

Independent Evaluation of Inclusive  
Governance of Natural Resources for Greater  
Social Cohesion in Solomon Islands

# EVALUATION REPORT

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

<b>BLC</b>	(Parliament's) Bill and Legislation Committee
<b>FGD</b>	Focus Group Discussions
<b>IGNR</b>	Inclusive Governance of Natural Resources for greater social cohesion in Solomon Islands
<b>ILO</b>	International Labor Organization (UN agency)
<b>KIIs</b>	Key Informant Interviews
<b>MLHS</b>	Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey
<b>MTDP</b>	(The Solomon Islands) Medium Term Development Plan
<b>MTGPEA</b>	Ministry of Traditional Governance, Peace, and Ecclesiastical Affairs
<b>MWYCFA</b>	Ministry of Women, Youth, Children, and Family Affairs
<b>NDS</b>	National Development Strategy (2016-2035)
<b>NRMCs</b>	Natural Resource Management Committees
<b>NYC</b>	National Youth Council
<b>NYP</b>	National Youth Policy
<b>OECD - DAC</b>	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development – Development Assistance Committee
<b>OMPC</b>	Office of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
<b>PBF</b>	(UN Secretary-General's) Peacebuilding Fund
<b>PMO</b>	Prime Minister Office
<b>PWDs</b>	Persons with Disabilities
<b>PWC</b>	Provincial Women Caucuses
<b>PYCs</b>	Provincial Youth Caucuses
<b>SDGs</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>SIs</b>	Solomon Islands
<b>SPITSI</b>	Supporting Peaceful and Inclusive Transition in Solomon Islands
<b>TGB</b>	Traditional Governance and Customs Facilitation Bill (Also referred as TGCFB)
<b>TRC</b>	The Solomon Islands Truth and Reconciliation Commission
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UN Women</b>	The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality
<b>VAWG</b>	Violence against women and girls
<b>YECSI</b>	Young Entrepreneurs Council in Solomon Islands
<b>YPS</b>	Youth, Peace and Security

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Introduction

The project “Inclusive Governance of Natural Resources (IGNR) for greater social cohesion in the Solomon Islands” was launched in December 2019. The overall aim of the IGNR project was to address the cause of the conflict related to the ownership and governance of land and natural resources. The conflict assessments<sup>1</sup> that informed the design of IGNR identified the following core issues giving rise to the Tensions and subsequent episodes of violence: land conflict; the clash between traditional and non-traditional authority structures; lack of access to government services, public resources and information; meagre livelihood opportunities; and disruptions in traditional and non-traditional law enforcement. The absence of a tenable land and resource management policy and legislative framework has aggravated the situation because people’s participation in decision-making platforms is minimal, and women and youth remain on the margins.

The IGNR project worked in support of the Government of Solomon Islands (SIs) and at policy, institutional, and grassroots levels to deliver these two overarching results:

- Outcome 1. The Government is equipped with analyses, laws, policies and frameworks on land and natural resource management which are inclusive and reflective of customary governance.
- Outcome 2. Communities adversely affected by land and natural resource mismanagement, including VAWG participate more strongly in decisions on land and natural resources.

Among other things, these two objectives coincided with the actions identified and recommended by the “Bills and Legislation Committee” of the National Parliament of the Solomon Islands to address the shortcomings in the Traditional Governance and Customs Facilitation Bill (TGB) 2018. Therefore, the IGNR project benefited from strong political ownership, bureaucratic and institutional support, and a welcomed response from the communities.

### Evaluation objective and methodology

UNDP and UN Women commissioned this summative, external evaluation of the IGNR project to determine the extent to which anticipated outputs were achieved and to gain a credible, evidence-based, and independent understanding of the contribution and attribution of this project towards inclusive policy, customary laws and governance of land and natural resources. Specifically, the objective of the IGNR project evaluation was to:

- Provide an independent, objective assessment on the relevancy, cohesion, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the project; and,
- Provide key insights, lessons learned, and recommendations to inform future initiatives and investments around peacebuilding and social cohesion in the Solomon Islands.

The IGNR project results’ framework reflects more qualitative, process-oriented results; therefore, the evaluation focused on qualitative approaches such as qualitative content analysis and narrative analysis to analyze primary and secondary data. Specifically, the evaluation involved:

- Literature review – using secondary data, to identify and document the key political, economic, and social context, problem areas, activities and intervention strategy(ies), Theory of Change, key results and any changes at the output, outcome and impact levels. The literature review involved but was not limited to, the review of key project documents, internal and external assessment(s),

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<sup>1</sup> UNDP Conflict Development Analysis REPORT Solomon, June 2019

key policy and government documents, and all the project supported legislations, policies and administrative systems and processes.

- Primary data collection – using key informant interviews (11) and focus group discussions (02), to collect the data and evidence, analyze results and make evidence-based judgements on the evaluation questions and against project relevance, cohesion, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. The primary data also helped to substantiate the findings of the literature review. This involved interviews and group discussions with key government counterparts, officials of the UN (UNDP, UN-Women), natural resource management groups, tribal leaders, etc.

## Key findings and recommendations

Key findings and recommendations of the evaluation are:

### Relevance

Overall, the IGNR project design, interventions and implementation approaches were highly relevant to the contextual challenges faced by youth and women in the Solomon Islands. The key government officials, as well as the tribal communities, confirmed that the IGNR project directly responded to the causes of actual or potential conflicts, such as the deficient legislative frameworks, inequitable use of land and natural resources, and the marginalization of women and young people<sup>2</sup>. In addition, the IGNR project was well aligned with the strategic priorities of the UN Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund and the Solomon Islands' NDS Medium Term Strategy (MTS). The project was uniquely designed to work with both: the demand-side representing women, youth, church, tribal leaders, and broader communities; and the supply-side representing policymakers, legislators and duty bearers to ensure inclusive, robust and well-informed legislative and institutional frameworks for more productive, inclusive and sustainable use of land and natural resources.

### Key findings and recommendations

- The IGNR project design phase consultations were vital in securing the buy-in of technical assistance at the political and administrative levels. The project design phase consultations enhanced the alignment, ownership, and sense of shared responsibility towards the project objective of inclusive governance of natural resources for social cohesion in the Solomon Islands. It also increased the understanding of key government counterparts on the project's logic model, its approaches, and drivers of change. It is, therefore, a 'best practice' that should be replicated across all PBF-funded projects.
- **The project interventions adequately considered the inclusion of women, girls, and young people in the decision-making of rights and benefits from customary lands and natural resources.** Gender equality is a stated priority of the Government of Solomon Islands<sup>3</sup>, yet the UNDP conflict analysis states marginalization of women and girls as one of the most recognizable peacebuilding gaps in the Solomon Islands. The project made a concerted effort towards (i)

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<sup>2</sup> The negative structural and cultural arrangements that deny women and youth full rights and decision-making authority in both the matrilineal and patrilineal guardianship of land continues to marginalize large sections of Solomon Islands society, fomenting conflict and unrest. Even in matrilineal societies the role of women, who have traditionally been strong as decision makers and determining inheritance rights to land, has been eroded with the rapid modernisation of Solomon Islands society. It is also argued that the lack of youth and women's participation in national parliaments and decision-making positions also leads to their marginalisation in accessing land resources and being part of the mechanisms which govern access to such resources.

<sup>3</sup><https://solomons.gov.sb/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/National-Gender-Equality-and-Womens-Development-Policy-2016-2020.pdf>

gender-responsive policies such as the revised TGB, and the Customary Land Record Act/Regulations; (ii) institutionalizing and mainstreaming women and youth in decision-making structures through revitalization and strengthening of provincial youth councils and women caucuses and establishment of customary landholding groups; and (iii) empowerment of women and girls by understanding policies, practices and norms that protects them from violence and other form of exploitation. Almost 100% of the project activities were analyzed as gender-response initiatives; with an increasing focus on maximizing the participation of and benefit to women, girls and young people in the land and natural resource management process.

## Coherence

Interviews with key stakeholders and a review of project-related documents established that the IGNR project remained coherent with internal and external initiatives, and this has been achieved due to: (i) the effective collaboration of UNDP and UN Women for strengthening the supply side and demand side of the IGNR project, which led to increased engagement, collaboration, and trust of citizens on the Government of Solomon Islands and its commitment towards inclusive governance of land and natural resources; (ii) the design of the IGNR's result framework with two outcomes and subsequent outputs that were logical to cover the wider gaps and areas of improvement in policy, institutional and community-level governance of land and natural resources; and (iii) the project's interventions that were prudently built on the effects and outcomes of previous PBF project. The IGNR project has also effectively leveraged existing structures such as the national youth council (NYC), provincial youth councils, provincial women caucuses, and their community-based structures to strengthen the engagement of women and youth in traditional governance of land and natural resources. Almost all respondents from the key government ministries appreciated UNDP and UN Women's collaborative approach to delivering project interventions.

### Key findings and recommendations

- The modernization of Solomon Islands society, rapid urbanization, the influx of private investments, gradual distortion of customary laws and traditional practices, and exclusion of women and youth from decision-making related to land and natural resource management have increased the number of disputes and related incidents of violence in the Solomon Islands. The courts are clogged with cases of land disputes. The amendment to the Traditional Governance Bill 2018 is meant to have some degree of institutionalization, management and regulation of customary laws related to land and natural resources. However, it appears that the amendment to the TGB would take time as it requires some critical processes and steps to be completed before agreement and enactment of the revised Bill. In the interim period, the IGNR project could have supported the Government of SI in some administrative and process level improvements in the Land and Titles Acts and related sub-legislations to provide legitimate mechanisms of dispute resolutions so as to reduce the workload of courts. Learning from this experience, it is important for PBF projects, like IGNR, to remain strategic, agile and flexible to achieve the desired results.

## Efficiency

The IGNR project mostly remained efficient, as the project successfully delivered over 80% of its planned interventions and outputs within available resources and timelines. Out of 10 output indicators, the project exceeded targets against two indicators, met targets against four indicators, and partially achieved the targets on the remaining four indicators. One of the factors for the delayed implementation of around 40% of the project activities and corresponding results was the short duration of the IGNR project, given the high ambition to support and influence complex policy, institutional and community-level reforms related to the traditional system of land and natural resource management. In addition, weak project management systems such as HR deployment, monitoring and evaluation, risk management, learning and adaptive programming also contributed to the delay in implementation of the some of the project activities.

### Key findings and recommendations

- The technical assistance projects, such as the IGNR project, offer a higher value for money (in terms of efficiency, effectiveness, and cost-effectiveness) for the PBF's investments. The technical assistance to the Government of SI has increased outreach, influence, and impact of the PBF project at policy, institutional and community levels. Also, investing in the government's capacity warrants sustainability of results. It is therefore recommended that the PBF may consider more of these TA initiatives to enable the government of SI to adhere to its policy commitments towards a peaceful and prosperous Solomon Islands.
- Technical assistance initiatives such as the IGNR project require the shared responsibility of implementing partners and government counterparts to ensure successful delivery and culmination of results. In practice, this means that the project results framework(s) is clearly defined in terms of (i) responsibility for delivering the results; and (ii) the risks and assumptions which can positively or negatively influence the achievement of results. Similarly, the progress against results must be discussed in joint meetings with all those who are responsible for the delivery of project activities. The establishment of the Project Board is a good practice to institute and formalize this process; however, on the IGNR project, the members of the Project Board were not effectively engaged to perform this role, which led to delayed implementation of some of the activities and corresponding results. It is therefore highly recommended that the establishment and regular functioning of the Project Board must be ensured on all PBF's funded projects.
- In terms of project management, it is important to ensure effective/sustained deployment of core, project management and delivery teams. The recommendation is particularly in the context of the IGNR project, which suffered from a lack of staffing for the project manager, deputy project manager, and M&E roles. UNDP and UN Women, as PBF partners, may develop their internal management and HR mechanism to ensure the continuity of key roles on the project. This might include using technical resources from a pool of qualified experts or deploying staff from other projects.
- The IGNR project was assessed and classified as a 'high-risk initiative'. Nonetheless, the IGNR project followed a highly cautious approach, especially while intervening at the policy/legislative level. The project deliberately avoided any involvement in the drafting of amendments to the TGB, Customary Land Records Act/ Regulations and the by-laws of customary landholding groups. Considering the existing capacity of the related ministries such as MTGPEA, MLHS, etc., it is unclear if the Government of SI would be able to use the inputs being produced by the IGNR project to make amendments to the customary laws and traditional government systems. Considering this learning, the future PBF projects and the UNDP and UN Women need to consider the following for projects that are political, high-profile, and critical in nature: (i) assess risk rating, define what it means for PBF and its partners, and clarify the extent to which the PBF and its partners are willing to take the risk. Also, the project results framework should include a column to highlight the "risks and assumptions" against results areas and targets. The risk management and mitigation framework should also be updated/ maintained on a regular basis; (ii) undertake regular political economy analysis (PEA) to identify/document conditions, actors, and interests that are in favour of the project interventions and/or otherwise. It is also important to use PEA to inform the project's stakeholder engagement and influencing strategies i.e. how to leverage conditions, actors and interests that are in favor, and how to navigate those who are not in favor; and (iii) document learning to inform course correction and adaptive programming. On a project which is highly complex, political, and dynamic – like the IGNR, this function should be institutionalized as part of the project's monitoring and evaluation and project management. Adaptive programming also requires the project (design) to be highly flexible and responsive to emerging contexts, political priorities, opportunities, and entry points. In a nutshell, a high-risk project requires greater risk appetite, thinking and working political and a more proactive approach to learning and adaptive programming.
- **More than 50% of women's participation in all project activities reflects a major achievement of the IGNR project in the context of the Solomon Islands and is likely to have**



**positive impact on the women’s participation in decision making and access and control over land and natural resources.** The SI Parliament’s BLC withdrew the draft Bill from consideration due to the absence of a comprehensive consultation process, one that should have been inclusive of marginalized groups of persons that would be significantly impacted by the proposed legislation, including women. Therefore, ensuring representation of women in consultations on all policy matters such as the TGB, Customary Land Records Act/ Regulations, by-laws of customary landholding groups, etc. was a must. It was a tough challenge, given the short duration of the project as meaningful engagement with women and other marginalized groups required awareness/briefing of women and other members of the community before they could meaningfully contribute to raising their concerns and aspirations. Both the UNDP and the UN Women have invested – through earlier PBF initiatives and otherwise, in establishing/strengthening institutional and community level structures such as provincial youth councils, provincial women caucuses which were effectively engaged to mobilize women, youth and wider communities in the awareness raising and consultation process. The participation of women, youth, church, tribal leaders, etc. have led to over 50 recommendations along on the TGB, and similarly on other legislative and policy matters which if incorporated will lead to structural change in the society of Solomon Islands, with regained role of women and youth in decision-making on land, natural resources, and wider peacebuilding measures.

