

## **Mainstreaming Gender in the ICZM Mangrove Plan planning process in Solomon Islands**



**National Workshop on Preparation of ICZM Mangrove Plan**

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**Venue: SINU Science Lab Conference Room, Kukum Campus, Honiara**

# **Mainstreaming Gender in the ICZM Mangrove Plan planning process in Solomon Islands**

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**SIG/MECDM support to SINU, CCD/MECDM & KEI**

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## 1.0 Introduction

### 1.1. Concept Note and Workshop overview.

The Solomon Islands Community Based Coastal and Marine Resource Management Strategy, spanning from 2021 to 2025, focuses on achieving healthy marine and coastal resources, contributing to socioeconomic needs and food security. The policy targets 25% improvement in community-based resource management across coastal areas by 2025. It emphasizes scaling up CBRM through awareness campaigns, training, and community engagement. The strategy integrates sustainable livelihoods, climate change adaptation, and monitoring systems to ensure effective coastal management. Simultaneously, the government addresses climate change challenges by proposing an Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) framework. With a reliance on agriculture, forestry, and fisheries, the Solomon Islands aim to safeguard coastal ecosystems. The Climate Technology Centre and Network supports this initiative, focusing on ICZM policies and mangrove protection. The assistance includes stakeholder mapping, legal framework analysis, consultations, and awareness campaigns. The anticipated impact involves integrated coastal development, sustainable economic growth, conservation of resources, and effective disaster risk reduction (ICZM workshop Handout, 2024)

#### **ICZM policy framework aims to:**

- Promote integrated planning and coordination of coastal developments across the various sectors.
- Promote sustainable economic development to secure livelihoods of coastal communities.
- Conserve the coastal and marine resources and environment for sustainable development.
- Manage environmental risks associated with changes in shoreline and climate.
- Develop capacity in research and education and enhance stakeholder awareness and participation in sustainable resource management.
- Establish effective institutional and legal frameworks for implementation of the ICZM policy.
- Protect the mangroves through Ecosystem based adaptation solutions.

### 1.2. **Scope of support ( to CCD/MECDM, SIG SINU, KEI & CTNC)**

This report presents the overall workshop key findings of gender and importance of recognizing gender ( men and women, children , vulnerable group and special needs people, etc) on the ICZM mangrove plan planning process for Solomon Islands. To better understand issues around gender (**workshop discussions, Presentations and literature**) were used to support facilitations to generate discussions. Further discussions also seek the participants to identify possible way forward or actions, example overarching roles, mandates of national government agencies, MOFR, MECDM, MFMR, etc which trigger potential opportunities and solutions to address the problems and challenges that will inform the initial planning processes to develop ICZM Framework and a Mangrove Policy for Solomon Islands.

## **2.0. WORKSHOP APPROACH**

For this workshop, I use WorldFish CBRM Facilitators Guide (2013) as a reference guide to facilitate the sessions, noting on Management planning principles; *Initial scoping; participatory diagnosis; management planning and adaptive management*. We use this to understand the context, situation and make recommendations as a basis for the formulation of the ICZM Mangrove management plan or policy for Solomon Islands

### **2.1. WORKSHOP BREAK OUT GROUP SESSIONS**

There are 3 break out groups for group discussions;

1. Government Ministries (comprise of Ministries present during the workshop sessions-MECDM, MFMR, MoFR, MAL)
2. NGOs-(Live and Learn-Solomon Islands, etc)
3. Academic (Solomon Islands National University, Graduate Research Students, local experts, etc)

### **2.2. KEY QUESTIONS FOR GENDER (ROLE, ISSUES, ACTIONS/SOLUTIONS)**

Three questions were formulated to generate discussions and obtain views from participants. Lead on questions were done face to face with particular groups also assist in gathering in-depth informations on the issues, etc.

1. In your sectors or organizations do you have a gender framework or policy and what are some issues relating to gender and mangrove use/managements?
2. What role do gender plays in mangrove use and management in Solomon Islands?
3. What are some ways forward/actions/possible solutions to address these issues?

### 3.0. DISCUSSION

#### PART 1: GROUP FEED BACKS FOR GENDER (ROLE, ISSUES, ACTIONS/SOLUTIONS)

Table 1: Summary of Key stakeholder Break out groups report on status, challenges (issues), way forward (solutions or opportunities) or plan (actions) feedbacks.

