Embracing preparedness in Solomon Islands: COVID-19 violence against women and girls’ response
Context and Challenges

- High Rates of Violence against women and girls
- Patriarchal Society
- Geographical Challenges – for service provision. 147 rural and remote populated island
- High rates of natural disasters
- History of political unrest
Solomon Islands has some of the highest documented rates of violence against women and girls in the world.

- More than 2 out of 5 women have reported experiencing physical and/or sexual partner violence in the last 12 months (42%).
- Nearly 2 in 3 of ever-partnered women, aged 15-49, reported experiencing physical or sexual violence, or both, by an intimate partner in their lifetime (64%).
- 3 out of 4 women in Solomon Islands believe that a man is justified in beating his wife under some circumstances (eg. for infidelity and disobedience) (73%).
- 37% of girls experiencing sexual abuse before they reach 15 yrs.
SAFENET

Government led programme coordinating sexual and gender-based violence response.

**Government led and coordinated:** SAFENET Coordinator funded by the Government.

**Systems in place** adapt easily and quickly for emergencies

**Ongoing contextualising** of the system in the provinces

**Working within existing systems** - sustainable and empowers local actors

**Reaching the whole nation** “hard to reach communities”. (Ensuring survivors in all their diversity can access services with service providers who understand their unique needs).
SAFENET’s COVID-19 Response and Multi-sector delivery coordination mechanism

A model for countries seeking to build national systems that are participatory and fit-for-purpose

As a Small Island Developing State across remote outer islands and provinces, substantial challenges related to connectivity, cost to ensure safety of survivors in remote/rural areas, stretched health and police services in “non-emergency”

Dedicated VAWG coordination mechanisms, such as SAFENET can prepare for any emergency, including COVID-19
A system that adapts and continues to function during times of emergency

Government led, multisector EVAW/GBV Response Coordination Systems functioning

Multi-Sector National Protocols & Referral Pathways in place

Multi-Sector GBV Admin Data System functioning, informing policy and practice

Building strong & sustainable Multisector Response Systems for cases of GBV before, during and after emergencies

Honiara ☐ Provincial ☐ Sub Provincial
Across the Solomon Islands, 18 localised, multisectoral referral pathways have been developed or enhanced.

Adapted Referral Pathways

More women and girls are being referred and are accessing quality essential services to recover from violence.

Western SAFENET COVID-19 Emergency Phone Tree

#132 DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HELPLINE 24/7

COVID-19 Health Number: Toll-free line #132
Solomon Islands Planned Parenthood Association (SIPPA):
Phone: Western
Sexual Assault/Rape/Crisis Support
MhMhs:
Phone: 1992/6077
MhMhs Integrated Mental Health:
Phone: 60224 ext 234
Mental health support

Police Call Centre:
Immediate Safety and Protection
Family Violence Unit:
Phone: 60777/60772
Seil Pies:
Toll free line #132
Crick Shelter

Western Provincial Council of women
Phone: 7632522
Crick + medium term shelter

Family Support Centre:
Phone: 7871138
Counselling and Support; Safety planning; Crick & support

Public Solicitors Office:
Phone: 60049
Family Violence Unit Legal Advice and Legal Assistance
Family Support Centre:
Phone: 7871138
Referral to FSC and Legal Assistance

Health
Protection and Security
Psycho-Social
Legal
SAFENET is a survivor centered system with guiding principles

- Zero Tolerance
- A rights-based approach
- A Survivor Centered Approach
- Safety is Paramount
- Culturally and age appropriate
- Perpetrator Accountability
- Advancing Gender Equality & Women’s Empowerment

- Safety
- Non-discrimination
- Respect and Dignity
- Confidentiality
Covid-19 Snapshot

- Intimate partner violence intensified
- Risk of GBV exacerbated by economic and social stressors
- Inflation for food and basic goods rapidly increased
- Seif Ples reported substantial increase in calls following the first case of community transmission to the 132 helpline
COVID-19 Response

- Coordination
- COVID-19 Preparedness
- Adapted Referrals
- GBV Essential Services
COVID-19 Preparedness

Advocacy Note
Responding to COVID-19: Gender-based violence in Solomon Islands

SAFENET & Solomon Islands GBVIE Sub-Committee – March 2022
Tagio Tumas!