### Effectiveness and ToC

The interviews and focus group discussions with key government officials, community leaders and members of the customary landholding groups suggest that the IGNR project was largely effective in generating results at the outcome level. The ToC logic model, drivers of change and related assumptions remained/ proved valid during the life of the project and based on the trajectory of change; however, there are still some conditions (relating to political will and institutional capacity of the Government of SI) which need to be met for the ultimate change to happen. The IGNR project played a catalytic role in generating the momentum for traditional governance reforms, including legislative arrangements, the land recording process, customary landholding groups, and effective and sustainable use of land and natural resources. Among all interventions, the recording of customary lands is being perceived as the most promising and high-impact intervention by the tribal leaders/ customary landholding groups. There is also strong, though initial, evidence that suggests women’s regained role in decision-making and access and control over land and natural resources. The key government officials, as well as the tribal leaders, have alluded to a number of examples and impressions which speak about the unintended, yet positive, potential or realized impact of the IGNR project.

### Key findings and recommendations

- For a technical assistance project, it is important to gauge the ‘degree to which institutional capacity of government counterpart ministries/institutions is built to adopt, institutionalize and scale-up the project interventions and related reforms’. Since this has not been defined as a result indicator within the IGNR’s results framework, it is unclear if the Government of Solomon Island and its relevant ministries will be able to complete the next steps in the process towards a more robust, inclusive, and informed system of traditional governance relating to land and natural resources.
- After realizing that there are diverse, somewhat opposing views on the definition, scope and extent of institutionalization, regulation and management of traditional governance system; the IGNR project might have adapted to shift the focus towards high-impact, low-risk activities such as the establishment of inclusive customary landholding groups and support to MLHS in the recording of customary lands. The adaptive programming, as an approach, should have been more practically used to remain relevant, efficient and results focused. The IGNR project has documented the learnings quite regularly as part of its bi-annual and annual reporting; however, there is little or no

mention of how the project responded to these learning. Through a better understanding of the political-economy situation, stakeholders and their incentives, the IGNR project could have better managed the risk associated with these policy-level interventions.

### Impact and sustainability

The IGNR project design featured the sustainability of results, especially the technical assistance by the project was geared towards enabling and equipping the Government of Solomon Islands and relevant ministries in strengthening engagement with the citizens. The interviews with key government officials confirmed that over 60% of the policy, institutional, administrative and process reforms re- traditional governance and management of land and natural resources have been somewhat institutionalized, sustained and scaled up by the respective ministries of Solomon Islands. Despite political will and institutional level commitment, the Government of SI and its ministries/institutions lack financial resources as well as technical capabilities to ensure the continuation of the remaining initiatives to strengthen the traditional governance system.

### Key findings and recommendations

- To ensure the best value for money for IGNR investments in the traditional governance system of the Solomon Islands, a second phase of the project is highly recommended. Most of the outputs are delivered during the life of the IGNR project; however, it is not enough to assume that these outputs will lead to changes at the outcome and impact level. The output level results indicate the scope and quality of interventions or early results delivered by the project; however, there is a need for continued engagement and support to realize the ultimate results. It is therefore recommended that the second phase of the IGNR project should be launched, without delay and interruption, to ensure the continuity of support to the government in addressing issues of land and natural resources for peacebuilding and social cohesion in the Solomon Islands.
- The Government of the Solomon Islands may explore the possibility of regional and international partnerships for land and natural resource management reforms. One way of securing new partnerships is to organize land summits and work towards the prospects of a regional treaty organisation of Melanesian countries on land rights of indigenous people with proposed initiatives of land banks, protecting women's right to land, climate action and climate justice for customary landholding groups etc. It is highly likely that several such initiatives may find development partners and financiers from across the region and the world. This recommendation is particularly for the Government of SI to mobilize additional technical and financial assistance to continue the process of strengthening the traditional governance of land and natural resources.

## SECTION 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. About the IGNR Project

#### Introduction

The IGNR project (Dec'2019 – Jan'2022) was a technical assistance initiative implemented by UNDP and UN-Women with the financial assistance of the UN Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund (PBF). It was a 25-month initiative, worth \$2.049 million, with an aim to reduce actual or potential conflicts triggered by deficient legislative frameworks, private interests, and lack of inclusivity with regard to the provision of the use of land and natural resources in the Solomon Islands.

The IGNR had two overarching results:

- Outcome 1. The Government is equipped with analyses, laws, policies and frameworks on land and natural resource management which are inclusive and reflective of customary governance.
- Outcome 2. Communities adversely affected by land and natural resource mismanagement including VAWG participate more strongly in decisions on land and natural resources.

To achieve these objectives, the project worked in support of government counterparts such as the Ministry of Traditional Governance, Peace and Ecclesiastical Affairs (MTGPEA), Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs (MWYCFA), Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey (MLHS), Provincial Governments of Malaita, Choiseul, Guadalcanal and Western, Chambers of Commerce, National Youth Council, Provincial Women's Caucuses and Youth Caucuses and the Office of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (OMPC).

#### Intervention design and activities

The IGNR project in its scope and ambition worked at multiple levels, i.e., policy, institutional and grassroots levels to strengthen legislation, and institutional and community level arrangements regarding land and natural resource management in the Solomon Islands. The project did this by:



Figure 1. Project design and intervention focus

All these intervention levels were aimed at building cohesion in the policy and administrative function of the government around land and natural resource management, thereby mitigating any potential risk of grievance, exclusion or exploitation that could potentially lead to conflict and violence in the Solomon Islands.

The **headline interventions** delivered by the project were:

- Consultations with communities, particularly women and youth, on the Traditional Governance and Customs Facilitation Bill, 2018 and compilation and submission of over fifty (50) gender responsive and inclusive recommendations to the MTGPEA to inform the drafting instruction of the revised bill.

Consultation process	Five consultation meetings	223 women representatives from all nine provinces, including Honiara	Four generalized recommendations on the aims and structure of the Bill, and 48 proposed amendments on the TGCFB.	Proposed inclusion of women in the governance, management and decision-making processes related to traditional governance, land and natural resource management.
Input into TGB 2018	Consultations held; recommendations compiled	Submitted to the MTGEA, widely accepted. Shared with legislative drafting office within the ministry	Consulted the judiciary, the Bar Associations. Further submitted to Attorney General.	Amendment to the TGB 2018, and other related Act/regulations.

Figure 2. Support on TGB 2018

- Consultations with communities on the by-laws of customary landholding groups in three provinces and development of a draft policy paper. Among other things, the draft policy paper recommends the development of a gender-sensitive framework (by-laws) for incorporation in the membership of as customary landholding groups (often referred as community-level resource management committees) with 50% of women’s representation in such committees.

<p>Customary land recording under the <i>Customary Land Records Act [Cap 132]</i> commenced in 2017; however, encountered several challenges including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The way by which tribal meetings were conducted was not inclusive of all members of the land holding group,</li> <li>• There was no process for dismissal of customary landholding group representatives in the event of a breach of duties. For example, misappropriation of tribal royalties,</li> <li>• There are low numbers of women representatives on customary land committees,</li> <li>• No prior informed consent of tribal groups for decisions made by their traditional leaders, and</li> <li>• No clear guidance for equitable benefit-sharing ensuing from developments on customary land</li> </ul>
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Figure 3. Customary Land Records Act – Critical Gaps

- Anthropological study to inform discussions on and the content of the TGB by exploring and documenting the traditional governance systems, structures and practices that exist within the Solomon Islands, including traditional and judicial enforcement mechanisms relating to land and natural resource management.
- Technical and outreach support to the MLHS in undertaking consultations (along with the consultations on the TGB) and producing the drafting instructions on proposed amendments for the Customary Land Records Act and the Customary Land Records Regulations 2017 to make it a mandatory requirement for landholding groups to register themselves as a legal entity as part of the land recording process.

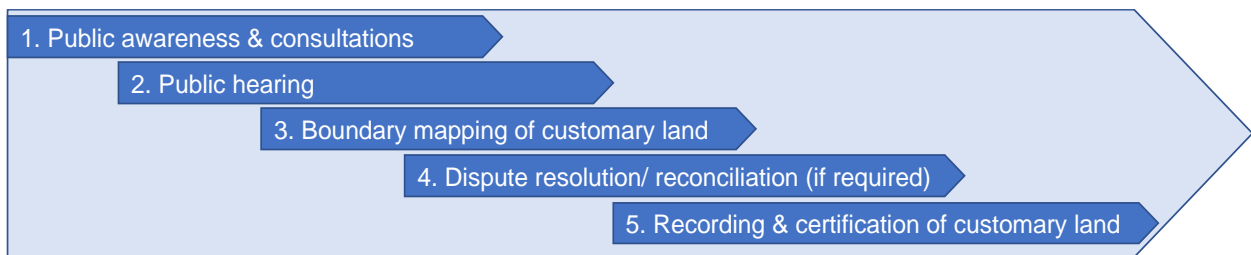


Figure 4. Land recording process

- Technical assistance to MLHS (land recording unit) in the recording of five (05) customary land titles through a community-led consultative process in three target provinces. In addition, it resolved three (03) land and natural resources related to community level disputes/ grievances in Malaita, the Western Province and Guadalcanal Province.

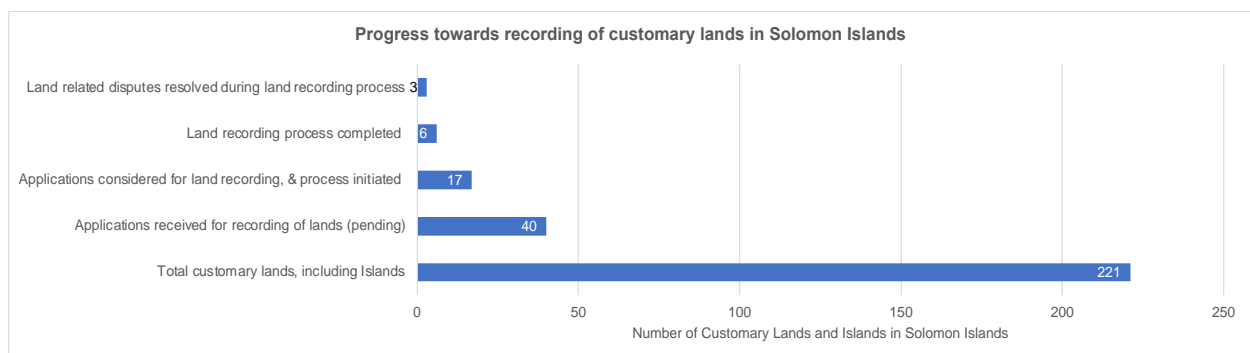


Figure 5. Progress towards the recording of customary lands

- Support to communities, mainly customary landholding groups, in identification of three (03) pilot businesses – referred as sustainable business ideas, which were later discussed during the “Land forum – a dialogue/workshop” held on 26-28 October 2021.
- Land Forum, 26-28 October, wherein participating women discussed the guidelines for making recorded customary land accessible. Majority of these women were representatives of the 5 recorded customary landholding groups from Malaita, Guadalcanal, and Western Provinces.
- Awareness sessions to increase the awareness of women and girls on laws and policies that protect women and girls from VAWG.
- Revitalization of four (04) Provincial Youth Councils, as platforms to allow young people to get involved in decision-making processes on governance and management of natural resources and peacebuilding at provincial and national levels. Initial planning meetings were already held between the National Youth Congress and Youth Caucus with the Provincial Youth Divisions to develop an awareness and training framework on policies and regulations governing national resource management.

Through these and other related supporting interventions, the IGNR project focused on addressing some of the intrinsic weaknesses in the legislative framework, institutional capacities, and traditional and customary governance of lands and natural resources. The redressal of these concerns is likely to reduce the local disputes relating to land and natural resource management and increase the probability of effective and sustainable use of these land and natural resources, which will further increase the employment and income generating activities for local communities, including young boys and girls.

## Demographic focus and geographical coverage

The IGRN project was a technical assistance initiative with a focus on working with the Government of the Solomon Islands and its ministries in the capital city of Honiara. At the sub-national level, the

Project's geographic focus was on areas having a high risk of potential conflict, i.e. Guadalcanal, Provinces of Choiseul, Malaita, and Western.

- **Demographically**, the project worked with women, young people, church, and tribal leaders in their individual capacity as well as part of the customary landholding groups to strengthen their participation in customary laws, policies and practices related to land and natural resource management and to raise awareness of women and girls on gender-based violence.
- **Geographically**, the project worked with national and sub-national governments and communities in the Capital Honiara, Guadalcanal and the Provinces of Choiseul, Malaita, and Western.

## Project resources

The **total budget of the project was \$ 2.49 million**, which included:

- **\$1.280 million as UNDP share**, with lead responsibility to design, manage, monitor, and coordinate the IGNR project. In terms of delivery, UNDP was responsible for providing direct technical assistance to the Ministry of Traditional Governance, Peace and Ecclesiastical Affairs (MTGPEA), Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey (MLHS), Provincial Governments of Malaita, Choiseul, Guadalcanal and Western, National Youth Council, Provincial Youth Caucuses and the Office of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (OMPC) on policy, legislation and administration of customary lands and natural resources.
- **\$0.769 million as UN Women share**, as a consortium partner with the responsibility to strengthen the participation of women, young people, and wider communities – through direct outreach as well as by leveraging platforms such as Provincial Women's Caucuses and Youth Caucuses – in the consultations on customary laws, by-laws relating to land and natural resource management and by increasing awareness on issues such as gender-based violence.

