strategy in place. However, the National ICT Policy sets out an action plan related to cybercrime (Council of Europe n.d.). The key objectives of the plan are (i) to ensure appropriate legal protection for the community at large from potential ICT-related risks and (ii) ensure regulatory, law enforcement, and judicial personnel have the skills and resources required to administer and enforce ICT laws effectively.

The Family protection Act 2014 does not make mention of cyber and/or online violence or harassment. A current review is being done and this could be an opportunity to look at this.

The Royal Solomon Island Police Force (RSIPF) (n.d.) has 35 trained officers across all the provinces who can deliver a cyber-Safety Awareness presentation to their communities.

There are standard operating procedures for reporting other cases of abuse and harassment outlined in the Solomon Islands SAFENET Guidebook 2017. The SafeNet Standard Operating Procedures apply for referral and coordination of sexual and Gender Based Violence Services. However, there are no references to online abuse etc.

The Government of Solomon Islands has a dedicated web page with access to resources and information on cyber safety including Get Safe Online Solomon Islands. Get Safe Online is a partnership with the UK Commonwealth Cyber Security Programme and Cyber Safety Pasifika, a regional program undertaken in partnership with the Australian Federal Police.

6.2: Planning for the Future of Work

Assessment criteria	Solomon Islands country assessment
<p>The government has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a national employment policy and/or strategy (or similar); and/or • education and training programs in place for emerging and/or changing employment opportunities (e.g., labor mobility schemes, migration, green jobs, business offshore processing) that includes specific measures to support women to take up these opportunities. 	<p>Partially meets assessment criteria</p> <p>A national employment policy or strategy in an emerging sector (or similar) is in place that includes plans for the future of work and mentions gender equality, women, and/or women-owned and/or led businesses, but includes no specific actions or targets for their participation.</p>

- **Relevant legislation and policy**

- [Solomon Islands Labour Mobility Policy Framework](#)
- [Labour Mobility Strategy for 2019-2023.](#)

- **National employment policy**

With support from the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Government of Solomon Islands is currently developing its first national employment policy. A series of consultation workshops and seminars have taken place since 2021 to engage stakeholders on national employment priorities (ILO 2021). The policy will be a 10-year cross-sectoral roadmap that is expected to be gender-responsive.

The Solomon Islands Tertiary Education and Skills Authority (SITESA) was established in 2019 with the primary objective to ensure that tertiary education and skills development align with the country's future needs for a highly skilled and productive workforce, contributing to economic and social development.

- **Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)**

No policy or strategy located.

- **Green jobs**

Planning for green jobs will be part of the National Employment Policy.

- **Labor Mobility**

Responsibility for labor mobility sits within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade and is governed by the [Solomon Islands Labour Mobility Policy Framework](#) and the [Labour Mobility Strategy for 2019-2023](#). Both documents recognize that labor mobility can create increased opportunities for various groups, including women,

young people, and individuals from provincial and remote areas. To promote access for underrepresented groups, annual targets will be established in collaboration with the Ministry of Women, Youths, Children, and Family Affairs, who are also a member of the Labour Mobility Oversight Committee.

The policy also underscores the importance of including underrepresented population groups in labour mobility opportunities. The Labour Mobility Unit (LMU) regularly reviews and sets annual targets to achieve this goal. Reporting mechanisms will include data on the ratio of male and female workers and workers from different provinces.

External stakeholders will also play a role in monitoring and reporting on these activities, specifically focusing on the number of female and youth workers mobilized. This comprehensive approach aims to enhance the inclusivity of labour mobility and ensure that it benefits a broader range of individuals, including women and disadvantaged groups.

