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Pacific  
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Inform and update on gender and fisheries country fact sheets for selected Pacific Island Countries to enhance gender integration in policy and programming

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## Background information

### *Research initiative*

1. Mid-2023 the Pacific Community began collaborating on a project titled “Gender and social-ecological resilience in coastal systems” led by the University of British Columbia (UBC), Stockholm Resilience Centre (SRC), and Stanford Center for Ocean Solutions (COS). One of the project’s key objectives is to co-develop seven country fact sheets on gender and fisheries for the following Pacific Island Countries (PICs): Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Timor-Leste.
2. This initiative builds on previous work led by UBC, SRC and COS, to deepen understanding of ocean risk and resilience, with a particular focus on **recognising women’s critical contributions in coastal fisheries** and strengthening pathways for enhancing **women’s participation and representation in fisheries governance**, especially within the context of small island developing states and least developing states.
3. Existing gender and fisheries country fact sheets developed as part of the initial project focused on 8 coastal African nations are available here for reference: <https://oceanrisk.earth/fact-sheets/>.
4. The above research is also part of a complementary project titled “Policy analysis to support gender equality and women’s empowerment in the fisheries sector” that includes a systematic analysis of how gender is considered in fisheries-related legislation and policies.
5. PICs gender and fisheries fact sheets including Timor-Leste will be published by August 2025 and available here: <https://oceanrisk.earth/fact-sheets/>.
6. Both projects are supported by the Ocean Risk and Resilience Action Alliance (ORRAA). Financial support for development of the fact sheets is provided by the government of Canada through the federal Department of Environment and Climate Change, with additional contributions from the United States Department of State and SPC through the Pacific-European Union Marine Partnership (PEUMP) programme. Funding for the policy analysis is provided by the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA). The government of Canada, DEFRA and SPC also contributed funding to facilitate a collaborative workshop.

### Purpose of the gender and fisheries country fact sheets

7. The fact sheets provide summaries across several key dimensions, including:
  - data and information on fisheries production;
  - women's contributions across fisheries value chains;
  - insights on women's social status, rights and empowerment; and

- the extent to which gender considerations are reflected in existing fisheries policies.
8. Together with the policy analysis, the fact sheets aim to:
- increase awareness of and support advocacy for the importance of women’s contributions across fisheries supply chains;
  - inform decision makers, civil society groups, researchers and funders to support integration of gendered perspectives into development planning and policy frameworks; and
  - inform opportunities to strengthen gender equity and women’s empowerment.

## Co-creation of fact sheets with local expertise

### *Engagement of local expertise*

9. From mid to late 2023 SPC engaged two early-career female researchers from Fiji to support specific dimensions of the desktop-based research for the seven country fact sheets. This engagement contributed to capacity strengthening by providing hands on research experience, fostering understanding of the importance and relevance of social-ecological science, and facilitating exchange with gender and fisheries researchers.
10. In 2024 the research team from SPC and UBC shared draft version of the fact sheets – developed by the core project team – with regional and national agencies as well as individuals with recognised expertise in gender and fisheries to invite additional insights, comments and contributions.
11. Complementing this process, a three-day exchange workshop titled: “Balancing the Vaka: Empowering Women and Fostering Gender Equity in Pacific Fisheries” was held in Nadi, Fiji from 3-5 December 2024. The workshop brought together fisheries officers and gender/women’s affairs officers from participating countries, alongside regional experts from partner organisations including the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), WorldFish and representatives of the Locally Managed Marine Area (LMMA) network.
12. The workshop aimed to identify, contextualise and foster exchange on gender and fisheries through discussions focused on the following themes:
- Articulating the current state gender equity and women’s empowerment in the context of *fisheries*;
  - Understanding the cultural dimensions that could be leveraged to enable transformative change;
  - Identifying what is needed to support the effective implementation of gender-related policies; and
  - Highlighting key enablers and barriers to progress.