## Key stakeholders and partnerships

The **IGNR project was a technical assistance initiative for the Government of Solomon Islands**; therefore, it worked in support of and close collaboration with all the relevant national, and sub-national level ministries and government institutions/ departments. Key collaboration and strategic engagements were:

- **National and sub-national level governments:** These include the Ministry of Traditional Governance, Peace and Ecclesiastical Affairs (MTGPEA), Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs (MWYCFA), Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey (MLHS), Provincial Governments of Malaita, Choiseul, Guadalcanal and Western, Chambers of Commerce, National Youth Council, Provincial Women's Caucuses and Youth Caucuses and the Office of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (OMPC).
- **Implementing partners:** UNDP and UN Women were the key implementing partners on the IGNR project.

## Major contextual and operational challenges

The IGNR project was a time-bound, 25-month initiative with a specific mandate to deliver technical assistance to the Government of the Solomon Islands on laws, policies, and institutional arrangements governing customary lands and natural resources. The project, among other things, was designed to support the implementation of actions identified and recommended by the "Bills and Legislative Committee" of the National Parliament of the Solomon Islands to address the shortcomings in the Traditional Governance and Customs Facilitation Bill (TGB) 2018. Some of the key factors that had a direct implication on the delivery of the activities and corresponding results of the IGNR project were:

- **Firstly, the IGNR's project design, intervention plan and results framework were overambitious, somewhat underestimating the complexities of traditional governance of**

**land and natural resources management.** For example. The IGNR project approached the shift towards institutionalization, management and regulation of customary laws re- land and natural resources in light of the remarks and recommendations of the SIs Parliament's Bill and Legislation Committee, without anticipating the diverged viewpoints of key stakeholders, including the Office of the Prime Minister; the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey (MLHS); the Ministry of Traditional Governance, Peace and Ecclesiastical Affairs (MTGPEA) and the Members of the Parliament on the approach and extend to which customary laws governing land and natural resources need to be institutionalized and regulated. Similarly, the anthropological research study took more time than expected because of the inherent complexity such as diversity in customs relating to land and natural resource management: the matrilineal and patrilineal systems of landholding; diversity across over 200 customary lands and 23 Islands; inadequate communication and transportation system; the role of multiple stakeholders and their interests and incentives; etc. The delay in the completion of research (till Jun'22) was one of the factors that slowed the progress towards amendment in the TGB. Similarly, the IGNR project team and their counterparts in the respective ministries assumed that the process of the consultations with women, young people, tribal leaders, and the church would be completed by June 2020; however, due to COVID-19 and related travel restrictions, the consultations in 9 localities completed with a delay of one year in May 2021. On the other hand, the MTGPEA could not extend these consultations to the village and council level due to the limited technical, financial, and human resource capacity. All these examples reflect that the risks and assumptions, especially at the strategic and operational level, were not adequately identified, managed, and mitigated during the project's life.

- Secondly, the downward reappropriation of budgets (i.e., budgetary cuts) of relevant government ministries by the Government of Solomon Islands curtailed the counterpart's ability to deliver their part of the interventions.** As a technical assistance initiative, the IGNR project design, intervention plan, and results framework called for shared responsibility of the Government of the Solomon Islands and the project team in the implementation of several project activities. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the shrinking fiscal space, the Government of Solomon Islands reduced and reappropriated the budget of key counterpart ministries or diverted the resources toward Covid-19 preparedness and response, which delayed the implementation of some of the project-supported activities. For example. The IGNR project held consultations in 9 major localities with women and local communities on amendments in the Traditional Government and Customs Facilitation Bill (TGB) and compiled over 50 sets of recommendations. The MTGPEA and the MWYCFA were responsible for taking the consultation process further to the village level, which they could not, due to the unavailability of financial resources. Similarly, the IGNR project facilitated the MLHS in the recording of 5 customary lands and the development of business pilots; however, again, due to the shortage of funds, the process of land recording to further customary lands remained slow. The delay in these activities not only had a serious implication on results such as (i) revised gender-sensitive draft Traditional Governance Bill (TGB) to be consultatively developed by the MTGPEA and submitted to parliament (outcome ind. 1, and output ind. 1.2.1); and (ii) at least 40% of women's representation in the natural resource management committees (output ind. 2.2.1).
- Thirdly, at an operational level, the COVID-19 pandemic and related travel restrictions constrained the timely implementation of IGNR project activities, especially those which involved consultations and engagements with the communities.** During the 25 months of implementation, the IGNR project experienced strict or moderate lockdown or related travel restrictions in over 11 months which hampered the project's ability to deliver community-based activities such as the consultations on TGB, consultations on by-laws of customary landholding groups, the land recording process and related dispute resolutions, anthropological study, and awareness sessions of women and girls on gender-based violence. The IGNR project risk register has never been updated to reflect the COVID-19 pandemic-related restrictions as a potential risk; neither any formal mitigation mechanisms were devised and put in place to mitigate the risk.

Nevertheless, the IGNR project team shared the detail of how they navigated the pandemic and related restrictions by adjusting the timelines of the activities and were able to implement over 80% of the activities within project life. Still, the risk register was not revised to chart how the project objectives would tread into the risky terrain and its constituents, i.e. people and investments would sail through safely.

- **Fourthly, an internal and operational challenge remained around the effective deployment and sustaining of key staff positions on the IGNR project.** Some of the key positions such as the project manager, the deputy project manager, and the monitoring and evaluation officer, remained vacant for up to 12 months on a 24-months project. Later, the UNDP and UN Women were able to deploy the project manager and the deputy manager through the in-house capacities, whereas the M&E position remained vacant during most of the project period and till the end. This undermined the ability of the IGNR project to a greater extent. This amply explains why available time was not efficiently utilized. The relative stagnation at the beginning spanning the two-third part of the project duration resulted in an otherwise avoidable burden of the last phase, which is marked by an acceleration in the delivery of the activities at a rather unusual speed. It goes without saying that most of the project activities, such as the consultation reports, recording of customary lands, land forum, anthropological study, etc., were delivered during the last eight months of the project.

## 1.2. Country context and justification of the project

The project “Inclusive Governance of Natural Resources (IGNR) for greater social cohesion in the Solomon Islands” was launched in December 2019 to address the root cause of the conflicts related to the ownership and governance of land and natural resources. The inequitable land resource management, absence of legislation governing land ownership and lack of processes for the participation of women and youth in decision-making have generally been reported as the drivers of conflict in the Solomon Islands. The conflict assessments<sup>4</sup> that informed the design of IGNR also identified the following core issues giving rise to the Tensions and subsequent episodes of violence: i) land conflict; ii) the clash between traditional and non-traditional authority structures; iii) lack of access to government services, public resources and information; iv) livelihood opportunities; and v) disruptions in traditional and non-traditional law enforcement. The absence of a tenable land and resource management policy and legislative framework has aggravated the situation because people’s participation in decision-making platforms is minimal, and women and youth remain on the margins.

Some of the key factors which formed the contextual relevance of the project were:

- **The Tensions (1998-2021) and the New Nexus.** The riots taking place off and on during the last two decades are locally known as “Tensions”. Ethnic conflict, land disputes and rising poverty were the major contributing factors to this violence. In 2003, the government requested the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF), the region’s main diplomatic grouping to help build peace and stability. The PIF established a multinational Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands (RAMSI), with Australia leading the deployment. RAMSI remained in the country for nearly 14 years fighting violence and helping government nurture a modern police force. In 2019, an international dimension to conflict emerged when the Solomon Islands government announced ending diplomatic ties with Taiwan in favor of Beijing. Beijing regards Taiwan as a breakaway province, but Taipei asserts it is a sovereign state. As China has been trying to diplomatically isolate Taiwan

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<sup>4</sup> UNDP Conflict Development Analysis REPORT Solomon, June 2019



by wooing the countries that maintain ties with it, the Solomon Islands stood as the seventh such country to switch since 2016.<sup>5</sup> To incentivize the move, Beijing offered Solomon Islands government \$8.5 million in development funds. The move raised concerns among traditional partners such as Australia, New Zealand, The United States, Japan and Papua New Guinea. Malaita, the largest province of the Solomon Islands, rejected it, threatening secession and establishing an independent Malaita. This development was welcomed by Taiwan and the United States. The latter pledged \$25 million in aid to Malaita in 2020.

- **Regulating Alienated and Customary Land.** Land and Titles Ordinance 1969 (revised in 2014) and The Customary Land Records Act 1994 (revised in 2019) govern the issues of land ownership in terms of alienated land. Because of the legislation gap, the concept of “land ownership” currently applies to only alienated land. The concept of ownership is equivocal and indistinct when it comes to the customary land. As per the tribal code, the land title is inherited by the son(s) from the father in Malaita province with patrilineal societies. Daughter(s) inherits the land title from the mother in Guadalcanal, Choiseul and Western Provinces, where matrilineal values are prevalent. The tradition of land ownership/inheritance in matrilineal societies is reportedly in danger. Lured by the economic advantages new players in the market offer, men have started distorting the tradition and eroding the women’s authority of inheritance rights and natural resource management. Customary land use, especially logging, has the lion’s share in the export economy of the Islands. The growing competition in land acquisition for this purpose is increasingly disrupting traditional land management and customary land ownership, leading to rising violence and disputes around the land. Moreover, most dispute resolution mechanisms available to communities have been customary and therefore inadequate and without any legal coverage and lawful enforcement. As the private sector’s land acquisition is growing, the absence of a legal framework to regulate this is breeding more causes of disputes and violence in society. This adequately demonstrated how the land had become a perpetual driver of conflict in the Solomon Islands.
- **Traditional Governance and Customs Facilitation Bill (TGB).** The vacuum of inadequate or no legislation needed to be abridged. Hence, Traditional Governance and Customs Facilitation Bill 2018 was introduced with the objectives of a) providing a framework for the institutionalization, management and regulation of traditional governance system; b) providing a framework for the promotion and preservation of traditional norms, protocols, values and practice; and c) empowering and allow for tribal chiefs and traditional leaders to participate in decision making on social and economic matters.<sup>6</sup> Citing deficiencies in the drafting and process of the first TGCF Bill, the Parliament’s Bills and Legislation Committee expressed its dissatisfaction with the quality of the consultative process. A list of recommendations<sup>7</sup> was compiled to address these concerns. Eventually, The Bill was withdrawn to comply with the Committee’s recommendations that (i) further consultation and research should be carried out, (ii) a comprehensive anthropological study on the dynamics of customary land and concepts of traditional custodianship should be conducted; and (iii) the Judiciary, the Bar Association, marginalized groups, women, youth and churches should be meaningfully consulted.
- **Unprecedented land rush in the region.** The turn of the century triggered an unprecedented land rush in customary land in most Melanesian countries. Land leasing without the consent of customary landowner groups became a norm. Not only it marginalise these groups, but the governments too felt helpless. As such, reforming and adjusting land ownership laws and enacting

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<sup>5</sup> The others six being Burkina Faso, the Dominican Republic, Sao Tome and Principe, Panama, El Salvador and Nicaragua.

<sup>6</sup> Section 5: Objects of the Traditional Governance and Customs Facilitation Bill 2018

<sup>7</sup> Report on the Traditional Governance and Customs Facilitation Bill 2018 --o .2 \_ of 2018) p. 6

mechanisms for land recording, registration, and leasing was a trend in the region. Governments across the region identified the need for reforms in land management not only to avert the threat but to transform it into an opportunity for economic development. Learning from the regional experiences of Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea and Fiji on a wide variety of approaches to customary land management has been analyzed and embedded in the design of the IGNR project in order to offer policymakers in Solomon Islands solutions compatible with the local context.

- **Gender and Youth Dynamics.** With 48.3% of the population, women hold nearly half of the sky of Solomon Island. Young women have their fair share in youth that makes up 70% of the population of the Solomon Islands. Nonetheless, the 2018 Solomon Islands State of Youth Report revealed low participation of youth in the economy, politics, and decision-making<sup>8</sup>. Youth, including women, have remained politically, socially and economically disfranchised due to poverty, ethnic stereotypes and divisions, elite capture of state resources, low levels of rural development, and the marginalization from politics and decision-making<sup>9</sup>. The Solomon Islands Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) recommended addressing the critical need for (i) increasing youth participation in decision-making at local and national levels; (ii) providing youth with employment; and (iii) encouraging learning from the tensions so such conflict is avoided from the outset.
- **The UN Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund (PBF).** The UN Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) was established in 2005 to complement the work of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Support Office by providing the UN system with early and strategic funding for catalytic, innovative, and risk-taking peacebuilding interventions aligned with national priorities. The PBF is the UN's financial instrument of first resort to sustain peace in countries or situations at risk or affected by violent conflict. The PBF has invested in the Solomon Islands since the aftermath of the conflict in 2003 and contributed through UN entities, government, and civil society organizations to build a durable peace in the country. The IGNR project corresponds to PBF focused area "Implement and sustain peace agreements – political dialogue" by designing activities which respond to imminent threats to the peace process. In addition, the project is fully aligned with UN priorities, thereby contributing directly to UN Pacific Strategy Outcome 5: By 2022, people and communities in the Pacific will contribute to and benefit from inclusive, informed, and transparent decision-making processes; accountable and responsive institutions; and improved access to justice.

## SECTION 2. IGNR PROJECT EVALUATION

UNDP and UN Women commissioned this summative, external evaluation of the Inclusive Governance of National Resources (IGNR) for greater social cohesion in the Solomon Islands to determine the extent to which anticipated outputs were achieved and to gain a credible, evidence-based, and independent understanding of the contribution and attribution of this project towards inclusive policy, customary laws and governance of land and natural resources. It also generated evidence-based analysis and recommendations to inform future funding of the UN's Peacebuilding Fund to promote peace and social cohesion in the Solomon Islands, wherein women and youth are a critical part of the decision-making processes. UNDP and UN Women are the key users of the

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8 Solomon Islands youth Status Report, 2018

9 The Commonwealth's Youth Development Index ranks Solomon Islands 76th globally for youth political participation and 70th in terms of youth civic participation.

evaluations; nevertheless, the UN's Peace Building Fund, the Government of Solomon Islands and its ministries and provinces will benefit from the findings and recommendations of this evaluation.