Dimension 7: Leadership, Voice, and Consumer Rights



- 7.1 Strategies for Women’s Leadership
- 7.2 Planning for the Future of Work
- 7.3 Promotion of Consumer Rights

7.1: Strategies for Women’s Leadership

Assessment criteria	Solomon Islands country assessment
<p>The government has put in place measures to increase women’s representation in leadership, including within state-owned enterprises, in two or more of the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • policies and/or programs to support increased recruitment and promotion of women; • gender targets or quotas; and/or • policies and/or programs to build capacity and support women’s leadership positions e.g. training, mentoring, and networking. <p>In addition, the national average proportion of women directors and senior managers is 30% or above.</p>	<p>Partially meets assessment criteria</p> <p>The government has put in place at least one of the measures outlined in the assessment criteria and/or the national average proportion of women directors and senior managers is below 30%.</p>

- **Relevant legislation and policy**

- National Gender Equality and Women’s Development Policy (2016–2020)

Solomon Islands has implemented several measures within its national legislation and policies to promote women’s representation in leadership roles. These measures include:

- The **National Gender Equality and Women’s Development Policy (2016–2020)** underscores the government’s commitment to addressing gender inequalities and integrating gender equality into development.
- The **Political Parties Integrity Act 2014** requires political parties to have at least 10% of women candidates in national elections, but this quota is not legally binding or enforced. In the 2019 national elections, only 5.2% of candidates were women, and only 2 out of 50 seats in parliament were won by women (UN Women 2022).
- The **Temporary Special Measures (TSM) Bill** is a proposed legislation that would reserve seats for women in the national parliament and provincial assemblies, but it has not been passed by the parliament yet. The bill was first introduced in 2010, but it faced opposition from some MPs and traditional leaders who argued that it was

unconstitutional, undemocratic, or against the culture (UN Women 2022).

The **2007 State-Owned Enterprises Act** requires SOEs to have at least one woman on their boards of directors, and to advertise board vacancies and increase independent oversight of boards. These reforms have provided more transparency and accountability in the appointment process of board members and increased the representation of women on SOE boards from 3% in 2007 to 11% in 2021 (PSDI 2022).

- The **National Gender Equality and Women's Development Policy 2016–2020** sets a target of 30% of women in decision-making positions at all levels of government by 2020, but this target has not been achieved. According to the latest data from UN Women, only 8% of seats in parliament and 14.8% of senior executive positions in the public service are held by women (Government of Australia, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade 2020).

A 2021 PSDI report on women's business leadership in the Pacific provides insights into women's business leadership in the Solomon Islands (PSDI 2021). The report found that women held 12% of leadership positions in government-owned entities and 7% in private sector organizations. Furthermore, women were found to be significantly underrepresented in executive and board roles, with only 3% serving as chief executive officers or managing directors, and women holding 5% of company board position. These findings highlight the existing gender gap in business leadership in Solomon Islands and the need for more efforts to promote women's participation in leadership positions.

7.2: Voice in Private Sector Policy and Planning

Assessment criteria	Solomon Islands country assessment
<p>Dedicated bodies exist to represent women in business, and women and/or women’s groups are members of consultative committees or are routinely consulted in the development of private sector policies, strategies, and action plans.</p>	<p><i>Partially meets assessment criteria</i></p> <p>Dedicated bodies representing women in business exist or women and/or women’s groups are consulted in the development of private sector policies, strategies, and action plans on an ad-hoc basis.</p>

In Solomon Islands, the [National Development Strategy 2016–2035](#) serves as the overarching policy framework guiding socioeconomic development. The strategy emphasizes inclusive economic growth and private sector empowerment. Some private sector development policies and strategies engage women and women’s groups during their development process. For instance, the National Development Strategy involves women and women’s groups in its consultation teams, recognizing the importance of their input.

The Ministry of Commerce, Industry, Labour and Immigration (MCILI) leads private sector development efforts but lacks a specific gender unit or strategy. However, it collaborates with the Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs (MWYCFA) and other stakeholders on initiatives that support women’s economic participation. The Solomon Islands National Council of Women and Solomon Islands Women in Business Association are consulted in the development of government policies and strategies.

Monitoring and reviewing mechanisms for private sector policies involve various stakeholders, including women and women’s groups. The Ministry of Development Planning and Aid Coordination (MDPAC) coordinates and evaluates the National Development Strategy, conducting consultations and workshops to ensure alignment and collect feedback from diverse stakeholders, including women and youth, contributing to policy coherence and development progress tracking.