Stakeholder	Status (gender Policy, Plan, etc)	Challenges (issues)	Way forward (actions)
<b>Government Ministries (MECDM, MFMR, MoFR,</b>	-SINCCP (2023-2032) -NDS(2016-2035) -Each line ministries have gender focal points example at the Ministry of Women Youth Children and Family Affairs (MWYCFA) (Solomon Islands Gender Equity plan 2016-2020 <b>-Some of the policies mentioned there is a need for gender inclusiveness.</b>	Gender Roles Female -harvesting & collection of mangroves resources Male -Cutting of firewood, building materials etc. -Leadership in decision in decision making -	-clearly states the roles of gender on mangrove management -Gender inclusive policy is priority, specifically for management and sustainable use of mangroves resources -Include female in management and decision making for mangrove management
Stakeholder	Status (gender Policy, Plan, etc)	Challenges (issues)	Way forward (actions)
<b>NGOs (live &amp; Learn)</b>	- Gender guides and policies present in NGOs( LLSI) -sustainable use of mangrove resources when gender equality is recognized in planning and management -cross cutting issue in all our projects-gender policy, gender guide, also other organization as well	-Inclusive decision making on mangrove use and management -Gender role are important when it comes to sustainable use of mangrove. -	-must mainstream or include Gender in any project design and implementation project & community , it is cross cutting issue -Equality must be recognize in planning and management
Stakeholder	Status (gender Policy, Plan, etc)	Challenges (issues)	Way forward (actions)

<b>ACADEMICS (SINU, USP</b>	-Gender is no issue when it comes to academics -Better answered in the community context rather than academic environment. We have policies related to gender in the University such as gender equality. -SINU gives equal opportunity for each institution. We Anybody can do research.	-Recruitment for both staff and students is done on merit and not gender inclusion. Research is focus; however, the limiting factor is time and funding. No barrier regarding gender	-Learn from communities -More research to be done on gender and mangrove management

### 3.1 Ministries

#### 3.1.1. Status

- -SINCCP (2023-2032)
- -National Development Strategy (NDS 2016-2035)
- -Each line ministries have gender focal points
- example at the Ministry of Women Youth Children and Family Affairs (MWYCFA) (Solomon Islands Gender Equity plan 2016-2020)

#### 3.1.2. Challenges

- Gender is plays crucial role in both national, provincial level, however it is silent in key sectoral government ministries
- No existing Integrated coastal zone management in Solomon Islands
- Overriding jurisdictions of coastal zone management use and access (E,g no clear zones, or defined boundaries demarcated in Solomon Islands)
- Knowledge Gap in recognizing mangrove forests as key biodiversity features and adaptation roles towards climate change
- Limited resources and capacity and expertise
- Mangroves receives very little attention, in spite of ongoing awareness on biodiversity, forest, environment including social economical activities
- Conflicting interests or overlap of mandates over use and access to coastal developments, E.g., logging, mining, fisheries, settlements, etc.

#### 3.1.3. Opportunities

- National Government Ministries has existing legal frameworks that could accommodate or mainstream gender equality in mangrove management planning
- Encourage participation at the national level for sustainable development at all level
- National government recognized the roles of gender
- Recommend there is need to develop gender inclusive policy for sustainable use and management of mangrove resources for Solomon Islands
- Integrate Gender into ICZM mangrove management plan and policy development process

#### 3.1.4 Plans

- Other Ministries should be involved in the Nation-wide consultations regarding ICZM framework and Mangrove Policy as next step. Example; Ministry of Provincial Government and Institutional Strengthening (MPGIS). Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs (MWYCFA); MMERE, MID, MLHS, etc
- Land tenure systems, that includes culture and traditional knowledge is one of the critical component in social, economic developments, therefore demands strategic approaches (80% of population lives in rural communities)
- Strengthen links and connections between the National, Provincial government and rural communities who are custodians of mangrove forests, marine and coastal reefs ecosystems, reef flats, including islands and freshwater estuaries where mangrove forests are present.

### 3.2. NGOs

#### 3.2.1. Status

- Some of the NGOs have existing Gender Policy, or Gender guide, which accommodates gender equity and provides guidelines especially on issues with natural resource managements or dealing with environment, social-economic developments and engaging with local communities. Example, Live and Learn Solomon Islands (LLSI) ( access online from website)

#### 3.2.2.Challenges

- Many NGOs working in different parts of Solomon Islands focusing on marine management and Community Based Resource Management programmes, including climate change adaptation projects. Whether these programmes aligns with National Objectives and support the national commitments is a gap.
- Datas/ information remains with NGOs, as some of the NGOs working on mangroves have their own policy, plan, .
- National database is limited to relevant ministries or national authorities for monitoring purposes

