



Regional Report on the Peer-led Study on the Rights and Social Experiences of Trans and Gender Diverse People in: **Fiji, Samoa, and Papua New Guinea**

REGIONAL REPORT



REGIONAL REPORT: FIJI, SAMOA, & PAPIUA NEW GUINEA / ASIA PACIFIC TRANSGENDER NETWORK /
HAUS OF KHAMELEON / MY GIRLS CLUB / HETURA NETWORK PNG ASSOCIATION INC



ASIA PACIFIC
TRANSGENDER
NETWORK





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Foreword / The Pacific Islands have a long record of gender diversity which extends deep into their country's history, society and culture across generations. These identities include Fa'afafine and Fa'atama in Samoa, Vakasalewalewa and Brastos/Viaviatagane in Fiji, and Palopa in Papua New Guinea which embody a distinct identity beyond the binary male and female. In the 16th to 18th century, colonialisation brought laws prohibiting diverse gender and sexual orientations that contributed to the suppression of these roles and identities in Pacific society and continues to leave an impact today.

As a consequence of deep-rooted marginalisation, the research and findings compiled in this report are the first of its kind in the Pacific and provide long overdue focus and recorded data of these communities. The indigenous communities in the Pacific have played the key role in ensuring these identities haven't faded through storytelling, sharing generational knowledge and other creative practices. In this report, the experiences of Fa'afafine and Fa'atama, Palopa, Vakasalewalewa, Brastos/Viaviatagane are shared in APTN's most extensive project in the Pacific. The research was led by trans community members at every step of the process and aimed to strengthen the research and advocacy capacity to share knowledge, resources and advocate for their rights. The intention of the project was to center the experiences, knowledge, and power within



"THE FINDINGS FROM THIS REPORT ARE AN IMPORTANT FIRST STEP TO PAVE THE WAY FOR FURTHER RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY. WE HOPE THAT THE DATA AND SKILLS GAINED FROM THIS RESEARCH WILL ADD FURTHER RICHNESS, UNDERSTANDING AND NEW DIMENSIONS TO THE STORIES AND GENDER DIVERSE MOVEMENT IN THE PACIFIC REGION."

the community to lead a study themselves about their lives through a multidisciplinary approach. With this research, we sought to increase the body of evidence on the experiences of gender diverse people in the Pacific, specifically in employment, education, access to services as well as their experiences within the family and social environments to better understand community resilience and acceptance.

The findings highlight a diverse and complex population of trans and gender diverse people across the three Pacific nations. Yet fundamentally, the data illustrates that stigma, discrimination, human rights violations and violence continue to harm transgender and gender diverse populations within all facets of society including being incarcerated simply by living as their authentic self. Many of the community-led groups we've interviewed are

often excluded from accessing funding opportunities due to the lack of organizational registration leaving them to continue their work with very little to no funding.

This research emphasises the need to further explore transgender and gender diverse communities' resilience and protective mechanisms.

"WE LOOK FORWARD TO THE RESEARCH FINDINGS BEING USED BY OUR PARTNERS AND OTHER COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS IN THE REGION TO DEVELOP ADVOCACY CAMPAIGNS AND SHARE THE FINDINGS WITH THE BROADER COMMUNITY TO INFLUENCE NEEDED CHANGE AND IMPROVE EXISTING CONDITIONS."

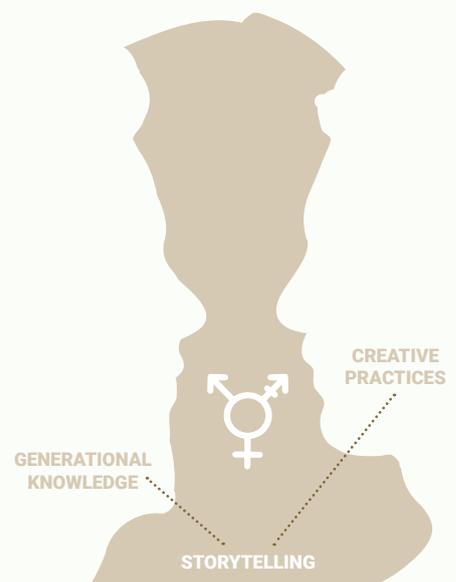
During the project, COVID-19 upended everyone's lives and exacerbated the adversity our community and partners deal with. It was inspiring to see the way each organization responded to the changing situation with flexibility, strength and resilience. More investment in the community and in research is needed to understand the community and identify interventions that will best meet community needs. It is with deep gratitude that we thank our country partners and the focal points for each country involved in this research: Lady Gaga of Hetura, Natu Tikeri of My Girls Club, and

Miki Wali of The Haus. Each was vital in leading the research and project activities, including responding to the challenges that accompanied the project.

The findings from this report are an important first step to pave the way for further research and advocacy. We hope that the data and skills gained from this research will add further richness, understanding and new dimensions to the stories and gender diverse movement in the Pacific region. We look forward to the research findings being used by our partners and other community organisations in the region to develop advocacy campaigns and share the findings with the broader community to influence needed change and improve existing conditions. We hope this report fosters collaboration and sparks dialogue with the greater Pacific community, policy makers, and other key stakeholders to advance and improve the lives of gender diverse people in the Pacific.

Joe Wong

Joe Wong,
Executive Director, APTN



Acknowledgements / The study was coordinated by the Asia Pacific Transgender Network (APTN) and led by Haus of Khameleon in Fiji, My Girls Club in Samoa, and the Hetura Network PNG Association Inc in Papua New Guinea. This study has been adapted from Transgender Europe (TGEU)'s *Transrespect versus Transphobia (TvT): The social experiences of trans and gender-diverse people in Colombia, India, the Philippines, Serbia, Thailand, Tonga, Turkey and Venezuela.*

Data has been gathered by trained transgender (trans) and gender diverse people under the coordination of Haus of Khameleon (Fiji), Hetura National Capital District (NCD) Lesbian Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Group (PNG), and My Girls Club (Samoa). Analysis of the data was supported by Kylie Fisk (country level) and Sangita Singh (regional level) and internally reviewed by the APTN Secretariat.

Feedback on the report has been received from Isikeli Vulavou (PSGDN), Jack Byrne, Patrick Thomsen, Phylesha Brown-Acton (APTN-RSC), Neomai Maravuakula (SPC-RRRT), Lukas Berredo (TGEU), My Girls Club, and Hetura.

Our deepest gratitude goes to all the trans and gender diverse people who shared their open, honest, and valuable experiences with the research team. It is through your reflections, experiences, and dedication that APTN can continue to contribute to the advocacy efforts for greater human rights in the fight for equality.



- ◆ REGIONAL
- ◆ FIJI
- SAMOA
- ▲ PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Acronyms

APTN / Asia Pacific Transgender Network

CBO / Community Based Organizations

HIV / Human Immunodeficiency Virus

HOK / Haus of Khameleon

HTC / HIV Testing and Counselling

INGO / International Non-governmental Organizations

LGBTI / Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Intersex

LGBTQIA+ / Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, and other sexually or gender diverse people

MGC / My Girls Club

MSM / Men who have Sex with Men

NGO / Non-government Organizations

PNG / Papua New Guinea

SOGIE / Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression

SRHR / Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

SRS / Sexual Reassignment Surgery

SPSS / Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

TGEU / Transgender Europe

TvT / Transrespect versus Transphobia

UN / United Nations

Glossary of Terms*

Transgender & Trans

The umbrella term trans covers a diversity of gender identities and forms of gender expressions. The following non-exhaustive list explains some common terms used to describe trans identities and how they are used in this report. The definitions and their applications vary significantly across the region, within specific countries or cultures, and amongst individual trans people. Every person has the right to use the term or terms that best describes their gender identity.

In this region, “transgender” (or “trans”) is used frequently as an umbrella term to describe people whose gender identity is different from their assigned sex at birth. APTN has included the following definition of the terms based on discussions held at a regional consultation in Manila in 2012:

Persons who identify themselves in a different gender than that assigned to them at birth. They may express their identity differently to that expected of the gender role assigned to them at birth. Trans/transgender persons often identify themselves in ways that are locally, socially, culturally, religiously, or spiritually defined.

This report uses the word “trans” as an umbrella term to convey this diversity of gender identity or expression. When it is appropriate, the report uses the following additional terms:

Trans Woman

A trans person who identifies as female (that is, someone whose sex was assigned male at birth but who identifies as female). The acronym MtF (male to female) is also used to describe a trans woman.

Trans Man

A trans person who identifies as male (that is, someone whose sex was assigned female at birth but who identifies as male). The acronym FtM (female to male) is also used to describe a trans man.

Cisgender

Someone who is not transgender, that is, someone whose gender identity corresponds with their sex assigned at birth.

Gender-affirming Health Services

The biomedical, surgical, or health interventions a trans person may undertake to physically transition. This includes, for example, access to counselling, hormone therapy, hair removal, and a range of surgeries. The term “gender-affirming surgeries” is preferred in this document, rather than the older term, “sex reassignment surgery (SRS)”.

Gender Expression

A person’s ways of communicating culturally-defined traits of masculinity or femininity (or both or neither) externally through physical appearance (including clothing, accessories, hairstyles, and cosmetics), mannerisms, ways of speaking, and behavioural patterns in interactions with others.

Gender Dysphoria

Discomfort or distress that is caused by a discrepancy between a person's gender identity and that person's sex assigned at birth (and the associated gender role and/or primary and secondary sex characteristics).

Gender Identity

A person's internal sense of being a man, a woman, or some alternative gender or combination of genders. A person's gender identity may or may not correspond with their sex assigned at birth.

Gender-nonconforming or Gender Variant

Someone whose gender identity or gender expression is different from societal expectations or stereotypes. Not all trans people are gender-nonconforming. Some trans people are comfortable conforming to societal expectations of what it means to be a woman or a man. Conversely, some people who are not trans may identify as gender-nonconforming, based on their gender expression rather than their gender identity.

Intersex

Someone whose innate physical sex characteristics (such as chromosomes, gonads, and genitals) are considered to be either male or female at the same time, only partially male or partially female, or neither male nor female.

Transition

A process many but not all trans people undergo to live authentically in their gender identity. This may involve changes to a person's gender expression, such as their outward appearance, clothing, mannerisms, or the name they use in everyday interactions. Transitioning may also involve biomedical and surgical steps that help align a person's anatomy with their gender identity.

Transphobia

Prejudice directed at trans people because of their actual or perceived gender identity or expression. It can also have an impact on non-trans people who do not fit societal expectations for males or females. Transphobia can be *structural* (reflected in policies and laws that discriminate against trans people), *societal* (when trans people are rejected or mistreated by members of the society), or *internalized* (when trans people accept such prejudicial attitudes about themselves or other trans people).

Sexual Orientation

A person's capacity for profound emotional, affectional, and sexual attraction to and intimate and sexual relations with individuals of a different gender (heterosexual), the same gender (homosexual), or more than one gender (bisexual or pansexual) (International Commission of Jurists, 2007).

* Adapted with minor changes from Health Policy Project, Asia Pacific Transgender Network, and the United Nations Development Programme, *Blueprint for the Provision of Comprehensive Care for Trans People and Trans Communities*, Washington DC: Futures Group, Health Policy Project, 2015.

Culturally Specific Terms

In the Pacific region, some culturally specific terms have very long histories and are best understood within their evolving cultural context. As the language of LGBTI groups has evolved over time, new terms have been developed in communities and countries to encompass culturally-specific terms to define local groups. Below is a list and meanings of the terms used throughout the report.

Samoa: Fa'afafine, Fa'atama

According to the Samoa Fa'afafine Association (SFA), Samoa has four cultural genders – female, male, fa'afafine, fa'atama, however only two, female and male are promoted and included in all legislation.

Fa'afafine and Fa'atama are indigenous LGBTI citizens of Samoa. Fa'afafine are male at birth and explicitly embody feminine gender traits. Some identify as gay males, and some identify as transgender.¹ Fa'atama are female at birth and explicitly embody masculine gender traits. Most identify as lesbian, and very few as transgender.

SFA also argues that boxing fa'afafine under transgender issues covered by the common acronym LGBTQIA+ ignores their cultural connection and fa'asinomaga (cultural duty and positioning), which is the essence of every Samoan.² This nuance is important in reading transgender and fa'afafine issues in Samoa. Fa'afafine do not see their gender diverse position as the central marker of their identity, rather, they view it as part of being Samoan.



¹ Samoa Fa'afafine Association (2016) *UPR of Samoa Summary Statement of Important Issues prepared by the Samoa Fa'afafine Association*. Retrieved from: https://ilga.org/downloads/Samoa_PRE_SESSIONS_SUMMARY.pdf.

² Samoa Fa'afafine Association (2015) *Submission to the UN Universal Periodic Review Regarding the Protection of the Rights of LGBTI Persons in Samoa 25th session of the Universal Periodic Review*. Retrieved from: <https://uprdoc.ohchr.org/uprweb/downloadfile.aspx?filename=2505&file=EnglishTranslation>.

Fiji: *Vakasalewalewa, Brastos/Viaviatagane*

Fiji has its own Indigenous terms for transgender populations that reflect its own unique cultural heritage.

Vakasalewalewa is often used in place of transgender women, and Baraca or Brasto for transgender men.³ Fiji's trans, vakasalewalewa and baraca populations face many obstacles to realizing their legal rights and social acceptance within Fiji. Although early colonial records on Fiji make no mention of transgender or non-heteronormative gender identities, it is commonly acknowledged that transgender Fijians played a recognized role in pre-modern Fijian society.⁴

Vakasalewalewa, which translates to "like a woman" is the identity grouping that is closely associated with transgender female used in a Western setting. Vakasalewalewa are seen as a distinct gender category, much like fa'afafine in Samoa, and fakaleiti in Tonga. However, they are not as prominent in Fijian society as some of their contemporaries across the Pacific region.

Papua New Guinea: *Palopa*

In recent years, a term Palopa was coined by gay and transgender from Port Moresby, capital of Papua New Guineans.⁵ This term is much like others in the Pacific denotes a "third gender" like the fa'afafine in Samoa, leiti in Tonga and the mahu of Tahiti and Hawai'i. Likewise, there is a documented third gender identity of the Sambian people kwolu-aatmwol (male thing-transforming-into-female thing), which indicates that gender diversity has an Indigenous reference point that suggests a wider historical social and cultural role within their many cultures and islands.

³ World Health Organization (2013) *Regional Assessment of HIV, STI and other Health Needs of Transgender People in Asia and the Pacific*. Online. Retrieved from: https://www.weareaptn.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Regional_assessment_of_HIV_STI_and_other_health_needs_of_TG_people_in_Asia_and_the_Pacific.pdf.

⁴ Presterudstuen, G. H. (2014). *Men Trapped in Women's Clothing: Homosexuality, Cross-Dressing, and Masculinity In Fiji*. In *Gender on the Edge: Transgender, Gay, and Other Pacific Islanders*, 162-183.

⁵ Rainbow Papua New Guinea (2016, October 28). *Reclaiming our Rainbow Cultural Identities*. Online. Retrieved from: <https://rainbowpng.wordpress.com/2016/10/28/reclaiming-our-rainbow-cultural-identities/>.

Executive Summary / This report presents the findings from a peer-led study on the rights and social experiences of trans and gender diverse people in Fiji, Samoa, and Papua New Guinea. The purpose of the study was to increase the body of evidence on the experiences of trans individuals, including information on employment, education, access to services, as well as their experiences in the family and social environments that promote and/or hinder community resilience and acceptance.



6 Carla LaGata/Carsten Balzer and Jan Simone Hutta, eds., *Transrespect versus Transphobia: The social experiences of trans and gender-diverse people in Colombia, India, the Philippines, Serbia, Thailand, Tonga, Turkey and Venezuela*, TvT Publication Series 9 (Berlin, Germany: Transgender Europe, 2015), <https://transrespect.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/TvT-PS-Vol9-2015.pdf>.