7.2: Promotion of Consumer Rights

Assessment criteria	Solomon Islands country assessment
<p>The government has policies, legislation, and regulations to promote gender inclusive consumer rights and protections, including measures to prohibit discriminatory practices based on sex or gender, a transparent and accessible consumer complaints and redress mechanism, and sex-disaggregated data on complaints received and resolved.</p>	<p style="background-color: #FFC000; padding: 5px;"><i>Partially meets assessment criteria</i></p> <p>The government has consumer protection policies, legislation, and/or regulations in place but they include no specific measures to prohibit discriminatory practices and/or there is limited sex-disaggregated data on complaints or gender inclusive promotion and upholding of consumer rights.</p>

The safeguarding of consumer rights is managed by the Ministry of Commerce, Industry, Labour and Immigration’s Consumer Affairs and Price Control Division.

The division is responsible for consumer education and awareness, inspections, and handling of consumer complaints. The ministry has produced a range of materials to promote consumer awareness including on loans and credit. These materials explain key concepts and use a combination of simple language (in English) and pictures.

Consumer complaints can be submitted in person, by letter, or by telephone with information on the process of lodging complaint outlined in a simple flowchart.

No data is publicly available on the reach of consumer awareness programs or the number of complaints that are submitted and resolved so it is not possible to assess the extent to which consumer protection systems are gender inclusive.

4. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

To enhance gender inclusivity within the private sector enabling environment in Solomon Islands, the following priority actions are recommended:

- 1 Systematically collect, analyze, and publish sex-disaggregated data on key indicators, such as workforce participation and entrepreneurship. This data will support evidence-based policy and programming, including the upcoming review of the national action plan on women's economic empowerment.
- 2 Strengthen opportunities for women's participation in key economic sectors by establishing coordination mechanisms across the relevant parts of government to draw on relevant gender data and analysis in the development and review of key strategies and policies to develop targeted actions with sufficient resources allocated.
- 3 Initiate a comprehensive study to gather data and insights on childcare needs, encompassing an assessment of demand, affordability, accessibility, and the quality of existing services, including those offered by private sector organizations, such as SolTuna.
- 4 Develop easily understandable and comprehensive information resources for individuals looking to establish and manage businesses. This information should cover aspects like business registration, compliance, taxation, and available options for financing MSMEs.
 - Consider revisiting the concept of a one-stop shop or explore alternative strategies and partnerships to disseminate this information to women, including those in provincial areas. This can be achieved through provincial hubs, constituency development officers, and collaboration with organizations like Solomon Islands Women in Business Association.
- 5 Review and update the national information and communication technology policy to include data, analysis, and programming addressing emerging challenges and opportunities associated with digital transformation. This encompasses online safety, digital literacy, and infrastructure improvements to maximize benefits for women.
 - Consider forming partnerships with organizations such as Women in IT Solomon Islands to conduct gender analyses to inform policy revisions.
- 6 Undertake an analysis of trade and investment in Solomon Islands to determine whether there is equitable access to markets and employment for both men and women. Additionally, assess the extent of support for industries where women are predominant, such as handicrafts.
 - Build upon existing initiatives and efforts to enhance women entrepreneurs' access to domestic and international markets. Provide targeted support to ensure compliance with standards and successful market supply.

These recommended actions aim to create a more gender-inclusive private sector environment in Solomon Islands and promote economic empowerment for women.

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UNLOCKING POTENTIAL A GENDER INCLUSIVE PRIVATE SECTOR FRAMEWORK FOR THE PACIFIC

SOLOMON ISLANDS COUNTRY ASSESSMENT

There is growing awareness that promoting women's economic empowerment makes good business sense. Yet legal, regulatory, and policy barriers persist that prevent women's full and equal participation in Pacific private sectors. This report proposes a new framework, designed to measure and improve gender inclusivity in the private sector in the Pacific. The PSDI Gender Inclusive Private Sector (GIPS) framework serves as a practical checklist for Pacific governments and institutions to measure progress and identify areas where further improvements are needed. This document provides an assessment of the private sector enabling environment in Solomon Islands, based on the criteria outlined in the GIPS framework.




About PSDI

PSDI is a technical assistance program undertaken in partnership with the Government of Australia, the Government of New Zealand, and the Asian Development Bank. PSDI supports ADB's 14 Pacific developing member countries to improve the enabling environment for business and to support inclusive, private-sector led economic growth. The support of the Australian and New Zealand governments and ADB has enabled PSDI to operate in the region for more than 15 years and assist with more than 300 reforms.



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