

Nauru National-level Review

**Thirtieth anniversary of the
Fourth World Conference on Women and
adoption of the
Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action
(1995)**



Republic of Nauru

2024



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INTRODUCTION

Nauru is an island nation located in the Pacific Ocean. It is one of the smallest nations in the world in terms of land area and population. It has a land area of 21 square kilometres with a much larger exclusive economic zone of approximately 300,000 square kilometres. It has a population of approximately 11,550 people (5,679 females and 5,871 males).¹ The majority of the population are indigenous Nauruans with a small number of expatriates from other Pacific Island countries, China, Australia and the Philippines. There are 14 districts within Nauru.

Nauru faces a number of challenges. It is resource constrained, its location is far from transport networks, there are limited sources of economic growth, and it must deal with the impacts of climate change. In the past, the government was heavily reliant on phosphate mining, which still occurs on a smaller scale. There is also Australia's regional processing centre for asylum seekers, air services and fishing licences for which the country receives revenue. Nauru is import dependent, with most food being imported due to the island having limited arable soil.²

Nauru was one of the last nations in the world to record cases of COVID-19. The first cases were recorded in April 2022. It recorded a total of approximately 5,400 cases and 1 death.³ The pandemic produced economic and social impacts which were mitigated by the government's response as well as support from development partners. The government responded by putting travel restrictions and quarantine measures in place and prepared the health system.

Gender equality is a clear priority within the National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS) 2019–2030. The NSDS has the vision of 'A future where individual, community, business and government partnerships contribute to a sustainable quality of life for all Nauruans.' Within the NSDS, 3 key sectors are recognised:

1. Social;
2. Economy; and
3. Environment and climate change.

The sectors are divided into four priority areas of: economic sector; social and community sectors; infrastructure; and cross-cutting sectors. Within priority area 2, social and community sectors, gender equality and social inclusion are recognised within goal 5, which is 'A just society that recognises and respects the rights of women and children, that promotes equal opportunities.'

¹ Government of Nauru and SPC. (2020). Mini Census Population of Nauru. <https://naurufinance.info/nauru-statistics/>

² Asian Development Bank (ADB). (2023). Asian Development Bank Member Fact Sheet Nauru. <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/27748/nau-2023.pdf>

³ World Health Organisation. (2023). The current COVID-19 situation Nauru. <https://www.who.int/countries/nru>



Section 1: Highlights

The process for developing Nauru's first Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) National-level Review Report has been based upon use of existing data, key national documents on gender equality and insights gained through consultation processes. A literature review of data and national documents was conducted. This report is further informed by consultation that took place through workshops that were held with government, including state-owned enterprises, and civil society organisations and community representatives.

This report provides insights on priorities, achievements, challenges and setbacks in advancing gender equality in Nauru over the past 5 years. It provides a review of progress across the 12 critical areas for concern in relation to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995). It also outlines the future priorities for action as identified through key documents on gender equality and consultation over the past 5 years. Given the size of the country, there are some gaps in information within the report. However, as reflected in the report, there has been a significant effort to advance gender equality in Nauru over the past 5 years, despite the challenges faced.

The Government of Nauru is committed to supporting gender equality. The Department of Women's and Social Development Affairs (WASDA) has commenced a process to update the Nauru National Women's Policy. The policy includes the key priorities of:

- elimination of violence against women;
- increasing women's participation in leadership and decision-making roles;
- improved quality and accessibility of health services for women and girls;
- enhancing economic participation;
- increasing participation and achievement in education; and
- strengthening the capacity of government and the national women's machinery.

Progress has been made to advance gender equality, particularly in the areas of addressing gender-based violence; enhancing the national women's machinery; developing gender mainstreaming and gender-responsive budgeting; increasing participation of women and girls in sports; and expanding women's economic opportunities.



Section 2: Priorities, achievements, challenges and setbacks

1. Achievements, challenges and setbacks

1. Over the past 5 years, what have been the most important achievements, challenges and setbacks in progress towards gender equality and the empowerment of women?

Nauru has made substantial achievements to advance gender equality over the past 5 years. These achievements have been significant despite the challenges the country faced due to the COVID-19 pandemic. These achievements demonstrate the nation's ability to address adversity faced by women and girls despite having limited resources and other pressing priorities. Yet there are also challenges that require attention, support and action.

Achievements

Addressing gender-based violence

Work to address gender-based violence has been led by WASDA, which has worked in partnership with various organisations and development partners. Support services have been further established, including employment of counsellors, setting up a helpline and re-establishing a safe house.

Further establishing the Department of Women's and Social Development Affairs

In October 2020, WASDA was established as a standalone department. Previously it sat within the Ministry of Home Affairs. Establishment as a standalone department is a significant achievement in that it enables WASDA greater autonomy within government and status to implement its work and objectives.

Increasing understanding and implementation of gender mainstreaming

Training and awareness raising on gender mainstreaming have taken place. The Nauru National Gender Mainstreaming Policy has been developed and significant work has been undertaken towards implementing gender-responsive budgeting, including a public expenditure and financial accountability (PEFA) assessment which was completed, submitted and endorsed by PEFA secretariat and government of Nauru. There is strong support within the government to implement gender-responsive budgeting, including endorsement by cabinet.

Increasing participation of women and girls in sports

Programs have been created to increase participation of women and girls in sports, including rugby, footy (Australian Football League), tennis and table tennis. This has included training and provision of equipment. This work also contributes to shifting gender social norms by expanding women's participation in sports as an important community and social activity. It can further contribute to supporting the health and wellbeing of women and girls.



Challenging and adopting changes to social norms

Through awareness raising and programs for sports development, economic participation and gender mainstreaming, social norms around gender are being challenged. With these discussions and changes in practice taking place, social norms around gender are arguably changing.

Expanding women's economic opportunities

Programs have been implemented to train women as entrepreneurs. With changing norms, it seems more women are entering the workforce, yet a range of barriers remain. There has also been discussion and preparation work done to expand childcare services; this includes a pilot program for the provision of childcare services for public services. Expansion of affordable and quality childcare services will allow more women to enter the workforce.

Challenges and Setbacks

A range of challenges and setbacks were noted through consultation and WASDA reporting. The key challenges include:

- The perpetuation of domestic violence and violence against women and girls which violates the human rights of women and children.
- The significant burden of domestic work, including household work, chores and care of children, older people and people with disabilities that limit women's economic and educational opportunities.
- The persistence of cultural values and religious views that reinforce gender stereotypes and discrimination.
- The limited resources to be able to implement programs and initiatives that support gender equality and women's empowerment.
- The institutional constraints and challenges such as limited financial and human resources which limit the work of WASDA.

2. Top 5 priorities for accelerating progress over the past 5 years

2. Over the past 5 years, what have been the top 5 priorities for accelerating progress for women and girls in your country through laws, policies and/or programs?

According to the consultations and reporting by WASDA the top priorities for accelerating progress for women and girls over the past 5 years were:

- addressing violence against women and girls
- changing negative social norms and gender stereotypes
- supporting equality and non-discrimination under the law and access to justice
- enhancing gender mainstreaming within national frameworks, policies and programs
- enabling participation of women and girls in sports.





3. Prevention of discrimination and rights of marginalised women and girls

3. Over the past 5 years, what specific actions have you taken to prevent discrimination and promote the rights of marginalised groups of women and girls?

Over the past 5 years, Nauru has taken actions to support the rights of marginalised groups of women and girls, particularly school children and people with disabilities. In the context of Nauru, marginalised groups include the elderly, people with disabilities, children and women, asylum seekers, refugees, and women and girls who are not Nauruan nationals.⁴

In 2023, the Government of Nauru adopted the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities Act 2023. The Act defines the rights of persons with disabilities across a range of areas in alignment with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). Under the Act, a register of people with disabilities must be established and a National Disability Strategy to support the realisation of the rights of people with disabilities is to be developed. The Act also stipulates the establishment of the Nauru Disability Coordinating Council to support the development of the National Disability Strategy and provide advice on implementation of government policies, plans and consultation processes. The states that the Council is to include representation from the Department of Justice and Border Control, Department of Education, Department of Health and Medical Services, Department of Finance and Sustainable Development, Bureau of Statistics, Public Service and non-government organisations. As well, the Department of Women's and Social Development Affairs (WASDA) are also part of the Council. This Act states that the National Disability Strategy shall, "recognise that women and girls with disabilities are subject to multiple discrimination and provide for measures to ensure the rights of women and girls with disabilities are protected".⁵

4. Crises affecting implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA)

4. Over the past 5 years, how has the confluence of different crises affected the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in your country, and what measures have you taken to prevent their negative impact on progress for women and girls?