#### 3.2.3. Opportunities

- sustainable use of mangrove resources when gender equality is recognized in planning

and management

- cross cutting issue in all our projects- gender policy, gender guide, present in also other organization as well.
- NGOs are working very close with local communities and national government therefore,

#### 3.2.4. Plans

- Must mainstream or include Gender in any project design and implementation project relating to coastal community , it is cross-cutting issue
- Equality must be recognize in planning and management

### 3.3 Academic

#### 3.3.1. Status

- Gender is not an issue for Institutions, such as SINU. SINU has strategies that accommodates gender, and that is promoted through research

#### 3.3.2. Challenges

- Engaging /recruiting staffs & students were done on merits, not necessarily means no gender issues.
- Gender issues regarding mangrove management were not very much experienced at the community level, since they are directly using or depending on these mangrove forest for their livelihoods.

#### 3.3.3. Opportunities

- SINU-promotes equal opportunity for training, learning and research in Solomon Islands
- SINU-Lead institution in Solomon Islands studies on Mangroves, climate change, potential for Carbon assessments, etc

#### 3.3.4. Plans

- More research needs to be done on gender and mangrove management in Solomon Islands to understand the roles of gender to inform ICZM management planning plan, policy development

PART 2: Summary of Local experts, researchers, government ministries, NGOs and academic presentations related to gender role, challenges and possible solutions in the ICZM and mangrove management in Solomon Islands.

As part of the broader ICZM implementation, some key areas which were highlighted by local experts, researchers and scientists, Government officers, NGOs and Academic ( especially SINU) related to Gender role, challenges, and possible solutions in the ICZM and mangrove management in Solomon Islands. Listed below were some of the important areas pointed out by the local experts.

### **Highlights**

- Mangrove taxonomy
- Governance and Legal frameworks/policy/management plan, etc
- Research and Education awareness,
- Fisheries, Marine and coastal livelihoods
- CBRM or rural communities Programmes /Activities
- Threats, climate change, waste management and pollution Coastal development
- Income generation/ incentives opportunities
- Traditional knowledge and cultural practice
- Access, rights and use of Mangrove resources
- EBA options and conservation
- Stakeholder engagement

Points raised are broadly based around mangrove managements, governances, livelihoods, incentives or income generating activities derived from mangrove ecosystems including other ecosystem benefits, threats such as waste and pollution relating to unsustainable developments in coastal and wetlands that surround mangrove forests. However, gender equity or participation plays an integral role at all level, thus can be realized in those issues. ( See local experts presentations).

For instance, Mr Bill Apusae of Live and Learn Solomon Islands, NGOs highlighted that Gender is cross-cutting issue, and must be given priority when undertaking mangrove management planning in Solomon Islands. The PEBACC Project presented by Mrs. Joana, also highlighted several communities in Solomon Islands in Malaita and Guadalcanal province which they have developed their Community Based resource Management plans, for example such Barana Community Nature and Heritage Park, to mainstream Climate Change adaptation through EBA.

Government, Presenter Mr Luke Mae of MECDM, also outlined government legal frameworks, which includes national legislations, policies and plans that give power or mandate over functions and goals. Other Ministries shared lessons within their ministries, although they do not have specific gender policy, gender was mainstreamed under minstrel programmes or activities.

Given the nature of these issues, some of main stakeholders suggested that gender inclusiveness or gender equality was regarded as one of the key or priority components for Mangrove management planning that formed an integral role in the ICZM mangrove management plan for Solomon Islands. In one of the sessions , Mrs. Rose babaua of Ministry of Environment Climate Change Disaster Management and Meteorology highlighted that Gender remains a challenge , in some cases, however, the issue of gender is silent, and thus needs more awareness on the issue.

This report highlighted some of the key findings related to Gender, challenges and possible solutions in the ICZM and mangrove management in Solomon Islands. General findings showed that not all government ministries have specific gender policies, or plans (see Annex1 as example). However, gender roles and gender inclusiveness were recognized under ministerial given the tasks or programmed related to particular activities. For instance, under CCD of Ministry of Environment, climate change programmes related to Climate Change adaptation measures do mainstream gender in the climate change policy. In most cases however, gender is silent in some other sectors, where contributions of women, and other vulnerable groups or special needs people were not at the forefront of decision-making and social and economic developments ( Table 1) .

Local experts, researchers, government sectors and researchers, also highlighted that Gender inclusiveness was also pointed out as one of the key component of effective coastal zone management related to mangroves forests and surrounding coastal or marine managed areas. ( see Solomon Islands power presentations 2024).