Trans and gender diverse people in each of the three countries were trained to conduct the survey to capture the experiences of 155 trans people across the three countries.

There has been very limited research on the experiences of trans and gender diverse people in the Pacific beyond HIV/AIDS behavioural or prevalence studies or as a very small component of more general research across the Asia Pacific region. This research has been adapted from Transgender Europe's (TGEU)'s *Transrespect versus Transphobia (TvT) Project: The social experiences of trans and gender-diverse people in 8 countries; Colombia, India, the Philippines, Serbia, Thailand, Tonga, Turkey and Venezuela*.⁶ In the Pacific, the study builds on the findings

from the research led by the Tonga Leitis Association in 2015 on the experiences of trans and gender diverse people in the region. This research attempts to highlight some of the experiences of trans and gender diverse people in the Pacific through quantitative and qualitative data about their human rights situation. In amplifying their voices, we aim to build an evidence base for international, regional, and country-based advocacy.

The Pacific has a long, varied history of acceptance of gender diverse and variant people, as reflected in their traditional roles within society. Yet, currently, there is very limited quantitative data on the number of trans people in the Pacific. What does exist is based largely around the HIV epidemic, with a focus on trans women. Even

7 Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Kirabati, Cook Islands, Samoa, Tonga, and Tuvalu.

8 Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Republic of Marshall Islands Federated States of Melanesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tokelau, Tuvalu, Vanuatu. Reference UN Free and Equal Campaign.

9 International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA) and Aengus Carroll, *State Sponsored Homophobia 2016: A world survey of sexual orientation laws: criminalisation, protection and recognition* (Geneva: ILGA, 2016), 186–187, https://ilga.org/downloads/02_ILGA_State_Sponsored_Homophobia_2016_ENG_WEB_150516.pdf.

10 Fiji National Civil Society, “United Nations Universal Periodic Review – Fiji,” (Fiji: ILGA, 2016), <https://ilga.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Shadow-report-12.pdf>.

11 ILGA, *State Sponsored Homophobia*.

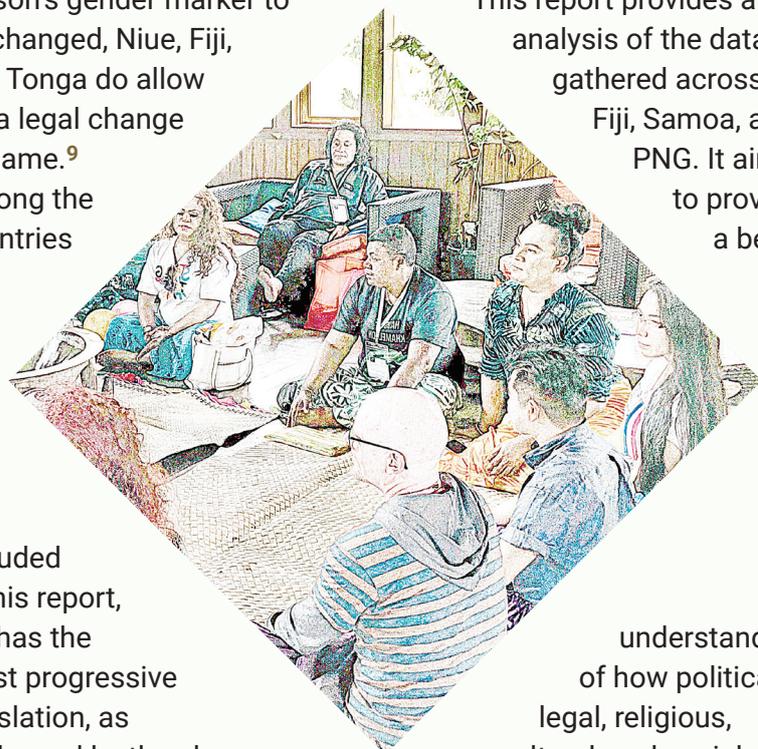
this information is largely not disaggregated between MSM and trans people, limiting the understanding of the unique priorities and needs of both populations.

Currently, 7⁷ out of the 14⁸ Pacific Island states and territories criminalise same-sex sexual acts between consenting adults. While no Pacific countries allow for a person’s gender marker to be changed, Niue, Fiji, and Tonga do allow for a legal change of name.⁹ Among the countries

included in this report, Fiji has the most progressive legislation, as evidenced by the absence of laws criminalizing trans and gender diverse people. Also promising are the decriminalization of same-sex relationships and the outlawing of any discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Fiji also allows for gender markers to be changed on legal documents.¹⁰ However, the country is yet to support legal gender recognition. Samoa repealed the criminalization

of cross-dressing in 2013. Consensual same-sex relations, however, remain illegal in both Samoa and PNG. In Samoa, the Crimes Act 2031 Section 67 criminalizes sodomy, and in PNG, the Criminal Code, Section 210 is used to criminalise consensual same-sex relations under the Unnatural Offences Against the Order of Nature Act.¹¹

This report provides an analysis of the data gathered across Fiji, Samoa, and PNG. It aims to provide a better



understanding of how political, legal, religious, cultural, and social structures can impact the social and lived experiences of trans and gender diverse people both negatively and positively. This analysis also provides an essential foundation for understanding the barriers to and enablers of individual and community resilience, and will additionally provide a rich database of knowledge to inform policies, programs, and practices.

The findings highlight a diverse and complex population of trans and gender diverse people across the three Pacific nations. There are some similarities across the three countries; Fiji, Samoa, and PNG all lack legal protections and safeguards as well as gender-affirming services for trans people. In all three countries, trans people experience discrimination in education, health care, and employment settings. Yet, the data also indicates differences such as higher levels of access to HIV service for trans and gender diverse people in PNG and lower levels of negative exposure to law enforcement and comparatively positive experiences in employment and education settings for Samoa's trans and gender diverse population.

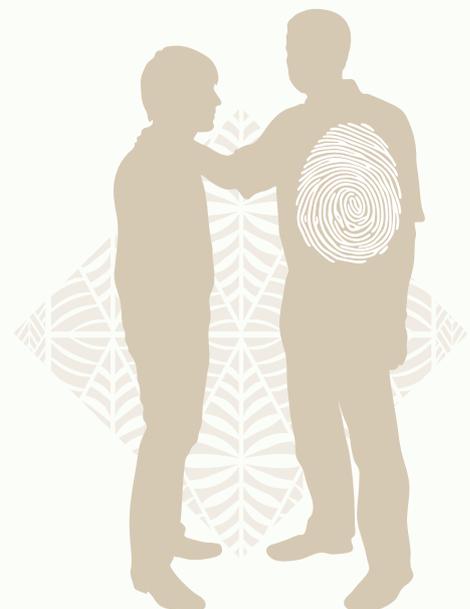
Trans people experience high levels of violence in all three countries, especially in PNG. In PNG, at the core of this gender-based violence are rigid binary gender norms and gender inequality¹² despite long histories of sociocultural and traditional roles for trans and gender diverse people. The population has high levels of poverty, is largely rural, and geographically dispersed with limited access to education and services. Furthermore, violence is committed with impunity as a result of the weak legal and justice mechanisms available to trans and gender diverse people.¹³

Positively, the findings also highlight some level of acceptance in the region, as evidenced by families, churches, and schools where trans and gender diverse people feel that they have a cultural or traditional role to play as members of the society. This is particularly the case in Fiji and Samoa. This research highlights the need to further explore trans and gender diverse communities' resilience and protective mechanisms. Yet, fundamentally, the data illustrates that stigma, discrimination, violence, and human rights violations, continue to harm trans and gender diverse populations in all realms of society, family and peers, education, employment, and the law.

The recommendations provided with this study, while not exhaustive, provide a framework to build on to enable the sharing of positive experiences across countries and support good practices, policy advocacy, and programming.

¹² Emily Darko, William Smith, and David Walker, *Gender violence in Papua New Guinea: The cost to business* (London: Overseas Development Institute, 2015), <https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/9886.pdf>.

¹³ Ibid.



Introduction / The Pacific has a long history of acceptance of gender diverse and variant people, including traditional roles within society, particularly in Polynesian cultures, such as the fa'afafine (trans feminine) and fa'afatama (trans masculine) in Samoa and leitis (trans feminine) in Tonga. Culturally specific terms and identities have also been part of the fabric of Pacific societies for trans people, like the palopa (trans feminine) in PNG and vakasalewalewa (trans feminine) in Fiji.



In more recent years, emerging movements of trans groups have also brought new language, such as Brastos, a term coined by trans men and the transmasculine and non-binary people in Fiji. However, colonization, particularly certain colonial laws and Christianity, have contributed to the erosion of these roles and identities in Pacific society.

This report presents the findings from a peer-led study on the rights and social experiences of trans and gender diverse people in Fiji, Samoa, and Papua New Guinea (PNG). The purpose of the study is to increase the body of evidence on the experiences of trans individuals with regards to employment, education, access to services, and their family and other social environments that promote

and/or hinder community resilience and acceptance. Data has been gathered by trans people in each country to develop the applied knowledge and research skills of the trans organisations in each of the three countries.

"TRANS AND GENDER DIVERSE PEOPLE IN EACH OF THE THREE COUNTRIES WERE TRAINED TO CONDUCT THE SURVEY TO CAPTURE THE EXPERIENCES OF 155 TRANS PEOPLE ACROSS THE THREE COUNTRIES."

This research contributes to the international *Transrespect versus Transphobia (TvT) Project* developed by TGEU, which is being conducted in Colombia, India, the Philippines, Serbia, Thailand, Turkey,



14 Health Policy Project, Asia Pacific Transgender Network, and United Nations Development Programme, *Blueprint for the Provision of Comprehensive Care for Trans People and Trans Communities in Asia and the Pacific* (Washington, DC: Futures Group and Health Policy Project, 2015), <https://weareaptn.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/blueprint-comprehensive.pdf>.



Tonga, and Venezuela. In order to ensure that the survey was relevant to the Pacific context, it was adapted and localized to the three countries. For example, local/cultural terminologies for gender identity have been used, and local sections/questions on services most available in the countries, such as traditional healers, SRHR/HIV services, and humanitarian aid services, have been added. The study builds on the 2015 research led by the Tonga Leitis Association on the experiences of trans and gender diverse people in the Pacific. Trans and gender diverse people in each of the three countries were trained to conduct the survey to capture the experiences of 155 trans people across the three countries.

There has been limited research on the experiences of trans and gender diverse

people in the Pacific beyond HIV/AIDS behavioural or prevalence studies or as a very small component of more general research across the Asia Pacific. One of the recommendations from the 2015 Blueprint for the Provision of Comprehensive Care for Trans People and Trans Communities in Asia and the Pacific was to further “undertake research on under-represented groups, including trans men, indigenous groups, and elderly people across the region and trans people in the Pacific.”¹⁴ This research is community-led and designed and was adapted to the local context by local trans and gender diverse organisations. The benefits to the trans community and community-led organisations that conducted this research have included an increase in their capacity to understand and employ research methodologies,

conduct interviews, enumerate data, and analyze findings with assistance from consultants in data analysis and report writing. Globally, this community has often been studied to support the need for information required by academics, public health officers, and development professionals to run programmes that are not community led and at times do not necessarily reflect the lived realities, needs, and priorities of the community itself. This research is a first attempt to highlight some of the social experiences and human rights situations of trans and gender diverse people in the Pacific and amplify trans and gender diverse voices by building an evidence base for international, regional, and country-based advocacy.

"AS MANY AS 7 OUT OF THE 14 STATES AND TERRITORIES IN THE PACIFIC ISLANDS STILL CRIMINALIZE SAME-SEX SEXUAL ACTS BETWEEN CONSENTING ADULTS."

LAWS, LEGISLATION, AND HUMAN RIGHTS AFFECTING TRANS AND GENDER DIVERSE PEOPLE IN THE PACIFIC /

In many Pacific countries, colonial administrations introduced "cross-dressing" laws that sought to prohibit a person from dressing or presenting as the "opposite" of their biological sex. These laws introduced strict European gender roles and distinctions

between men and women into Pacific cultures.¹⁵

"NOT A SINGLE PACIFIC COUNTRY ALLOWS FOR A PERSON'S GENDER MARKER TO BE CHANGED (NIUE, FIJI, AND TONGA DO ALLOW FOR THE LEGAL CHANGE OF NAME)."

The current national legal frameworks of countries in the Pacific do not provide sufficient protections to trans and gender diverse people. Trans people are often criminalized under the above-mentioned so-called "cross-dressing" laws and laws prohibiting same-sex relationships, either directly or indirectly. As many as 7¹⁶ out of the 14¹⁷ states and territories in the Pacific Islands still criminalize same-sex sexual acts between consenting adults, and not a single Pacific country allows for a person's gender marker to be changed (although Niue, Fiji, and Tonga do allow for the legal change of name). In PNG, both discriminatory laws as well as harmful traditional and religious customs encourage abuse and stigma, particularly towards trans and gender diverse people.¹⁸

Fiji, Vanuatu, Kiribati, Cook Islands, and Samoa have some anti-discrimination laws protecting trans people. Yet, despite some promising safeguards, trans people continue to find themselves

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Kiribati, Cook Islands, Samoa, Tonga, and Tuvalu.

¹⁷ Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Republic of Marshall Islands Federated States of Melanesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga Tokelau, Tuvalu, Vanuatu. Reference UN Free and Equal Campaign.

¹⁸ Stakeholder report submitted by Kapul Champions for PNG's second Universal Periodic Review (UPR). Full submission is available here: <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/UPRPGStakeholdersInfoS25.aspx>.

inadequately protected by the law. Laws and policies play a critical role in influencing the way in which societies shape their perceptions, behaviours, and relationships. When laws are neither accessible nor protect the most vulnerable, violence is perpetrated with impunity.

"WHEN LAWS ARE NEITHER ACCESSIBLE NOR PROTECT THE MOST VULNERABLE, VIOLENCE IS PERPETRATED WITH IMPUNITY."

There are currently no specific laws explicitly providing rights and protections related to gender identity under Fiji's constitution or legal framework. However, compared to other Pacific Island countries, Fiji has made some progress toward ensuring greater protection for trans and gender diverse people. This includes decriminalizing same-sex conduct for both men and women in 2010, and, in 2013, outlawing any discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity and allowing for gender markers to be changed in legal documents.¹⁹

In contrast, for instance, the penal code in PNG prohibits same-sex activity, making it punishable by imprisonment up to 14 years. The conservative religious and traditional customs further discourage and stigmatise any divergence

from the male-female and heteronormative gender binary.

"THE PENAL CODE IN PNG PROHIBITS SAME-SEX ACTIVITY, MAKING IT PUNISHABLE BY IMPRISONMENT UP TO 14 YEARS."

In 2013, the Samoan government repealed a law that criminalized men for cross-dressing in public which was largely used to target trans women and gender diverse people. In the same year, the government also removed provisions criminalizing "indecent acts between males." However, it continues to criminalize sodomy despite recommendations for abolishment by the Samoan Law Reform Commission, largely due to objections from religious leaders.

¹⁹ Fiji National Civil Society, "United Nations United Periodic Review – Fiji."



Methodology / This research was conceptualized as a peer-led study adapted from TGEU’s *Transphobia versus Transrespect (TvT) Project*. Training sessions on research methodologies and data collection were conducted in Fiji, Samoa, and PNG in September 2018. Each country team identified their focal person and 10 research team members (who were trans or gender diverse people).

The existing TvT survey tool was reviewed and adapted to the specific country context with the inclusion of culturally appropriate terminologies, together with the research team, and ensuring that specific words in the questionnaire are understandable to the interviewers and can be explained locally to respondents.