As a remote Pacific Island state, Nauru faces a range of crises. These relate to the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change and food security. The COVID-19 pandemic had a social and economic impact on Nauru, as with many countries throughout the Pacific and beyond. To mitigate the impacts of increased economic challenges, which produced a range of social impacts, WASDA increased awareness raising of services, reporting and preventing increased domestic violence during the pandemic. During the pandemic it became clear that the impacts of the pandemic

⁴ Government of Nauru. (2020). Tomano Declaration: 1st Nauru National Women's Summit 2019.

⁵ Republic of Nauru. (2023). Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities Act 2023. p. 11. http://ronlaw.gov.nr/nauru_lpms/files/acts/95134b1ef4c152d22881f6ee1728ecb3.pdf



and other crises produced many gendered impacts, and there is a need for responses to be informed by gender-responsive policy measures. WASDA has therefore initiated the development of the Enabling Gender-responsive and Inclusive Climate Change, Disaster Risk and Pandemic Response Policy, it is anticipated this policy will be endorsed in later 2024.

5. Priorities for accelerating progress in the next 5 years

5. Over the next 5 years, what are the priorities for accelerating progress for women and girls in your country through laws, policies and/or programs?

Through the consultation process for developing this report and insights from WASDA, the priorities for the next 5 years to accelerate progress for women and girls through laws, policies and programs have been made clear. The priorities for the next 5 years are:

- supporting access to health care, including sexual and reproductive health, and reproductive rights
- improving education, training and lifelong learning for women and girls
- changing negative social norms and gender stereotypes
- eliminating violence against women and girls
- increasing women's political participation and representation
- enabling women's economic empowerment
- enabling gender mainstreaming in relation to climate change, disaster risk and pandemic preparedness and response
- strengthening gender policy, gender mainstreaming,
- implementing gender-responsive budgeting, and
- increasing the collection of sex and gender-disaggregated data.

Section 3: Progress across the 12 critical areas of concern

Inclusive development, shared prosperity and decent work

Critical areas of concern:

- **Women and poverty**
- **Women and the economy**
- **Human rights of women**
- **The girl child**



6. Gender equality in the world of work

6. Over the past 5 years, what actions has your country taken to advance gender equality in the world of work (including informal and non-standard employment as well as entrepreneurship)?

Over the past 5 years, the Government of Nauru has taken measures to increase women’s economic empowerment and improve workplaces for women in the formal sector. Data from the 2019 mini census provides insight into the labour market. Among the working-age population of 7,244 people, 50% are men and 50% are women. Of working-age people, 4,580 people or 63% of people (74% of men and 52% of women) are in the labour force. Among people in the labour force, the proportion of employed and unemployed are similar between men and women – 82% (82% of men and 81% of women) are employed and 18% (18% of men and 19% of women) are unemployed.⁶ These statistics indicate a 22% gender gap in the labour force participation.

Among people over the age of 15 years, the activity status of people varied between women and men. These statistics indicate that fewer (19% less) women work in government, NGOs or in the hotel or hospitality sector than men, and significantly more women (22%) are taking care of the household or family members.⁷

Table 1: Activity status of males and females

Activity Status	Total %	Male %	Female %
Working in government, NGO or hotel sector	51	61	42
Looking for work	11	13	10
Taking care of household or family	18	7	29
Studying or training	9	9	10
Other activities	11	10	9

Women in the public services are entitled to maternity leave. As per the Public Service Act 2016, women who have worked for the public service for a minimum of 6 months are entitled to 12 weeks paid maternity leave and men who work in the public service are entitled to 2 weeks paid paternity leave. Women working in the private sector or the informal sector are not yet entitled to maternity leave by law. However, some private sector organisations do provide paid maternity leave at their own discretion.

Another action taken to improve workplaces for women is the development of the Sexual Harassment Policy for the public service. The draft policy defines sexual harassment as unwanted or unwelcome behaviour of a sexual nature that makes or leads to a person feeling offended, uncomfortable, humiliated or intimidated. It notes various forms of sexual harassment as verbal conduct, non-verbal conduct, physical conduct, online and electronic harassment and

⁶ Government of Nauru and SPC. (2023). Education and Economic Activity in Nauru. https://pacificdata.org/data/dataset/spc_nru_2019_phc_v01_m

⁷ Government of Nauru and SPC. (2023). Education and Economic Activity in Nauru. https://pacificdata.org/data/dataset/spc_nru_2019_phc_v01_m



abuse and quid pro quo. As well, the draft policy commits to provide a safe environment for all its employees and offer protection from sexual harassment. It recognises the impacts of harassment on those who experience it, the negative impact on work environment and negative perceptions of the public service when sexual harassment takes place. The policy takes a zero-tolerance view on any form of sexual harassment and provides a framework for investigation of allegations and disciplinary measures when an offence is confirmed. It is expected that the policy will be finalised and endorsed in 2024.

Nauru faces challenges in economic development due to resource constraints. However, the government are working to provide training to provide technical and vocational education and training (TVET) to support women's economic empowerment. Nauru TVET offers a range of training programs including courses for example in hospitality, plumbing, digital technology, engineering and other areas.

The Tomano Declaration which resulted from a national women's summit held in 2019 highlights the importance of economic empowerment of women under outcome six. It calls for training on financial literacy, credit and loan services from financial institutions to support women owned businesses.

7. Recognition, reduction and redistribution of unpaid care and domestic work

7. In the past 5 years, what actions has your country taken to recognise, reduce and/or redistribute unpaid care and domestic work, promote work-life and family balance, and strengthen the rights of paid care workers?

In Nauru, as is the case in many countries, women are primarily responsible for unpaid care and domestic work. As noted in the statistics above, for 29% of women their main activity was taking care of the household or family. Women who are employed in either the formal or informal sectors are also responsible for doing most of the care and domestic work.

In the past 5 years, several actions have been implemented which relate to the unpaid care and household work primarily done by women. As described above, maternity leave of 12 weeks and paternity leave of 2 weeks are provided for public servants when they have a child. The provision of paternity leave recognises and has the potential to redistribute the care work of looking after a newborn and other unpaid care and domestic work.

There are several social protection measures in place that provide cash transfers for children and people with disabilities (social protection programs are described in greater detail in section 11). The Disabled Benefit provides support to assist with basic living expenses for people with severe disabilities. This may help to ease the burden of financial expenses often taken on by carers of people with disabilities. Cash transfer programs to support children include the Birth Benefit, a one-off payment to assist mothers with the birth of a new child; the School Feeding Program provides daily lunches to school children; and the Back-to-School Payment provides



funds of AUD\$50 per term to address financial obstacles to attending school. These programs reduce the financial burden of attending school, as well as the burden of providing and preparing daily lunches for school children.

Another initiative is the Zero to Three Child Development Centre which was established in 2021. It aspires to provide Nauruan children with ‘the best start to life.’ The centre brings together services provided by the Ministry of Health, Department of Education and WASDA. The centre provides training to parents on child development, health and parenting. It also provides specific programs for new mothers who are under the age of 20 years. The centre further provides referral services for children and families who need support in relation to health, domestic violence, child abuse and neglect.

The government also acknowledges the limited childcare services available. WASDA has been advocating on this issue for several years now with government and development partners. The government is currently discussing the development of a pilot program to provide childcare services for parents of children 0-3 years of age with the assistance of development partners. This will enable women to work and provide care, support and learning for their children.

8. Reduction of the gender digital divide

8. In the past 5 years, what actions has your country taken to reduce the gender digital divide?

NSDS 2019–2030 recognises the importance of information and communication technologies (ICT) to support education and economic development. A large proportion of the population uses the internet; data from 2021 indicates that 84% of the population use the internet.⁸ Facebook is by far the most used form of social media, with 97% of the population reported as using the platform and 4% reported as using Twitter (X).⁹ There is no sex-disaggregated data available on internet and social media use. However, anecdotal data indicates that there is high access for women and men and among all ages including youth, children and older persons.

The Cybercrime Act 2015 prohibits harassment using electronic communication to coerce, intimidate, harass or cause emotional distress to a person, and prohibits the production, distribution, possession and other actions related to child pornography.¹⁰ The Act provides protection for women and girls who may experience technology-facilitated gender-based violence.

