

Solomon Islands

Women play essential yet often undervalued roles across fisheries value chains in Solomon Islands. They are particularly active in nearshore fishing and gleaning, post-harvest processing, trading, as well as activities such as the production and sale of shell money and handicrafts. Women also constitute most of the workforce in tuna processing and are increasingly employed in fisheries-related roles within government and management. Together, these contributions support food and nutrition security, local economies, and fisheries governance. The nature and extent of women's participation varies across provinces and communities, shaped by gender norms and relations, local ecological conditions, customary tenure systems, infrastructure, and changing economic opportunities. Despite these contributions, limited access to markets, resources, finance, and decision-making spaces, as well as restrictions on safe mobility, continue to constrain women's participation and advancement.

These challenges are compounded by broader inequalities. While Solomon Islands has formally committed to gender equality through international and regional frameworks, women face low formal workforce participation, constrained land and resource rights under customary tenure systems, disproportionate unpaid care responsibilities, and limited influence in household, community, and institutional governance. Political representation remains among the lowest globally, with women currently holding 8% of parliamentary seats. Gender-based violence is widespread. While protective legislation exists, enforcement is limited and access to support services remains constrained, particularly for women in rural and resource-dependent communities.

Emerging initiatives offer opportunities for meaningful progress. These include growing recognition of women's roles in community-based fisheries management, women-led savings groups that strengthen economic resilience, and women's leadership in market vendor associations and gender-responsive programming that support safer, more inclusive marketplaces. Developing policy and institutional efforts further aim to strengthen women's participation and protection.

This fact sheet provides an overview of the role of seafood value chains in Solomon Islands, with a focus on gender dimensions, highlighting opportunities to strengthen gender equity and women's empowerment in the sector and beyond. It is part of a series meant to offer development partners, government agencies, civil society organisations, donors, and researchers with a snapshot of gender equity and fisheries to inform the planning and delivery of relevant activities these actors might be involved in or are in the process of developing.

April, 2026



Fish production

National data

Coastal and inland fisheries production estimates in Solomon Islands remain limited by data availability. A 2021 analysis¹ estimated coastal commercial catches at around 5,000 tonnes, with a value of SBD 80 million (around USD 9,900,000), and subsistence catches at roughly 25,000 tonnes.

The same analysis estimated freshwater catches in 2021 at around 2,500 tonnes.¹ Subsistence freshwater fisheries play an important role for inland populations with limited or no direct access to the coast. These fisheries typically focus on species such as introduced Mozambique tilapia (*Oreochromis mossambicus*), flagtails, gobies, eels, shellfish, and freshwater shrimps harvested from streams and larger rivers.

The Solomon Islands' offshore tuna fishery comprises both domestic and foreign fleets. In 2024, total annual catch from Solomon Islands' Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) across all tuna species and all fishing methods was estimated at 191,849 tonnes.² The domestic fleet, consisting of nine purse seiners, two pole-and-line vessels (non-operational in 2024), and 25 longliners, caught an estimated 69,359 tonnes of tuna, alongside approximately 602 tonnes of other species (including billfish and sharks).² Tuna catches were dominated by skipjack (*Katsuwonus pelamis*) and yellowfin (*Thunnus albacares*), with smaller contributions from albacore (*Thunnus alalunga*) and bigeye (*Thunnus obsesus*),² and were valued at USD 100.7 million.³ That same year, the foreign fleet, consisting of 143 purse seiners and 31 longliners, caught an additional 122,490 tonnes of tuna, and approximately 840 tonnes of other species.² Catches were largely composed of skipjack, followed by yellowfin, albacore, and bigeye tuna.²

Aquaculture is nascent but slowly expanding, with government efforts focused on both inland (Nile (*O. niloticus*) and Mozambique tilapia) and coastal aquaculture (seaweed – *Kappaphycus* spp.). Mangrove crabs/ mudcrabs (*Scylla serrata*) and shrimp aquaculture are in development.^{1,4}

Sea Around Us data

The Sea Around Us^a estimated total annual marine capture production for Solomon Islands' fleets as follows:

- ▶ Marine subsistence^b (2019) - 22,715 tonnes
- ▶ Marine commercial^c (2019) - 75,726 tonnes by the industrial sector. Of this catch, 54,206 tonnes were harvested within Solomon Islands' EEZ and the EEZ of a number of Pacific Islands countries and territories, including Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, Federated States of Micronesia, Tuvalu, Cook Islands, Nauru, and the Marshall Islands. The remainder (21,519 tonnes) were caught by domestic fleets on the high seas. Artisanal fleets captured an additional 8,176 tonnes within Solomon Islands' waters.

Foreign industrial fleets caught 108,734 tonnes (2019) within Solomon Islands' EEZ. Taiwan accounted for 16% of that catch, followed by Japan (13%) and South Korea (11%).

Fish consumption

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN estimated apparent fish consumption^d for Solomon Islands in 2023 at 30.49kg per capita per year.⁶

Using data from the 2012/2013 Household Income and Expenditure Survey, one study estimated average per capita consumption of aquatic foods in Solomon Islands to be as high at 73kg per year,⁷ well above the global average of around 20kg. Consumption levels vary markedly across the country,¹ with rural populations estimated to consume an average of 83kg per person per year, compared to 48kg in urban areas.⁷ Notably, rural consumption of pelagic fish alone is equivalent to the global average, supplemented by an additional 63kg per year from other fish and seafood sources.⁷

Fresh fish remains a relatively affordable source of dietary energy compared to terrestrial animal meats and provides nearly 30% of the country's total

protein intake.⁸ Domestic consumption of aquatic foods includes pelagic, mangrove, and reef fish, along with canned fish and shellfish.^{7,9} Tuna consumed locally comes from multiple sources, including local catches, bycatch, and undersized tuna retained from the domestic fleet, as well as “salt fish” (salt-preserved tuna discards from commercial purse seiners) obtained through transshipment operations.^{1,10}

Economic contribution to GDP

According to official statistics, fishing contributed 6.07% to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2020.¹ Revised estimates from the Pacific Community (SPC) place this contribution at 1.53% for 2021.¹

Access fees for offshore fishing were estimated to account for 8.9% of total government revenue in 2020.¹ In 2021, fisheries exports represented 15.9% of total exports.¹

Employment contribution (all)

“Nearly half of Solomon Islands households fish or gather invertebrates. Most do so for personal consumption, around half combine subsistence with selling, and very few fish purely commercially.”

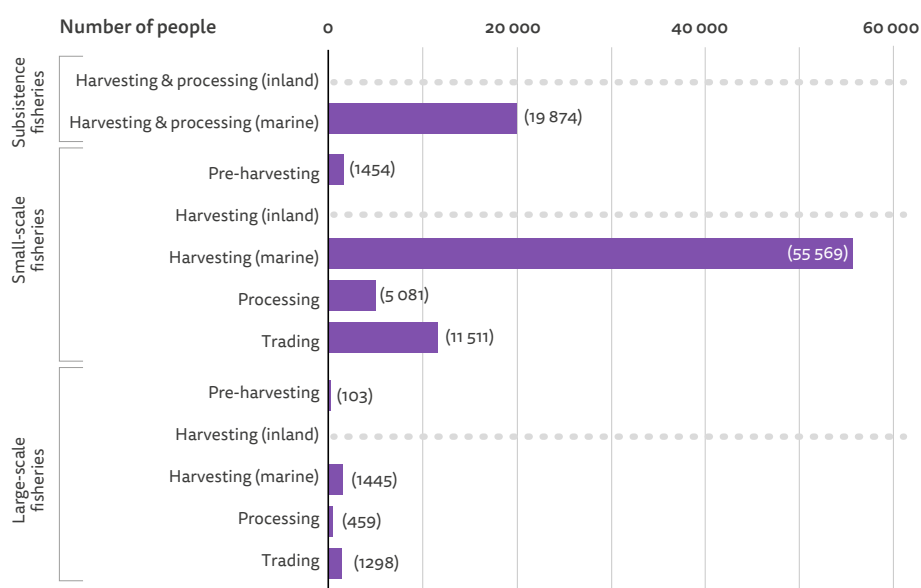
National data

National estimates from the 2019 census indicate that, of the 258,383 people recorded as being employed, 71% of these (132,268 people, 54.7% of which were female) were classified as semi-skilled agriculture, forestry, and fisheries workers.^e These figures are not disaggregated further to fisheries specifically and exclude fisheries professionals.

At a household level, 46.5% (61,185) of all households in Solomon Islands reported engagement in fishing activities and gathering of invertebrates. Just over half of these households (51.7%) undertook these activities exclusively for their own consumption (subsistence), while 46.7% fished both for household consumption and for sale. Fewer than 2% of households reported fishing solely for the purpose of selling their catch.

Illuminating Hidden Harvests estimates

The Illuminating Hidden Harvests (IHH) Initiative^{f,12} estimated that in 2016, a total of 96,794 individuals^g were engaged in the fisheries sector, including pre- and post-harvest as well as subsistence^h fishing activities. Most individuals were involved in the marine small-scale fisheries (SSF)ⁱ sub-sector (see figure below). The IHH also estimated that a total of approximately 382,130 people depended, at least partly, on fisheries or subsistence fishing: 285,878 in SSF, 86,760 in subsistence fisheries, and 9,492 in large scale fisheries.^j



● ● ● Numbers could not be estimated based on availability of data and methods used.

Employment contribution (women)

“Women dominate invertebrate gathering, with nearly 25% of female household members participating compared to just 2.6% of men.”