The questionnaire is divided into ten sections (see Annex 1):

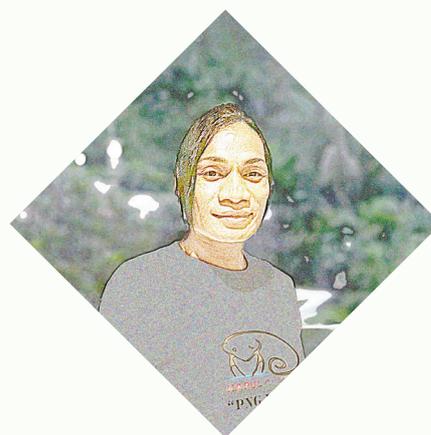
1. General Information
2. Family, Friends, and Partners
3. Formal Education
4. Labor Market, Job, Earning one’s Living
5. Health Care
6. Legal and Criminal Justice Systems
7. Religion
8. Society
9. Culture
10. Local Section (Humanitarian Aid Services, SRHR Services, Traditional Healers, Traditions)

The country research teams and APTN retained the original form of the questionnaire for sections 1 to 9 but changed some sentence structures

and removed or combined specific questions. Section 10, including questions on humanitarian aid services, SRHR services, traditional healers, and traditions, was jointly developed.

The questionnaire that all three countries would use was finalised by the end of November 2018. There was a consensus to keep the questionnaire in English and have the interviewer verbally translate it into the local language, if required, to assist in a greater understanding of terms and concepts. There were 175 questions, including open-ended questions where people could write in their responses. Enumerators were required to guide interviewees through a paper-based questionnaire and write down their responses. This way, the interviewee could focus on sharing their experiences in the language they were comfortable with, and the interviewer could translate the responses back into English.

Participants interviewed were mostly from urban areas, largely



due to convenience sampling. Convenience sampling was used due to the high costs and difficulties associated with travelling to the outer islands. The interviews took place between December 2018 and January 2019. It was decided to make sure that at least 10% of the respondents from Samoa and PNG and at least 20% of the respondents from Fiji were transmasculine/trans men. This decision was determined based on the number of trans women and trans men in the research team in an endeavour to ensure that a respondent could be interviewed by a person of the same gender identity (that is, a trans man could be interviewed by a trans man, and a trans woman could be interviewed by a trans woman).

Each interview started with providing the respondent with the information sheet (Annex 2) about the research. Respondents were screened to see if they met the 5 inclusion criteria. If eligible, informed consent (Annex 1) was sought and assurance of confidentiality was provided before progressing. Lastly, an 18-character interview code for each respondent was captured to ensure their anonymity. After each interview, respondents were asked if they were willing to be contacted for a follow-up discussion. If yes, another informed consent document was signed to get the respondent's mobile number and/or e-mail address. Each respondent was provided with a transportation allowance to support their participation in the study. Each interviewer was provided with compensation per the completed form.

DATA MANAGEMENT AND ANALYSIS /

The survey questionnaire was structured in ten sections, grouped thematically by modules. This structure has largely been followed in the presentation of the analysis, though items have been merged or placed in different sections to ease the reading flow. Data has been imported from Excel and analysed using IBM SPSS v.24. Data has been coded and labelled according to the survey tool.²⁰ The selection of findings presented was guided by key themes. Findings

of interest, including those that were unexpected or where quantitative and qualitative data were complementary or particularly insightful, have also been included. With a sample of 155 individuals in total, comprising 51 individuals in Fiji, 52 each in Samoa and PNG, and a diverse range of gender identities, disaggregation by gender wasn't possible, though we point towards patterns where they exist by gender.

LIMITATIONS /

Some of the limitations that may have affected the data stemmed largely from the limited oversight and quality assurance of data collection due to time and budget constraints. Budget constraints meant only one training was provided to all interviewers and enumerators, and could have contributed to some inconsistencies in the application of the questionnaire which were found in the data collection, that could be due to a misinterpretation of a question or term.

For example, some respondents misunderstood the question on "preferred name" and "preferred gender identity" in legal documents and misinterpreted "accessing services" to mean "interested in/want to access a service," which affected their responses. In addition, some terms and concepts regarding gender identity may not have been easily translated into the local language. During the



²⁰ Validity checks were performed but removing cases was avoided to preserve data quantity; instead, instances where results were inconsistent or unrelated to the question have been noted in footnotes. Likewise, qualitative answers unrelated to the question have not been removed but are not presented here; they can be accessed through APTN if required.

training, a SOGIE orientation was conducted with the research team, and each SOGIE terminology was discussed, especially commonly used local terminologies that might have to be explained to the respondents.

"THIS ANALYSIS ALSO PROVIDES AN ESSENTIAL FOUNDATION TO UNDERSTAND THE BARRIERS AND ENABLERS TO INDIVIDUAL AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE THAT WILL ADDITIONALLY PROVIDE A RICH BODY OF KNOWLEDGE AND EVIDENCE TO INFORM POLICY, PROGRAMS, AND PRACTICES."

Given the large number of questions and this being the first time many of the community interviewers and enumerators were engaging in such a project, there were also issues of missing data in sections.

While in Fiji, 6 respondents were interviewed a second time to amend the inconsistencies, this was not possible in Samoa. However, validity checks were performed to ensure the rigour of the data presented in this report. Finally, given the hard to reach population, many interviewees were associated with the coordinating organisations and

other LGBTI organisations in each country. This means that the findings presented in this report reflect only that section of the trans population of each country that is connected, even if peripherally, to LGBTI organisations.

Trans people who can be contacted through LGBTI organisations may share particular characteristics that are different from those living beyond the reach of these organisations. Although we cannot be sure, we note here that the findings may not apply to the broader trans communities in any of the three countries. Finally, the number of trans men and transmasculine respondents in each of the three countries was relatively small. This means that the experiences presented here may reflect the condition of the trans women and transfeminine community more than that of trans men and transmasculine people.

This report provides an analysis of the data across the three countries and aims to provide a better understanding of how political, legal, religious, cultural, and social structures can impact the social and lived experiences of trans and gender diverse people both negatively and positively. This analysis also provides an essential foundation to understand the barriers and enablers to individual and community resilience that will

additionally provide a rich body of knowledge and evidence to inform policy, programs, and practices.

Across the three countries, Fiji, Samoa, and PNG, a total of 155 trans and gender diverse people were interviewed for this study. It should be noted that while validity checks were performed, removing cases was avoided to preserve data quantity. Qualitative answers unrelated to the question have not been removed but have been noted in the footnotes.



▣ Presentation of Findings /

BASIC DEMOGRAPHICS /²¹

The average age across all study participants was 33 in Fiji, 30 in Samoa, and 31 in PNG, with the oldest participant being 59 (from Samoa).

²¹ In the Samoa report, there were 8 cases with missing data in the first section of the questionnaire, along with some missing data in the qualitative responses. However, these cases did have data for most of the other sections of the questionnaire, and so have been included in this report.

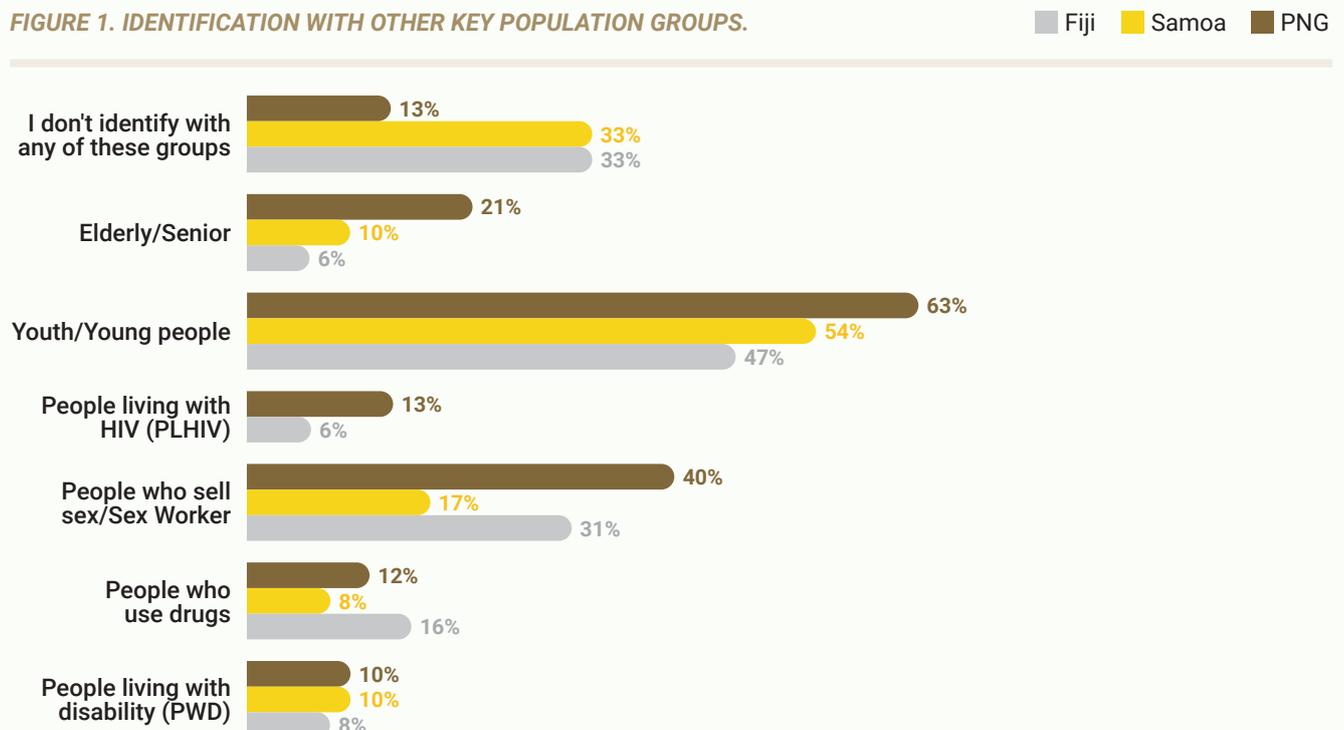
TABLE 1. AVERAGE AGE OF KEY PARTICIPANTS.

COUNTRY	MEAN AGE	AGE RANGE
Fiji	33.36	19-54
PNG	30.48	19-52
Samoa	30.38	18-59

Of the 155 respondents, the majority (76% or 118) were transfeminine, and 24% (37) were transmasculine. Additionally, 9% of the sample stated they have an intersex variation.²² Gender identity is diverse and varied in these Pacific countries. In addition, respondents across all countries also identified as belonging to other marginalized groups. Young people were the most represented in the sample.

²² Intersex variation separate from gender assigned at birth and preferred gender.

FIGURE 1. IDENTIFICATION WITH OTHER KEY POPULATION GROUPS.



There are challenges to using Western terminology to describe the gender of people in the Pacific as these terms are often simplistic, binary, or based on physical characteristics or expressions. People across each of the countries use broad local and traditional ways as well as Western terms to define their gender identity. The tables below present all genders represented in the sample for each country. The data includes instances where respondents selected multiple responses.

TABLE 2. GENDER IDENTITIES REPRESENTED IN FIJI.

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT (%)
Valid		
Transsexual woman	5	9.8
Transgender woman/trans feminine	12	23.5
Vakasalewalewa	7	13.7
Transsexual man	1	2.0
Transgender man/trans masculine	8	15.7
Brastos	11	21.6
Third sex/third gender	1	2.0
Gender non-conforming	2	3.9
Genderqueer	2	3.9
Total	49	96.1
Missing		
System	2	3.9
Total	51	100.0

TABLE 3. GENDER IDENTITIES REPRESENTED IN SAMOA.

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT (%)
Valid		
Indigenous	1	1.9
Other	3	5.7
Trans woman/fa'afafine	1	1.9
Transgender woman Fa'afafine, third sex/third gender	2	3.8
Trans woman, vakasalewalewa, third sex/third gender	1	1.9
Fa'afafine	33	62.3
Fa'afafine, third sex/third gender	1	1.9
Fa'afafine, other	1	1.9
Fa'afatama	9	17
Total	51	100.0

TABLE 4. GENDER IDENTITIES REPRESENTED IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA.

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT (%)
Valid		
Gender fluid	1	1.9
My gender identity is not listed above	2	3.8
Trans woman/transfeminine	15	28.8
Trans woman and palopa	12	23.1
Fa'afafine	1	1.9
Palopa	15	28.8
Transsexual man	3	5.8
Trans man/transmasculine	3	5.8
Total	51	100.0

It is apparent from the tables above that trans and gender diverse communities in Fiji, Samoa, and PNG identify their gender in diverse and intersecting ways.

The sample contains a large number of transfeminine respondents; this could be attributed to the fact that the study was led by transfeminine organisations and, given the nature of convenience sampling, the transfeminine communities in each of the three countries were, therefore, more visible to the researchers and easier to engage with. This highlights the need to design future research to ensure greater representation of transmasculine communities to gain a better understanding of their experiences, an area that continues to remain under-researched.

Due to convenience sampling, a majority of the respondents in PNG came from the national

capital, Port Moresby, while a few respondents came from neighbouring Central Province.

"THIS HIGHLIGHTS THE NEED TO DESIGN FUTURE RESEARCH TO ENSURE GREATER REPRESENTATION OF TRANSMASCULINE COMMUNITIES TO GAIN A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THEIR EXPERIENCES, AN AREA THAT CONTINUES TO REMAIN UNDER-RESEARCHED."

In Fiji, most of the respondents came from Fiji's capital, Suva (Central Eastern division), some came from Nadi (Western division), and some from Labasa and Savusavu (Northern division).

In Samoa, the majority of the respondents came from various villages and districts, including Apia, Faleata, Vaimauga, Aleipata, A'ana, Lepa, and

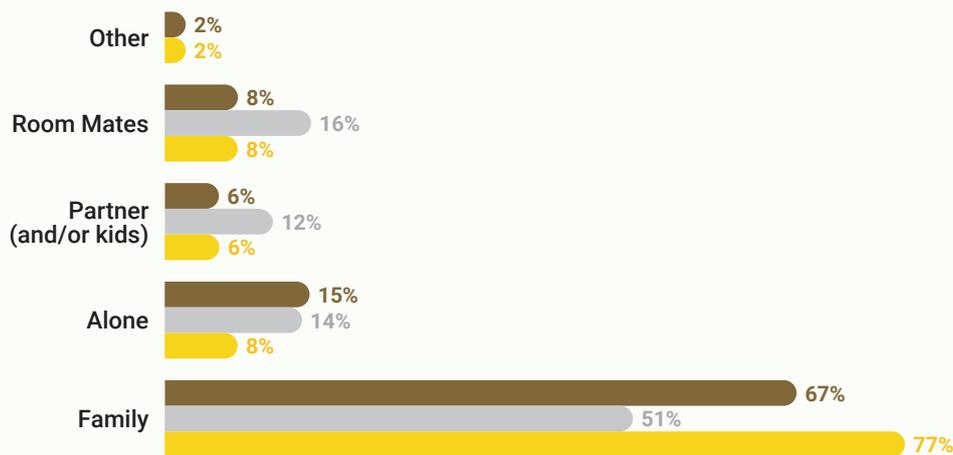
Lotofaga, among others. Of the 155 respondents interviewed in the study, 94% were Christians, 2 were Hindus, and 2 were Muslim. Another 6 individuals provided "other" or "none" as a response.

Most respondents lived with their families, with the rest relatively equally spread across living alone, with their partners and or kids, and with others (see figure 2).



FIGURE 2. LIVING ARRANGEMENTS.