⁸ World Bank. (2024). Individuals using the Internet (% of the population) – Nauru. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/IT.NET.USER.ZS?locations=NR>

⁹ Statscounter. (2024). Social Media Stats in Nauru – June 2024. <https://gs.statcounter.com/social-media-stats/all/nauru>

¹⁰ Government of Nauru. (2015). Republic of Nauru Cybercrime Act 2015. http://ronlaw.gov.nr/nauru_lpms/files/acts/a59d9691f5a195412b877493a2a95e8b.pdf



9. Macroeconomic and fiscal policy environment and implementation of Beijing Platform for Action

9. In the past 5 years, how has the macroeconomic and fiscal policy environment affected the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in your country, and what macroeconomic policies has your country implemented in support of a more gender-equal economy?

Over the past 5 years, Nauru has faced macroeconomic challenges but has continued to work towards the implementation of initiatives to support gender equality. Nauru faces macroeconomic challenges due to its location, size, resource limitations and the impacts of climate change. As a small island state, it is far from major economic centres. The size and location of Nauru means that there are challenges in terms of transportation, economies of scale, and high costs of infrastructure and provision of services. Nauru is import dependent due to the limited arable land. There are also limited options for economic growth.¹¹

There is strong support for the implementation of gender responsive budgeting. The Tomano Declaration 2019 reasserted support for gender responsive budgeting and recommended that, “there should be a gender lens applied in relation to budgetary processes within government” (p. 6).¹² There is also political will for gender responsive budgeting which is being championed by Minister Charmaine Scotty, she states that it can support, “decision-making processes, institutions can better identify and address systemic barriers to women’s empowerment and promote gender equality.”¹³

In 2022, the Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability (PEFA) Gender Responsive Budgeting Assessment Report was jointly produced by the Government of Nauru and the PEFA Secretariat. The assessment documents work that the government has undertaken to progress gender equality. It found that although the government has not yet introduced gender-responsive budget practices, there are policies which support gender mainstreaming. The assessment also found that gender analysis is increasingly becoming a key component of project appraisal and assessment.¹⁴

From 2017 a cabinet paper proposed and was approved to implement an increase of import duty on alcohol due to the strong links between alcohol abuse and violence against women and children. There was a corresponding expenditure increase to support the welfare of women and children in a domestic violence safe house.

The government plans to work towards implementing gender-responsive budgeting measures. It has requested technical assistance from development partners to support this, and to

¹¹ ADB. (2023). Asian Development Bank Member Fact Sheet Nauru. <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/27748/nau-2023.pdf>

¹² Government of Nauru. (2020). Tomano Declaration: 1st Nauru National Women’s Summit 2019.

¹³ Ligaiula, P. (2024). Policy and capacity building key to advancing gender, Nauru tells UN CSW. *Pacnews*. <https://pina.com.fj/2024/03/13/policy-and-capacity-building-key-to-advancing-gender-nauru-tells-un-csw/>

¹⁴ Government of Nauru. (2022). Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability (PEFA) Gender Responsive Budgeting Assessment. <https://www.pefa.org/sites/default/files/2022-11/NR-Aug22-GRPFBM-Public%20with%20PEFA%20Check.pdf>



supplement capacity and build local expertise to implement gender-responsive budgeting. This work is to be done jointly with the Department of Finance, WASDA and development partners.

Recently, the Government of Nauru signed a grant agreement with the Asian Development Bank to assist Nauru to strengthen gender-responsive fiscal sustainability by implementing policy and institutional reforms. There are 3 areas of reform:

1. Fiscal and debt management;
2. Governance of state-owned enterprises; and
3. Fiscally responsible support for vulnerable groups including women.

Poverty eradication, social protection and social services

Critical areas of concern:

- **Women and poverty**
- **Education and training of women**
- **Human rights of women**
- **The girl child**

10. Reducing poverty among women and girls

10. In the last 5 years, what actions has your country taken to reduce/eradicate poverty among women and girls?

In the last 5 years, the government has introduced social protection measures that aim to reduce poverty and hardship, particularly among women and girls. It has also developed a social protection strategy and implementation plan that has a range of gender-responsive measures to address disparities experienced by women and girls. These measures are described in detail in section 11.

The latest data on poverty and hardship in Nauru is available through a report that analyses the Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) 2012-13. The HIES data suggests that 24% of the people are living below the basic-needs poverty line (BNPL); 8% are highly vulnerable (within 20% of BNPL); 15% are vulnerable (within 20–50% of BNPL); 21% are potentially vulnerable (within 50–100% of BNPL); and 32% are not poor or vulnerable. The data indicates that nearly half (47%) of people are vulnerable or living below the BNPL.¹⁵

¹⁵ Moustafa, A. (2014). Nauru Hardship and Poverty Report Analysis of the 2012/13 Household Income and Expenditure Survey. UNDP. Suva, Fiji. https://nauru-data.sprep.org/system/files/Nauru_UNDP_Hardship%20and%20Poverty%20Report_2012_2013.PDF



When it came to differences in terms of poverty and sex, female-headed households are more vulnerable to poverty than male-headed households. Among households headed by females, 18% were below the BNPL and 7% were vulnerable (within 20% of BNPL). The proportions were slightly lower among male-headed households with 16% of male-headed households below the BNPL and 5% of male-headed households being vulnerable. Children are also vulnerable to poverty and hardship, within 22% of children living in households less than the BNPL. Key issues that underpin poverty and vulnerability are the limited availability and affordability of healthier foods and limited employment options.¹⁶

11. Improving access to social protection for women and girls

11. In the past 5 years, what actions has your country taken to improve access to social protection for women and girls?

The Social Welfare Division within the Ministry of Finance was established in 2020 to provide advice on social welfare policy and priorities. In Nauru, social protection includes social insurance, social assistance and labour market programs. Social insurance is provided by the Nauru Superannuation Scheme (NSS) through the Nauru Superannuation Act 2018. Through NSS, both employers and employees contribute 5% of salary to the scheme, which is mandatory for all employers. There is also a separate Parliamentary Pension Fund which was established in 2008. It provides a pension to Members of Parliament who have served an aggregate period of 9 years or more.

In terms of women and social insurance, there is no sex-disaggregated data available through the NSS. However, it is likely that women receive lower levels of superannuation than men, given that 42% of women were engaged in formal employment, compared to 61% of men.¹⁷ The Aged Benefit as a pension is particularly important in providing income support to women over the age of 60 years. Women make up a low proportion of parliamentarians and would likely benefit less from the Parliamentary Pension Fund; for example, currently 2 of 19 Members of Parliament are women.

There are a range of social assistance programs in Nauru including:

- **Birth Benefit** – was introduced in 2005 to assist mothers in meeting the costs associated with the birth of a new child. It provides a one-off payment of AUD\$300 for employed women and AUD\$600 for unemployed women.
- **Death Benefit** – was introduced in 2005 to assist the family of a deceased person to cover funeral and related expenses. It provides a one-off payment of AUD\$2,000 per deceased person.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Government of Nauru and SPC. (2023). Education and Economic Activity in Nauru. https://pacificdata.org/data/dataset/spc_nru_2019_phc_v01_m



- **Aged Benefit** – was introduced in 2005 to assist with basic living expenses. It provides a monthly payment of AUD\$500 for people aged 60–69 years and AUD\$600 for people over the age of 70 years.
- **Disabled Benefit** – was introduced in 2008 to assist disabled people with basic living expenses. It provides a monthly payment of AUD\$500 for persons with severe disabilities.
- **School Feeding Program** – was introduced in 2013 to improve nutritional intake and school attendance. It provides daily meals to school children.
- **Education Assistance Trust Scheme** – was introduced in 2016 to improve educational attendance. It provides AUD\$5 per day attended per school year upon completion of year 12 to students enrolled and attending school from the age of 4 to 18 years.
- **2020 Back-to-School Payment** – was introduced in 2020 to decrease obstacles for children to attend school and increase school attendance. It provides AUD\$50 per student per term to parents or legal guardian of children.¹⁸

Social assistance programs in Nauru take a universal approach and are accessible to women, men, girls and boys. Several of the programs also aim to support children and care of children and persons with disabilities. This is important as unpaid care work in Nauru, as in many countries, is predominantly done by women.

There are several active labour market policies that aim to support people to secure employment. Seasonal worker programs exist with Australia and New Zealand. The Recognised Seasonal Employer scheme has existed with New Zealand since 2007 and the Australian Seasonal Worker Program since 2009. The Pacific Australia Labour Mobility scheme was introduced by Australia in 2018. Through these programs, Nauruan citizens who meet the criteria can apply to undertake seasonal or temporary work in New Zealand or Australia. Part of the aim of the program is to provide employment, particularly for youth.