13. The workshop objectives (outlined below) were tailored to foster an inclusive co-development process with local experts. This approach was intended to ensure country ownership, contextual relevance and accuracy of the fact sheet data and information, while also strengthening co-authorship relationships to incorporate additional information and local knowledge. The agenda is included in Annex 1 for more information and details.
- Identify practical recommendations to advance gender equity and women empowerment that:
    - Centre cultural practices and Pacific values;
    - Are attuned to local contexts; and
    - Recognise the important role of men as allies in achieving gender equity
  - Discuss approaches to support the integration of gender considerations into fisheries policies and for their effective implementation; and
  - Co-create content for the country specific fact sheets through collaborative input.



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Annex 1: Workshop Agenda: Balancing the Vaka: Empowering Women and Fostering Gender Equity in Pacific Fisheries, 3-5 December 2024, Nadi, Fiji.

# Balancing the Vaka: Empowering Women and Fostering Gender Equity in Pacific Fisheries

WHEN: 3<sup>rd</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> December 2024

WHERE: Tanoa International Hotel, Votualevu Road, Nadi, Fiji

Meeting Room: “Tanoa Room”

## Background

The University of British Columbia (UBC), Stockholm Resilience Centre (SRC), and Stanford Center for Ocean Solutions (COS), with support from the Government of Canada, the UK Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, US Department of State, and the Ocean Risk and Resilience Action Alliance (ORRAA), are collaborating with the Pacific Community (SPC) under the Pacific-European Union Marine Partnership (PEUMP) programme to co-develop seven country-specific fact sheets on gender and fisheries. These fact sheets cover Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, and Timor-Leste, aiming to highlight women’s contributions in coastal fisheries and increase their representation in fisheries governance.

The fact sheets integrate key data on fisheries production, women’s engagement in fisheries, as well as human rights considerations including gender aspects in existing fisheries policies, political representation, and barriers and opportunities to women’s empowerment. This work builds on prior research by UBC, SRC, and COS with ORRAA support, aiming to inform decision-makers, researchers, and civil society to advocate for equitable fisheries resource allocation and amplify women’s roles across the fisheries supply chain.

The initiative aligns with outcomes of the Pacific Gender & Social Inclusion (GESI) in Fisheries symposium jointly hosted by SPC and the Forum Fisheries Agency in Honiara, Solomon Islands, in April 2024. Key priorities identified include: (a) standardizing data collection across and within sectors; (b) organisations to include GESI indicators to guide GESI



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and fisheries policy commitments; and (c) strengthening capacities through formal and informal means for fisheries socio-economic data collection and analysis with a GESI lens, including on welfare and wellbeing across the fisheries supply chain.

## **Workshop Objectives**

The workshop will provide a platform for participants to:

1. Share experiences on gender and fisheries across the Pacific region.
2. Discuss barriers, opportunities, and lessons from past initiatives to advance gender equality.
3. Identify entry points for change and co-design recommendations for equitable, context-specific interventions.
4. Contribute expertise to the development of the country-specific fact sheets.

Through dialogue and collaboration, the workshop aims to foster actionable insights to promote women's empowerment in the fisheries sector.

### *Acknowledgements*

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## Gender and Fisheries Workshop Agenda

DAY 1 – 3 <sup>rd</sup> December 2024			
Time	Session	Description	Lead
08:30 - 09:00	Registration		
09:00 - 09:25	Welcoming and opening remarks	Official opening remarks and welcome.	Martin Chong Natalie Makhoul & Colette Wabnitz
09:25 - 09:30	Prayer	A word of prayer.	
09:30 - 10:20	Introductions and workshop expectations	Who is who? Ice breaker.	Everyone
10:20 – 10:30	<b>Group photo</b>		
10:30 - 11:00	Morning tea break		
11:00 - 11:15	Regional priorities to value women's contributions in fisheries	Presentation on the outcomes of the GESI and fisheries symposium held in Honiara.	Rose Martin
11:15 - 11:30	Workshop context setting	Provide background to gathering and aims of the workshop.	Natalie Makhoul, Colette Wabnitz & Alli Cutting
11:30 - 12:30	Understanding women's contributions in fisheries value chains	Identify where women contribute along the fisheries value chain, from pre-harvesting to trading, and across various habitats, from shore to open ocean.	Everyone
12:30 - 13:30	Lunch break		