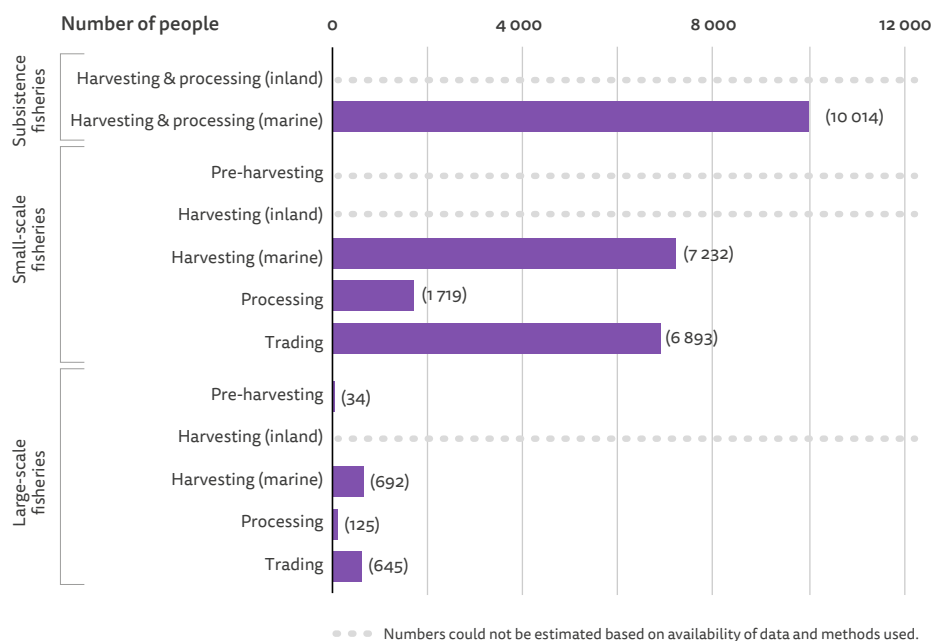
National data

National census data (2019) indicate that 46.5% of households engage in fishing and/or invertebrate gathering, with clear gender-differentiated patterns of participation across these activities.¹¹ Reef-fish fishing was the most common activity for both men and women, though participation rates were higher among men (57.4%) than women (38.9%). Participation in invertebrate gathering was substantially higher among women, with 24.6% of female household members engaged in this activity compared to only 2.6% of men. Conversely, tuna fishing was reported by 8.1% of men in these households, compared to just 1% of women.

Based on multiple studies, the Pacific Community (SPC) identified that roles along the value chain – including types of harvesting and roles in harvesting, processing, transport and sales – vary by community and province, underscoring the need for localized studies to estimate gendered employment contributions across fisheries value chains.^k

Illuminating Hidden Harvests estimates

The IHH Initiative¹² estimated that in 2016, a total of 27,354 women were active across fisheries value chains. SSF provided the greatest source of livelihoods for women in the sector (see figure below). Women are more likely than men to engage in subsistence fishing, accounting for approximately 50% of all individuals participating in these fisheries. They also play a key role in the trading of fish, accounting for 60% of individuals active in this SSF subsector. Within large-scale fisheries, women make up 48% and 50% of those engaged in harvesting and trading activities, respectively.



“While women’s contributions across fisheries value chains have increased and expanded over time, household, family, and community responsibilities remain substantial, placing increasing demands on women’s time.”

In rural Solomon Islands, both women and men engage in subsistence farming and fishing, although they often utilize different fishing gears and experience differing levels of access to, and control over, resources.¹⁶ Women’s contributions to fisheries in Solomon Islands span fishing, post-harvest processing, and market-based activities, with roles shaped by gender norms and relations, livelihoods, and changing economic opportunities. While women’s contributions across fisheries value chains have increased and expanded over time, household, family, and community responsibilities remain substantial, placing increasing demands on women’s capacity.¹⁷

Women's fisheries activities include line fishing from shore or canoes in coastal and reef areas, as well as harvesting shellfish, seaweeds, crabs, sea cucumber, octopus, giant clams, and lobster from nearshore environments.¹⁸ Gendered patterns in fisheries activities have been said to be shaped by habitat, with men more likely to access fisheries located in deeper waters further from shore, while women's efforts are typically concentrated closer to shore, particularly within mangrove areas, reefs, and sandy-bottom lagoon habitats.^{16,19-25} However, these patterns are not uniform, with access and use varying according to local ecological conditions and social factors, including socio-cultural norms.²⁶

"In some contexts, women are increasingly fishing offshore and engaging in diving activities, while in others, men are moving into areas traditionally dominated by women as the commercial value of certain target species rises."

Evidence also points to shifts over time. In some contexts, women are increasingly fishing offshore and engaging in diving activities,^{26,27} while in others, men are moving into areas traditionally dominated by women as the commercial value of certain target species rises. In Marovo Lagoon, for instance, men have increasingly entered mud crab (*Scylla serrata* and other related species) harvesting in mangrove areas – an activity traditionally dominated by women – to take advantage of rising market prices.²⁸

Traditionally, women have primarily fished to feed their families, providing an estimated 50% of fish consumed at the household level, while men have more often focused on fishing for cash income.²⁰ In recent years, however, women's engagement in income-generating fishing activities has increased,²⁴ including in villages bordering Sandfly Passage in Central Province.²⁹

Women also support family fisheries activities through a range of complementary roles. These include preparing food and water for men's fishing trips, mending nets, and readying canoes,¹ as well as sometimes going out fishing together.^m In some locations, women and children dive for sea cucumbers,ⁿ and the family may collectively process and dry *bêche-de-mer*,^o using firewood gathered by women. Women also play multiple roles in family-based fish smoking enterprises.³⁰

"Women play a particularly prominent role in the "salt fish" value chain, including trading activities in Noro and Honiara, as well as running fish-and-chips and other cooked seafood businesses."

Women are widely recognised for their contributions in post-harvest processing activities for both household consumption and sale, including cooking, drying, salting, and smoking aquatic foods for local markets.^{26,30} In village and urban markets, women play a central role in commerce, including the trade and sale of both fresh and prepared fish products. Women play a particularly prominent role in the "salt fish"^p value chain, including trading activities in Noro and Honiara,⁹ as well as running fish-and-chips and other cooked seafood ventures. While women-run businesses are often small-scale, they typically rely on family labour or a small number of casual workers.^f

Women have also participated in a range of export-oriented activities for the aquarium trade, including the collection of corals, shells, and fish, as well as the mariculture of corals and giant clams.^{32,33} These activities are sensitive to international market demand, affecting the stability of incomes over time.

Both men and women are engaged in tilapia²⁶ and seaweed farming.³⁴

Despite their central role across fisheries, women continue to face constraints in leadership, market access, and income generation. While a UN Women-supported initiative increased women's representation in market vendor association leadership, men still hold around 75% of the management positions in the country's major formal markets, including Honiara, Auki, and Gizo.³⁵ Gender disparities are also evident in fish sales and income. Male vendors tend to sell higher-value pelagic species, such as

skipjack and yellowfin tuna caught offshore, while women more commonly sell fish species that generate lower returns. In Malaita Province, male vendors earn approximately 60% more per fish sold than female vendors.³⁵

“Women from Langalanga Lagoon are renowned producers of shell money – a culturally significant traditional currency whose labour-intensive production can fetch between USD 100 and USD 500 per *tafulia’e*.”

Shell money, handicrafts, and women’s livelihoods

Seashells are used for decoration, making jewellery, and the production of “shell money”, a traditional form of currency and an important cultural symbol.⁵ Women from Langalanga Lagoon in Malaita Province are particularly well known for producing shell money.³⁷ Making shell money is a labour-intensive and lengthy process: seashells are broken, shaped into approximately 1cm discs (*didia suiro*), smoothed on limestone pieces, drilled, and threaded into strings of ten, known as *tafulia’e*, or more. Shell discs are often polished into smaller beads by grinding them with polishing stones and may be heated to change the shell’s colour.^t The value of shell money varies by string length, with a single *tafulia’e* typically valued between USD 100 and USD 500.³⁸

Shell money has traditionally been used for bride price (*braedpraes*) and for dispute settlement. *Braedpraes* involves the transfer of wealth from the groom’s to the bride’s family upon marriage, formalising the relationship between husband and wife and building ties between the two families (see also *Women rights and political empowerment* section).³⁹ Shell money is still used in provinces such as Malaita, Makira, and Guadalcanal, including for these purposes. Yet the craft has also expanded into the production of jewellery for sale to locals and tourists.

Historically, men were more involved in free-diving for shells and polishing the discs into beads, while most of the manufacturing activities were undertaken by women.⁴⁰ Over time, women have become increasingly active across the shell money value chain, from harvesting to manufacturing and, notably, retail trading of shell products. These activities create important income-generating opportunities and, in some cases, place women in a more central role in household livelihoods.⁴⁰ These changes reflect broader social and economic shifts, including expanding cash economies and changing market demand, but have not always been accompanied by parallel shifts in gender norms. In some contexts, women who travel for trade, particularly for extended periods, may face social scrutiny that can increase their exposure to retaliation or violence.⁴⁰

Tuna industry

Women constitute most of the workforce in the processing segment of the tuna fisheries supply chain. At SolTuna cannery, women account for around 66% of employees⁴¹ and are primarily engaged in processing line roles such as in fish cleaning and loin preparation.⁴² However, they earn much lower wages than their male counterparts working in similar roles.⁴³ While low wages remain a challenge, SolTuna has taken steps to improve conditions, including recent increases for staff on the lowest four pay scales. In 2024, SolTuna opened the country’s first on-site child daycare centre⁴⁴ in response to concerns raised by women employees regarding limited access to early childhood care^u – an issue previously identified as contributing to high rates of absenteeism among female staff.⁴⁵

“Women make up two-thirds of SolTuna’s workforce, primarily in processing roles such as fish cleaning and loin preparation, yet earn lower wages than men performing similar work.”

Although participation across the tuna value chain remains gendered, recent initiatives indicate progress in advancing gender equality. Men have traditionally dominated fishing vessels, heavy labour, and senior management positions. However, in 2019, SolTuna employed its first three female fishing vessel cadets, marking an important milestone.⁴¹ Women have also taken onshore-based roles in areas such as vessel maintenance and quality control.⁴¹ In addition, the SolTuna facility, working with the International Finance Corporation, has implemented a range of measures

“Following targeted workplace reforms at SolTuna, women’s representation in management has increased markedly, now comprising 25% of middle, 24% of senior, and 50% of top management positions.”

to improve women’s working conditions and advancement opportunities. These include, new pathways for women in non-traditional roles such as forklift operation and mechanics, financial literacy programmes that increased worker savings by an estimated 80%, the introduction of a Respectful Workplace Policy to address gender-based violence and harassment, and the above-mentioned workplace childcare facility.⁴⁶ Together, these efforts have contributed to a marked increase in women’s representation in management positions, with women now comprising 25% of middle management (up from 14%), 24% of senior management (up from 8%), and 50% of top management positions (up from 20%).