## 2.1. Purpose and scope of the Evaluation

The evaluation-ToRs sets clear expectations in terms of objectives, scope, and methodology of the evaluation. In line with the ToRs, the evaluation of the IGNR project serves two purposes.

**Firstly**, it employed standard evaluative tools to provide an independent, objective-assessment on the relevancy, cohesion, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability of the project; and,

**Secondly**, it provided key insights, lessons learned and recommendations to inform future initiatives and investments around peacebuilding and social cohesion in the Solomon Islands.

Specifically, the external evaluation followed the **OECD – DAC framework**<sup>10</sup>, and employed conflict-sensitive and gender-sensitive approaches to provide an objective assessment on:

- **Relevance:** If the IGNR project responded to the political, social, and economic issues around land and natural resource management? If the problem identification and the intervention design – including the Theory of Change – was appropriate in the contextual environment of the Solomon Islands? Did the PBF project follow an explicit approach to conflict sensitivity? Was the project relevant in addressing conflict drivers and factors for peace identified in the conflict analysis? Were the considerations made in the project design to gender-responsive peacebuilding, particularly with respect to the budget, realized throughout implementation?
- **Coherence:** How well the IGNR project leveraged external opportunities and related initiatives, as well as internally among the two outcomes? How well UNDP and UN-Women leveraged other PBF projects to promote synergies, avoid duplication, and strengthen results? Has the project made efforts to create catalytic results (e.g., bringing in funding and support from other sources to its activities, areas of support and beneficiaries)?
- **Efficiency:** How well UNDP and UN Women used their resources (financial and technical) and convening power (as a catalyst) to maximize the delivery and achieve higher value for money for PBF's funding? What were the key oversight, management, and project implementation practices – including conflict-sensitivity analysis, risks management, M&E and beneficiary feedback tracking, etc. – that UNDP and UN Women (and their implementing partners, sub-contractors, and consultants) adopted to achieve efficiency?
- **Effectiveness:** If the project interventions and outputs (direct results) contributed to the achievement of project outcomes? How much of the results at the outcome level are attributable to IGNR's interventions? If the results are not achieved, what is the direction of travel towards higher-order results? And did the Theory of Change and its assumptions that were envisaged at the design stage hold true?
- **Impact and Sustainability:** What are the fundamental structural changes that have occurred at policy, administration, community, and individual levels as a result of IGNR's project interventions? And if these changes (results) are likely to sustain after the withdrawal of UN-PBF's funding and assistance? Was an ongoing process of context monitoring and a monitoring system that allows for monitoring of unintended impacts established?

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<sup>10</sup> <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>

- **Cross-cutting issues:** The extent to which cross-cutting issues such as social dialogue, gender and marginalization have been addressed through project design, its implementation approaches, and activities.

In addition, the evaluation captured key learning, insights, and best practices for UN’s PBF and its partners (including UNDP, UN Women, Government of Solomon Islands, and others) to inform future funding of PBF and how well projects like IGNR have or can contribute to the wider/ strategic objectives of the peacebuilding strategy of UN’s PBF in the Solomon Islands.

The evaluation matrix (**Annex-1**. Evaluation matrix) provides a detailed framework for assessing the above-motioed aspects of the evaluation.

## 2.2. METHODOLOGY

The IGNR project results’ framework reflects more qualitative, process-oriented results with the exception of one output statement that requires an assessment of the awareness level of community members (mainly women and girls) on legal rights and their perception of being protected from VAWG. Given the nature of the project, i.e. a technical assistance initiative with community engagement activities, the evaluation involved both: secondary and primary data collection to produce evaluative evidence. This ensured evaluation rigor, with more accurate and plausible assessment and analysis on key evaluation themes/ questions.

The evaluation data collection and analysis plan (**Annex-2**. IGNR Project Evaluation – Primary and Secondary Data Collection Plan) provides a brief description of source and type of data/information, purpose of data analysis, and how primary and secondary data is used to analyze and assess the evaluation aspects such as relevance, appropriateness, cohesion, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability.

### Data collection approach/ tools

**Secondary data collection and analysis** to identify and document the key political, economic, and social context, problem areas, activities and intervention strategy(ies), envisaged Theory of Change, key results and any changes at output, outcome and impact level. The literature review involved, but not limited to, the review of key project documents, internal and external assessment(s), key policy and government documents, and all the project-supported legislations, policies and administrative systems and processes.

The below table explains how review of secondary data and literature is used to analyze and assess the evaluation aspects such as relevance, appropriateness, cohesion, efficiency, and effectiveness.

Objective and scope of the literature review	List of documents reviewed
Project’s internal documents – to analyze and assess the relevance and appropriateness of IGNR project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project design document, including result framework</li> <li>• Progress and financial reports</li> <li>• Institutional arrangements, including M&amp;E, risk management, conflict analysis, etc.</li> <li>• Intervention reports, and internal assessments</li> </ul>
Background documents – to analyze and assess the contextual relevance, appropriateness, alignment, and coherence of IGNR project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UNDP Conflict Development Analysis</li> <li>• Traditional Governance &amp; Customs Facilitation Bill 2018</li> <li>• Committee Report on TGB</li> <li>• Solomon Islands Youth Status Report, 2018</li> <li>• Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report</li> <li>• UN peacebuilding Strategy</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perception survey 2017 and 2020</li> </ul>
Key intervention reports – to analyze and assess the ownership, buy-in and contribution of project interventions (efficiency and effectiveness)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TGB – Consultation report &amp; recommendations</li> <li>• Draft policy paper on by-laws re- land and natural resources</li> <li>• Anthropological study</li> <li>• Land recording process, and brief on dispute resolution</li> <li>• Report on awareness raising</li> <li>• Land forum, including business pilots</li> <li>• Project baseline report</li> </ul>
Policy papers, technical briefs and recommendations submitted to the Government – to analyze and assess the change, and the direction of change (impact, sustainability of impact)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy reforms (legislative and policy frameworks re- traditional land governance, including recommendations for inclusive legislation)</li> <li>• Policy paper on bylaws relating to traditional governance and customary laws for land and natural resource management</li> <li>• Recommendation on membership of Customary landholding groups and natural resource management groups</li> <li>• Others</li> </ul>

**Primary data collection, using key information interviews (8 females, 3 male) and focus group discussions (02 – mainly women and youth)** to collect the data and evidence, analyze results and make evidence-based judgements on the evaluation questions and against project relevance, cohesion, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. The primary data also helped to substantiate the findings of the literature review. This involved interviews and group discussions with key government counterparts, officials of the UN (UNDP, UN-Women), natural resource management groups, tribal leaders, etc.

Below is the list of stakeholders (including project beneficiaries) who have been consulted, through interviews and group discussions, to assess their perspectives on the project.

#### Key informant interviews with Government counterparts – recipients of IGNR project’s technical assistance

- Ministry of Traditional Governance, Peace and Ecclesiastical Affairs (MTGPEA)
- Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs (MWYCFA)
- National Youth Council/ Youth Caucus
- Provincial Women’s Caucuses
- Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey (MLHS)
- Provincial Governments of Malaita, Guadalcanal and Western Provinces
- Gender expert engaged for TGB consultations.
- IGNR’s technical expert (consultant) for anthropological study
- UNDP and UN Women

#### Focus group discussions with community-based stakeholders (including tribal leaders, and members of customary land holding groups)

- Customary landholding groups, including women and youth members
- Women and girls participants - awareness raising on VAWG

**With this, the evaluation provided a particular focus on** (i) inclusion/ representation to women, girls and youth in policy, legislative and management of land and natural resource management; (ii) the inculcation of democratic principles in the process of legislation and policy-making; (iii) the responsiveness to local customary laws, regulations, norms and frameworks; and (iv) the capacity of

local communities, including of natural resource management committees, to assess, meaningfully engage, and influence laws, policies and institutional/ management arrangements for land and natural resource management.

## Sampling – representation

This evaluation applied purposive and convenience sampling for each respondent group and data collection method based on three key yardsticks, including the (i) relevancy and level of engagement of target groups/stakeholders in the project; (ii) the inclusion of disadvantaged groups in the project (e.g., women, youth and communities from the hotspot and underprivileged areas, especially the three targeted provinces including capital Honiara); and (iii) accessibility of project target locations considering the travelling restriction in the country due to the second wave of COVID-19 pandemic.

## Data analysis and interpretation approach/ tools

The data/ information collected during the desk review, focus group discussions, and key informant interviews were predominantly qualitative and descriptive. Therefore, the evaluation used:

- **Qualitative content analysis** to document responses, analyze and synthesize information, and draw conclusions which are consistent with the objectives and scope of the evaluation.
- **Narrative analysis** to generate evidence by interpreting respondents' experiences and stories around project interventions, implementation strategies and results.

In all these data analysis approaches, qualitative data was properly documented, synthesized, analyzed and interpreted to provide an evidence-based assessment on the relevance, cohesion, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the IGNR project.

## 2.3. Ethical considerations

The evaluation method, data collection tools, data collection process, and evaluation report ensured the adherence to the following ethical considerations.

- **Consent to participate in the evaluation.** All respondents were requested for their consent as if they were interested in participating in the evaluation and providing their responses. In addition, for virtual interviews, the respondent's consent has been taken (where applicable) before recording the interviews and responses.
- **Confidentiality of the respondents.** All respondents were assured that their information would not be made public as an exclusive response(s). The individual responses were and are to be kept anonymous, while consolidated findings of the report will be shared widely among all relevant stakeholders.
- **Obligations to participants.** The evaluator (and the national team member who led the FGDs) remained respectful to individuals/beneficiaries participating in the evaluation. The evaluator has not asked for any sensitive information or insisted on a response where beneficiaries lacked information or were reluctant to respond.
- **Avoidance of harm.** The evaluator ensured that no harm was made to those who participated in the evaluation; rather sought to maximize the benefits and reduce any unnecessary harms that might have occurred from negative or critical evaluation – without compromising the integrity of the evaluation. In the wake of the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, the evaluation used online methods (telephonic and internet-based tools) for interviews and groups discussion to minimize interaction and chances of spread of the disease.
- **Independence and impartiality of the evaluator.** The evaluator has kept no biases related to the project and its evaluation. Also, the evaluator followed a professional, impartial approach towards undertaking the evaluation, and will be presenting the findings in a credible and transparent manner.

- **Accuracy, completeness, and reliability.** The evaluator ensured that the evaluation report is accurate, complete, and reliable.

## 2.4. Limitations

- **A mixed-method approach with both quantitative and qualitative data provides an ideal methodology for evaluations.** COVID-19 outbreaks kept recurring in communities as such direct in-person contact with the communities was considered a risk better avoided than taken. The situation dictated that the survey method for this evaluation was not possible. In order to compensate for this limitation, qualitative analysis techniques were used rigorously. These include context analysis and narrative analysis, etc., to substantiate the findings, establish key contributions and attributions, document lessons learned and provide evidence-based recommendations. It was well in line with the nature of results “indicators as ... defined in the project result framework” as most of the indicators reflect a qualitative change which could be best captured through key informant interviews and focus group discussions. The evaluation could conduct key informant interviews with project focal persons, representing all 6 key national and provincial ministries/ departments; however, the number of planned FGDs were reduced from three to two focus group discussion. Nevertheless, the evaluation used secondary data and project intervention-specific consultations such as the consultation on the TGB, the consultation on land reforms, including by-laws of customary land holding groups, anthropological study, etc. to capture and include the perspective of citizens, including women, youth, tribal communities on the IGNR project, its interventions and results.
- **The culmination of higher-order results is yet to happen at the policy, legislative, institutional and community levels.** The evaluation noticed that most of the project-supported interventions are delivered; however, these were not the ultimate results committed by the project. These interventions and related documents reflected ‘critical processes and inputs – as policy recommendations to introduce legislative and institutional reforms in traditional governance and customary law relating to land and natural resources. This means that the evaluation could provide analyses on mostly process indicators, with a direction of travel or early indication towards ultimate change and its impact on addressing grievances of women and youth, reducing incidents of conflicts, promoting peace, ensuring sustainable land and natural resource management, and in increasing income and employment opportunities. The interviews with key government officials revealed some tangled results and developments taking place during recent months and weeks, which were not covered in the IGNR project progress reports. These developments mainly included governments’ actions on policy recommendations for inclusive legislation.

## SECTION 3. KEY FINDINGS

The evaluation findings have been structured in line with the framework underlined in the TORs of the study. Also, they are consistent with OECD-DAC evaluation criteria, i.e., relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact.

### 3.1. Relevance

Relevance measures the extent to which the IGRN project design and implementation approaches responded to the contextual challenges faced by youth and women in Solomon Islands, in relation to reducing the actual or potential conflicts triggered by deficient legislative frameworks, private interests, and inequitable use of land and natural resources in the Solomon Islands.

### Supporting data, evidence, and commentary

- **The IGNR project design sufficiently addressed the political, social, and economic causes of the conflicts and violent disputes in the Solomon Islands.** The land and natural resources have been governed under traditional and customary laws, which enable and empower local communities to participate in decision-making and share benefits from the use of land and natural resources. However, over time, the traditional governance system is exposed to several challenges, such as the concentration of power and decision-making around the use of land to few hands, primarily men as tribal leaders and members of the customary landholding group, even in matrilineal system/tradition; inequitable distribution of benefits from land and natural resources; limited capacity of tribal leaders to deal with the private sector for investments, especially the extraction industries; etc. Considering this, the support to strengthening the efforts of the Government of SIs towards institutionalization, management and governance of traditional governance system was a politically, socially, and economically correct choice of intervention. Specifically, the IGNR responded to the following political, social, and economic priorities of the Solomon Islanders.
  - **In terms of political aspects,** the project was an appropriate and timely response to the concerns raised by the SIs Parliament’s Bills and Legislation Committee (BLC), which called for a more inclusive, robust, and informed Traditional Governance Bill. In addition, there is a wider consensus<sup>11</sup> among policymakers, duty-bearers, and the communities, including the private sector, for the need to recognize, strengthen and empower the informal governance structures.
  - **In terms of social aspects,** the project prioritized educating and empowering women, youth, church, tribal leaders, and the wider communities to engage in policy reforms, institutional processes, and management of customary laws relating to land and natural resources. For women and young people, it means “being heard” and upon enactment of an inclusive TGB, Customary Land Records Act & Regulations, and enforcement of bylaws of customary landholding groups, etc. this will mean a more active, formal, and meaningful role in the decision-making related to customary lands and natural resources. As per the IGNR’s ToC, this change will lead to enhanced access of communities (traditional leaders/chiefs, women, youth, PWDs) to the benefits emerging from the development of customary lands and thus reduce the incidence of conflict.
  - **In terms of economic aspects,** the project intervention was an appropriate response to addressing two major obstacles faced by the private sector when attempting to establish a business enterprise in the Solomon Islands, i.e. identifying the right people to deal with concerning land; and the security of title and access to land. These two problems are particularly true for customary land dealings. The IGNR project interventions embarked upon addressing these two concerns, thereby unlocking the private sector, governmental and other investments critical for local economic development beyond logging, mining, and fishing industries. As per the IGNR’s ToC, this will lead to more empowered and motivated communities which can hold the private sector companies accountable to comply with the regulations relating to the land and natural resources, thereby ensuring sustainable, inclusive, and equitable economic development.