Fiji Samoa PNG

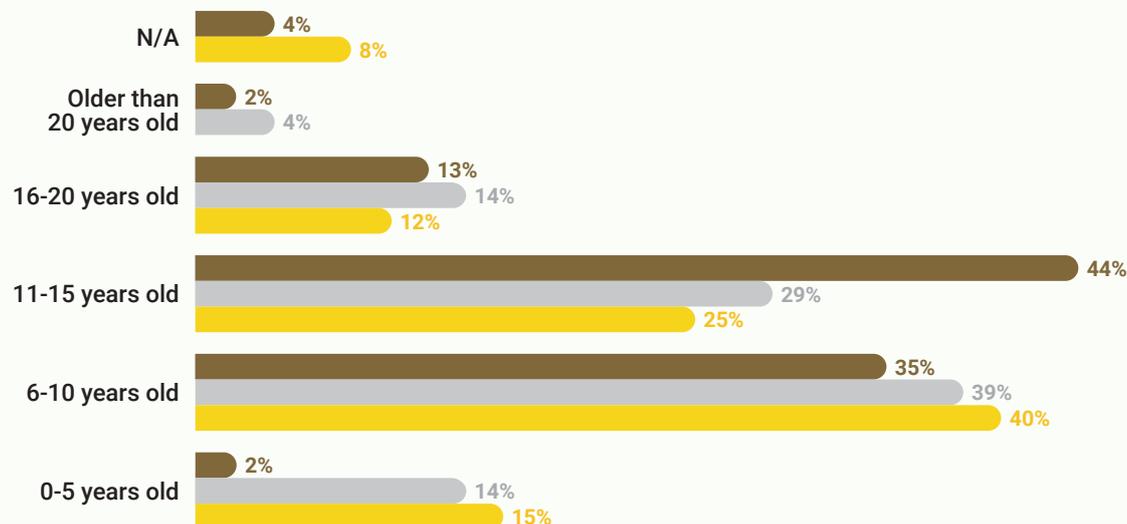


GENDER IDENTITY AND EXPRESSION /

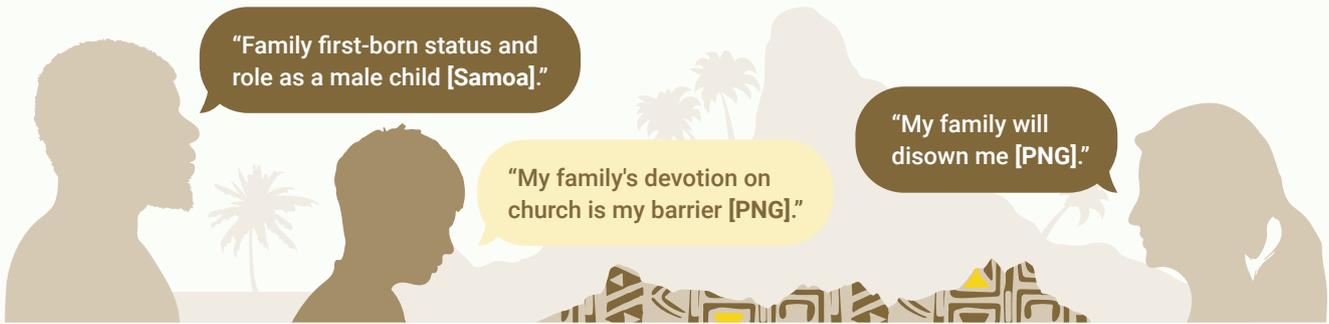
Some respondents were as young as one year old (in PNG) when they began identifying in their current gender identity. The average age at which most respondents across the three countries began to identify in their current gender was between 6 to 15 years.

FIGURE 3. "WHAT AGE DID YOU START IDENTIFYING WITH YOUR CURRENT GENDER IDENTITY?"

Fiji Samoa PNG



When asked if they were open about their gender identity and/or expression with their family, only 32% of the sample stated “yes” or “with some members of their family.” Those who either said they did “sometimes” or that they did not live in their preferred identity cited safety issues, expectations around traditional gender roles, and stigma from society, family, and the church as barriers to their gender expression.



Due to the lack of legal gender recognition laws in Samoa and PNG, trans and gender diverse people cannot change official documents to reflect their preferred names and/or sex to match their gender identity.

Of the entire sample, only 3% (4 individuals) had tried to change their identification document to reflect their preferred name and gender. In Fiji, while it is possible to change one's name (but not gender marker), many cited administrative barriers and lack of affordability as major barriers. With over a third of the sample living in their gender identity all the time, the lack of documentation to reflect that poses a huge

barrier to accessing essential services such as education, health care, and social protection services.

Those who are not able to live in their gender identity due to family and societal backlash represent the trans and gender diverse people who have to bear the heavy burden of living one's life based on other people's expectations of who they should be and how they should identify. The strong cultural, religious, and family ties that bind trans and gender diverse people to their society can be both barriers and protective factors, as is revealed throughout the report.

FAMILY, FRIENDS, AND INTIMATE PARTNERS /

On average, a little under a third of the sample (44 respondents) experienced some kind of disrespect and abuse from family members across all three countries.

The respondents (26 from Samoa, 21 from PNG, and 17 from Fiji) reported numerous instances of violence inflicted by family members. Examples of violence included being attacked, abused, and/or bullied. The data for PNG also highlighted that despite the abuse perpetrated by family members, the family is still an important source of support

and acknowledgement for trans and gender diverse people.

"THE STRONG CULTURAL, RELIGIOUS, AND FAMILY TIES THAT BIND TRANS AND GENDER DIVERSE PEOPLE TO THEIR SOCIETY CAN BE BOTH BARRIERS AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS."

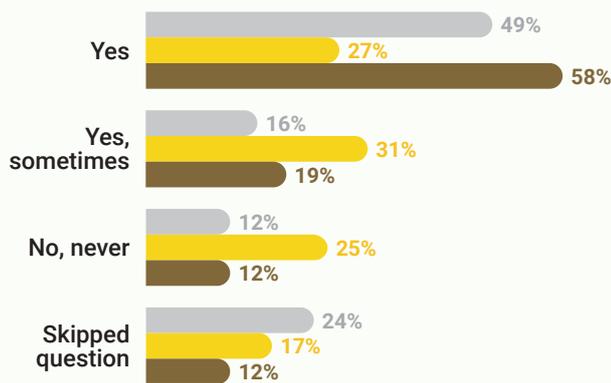
As many as 103 respondents (67% of the sample) stated that they receive support or acknowledgement in relation to their gender identity and/or expression from their family. This underlines the complexity of family relationships,

especially for those living with their families, a site of both support and violence for trans and gender diverse people.



FIGURE 4. SUPPORT AND/OR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF SUPPORT FROM FAMILY.

Fiji Samoa PNG



When examining the qualitative data, we find that, in particular, female family members (mothers/sisters/cousins) are more likely to be supportive in terms of affirming gender identity and providing protection and safety within the household. Furthermore, while there was mention of some male family members (fathers/nephews/ grandfathers) who were supportive, most respondents across all countries cited male family members largely as perpetrators of violence.

²³ “Fiji,” Global Database on Violence against Women, UN Women, accessed June 5, 2022, <https://evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/en/countries/oceania/fiji>.

²⁴ “Samoa,” Global Database on Violence against Women, UN Women, accessed June 5, 2022, <https://evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/en/countries/oceania/samoa>.

TABLE 5. QUALITATIVE EXAMPLES GIVEN BY PARTICIPANTS OF SUPPORT AND ABUSE.

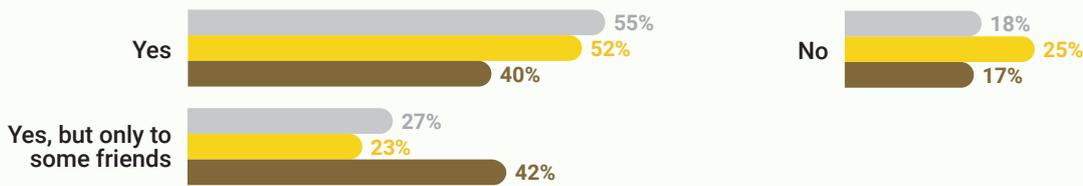
NOT SUPPORTIVE	SUPPORTIVE
<p>“My uncle tied a rope around my neck and hung me from a tree.” [Samoa]</p> <p>“Persuading me to have sexual intercourse with them/Making me doing things I did not like.” [Fiji]</p>	<p>“Especially from my sisters (in-laws), nieces, and nephews support against bullying.” [PNG]</p> <p>“Mom has always supported me and what and who I am.” [Samoa]</p> <p>“My father told all to treat me as a girl.” [Fiji]</p>

It should be noted that family violence is not solely experienced by trans and gender diverse communities in Fiji,²³ Samoa,²⁴ and PNG.²⁵ Women and girls in Fiji, Samoa, and PNG also experience high rates of violence, which ultimately stems from the same patriarchal culture, rigid norms, and conservative religious values about what it means to be a woman or a man in these socio-cultural contexts. This contributes to high levels of violence against cisgender women and against trans and gender diverse people who are seen to be transgressing gender norms.

²⁵ Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-based Violence, “Fact Sheet: Pacific Islanders and Domestic & Sexual Violence,” February 2018, <https://s3.amazonaws.com/gbv-wp-uploads/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/12205452/DVFactSheet-Pacific-Islander-Apr-2018-formatted-2019.pdf>.

FIGURE 5. "ARE YOU ABLE TO BE OPEN ABOUT YOUR GENDER IDENTITY AND/OR EXPRESSION WITH FRIENDS NOT BELONGING TO YOUR IDENTITY GROUP?"

Fiji Samoa PNG



The trans and gender diverse respondents across all three countries reported having received support, acceptance, and acknowledgement of their preferred gender identity from their friends. Gender-affirming actions such as addressing them by their preferred pronouns, offering emotional support, and showing respect were cited as ways in which the respondents' friends made them feel accepted. Unfortunately, the data

also highlights that despite private acceptance, friends who do not belong to the same gender identity group (that is, cisgender people) are also likely to be disrespectful, especially in public. This may be associated with perceived social taboos and the stigma of being associated with trans and/or gender diverse people.

TABLE 6. QUALITATIVE EXAMPLES GIVEN BY PARTICIPANTS OF SUPPORT AND ABUSE.

NOT SUPPORTIVE	SUPPORTIVE
<p>"I have lost some friends because of the fact that their cultural and religious beliefs may be in conflict with my dissemination of info and understanding." [Fiji]</p> <p>"When I hang out with friends and get drunk, they would tease me, make jokes about me, and even tried to hook me up with some guy." [Samoa]</p>	<p>"They accept me for who I am." [PNG]</p> <p>"They address me with my preferred name." [Fiji]</p>

The majority of all respondents across the three countries said they had expressed their gender identity to their intimate partners. As many as 76 respondents (49% of the sample) stated that they always felt appreciated by their partners. This suggests an association between

the sharing of ones gender identity with a partner and the belief that their partner will be accepting of their identity. Those who think that their partner will not accept their gender identity may be less likely to express this part of their identity.

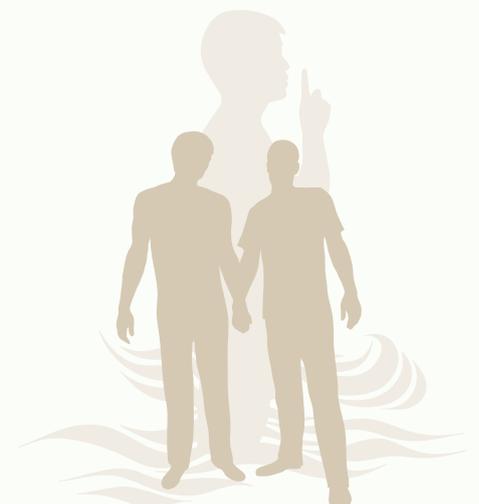
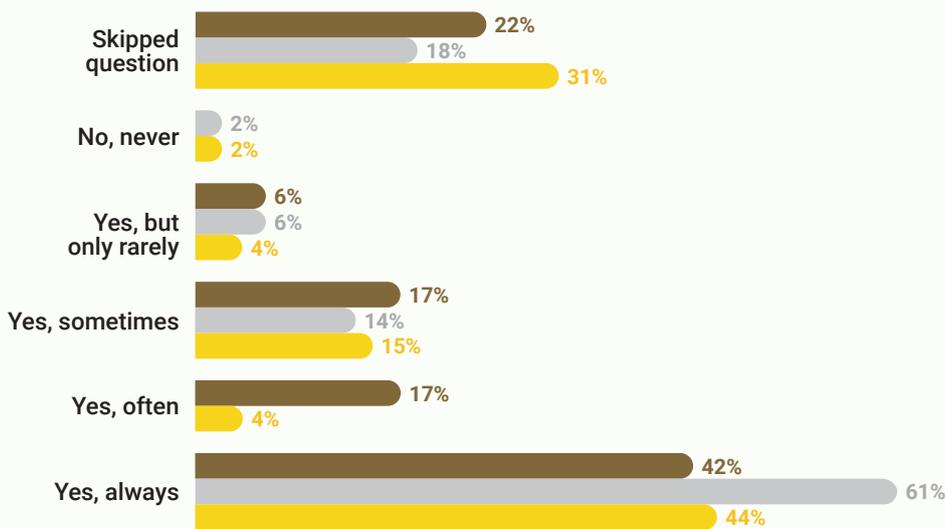


FIGURE 6. APPRECIATION BY INTIMATE PARTNER.

Fiji Samoa PNG



However, when asked if they felt disrespected by their partners, in a glaring difference, 42% of the respondents from PNG said they always felt disrespected by their partner. At the same time, 50% and 55% of the respondents from Samoa and Fiji, respectively, stated they had never experienced disrespect from their intimate partners.

The qualitative examples below indicate that trans and gender diverse people often have little control of their

relationships in the public sphere and only sometimes in the private sphere.

"THESE FINDINGS INDICATE THAT TRANS AND GENDER DIVERSE PEOPLE CONTINUE TO LIVE BY THE EXPECTATIONS OF OTHERS RATHER THAN BEING ABLE TO EXPRESS THEMSELVES FULLY, BE IT IN PUBLIC OR PRIVATE."

Again, as already evidenced by the responses about family

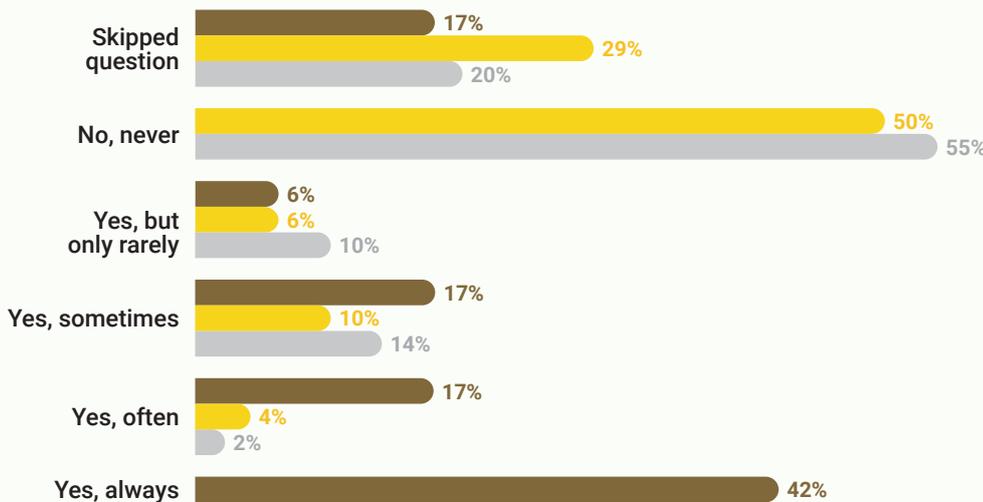
support, these findings indicate that trans and gender diverse people continue to live by the expectations of others rather than being able to express themselves fully, be it in public or private.

TABLE 7. QUALITATIVE EXAMPLES GIVEN BY PARTICIPANTS OF SUPPORT AND ABUSE.