Formal employment in the tuna industry presents a key avenue for improving women’s economic outcomes. This is particularly significant in a national context where rural employment averages around 13%, with women’s participation rates being even lower, in part due to limited access to education (see *Social considerations* section).⁴¹ Employment in the tuna sector offers women access to regular wages, paid maternity and sick leave, and financial literacy training, all of which can contribute to strengthened household financial security and resilience.

Government employment

Women have increasingly gained employment in the fisheries sector, including in roles with the Solomon Islands Government and Maritime Authority. Women work as fisheries officers, compliance officers, offshore purse seine observers, and in management positions within the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR).^y

Constraints to women’s participation in fish supply chains

Women make significant contributions to food and nutrition security⁴³ for families and communities in both urban and rural areas. Yet women outside the formal workforce face persistent challenges, including limited recognition and support, and inadequate infrastructure (such as access to cold storage).²⁵ They also face transportation barriers, including high travel costs and safety concerns that can further restrict women’s ability to access markets and sustain livelihoods.^{25,47}

“Women face persistent challenges, including limited recognition and support, transport barriers that restrict market access, alongside continued underrepresentation in fisheries governance and decision-making processes.”

Women are also underrepresented in fisheries governance. They remain largely excluded from fisheries planning and decision-making processes;^{24,25} 68% of local community-based fisheries committees are dominated by men,^w men are six times more likely than women to feel included in local fisheries decision-making,^x and 69% of all provincial and national fisheries staff are men.^y Evidence from a study on community perceptions of fisheries services further indicates that men were more likely to self-nominate for a committee role or be prioritised for support, leaving women and youth with limited access to services and resources.⁴⁸ Similarly, “Fisheries Centres” have tended to focus on supporting men to upskill and increase the value of their catch, offering limited opportunities tailored to women’s roles and needs.¹⁸ However, a recent study found that having access to cold storage and ice at Fisheries Centres helped support women with income generating activities, including cooling drinks to sell at community events and church fundraisers, and storing fish used for making and selling fish and chips.⁴⁹ In one case, access to a communal freezer meant women did not have to process fish through the night on the day of landing, thus also easing their overall workload.⁴⁹

There are examples of more inclusive practices at the community level. Research in the Western Province highlights instances of effective inclusion of women’s voices in community-based fisheries management.⁵⁰ At the same time, findings suggest that gender parity on committees is not a reliable indicator of gender equity, reflecting the importance of broader

social dynamics and complex intersection of gender with factors such as age, ethnicity, and insider-outsider status.^{50,51}

“Community consultations in Noro and Munda, identified controlling behaviours – such as jealousy, mistrust, and limited decision-making autonomy – as key constraints to women’s participation in fisheries.”

Social norms and household dynamics further shape women’s participation in fisheries. Community consultations in Noro and Munda, led by the MFMR and SPC as part of developing a new *Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Strategy* for MFMR, identified controlling behaviours – such as jealousy, mistrust, and limited decision-making autonomy – as key constraints to women’s participation in fisheries.²⁴ Women also reported that declining fish stocks required them to fish longer and travel further to meet household needs, but that a lack of recognition for their work and unsupportive household dynamics hindered their ability to engage more fully or innovatively within the sector.²⁴

These intersecting challenges can make women particularly vulnerable to external shocks. During the COVID-19 pandemic, women assumed additional responsibilities as primary caregivers and took on increased domestic duties, including food provisioning.⁵² Movement restrictions and market closures disproportionately disrupted women’s fisheries-related economic activities compared to men – particularly market trading – leading to significant income losses.⁵² Lockdowns also heightened women’s exposure to domestic violence.⁵²

Social considerations

“While conservative interpretations of scripture have often reinforced male leadership and gender inequalities, a growing number of initiatives are working within churches and communities to promote more inclusive interpretations and practices.”

Solomon Island cultures are diverse, yet social structures are predominantly patriarchal,⁵³ with deeply rooted gender norms that tend to position men in leadership and decision-making roles within households, communities, and institutions.

Religious institutions play a central role in shaping gender norms in Solomon Islands. Christianity is highly influential across Solomon Islands society and, while faith-based institutions can provide important sources of social support and cohesion,⁵⁴ conservative interpretations of scripture have often reinforced male leadership, perpetuated gender stereotypes, and limited opportunities for women.⁵⁵ The United Church is currently the only denomination that formally accepts women into senior church leadership.² At the same time, a growing number of initiatives are working within churches and communities to revisit patriarchal interpretations of the Bible in favour of more inclusive biblical teachings. Efforts are also targeted towards supporting women’s leadership, and addressing violence against women and girls (see also *Gender-Based Violence* section).⁵⁶⁻⁵⁸

These dynamics are closely linked to historical processes that have further shaped contemporary gender relations. Colonial administrations and missionary activities have contributed to the social, political, and economic organisation of Solomon Islands, with both positive and negative impacts on women’s and men’s lives, and gender relations. Christianisation and the monetisation of society gave women expanded educational and economic opportunities, access to new means of healthcare, and created space for women’s groups and leadership development.^{aa} However, these externally derived and historically situated gender norms also continue to influence marriage practices, the division of household labour, access to reproductive health services, participation in decision-making processes, and broader societal expectations around ‘traditional’ gender roles. Male dominance was further reinforced during periods of conflict, especially “The Tensions” (1998–2003), when militarisation and violence contributed to the normalisation of hypermasculine behaviours, and a rise in gender-based violence, including rape, forced marriage, and domestic abuse.⁵⁹

“Gender equality initiatives are sometimes perceived as focusing only on women, and confusion between ‘sex’ and ‘gender’ persists, contributing to resistance and limiting support for inclusive approaches.”

“Between the 2009 and 2019 censuses, the share of the population who has never attended school increased. This trend is more pronounced among women.”

“By 2020, women comprised 25% of MFMR coastal fisheries staff, while at WorldFish Solomon Islands, women’s representation rose steadily, becoming the majority of staff from around 2017 onwards.”

Misconceptions about the meaning of ‘gender’ also hinder social progress. Gender equality initiatives are sometimes perceived as focusing solely on women, and confusion persists between the concepts of ‘sex’ and ‘gender’, including among senior government and private-sector actors. These misunderstandings contribute to resistance to change and limit broader support for inclusive and equitable approaches.^{ab}

Education and training

Solomon Islands has made progress in expanding access to education, notably through the 2009 Basic Education Fee Free policy, which covered schooling up to Form 3 (Years 1–9).^{ac} However, subsequent governments have effectively rendered this policy redundant citing cost constraints,^{ad} shifting the financial burden of school fees and indirect costs – such as uniforms, school supplies, and transport – back onto households.⁶⁰ Women, who are often primary providers for children’s schooling, are disproportionately affected. These costs can be particularly burdensome at the secondary level and contribute to lower retention of girls in school. Girls also face additional barriers, including limited access to adequate sanitary facilities and dormitories, long travel distances to school, and increased risks of violence along the way.⁶¹

Educational outcomes differ by gender and location. According to the 2019 National Population and Housing census, literacy rates among those aged 15 and older are higher for men (88.5%) than for women (82.5%).¹¹ Literacy and educational attainment also differ markedly between urban and rural areas, with rates of 92.5% and 82.3% respectively – with more than 72% of the population living in rural areas.¹¹ While lower secondary school completion rates are slightly higher for girls than boys (59.5% and 55.8% respectively),^{ae} this is largely driven by higher female attainment in urban areas.¹¹ At tertiary levels, however, men’s enrolment and completion exceed that of women. Higher educational attainment among women is associated with delayed childbirth, with women who complete secondary education giving birth on average three years later than those with only primary schooling.¹⁷

Recent trends raise concerns about exclusion from education. Between the 2009 and 2019 censuses, the share of the population who has never attended school increased. This trend is more pronounced among women, with 14.5% reporting no schooling, compared to 10.9% of men.¹⁷ Poverty may be a contributing factor, increasing from 23.5% in 2021 to 30.7% in 2024.⁶²

Education and training have played an important role in shaping participation and capacity in Solomon Islands’ fisheries management and governance, including through research stations, technical training, mentoring, and institutional strengthening.^{43,63} Historically, fisheries staffing was strongly male dominated, but by 2020 women made up 25% of MFMR staff in coastal fisheries-related roles, alongside broader gains in tertiary qualifications across the ministry.⁶³ Similarly, the WorldFish Solomon Islands team evolved from an all-male team in the early 1990s to a steadily increasing proportion of female staff from the late 2000s, with women outnumbering men from around 2017 and comprising the majority of the workforce through to 2021, when the study concluded.⁶³

Labour force participation and gendered work patterns

In Solomon Islands, the economy is predominantly characterised by subsistence activities, with most people engaged in farming, fishing, handicrafts, and petty trading,⁶⁴ while formal labour force participation stands at 55.4% for those of working age.¹¹ Most employment consists of unpaid family labour rather than formal or salaried employment.⁶⁵

“Within paid employment, there are roughly two men for every woman earning a wage, and women comprise the majority of unpaid workers (55.6%).”

Although 92.1% of the labour force is classified as employed – including both paid and unpaid work – formal wage and salary employment remains limited, accounting for 14.4% of the working-age population and 58.1% of total paid work.¹¹ Within paid employment, there are roughly two men for every woman earning a wage, and women comprise the majority of unpaid workers (55.6%).¹¹ Gender-based discrimination – such as differential wages, and limited access to credit and dispute resolution – further reinforces these disparities and increases women’s vulnerability to poverty.⁶⁴

Employment patterns are strongly shaped by sector and geography. The combined agriculture, forestry, and fisheries sector accounts for 68.4% of all employment,¹¹ with the majority (87%) of these jobs located in rural areas, where employment levels are relatively equal between men and women.

Strong social-cultural norms assign women primary responsibility for unpaid care work, including childcare, elder care, and food provision. These responsibilities are expected to take precedence over any income-generating activities, often limiting women from pursuing paid employment or entrepreneurial opportunities.⁶⁶ In contrast, men are generally not expected to engage in unpaid domestic work. Unpaid care work is widely recognised as a major barrier to women’s economic empowerment in Solomon Islands.⁴⁸ Despite bearing responsibility for household well-being, women often have limited control over financial resources or access to productive assets such as land, further constraining their ability to respond to household needs or invest in income-generating activities.⁶⁴ In its 2023 follow-up, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women requested information on how Solomon Islands is addressing the disproportionate burden of unpaid care work borne by women.⁶⁷

“Women-led savings clubs have become important platforms for building women’s financial literacy, self-confidence, and community recognition.”