**Land rights and claims and related conflicts, as identified and documented by the report on consultations on bylaws for customary landholding groups in Solomon Islands.**

- Women reported that they have stories of how land is inherited, passed to them by their mothers. They tell the story to their children. But nowadays, stories are also made up by male

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<sup>11</sup> Established based on the IGNR project evaluation (KIs & FGDs) with key stakeholders.



relatives who also reduce the significance of women's rights to land, their value in the home and in the community.

- Women who are married to men from other provinces and land-owning groups have uncertainty about their rights and claims to land. They reported that when they live on their customary land, they are not involved in decision-making, which results in unclear rights and claims. Although five of the nine Solomon Islands provinces traditionally engaged in matrilineal property inheritance (around 70% of customary lands), only 2% of the land is in the hands of the women<sup>12</sup>. They are usually subjected to decisions made by male members of the land-holding group. When they move to the customary land of their spouse or partner, they have secondary rights to land and cannot do activities which will raise a lot of income. They are likely to be stopped from business activity if this happens.
- In the past, landholding groups used to share plots with relatives from other tribes and clans. It is usually clear with these arrangements that how has the secondary right for houses. Over time when the person who was granted secondary rights passes on, their descendants then claim that they have primary rights to the land. It is an increasing issue where the next generation, down from those that were given secondary rights, do not respect the customs that were carried out by their elders.
- There are increasingly new usage of customary land and new people moving into the land. These were not part of traditional land tenure. There is no custom or traditional practice for the new usage of land or resources and people who are moving into or using the land resources. An example is where people from different provinces and ethnicities with no marital or traditional links to the land-holding group settle on customary land. Natural disasters and internal migration have also seen people from other provinces and landholding groups moving in and using customary practices to gain rights to land. In some places on Guadalcanal, the term used by these settlers is 'ownership,' especially when money and ceremonies have been performed to allow the settlers to the land. This has increasingly caused frustration among groups of people who live on customary land and gives rise to a need for traditional leaders to come up with clear guidelines on how to deal with new ways by which people come into the land of customary land-holding groups.
- Another practice which is new is claims to the land of affiliated land-owning groups. Some people hear their genealogy (and they are from another part of the province with a different language at times) and say they have rights to the customary land of an affiliated tribe or clan. There have been incidents where the affiliated tribe or clan have gone into the land of other tribes and clans and claimed that they have primary rights. At times they are distant relatives, so there is a conflict between related tribes and clans.

*Figure 6. Land rights and claims and related conflicts, Consultations on bylaws of customary landholding groups*

- **The project approach, focus areas and main interventions were designed in consultation with the relevant Government stakeholders and to respond to priorities set by the UN Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund.** The IGNR project was conceived in response to the recommendations of SI Parliament's BLC, which withdrew the draft Bill from consideration due to the absence of a comprehensive consultation process. However, pre-project consultations with key government officials and other relevant stakeholders expanded the scope of the project to include other components essential to launching a comprehensive response towards inclusive governance of natural resources as a mean to achieving sustainable peace and long-term social cohesion in the Solomon Islands. In addition to addressing the immediate needs of the Solomon Islands society, the IGNR project contributes towards:
  - The SI National Peacebuilding Policy (NPP) which seeks to (i) promote conflict-sensitive policy and programming across governmental agencies at all levels, especially in land

<sup>12</sup> <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/countries/fiji/co/solomon-islands>

reform-related programs (objective 2.1.); and (ii) design and implement mediation, negotiation, and dialogue processes on emerging issues, especially land and resource management (objective 2.3).

- The UN General Secretary's PBF, particularly the political dialogue as a means to implement and sustain peace agreements and design activities which respond to imminent threats to the peace process. In addition, the IGNR project is fully aligned with UN priorities, thereby contributing directly to UN Pacific Strategy Outcome 5: By 2022, people and communities in the Pacific will contribute to and benefit from inclusive, informed, and transparent decision-making processes; accountable and responsive institutions; and improved access to justice.
- **The IGNR project directly responded to the priorities set under the Solomon Islands' NDS Medium Term Strategy (MTS), i.e., strengthen land reform and other programmes to encourage economic development in urban, rural and customary lands.** The MTS further specifies the following focus areas: review the several land Acts constraining development; encourage and promote awareness on customary land registration and undertake enumeration of the registered customary land based on agreement; reflect customary land rights in planning, law establishment and land management; enable landowners to receive more benefits from development by encouraging and facilitating land registration, land rights and tenure system, and interest of landowners; encourage investment from investors on customary land by facilitating proper identification and valuation of land type for industries, agriculture, and mining. The IGNR project design and intervention areas encapsulated all these considerations, thereby providing adequate support to implementation of SIs NDS Medium Term Strategy.
- **Working with both: the demand-side representing women, youth, church, tribal leaders, and wider communities; and the supply-side representing policymakers and duty bearers, strengthened the process of land reforms and related customary laws.** The weak social contract between the citizens and the state has been a leading factor behind the Tensions (1998-2003) and the subsequent episodes of conflicts, including the recent riots and violence during the 2019 elections and (the burning of Chinatown) in Capital Honiara in November 2021. The Solomon Islands Conflict and Development Analysis, conducted by UNDP in 2019, highlighted the lack of access for women and youth to decision-making platforms as one of the key issues among other broader issues such as corruption and weak governance. The IGNR project approach of working with both sides has strengthened the image of the Government and its ministries as being responsive to citizens; and at the same time provided the opportunity to women, youth, church, and tribal leaders to effectively and meaningfully contribute to customary laws, policies and institutional and community practices affecting their lives, and access to resources and benefits.

*Traditional governance system is working well for some tribal communities; however, in other places, it is a source of disruption, marginalization and exclusion of women and youth, including in societies where the matrilineal system exists for the inheritance of customary land. The local customs and governance systems relating to land and natural resources are not fully governed, which undermines the Government's ability to regulate and manage issues such as the lack of participation of women, youth and wider communities in decision-making on the use of customary lands and natural resources, inequitable sharing of benefits, and land related disputes. The institutionalization, regulation and management of customary lands and natural resources through legislative amendments, institutional enforcement and community-based structures is a good way forward.*

- *Traditional Governance Division, Ministry of Traditional Governance, Peace and Ecclesiastical Affairs (MTGPEA)*

*The society of the Solomon Islands is transforming, and there are new challenges and opportunities in the way we manage our lands. Logging was the only source of income, but now we see more and more tribal communities getting into extraction industries and private businesses. As tribal leaders, we now*

*weigh on our young people to take on the role in the management of lands. We also want to include women in land management, as we see great potential in them. We have been waiting for the Traditional Governance Bill for years, and it is already too late. The Government should pass this bill soon, as this is close to our heart.*

- Tribal leader, North Malaita

- **In addition to countering immediate causes of conflicts and violent disputes, the IGNR project sufficiently accounted for impending issues such as rapid urbanization and pressure on resources, modernization and distortion of the customary laws, environment and sustainable development, and the need for more balanced, local economic development.** In the Solomon Islands, there are inherent issues which are leading to more chronic social, political, economic, and environmental problems. Some of these are more evident and well documented, while others are impending challenges and possible triggers of conflicts. Strengthening of the customary laws, primarily related to land recording and land development, have direct impact on the local economic development, which will eventually reduce the current pace of urbanization, pressure on resources in Capital Honiara, generate local level economic and employment opportunities and lead to more equitable, inclusive, and sustainable development.
- **The project interventions adequately considered the inclusion of women, girls, and young people in the decision-making of rights and benefits from customary lands and natural resources.** Gender equality is a stated priority of the Government of Solomon Islands<sup>13</sup>, yet the UNDP conflict analysis states marginalization of women and girls as one of the most recognizable peacebuilding gaps in the Solomon Islands. The project made a concerted effort towards (i) gender-responsive policies such as the revised TGB, and the Customary Land Record Act/Regulations; (ii) institutionalizing and mainstreaming women and youth in decision-making structures through revitalization and strengthening of provincial youth councils and women caucuses and establishment of customary landholding groups; and (iii) empowerment of women and girls by understanding policies, practices and norms that protects them from violence and other form of exploitation. Almost 100% of the project activities were analyzed as gender-response initiatives; with an increasing focus on maximizing the participation of and benefit to women, girls and young people in the land and natural resource management process.
- **The recommended legal changes, as identified and proposed through public consultations, are less disruptive of the current legal framework and require no amendments in the Constitution of Solomon Islands.** The Constitution of the country features customary law fifth in the hierarchy of laws to be applied in the country, and its application is limited to the customary jurisdiction of each of the different social groups.<sup>14</sup> The recommendations for the amendment do not conflict with the Constitution, especially its provisions relating to land, landowning, customary landholding and customary laws.<sup>15</sup> The Constitution already provides that Parliament has the responsibility to legislate on the application of customary laws. As such, no recommendations have been made for any amendments to the Constitution.

<sup>1</sup>Section 76 further provides that Schedule 3 shall have effect for the determination of operations of customary law in Solomon Islands. Schedule 3 (3) (1) establishes that customary law is a source of law in Solomon Islands. Schedule 3 (3)(3)also sets out that Parliament may make laws on: a. proof and pleading of customary law, b. the

<sup>13</sup><https://solomons.gov.sb/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/National-Gender-Equality-and-Womens-Development-Policy-2016-2020.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> Schedule 3 to the Constitution of SI – Application of the Laws (Section 76)

manner in which or the purposes for which customary law may be recognized, and c. the resolution of conflicts of customary law. Chapter XI of the Constitution is titled Land. Section 111 sets out that Parliament will make provisions for conversion of customary land into perpetual estate, compulsory acquisition of land or right over or interest in land, and the criteria for assessment of compensation for compulsory acquisition. Section 112 further provides for duties that must be undertaken with the compulsory acquisition process. This includes negotiations with owners of the land with reference made to 'right or interest.' The section also sets out that interest in land acquired through compulsory acquisition can be converted to fixed-term interest.

- **There has been a slight shift in the priorities of the Government of SIs; however, the institutionalization, management and regulation of the traditional governance system remained a top priority.** With an increase in economic cooperation (i.e. bilateral and private sector investments) between the Solomon Islands and China, the Government of SIs has started to shift its priorities toward building physical infrastructure, including roads, ports, and piers ostensibly with a view to developing means of communication for people living in distant islands. The Government sees it as an alternative pathway to promote peace and cohesion in the Solomon Islands, and this would have an implication for the UNPBF's earlier investments in promoting peacebuilding and social cohesion, including through the IGNR project. Nonetheless, the interviews with key government officials from relevant ministries held during the IGNR project evaluation confirmed their continued commitment to strengthening customary laws for greater inclusion and alignment with the traditional values and systems.

## 3.2. Coherence

The extent to which the IGNR project ensured internal coherence i.e. synergies and complementarities among outcome 1 and outcome 2; and the external coherence i.e. complementarities and synergies with other projects and initiatives.

## Supporting data, evidence, and commentary

### Internal cohesion

- **UNDP and UN Women collaborated to strengthen the supply side and demand side of the IGNR project, which led to increased engagement, collaboration, and trust of citizens on the Government of Solomon Islands and its commitment towards inclusive governance of land and natural resources.** Both implementing partners added significant value to the project, in terms of joint understanding of the context and issues related to conflict; credibility among Government of SIs with strong convening power; effective access and outreach to communities and community-based structures; and learning from previously implemented peacebuilding projects. Particularly, UNDP led the engagement with the government at national level, while UN Women strengthened the role of sub-national level institutions and communities in the reform process. Both of these were instrumental in ensuring the credibility and inclusiveness of process of land and natural resource management. Meetings with both UNDP and UN Women confirmed that the project benefitted from this collaboration, as it augmented the quality of technical assistance and support through the project.
- **The two outcomes and subsequent outputs were logical to cover the wider gaps and areas of improvement in policy, institutional and community-level governance of land and natural resources.** The two outcomes were complementary, wherein outcome 1 focused on governments capacity to provide legal framework for institutionalization, regulation and management of customary laws and traditional governance practices; while outcome 2 focused on ensuring representation of women, youth, church, trial leaders and wider communities in the traditional governance and land recording process. The IGNR's theory of change (ToC) envisaged an inclusive, robust, and well informed TGB as an essential condition for land recording process; however, the project experienced suggests that most of the legislative and process improvements in the land recording process were not contingent upon amendments in the TGB. It was, therefore,

a good strategy by the IGNR project to not sequence the activities planned under these outcomes, as the delay in policy/ legislative work would have had delayed the delivery of project activities planned under outcome 2.