EXAMPLES OF DISRESPECT	EXAMPLES OF RESPECT
<p>"They think we don't want pleasure, all we are there for is to give them blow jobs, and that's how they appreciate me." [Samoa]</p>	<p>"As long as I am not too open about my identity to everyone else or show affection to him publicly is a no, our relationship is closed to ourselves." [PNG]</p>

FIGURE 7. DISRESPECT BY INTIMATE PARTNER.

Fiji Samoa PNG



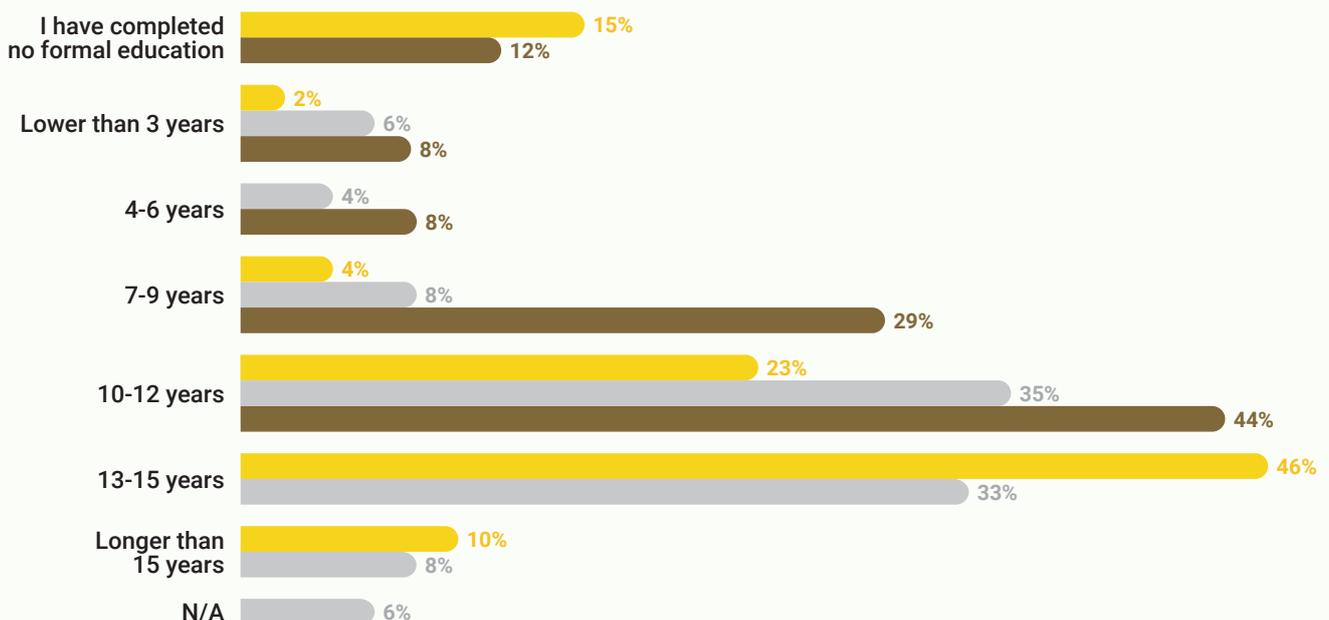
EDUCATION /

The findings indicate that 86% of the respondents have had exposure to some kind of formal education.

The Fiji sample had the highest number of respondents (96% or 49) with formal schooling, followed by Samoa (83% or 43) and PNG (79% or 41). The Samoa sample had the highest number of respondents (56% or 29) with 13+ years of schooling, with 9% that had had no schooling (compared to 6% from PNG and 0% from Fiji with no schooling). Overall, Fiji had the highest mean years of schooling (11.6) compared to Samoa (10.85) and PNG (7.75).

FIGURE 8. YEARS OF EDUCATION.

Fiji Samoa PNG





"Rugby boys demanded an orgy." [Samoa]

"During health science, the teacher asked me to strip (but I didn't) because he wants everyone to see that I am a man, not a girl." [Samoa]

"I almost got raped by the 2 boys in the toilets." [PNG]

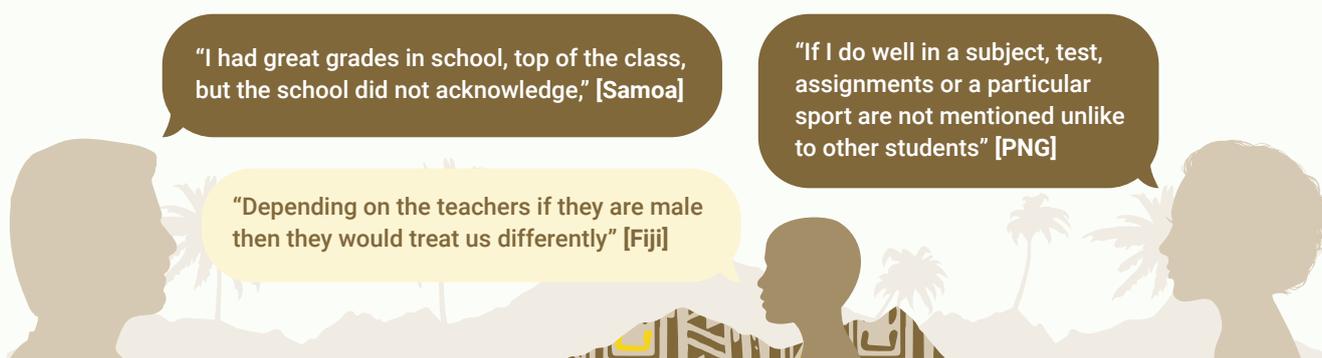
However, despite these heartening figures, trans and gender diverse people from all three countries experience bullying, harassment, and physical and sexual violence in educational institutions throughout their schooling years, the perpetrators being both students and teachers. Across the three countries, a high percentage of respondents reported having experienced physical (25%) and sexual abuse (29%) often, a few times, or at least once.

The qualitative data indicate that fellow students, in

particular, subject trans and gender diverse students to an overwhelming amount of violence, including physical assault, sexual abuse, and rape. Specific instances of violence included being forced to engage in sexual acts and being attacked while travelling to and from school. In Samoa, 21% of the sample (11 respondents) reported having experienced disrespectful treatment, including violence, from teachers due to their gender identity, with only one respondent saying they reported the behaviour to school administrators.

"IN SAMOA, 21% OF THE SAMPLE (11 RESPONDENTS) REPORTED HAVING EXPERIENCED DISRESPECTFUL TREATMENT, INCLUDING VIOLENCE, FROM TEACHERS DUE TO THEIR GENDER IDENTITY."

In Fiji, of the 47 respondents who answered the question, 3 reported experiencing physical violence by teachers at least once, with examples given of being "punched and beaten," and "belted."



"I had great grades in school, top of the class, but the school did not acknowledge," [Samoa]

"If I do well in a subject, test, assignments or a particular sport are not mentioned unlike to other students" [PNG]

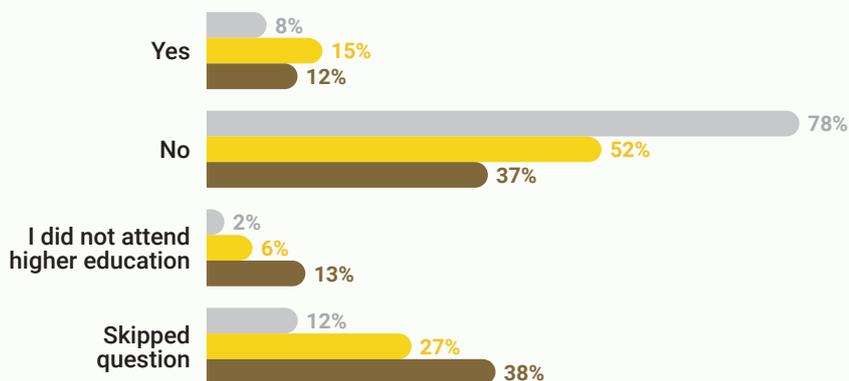
"Depending on the teachers if they are male then they would treat us differently" [Fiji]

The data indicate that some respondents across each of the countries did not feel their gender identity and expression affected how they were treated in educational institutions. However, it should be noted that the survey did not ask questions relating to whether respondents were

living in their preferred gender identity at the time, which may have had an impact on the response to this question. The qualitative responses revealed that some respondents believed that their gender identity was responsible for the lack of recognition of their academic achievements.

FIGURE 9. "HAS YOUR GENDER IDENTITY AND/OR EXPRESSION AFFECTED HOW YOU WERE TREATED IN HIGHER EDUCATION?"

Fiji Samoa PNG



In Samoa, however, 31% of the sample said that their teachers expressed at least some form of respect, acknowledgement, or appreciation, particularly for participation in extracurricular activities like helping clean the classroom, being a prefect, and gendered tasks.

"IN PARTICULAR, TRANS AND GENDER DIVERSE STUDENTS MUST BE PROVIDED WITH AVENUES TO REPORT BULLYING AND HARASSMENT BY THEIR PEERS AND TEACHERS."

Similarly, in PNG, the respondents reported that exceptional achievements such as being a top student, class captain, or talented in a skill such as drama or singing would increase the positive acknowledgement and respect they received from teachers.

The data illustrates the need for greater interventions for trans and gender diverse students in educational institutions. In particular, trans and gender diverse students must be provided with avenues to report bullying and harassment by their peers and teachers. The impunity with which teachers seem to perpetuate bullying, including physical violence, is particularly concerning. While further information on the reasons why the respondents did not report this behaviour is not available, the evidence suggests that there is no system

in place that enables them to report such incidents safely.

The sensitisation of teachers, school administrators, and all auxiliary staff is essential to enable a safe and

positive learning environment for young trans and gender diverse people. Furthermore, the school curriculum must include positive measures to increase the acceptance of trans and gender diverse communities amongst their peers across the three countries.



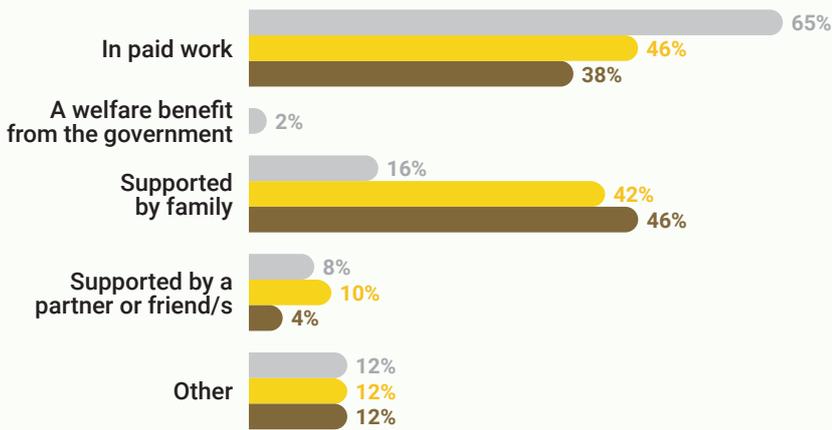
LABOUR MARKET: EARNING ONE'S LIVING /

Of the three countries, the sample in Fiji had the most number of respondents (65% or 33) who were engaged in paid work, followed by Samoa (46% or 24) and PNG (38% or 20).²⁶ Employment opportunities cited were largely in the informal sector aside from NGOs/CBOs. Employment areas included hairdressing, entertainment, sex work, hospitality/tourism, and manual work like sewing.

²⁶ See Annex 4 for breakdown of professions.

FIGURE 10. "HOW DO YOU CURRENTLY EARN YOUR LIVING?"

Fiji Samoa PNG



Hearteningly, about 75% of the sample indicated they had never been refused employment based on their gender identity, and 79% of the sample stated they had never lost their jobs due to their gender identity.⁷ However, this could be because most of the respondents were employed in the few sectors (for instance, hairdressing, beauty industry, development)

that typically are more open to employing trans and gender diverse people. However, 6 respondents in PNG, 5 in Samoa, and 3 in Fiji said they had been refused employment at least once due to their gender expression and/or gender identity.

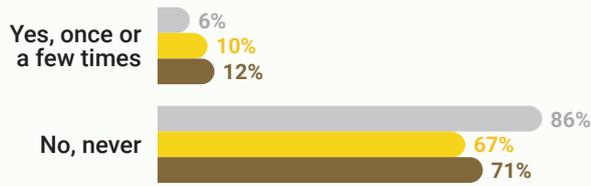
It is interesting to note that of the 5% of the sample (7

respondents) who had been refused employment and legally challenged the refusal, only 2 (one from Fiji and one from Samoa) indicated that their challenge was successful.



FIGURE 11. REFUSAL OF EMPLOYMENT DUE TO GENDER IDENTITY.

Fiji Samoa PNG



"FIJI IS THE ONLY COUNTRY OF THE THREE WITH LAWS THAT CRIMINALIZE EMPLOYMENT-BASED DISCRIMINATION DUE TO SOGIE."

Few respondents among the sample had had an opportunity to work in an environment cognizant of the needs of trans and gender diverse people, equipped with physical (including gender-neutral toilets) and administrative (including forms which allow for affirming gender markers and use of preferred names) facilities that recognize and affirm gender identity.

Overall, only 7% of the sample (11 respondents) stated that they had access to specific facilities for people of their gender identity/expression, with the most common example of that being gender-neutral toilets.

"THE OVERALL FINDINGS SUGGEST THAT STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION, A LACK OF FUNDS, AND A LACK OF ACCESS TO JUSTICE ACROSS INSTITUTIONS, INCLUDING THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM, COULD BE BARRIERS TO CHALLENGING SUCH RIGHTS VIOLATIONS."

FIGURE 12. LOST EMPLOYMENT DUE TO GENDER IDENTITY.

Fiji Samoa PNG

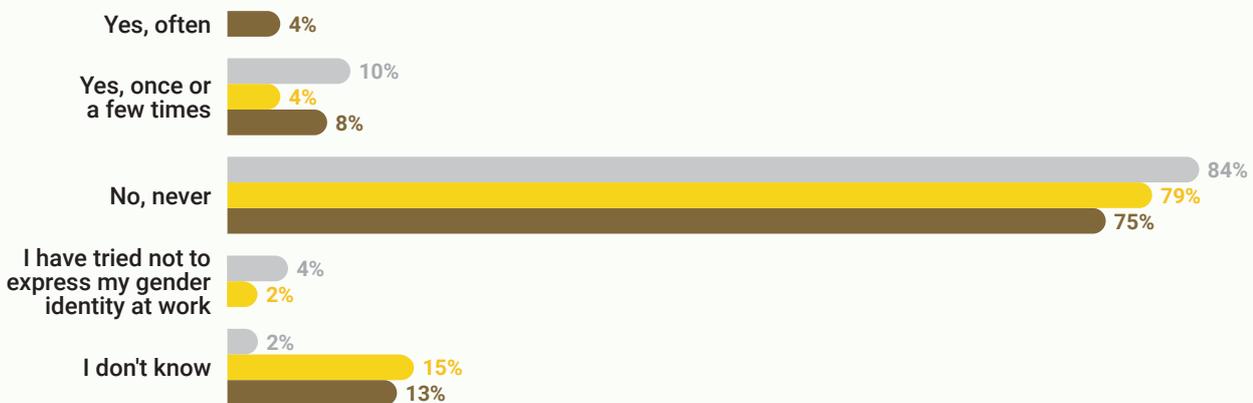


TABLE 8. GENDER AFFIRMING FACILITIES AT THE WORK PLACE.

Yes No



As much as 25% of the sample said that they were refused employment due to their gender identity. Fiji is the only country of the three with laws that criminalize employment-based discrimination due to SOGIE. The survey did not explore why the people who were refused employment did not take legal action.

However, the overall findings suggest that stigma and discrimination, a lack of funds, and a lack of access to justice across institutions, including the judicial system, could be barriers to challenging such rights violations.