Community-based financial initiatives offer promising pathways for inclusion. Women-led savings clubs, supported by civil society organizations like Live & Learn and the Australian Government’s Strongim Bisnis Initiative,⁶⁸ have become important platforms for building women’s financial literacy, self-confidence, and community recognition.^{69,70} These informal, community-based initiatives not only support greater household financial security but also promote women’s economic empowerment and inclusion by facilitating access to savings, credit, and income-generating opportunities. Some community initiatives now collaborate with government-led financial inclusion programmes and commercial banks.

Mobility and access to economic opportunities

Socio-cultural norms shape expectations around women’s mobility, affecting their participation in fishing, trade, and paid work. Men, who are generally afforded greater freedom of movement, dominate the harvest and sale of high-value fish species (often pelagics).¹⁸ These norms also extend to participation in overseas labour mobility programmes such as the Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) Scheme.⁷¹ Despite targeted efforts to recruit more women, participants in the scheme remain largely men. The outward migration of men has significant implications for women who remain in their communities, as they often take on additional responsibilities to sustain households and livelihoods in their husbands’ absence.^{71,72} For women who do migrate – most commonly into caregiving roles – household and care responsibilities are typically absorbed by other women within families or communities, reinforcing gendered patterns of unpaid care work across generations.^{71,72}

Women's rights and political empowerment

“Customary land ownership and governance systems intersect with gender roles in complex ways, shaping who has access to resources and a voice in decision-making.”

“Lily Ogatina Poznanski made history as the first woman elected to political office in 1965 – a considerable achievement prior to independence when women were unable to vote.”

The legal framework in Solomon Islands recognises both customary and statutory law, creating complex implications for gender equality. The Constitution prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex.^{af} Yet, it does not explicitly prohibit discrimination based on gender with protection subject to exemptions, particularly where customary law (*kastom*) and land-related matters are concerned.^{ag} While the Draft Federal Constitution^{ah} proposes to remove the explicit exemption for discriminatory customary practices, it contains a limitation protecting traditionally observed customs^{ai} and continues to expressly exempt land-related customs, limiting the practical reach of equality provisions.^{aj}

Access to land and resource governance

Customary land ownership and governance systems intersect with gender roles in complex ways, shaping who has access to resources and a voice in decision-making. In State law, both men and women have equal opportunity to acquire land. However, more than 80% of land – particularly in rural areas – is held under customary tenure, typically owned collectively by clans but used by individuals or families.⁶⁴ Although both matrilineal and patrilineal systems exist – with the former conferring women some social status through maternal inheritance – land-related decisions are generally made by male clan leaders, including within matrilineal groups.⁶⁴

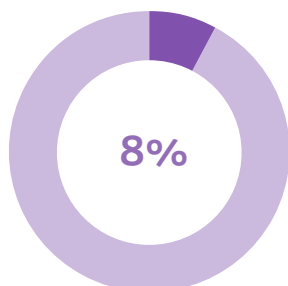
Broader social and economic changes have further constrained women's land-related rights and participation. Across both matrilineal and patrilineal systems, religious influence, male-dominated leadership structures, and the increasing commercialization of land have eroded some of women's traditional rights and roles,⁶⁴ with men generally dominating public decision-making.⁷³ Chiefly titles are rarely held by women, though there are notable exceptions, such as in Isabel Province, where female chiefs have equal speaking and decision-making rights.^{ak}

Women, especially those without primary resource rights, face barriers to participating in community-level governance. In Malaita Province, for instance, 72% of women surveyed reported never being involved in marine resource management decisions, compared to regular engagement by men.²⁶ Similar patterns were observed in Central Province.²⁹ While a broader “culture of silence” continues to limit women's participation in many contexts,²⁶ there are important signs of change. In communities such as Niu and Ambitona,⁷⁴ more inclusive practices are emerging, with both men and women – including those who marry into the community – participating in resource-related decision-making.⁷⁴ In Ambitona specifically, women's participation in fisheries resource committees has expanded, thanks to a growing recognition of the importance of women's fishing activities, a community supportive of women's leadership, and more inclusive gender norms.⁷⁴ More broadly, women are gaining influence at village and communal levels, particularly as men shift their focus to national political arenas.⁶⁵

Political representation and leadership

Social cultural norms and institutional barriers continue to limit women's participation in politics and opportunities for leadership, despite longstanding engagement. Although Lily Ogatina Poznanski made history as the first woman elected to political office in 1965 – a considerable achievement prior to independence when women were unable to vote⁷⁵ – progress since has been slow. Women have contested seats in every election and some hold senior public service roles, such as Pauline McNeil, who has served as Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Health and Medical Services since 2019 and became a prominent figure through her leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, few women have been elected to national leadership positions.

Women’s representation in formal politics remains among the lowest globally. In 2024, three women were elected to the National Parliament,⁷⁶ with a 2025 by-election in West Guadalcanal increasing this to four members – approximately 8% of parliamentary seats.⁷⁷ Of the 24 Cabinet positions, only two are held by women: the Honourable Cathy Nori (Minister for Women, Youth, Children, and Family Affairs) and the Honourable Choylin Yim Douglas (Minister for Culture and Tourism).



Percentage of seats held by women in Parliament (2025)

While a legal provision requires political parties to reserve at least 10% of endorsed candidates for women, it includes an exemption under which parties are not considered in contravention if too few women apply.⁷⁸ This 10% threshold has rarely been met; in 2024, only three of 13 parties achieved the quota. In addition to the National Assembly, each of Solomon Islands’ nine provinces has a Provincial Assembly. In 2022, Rhoda Sikilabu became the first female Premier in the country, leading the Isabel Provincial Assembly.⁷⁹ Post elections in 2024, only three out of 123 contested seats (less than 5%) were filled by women (Isabel, Temotu, Malaita).⁸⁰ In response to low representation, Cabinet approved Temporary Special Measures as an amendment to the *Provincial Government Amendment Bill* to guarantee, appoint, or reserve seats for women in provincial government.^{81,82} This measure was endorsed in 2025, with Cabinet approving the establishment of a taskforce to advance its implementation in January 2026.⁸³ In addition, some provinces have established women’s caucuses to amplify women’s voices and advise provincial executives, with efforts underway in Western, Guadalcanal and Malaita provinces.

Barriers to political participation include restrictive social norms,⁸⁴ limited access to campaign financing, and discriminatory rhetoric⁸⁵ - including from some religious leaders publicly discouraging votes for women, citing spiritual consequences.⁸¹

Gender inequities extend to the private sector, where women hold only 11% of company directorships and Board Chair positions.⁷⁸

“The 2009 Family Health and Safety Study found that 64% of women aged 15–49 years who had ever been in an intimate relationship reported experiencing physical and/or sexual violence from a partner.”

“National surveys consistently show high levels of acceptance of intimate partner violence among both women and men. Common justifications included perceived infidelity or disobedience.”

Gender-based Violence

Gender-based violence (GBV) is a deeply entrenched and pervasive issue in Solomon Islands, with far-reaching impacts on women and girls. The 2009 Family Health and Safety Study found that 64% of women aged 15–49 years who had ever been in an intimate relationship reported experiencing physical and/or sexual violence from a partner.⁸⁶ Of those surveyed, 42% reported experiencing such violence in the past year. Rates were higher in Honiara than in other provinces, likely linked to alcohol availability, unemployment, overcrowding, and high living costs.⁶⁴ In a recent Honiara-based study of women attending health clinics, 47% reported experiencing physical or sexual violence in the past year, most often by a current or former partner; with alcohol involved in more than half of these cases, and formal reporting remaining low.⁸⁷ Sexual violence outside of intimate partnerships is also considered prevalent (20%),⁸⁸ and 37% of girls report having experienced abuse before the age of 15.⁸⁹ Incest remains a widespread yet taboo issue.⁸⁹

High rates of intimate partner violence are often reinforced by social norms, systematic discrimination in health and education, economic inequality, and women’s limited access to resources and justice systems.⁶⁴ National surveys consistently show high levels of acceptance of intimate partner violence among both women and men. Common justifications included perceived infidelity or disobedience.

Historically, violence against women by a partner was often seen as a ‘domestic’ issue, limiting police intervention. While attitudes are shifting,

with nearly half of women surveyed in a 2019 United Nations Development Programme study⁹⁰ indicating they would consider reporting violence to the police, low police presence and limited geographic coverage often constrain this option. Many women continue to rely on village chiefs or local leaders. However, fear and discomfort when approaching male authorities are commonly reported, including in relation to chiefs, elders, and church pastors.

Early and forced marriage remain significant concerns. Under the 1945 *Islanders' Marriage Act*⁹¹ the legal marriage age is 15 for both men and women – with parental consent required up until the age of 18. Efforts to raise the legal marriage age to 18 and to impose a minimum age for customary marriages, which are not subject to this statutory provision, are under parliamentary consideration.^{92–94}

The cultural practice of *braepraes* – widespread across the country – carries complex and contested implications for gender equality, including GBV. While some view it as a cultural practice that enhances a woman's status and provides certain protections within customary frameworks,³⁹ research also suggests it can reinforce harmful gender norms by promoting the perception of ownership of women by men, which may legitimize controlling behaviour and violence. The practice also often leaves women feeling like they are prevented from leaving their husbands.⁹⁵ In some cases, *braepraes* has been misused to justify transactional arrangements involving young girls, facilitated by family or community members, under the guise of *kastom*.⁸⁹ Its misuse can lead to serious violations of girls' rights and constitute forms of child sexual exploitation and trafficking.⁸⁹

“Women and girls living near logging, fishing, and mining sites face heightened risks of gender-based violence, sexual exploitation, and trafficking.”