In most regions of Solomon Islands, mangroves are managed under customary tenure systems, with resources owners and chiefs making decisions regards to use, access and management. Mangroves are used and accessed by men, women and youth, with some specific gendered roles with respect to how mangrove resources are exploited (e.g. Weiant and Aswani 2006).

While this is so, there are some coastal regions or communities in different provinces, where there is no clear tenure systems and complex governance and traditional resource management are slowly eroding. It can realized that without gender, there is imbalance of decision-making, poor strategic planning, no equity and benefits that contributes towards sustainable development.

The National government ministry responsible for gender is Ministry of Women, youth Children and Family affairs. The Gender Equality and Women's Development (GEWD) Policy (2016-2020), is premised on the vision that gender equality contributes substantially to improving the wellbeing of women, men, girls and boys—and that the promotion of gender equality must be at the heart of the government's mission.

Albert and Swartz 2013, also highlighted significant areas for mangrove management in Solomon Islands; Mangrove ownership and user rights through customary tenure systems; Mangrove legislation is lacking and management approaches accepted or supported by Solomon Islands Government, for instance the CBRM. The Mescal Report 2011, joint collaborations between government, NGOs, and international experts which focused mainly on biodiversity assessment of Maramasike Passage also highlighted that one of the key objective of the report is to develop co-management plan for the demonstration site at Maramasike Passage. Therefore, for this task, the formulation of the ICZM mangrove legal framework that encompasses the development of mangrove management plan and policy sets the fundamental need to engage key or relevant stakeholders in the planning processes that is gender inclusive and representatives across sectors at both the national government and provincial government including NGOs and communities.

**3.1. Photographs of stakeholders consultation during group breakout session**



Figure 1.(Photo).stakeholder group discussions- Government Ministries (CCD & ECD of MECDM, MOFR, MFMR representatives) at SINU science lab conference room, Kukum campus, FAFE. Honiara. Source: Veira P, 29<sup>th</sup> Feb 2024



Figure 2. (Photo) Government Ministry representatives, Mr Luke Mae (ECD/MECDM) and Mr Muveni (Forestry Department) reporting during preliminary sessions. SINU lab Conference room, Kukum campus, FAFE. Honiara. Source: Veira P, 29th Feb 2024



Figure 3. NGOs or CBOs representative, Mr Bill Apusae of Live and Learn, Solomon Islands sharing their experiences, lessons learned during preliminary session. SINU Lab conference room, FAFE. Honiara. Source: Veira P, 29th Feb 2024



Figure 4: Academic representatives open discussion sessions on Mangroves, Gender and Capacity Building, SINU FAFE. Honiara.

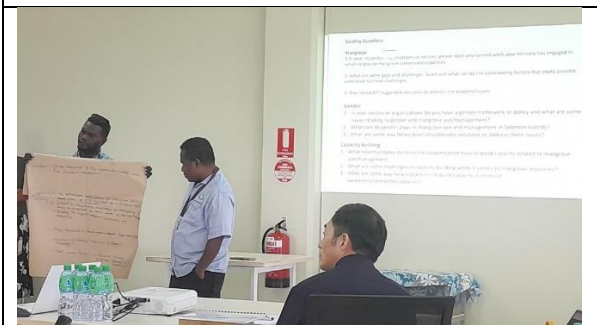


Figure 5: Academic or research institutions representative reporting their discussion points on gender SINU Lab Conference room, FAFE. Honiara. Source: Veira, P 29th Feb 2024



Figure 6: local Botanist, Mr Myknee Sirikolo (Director Herbarium/MoFT), giving brief Mangrove distribution and taxonomy. Source: Veira P, 2024

Some of the limitations to generating informations during the workshop are due to

- Availability of other local experts and minimal participation of relevant stakeholders for the workshop meeting.

#### **4.0. CONCLUSION**

The overarching issues which span from all sectors is the overarching laws, governance, , territorial waters and customary rights of access and use rights of coastal zones or shoreline outwards towards coral reefs or atolls or islands both at the national level, Provincial governments and community or rural coastal communities. While the ICZM approach is new to Solomon Islands, Gender inclusiveness plays an integral component within ICZM mangrove planning processes to ensure responsible stakeholders understands gender roles and mandates and appropriate laws, policies and plans are developed, gender-based research conducted and education awareness raising promoted to inform the planning processes across sectors. Gender inclusive approaches, means all people ( men, women, special needs , children, and youths) of Solomon Islands were engaged and involved , especially custodians or resource owners, in this regard coastal communities in the ICZM planning process.