During 2020-21, the Government of Nauru developed the National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS) 2022–2032. It has a long-term vision of seeking ‘to establish a gender-responsive and socially inclusive social protection system that ensures relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, and financial sustainability of all existing and potential future social protection programs to protect the population from poverty and deprivation and to reduce persistently high inequality in the country’ (p.3).¹⁹

The strategy has 7 principles. These are:

1. Protection from poverty and deprivation
2. A life cycle approach
3. Empowerment of vulnerable groups and equity
4. Transformational social protection

¹⁸ Government of Nauru. (2022). National Social Protection Strategy 2022-2032. https://naurufinance.info/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Nauru-Social-Protection-Strategy-published-version_Final.pdf

¹⁹ Ibid.



5. Shock responsiveness and resilience
6. Needs-based and evidence-based measures
7. Good governance.

Principle 3, empowerment of vulnerable groups and equity, recognises that women along with persons with disabilities, people engaged in informal employment, the elderly, children, unemployed people and people engaged in care work experience greater levels of poverty and require greater support.

The strategy recognises other aspects of gender inequality. It notes the need to mainstream gender across all monitoring and evaluation systems and the importance of collecting sex-disaggregated data. Collection of sex-disaggregated data will provide insights on gender disparities in accessing social insurance, social assistance and active labour market programs. Strategy 4 focuses on adopting appropriate, gender-responsive and sustainable social protection programs in the future to achieve a life cycle approach. It highlights the importance of considering the needs of working-age women who are sole parents, caregivers, living with disabilities and/or are pregnant. Strategy 5, focused on labour market programs, also acknowledges the need to consider gender-specific needs when designing labour market programs.

Within the NSPS 2022–2032 Implementation Plan, there are several activities that aim to support gender-responsive actions. These include but are not limited to:

- Undertake a capacity and resource analysis of the Social Welfare Division to assess the division's capacity gaps, skills and needs in light of the division's additional responsibilities under this strategy. Ensure that the assessment is gender responsive and assess also whether the workforce is gender diverse.
- Review, update or develop new legislation, Acts and policies related to social protection to further strengthen their impacts. This includes ensuring that these are gender sensitive, evidence based and shock responsive.
- Set up appropriate gender-responsive delivery systems for the country's social assistance programs to improve the administration of social protection.
- Establish a centralised digital system that supports a gender-responsive grievance redress mechanism.
- Produce annual sex-disaggregated social protection monitoring reports. Ensure the quantifiable gender-responsive outcomes and outputs under the NSPS monitoring and evaluation framework are included in the monitoring reports.
- Produce a sex-disaggregated impact assessment, specifying the impact of each social protection program on relevant indicators.
- Ensure the measurement of the relevant gender-responsive outcomes and outputs under outcome statement 1 of the NSPS monitoring and evaluation framework.



- Develop a gender-responsive social protection program targeted at poor and vulnerable individuals of working age, delivering cash transfers and supporting labour market integration.
- Design and implement a comprehensive gender-responsive review of the Nauru Education Assistance Trust Scheme and the Back-to-School Scheme, assessing whether both programs meet their objectives.
- Facilitate access to conditional credit that can only be spent on employment services, career counselling and services targeted at self-employment and entrepreneurship. Ensure this takes into consideration gender-specific needs.

The implementation plan therefore includes a range of initiatives to acknowledge gender disparities, consider and address the specific needs of women and girls, and improve collection of disaggregated data. A NSPS working committee has been formed and - includes WASDA.

12. Improving health outcomes for women and girls

12. In the past 5 years, what actions has your country taken to improve health outcomes for women and girls in your country?

Over the past 5 years, the health sector within Nauru has been focused on the COVID-19 response, as was the case with many countries. Nauru faces several health challenges due to its size, lack of arable land, high reliance on imported foods and remote location. Due to both the remote location and small size of the population specialised health services are limited.

Nauru has a relatively low life expectancy. In 2022, the overall life expectancy was 64 years old – 68 years old for women and 61 years old for men.²⁰ The maternal mortality ratio is 0 per 100,000 live births with 100% of deliveries conducted by trained health personnel.²¹ For the period July 2021 to June 2022, both the early neonatal mortality rate (deaths 0-<7 days) and the neonatal mortality rate (deaths 0-28 days) were 20.8 deaths per 1,000 live births.²²

Data on the sexual and reproductive health of women and girls indicates that 24% women aged 15–49 years use some form of contraception.²³ The latest available data from the Demographic and Health Survey 2007 data indicates that 24% of married women in Nauru have an unmet

²⁰ World Bank. (2024). Life expectancy at birth, total (years) – Nauru. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.DYN.LE00.IN?locations=NR>

²¹ MHMS. (2022) Annual Report 2021-2022, Nauru: Ministry of Health and Medical Services.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.



need for family planning. Unmet family planning needs were higher among younger women, with 37% of women aged 20–24 having an unmet need for family planning.²⁴

Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) are a significant challenge for Nauru. Data from 2023 indicates that 66% of females and 61% of males aged 18 and over were obese and 89% of females and 88% of males were overweight.²⁵ Among children and adolescents aged 5–19 years, 33% of girls and 33% of boys were obese and 68% of girls and 62% of boys were overweight. The high prevalence of NCDs is also noted as a factor that increases the unpaid care work women undertake to look after older people and people with disabilities who are affected by NCDs, while also experiencing the impacts of NCDs themselves.

Improved access to health care including sexual and reproductive health is a priority identified during consultations for this report. It is also a priority within the Nauru National Women’s Policy 2024-2034. The An Towepo Declaration that resulted from the 2nd Micronesian Ministers for Women Conference held in Nauru in April 2024 also highlighted NCDs, women’s health and sexual and reproductive health and rights, and cancer as key outcomes. It specifically recommended the need to address NCDs through improved screening, early diagnosis and treatment. In terms of sexual and reproductive health, it is a priority to increase support for accessible prenatal care, access to contraception, services for rural and remote women, and screening and services for cervical and breast cancers.

In 2023, the Department of Health and Medical Services have developed and endorsed *Guidelines and Manual for Breast, Cervical and Prostate Cancer Prevention, Screening & Early Detection: Breast Health & Screening Mammography: Cancer Control*. The implementation of these guidelines will significantly improve outcomes for women facing breast and cervical cancer. They can also enable girls aged 11–13 years to be vaccinated for HPV (human papillomavirus) and improve access and services within the public health reproductive women’s health clinic.

13. Improving education outcomes and skills for women and girls

13. In the past 5 years, what actions has your country taken to improve education outcomes and skills for women and girls, including in sectors where they are underrepresented?

Over the past 5 years, data has shown that girls are outperforming boys in terms of attendance and attainment in education. In primary and secondary school, boys have lower rates of attendance than girls. This is a common issue in many Pacific countries. Gross attendance rate in primary school for girls is 100% and 102% for boys; at the secondary level it is 79% among girls

²⁴ Nauru Bureau of Statistics, SPC and Macro International Inc. (2007). Nauru 2007 Demographic and Health Survey, Noumea: The Pacific Community.

²⁵ Global Nutrition Report. (2023) Country Nutrition Profiles: Nauru. <https://globalnutritionreport.org/resources/nutrition-profiles/oceania/micronesia/nauru/#:~:text=Nauru%20is%20%27on%20course%27%20to%20meet%20the%20target%20of%20stunting,years%20of%20age%20are%20affected.>



and 64% among boys; and at the technical and vocational education and training (TVET) level it is 17% among women and 17% among men.²⁶ The number of out-of-school children is higher among boys – for children aged 6–11 years, 9% of girls and 13% of boys are out of school. Among 12–17 years olds, 28% of boys and 21% of girls are out of school.

In terms of attainment, among the population over the age of 25 years primary school was the highest level of schooling among 3% of boys and 1% of girls; secondary school was the highest level among 90% of boys and 92% of girls; and tertiary was the highest level among 6% of boys 6% of girls (1% of boys and 1% of girls obtained other level of education).²⁷ These statistics indicate that overall girls outperform boys in terms of education, including at the tertiary level. However, after education is attained, women’s participation in the workforce is significantly lower. This remains a challenge for Nauru, the limited childcare care services are a key barrier in women’s transition and retention in the workforce.