Women and girls living near logging, fishing, and mining sites face heightened risks of gender-based violence, sexual exploitation, and trafficking. In some fishing contexts, this includes coerced exchanges of sex for fish, often occurring in situations marked by power imbalances and economic hardship.⁹⁶ These areas often experience higher rates of alcohol use,⁹⁷ low sexual health literacy, and a transient workforce, all of which contribute to increased vulnerability to violence, sexually transmitted infections, and unwanted pregnancies.⁹⁷

Conflict-related violence has also had lasting impacts. During the period of civil conflict known as “The Tensions”, (1998–2003), women faced severe violence, including rape, forced marriage, and abduction. Yet these crimes were not prosecuted during the post-conflict “Tension Trials”. Despite women's key roles as informal peacebuilders and grass-roots mediators during these conflicts, they have struggled to have these contributions recognised.⁹⁸ The late Lady Joy Kere led the government ministry responsible for national reconciliation in the aftermath of the “The Tensions”; yet the prioritisation of customary governance as critical to future peace meant that women were largely excluded from formal negotiations.⁹⁹ The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's recommendations on reparations for survivors remain unimplemented to this day.¹⁰⁰

“Several national policies identify gender-based violence as a major challenge and priority in Solomon Islands, including the National Policy to Eliminate Violence Against Women and Girls and the National Gender Equality Policy.”

Legal protections and programmatic responses are evolving, though gaps remain. The *Family Protection Act* (2014), which covers violence against women, along with strengthened provisions regarding sexual assault on women introduced in 2016,^{am} provide legal recourse. The *Public Service Bill* (2022) introduced an explicit prohibition on workplace sexual harassment, criminalising unwanted conduct of a sexual nature by any employee. However, enforcement remains inconsistent, in part due to stigma, limited awareness, and rural accessibility. While Solomon Islands has yet to adopt a comprehensive national action plan on GBV,⁸⁸ several national policies recognise GBV as one of the most serious gender challenges faced by the

people of Solomon Islands and as a priority area (e.g., *National Policy to Eliminate Violence Against Women and Girls (2016-2020)*,¹⁰¹ and *National Gender Equality and Women’s Development Policy (2016-2020)*.¹⁰²

Multi-sectoral prevention and response efforts are ongoing. Initiatives such as SAFENET, comprising seven government and nongovernmental service providers – including the police, hospitals, and crisis centres – provide counselling and medical care, as well as support outreach efforts through churches, schools, and other institutions to reject discriminatory attitudes and prevent violence against women.^{an,103} Other programmes, such as the Pacific Partnership to End Violence Against Women and Girls in Solomon Islands – funded by Australia and the European Union and jointly coordinated by UN Women and SPC, in collaboration with the Pacific Islands Forum – aim to strengthen the link between prevention, protection, and institutional response.

Key international and regional frameworks promoting gender equality and their ratification status^{ao}

- ✓ Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) acceded to in 2002 with its 6th periodic report submitted in 2017.¹⁰⁴
- ✓ Solomon Islands acceded to CEDAW’s Optional Protocol in 2002.¹⁰⁵
- ✓ Beijing Platform for Action committed to in 1995. Solomon Islands submitted its Beijing+25 review national review report in 2019¹⁰⁶ and Beijing+30 report in 2024.¹⁰⁷

While not legally binding, Solomon Islands also endorsed the *Pacific Leaders’ Gender Equality Declaration*, which was adopted in 2012, reaffirmed in 2015, and revitalized in 2023;¹⁰⁸ and the *Pacific Platform for Action for the Advancement of Women and Gender Equality (1994, 2004, 2017)*, which aims to “accelerate the implementation of gender commitments at all levels in order to achieve gender equality and the promotion and protection of the human rights of all women and girls, in all their diversity.”¹⁰⁹

Gender equality, women’s empowerment, and the rights of women and girls^{ap} also feature prominently in the *Small Island Developing States Accelerated Modalities of Action (Samoa Pathway)*¹¹⁰ – an outcome document of the 2014 Small Island Developing States Conference – and the more recent Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States of 2024.¹¹¹

Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI)

SIGI^{aq} values range from 0 for no discrimination^{ar} to 100 for very high discrimination, with higher SIGI values denoting higher inequality. “-” indicate no value was available for that indicator.

Given that data is missing across several dimensions of the index, no overall aggregated value is available for Solomon Islands.

Year	Total aggregated index value	Discrimination in the family	Restricted physical integrity	Restricted access to productive & financial resources	Restricted civil liberties
2019 ¹¹⁴	-	51 (high)	37.3 (med.)	-	-
2023 ¹¹⁵	-	59.7 (high)	41.5 (high)	-	-

Gender Inequality Index (GII)

The GII^{as} value is given on a scale from 0 to 1, with 0 being 0% inequality, indicating women “fare equally” in comparison to men, and 1 being 100% inequality, indicating women “fare poorly” in comparison to men. The assessment of women ‘faring equally’ or ‘poorly’ compared to men refers to their relative standing in health, political representation, education, and economic participation.

Value (2023)¹¹⁶

0.478

Rank (2023)

118

(out of 172 countries)

Gender in national fisheries governance

Forty-three fisheries governance documents^{at,au} were identified and reviewed as of July 2025, covering a range of laws, regulations, policies, strategies, and plans guiding Solomon Islands' fisheries sector. Of these, nine reference women or gender in some regard: three solely through explicit mention of women^{av} or gender (without feminine pronouns), five solely through the use of feminine pronouns (she/her), and one through both.

The Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources envisions “a sustainable fisheries sector that contributes to the socio-economic needs of all Solomon Islanders.” In its **Corporate Plan 2020–2023** (2020),^{aw} the Ministry sets out Corporate Goal No. 2: “to optimize the economic and social benefits of aquatic resources through ecologically sustainable fisheries and greater local participation in harvesting, processing, and exporting.” One strategy under this goal is to develop climate change–resilient aquaculture as an equitable livelihood opportunity for men, women, and vulnerable groups. An indicator for achieving this goal is an increase in the number of men and women using aquatic resources as a sustainable economic tool.

“The National Fisheries Policy 2019–2029 underscores the role of women in fisheries, citing data indicating that in rural areas ‘nearly half of all women and 90% of men fish or collect aquatic resources for food and income.’”

The **National Fisheries Policy 2019–2029** (2019) underscores the role of women in fisheries, citing data that in rural areas “nearly half of all women and 90% of men fish or collect aquatic resources for food and income”. In response, the policy sets out three strategic objectives, including one aimed at safeguarding fisheries and their ecosystems for nutrition and socio-economic benefits. Within this objective, one intention is to establish management plans for inshore and inland fisheries that apply ecosystem-based and gender-equitable approaches to promote climate change resilience. Another intent is to support sustainable use through improved preservation and to expand market access and livelihood opportunities for both rural men and women. The third objective centres on developing a sustainable aquaculture sector, with the intention of positioning inland and coastal aquaculture as an equitable livelihood opportunity in which men, women, and vulnerable groups can participate and benefit.

The **Tuna Management and Development Plan** (2017) aims to maximize the economic and social benefits of sustainable tuna fisheries. Among its seven identified strategies to achieve this goal, is a commitment to “minimize adverse social, cultural, and gender impacts.” Outcome 5.3 is “promote gender equity,” supported by an activity to promote gender mainstreaming in industry development and an indicator to support gender parity in wages and that approaches in training and mentoring is aligned with the *Solomon Island’s Gender Equality and Women’s Development* policy. It notes an assumption of “strong political commitment to gender equality.”

The **Fisheries Management Regulations (L.N. No. 2 of 2017)** (2017)^{ax} require that appointments to the Fisheries Advisory Council aim to achieve “balanced representation between genders and across fisheries subsectors.” The regulations include both masculine and feminine pronouns in reference to members of the Fisheries Licensing Committee, the Permanent Secretary responsible for fisheries, the Director of Fisheries, fishing equipment holders, record keepers, vessel masters, authorized officers, and observers.

Roles in the fisheries sector are predominantly framed in masculine terms, as reflected in governance documents through the use of male pronouns. The inclusion of feminine pronouns indicates recognition that women may also hold leadership, regulatory, and/or operational roles within the sector. The **Fisheries (Amendment) Regulations (13B)** (2009) and the **Fisheries (Beche-de-mer) (Amendment No. 2) Regulations** (2013) include “his or her” in reference to possession of bêche-de-mer, while the **Fisheries (Beche-de-mer) (Amendment No. 2) Regulations** (2014) applies the same wording to both license holders and those in possession of bêche-de-mer. The **Temotu Province (Fisheries and Marine Protection) Ordinance** (2010) employs “he or she” in reference to ownership of reefs, lagoons, and other areas of water, as well as in references to the Minister.

The **Fisheries Management Act (No. 2 of 2015)** (2015) makes extensive use of the terms “he or she” and “his or her” when referring to the Director of Fisheries, the Permanent Secretary responsible for fisheries, authorized officers, fishing license holders, vessel operators or owners, observers, crew members, auditors, and police officers. The **Fisheries Management Regulations** (2017) uses feminine pronouns in reference to members of the Fisheries Licensing Committee, the Permanent Secretary responsible for fisheries, the Director of Fisheries, fishing equipment holders, record keepers, vessel masters, authorized officers, and observers.

Threats and drivers of change in fisheries

Several key threats to and drivers of change in Solomon Islands’ coastal and pelagic ecosystems and fisheries, alongside examples of how these may be addressed, are outlined below. Threats and drivers of change to fisheries may have specific gender dimensions associated with them making gender integration necessary in efforts to improve adaptation and foster resilience in the face of change.

“Although data on IUU fishing in Solomon Islands remain limited, recent efforts have strengthened policy responses, including the National Monitoring, Control and Surveillance Strategy and the MFMR E-port Development Policy.”

Illegal, Unregulated, and Unreported (IUU) Fishing – IUU fishing remains a concern across much of the Pacific region, including Solomon Islands, where the scale of the EEZ and limited surveillance and monitoring capacity to detect non-compliant vessels can constrain deterrence. Regional compliance estimates indicate that IUU activity in Pacific tuna fisheries during 2017–19 was approximately 192,186 tonnes with an ex-vessel value of USD 333 million, much of it associated with non-compliance by licensed vessels.¹¹⁷ This represents about 6.5% of the total tuna catch in the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) Convention Area in 2019.¹¹³ A recent initiative by the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) and 15 member nations detected over 2,000 cases of IUU fishing in several Pacific Island nations.¹¹⁸ While no national-level estimates are available for Solomon Islands, IUU fishing has been identified by the government as an ongoing concern.¹¹⁵ Recent national efforts have strengthened the policy framework to address the issue. These include the *Solomon Islands National Monitoring, Control and Surveillance Strategy* (2023-2028) and the *MFMR E-port Development Policy and Strategy Plan* (2023-2028). Encouragingly, the region, including with support from Pacific QUAD^{ay} partners, is continuing to strengthen tools and cooperation aimed at improving compliance and transparency in tuna fisheries.