- **Recording of customary lands strengthened the synergies among stakeholders, including relevant government authorities, communities, and private sector for local economic development.** The private sector faces two major obstacles when attempting to establish a business enterprise in the Solomon Islands. These are: identifying the rightful people to deal with concerning land acquisition; and security of title and access to land. These two problems are particularly true for customary lands. Additionally, the involvement and representation of women and youth in the overall process of recording of customary land titles and related decision making is very limited. The IGNR project supported the MLHS in recording five (05) customary land titles, while ensuring an active participation of women, youth and larger communities in the process. To bridge the gap between private sector (investors) and landholding groups, the IGNR project facilitated customary landholding groups in developing their business ideas and participating in Land Forum which brought together all relevant stakeholders including the private sector on one platform for discussion on productive, inclusive, and sustainable use of customary lands and natural resources.
- **The project exhibited inter-connected and holistic approach towards reforms, discouraging piecemeal approach.** It has been observed that often policy prescriptions address one issue in a particular sector ignoring the ramifications on laws and policies of other sectors as such disregarding intersection of different sectors. So much so that the link between the processes in the Land and Titles Act and the recording process in the Land Recording Act were not clear and well-established. The IGNR sought to identify and plug the gaps through recommended amendments and additions in the legal provisions to bring efficiency and effectiveness in land management processes. The project did this by equipping the government with analysis examining traditional governance systems and its relation to other laws and policies, including, inter alia: the Land Titles Act, Land Recording Act, the Political Party Integrity Act, the Islanders' Marriage Act, the Child and Family Welfare Act, the Penal Code (Amendment) Sexual Violence Bill, the Family Protection Bill, the National Policy on Gender Equality and Women's Development (NPGED) and the National Action Plan on Women Peace and Security (2017-2021) (WPS NAP).

### External cohesion

- **The project interventions built upon the effects and outcomes of previous PBF supported projects,** such as Supporting Peaceful and Inclusive Transition in Solomon Islands (SPIT) implemented by UNDP and UN Women (July 2016 – Dec 2017) and Empowering Youths as Agents for Peace and Social Cohesion in Solomon Islands Project (EYAPSCSI) implemented by UNDP and ILO (Dec 2018 – June 2021). While UNDP, UN Women and ILO were the Recipient UN Organizations (RUNOs) and primary implementers, other implementing partners in these projects were the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey (MLHS), Ministry of Traditional Governance, Peace and Ecclesiastical Affairs (MTGPEA), Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs (MWYCFA) and the Prime Minister's Office (PMO). In addition, the project activities were smartly linked to the structures that earlier PBF projects had created such as provincial women caucuses and youth councils. The IGNR project utilized these structures to leverage the entry points for the inclusion of women and youth. It also provided assistance to revitalize the youth councils in order to consolidate the impact of PBF interventions in Solomon Islands. Building on synergies shaped by earlier PBF projects, IGNR further opened an inclusive space for dialogue to strengthen national capacity for reforming legislative frameworks so as to introduce equitable and inclusive land reforms.
- **The IGNR project effectively leveraged existing structures such as national youth council (NYC), provincial youth councils, provincial women caucuses, and their community-based**

**structures to strengthen engagement of women and youth in traditional governance of land and natural resources.** The PBF and its partners have invested a lot in strengthening the role of NYC, provincial youth councils, provincial women caucuses and their ward/ community level structures in decision making process. Capitalizing on these existing structures, the IGNR project effectively mobilized women, youth, and local communities in the public consultation process.

*In Guadalcanal province, women are the custodian of land. Its matrilineal system. However, all chiefs are men, and they control the land and resources. There is no representation of women in the house of chiefs. Through consultations on the TGB, we ensured that women have exclusive platforms to speak about their concerns and provide recommendations on how their participation can be strengthened in decision-making bodies, as well as in the management of land and its benefits. Together, we provided recommendations that ensure women’s participation in all traditional governance structures, including in the customary landholding groups and the house of chiefs. The women and young people are not happy with the current arrangements that provides almost absolute powers to the trustees to decide on land and share benefits as they feel appropriate.*

- Guadalcanal Council of Women

### 3.3. Efficiency

The extent to which the IGNR project could deliver the intervention and the intended results, in an economic and timely way and as per the satisfaction of key government counterparts.

#### Supporting data, evidence, and commentary

- **The IGNR project successfully delivered over 80% of its planned interventions and outputs within available resources and timelines.** The IGNR was a complex, political, and dynamic project with sharing of responsibility for the delivery of results at the output and outcome levels. Nevertheless, the project could effectively collaborate with the relevant government ministries and institutions for the delivery of most of its planned outputs at an institutional and community level. The indicators that reflect policy and legislative reforms, such as the revised TGB and the amendment in the by-laws of customary landholding groups could not be fully achieved. Similarly, there has been a delay in the implementation of some of the activities such as anthropological study, drafting instructions on by-laws of customary landholding groups, and support to customary landholding groups on business ideas. The project team and the government counterparts explained various reasons for these delays, including the COVID-19 pandemic, which disrupted community-based activities; the complexities of anthropological study; and the downward reappropriation of the budget of respective ministries.

Below is the matrix used to rate the progress against results framework indicators and targets.

Table: Progress rating matrix

RAG rating	Criteria – assessment of progress against results framework i.e., indicators and targets
<b>Over-achieved</b>	Exceeded the expectations against targets (as defined in the IGNR result framework)
<b>Achieved</b>	Met the expectations against targets
<b>Partially achieved</b>	Couldn’t achieve the target; however, made significant progress towards the target
<b>Failed to deliver</b>	Significantly missed the target; even moderate progress could not be made.

Note: The below dashboard “progress against output level results” is developed based on the (i) literature review, including review of key project documents, progress reports, technical papers, etc. being developed by the IGNR project; and (ii) key informant interviews and focus group discussions,

including meetings with key government officials who validated the contribution of the IGNR project in delivering these outputs.

Table: Progress against output level results

Results statements	Indicators	Progress rating	Explanation/ Justification
<b>Outcome 1: The Government is equipped with analyses, laws, policies and frameworks on land and natural resource management which are clearer, more inclusive, and reflective of customary governance.</b>			
<b>Output 1.1.</b> Comprehensive review of legislative and institutional frameworks governing land and natural resources.	Ind-1.1.1. Number of inclusive, gender sensitive recommendations for amendments to the bi-laws and regulations governing land and natural resources management.	Achieved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The IGNR project developed a consultation report with recommendations and a policy document to inform drafting instructions on bylaws for landholding groups in the Solomon Islands.</li> <li>The consultation report on amendment to by-laws of customary landholding groups was compiled based on the recommendations of women, youth, church, tribal leaders, and other actors (85 women, 118 men). These consultations were conducted in three sites in three provinces: Malaita, Guadalcanal, and Western Province.</li> <li>The MLHS, MWCYFA and the provincial women caucuses expressed<sup>16</sup> their satisfaction on the consultation process, the quality of draft policy paper and recommendations on by-laws of the customary landholding groups and has further shared these with the legislative drafting officer (within the MTGPEA) for drafting purpose.</li> <li>It is expected that the by-laws of the customary landholding groups will be notified after concurrence with the TGB, Customary Land Records Act/ Regulations, and subordinate legislations.</li> </ul>
<b>Output 1.2.</b> The Traditional Governance Bill is submitted to Parliament and reflects the concerns of women and youth	Ind-1.2.1. Recommendations of gender analysis and women's consultations incorporated into the revised traditional Governance Bill	Partially achieved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IGNR project developed consultation report with over 50 recommendations (four generalized recommendations on the aims and structure of the Bill, and forty-eight proposed amendments on the TGB) based on five consultation meetings with a total of 223 women representatives from all nine provinces, including capital Honiara. Also, the IGNR project conducted gender analysis</li> </ul>

<sup>16</sup> Finding of the key informant interviews, IGNR's project evaluation.

Results statements	Indicators	Progress rating	Explanation/ Justification
			<p>of the draft TGB based on the recommendations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In addition, the IGNR project conducted an anthropological research study, capturing diverse perspectives and practices around traditional governance system. The study has been recently completed, Jul'22, and is yet to be shared with the MTGPEA and the Office of PM.</li> <li>The consultation report/ recommendations and the gender analysis of the TGB were submitted to the MTGPEA, which after initial review submitted the same to its legislative office for drafting of amendments to the TGB 2018.</li> <li>The MTGPEA confirmed<sup>17</sup> that these recommendations are also discussed with the Office of Attorney General who has in-principle agreed to the consultation process and recommendation; however, have advised the MTGPEA to extend the consultations to village and council level, and to include young people, church and tribal leaders in these consultations before these are finally considered for informing the amendment to the TGB 2018.</li> </ul>
	Ind-1.2.2: % of women (of those consulted) from target project provinces were engaged during consultative process for traditional governance bill	Achieved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The IGNR project could effectively engage women in all consultations held on TGB, Customary Land Record Act/Regulations, and the by-laws of the customary landholding groups. Specifically, against a target of 50% women, the IGNR project has achieved:                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100% women-focused consultations on the TGB, as per the directives of the SIs Parliament's BLC.</li> <li>42% women participation in consultations on the Customary Land Record Act/Regulations, and the by-laws of the customary landholding groups.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Outcome 2: Communities adversely affected by land and natural resource mismanagement including VAWG participate more strongly in decisions on land and natural resources.</b>			
Output Improved recording of	2.1. Ind-2.1.1. Number of Customary land titles successfully recorded	Over-achieved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Against a target of recording of 2 customary lands, the IGNR project could support the MLHS in recording of 5 customary lands. The</li> </ul>

<sup>17</sup> Key information interview with the officials of MTGPEA, IGNR Project evaluation – July 2022.



Results statements	Indicators	Progress rating	Explanation/ Justification
customary land titles and strengthened synergies with Government and Private Sector to sustainably develop registered customary land	through community led consultative process		<p>process involved: public consultations/ awareness, public hearing, boundary mapping, dispute resolution, and finally land recording and its certification.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In addition, the IGNR project awareness campaign on the land recording process and related topics such as the role of customary landholding groups, sustainable business ideas, etc. created an overwhelming interest in the communities which is evident from the fact that the MLHS/ Land Recording Unit received over 40 applications (out of total 193 customary lands and 23 island).</li> <li>The Land Recording Unit, MLHS has also initiated the process of recording additional 17 customary lands; however, it takes 8-12 months, and approx. \$70,000 to record a customary land<sup>18</sup>. To accelerate the efforts, the Land Recording Unit, MLHS is considering alternate, efficient approaches such as a cluster approach, in-kind contributions from customary landholding groups/communities, developing a cadre of internal land recording officers, etc.</li> </ul>
	Ind-2.1.2. Number of sustainable pilot business plans mutually developed between MLHS, private sector and host communities with registered customary land.	Partly achieved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Against a target of two (02) sustainable business pilots, the IGNR project and the MLHS helped customary landholding groups (with recorded customary lands) in identification and development of three (03) sustainable business ideas, which were later discussed during the “Land forum – a dialogue/workshop” held on 26-28 October 2021.</li> <li>In light of the discussions held during Land forum, the customary landholding groups are supposed to develop detailed business plans for attracting investments from government, private sector and other entities.</li> </ul>
	Ind-2.1.3. Number of community-related land and resources grievances resolved through conflict resolution under the MTGPEA and MLHS	Achieved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As part of the process of recording of customary lands, the IGNR project supported the Land Recording Unit, MLHS in resolving three (03) land and natural resources related community level disputes/ grievances in Malaita, the Western Province and in Guadalcanal Province.</li> </ul>

<sup>18</sup> Key informant interview with the MLHS and the Land Recording Unit, IGNR Project evaluation (June 2022)

Results statements	Indicators	Progress rating	Explanation/ Justification
<p><b>Output 2.2.</b> Natural resource management committees provide an opportunity for community members, including women, to discuss and address grievances within communities, with the private companies and Government representatives.</p>	<p>Ind-2.2.1: Increased access of women and youth to natural resource management decision making.</p>	<p>Partially achieved</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The indicator required ensuring at-least 40% of women's representation in the customary landholding groups.</li> <li>The IGNR project supported the Government of Solomon Islands, and related ministries at national and sub-national level, with recommendations for more inclusive TGB, Customary Land Records Act/Regulations, and the by-laws of customary landholding groups.</li> <li>Specifically, the recommendations include 50% of women's representation in the customary landholding groups.</li> <li>Referring to the consultation sessions (which also involved awareness raising of women, youth, and wider communities), the official from the MWYCF state that "the IGNR project amplified the role that women can play in land and natural resource management".</li> </ul>
<p><b>Output 2.3.</b> Community members, especially women and girls have increased awareness of the legal rights and feel protected from VAWG</p>	<p>Ind- 2.3.1. Increased awareness of community members (of those who participated awareness sessions), especially women and girls, on existing laws and policies that protect women and girls from VAWG</p>	<p>Achieved</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As per the pre and post assessment conducted by the IGNR project, over 80% of those who participated in awareness sessions reported increased awareness on laws and policies that protect women and girls from VAWG.</li> <li>Participation of the focus group discussions in Western province stated that they are highly satisfied with the awareness sessions as "the awareness was very timely especially when a lot of issues of domestic violence are evident in our communities".</li> </ul>
<p><b>Output 2.4.</b> Avenues exist for communities, especially youth and women, to hold their leaders and government to account with regards to land and natural resource management decisions.</p>	<p>Ind-2.4.1: Improved participation of youth and women advocacy forums in decision-making processes related to peacebuilding, natural resource governance and accountability mechanism</p>	<p>Over-achieved</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IGNR project supported the National Youth Council (NYC) in revitalization of four (04) provincial youth council of Malaita, Guadalcanal, Western Province and Choiseul, as platforms to allow young people to get involved in decision-making processes on governance and management of natural resources and peacebuilding at provincial and national levels.</li> <li>Similarly, the provincial women caucuses were enabled to achieve greater participation of women in public consultations on TGB, Customary Land Records Act/Regulations, by-laws of customary landholding groups, and in awareness sessions on laws and policies that protect women and girls from VAWG.</li> </ul>

Results statements	Indicators	Progress rating	Explanation/ Justification
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NYC, provincial youth councils and the provincial women caucuses confirmed<sup>19</sup> that the IGNR project enabled them to play a role in policy and legislative matters as a mainstream actor, while representing women and youth people. (Examples of role performed by youth/women institutions are explained below in effectiveness and cross-cutting sections).</li> </ul>
<b>Output 2.5.</b> Communities are supported to find more sustainable and inclusive use of land which reduce conflict factors.	Ind-2.5.1. Number of sustainable business ideas/ proposals developed by national business development forum.	Partially achieved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In collaboration with the MLHS, the IGNR project facilitated a Land Forum, 26-28 October, wherein participating women from 5 recorded customary landholding groups (in Malaita, Guadalcanal and Western Provinces) presented three business ideas.</li> <li>These sustainable business ideas need to be further refined by the customary landholding groups as proposals for attracting private sector and governments' investments.</li> </ul>
<b>Overall results assessment</b>		<b>Achieved</b>	<b>Total indicators: 10</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Over-achieved:</b> 2 indicators, mostly related to community and institutional level results.</li> <li><b>Achieved:</b> 4 indicators, mostly process indicators and direct results of IGNR TA.</li> <li><b>Partially achieved:</b> 4 indicators, which were the outcomes of the policy change and/or related to productive, inclusive and sustainable use of recorded customary lands.</li> </ul>

- The duration of the IGNR project was too short given the ambition to support and influence complex policy, institutional and community-level reforms related to the traditional system of land and natural resource management.** In 25 months of project implementation, the UNDP and UN-Women could deliver at a limited scale technical assistance to the Government of SIs and its relevant ministries on committed activities. Experience from developing countries suggests that reforms are incremental and often require support beyond direct activities to ensure institutionalization, adaption and uptake of improved policies, processes, and systems. In this case, the IGNR project produced various input documents exhibiting high-quality technical support, such as gender-responsive recommendations, draft anthropological study, gender analysis/review of existing policies, drafting instructions, etc., to inform the amendments to the TGB. Appreciating the IGNR project's contribution to the process, the MTGPEA asserted that they lack technical and financial resources to complete the remaining steps, which include finalization

<sup>19</sup> Key informant interview with the representatives of NYC, provincial youth councils, provincial women councils, and the MWYFA, IGNR project evaluation 2022.

of these input documents, dialogue and consensus building among stakeholders, and making final amendments to the TGB. Similarly, the Land Recording Unit of the MLHS highly appreciated the IGNR project support to kick-start the process of recording of customary lands; however, they feel that the project might have continued to enable effective and sustainable use of recorded customary lands. Both ministries were of the view that the project should have been at-least for 4-5 years, till 2024.