Participation in sports is an area where efforts have been made to improve the skills of women and girls. It is much less common for women and girls than men and boys to play sports in Nauru and for these activities to be resourced. WASDA has provided equipment and training for sports programs for women and girls.

14. Economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and gender gaps

14. What actions has your country taken to ensure that economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic closes gender gaps in poverty, employment, social protection, education, and/or health that the pandemic has exacerbated?

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government of Nauru took several measures to address the health, economic and social impacts of the pandemic. In March 2020, a state of emergency was declared and a COVID-19 task force was formed. As well, quarantine and travel restrictions were put in place which meant the virus reached Nauru at a later stage of the pandemic. Vaccinations were provided which, along with travel restrictions, meant the COVID-19 mortality rate was low.

The government managed the pandemic to mitigate the impacts on its people. During 2020 and 2021, there were no school closures which meant that children did not miss out on learning as was the case in many other countries. Borders and transportation connectivity remained open to ensure food security, as a significant proportion of food and necessities are imported. The negative economic impacts were less than was forecasted, due to the cash reserves and budget surpluses being available to continue employment in the public service, government services

²⁶ Government of Nauru and SPC. (2023). Education and Economic Activity in Nauru. https://pacificdata.org/data/dataset/spc_nru_2019_phc_v01_m

²⁷ Ibid.



and the provision of social assistance.²⁸ Support from development partners was also provided for medical equipment, quarantine facilities, and repairs and maintenance to the hospital.

In 2022 when the Corona virus was spreading within Nauru, welfare support was provided to individuals as ex-gratia payments, on two occasions. Payments were made to government and state-owned enterprise employees, pensioners and people receiving Disabled Benefit. Larger payments were provided to those on lower incomes: people with a fortnightly income less than AUD\$500 received AUD\$600; people with a fortnightly income of \$501 to \$800 received AUD\$400; people with a fortnightly income more than AUD\$800 received AUD\$200. For the second payment, AUD\$1,000, AUD\$800; and AUD\$600 respectively were provided as additional welfare support.

WASDA implemented several initiatives to deal with the impacts of the pandemic that had the potential to negatively impact women. To address the issue of gender-based violence increasing during the pandemic, WASDA developed new awareness-raising initiatives with the aim of preventing violence and ensuring that women were aware of support services. During the pandemic the government-run safe house was refurbished and reopened with the support of development partner assistance. As well a country-specific video animation about the safety of women and children in their homes during the COVID-19 pandemic was produced and disseminated online.²⁹

Freedom from violence, stigma and stereotypes

Critical areas of concern:

- Violence against women
- Human rights of women
- Women and media
- The girl child

15. Forms of gender-based violence

15. Over the past 5 years, which forms of gender-based violence, and in which specific contexts or settings, has your country prioritised for action?

Over the past 5 years, efforts have been made to address intimate partner violence and violence against children, particularly in the domestic or household context. The Domestic Violence and Family Protection Act 2017 is the main legislation which supports the elimination of violence

²⁸ Government of Nauru. (2022). National Social Protection Strategy 2022-2032. https://naurufinance.info/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Nauru-Social-Protection-Strategy-published-version_Final.pdf

²⁹ Pacific Women Lead and Government of Nauru. (2022). COVID-19: Staying Safe at Home (Nauru). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PYcPfoiOrLI>



against women and girls.³⁰ The Crimes Act 2016 includes amendments that support survivors of violence against women and girls.³¹ The Child Protection and Welfare Act 2016, stipulates arrangements for the protection of children, carers including foster and kinship carers and the rights of children under the law.³²

The high rate of violence against women is a challenge in Nauru. The Family Health and Support Study conducted in 2013 found that 48% of ever-partnered women who participated in the study have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by a partner at least once in their lifetime.³³ The study showed that 47% of ever-partnered women experienced physical violence and 21% of ever-partnered women experienced sexual violence at least once in their lifetime, while 25% of ever-pregnant women experienced physical violence in at least 1 pregnancy. It was also found that women experienced high rates of controlling behaviours.

Data from the Nauru Judiciary Department provides an indication of reporting of domestic violence. As is the case in many contexts, the prevalence of domestic violence is much higher than the administrative data on reporting of domestic violence.

Table 2: Domestic violence reporting to Judiciary Department

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023 ³⁴
Case filed	33	18	12	24	18	13	7
Granted	33	15	11	19	18	12	7
Interim	33	15	10	17	17	11	4
Permanent	0	0	1	2	1	1	3
Ongoing	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Not granted	0	3	1	5	0	1	0
Disposed	33	18	12	24	18	13	4

16. Actions to address gender-based violence

16. In the past 5 years, what actions has your country prioritised to address gender-based violence?

Over the past 5 years, governmentthe Government of Nauru has worked to maintain and expand efforts to address gender-based violence. This work has been led by WASDA. It has

³⁰ Republic of Nauru. (2017). Domestic Violence and Family Protection Act 2017. http://ronlaw.gov.nr/nauru_lpms/files/acts/5c1134ca869c492c2a97a19a414c99e3.pdf

³¹ Republic of Nauru. (2016). Crimes Act 2016. http://ronlaw.gov.nr/nauru_lpms/files/acts/f68fdcd4363b5f0b4630ac4c9c9f1202.pdf

³² Republic of Nauru. (2016). Child Protection and Welfare Act 2016. http://ronlaw.gov.nr/nauru_lpms/files/acts/956a6f853ffd4e10f0cecdf4c76ba5d2.pdf

³³ Nauru Ministry of Home Affairs. (2013). Nauru Family Health and Support Study: An exploratory study on violence against women. <https://pacific.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/NauruFHSSReportweb.pdf>

³⁴ Data is only to 7 July 2023.



maintained and expanded existing services, addressed gender-based violence related to the COVID-19 pandemic, and expanded services and support.

There were a range of initiatives to address gender-based violence. In 2020, the safe house for survivors of domestic violence was renovated and refurbished. This has helped to ensure that the safe house is available for women and children who require support. A helpline has been created through a partnership between the government and mobile phone provider Digicel which allows people to call for assistance. There are 2 trained counsellors employed full-time within WASDA who provide support for women and girls.

Nauru has participated in and acted as chair of the Pacific Community (SPC) Regional Working Group on the Implementation of Family Protection and Domestic Violence Legislation. This serves as an opportunity to learn about challenges and best practice from other Pacific Island countries, as well as share lessons and achievements in the Nauru legislative context.

More recently, WASDA has identified gaps and shortfalls within existing legislation, specifically the Domestic Violence and Family Protection Act 2017 in relation to reporting and legal charges under the act. WASDA will soon initiate a review of the legislation so it can be improved.

17. Strategies to prevent gender-based violence

17. In the past 5 years, what strategies has your country used to prevent gender-based violence?

WASDA has continued its efforts to raise awareness in innovative ways. This has included the use of social media, press releases, newsletters and campaigns. As well as ongoing work going out to districts and communities to conduct workshops on gender-based violence, for example White Ribbon Day events, socialising the Domestic Violence and Family Protection Act 2017.

There has been a new focus on men and boys, with the aim of educating them on gender-based violence and challenging gendered social norms around gender-based violence. Men and boys have also been engaged as spokespersons to enhance advocacy efforts.

18. Prevention and response to technology-facilitated gender-based violence

18. In the past 5 years, what actions has your country taken to prevent and respond to technology-facilitated gender-based violence (e.g. online sexual harassment, online stalking, non-consensual sharing of intimate images)?

Over the past 5 years, the issue of technology-facilitated gender-based violence has become apparent. This is relevant to Nauru as a country with high rates of internet penetration and



usage, particularly Facebook, which is the most popular form of social media and used by 97% of the population.³⁵

The Cybercrime Act 2015 prohibits harassment using electronic communication to coerce, intimidate, harass or cause emotional distress to a person, and prohibits the production, distribution, possession and other actions related to child pornography.³⁶ The Act provides protection for women and girls who may experience technology-facilitated gender-based violence. Going forward, the issue of technology-facilitated gender-based violence and awareness of the provisions on harassment within the Cybercrime Act 2015 will be integrated into the awareness-raising and training work of WASDA.

19. Resourcing women’s organisations to prevent and respond to gender-based violence

19. In the past 5 years, what measures has your country taken to resource women’s organisations working to prevent and respond to gender-based violence?

As Nauru is a particularly small country with a limited number of civil society organisations, efforts have been concentrated among a few organisations. WASDA has the lead role in preventing and responding to gender-based violence; as a government department they are supported through the national budget process.