“Participatory assessments show women have long raised concerns about logging impacts on nearshore habitats, including sedimentation and degradation of seagrass, mangroves, and reefs central to their fishing and food provisioning.”

“The 2019 grounding of *MV Solomon Trader* caused significant oil spill damage to reefs and coastal habitats, with and highlighted broader weaknesses in environmental governance, regulatory oversight, and emergency preparedness.”

“Periodic reopening of sea cucumber fisheries has driven rapid increases in effort and localized depletion, raising concerns about moratoria effectiveness without sustained management, monitoring, and enforcement capacity over time.”

Extractive industries – Solomon Islands’ reliance on timber and mineral exports has been documented as a driver of environmental change in marine and nearshore environments, with direct implications for fisheries productivity and the livelihoods that depend on them. Extensive logging has been linked to increased sediment runoff into coastal waters, contributing to more turbidity, altered coral reef community composition, reduced coral cover, and declines in the abundance and biomass of grazing fish,¹²⁰ as well as reductions in juvenile nursery habitat.¹²¹ These impacts are particularly consequential for women, who are disproportionately engaged in nearshore fishing, gleaning, and harvesting of invertebrates in mangrove, seagrass, and reef-flat habitats that are highly sensitive to land-based pollution.

Evidence from participatory assessments and regional forums indicates that women have long identified and articulated concerns regarding the impacts of logging on nearshore habitats. More than a decade ago, women leaders participating in the Coral Triangle Initiative–linked dialogues highlighted sedimentation and habitat degradation affecting seagrass, mangroves, and reef-flat environments.¹²² These observations were grounded in women’s routine use of coastal ecosystems and their role in household food provisioning.

More recently, women in Isabel Province have played a prominent role in community-led responses to environmental degradation linked to logging, including legal action seeking redress for damage to marine ecosystems and fisheries-dependent livelihoods.¹²³ These efforts build on a longer tradition of women’s activism in Solomon Islands, including prominent grassroots leaders who have challenged logging and mining operations on the grounds of environmental degradation, intergenerational justice, and the erosion of customary stewardship systems.¹²⁴

Oil pollution associated with extractive activities and maritime transport represents an additional risk to coastal ecosystems and fisheries. The 2019 grounding of the *MV Solomon Trader* on Rennell Island resulted in a substantial oil spill, with documented damage to coral reefs and adjacent coastal habitats. Subsequent analyses characterized the incident as indicative of broader systemic weaknesses in environmental governance, regulatory oversight, and emergency preparedness related to extractive industries and shipping in Solomon Islands, rather than an isolated accident.^{125,126}

Overexploitation – In some locations, rising market demand combined with limited resource governance and management capacity – across both customary and statutory systems – has increased depletion risks in coastal fisheries, particularly for high-value species. National policy and planning documents identify growing commercial exploitation, interacting with population pressures and climate change, as key drivers of inshore resource decline, including for sea cucumbers, which have experienced repeated boom-and-bust cycles linked to export demand.¹²⁷

A number of fishery moratoria and strengthened regulatory measures have been introduced over the past two decades to address overexploitation of sea cucumbers in particular. While these measures signal increasing policy attention to sustainability concerns, implementation and outcomes have been uneven. This reflects persistent challenges related to enforcement capacity, monitoring, compliance, and the alignment of national regulations with customary tenure and management systems.^{az,128} Periodic reopening of the fishery has, in some cases, been associated with rapid increases in fishing effort and localized depletion, raising concerns about the long-term effectiveness of moratoria in the absence of sustained management and enforcement capacity.

Several sea cucumber species, including some of the most commercially valuable taxa harvested in Solomon Islands, are now listed under Appendix II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). These listings are expected to introduce additional export controls and reporting requirements, influencing the degree to which these can be exported from Solomon Islands in the future.¹²⁸ Effective implementation will depend on national capacity to undertake non-detriment findings, monitor harvests and exports, and ensure coordination between fisheries, environment, and customs authorities.

“Under a high emissions scenario, skipjack biomass may decline by 32% and yellowfin by 11% by 2050, reducing domestic landings and affecting tuna-related employment, including SolTuna’s largely female workforce.”

Climate change – Climate change poses significant risks to Solomon Islands’ fisheries sector, with projections indicating potential reductions in maximum catch potential of more than 50%.¹²⁹ Rising sea temperatures are expected to alter the distribution of many species, including tuna, with feeding grounds expected to shift away from the Solomon Islands’ EEZ.¹³⁰ Under a high emissions scenario (RCP 8.5),^{ba} the biomass of skipjack and yellowfin tuna – the primary target species of the purse-seine fishery – are projected^{bb} to decrease in the EEZs of PICTs in the western part of the Western and Central Pacific Ocean. For Solomon Islands specifically, modelling suggests average biomass decreases by 2050 of 32% for skipjack and 11% for yellowfin.¹³¹ Such changes would reduce the volume of catches landed domestically and have implications for tuna-related employment, including for SolTuna’s largely female workforce. Albacore biomass, however, is projected to increase by 18%.¹³¹

Warming waters, combined with ocean acidification, are also expected to affect coral reef formation and health, with cascading impacts on reef-associated fish populations.¹³² Sea-level rise is likely to reduce mangrove extent¹³³ – an important nursery habitat for many reef species – particularly where urban development limits the ability of mangroves to migrate landward. These impacts are not gender neutral. Women fishers tend to rely more heavily on nearshore habitats such as mangroves, seagrass beds, and shallow reefs, which are among the most exposed to climate-related change. Women’s capacity to adapt may also be constrained by unequal access to assets and motorised vessels, as well as by substantial caregiving responsibilities that limit time available for fishing and other livelihood activities.

“Women fishers rely heavily on climate-exposed nearshore habitats and face constrained adaptive capacity due to limited access to assets and vessels, alongside caregiving responsibilities that restrict livelihood opportunities.”

The increasing (frequency and) intensity of natural hazards, particularly cyclones, further compound these risks, damaging reefs and coastal infrastructure and reducing safe fishing days. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Solomon Islands was affected by Tropical Cyclone Harold, illustrating how overlapping shocks can also intensify pressures on fisheries. Damage to crops and plantations, combined with movement restrictions, increased reliance on fishing for food and income, placing additional strain on already stressed resources.¹³⁴

Policy and management gaps – Constraints in integrated coastal and ocean planning, enforcement capacity, and inclusive decision-making can limit the effectiveness of fisheries management and lead to inequitable outcomes if trade-offs are not carefully anticipated. Competing objectives – such as conservation measures alongside livelihood needs – may disproportionately affect marginalised groups when implemented without adequate consultation or alternative livelihood strategies. For example, restrictions associated with mangrove protection can reduce access for women who rely on gleaning for food and income, potentially increasing vulnerability in the absence of appropriate livelihood alternatives.

National fisheries policy recognises both the importance of, and challenges associated with, scaling community-based fisheries management under the Fisheries Management Act framework. Although the *Community Based Coastal and Marine Resource Management Strategy*¹³⁵ itself doesn’t mention gender,

it points to the policies and guidance documents for community-based fisheries and resource management which do address gender. Furthermore, encouragingly, Solomon Islands has advanced policy and institutional efforts to strengthen community-based management, including mechanisms that allow community fisheries management plans to gain legal standing through gazettal. These efforts have been supported by regional partners and long-running development programmes that continue to build capacity within the MFMR.

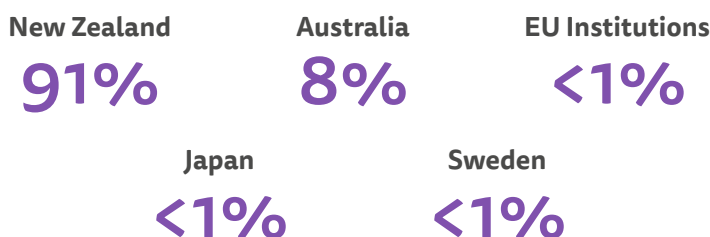
“The Ministry and partners are developing a comprehensive GEDSI strategy through consultative processes, aimed at strengthening internal institutional mainstreaming and integrating GEDSI considerations across all thematic areas of work.”

Relatedly, the Ministry and its partners are developing a comprehensive *Gender Equality and Disability Social Inclusion (GEDSI) Strategy* through consultative processes that are broad in scope and apply two-fold: internally to strengthen institutional structures for GEDSI mainstreaming, and across all areas of thematic work. The strategy encompasses five objectives ranging from improving organisational structures and strategic partnerships to more specific areas such as enhancing GEDSI dimensions in community-based resource management, strengthening women's and youth's socio-economic resilience through coastal livelihoods and aquaculture initiatives, and integrating GEDSI lenses across tuna industry supply and value chains through corporate social responsibility mechanisms. With the strategy's official endorsement and launch anticipated in mid-2026, this work has the potential to ensure that future management approaches more effectively reflect women's roles across fisheries, address structural constraints, and balance conservation objectives with equitable livelihood outcomes.

Gender in ODA allocation for fisheries

Between 2012 and 2022, Solomon Islands received a total of USD 31,04 million in fisheries Official Development Assistance (ODA),^{bc} of which 46% (USD 14,35 million) was allocated to gender equality and women's empowerment in fisheries (i.e. tagged with gender markers 1 or 2). No gender focused financing for Solomon Islands scored as 'Principal' (gender marker 2). Fisheries aid to Solomon Islands represents 34% of fisheries aid to the Melanesian subregion, whilst gender-equality focused fisheries aid to Solomon Islands represents 66% of gender-equality focused fisheries aid to the region.

Of the ODA screened for gender markers, gender-equality focussed financing for fisheries in Solomon Islands came from New Zealand (91%), Australia (8%), EU Institutions (<1%), Japan (<1%), and Sweden (<1%).



Programmes or initiatives aiming to advance gender equality in fisheries

A great number of current and past projects have contributed to progressing gender equality in fisheries in Solomon Islands. The list below is not intended to be comprehensive, but rather to highlight the diversity of initiatives through which gender is mainstreamed and women's empowerment is supported. These include efforts to strengthen fisheries institutions; advance women's social and economic empowerment, particularly in areas where their contributions are most significant;

reinforce and scale community-based approaches; and support collaborations with national academic partners, such as SINU, which are progressively becoming important repositories of knowledge and influential agents of change.