13:30 - 14:15	Social considerations for gender and women empowerment	Explore social and cultural norms shaping women's roles in the Pacific. Discuss what empowerment means in your context, particularly in fisheries, and how men and women can support gender equity. Reflect on potential concerns around empowerment and how it relates to equity.	Everyone
14:15 - 15:00	Report back from activities	Each group to report back on key takeaways.	Everyone
15:00 - 15:30	Afternoon tea break		
15:30 - 16:00	Advancing gender equity in fisheries: Barriers, opportunities, and pathways for change	Examine how women's contributions to fisheries are recognized in each country. Discuss what is working well, areas for improvement, barriers to advancing gender equity, and opportunities for change. Identify and discuss regional similarities and differences.	Everyone
16:00 - 16:30	Wrap-up session	Key take-aways from each group.	Everyone

DAY 2 – 4 <sup>th</sup> December 2024			
Time	Session	Description	Lead
09:00 - 09:15	Recap of day 1	Key messages from the day before.	Everyone
09:15 - 09:30	Policy analysis to support gender considerations in fisheries	Presentation to set the foundation on policy as a meaningful entry point for change.	Alli Cutting
09:30 - 10:30	Entry points for change	Identify specific entry points for advancing gender equity at social and policy levels. Discuss key	Everyone



		enablers for effective change (e.g., funding, spokesperson).  Consider realistic timelines for achieving these changes.	
10:30 - 11:00	Morning tea break		
11:00 – 11:20	Gender and fisheries quiz	Exploring facts and data on gender & fisheries in the Pacific.	Workshop co-hosts
11:20 - 12:30	Visioning a path to a bright future	Reflect on the current situation (day 1 afternoon discussion) and envision desired outcomes for gender equity and women’s empowerment. Identify and prioritize key goals. Outline step-by-step actions needed to achieve them, including tools and enablers to support each step.	Everyone
12:30 - 13:30	Lunch break		
13:30 - 15:00	Draft key recommendations	Develop actionable recommendations to advance the gender and fisheries agenda at regional and national levels. Tailor recommendations, including language, to specific audiences – e.g., policymakers, donors, and other platforms. Create 5–10 concise, impactful recommendations. Identify priority venues for presenting these recommendations.	Everyone
15:00 - 15:30	Afternoon tea break		
15:30 - 16:30	Closing session	Key takeaways and open discussions for comments and reflections.	Everyone
18.30 – 20.00	Lovo Buffet Networking Dinner at the Tanoa hotel		

**DAY 2 – 4<sup>th</sup> December 2024**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Session</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Lead</b>
09:00 - 09:30	Recap of day 2	Key messages from the day before.	Everyone
09:30 - 09:45	Fact sheet presentation	Presentation on fact sheet structure and content. Visit the following <a href="#">website</a> for an overview of the eight existing published African factsheets.	Colette Wabnitz
09:45 - 10:30	Country-specific fact sheets	Participants to group by country. Discuss and provide inputs via this <a href="#">Google form</a> . Include references where possible to support information provided.	Everyone
10:30 - 11:00	morning tea break		
11:00 - 11:15	Stars to sail by: GESI in fisheries communications guide	Presentation on the recently published <a href="#">GESI communications guide</a> .	Natalie Makhoul
11:15 - 12:00	GESI comms activity	Draft a GESI sensitive headline using inclusive language and positive GESI messaging.	Everyone
12:00 - 13:00	lunch break		
13:00 - 13:45	Country-specific fact sheets	Provide reflections on how the factsheets can best be used and disseminated. Share suggestions for improvements to better address specific needs.	Everyone
13:45 - 15:00	Wrap up session & feedback circle	Engage in a brainstorming session to identify the aspects participants feel most passionate about and key ideas they want collective action to focus on. Evaluations and next steps.	Everyone

## Workshop contacts

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