HEALTHCARE AND SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS (SRHR) SERVICES /

Health care, including sexual and reproductive health care, is an essential right for all trans and gender diverse people. Trans-competent clinical care that is delivered without stigma and discrimination must be made available to all trans and gender diverse people.

Across the three countries, 15% of the sample (24 respondents) stated that their gender identity and/or expression affected how they were treated when trying to access public

healthcare services. As many as 14 respondents from PNG, 9 from Fiji, and one from Samoa stated that they felt their gender identity negatively affected their access to services. In total, 15 respondents, 12 of them from PNG, said they were refused treatment.

"AS MANY AS 14 RESPONDENTS FROM PNG, 9 FROM FIJI, AND ONE FROM SAMOA STATED THAT THEY FELT THEIR GENDER IDENTITY NEGATIVELY AFFECTED THEIR ACCESS TO SERVICES."

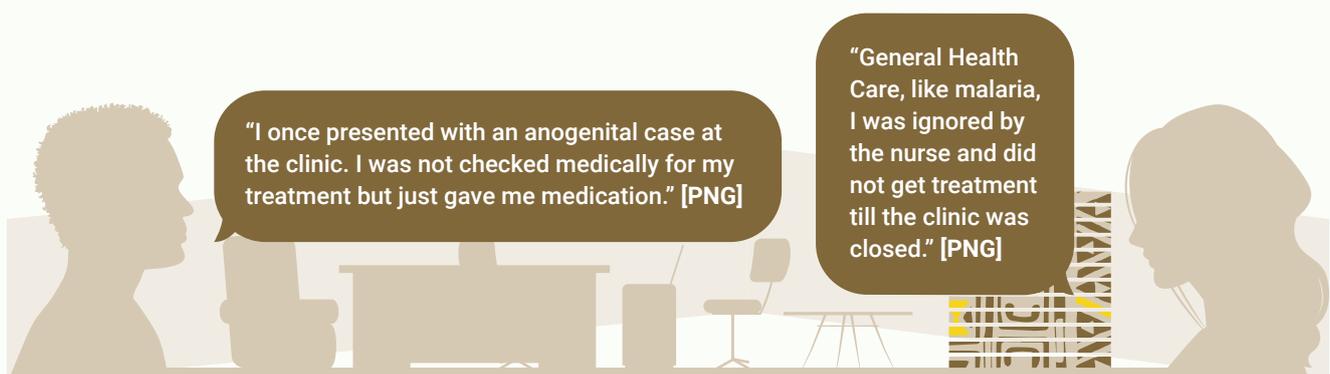
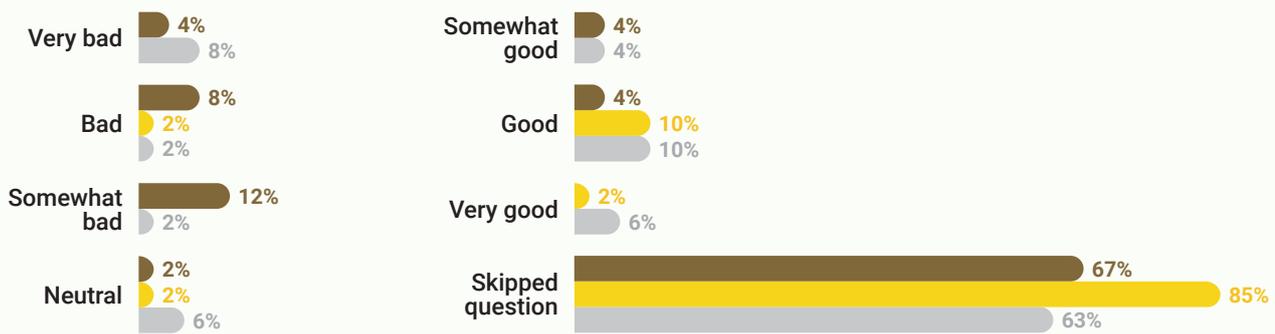


FIGURE 13. OVERALL EXPERIENCES OF ACCESSING HEALTH CARE.

Fiji Samoa PNG



In all, 106 respondents across the three countries reported not being treated differently when accessing public health services. However, the survey did not ask questions on healthcare-seeking behavior which may include respondents who have not tried to access healthcare. This issue should be explored in greater depth in future studies. For example, when respondents sought medical services with symptoms of STIs or for general health concerns, their treatment

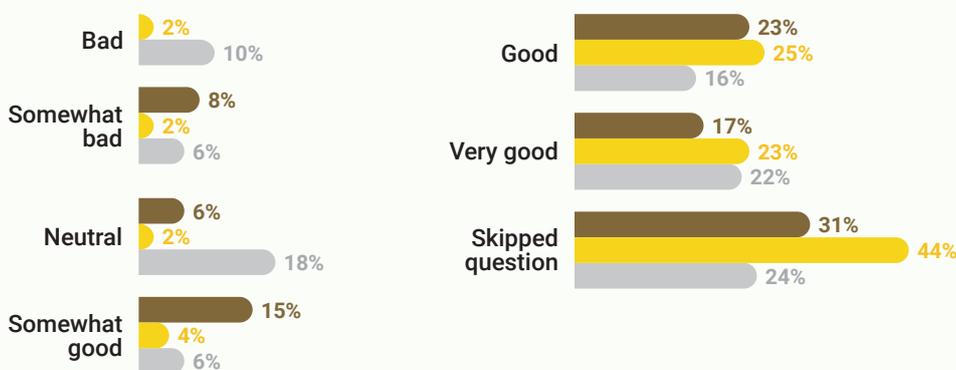
was delayed and often of poor quality.

The data illustrates that 13% of the sample (19 respondents) have had a negative experience with healthcare providers.

The PNG sample had the highest number of respondents (12) to have had a negative experience with healthcare providers, followed by Fiji (6) and Samoa (1). Among the respondents

FIGURE 14. OVERALL EXPERIENCES OF ACCESSING SRHR SERVICES.

Fiji Samoa PNG



that answered this question across the three countries (39), a total of 17% (25) rated their experiences to be between neutral and very good, with the most positive responses coming from Fiji (13), followed by Samoa (7) and PNG (5).

Transition related services for trans and gender diverse people

in the Pacific are extremely limited and, where available, unaffordable for many. Hormone replacement therapy is available in Fiji through private practitioners for trans women. However, a prescription is required to access it, and the treatment is often expensive.

Testosterone is not available for transmasculine people. Samoa

and PNG do not have gender-affirming care services. Despite this, 17% of the total sample (25 respondents) had sought some kind of gender-affirming care, with the highest number of respondents (13) who had done so being from Fiji.

The majority of the sample (83% or 129 respondents)



had never sought transition-related services from a healthcare professional. The reasons cited varied, with 41 respondents (26%) stating that such services were not available and 38 respondents (25%) stating they did not want or need these services. Fear, expenses, and a lack of information on where to seek such services also featured in the responses as well as a lack of trust in healthcare providers, insufficient funds to see a healthcare professional,

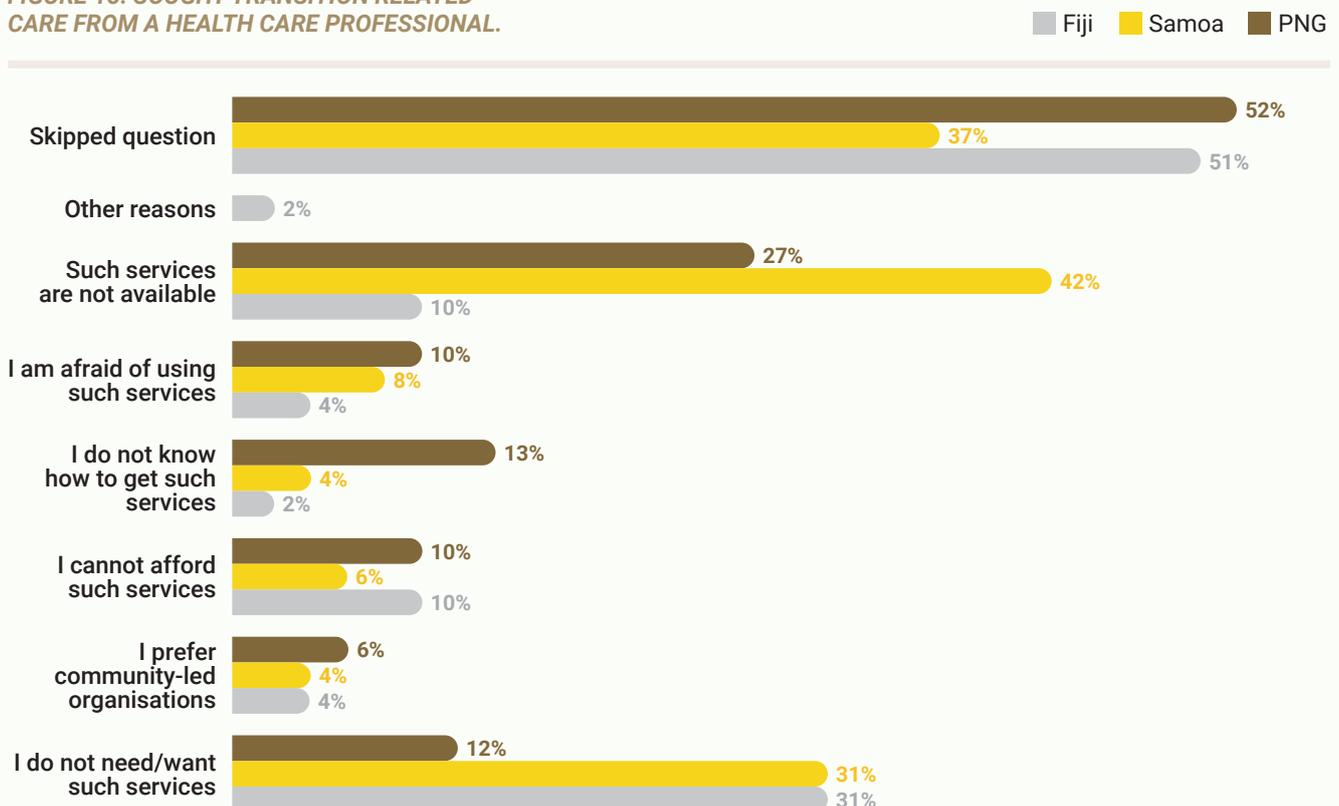
and a preference for NGO/CBOs as a source of information on gender-affirming support.

In the qualitative responses, some respondents cited religion or faith as a reason they didn't want or need transition-related support. This was particularly the case in Samoa, as shown in these examples.

The rate of access to HIV and sexual health services, especially HTC, was highest among the PNG sample. This

could be in part due to the higher HIV prevalence in PNG and the resultant increased funding for HIV services, enhanced service delivery, and a higher number of HIV programmes than in the other countries. For example, 44 respondents (85%) in PNG had access to HTC compared to 27 (53%) in Fiji and 26 (50%) in Samoa. Similarly, 83% of the sample in PNG (44 respondents) had accessed STI tests and treatment compared to 20% (10) in Fiji and 15% (8)

FIGURE 15. SOUGHT TRANSITION RELATED CARE FROM A HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL.



in Samoa. More respondents (trans women) in the PNG sample said they had access to sexual health screening such as rectal and prostate examination than Fijian and Samoan respondents. Few transmasculine respondents reported accessing pap smears or breast exams. The trans women in the sample did not report having

had breast exams either. Condoms, lubricants, sexual and reproductive health and rights education, information and communication were the most accessed products and services. Overwhelmingly, 52% of the total sample cited community-led organisations and NGOs as their preferred service providers. The number of respondents who preferred

NGOs as their service providers was highest in PNG (75% or 39), followed by Samoa (21) and Fiji (20). This highlights the need to ensure continued investment in NGOs and CBOs in the Pacific to ensure they have the skills, capacity, and resources to provide high-quality services and support to trans and gender diverse people.

FIGURE 16. SRHR SERVICES ACCESSED.

Fiji Samoa PNG

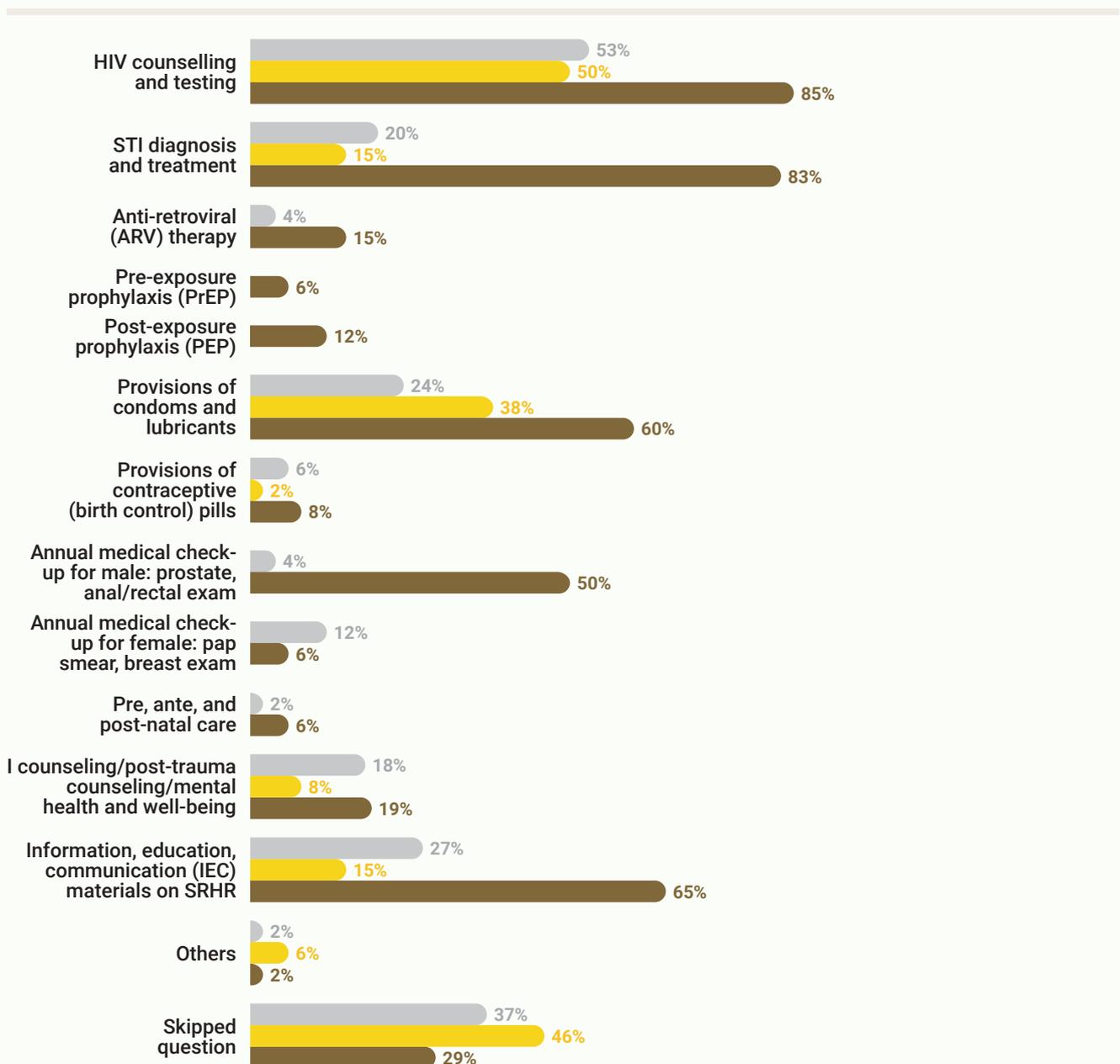
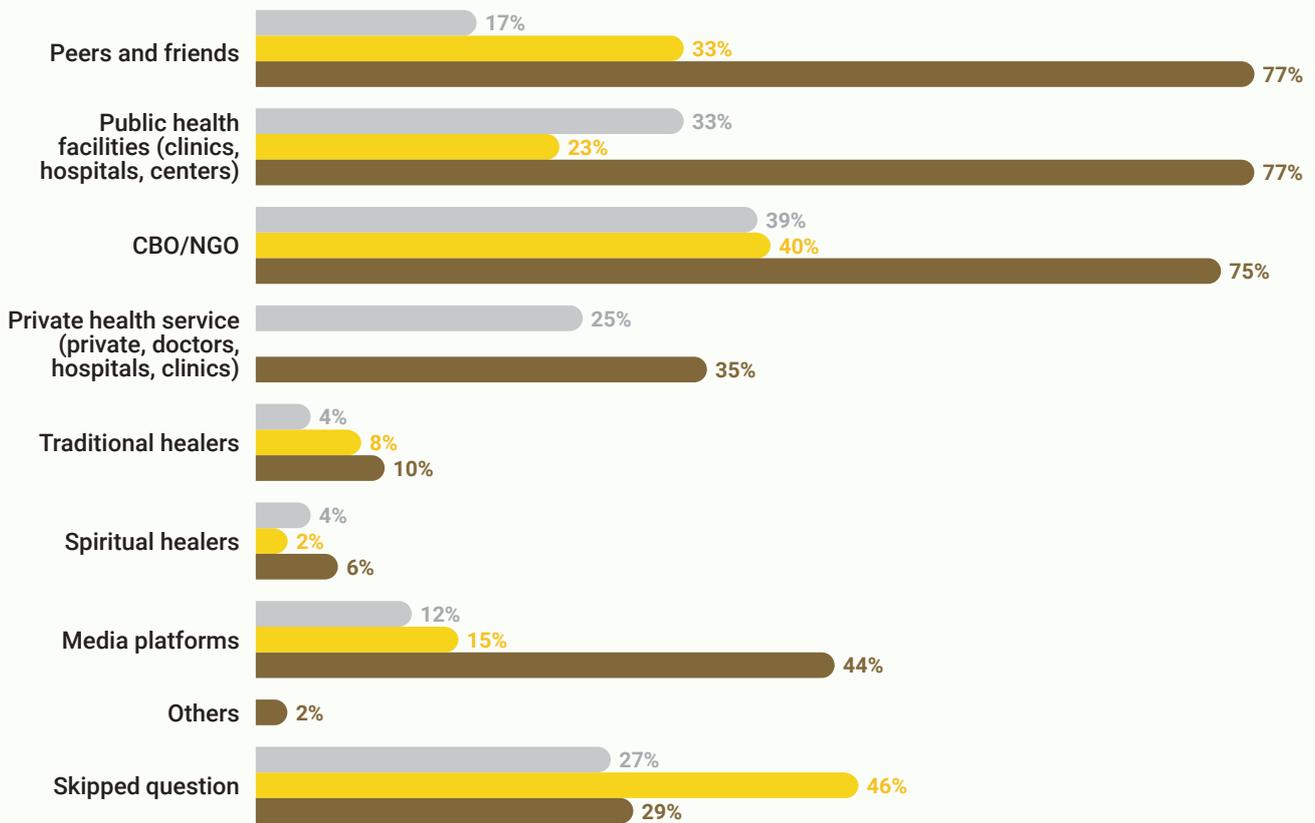