Mekem Strong Solomon Islands Fisheries (MSSIF) programme (2010 – present) is part of a partnership arrangement between the New Zealand and Solomon Islands governments that aims to support Solomon Islands in enhancing capabilities in the fisheries sector, implementing a range of policy and regulatory reforms, and enhancing fisheries management practices.¹³⁶ The programme has recently entered its fourth phase, with a focus on supporting the Ministry in enhancing aquaculture and provincial fisheries services, investing in the MFMR workforce, and providing support for the Ministry to respond to new priorities and strengthen inclusive practices.¹³⁷ Each phase of the MSSIF programme has included a focus on integrating gender into fisheries management at the Ministry level, including through improving gender equitable hiring practices, encouraging women's participation in decision-making, and supporting the development of gender-responsive approaches to fisheries development and management.⁶⁴ During Phase 3 there were increasing opportunities for MFMR to receive support for gender equality from other development partners and MSSIF assisted the Ministry in their efforts to mainstream gender in their policies and data collection through growing collaborative programmes looking at gender in fisheries, including those undertaken by the University of Wollongong and WorldFish (Pathways Projects), SPC (PEUMP Programme), and FFA.¹³⁸

“The MSSIF programme supports gender integration in fisheries management within the Ministry, including equitable hiring, increased women’s participation in decision-making, and the development of gender-responsive policies and approaches.”

The Markets for Change (M4C) project (2014 – present), supports the social and economic empowerment of women vendors and the development of safer, more inclusive, and non-discriminatory urban and rural marketplaces in Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu.¹³⁹ An initial phase (2014–2021) was funded by the governments of Australia, New Zealand, and Canada, and a second phase (2022–2026) is being supported by the Government of Australia.¹⁴⁰ M4C builds on evidence and lessons from the Partners Improving Markets (PIM) programme (2009–2012), which showed that improvements in market infrastructure and governance can enhance the socio-economic conditions of women vendors.¹⁴¹ Phase II of M4C further builds on these lessons, drawing on experience from both PIM and the first phase of M4C implemented between 2014 and 2021. The project also works with local governments and banks, market management, and other stakeholders. Since 2014, M4C has worked with 50,500 market vendors across 26 markets in the four countries.¹⁴⁰ In Solomon Islands, the project has focused on key markets in Honiara, Auki (Malaita), and Gizo (Western Province). M4C has helped women establish savings schemes, strengthen financial literacy and leadership skills, and build confidence and resilience through grassroots-led, gender-responsive governance.¹⁴⁰ In its current phase, M4C continues to strengthen representative market vendor associations, enhance women's influence in market management, and improve access to financial services and skills development, with an emphasis on strengthening market vendor resilience to respond to vulnerabilities identified in the context of COVID-19.^{141,142}

“M4C has helped women establish savings schemes, strengthen financial literacy and leadership skills, and build confidence and resilience through grassroots-led, gender-responsive governance.”

In November 2025, 30 Market Vendor Association leaders from across Solomon Islands participated in a three-day Management Learning Forum. The Forum focused on practical training to strengthen inclusive market governance, gender equality, and sexual and reproductive health in market spaces, and action planning to support stronger, more sustainable vendor associations in 2026.¹⁴³

“The Pathways Projects have worked to challenge gender norms and balance of power, as well as build capacity within the Ministry to mainstream gender in data collection, analysis, and policy.”

“PEUMP's first phase prioritised mainstreaming gender and human rights, including gender-disaggregated data collection, capacity strengthening, supporting women's participation, and expanding equal employment opportunities in the tuna industry.”

“The Fish Innovation Project and Seafood Post-Harvest Training Initiative strengthened fisheries value through improved handling, food safety, and community capacity, with SINU serving as a central national training and research partner.”

The Pathways Projects Phases 1–3 (2017 – present), funded by the Australian government,^{bd} focus on strengthening and scaling community-based approaches to Pacific coastal fisheries management in Kiribati, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu. Specifically, the projects aim to improve the wellbeing of coastal communities in the Pacific by working towards more productive and resilient fisheries and enhanced food security. Implemented by the University of Wollongong, WorldFish, SPC, and the MFMR (in Solomon Islands) the projects have focused on enhancing social and gender equity in coastal fisheries management and governance. This includes recognising women's contributions, strengthening their participation in decision-making, and supporting more equitable access to livelihoods and nutrition benefits.¹⁴⁴ Efforts have also sought to address underlying gender norms and balance of power, while strengthening institutional capacity within the Ministry to integrate gender considerations into data collection, analysis, and policy.¹⁴⁵

The Pacific-European Union Marine Partnership Programme (PEUMP) (2019 – present), a programme funded by the European Union and Sweden, aims to provide direct assistance to support regional and national level activities across the Pacific Island region, including in Solomon Islands.¹⁴⁶ During its first phase (2019–2025), the project prioritised mainstreaming a gender, social inclusion, and human-rights based approach within the fisheries sector. This included collecting gender-disaggregated data, strengthening capacity, supporting women's participation in coastal fisheries decision-making, and expanding equal employment opportunities in the tuna industry.¹⁴⁷ The European Union renewed its investment in PEUMP through Phase II (2026–2030), providing EUR 20 million to be implemented by SPC, FFA, and the University of the South Pacific in partnership with regional and national actors. The programme will support Pacific countries and Timor-Leste to strengthen ocean governance and fisheries management, enhance equitable value chains, and address climate, biodiversity, and IUU fishing challenges through education, research, training, policy support, and technical assistance.¹⁴⁸

The Pacific Ridge to Reef (R2R) Programme (2015 – present) is a Global Environment Facility (GEF) initiative designed to promote sustainable development in Pacific SIDS through integrated environmental management. Regionally, it is executed by SPC through the GEF Pacific R2R International Waters project.¹⁴⁹ The programme supports 14 Pacific Island Countries and Territories, including Solomon Islands, aligning its efforts with each country's specific priorities.¹⁴⁹ National stakeholders have identified six priority environmental issues contributing to ecosystem degradation in Solomon Islands: poor solid waste management, land degradation, deforestation and forest degradation, water pollution, invasive species, and coral reef degradation.¹⁵⁰ Recognising the important connection between gender equality and environmental sustainability, the programme also incorporates a gender mainstreaming strategy to promote inclusivity, sustainable livelihoods, and resilience.^{149,151}

Other initiatives that have contributed to advancing gender equality in fisheries in Solomon Islands include:

Two initiatives focused on strengthening fisheries value through improved post-harvest handling, food safety, and community-level capacity building, with Solomon Islands National University (SINU) playing a central role as a national training and research partner. The **Fish Innovation Project** (2021–2025), funded by the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) and implemented in collaboration with SINU, WorldFish, MFMR, and the University of Wollongong, sought to identify community-led

innovations that contribute to sustained livelihood improvements.¹⁵² As part of this effort, a series of fish handling workshops combining theoretical and practical components were delivered at the community level,¹⁵³ with training designed to reach both women and men. Complementing this work, Phase 1 (2024–2025) of the **Seafood Post-Harvest Training Initiative**, funded by the Japanese Promotion Fund through the Pacific Islands FFA and implemented by SINU’s Department of Fisheries Studies, was delivered exclusively in Solomon Islands. Training was conducted in four communities in Guadalcanal and Malaita Provinces, with around 15 participants per community and women comprising 80–100% of trainees, reflecting both the central role women play in post-harvest activities and the importance of strengthening their access to skills, food safety knowledge, and livelihood opportunities.^{be} The training focused on practical and locally relevant approaches to post-harvest handling and seafood safety, aiming to support small-scale fisheries businesses while contributing to improved product quality, incomes, and food security.^{bf} Phase 2, continuing in 2026, aims to expand this work to other Pacific Island countries. At the time of writing, a training-of-trainers course has been completed at FFA for two women from Fiji, who will support the rollout of training nationally.^{bg} This approach seeks to build local capacity and ensure that training is delivered in ways that are context-appropriate, gender-responsive, and sustainable over time. Together, these initiatives highlight the role of SINU in building national capacity to partner with MFMR and regional and international organizations, and in supporting community outreach using gender-sensitive and equitable training approaches that help address persistent barriers to women’s participation along fisheries value chains.

Coral Reef Rescue: Resilient Coral Reefs, Resilient Communities Project (2023 – current), is a GEF funded project that focuses on building capacity and solutions to ensure the long-term survival of climate resilient coral reef ecosystems in six countries: Fiji, Indonesia, Madagascar, the Philippines, Solomon Islands, and Tanzania. The project^{bh} is implemented by the World Wildlife Fund and executed by The University of Queensland. In Solomon Islands, the project is executed by the Wildlife Conservation Society in partnership with the Solomon Islands Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology (the focal government Ministry). The project is working towards the co-development of a national coral action plan for coral reef conservation targeting local drivers of coral reef degradation through inclusive planning with local communities, government, non-government, and private sector stakeholders. Coral Reef Rescue is focused on knowledge sharing, awareness and capacity development, and strengthening reef-friendly small-scale businesses and community groups. Four free online learning courses^{bi} (Coral Reef Challenges and Solutions, Data and Monitoring, Sustainable Blue Economy, and Climate Resilient Communities) have been designed by the University of Queensland that provide adaptable tools for learners to implement, based on their specific context. Information on accessing the courses has been disseminated to local high schools across the country.¹⁵⁴ In 2025, a regional community of practice was supported, bringing together local women community representatives and participants from the Coral Triangle Initiative Women’s Leaders Forum to promote peer learning and gender-inclusive approaches to coral reef conservation.¹⁵⁵ In recognition of the challenges encountered by women in the use, management, and conservation of coastal and marine resources, the project takes a gender-responsive approach targeting equitable participation and dedicated investment to support and build capacity for women-owned enterprises.

“In 2025, Coral Reef Rescue supported a regional community of practice, bringing together women leaders and Coral Triangle Initiative participants to promote peer learning and gender-inclusive coral reef conservation approaches.”

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Elize Kota shucking oysters outside Munda market, Western Province, as part of small-scale coastal livelihoods. Photo by © WCS | Rio Button.