**Logic behind a short-duration TA project, and why it is not so true in case of the IGNR project?**

- **Firstly**, the IGNR project was designed to create a catalytic impact by addressing inherent constraints such as low participation of women, youth and local communities in policy, legislative and institutional reforms; inadequate technical and financial capacity of government and its ministries to pursue inclusive, robust, and informed policy and legislative reforms; and weaker coordination among government ministries/ institutions. The underline assumption was that addressing these constraints will bring the intended change (toward inclusive governance of natural resources for social cohesion in Solomon Islands); however, in the real-world scenario, the evaluation corroborated the information that there is a lot more that needs to be done to realize the actual change. The key government ministries reported their limited ability to pursue it further on their own, at-least at a pace that is required given the urgency and priority of the issue.
- **Secondly**, despite being declared as a high-risk initiative, the IGNR project took a cautious approach indicating a low-risk appetite of PBF and its partners around traditional governance systems in Solomon Islands. This is understandable given varying perspectives within and among policymakers, tribal leaders and communities on the definitions, scope and extent of institutionalization, regulation and management of traditional governance system, and matters such as customary land and natural resources. Nevertheless, this has restrained the IGNR project to go beyond direct technical assistance to influencing and advocating for the intended change toward inclusive governance of natural resources for social cohesion in Solomon Islands.

**Overall, in this short i.e., 25-months, the IGNR has set the direction toward the intended change;** however, there are many critical steps that are still needed to realize the ultimate objective of inclusive governance of land and natural resources for peace and social cohesion in Solomon Islands. The evaluation finds it out that additional technical and financial assistance is inevitable, as the government ministries have already started to lag on follow-up actions toward the ultimate change. This may risk PFB's investments on some of the reform initiatives, especially on the policy level results of the IGNR project.

*The IGNR project was timely and a great help for the MTGPEA; however, the project should have been continued till 2023-24 till the amendment to the TGB is finalized. The project completed consultations in nine major localities and developed a report with recommendations. The quality of the recommendations is also good, and we have discussed these with the legislative drafting office, the Attorney General, Judiciary, and the Bar Association. There is an overall satisfaction on the process and recommendations, but we have been asked to extend the consultations to the village and council level, and to include church and tribal leaders. The MTGPEA, together with the MWYCFA, have conducted some additional consultations; however, this seems to be a huge task and we need the support of partners like UNDP and UN Women.*

- *Traditional Governance Division, Ministry of Traditional Governance, Peace and Ecclesiastical Affairs (MTGPEA)*

- **The IGNR project was highly efficient in leveraging political buy-in and support from the Government of Solomon Islands and its relevant ministries; however, the role of the Project Board remained weak.** The project design consultations and the formal and informal engagement mechanisms were key in leveraging political and bureaucratic level buy-in and support to UNDP and UN Women on the IGNR project. Also, the IGNR project directly corresponded to the policy priorities, capacity gaps, and technical needs of the Government of SIs in institutionalizing, regulating, and managing traditional governance systems related to land

and natural resources. The evaluation affirms that, at a strategic level, the key government counterparts are appreciative of PBF's support through UNDP and UN Women on the IGNR project. However, at an operational level, the IGNR project could not effectively leverage its Project Board, which was comprised of MTGPEA, MWYCFA, UNDP, UN Women, MLHS, and one delegate from the Youth and Women's Forum. For example, the Project Board could have played its role in securing the agreed/committed budget (which was downward revised due to shirking fiscal space as well as change in government priorities) of these respective ministries to ensure the continuation of efforts beyond the IGNR project and toward institutionalization, regulation, and management of traditional governance system.

- **The IGNR project took an opportunist and entrepreneurial approach, with the right set of entry points to strengthen various dimensions of the customary laws governing land and natural resources.** Being an opportunist means highly strategic, results-focused, and finding the right set of entry points and interventions to maximize the impact of project investments. The IGNR project warranted all these features. In response to the evaluation question, government counterparts from all relevant ministries/institutions appreciated the fact that the IGNR project could create inroads at policy, institutional and community levels to maximize and sustain its results. The project built on the momentum of existing initiatives such as the amendment to TGB 2018 by the MTGPEA; recording of customary lands by the MLHS; uplifting and inclusion of women, youth and tribal communities by the MWYCFA; etc. One of the unique features of the project was that it promoted the culture of policy dialogue, public consultations, and consensus building around complex policy issues, such as the traditional governance system that have an impact on the lives of the people, especially women, youth and tribal communities.

*The Land Recording Project of the Ministry of Land, Housing and Survey (MLHS) was initiated in 2017; however, due to technical and financial constraints, we could not finalize the design or launch its interventions till 2019. The IGNR project then assisted us in finalizing the design of the programme and shared responsibilities for technical and financial support, which enabled us to launch the programme in 2019. And since then, we have made substantial progress.*

- Ministry of Land, Housing and Survey
- Land Recording Programme, MLHS

- **The project took a highly cautious approach – reflecting the low-risk appetite of PBF, UNDP and UN Women – towards customary laws and policies governing land and natural resources, which is leading to a delay in concluding some of the critical milestones.** As stated above, the IGNR project contributed to the processes and inputs into the policy reforms, i.e., the amendment to the TGB, Customary Land Records Act/Regulations, and by-laws of the customary landholding groups, leaving the choices to the Government of SIs and its ministries to use/ adopt these as they deem appropriate. The quality of input provided by the IGNR project was good, reflecting the aspirations of the groups consulted. However, not being forceful (through tools such as policy advocacy and influencing) means the agenda of inclusive governance of natural resources for social cohesion might get into a risk, not due to the malafide intentions of policymakers or powerholders but because of low capacity or lack of pursuance. The IGNR project's deliberate decision not to get into the next steps of policy formulation is understandable, given the diverging viewpoint of key government officials on the definitions, scope and extent of institutionalization, regulation, and management of the traditional governance system. Nevertheless, it has limited the ability of the project to pursue the outcomes and impact of the project, especially around the policy shift towards inclusive governance of land and natural resources for social cohesion in the Solomon Islands.
- **The project's internal management system such as monitoring and evaluation, risk management, learning and adaptive programming could have been better instituted and employed to address the complexities of the project.** For a complex project with shared responsibility with the government to deliver results, it was even more important to use time-tested

project management systems and tools. Generally, under the guidance of the project manager, the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) officer performs the functions of results monitoring, deviation reporting, impact tracking, risks tracking/mitigation, and documentation of learning, best practices and adaptive programming. Since M&E officer was not engaged for most of the duration of the IGNR project, these functions were not sufficiently taken care of. The evaluation reached this conclusion not because these documents were not so regularly produced but also because this exhibited the weak existence of these systems. For example, most of the activities were delayed during the first and a half year of the project, but the reasons for such delays were neither timely identified nor were any corrective measures taken. That is why most of the activities were delivered during last 6-8 months of the project. Similarly, the key risks to the achievement of results, mostly applicable to policy level changes, were not identified timely and thus no mention of adaptive programming. For example, the output Indicator 1.2.1 “recommendations of gender analysis and women’s consultations incorporated into the revised traditional Governance Bill” was expected to achieve by project end or Jan’22; however, the MTGPEA shared that now this result is likely to be achieved by early 2024. There are several other examples where project could have further improved its contribution if project results management, M&E, risks management, learning and adaptive programming systems were adequately in placed. The role of full-time M&E officer must be ensured on all PBF projects.

- More than 50% of women’s participation in all project activities reflects a major achievement of the IGNR project in the context of Solomon Islands and is likely have positive impact on the women’s participation in decision making and access and control over land and natural resources.** The SI Parliament’s BLC withdrew the draft Bill from consideration due to the absence of a comprehensive consultation process, one that should have been inclusive of marginalized groups of persons that would be significantly impacted by the proposed legislation, including women. Therefore, ensuring representation of women in consultations on all policy matters such as the TGB, Customary Land Records Act/ Regulations, by-laws of customary landholding groups, etc. was a must. It was a tough challenge, given the short duration of the project as meaningful engagement with women and other marginalized groups required awareness/briefing of women and other members of the community before they could meaningfully contribute to raising their concerns and aspirations. Both the UNDP and the UN Women have invested – through earlier PBF initiatives and otherwise, in establishing/strengthening institutional and community-level structures such as provincial youth councils and provincial women caucuses, which were effectively engaged to mobilize women, youth and wider communities in the awareness raising and consultation process. The participation of women, youth, church, tribal leaders, etc. has led to over 50 recommendations for amendment to the TGB and, similarly, on other legislative and policy matters, which if incorporated, will lead to structural change in the society of Solomon Islands, with a regained role of women and youth in decision-making on land, natural resources, and wider peacebuilding measures.

*We appreciate that the IGNR project amplified the role of women to participate in land and natural resource management. The amendment to the TGB and the by-laws of the customary landholding groups will ensure representation of women at all levels.*

*- Guadalcanal Council of Women*

- The project timely highlighted the need for applying the lens of intersectionality, diversity, gender-sensitivity and inclusion for codification of the customary laws in the Solomon Islands.** The project activities equipped the government with analysis and suitable alternatives, policies, and frameworks which are more inclusive and conform to the positive aspects of customary governance. These include, among others, the inclusive and gender-sensitive recommendations for amendments to the bylaws and legal provisions relating to recording, registration, and development of land and natural resource management. In addition, the IGNR project supported the government of SI in its endeavor to reform policies and legislation around

land management to the benefit of the vast majority of the people whose social, economic and cultural rights are directly linked to the ownership and development of customary land.<sup>20</sup>

- **Most of the risks to the achievement of the IGNR project’s objectives (risks matrix) were being managed through effective project designing and implementation strategies; however, other operational risks were seen to be ignored during the project life.** For example, the lack of political will or support for the project, the risk of limited ownership by relevant ministries related to the inclusive approach of consultations and gender-sensitive recommendations on TGB, etc. were identified and effectively managed through project design and management approaches such as pre-project and design phase consultations, and regular engagement with the key government counterparts. Similarly, the risk of “no feasible alternatives to communities but unsustainable logging” was mitigated by helping communities develop sustainable business ideas, which were presented in the “land forum”. However, risks such as the weak rule of law and high prevalence of crime, difficulties in identifying human resources and expertise to implement projects, etc., could not be effectively mitigated due to the lack of regular management of the risks register. However, it is equally correct that addressing law and order issues were beyond the call of the IGNR project. Also, true enough that projects, including and similar to the IGNR, cannot fully deliver in a vacuum of unpredictability and the weak rule of law.

### 3.4. Effectiveness and Theory of Change

To what extent the project outputs contributed to the achievement of change at the outcome level, and IGNR project has made a concrete contribution towards reducing the actual or potential conflicts triggered by deficient legislative frameworks, private interests, and lack of inclusivity with regard to the provision on the use of land and natural resources in the Solomon Islands, and whether the project Theory of Change was realized.

#### Supporting data, evidence, and commentary

##### Theory of change

- **The ToC logic, drivers of change and related assumptions remained/ proved valid during the life of the project and based on the trajectory of change.** The interviews and focus group discussions with all relevant stakeholders including key government officials at national and sub-national level, UN agencies, community leaders, women and other members of the society confirmed that the inequitable land resource management, absence of legislation governing land ownership, and lack of the processes for the participation of women and youth in decision making are the key drivers of conflict in Solomon Islands. The two outcomes i.e., government’s ability to institutionalize/regulate and the communities’ participation in decision-making on land and natural resources; and three entry points i.e. policy, institutional and community level engagements provided a qualified response to addressing these challenges. Although, the ultimate change in the outcomes is yet to be seen, the direction of travel suggests that the IGNR project created a momentum for long-term change towards inclusive governance of land and natural resources. For

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<sup>20</sup> As a state party to International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), government of SI is duty bearer to introduce land management reforms for the realization and equal enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights. This includes reforms in terms of the access, use and tenure of land for their economic, social and cultural functions. Specific rights set out in the covenant which are intertwined with land include the right to gender equality, food, water, clothing, housing, continuous improvement of living conditions, and culture.

example. over 80% youth and women who participated (186 youths from 5 Provinces including Honiara) in pre-consultation sessions on TGB 2018 confirmed their enhanced knowledge and understanding on the traditional governance system, and the process through which this can be strengthened. This is also evident from 52 recommendations that were provided by the women during consultation sessions on TGB, and the in-principle agreement of the MTGPEA, MWYCFA, MLHS and the Office of Attorney General for more inclusive, robust and informed amendment to the Traditional Governance Bill.