FIGURE 17. "WHERE HAVE YOU ACCESSED/RECEIVED SRHR SERVICES?"

Fiji Samoa PNG



EXPERIENCES OF VIOLENCE AND ACCESS TO LEGAL AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEMS /

The data has thus far revealed that trans and gender diverse people experience stigma, discrimination, and violence throughout their lives across

various institutions, including the family, educational institutions, and healthcare settings.

Most of the respondents stated that they feel especially discriminated against in society

due to their gender identity and expression. For some, this discrimination has led to various forms of violence, including violence inflicted by the police.

FIGURE 18. "DO YOU THINK PEOPLE LIKE YOU ARE ESPECIALLY DISCRIMINATED IN SOCIETY BECAUSE OF YOUR GENDER IDENTITY AND/OR EXPRESSION?"

Fiji Samoa PNG

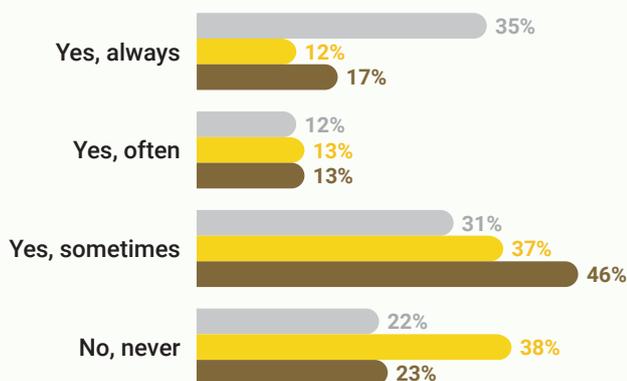
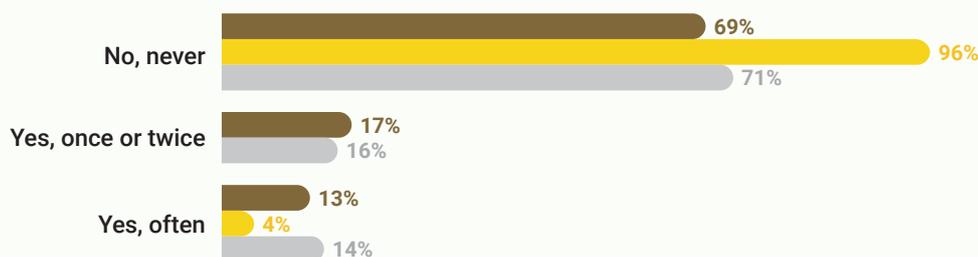


FIGURE 19. "HAVE YOU EVER BEEN HARASSED BY THE POLICE BECAUSE OF YOUR GENDER IDENTITY AND/OR EXPERIENCES?"

Fiji Samoa PNG



As much as 48% of the sample (55 respondents) said that they experienced some kind of violence due to their gender identity.

"AT LEAST 30% OF THE RESPONDENTS IN FIJI (15) AND PNG (16) AND 4% OF THE RESPONDENTS FROM SAMOA (2) SAID THEY HAD EXPERIENCED POLICE HARASSMENT DUE TO THEIR GENDER IDENTITY."

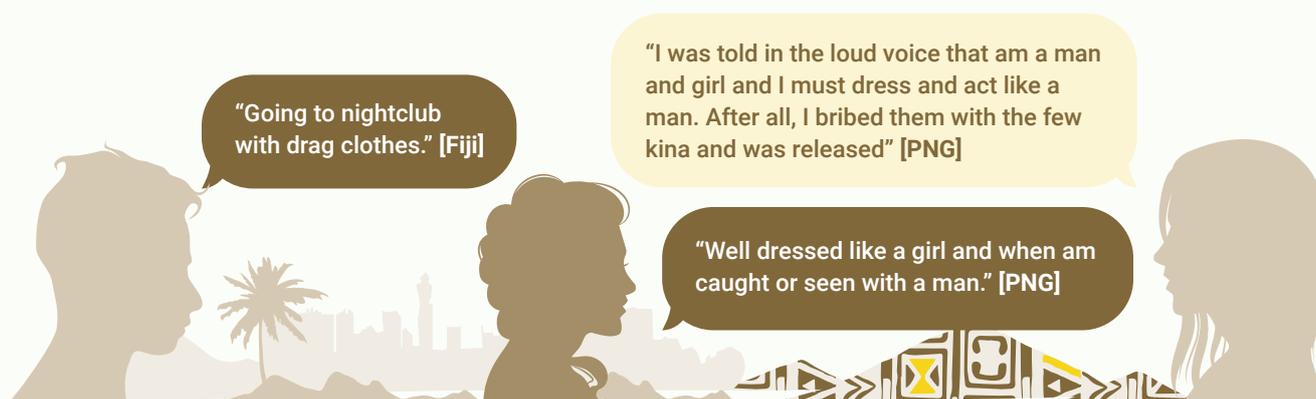
The most common form of violence experienced by trans and gender diverse people were insults and threats of violence, followed by physical aggression. More respondents in the PNG sample reported having experienced violence

due to their gender identity and expression than those from Samoa or Fiji. As many as 19 respondents in PNG reported having experienced sexual violence compared to 8 and 10 individuals in Fiji and Samoa, respectively. However, of the 63 respondents who answered the question, "Did you formally file a complaint about what happened to you?" only 5 said yes, 2 from Fiji, 2 from Samoa, and one from PNG. This can be attributed to the discrimination and stigma trans and gender diverse people have to deal with when dealing with the police and laws that criminalise certain behaviours as unnatural and indecent, including sex work, cross-dressing, and sodomy.

At least 30% of the respondents

in Fiji (15) and PNG (16) and 4% of the respondents from Samoa (2) said they had experienced police harassment due to their gender identity. This includes being arrested and fined for public nuisance (with an overwhelming 19 respondents from Fiji and one respondent from PNG citing it as a reason for harassment, fines, or arrest); cross-dressing (7 respondents in PNG and 1 in Fiji); and sex work (6 respondents in PNG and 1 in Fiji).

"AS MANY AS 19 RESPONDENTS IN PNG REPORTED HAVING EXPERIENCED SEXUAL VIOLENCE COMPARED TO 8 AND 10 INDIVIDUALS IN FIJI AND SAMOA, RESPECTIVELY."



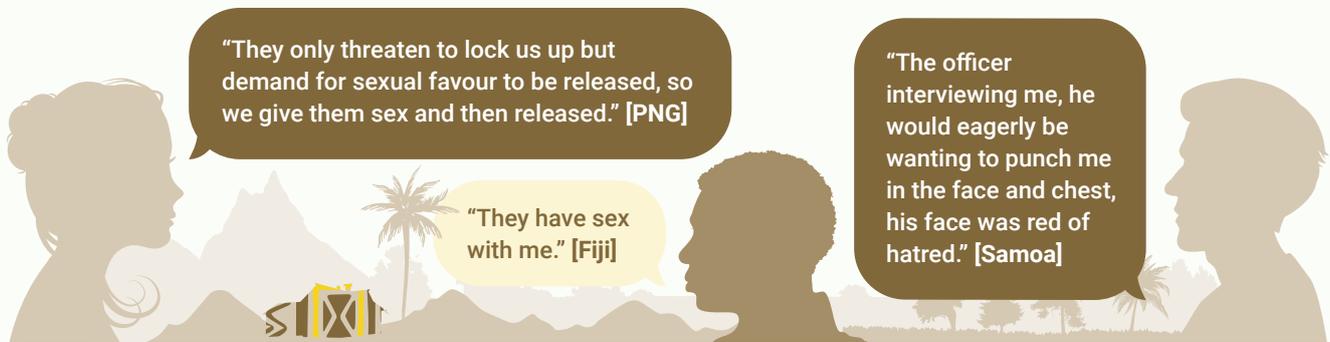
Comparatively, the Samoa sample reported lower rates of harassment, fines, or arrests by police, with only 2 respondents citing cross-dressing and sex work as reasons for arrest.

arrests on a scale of “very respectful” to “very disrespectful,” most of the respondents selected “neutral.” This was especially the case in the Fiji sample, where 15 out of 21 respondents selected this answer. Potentially, this rating could reflect an ambivalence towards unpredictable treatment, rather than true neutrality.

"OF THE 32 RESPONDENTS ACROSS THE THREE COUNTRIES WHO HAD SOME KIND OF EXPOSURE TO THE POLICE, THE PNG RESPONDENTS REPORTED THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF INCIDENTS OF DISRESPECT EITHER SOME OF THE TIME OR ALL THE TIME."

Of the 32 respondents across the three countries who had some kind of exposure to the police, the PNG respondents reported the highest number of incidents of disrespect either some of the time or all the time. Individuals from each country cited negative experiences with the police.

When asked to rate the police’s behaviour towards trans and gender diverse people during



Of the respondents that had been incarcerated (11 in Fiji and 5 in PNG), more than half were put into jails cells that did not align with their gender identity (6 in Fiji and 3 in PNG).

had been placed in solitary confinement and 2 respondents from Fiji and one from Samoa had been put into cells for people of their gender identity.

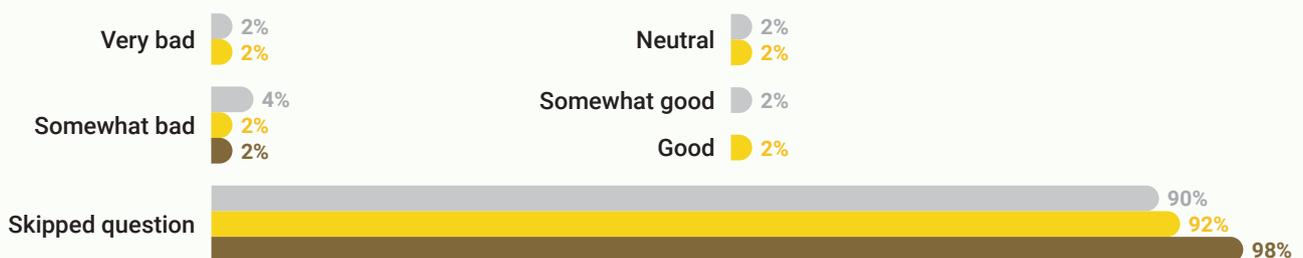
from PNG) reported exclusion, bullying, and insults, and 2 (1 from Fiji and 1 from PNG) stated that they had been sexually assaulted by other inmates and/or prison officers.

Among those detained, 3 respondents from Fiji and one each from PNG and Samoa

Across the three countries, 4 respondents (2 from Fiji and 2 from PNG) were physically attacked, 4 (3 from Fiji and 1

FIGURE 20. OVERALL EXPERIENCES IN PRISON.

Fiji Samoa PNG

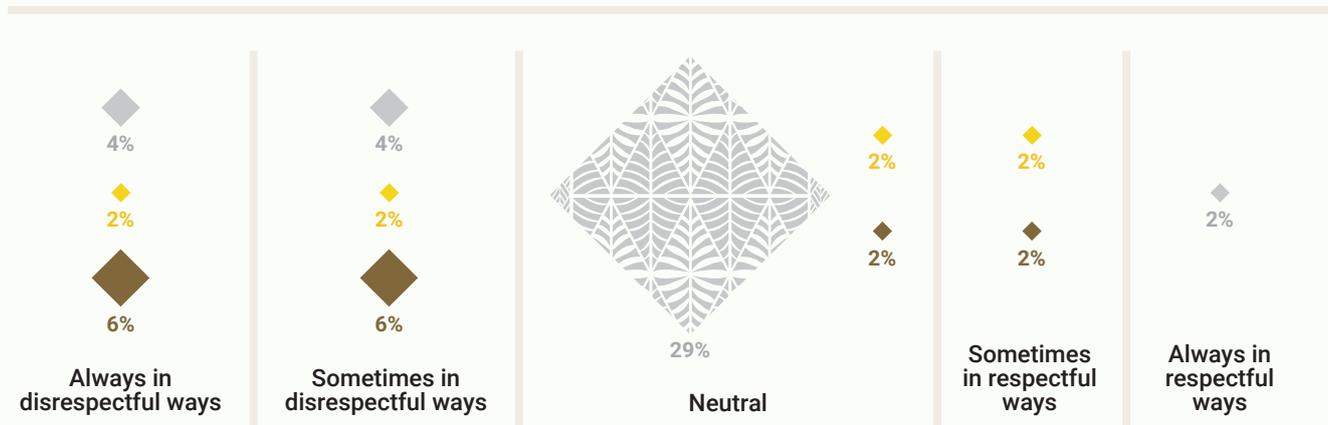


When asked how they would rate their experiences in prison regarding their gender identity, most rated their experiences as bad or somewhat bad. However, 5 respondents from Fiji and 3 from PNG stated that they felt respected by inmates whilst in jail.