Left: Oneideh Panda harvesting seagrapes in the coastal waters off Boboe village, Western Province, for export to Honiara. Right: Mary Kera, Munda Market Vendors Association president, attending a Community-Based Organisation meeting for the Munda Environmental Stewardship Association. Photos by © WCS | Rio Button



Left: Fisheries officer Sandra Rose recording individual tuna weights during container loading in Noro, Western Province. Right: Fisheries officer Charlyn Golu monitoring a tuna transshipment event in Noro, Western Province. Photos by Francisco Blaha.

Endnotes

- a Marine fisheries statistics are derived from catch reconstruction under the Sea Around Us - <http://www.seaaroundus.org/data/#/eez>. The approach utilized builds on national statistics and accounts for discards as well as sectoral catch data that often is not included in official datasets (e.g., artisanal or recreational catches). The Sea Around Us data is also utilized here as a consistent frame of reference for and to facilitate comparison across the set of countries for which fact sheets were developed as part of this project. Sea Around Us data are distinguished according to the following categories: large-scale (i.e., industrial) and small-scale (i.e., artisanal, subsistence and recreational) fisheries catches. Recreational catches were not considered here.
- b "Marine subsistence" is used by the Sea Around Us to refer to the amount of annual marine capture production landed by the subsistence sector. This consists of fisheries conducted by women and/or non-commercial fishers for consumption by one's family, and where applicable, the fraction of the commercial catch that is given to crew or the community (mainly from small-scale fisheries). Source: (5)
- c "Marine commercial" is used by the Sea Around Us to refer to the amount of annual marine capture production landed by commercial fisheries. These are fisheries whose landed catch is sold commercially (as opposed to being consumed and/or given away to the crew) and encompass both the industrial (large-scale) and artisanal (small-scale) sectors. Source: (5)
- d The term "apparent" refers to the average food available for consumption, which for several reasons (for example, waste at the household level), is not equal to average food intake or average food consumption. The amount is calculated as production + imports - exports - non-food uses, +/- stocks variations and divided by number of people partaking of it.
- e This section summarises statistics from the 2019 Population and housing census. Source: (11)
- f The Illuminating Hidden Harvests estimates are utilized here as a consistent frame of reference for and to facilitate comparison across the set of countries for which fact sheets were developed as part of this project (visit <https://oceanrisk.earth/> to access all the fact sheets).
- g These estimates are not based on primary data collection activities in the country. IHH estimates of employment in fisheries were derived using the IHH modelling framework. For more details we refer the reader to Appendix A.4.2 of (13) and the IHH database - <https://www.fao.org/voluntary-guidelines-small-scalefisheries/resources/i-h-database/en>.
- h Subsistence fisheries activities, also referred to as "working for own consumption", are defined by the IHH as activities that individuals of any sex and age carried out at least once over the last 12 months in order to produce and process fish for their own final use, with no transaction occurring in the marketplace. By definition, they are considered here as small-scale fisheries. Table 2.1, p.11 in (14)
- i Small Scale Fisheries (SSF) are distinguished from Large Scale Fisheries (LSF) according to a characterisation matrix that distinguishes between fisheries according to gear use, vessel characteristics, fishing operations, types of storage and preservation of catch, employment/labour, and use of catch. The characterisation matrix allows for a standardised approach to classify and characterize fisheries at the global and regional level, allowing for high levels of variation between fisheries. SSF generally includes low-technology, low-capital, labour-intensive fishing practices. Often, the term artisanal is used to refer to small-scale fisheries. In the context of the IHH work, the term small-scale fisheries refers to the whole value chain of pre-harvest, harvesting and post-harvest activities, including subsistence fisheries and excluding recreational fisheries. Source: (15)
- j According to IHH estimates, 503,152 people belong to a household where at least one person engages in fisheries or in subsistence fishing.
- k Co-author contribution.
- l Co-author contribution.
- m Co-author contribution.
- n Co-author contribution.
- o The boiled, dried, and smoked flesh of sea cucumbers.
- p In Solomon Islands, "salt fish" commonly refers to frozen, salted fish offloaded from purse-seine vessels during transshipment at Honiara port and those sourced from the National Fisheries Development (NFD) company in Noro, shipped via transport vessels to Honiara. This fish includes non-target species caught as bycatch during tuna fishing, as well as damaged tuna that is no longer marketable for export.
- q As of January 2026 Honiara City Council clarified that salt fish can only be sold at designated markets (specifically White River Fish Market), not at the Central Market, and that vendors must comply with this decision for regulatory and public health reasons. Source: (31)
- r Co-author contribution.
- s These shells, often worked into beads or otherwise shaped, were used as a medium of exchange, particularly before the introduction of modern currency. While the Solomon Islands dollar is the official currency, shell money continues to play a significant role in various cultural practices. Source: (36)
- t For a detailed account about shell money production in Langalanga lagoon we refer the reader to (37).
- u Co-author contribution.
- v Co-author contribution.
- w "Male dominated committees" are defined as committees that have more male members than female. Data from WorldFish reviewing a cross section of 19 communities for which gender segregated Community-Based Fisheries Management data was available in 2020. Source: (35)
- x Data from Participatory Exclusions research by WorldFish. Source: (35)
- y Data from MFMR reviewing employment data for the ministry in 2020. Source: (35)
- z Co-author contribution
- aa Co-author contribution.
- ab Several co-author contributions.
- ac Several co-authors noted that while the policy is described as 'fee-free', its practical implementation varied. In some areas, families primarily have access to church-run schools (rather than government schools), where fees or associated costs may still apply.
- ad Co-author contribution.
- ae Accessed through the WorldBank Gender Data Portal | Solomon Islands <https://genderdata.worldbank.org/en/economies/solomon-islands> citing as source UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). UIS.Stat Bulk Data Download Service. (Accessed April 5, 2025)
- af Constitution of Solomon Islands 1978, s 15.
- ag Constitution of Solomon Islands 1978, s 15(5).
- ah Draft Federal Constitution of Solomon Islands 2018, cl x.
- ai Draft federal Constitution of Solomon Islands 2018, cl 16(2)
- aj Draft federal Constitution of Solomon Islands 2018, cl 16(3)(a)(ii).
- ak Co-author contribution.
- al Personal communication between Pauline Soaki (formerly the Director of the Women's Development Division) and Nicole George.
- am Penal Code Cap 26, Parts XVI and XXV.
- an The Ministry leads SafeNet and its Coordinator is based in the Women Development Division. All its members operate under a common MOU along with minimum standards that ensures quality support services are provided for Women and Children that experience GBV. Please refer to <https://solomons.gov.sb/ministry-of-women-youth-children-family-affairs/essential-services/access-women-youth-victim-help-and-family-counselling-services/> for more information.

- ao Visit <https://oceanrisk.earth/> to read summaries of key conventions/policies, as well as additional information about key indicators used in this factsheet.
- ap Specifically, the SAMOA Pathway outlines recommendations to eliminate discrimination, enhance economic empowerment, end violence, ensure participation in decision-making, and protect sexual and reproductive health rights.
- aq Visit <https://oceanrisk.earth/> to read summaries of key conventions/policies, as well as additional information about key indicators used in this factsheet.
- ar Countries are classified into five groups according to their SIGI score: (1) very low level of discrimination (0 < SIGI < 20); (2) low level of discrimination (20 < SIGI < 30); (3) medium level of discrimination (30 < SIGI < 40); (4) high level of discrimination (40 < SIGI < 50); and (5) very high level of discrimination (50 < SIGI < 100). Source: (112) Also corresponds to scores for 2019 listed in (113).
- as Visit <https://oceanrisk.earth/fact-sheets/#supplementary-material-for-country-fact-sheets> to read summaries of key conventions/policies, as well as additional information about key indicators used in this factsheet.
- at Sourced from the databases FAO LEX, ECO LEX, and SSF LEX. Fisheries governance documents include fisheries policies, laws, acts, plans, strategies, and regulations. A database of all reviewed governance documents can be found here: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15098509>.
- au Supplementary material is available at <https://oceanrisk.earth/fact-sheets/#supplementary-material-for-country-fact-sheets>, where you can read summaries of key conventions and policies, as well as additional information about key indicators used in this factsheet.
- av The *National Plan of Action on Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs* (2010) mentions women in an acronym for the Ministry of Women, Youths and Children Affairs (MWYCA) and in a photo credit noting “women selling fish.” As women are not mentioned in the policy content itself, this reference was not counted in the formal findings.
- aw The *Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources Corporate Plan 2015–2018* (2016) was reviewed and no reference to women or gender was found, while the updated *Corporate Plan 2020–2023* (2020) does include such references, as noted.
- ax Governance frameworks are dynamic, and although the *Fisheries Management Regulations (L.N. No. 2 of 2017)* (2017) have since been amended, this document and its amendments were included in the analysis to understand how the policy landscape has evolved over time. Full titles, publication years, and current legal status are documented in the accompanying database <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15098509>.
- ay A strategic, informal diplomatic grouping composed of the United States, India, Australia, and Japan.
- az Co-author contribution.
- ba Representative Concentration Pathway 8.5 (RCP 8.5) is a high emissions scenario used in climate modelling that assumes minimal mitigation efforts and continued growth in greenhouse gas emissions throughout the 21st century.
- bb Projections are drawn from SEAPODYM (Spatial Ecosystem and Population Dynamics Model), a modelling framework developed by the Pacific Community (SPC) that simulates the spatial dynamics of tuna species as well as micronekton biomass distributions at basin and global scales, under the influence of both fishing and environmental effects. Projections under climate change were driven by physical and biogeochemical variables generated by the coupled model Nucleus for European Modelling of the Ocean, Pelagic Interaction Scheme for Carbon and Ecosystem Studies (NEMO-PISCES). The projected future impacts of climate change on tuna biomass and recruitment are described using historical (2001–2010) and climate projections to 2050 (2046–2055) without considering the impact of fishing. Biomass estimates reflect ensemble projections under RCP 8.5 and are subject to uncertainty, particularly at the scale of individual EEZs. Source: (131)
- bc Different from OECD standard methods, this is measured in disbursements from DAC countries (including EU Institutions) to recipient countries. This captures the amount of money given, as opposed to the amount of money committed. Original data was downloaded on 17th June 2024.
- bd Through the Australian Center for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).
- be Co-author contribution.
- bf Co-author contribution.
- bg Co-author contribution.
- bh Project webpage: <https://coralreefrescue.iwlearn.net/>
- bi Online learning course link: <https://coralreefrescue.iwlearn.net/online-learning-courses>

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