Unique-Lee Violence Prevention Foundation is a civil society organisation that was established in 2018 to spread awareness about gender-based violence. They receive sponsorship support from development partners and work in collaboration with WASDA.

20. Portrayal of women and girls and discrimination in the media

20. In the past 5 years, what actions has your country taken to address the portrayal of women and girls, discrimination and/or gender bias in the media, including social media?

Media in Nauru includes a television station, Nauru Television (NTV), which produces a limited amount of local content, as well as broadcasting content from Australian and New Zealand television. NTV also delivers news content via newsletter and its Facebook page, Nauru Media News – NTV. There is a radio station, Radio Nauru – Nauru Media Bureau which is operated by Nauru Broadcasting Service. It broadcasts local content and content from Radio Australia. The Government of Republic of Nauru also have a Facebook page which disseminates government news and updates.

³⁵ Statscounter. (2024). Social Media Stats in Nauru – June 2024. <https://gs.statcounter.com/social-media-stats/all/nauru>

³⁶ Republic of Nauru. (2015). Republic of Nauru Cybercrime Act 2015. http://ronlaw.gov.nr/nauru_lpms/files/acts/a59d9691f5a195412b877493a2a95e8b.pdf



Women are portrayed in the media for a range of roles as mothers, community members, athletes, workers and leaders and agents of change. Media in Nauru is used as a tool to raise awareness, advocate and provide information to support women and families. For example, is it used to share messaging to speak out about violence against women and to provide information about services to support survivors of domestic violence. Media is also used to profile messaging from leaders, including women leaders who are reaching out to communities. Media is also used as a tool for sharing information on health, education and national events, including International Women's Day, White Ribbon Day and other events which is promoted and celebrated annually by WASDA.

21. Addressing violence against marginalised women and girls

21. In the past 5 years, what actions has your country taken specifically tailored to address violence against marginalised groups of women and girls?

Actions have been taken to support the prevention of violence experienced by marginalised groups of women and girls. For example, the Zero to Three Child Development Centre provides support to young women and girls who become mothers at an early age including single mothers. These women and girls are vulnerable to violence from intimate partners and within their families. When they attend sessions at the Zero to Three Child Development Centre, they are provided with information about services and support relating to gender-based violence.

As well, WASDA has been working to integrate disability across the work they do in advocating for gender equality. In the future, WASDA plans to further integrate disability issues and issues of ageing women across their work.

Participation, accountability and gender-responsive institutions

Critical areas of concern:

- **Women in power and decision-making**
- **Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women**
- **Human rights of women**
- **Women and media**
- **The girl child**



22. Promoting women's participation in public life and decision-making

22. In the past 5 years, what actions and measures has your country taken to promote women's participation in public life and decision-making?

Women's participation in public life and decision-making varies and is overall lower than men's participation. Parliament is made up of 1 house with 19 members, of which 2 are women. In the 2022 elections, 11 of the 77 candidates who ran were women; 2 were elected.³⁷ Within the public service women are well represented in leadership roles, 13 of the 23 government departments are headed by women. As well, women make up a significant number of director and leadership roles in government particularly within the Department of Foreign Affairs.

A study focused on women's leadership roles in the private sector in the Pacific was carried out in 2021 and 2024. In Nauru it found that there were some gains and some losses in comparing data from 2021 and 2024. It found that in Nauru women hold 12% in 2021 and 31% in 2024 of director positions on boards of private sector organisations including state-owned enterprises, with two-thirds (67%) in 2021 and 10% in 2024 having no women directors at all and 11% in 2021 and 40% in 2024 having less than 30% women directors.³⁸ Women are not well represented as board chairs, holding 2 of 10 (20%) in 2021 and 1 of 10 (10%) in 2024 of board chair positions.³⁹ Within government there are several ministries and departments that are headed by women; in 2024 13 of 23 heads of department were women.

Women play a role in leadership and decision-making positions at the district level, many community leaders are women. The introduction of temporary special measures to increase women's leadership at the parliamentary level has been raised but has not been publicly supported at that time. Questions on temporary special measures (TSM) were asked during a referendum process which contained other controversial questions which were opposed.

23. Increasing women's access to expression and participation in decision-making in media

23. In the past 5 years, what actions has your country taken to increase women's access to expression and participation in decision-making in the media, including through ICT?

In Nauru the Secretary of the Media Department is a woman. The media entities of Nauru television (NTV), social media, Nauru Media Bureau sit within the department.

³⁷ Pacific Women in Politics. (2024). Country Profiles Nauru. <https://www.pacwip.org/country-profiles/nauru/>

³⁸ PSDI. (2021). Leadership Matters: Benchmarking Women in Business Leadership in the Pacific. <https://www.pacificpsdi.org/assets/Uploads/PSDI-LeadershipMatters-Web3.pdf>

³⁹ Ibid.



24. Strengthening national women's machinery

24. Please describe your country's current national women's machinery (government entity exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women) and describe the measures that your country taken over the past 5 years to establish and/or strengthen it.

WASDA is the government agency responsible for coordinating, monitoring and providing advisory services on gender equality and social development. Following the Beijing Platform for Action meeting in 1994, an Officer in Charge of the Women's Desk was set up within the Chief Secretary's Office in 1997. Between 1998 and 2020, the Women's Affairs Desk, and later Women's Affairs Division, existed within different government agencies. In 2020, WASDA was established as a standalone department. There are 3 divisions within the department: Gender Mainstreaming, Child Protection and Women's Affairs with approximately 26 staff members across the department.

As stated in WASDA Annual Report 2020-21:

Department of Women and Social Development Affairs (WASDA) strive to create a future in which all people living in Nauru will be viewed and treated equally, in all aspects of life; civil, political, economic, social and cultural.

Our vision is that the vulnerable in Nauru become self-reliant and remain well recognised in their community, well respected and truly empowered.

We seek to continue the role as advocates of women's rights, gender and equality and child protection.

We endeavour to work in the New Normal by promoting women's capacities and driving force of social change especially during this Pandemic and all future pandemics.

25. Mechanisms and tools to mainstream gender equality

25. In the past 5 years, what other mechanisms and tools has your country used to mainstream gender equality across sectors? (e.g. gender focal points in the executive, legislature or judiciary; inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms; gender audits; consultations with women's organisations).

Over the past 5 years, the key tools that have been used to mainstream gender equality include consultation, policy development and the inclusion of gender equality within the national development plan. WASDA has undertaken consultation processes with a range of partners,



including communities across the 14 districts of Nauru, government agencies, state-owned enterprises, the private sector and civil society organisations.

In 2017, the cabinet paper was submitted to implement gender mainstreaming and gender responsive budgeting. WASDA have advocated for a gender lens to budget documents. In 2024, and updated cabinet paper on more comprehensive initiatives for gender responsive budgeting was reintroduced and endorsed. There has been a notable increase in awareness and understanding of gender mainstreaming and gender responsive budgeting. It is recognised as a priority and requirement of government and development partner programs and processes.

To better understand and support the implementation of gender mainstreaming, WASDA has initiated the development of the national Gender Mainstreaming Policy for the public service. It provides guidance on gender mainstreaming through increased knowledge and understanding of gender analysis; removal of barriers to women’s participation in national development; increased representation of women in leadership and decision-making roles; and collection, analysis and application of gender-disaggregated data. NSDS 2019–2030 has the vision of ‘A future where individual, community, business and government partnerships contribute to a sustainable quality of life for all Nauruans.’ The strategy notes that women participated in and demonstrated interest in community consultations to develop the strategy.

26. Addressing violations through a human rights institution

26. If there is a national human rights institution in your country, what measures has it taken to address violations of women’s rights and promote gender equality?

At present, a national human rights institution does not exist in Nauru. Nauru has undergone discussion, consultation on development of legal frameworks and a draft bill for the establishment of a human rights institution, but this has not resulted in an institution being established.

Peaceful and inclusive societies

Critical areas of concern:

- Women and armed conflict
- Human rights of women
- The girl child

27. Building and sustaining peace and inclusive societies

27. In the past 5 years, what actions has your country taken to build and sustain peace, promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, and implement the Women, Peace and Security agenda?



The Government of Nauru is driving work focused on peaceful and inclusive societies that specifically relates to climate, peace and security. Climate change is affecting livelihoods, food security, access to land, economic development and social relations, including gender equality, and ultimately impacting peace and security within affected nations such as Nauru. Nauru, as an advocate in the global climate change sector, is advocating for the impacts of climate change on peace and security to be acknowledged and acted upon.