#### **5.0. RECOMMENDATION**

- Future national workshops must also address Gender as one of the priority areas surrounding ICZM mangrove management planning.
- Nation-wide consultations that includes representatives from communities, provincial governments is crucial for the ICZM mangrove planning
- More research is needed to understand Gender role across sectors, both at the national, provincial, and communities in Solomon Islands.
- Gender equity or inclusiveness must be mainstreamed within the ICZM mangrove management plan and policy framework for Solomon Islands given the nature of Solomon Islands customary tenure system, local governance, population, geographic settings, etc,
- Further engagement of key stakeholders in each sectors;-economic, infrastructure, tourism, provincial governments, business sectors, development partners are important to provide consensus into developing an ICZM framework for Solomon Islands. Stakeholder- example; MID, MCT, MPGIS, MLHS, SIMA, SOEs, Dev Partners, etc.

(see also Opportunities and Plan under three groups; Government, NGOs and Academic, p.g, 7-9)

## **6.0.References**

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## Annex 1

Table below provides a summary for 3 National Government Ministries related to their mandates and Gender to showcase its importance in ICZM planning process.

No.	Ministries	Functions and Objectives	Laws, Plans, Policy, etc	Gender focal points, policy,	Other policy, plans , laws related to Mangroves forests, Integrated coastal Zone management
1	MOFR	Ministry services include (among others): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementation of the Forest Development and Reforestation program</li> <li>Planning and management of forest resource</li> </ul>	FOREST RESOURCES AND TIMBER UTILISATION (Amendment) ACT 2000	Gender focal points mainstreamed within ministerial programmes under divisional or units within MFMR. No specific Gender Policy??	Forestry Act UN SI RED+ Programmes
	MOFR (National Herbarium)	Is responsible for conducting plant specimen collection, documentation and updating the Solomon Islands' flora along with collaborating with international agencies, institutions and researchers to conduct research on ecology and botany.			
2	MFMR	The Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources is responsible for Fisheries and Marine Resources, Aquaculture, Research on fisheries resources	Fisheries Management Regulations 2015	Gender focal points mainstreamed within ministerial programmes under divisional or units within MFMR. Gender Policy-mainstreamed in specific fisheries	

		with potential for development, and Fisheries Extension Services.		programmes/activity ( see also MFMR Powerpoint-		
	MFMR (Inshore Division)	The Inshore Division manages the interaction between people and their inshore fisheries, aquatic resources and their environment. This is done by providing information and facilitating sustainable management for livelihoods, food and nutritional secure				CBRM Strategy 2021-2025
3	MECDM	are to promote and ensure safe, sustainable and resilient Solomon Islands communities and to coordinate and guide the sustainable use and conservation of the Solomon Islands' natural resources and ecosystems, as well as providing key data services such as meteorological information and disaster risk reduction and management strategies	<p>Environment Act 1998;</p> <p>Wild Life Protection and Management Act 1998</p> <p>Protected Areas Act 2010;</p> <p>Meteorology Act 1985;</p> <p>National Disaster Council Act 1989</p> <p>other laws that govern the MECDM's areas of work include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Essential Services Act and;</li> <li>2. Civil Aviation Act 2008</li> <li>3. Part 174 Civil Aviation Rules – Aviation Meteorological Service Organisation Certification</li> </ol>	<p>Gender focal point sits within ministerial Divisions or department level, <b>Do not have specific gender policy;</b></p> <p>Gender mainstreamed through ministerial divisional programmes</p> <p>Example, CCD policy</p>		

	MECDM Environment Conservation Division (ECD)	To ensure the Environment and Natural Resources of Solomon Islands are protected, managed and sustainably used for the maximum benefit of the Government and people of Solomon Islands	PA ACT 2010 EA 1998 PA REG 2012 WPMA1998 WPM(amendments) 2019		Solomon Islands National Environment Management Strategy (NEMS) 2020-2023  National Biodiversity Strategic Action Plan (NBSAP) 2016-2020  Solomon Islands National Waste Management and Pollution Control Strategy (NWMPC) 2017-2026
	MECDM Climate Change Division (CCD)	play a leading role in mobilizing resources for adaptation and mitigation initiatives, conduct relevant and priority research and information dissemination activities, seek resources to support national programmes to mitigate the causes of climate change	No national law for Climate Change  (SINCCP) 2023-2032 Policy		Solomon Island Climate Change Policy (SINCCP) 2023-2032 Policy  The Solomon Islands Low Emissions Development Strategy (LT-LEDS)