Overall, these findings highlight a need for reform in the justice system to ensure that those who are responsible for protecting the rights of the people are also upholding the rights of trans and gender diverse people and shielding them from human rights violations.

TABLE 9. POLICE TREATMENT.

Fiji Samoa PNG



RELIGION, CULTURE, AND TRADITION /

The majority of the respondents (94% of the sample) identified as Christian. Interestingly, 62% of the sample (96 respondents) across the 3 countries indicated that they did not feel as though their gender identity and/or expression affected how they are received or treated in their religious and/or spiritual community. Yet, when asked if they could be open about their gender identity and expression in their religious community, 47% of the sample (73 respondents, 31 from Fiji, 24 from Samoa, and 18 from PNG) stated they could not. This result may imply that the

respondents who answered that they do not feel as though they are treated differently due to their gender identity and expression within religious institutions feel so because they also do not reveal their preferred identity and expression within these religious institutions. When asked if they felt their gender identity and/or expression was valued within their religious community, more respondents in Fiji and Samoa stated they did not feel valued than in PNG.



"WHEN ASKED IF THEY COULD BE OPEN ABOUT THEIR GENDER IDENTITY AND EXPRESSION IN THEIR RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY, 47% OF THE SAMPLE (73 RESPONDENTS, 31 FROM FIJI, 24 FROM SAMOA, AND 18 FROM PNG) STATED THEY COULD NOT."

FIGURE 21. REVEALING GENDER IDENTITY AND EXPRESSION WITHIN RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES.

Fiji Samoa PNG

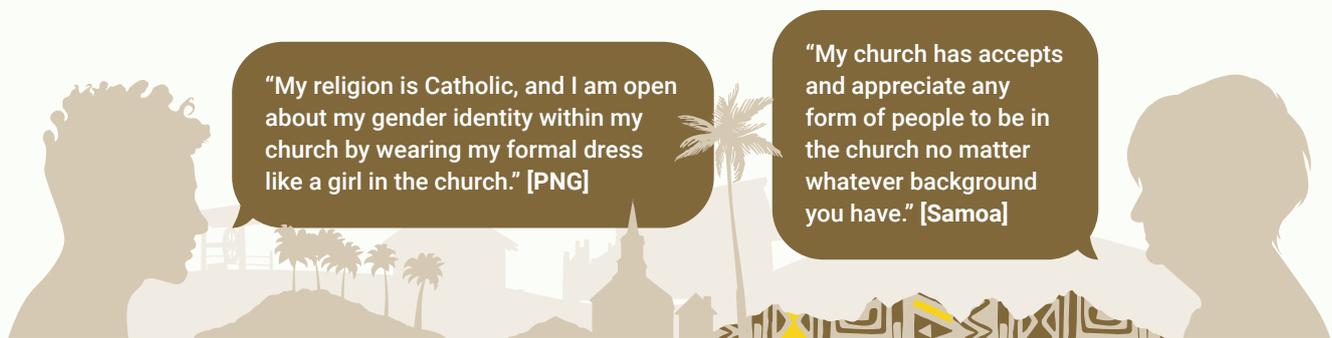
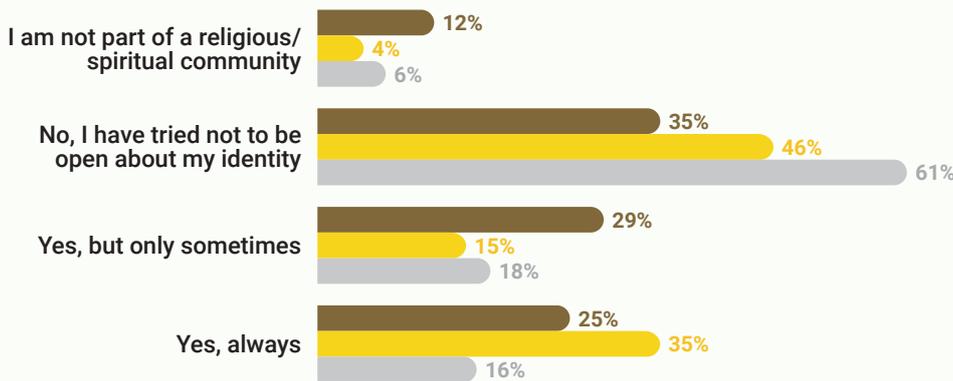
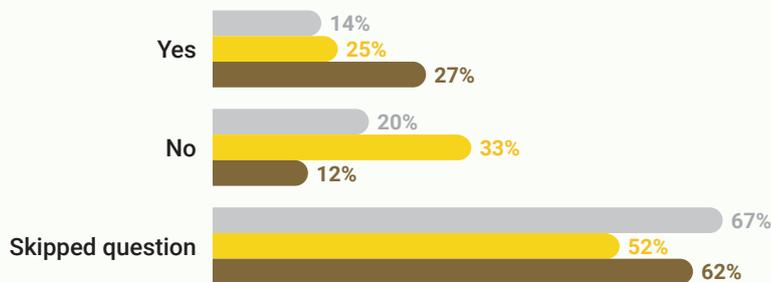


FIGURE 22. VALUED BY RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY.

Fiji Samoa PNG



Despite this, it is clear from the qualitative responses that for some, the church is a place of acceptance. As many as 28 respondents from PNG, 24 from Samoa, and 17 from Fiji stated that they felt as though they could express their gender identity and expression in their religious and spiritual community.

This is very promising as religious institutions play a central role in Pacific communities in fostering acceptance and erasing discrimination in the broader society.

Conclusion / Historically, the Pacific has been neglected and underinvested in the areas of research and programmes. Within the LGBT space in the region, it is only recently that trans-led groups have emerged as a separate entity from the umbrella groups for LGBT, MSM and gay men's movement.

27 "Fact Sheet: Pacific Islanders and Domestic & Sexual Violence," Asia Pacific Institute on Gender-based Violence, 2018, <https://s3.amazonaws.com/gbv-wp-uploads/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/12205452/DVFactSheet-Pacific-Islander-Apr-2018-formatted-2019.pdf>.

The data in this report begins to reveal the lived realities of trans and gender diverse people in Fiji, Samoa, and PNG, research on which thus far has been very limited.

"AT THE CORE OF THIS GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE ARE RIGID BINARY GENDER NORMS IMPOSED BY CONSERVATIVE RELIGIOUS BELIEFS ON A POPULATION THAT HAS HIGH LEVELS OF POVERTY AND ILLITERACY."

The findings highlight a diverse and complex population of trans and gender diverse people across the Pacific. There are

some similarities across the three countries, Fiji, Samoa, and PNG, in terms of the lack of legal protections, safeguards, and gender-affirming services, and the discrimination trans and gender diverse people experience in education, health care, and employment settings. Yet, the data also indicates differences in the experience of trans and gender diverse communities in the three countries. For instance, the respondents in PNG reported higher levels of access to HIV services, while those in Samoa reported fewer interactions with law enforcement and comparatively positive experiences in employment and education settings. The high levels of violence

experienced by trans and gender diverse people as well as by cisgender women in PNG is a matter of concern. Rooted in gender inequality,²⁷ this kind of violence, as indicated by the data, impacts all aspects of trans and gender diverse people's lives in the three countries, both in the private and the public sphere, from their relationships with partners and family to their experiences in education, health care, law enforcement, and employment settings. At the core of this gender-based violence are rigid binary gender norms imposed by conservative religious beliefs on a population that has high levels of poverty and illiteracy and is largely rural and geographically dispersed, with





limited access to education and other services.

strong entry point to reducing societal stigma and discrimination.

"THIS RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS THE NEED TO FURTHER EXPLORE THE RESILIENCE OF TRANS AND GENDER DIVERSE COMMUNITIES IN THE PACIFIC."

Positively, the findings highlight that alongside negative experiences, there is some level of acceptance, with respondents across the three countries citing families, churches, and schools that enabled them to feel that trans and gender diverse people have a cultural or traditional role to play in society. Several respondents from Fiji and Samoa, in particular, spoke about the support they received both in their households and

at church. The qualitative responses that talk about the church as a positive and accepting environment where the respondents could be themselves underline the important role played by some churches in providing a safe and affirming environment for trans and gender diverse people. Given the highly regarded leadership positions religious leaders hold in the Pacific, acceptance of trans and gender diverse people by religious institutions can be a

This research only begins to illustrate the support as well as the transphobia experienced by trans and gender diverse communities in PNG, Samoa, and Fiji. It highlights the need to further explore the resilience of trans and gender diverse communities in the Pacific and identifies the protective mechanisms that enable them to advocate for greater protection under the law. Yet fundamentally, the data illustrates that stigma, discrimination, human rights violations, and violence continue to harm trans and gender diverse populations in all facets of society, family and friends, education, employment, and the law.

Recommendations / These recommendations are not exhaustive but provide a framework to build on, offering an avenue for sharing the positive experiences across countries to support good practices and programming.

1.0

Reduce and or eliminate stigma and discrimination

Stigma and discrimination are leading causes of violence against trans and gender diverse people in the Pacific. Reducing stigma against trans people through awareness is essential for accepting that gender diversity and expression that does not conform to cisgender norms is not a result of a disease, condition, or disorder. This awareness can be fostered by following the below recommendations.

1.1

Conduct regional and national consultations

with government bodies, national human rights institutions, members of civil society, the UN, INGOs, representatives from the private sector, and trans and gender diverse organisations to increase understanding of the issues affecting trans and gender diverse populations. This should include ensuring government ministers, policymakers, and decision-making leaders have an understanding of the government's obligations to honour human rights treaties and conventions, understand how they apply to trans and diverse people, and establish and uphold commitments to protect trans and gender diverse people from transphobia in every form.

1.2

Promote dialogue

(at regional and national levels) with faith-based organisations to affirm and nurture the dignity of trans and gender diverse people in spiritual and faith-based communities, given the importance of religion in Pacific societies, including trans and gender diverse communities. Additionally, reinforce the universality of human rights, including the relationship between freedom from discrimination and freedom of religion, belief, and inclusion.

1.3

Develop mainstream and targeted initiatives in educational institutions

from primary and secondary to tertiary levels to ensure schools are safe and supportive learning environments for all trans and gender diverse students.

1.4

Work in partnership

with NGOs, civil society, faith-based organisations, and CBOs working in the community to change negative mental attitudes and behaviours towards trans and gender diverse people.

2.0

Increase access to and availability and Quality of trans-competent health care

Access to quality and affordable health care free from stigma and discrimination is a fundamental human right afforded to all. Increasing access to quality health care for trans and gender diverse people and training health service providers on the needs of trans and gender diverse people is crucial. The following are recommendations for improving trans and gender diverse people's equal and unequivocal access to health care.

2.1

Provide training to healthcare providers

on trans-competence practices. This includes rights-based, attitudinal, and sensitisation training on the right to health care. The training should also involve increasing healthcare providers' knowledge of the efficacy and legality of gender-affirming health services in their country to allay their reluctance to provide or facilitate the community's access to medically necessary health services.

2.2

Increase health literacy

and understanding of healthcare rights among trans and gender diverse people to enable themselves to understand and advocate for their mental and physical health.

2.3

Map sensitised and quality healthcare professionals and services providing quality care for trans and gender diverse populations

to ensure the community is aware of supportive services. Utilise these services and professionals as changemakers in the healthcare community to improve understanding of and access to trans-competent clinical and support services.

2.4

Build the capacity

of trans and gender diverse CBOs and community-friendly NGOs to provide healthcare support, referrals, and information, especially around gender-affirming services, including hormone therapy for those considering transitioning.

2.5

Build awareness and capacity of services

focused on HIV and other STIs to strengthen the integration of gender-affirming health services (where possible) and information for trans and gender diverse people.

2.5

Advocate for inclusion

of trans health in the development or updating of various health policies, especially those pertaining to sexual and reproductive health.

3.0

Strengthen access to justice and legal systems

The lack of legal gender recognition allows for human rights violations to be perpetrated against trans and gender diverse people with impunity since the community has limited opportunities for justice or recourse. Without legal recognition, the trans and gender diverse community will continue to suffer from violence and have their rights abused. Following are the recommendations for steps to be taken to address this issue.

3.1

Invest in and sustain advocacy

for legal gender recognition in countries where it is currently absent from the legal framework. Promote awareness of the importance of social and legal gender recognition and its links to the realisation of other human rights.

3.2

Effectively investigate, prosecute, and punish

all forms of violence based on someone's gender identity and/or expression (as well as sexual orientation), ensuring that victims are provided with appropriate support, remedies, and redress.

3.3

Ensure legal protection under anti-discrimination provisions

for trans and gender diverse people and audit other existing or proposed laws to ensure they protect trans and gender diverse people regardless of their gender identity, gender expression, or sex.

3.4

Conduct human rights training sessions

with legal and human rights organisations and the police and other law enforcement agencies to reinforce their understanding of the rights of trans and gender diverse people. This includes attitudinal sensitisation training to ensure equal treatment and access to legal and justice mechanisms.

4.0

Build the capacity of trans and gender diverse organisations

Building organisational leadership and capacity will be essential to ensuring robust, self-reliant, and resilient trans movements to advocate for the fulfilment of fundamental human rights. Recommendations for achieving the same are provided below.

4.1

Continue investment

in trans and gender diverse organisations to strengthen governance and financial processes to improve and increase access to funding and implement much-needed community-led advocacy initiatives and programmes.

4.2

Foster linkages

between different organisations working on trans-sensitive human rights, gender equality, and women's rights to increase the exchange of ideas, resources, and learnings and share best practices on key issues such as gender-based violence, access to legal and health services, etc.

4.3

Provide opportunities for south-south learning

between trans and gender diverse activists around the world and within the Pacific to share similar experiences and learn from each other about implementing programmes in similarly hostile environments.

4.4

Invest in training trans and gender diverse groups

to document human rights mechanisms and utilize regional and international human rights mechanisms to hold national duty bearers to account for their commitments to human rights treaties.

5.0

Continue research to understand the priorities and needs of trans and gender diverse people in the Pacific

There is a lack of information and research around the experiences of trans and gender diverse people, particularly in the Pacific. This, in turn, highlights the lack of services and programmes required to respond to the needs and priorities of trans and gender diverse people. Further information in key areas can bridge this gap.

5.1

Undertake further research

on the impact of gender-based violence on trans and gender diverse people (including trans men and gender-nonconforming people who were assigned female at birth), plan interventions required to reduce such violence, and support those affected by it.

5.1

Document the vulnerability

of trans and gender-nonconforming children and youth to bullying. Explicitly address their rights and the schools' obligations to establish effective internal and external complaint and support mechanisms for those who are harassed or bullied within education institutions.

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ANNEX 1: Research Questionnaire (with informed consent)

Fiji Link: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PqcAPIBAZbea4xMBXCx4JVc_wkUmH9Gb/view?usp=sharing

Samoa Link: https://drive.google.com/file/d/18pXnxO_PNGjoYp8VZmfl2EdUsNb2XvJJ/view?usp=sharing

PNG Link: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1v5pR2PEBc9p-kN3Hzm3RREJGioWQL0Mb/view?usp=sharing>

ANNEX 2: Information Sheet

Fiji Link: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1L4mahpM9zgp2lwiDXWJj_LUkcC30S8Sp/view?usp=sharing

Samoa Link: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/11FtN5kw9uyTF5vD7-5vrXwaabYalKGzs/view?usp=sharing>

PNG Link: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1KceU83ZEHjbHOutKKta_JPfGFPIXYaqj/view?usp=sharing

ANNEX 3: List of Professions

Data can be requested.

The Asia Pacific Transgender Network

Email: hello@weareaptn.org **Website:** www.weareaptn.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/WeAreAPTN

Instagram: www.instagram.com/weareaptn

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/WeAreAPTN>

LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/company/weareaptn