Within the women, peace and security space, women play an important role as agents for peaceful and inclusive societies. Women play an important cultural role in relation to land ownership and land rights. This plays a role in fostering and sustaining peace in the Nauru context where land ownership is a sensitive topic that requires mediation and is led by women.

Minister Charmaine Scotty is a strong advocate for the women, peace and security agenda. During the meeting of the 68th Commission of the Status of Women, at the UN Security Council Arria Formula Meeting on Women, Peace and Security, she made an intervention and stated that:

Nauru believes that the successful strategies for leveraging synergies include:

1. Ensuring women's meaningful participation in decision-making processes related to conflict prevention, resolution and post-conflict construction.
2. Implementing gender-sensitive policies and programs that address the specific needs and rights of women in conflict-affected areas.
3. Providing training and capacity-building opportunities for women to enhance their skills and knowledge in peacebuilding and conflict resolution.
4. Promoting women's leadership and representation in peace negotiations, mediation efforts, and peacebuilding initiatives.
5. Establishing mechanisms for monitoring and reporting on the implementation of gender equality commitments under CEDAW and the Women, Peace and Security framework.
6. Collaborating with local women's organizations, civil society groups, and grassroots movements to amplify women's voices and perspectives in peace processes.
7. The appointment of a Special Representative on Climate and Security who could strengthen coordination between relevant UN entities to improve the organization's ability to address climate-related security risks.⁴⁰

28. Increasing women's roles in conflict prevention and peacebuilding

28. In the past 5 years, what actions has your country taken to increase the leadership, representation and participation of women in conflict prevention, resolution, peacebuilding,

⁴⁰ Dongobir, J. (2024, March). CSW68 Update. https://www.linkedin.com/posts/josieanndongobir_csw68-nauru-activity-7173894511012507648-Nvq4?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop



humanitarian action and crisis response, at decision-making levels in situations of armed and other conflicts, and in fragile or crisis settings?

As stated above, Nauru is advocating for the impacts of climate change on peace and security to be acknowledged. As well, Nauru have been included in peacekeeping exercises in conflict in international peacekeeping and ensuring women's participation to work towards a gender parity in these exercises.

29. Actions taken to address violation of human rights and humanitarian law

29. In the last 5 years, what actions has your country taken to enhance judicial and non-judicial accountability for violations of international humanitarian law and violations of the human rights of women and girls in situations of armed and other conflicts or humanitarian action and crisis response?

In the last 5 years, Nauru has worked to improve accountability for violations of humanitarian law and human rights of women and girls. Since 2012, a regional processing capacity has existed in which transferees and asylum seekers are temporarily held on Nauru. In 2023, a memorandum of understanding between Nauru and Australia has been signed which states that transferees will be treated with "dignity and respect" including relevant obligations under international human rights law' (p. 3).⁴¹

30. Actions taken to elimination discrimination against girls

30. In the last 5 years, what actions has your country taken to eliminate discrimination against and violations of the rights of the girl child, including adolescent girls?

There are several areas where work is being done to eliminate discrimination against the rights of the girl child, including adolescent girls. Nauru has a relatively high adolescent fertility rate of 71 per 1,000 among adolescent girls aged 15–19 years old, based on 2022 data.⁴² Data from the Demographic and Health Survey 2007 also showed that younger women were more likely to have unmet needs for family planning, with only 43% of 20–24-year-olds having their need for contraception met. It is recognised that adolescent pregnancy is a significant challenge for Nauru, particularly the impacts of stigma associated with adolescent pregnancy which exacerbate the impacts on access to education and employment after birth and later in life. WASDA have been going to schools to conduct sensitisation on young women returning to school.

⁴¹ NA. (2023). Memorandum of Understanding between the Republic of Nauru and Australia on the Enduring Regional Processing Capability in Republic of Nauru. <https://www.dfat.gov.au/sites/default/files/mou-nauru-enduring-regional-processing-capability-sep-2021.pdf>

⁴² World Bank Group. (2024). Adolescent fertility rate (births per 1,000 women ages 15-19) – Nauru. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.ADO.TFRT?locations=NR>



Several initiatives have been developed to support the needs of adolescent girls. The Zero to Three Child Development Centre provides support for adolescent mothers and their children. Further, recent guidelines on breast, cervical and prostate cancer prevention, screening and early detection includes efforts to address HPV for girls which targets girls aged 11–13 years. This includes educational campaigns for the HPV vaccine programs to increase awareness of cervical cancer prevention.

Environmental conservation, protection and rehabilitation

Critical areas of concern:

- **Human rights of women**
- **Women and environment**
- **The girl child**

31. Integrating gender perspectives in environment and climate change

31. In the past 5 years, what actions has your country taken to integrate gender perspectives and concerns into environmental policies, including climate change adaptation and mitigation, biodiversity conservation and land degradation?

In the past 5 years, the links between climate change and gender equality have not been well established within the environment and climate change sector. However, recent discussions and efforts indicate that is changing.

Nauru is vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, including coastal flooding, drought and sea-level rise. Most people live along the coast as phosphate mining was concentrated on the interior of the island. It is well established that certain groups of people are more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, particularly older people, children, women and people with disabilities.

Nauru has several frameworks focused on climate change and disaster reduction. The Updated Nationally Determined Contribution (2022) defines the country's ambitions to address climate change. It sets out targets and actions to achieve climate and sustainable development objectives. The Nauru Climate Change Policy (2020) provides a framework to address the impacts of climate change by integrating climate change into Nauru's decision-making, including the natural environment, energy generation and infrastructure. The Republic of Nauru Framework for Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction (RONAdapt) (2015) documents the joint climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction risks as well as the requirement to mainstream them into national and sector planning. These frameworks include gender equality and social inclusion considerations to varying degrees. There is awareness of the shortcomings of existing policies and future policy frameworks will include gender and social inclusion considerations. The Department of Climate Change and National Resilience is working



with the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Program to develop a national adaptation plan. This plan will include an analysis of gender and social inclusion. The initiative is supported by the Green Climate Fund.

To comprehensively support gender equality and climate change and disaster risk initiatives, WASDA has initiated the development of the Enabling Gender Responsive and Inclusive Climate Change, Disaster Risk and Pandemic Response Policy. This policy provides guidance to enhance climate change response through increasing women's participation in decision-making, gender analysis and mainstreaming, collection of disaggregated data and allocation of resources for gender responsiveness.

32. Gender perspectives and disaster risk reduction

32. In the past 5 years, what actions has your country taken to integrate gender perspectives into policies and programs for disaster risk reduction and building environmental and climate resilience?

The National Disaster Risk Management Act 2016 is the legislation which defines the governance of disaster risk reduction and response. The Act includes reference to not excluding people from disaster assistance based on gender, disability, age and other factors. The Act recommends that women's groups being part of Community Disaster Management Committees. The aim of the Gender Responsive and Inclusive Climate Change, Disaster Risk and Pandemic Response Policy will enhance gender perspectives within disaster preparedness and response as well as climate resilience.

Further information is provided above in section 31.

Section 4: National institutions and process

33. National strategy for gender equality

33. Please describe your country's national strategy or action plan for gender equality, including its name, the period it covers, its priority, funding and alignment with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the targets under SDG 5.

The Nauru Women's Affairs Office established the first National Plan of Action 1998–2004, which was revised and updated to the 2005–2015 plan. In 2014, the first iteration of the Nauru National Women's Policy 2014–2024 was drafted. –During the last five years, two National Women's



Summits were held in 2019 and 2022. The first summit produced the Tomano Declaration which provided recommendations on improving health, violence against women and girls, education and training.

An updated Nauru National Women's Policy 2024-2034 was drafted in 2024 based on recent consultations and insights gathered by the Department of Women's and Social Development Affairs during the national women's summits. There are six policy outcomes which focus on:

1. Increased participation of women in leadership and decision-making roles
2. Accelerate action to eliminate violence against women and girls
3. Enhance economic empowerment of women and equity in the workplace
4. Improve quality and accessibility of health services for women
5. Improve participation and achievements of women and girls in education
6. Strengthen the capacity of government and national women's machinery to be gender responsive.

