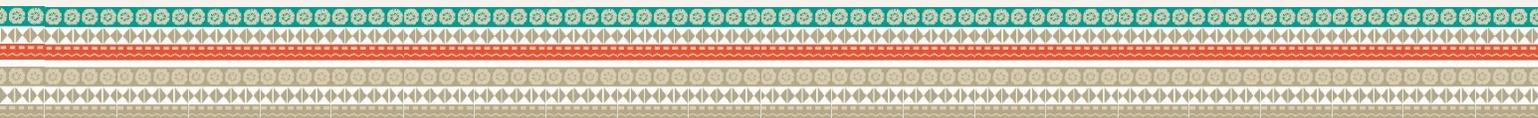


# PACIFIC GIRL

Supporting adolescent girls in Pacific Island countries achieve their full potential



# Context



- Challenges are compounded
- Different contexts across the region
- Continuing barriers to education and access to economic opportunity
- Challenges are exacerbated for rural and remote girls, girls living with a disability, and those facing other forms of marginalisation

# Context continued...



- Adolescent girls face multiple challenges in accessing information and resources about their bodies, sexuality and reproductive health.
- Barriers include stigma and discrimination, physical access to health centres and legal barriers.
- Limited comprehensive education regarding sexuality made available to adolescent girls and boys.
- While some country studies show about two thirds of young people are sexually active, fewer than 20 per cent of adolescent girls aged 15–19 and less than half of adolescent boys in the Pacific report having ever used a modern method of contraception

Burnet Institute Submission, New Zealand Parliamentarians' Group on Population and Development (NZPGPD) (2012). 'Pacific Youth: Their Rights, Our Future.'

# Context continued...

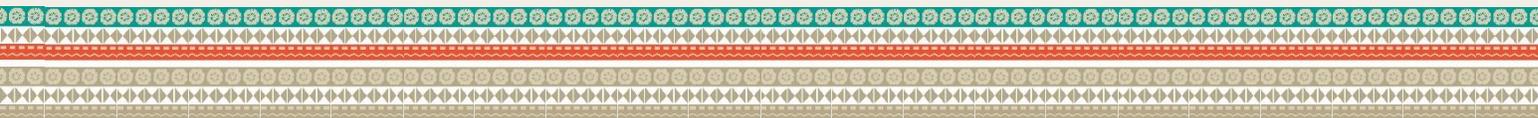


Adolescent fertility rates vary among Pacific Island countries –

- from 20 births per 1,000 adolescent girls in Tonga and Niue ,
- to the highest rates of 81 and 85 per 1,000 adolescent girls in Nauru and the Republic of the Marshall Islands respectively.
- Papua New Guinea at 65 and Vanuatu at 66 births per 1,000, also have quite high rates of pregnancy among adolescent girls.
- Teenage pregnancy rates can be much higher for girls living in rural areas, with rural adolescent fertility rates of 70 per 1,000 adolescent girls in Solomon Islands,
- and the region's highest rate of 100 births per 1,000 adolescent girls in rural areas of the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

UNFPA Pacific Sub-regional Office (2014). 'Population and Development Profiles: Pacific Island Countries'; NZPGPD (2012) above, p 1; Wilkinson and Walls in Chetty and Faleatua (2013). 'Keeping it Under the Mat: The struggle for sexual and reproductive rights in the Pacific Island region,' DAWN.

so, what are we doing about all this?



**PACIFIC WOMEN**  
SHAPING PACIFIC DEVELOPMENT





## #PacificGirl is:

\$4.5 million multi-country program to support adolescent girls in Pacific Island countries achieve their full potential.



## #PacificGirl is:

empowering girls to talk to each other, advocate and create change in how families, communities and governments respond to their needs.

**‘Nothing about us, without us!’**

# Common challenges



- Adolescent girls from Pacific Island countries say they are facing common challenges:
- **Teen pregnancy**, early or arranged marriage and lack of access to sexual and reproductive health information.
- **Violence and abuse** in the home and community, including sexual violence.
- **Bullying**, including cyber bullying, negative peer pressure and body shaming.
- Lack of access to education and employment.
- Family expectations of **unpaid care and domestic work**.
- **Lack of voice** and influence in their community or at national policy making levels.
- **Culture, custom and beliefs** that restrict the rights of girls.

# Solutions



**Girls also hold the solutions. They told us they want partners to:**

- Provide life skills and leadership training.
- Deliver respectful relationships programs.
- Deliver sex education programs for girls that promote open discussion.
- Promote equal access to education.
- Work with parents so they understand the realities and challenges of girls' lives today.
- Build confidence and skills of adolescent girls through sports and creative arts.
- Develop cyber safe skills and promote online safety.
- Engage service providers to promote better responses to girls' needs.