The Nauru Action Plan for National Gender Equality Policies 2025-2030 is a joint Action Plan that defines actions and activities to be undertaken to support three key national gender equality policies. These policies include the Nauru National Women's Policy 2024-2034, Nauru National Gender Mainstreaming Policy and the Gender Responsive and Inclusive Climate Change, Disaster Risk and Pandemic Response Policy. The Action Plan documents the actions, responsible agencies and timeframes for the policy outcomes and objectives of each of these policies. The aim of the Action Plan is to support the coordination and implementation of actions related to supporting gender equality as well as to be able to monitor the status these actions within one joint document.

The Nauru National Women's Policy is aligned to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, under Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 which aims to achieve gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls. More specifically the policy is most closely aligned with targets:

- 5.2 end all violence against and exploitation of women and girls
- 5.5 ensure full participation in leadership and decision-making
- 5.6 universal access to reproductive health and rights
- 5.7 equal rights to economic resources, property ownership and financial services
- 5.9 adopt and strengthen policies and enforceable legislation for gender equality.

The Nauru National Women's Policy is a comprehensive policy which demonstrates Nauru's commitment to creating a future in which all people of Nauru are viewed and treated as equals in all aspects of life. The Nauru Action Plan for National Gender Equality Policies 2025-2030 further demonstrates commitment and pathway for enabling actions to advance gender equality.



34. National budget for promotion of gender equality

34. Please describe your country's system for tracking the proportion of the national budget that is invested in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women (gender-responsive budgeting), including the approximate proportion of the national budget that is invested in this area.

As indicated in section 9 of the PEFA Gender Responsive Budgeting Assessment Report undertaken in 2022, the government currently does not have the capacity to track expenditure on gender equality except for the budget allocation for WASDA. However, as previously stated, the government has undertaken preparation work to implement gender-responsive budgeting measures which would allow for tracking in the future.

35. Implementation and monitoring of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

35. What formal mechanisms are in place for different stakeholders to participate in the implementation and monitoring of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development?

Nauru is a particularly small country and is therefore not able to consult and report regularly on all the various regional and international declarations that it has endorsed. This is the first Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action National Review Report that Nauru has undertaken – there are no formal mechanisms in place to yet for regular monitoring of implementation. In 2019, Nauru undertook a voluntary review on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

36. Stakeholder contributions

36. Please describe how stakeholders have contributed to the preparation of the present national report.

The stakeholder consultations that have been undertaken to inform this report were led by WASDA. A desk review was conducted to gather background data and information on initiatives that have been carried out over the past 5 years to support gender equality in Nauru. A national consultative workshop was conducted by the WASDA team to consult with stakeholders and reflect on progress and challenges in supporting the advancement of gender equality and the Beijing Platform of Action. The workshop also identified future priorities. The findings of the desk review and national consultative workshop were compiled and developed into a draft national



review report. Upon endorsement by the government, the report will be distributed and shared with stakeholders who participated in the consultation workshop.

37. Implementation of CEDAW

37. Please describe your country's action plan and timeline for implementation of the recommendations of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women Committee (if a state party), or of the recommendations of the Universal Periodic Review or other United Nations human rights mechanisms that address gender inequality/discrimination against women.

Nauru had its last sitting before the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination (CEDAW) Committee in 2017 and on its return, a set of concluding observations were sent for Nauru's implementation. The CEDAW Recommendations Implementation Plan was drawn up and completed. The plan involved the identification of key stakeholders for the implementation of specific recommendations. The plan was expanded to capture whether recommendations had been completed or were still in progress. There are 22 cluster of recommendations. The Women's Affairs Department expanded the cluster of recommendations, and they became 64 specific recommendations altogether. A draft CEDAW report has been developed, the changes to reporting processes which involved the development of a list of issues by the CEDAW committee. Nauru will then respond to the list of issues in accordance with the date for the sitting.

Section 5: Data and statistics

38. Progress of gender statistics

38. What are the most important areas in which your country has made most progress over the past 5 years when it comes to gender statistics at the national level?

Nauru faces challenges in regular generation of statistical data, given the size of the country. However, the country is making steps towards regular collection of sex-disaggregated data and gender statistics. The 2019 mini census provides a significant amount of sex-disaggregated data on population, education, labour force participation and disability. There is increased awareness of the need for gender statistics and other forms of disaggregated data.

The first ever Nauru Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey was conducted in 2023 through a collaboration between the Government of Nauru and United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Pacific Community (SPC). The survey includes themes of health, including sexual and reproductive health, family planning, education, nutrition, and water sanitation and hygiene. When published, the survey report will provide valuable, up-to-date information on the situation of children, adolescents,



women and households. The Department of WASDA was involved in the consultations for this report.

39. Priorities for strengthening national gender statistics

39. Over the next 5 years, what are your country's priorities for strengthening national gender statistics?

Over the next five years, Nauru's priorities for strengthening national gender statistics will focus on the collection of gender disaggregated data across a number of key areas. Within the National Gender Mainstreaming Policy there is policy outcome on increasing knowledge, understanding and implementation of gender analysis and mainstreaming. This work will include building capacity on the importance of sex and gender disaggregated data across a range of sectors.

Within the Gender Responsive and Inclusive Climate Change, Disaster Risk and Pandemic Response Policy, policy outcome 3 is on increasing the collection and analysis of disaggregated data related to climate change, disaster risk and pandemic preparedness, programs and response. The policy objective linked to this is the establishment of a partnership between the Department of Climate Change and National Resilience, Department of Women's and Social Development Affairs and the Nauru Bureau of Statistics.

As well, the Department of Women's and Social Development Affairs will also work to continue to enhance the collection of data on domestic violence with a focus on violence against women and girls.

40. Gender-specific indicators for SDGs

40. What gender-specific indicators has your country prioritised for monitoring progress on the SDGs?

The Nauru National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS) 2019-2030 Key Performance Indicators document outlines the targets to monitor progress on the NSDS, some of these targets support the monitoring of progress on the SDGs.⁴³ The NSDS Key Performance Indicators document includes a baseline, target for the current financial year and a long-term target for 2030. The document defines indicators that are relevant to a number of SDGs, below a number of examples have been extracted which are closely related to gender equality.

Table 3: Examples of Gender Equality related NSDS Key Performance Indicators

Indicator	Baseline	Target FY 23-24	Target 2030	Responsible Organisation
<i>Soc-Goal 1: Improve the quality and broaden the scope and reach of education</i>				

⁴³ Republic of Nauru. (2023). Nauru National Sustainable Development Strategy 2019-2030 Key Performance Indicators FY 23-24. https://naurufinance.info/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/NSDS-KPIs-FY-23_24_Final.docx.pdf



Parenting - Number of parents participating in Zero to Three training/other parenting programs increases	25	250	100% of Parents complete all stages of the Zero to Three program	WASDA
<i>Soc-Goal 2: A healthy and productive population</i>				
Maternal deaths - reduction in number of maternal deaths	0 per 1,000	0 per 1,000	0 per 1,000	Department of Health
<i>Soc-Goal 5: A just society that recognizes and respects the rights of women and children, that promotes equal opportunity</i>				
Less than 5% difference between proportion of men and women (18-60) in full-time employment	18% difference in full-time employment 59% of males and 41% of females in full-time employment	15% difference	5% difference	Department of Finance
Family and Domestic Violence cases are resolved within a reasonable time	Offenses processed and heard usually within 6-12 months of charges being laid/information filed	All offenses are processed and prepared for prosecution within 6-12 months of receiving report (due to mandatory remand and increase in penalties)	All offenses are processed and prepared for prosecution within 6 months of receiving report (due to mandatory remand and increase in penalties)	WASDA/Justice



41. Data disaggregation

41. Which data disaggregation's are routinely provided by major surveys in your country?

As noted above, the 2019 mini census provides disaggregated data that was previously not available. The main data disaggregation that are routinely provided include age, marital status, geographic location, sex, income level and disability status.

Section 6: Conclusion and next steps

Over the past 5 years, Nauru has made progress in advancing gender equality, despite challenges of size, pandemic and climate change. These advances cover a range of areas, including addressing gender-based violence, increasing gender mainstreaming, working towards gender-responsive budgeting and engagement with communities. In terms of gaps there is progressive realisation of the work that is needed to be done to bridge the gaps as well as the need for an enabling environment for conservations and action on gender equality.

Going forward over the next 5 years, the government remains committed to work towards gender equality through the Nauru National Women's Policy, the Nauru National Gender Mainstreaming Policy, the Enabling Gender Responsive and Inclusive Climate Change, Disaster Risk and Pandemic Response Policy Nauru, and other national development initiatives.