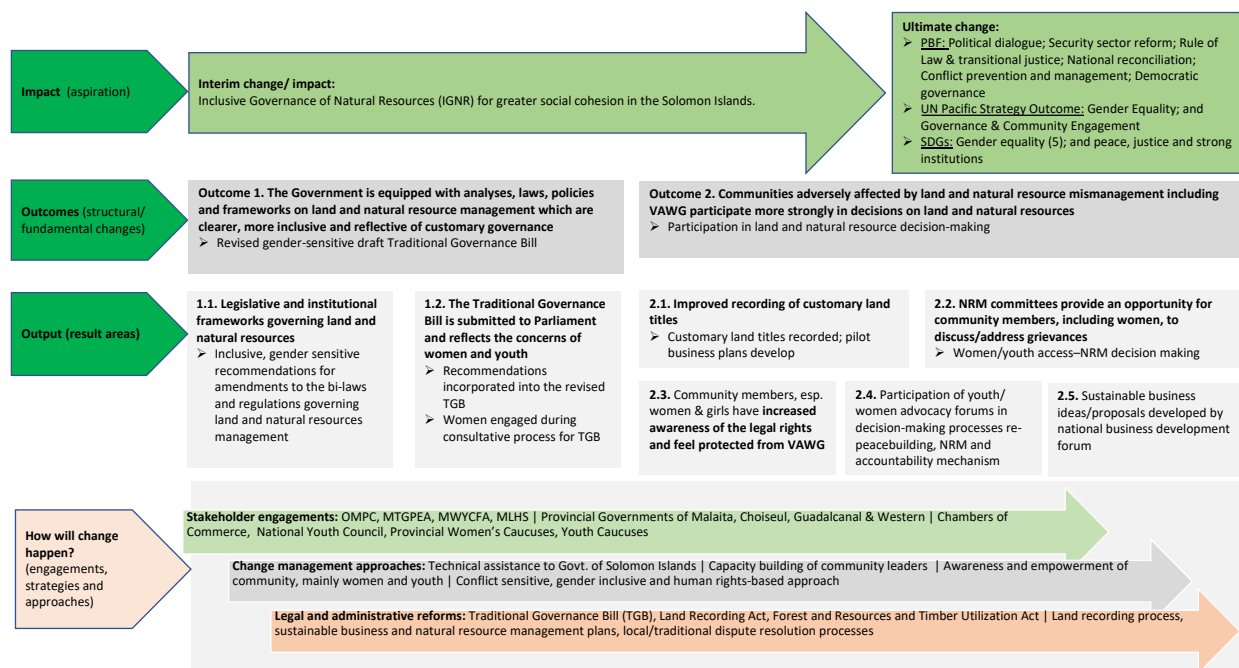


Figure 7. Project ToC diagram (revised)

- To achieve a meaningful change at the outcome level, the project should have considered longer-term engagement beyond direct technical assistance to influence the fundamental changes.** For example. outcome 1 “the Government is equipped with analyses, laws, policies and frameworks on land and natural resource management which are inclusive and reflective of customary governance” has been achieved as the IGNR project provided all required inputs (based on public consultations, technical review/analysis, drafting instructions, etc.) to inform and strengthen traditional governance systems related to land and natural resources; however, now it is up to the government and its ministries to decide how much they want to include. Similarly, under outcome 2, there are several recommendations – compiled based on the consultations with women, youth, church, tribal leaders, and wider communities – that require 50% participation of women and youth in decision-making structures, i.e., from customary landholding groups to national council of chiefs. There are other more complex documents, such as anthropological study, which explain the diversities and complexities around various customary and traditional systems that exist in Solomon Island for defining these rights, use, and sharing of benefits from land and natural resources. The IGNR project ToC assumes that if these two outcomes are achieved, it will lead to a more inclusive, robust, and informed traditional governance system, which will ultimately reduce the marginalization and grievances of communities, particularly women and youth. However, discussion with key informants, especially with senior government officials at the MTGPEA and the MLHS, suggest that the government still lack the capacity to comprehend, synthesize and incorporate all these inputs to draft amendment to the TGB, Customary Land Records Act/Regulation, and to institutionalize and regulate customary landholding groups.

**Below is the analysis of key ToC logic model and related assumptions**



ToC logic model and related assumptions	Validity assessment and explanation
<p><b>IF</b> gender sensitive natural resources management and administration related regulations and business development initiatives are institutionalized with the participation of communities (traditional leaders/chiefs, women, youth, PWDs) and private sector,</p> <p>➤ <b>THEN</b> communities (traditional leaders/chiefs, women, youth, PWDs) and private sector will be able to access the benefits from the development of customary lands with confidence and thus reduce the incidence of conflict in the communities.</p>	<p><b>True, because:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Out of 6 recorded customary lands, three community-based land and customary landholding groups have resolved their land related disputes/issues; and three of them could develop (somewhat sustainable) business ideas.</li> <li>• This has resolved issues relating to land rights, sustainable use of land and natural resources, and more equitable benefit-sharing, which were major bottlenecks for communities and private sector for the development of customary lands.</li> </ul> <p><b>However,</b> three aspects of this logic model and related assumptions are yet to be confirmed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Firstly, if the land recording process will be implemented at scale. The Land Recording Programme started in 2017, and with two-years of IGNR project support, a total of 6 customary lands are recorded, another 19 applications for recording of land are accepted for consideration. There are over 200 major customary lands that need to be recorded.</li> <li>• Secondly, if the customary landholding groups (or related structures at community level) will be truly inclusive with some level of institutionalization, regulation and management by the Government (through enactment of amendment to TGB, customary land records Act/Regulations, bylaws of customary landholding groups).</li> <li>• Thirdly, if the communities or their respective landholding groups will have the capacities to develop sustainable business plans, and to engage with the private sector to maximize their social, economic, and environmental benefits.</li> </ul> <p>(The INGR project support has been withdrawn at an early stage of the transformation; therefore, there is still a risk that it may or may not lead to intended, ultimate change at the outcome level.</p>

## Effectiveness

- The project played a catalytic role in generating the momentum for traditional governance reforms including legislative arrangements, land recording process, customary landholding groups, and effective and sustainable use of land and natural resources. The

officials of MTGPEA, MLHS and MWYCFA expressed<sup>\*21</sup> that they were overwhelmed by the remarks and recommendations of the SI Parliament's BLC; and responding to these seemed like a gigantic task. However, the timely intervention of PBF through IGNR project made it possible to address these multiple concerns simultaneously and equipped the ministries to further pursue these reforms. Similarly, the MLHS launched a Land Recording Program in 2017; however, as per the officials of Land Recording Unit, the project could not be implemented till 2019. The IGNR project then helped the finalization of the MLHS's Land Recording Program, by sharing technical and financial responsibilities as well by launching a massive awareness raising campaign which generated interest of the communities, including tribal leaders, to pursue for recording of their customary lands. The IGNR project generated a government-wide momentum for strengthening traditional governance systems relating to land and natural resources. Key informant interviews with key government officials at national and sub-national level indicated a highly level of commitment towards institutionalize and up-scale IGNR project supported initiatives, especially the drafting of amendment to the TGB, land recording process, and inclusiveness of customary landholding groups. Nonetheless, weak technical, financial and operational capacity could continue to blockage the pace of progress.

- **Among all interventions, recording of customary lands is being perceived as a most promising and high-impact intervention by the tribal leaders/ customary landholding groups.** The IGNR project support to the MLHS, especially in recording of customary lands, has proved to be highly effective. It has generated huge interest in the communities – evident from fact that over 60 applications (out of a total of 221 main lands) received during 2021 by the MLHS from tribal leaders/community groups for the registration of their lands – which indicates that the communities, mainly tribal leaders and members of the customary landholding groups consider registration/recording of land as an opportunity to unlock multiple other avenues of local economic development i.e. private sector investments, employment, diversification of income sources, and sustainable business beyond logging and other extraction industries. As one of the tribal leaders in Malaita province affirmed that the land recording as a process helps us address our community level disagreements/disputes and bring clarity on the right and authority of land and its uses.

**Challenges around recording of customary lands in Solomon Islands; and how is the MLHS/ Land Recording Programme approaching this?**

In Solomon Islands, over 80% of the total land is the customary land. There are around 220 major customary lands, including Islands. So-far, the Land Recording Unit of the MLHS has recorded 6 customary lands. It is five-step process of recording of customary land, which requires 8-12 months and an average cost of US\$ 70,000 per customary land. There is an overwhelming interest of the communities (through tribal leaders, customary landholding groups, etc.) for the registration of their customary lands, and as per the Land Recording Unit, out of a total of 60 applications received it could consider only 19 applications for land recording. The Land Recording Unit has (only) three full-time employees, and a pool of part-time surveyors, land recording officers and legal experts. In terms of capacity, despite the IGNR project technical and financial support, the Land Recording Unit could only record five (05) customary lands in 2021 (and one was done before the IGNR project).

A slow response from the Land Recording Unit, MLHS might lead to (i) dissatisfaction and mistrust of the communities, particularly the tribal leaders and the landholding groups, on the government services; (ii) missed opportunity to realize the potential investments for local economic development, youth employment, achieving diversity in sources of income, etc.; (iii) a continued rise of number of local disputes (and a pressure on already clogged judicial system) on land and natural resources

<sup>21</sup> \*Expressed during the key informant interviews and discussions, IGNR Project Evaluation July 2022.

and a risk of more violent riots; (iv) further exploitation of private sector through unsustainable use of land and natural resources; and (v) long-term impact of unsustainable use of land and natural resources in terms climates, environmental hazards and loss of future, sustainable livelihoods.

The Land Recording Unit, MLHS is cognizant of these challenges (as confirmed by the officials of the Land Recording Unit and the MLHS during the IGNR project evaluation interviews/ discussions) and has devised a strategy which is yet to be approved by the MLHS and the Office of Prime Minister. Key dimensions of the strategy are:

- Cluster-based approach for the recording of customary lands, which means the Land Recording Unit will consider 3-4 adjacent customary lands as a cluster and deploy a team to simultaneously work on recording of these lands. This will reduce the travel time and cost, which constitute a major share of total cost of recording of customary lands.
- Cadre of land recording office, which means expanding the temporary staff of the Land Recording Programme/ Unit. For this, the Land Recording Unit, MLHS plans to conduct short-duration trainings and certification programmes, thereby increasing the team of experts who could do recording of customary lands.
- In-kind cost sharing by the respective communities, whereby the communities interested in recording of their lands share the responsibility to host the teams of the Land Recording Unit by supporting their accommodation, local travel and maybe food during the land recording process.

All of these are the proposed options put forward by the Land Recording Unit, MLHS to overcome the technical and financial capacity gaps in recording of customary lands and to expedite the process. In addition, the Land Recording Unit has made a special request (to include as one of the recommendations of the IGNR project evaluation) that the PBF may consider (i) support to communities in formalizing community-based, more inclusive land and natural resource management structures i.e. the customary landholding groups; and (ii) technical (and financial) support to the Land Recording Unit, MLHS in strengthening its operational capacity to expedite the process of recording of customary lands.

- **There is strong, though initial, evidence that suggests women’s regained role in decision-making and access and control over land and natural resources.** The soft component of the IGNR project, such as awareness raising on traditional governance systems, recording of customary lands, registration, and institutionalization of customary landholding groups, etc., has been highly instrumental in leveraging interest and active involvement of the women, youth, tribal leaders, tribal chiefs, and wider communities in the transformation of land and natural resource governance system. In addition, fulfilling the requirement of a comprehensive consultation process, inclusive of women and marginalized groups, will have a significant impact on the proposed legislation. Especially the consultations with women belonging to cross-sections of society<sup>22</sup> accomplished the objective of making TGF inclusive, which The Solomon Islands (SI) Parliament’s Bills and Legislative Committee (BLC) had declared to be “gender blind”.

***In response to the question “what kind of benefits you (as women) experienced as a result of public consultants and land recording process?”, the women respondents expressed that:***

*We feel more empowered in all spheres of lives. For example.*

***In the social sphere, we experienced that:***

<sup>22</sup> Women participating in consultations on traditional governance bill represented various sectors including: Government ministries, Provincial Councils (PCW) and Ward Councils of Women (WCW), faith-based organizations (FBOs), Non-Government Organizations (NGOs), international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs), landowning groups, market vendors, women business organizations, community-based organizations (CBOs), women and community/church leaders.

- *Women and youth have increased social interactions with the tribal leaders, and we are more openly and easily communicating in the tribal groups.*
- *Women have more freedom and access to the customary land, especially due to the bylaws of customary landholding groups which were put in place during the land recording process.*

***In the economic sphere, we experienced that:***

- *We have improved access to investment to help develop the land. For example, we secured funding for the planting of ginger and Kava.*

***In the political sphere, we experienced that:***

- *Our customary land has been recognized by the Ministry of Land, Housing and Survey.*
- *We are formally represented in our tribal community as part of our customary landholding group.*
  - *Respondents of FGDs, Western Province*

- **The project set the direction of the development discourse and adroitly built on the policy pledge of the Government of the Solomon Islands.** The IGNR project leveraged the already available policy and legislative environment and policy priorities of the Solomon Islands Democratic Coalition Government for Advancement (DCGA) that had specific targets and actions with regard to reforming customary land management and landholding groups.<sup>23</sup> In addition, the project provided an impetus for fulfilling the obligations of the state under CEDAW by supporting the government of SI in taking steps for women’s empowerment and protection of their land rights. The government has a legal obligation to fulfil, protect and respect the rights of women. This includes taking steps in laws, policies, and other measures to ensure that women are not discriminated against in land governance, claims to inheritance and land rights.<sup>24</sup>

**Part 5.2.1.7 of the DCGA Policy sets out the key priorities for the current government as follows:**

- 5.2.1.7 (a) Prioritize a Customary Land Recording Bill. The intended outcome is an Amendment to the Customary Land Records Act.
- 5.1.2.7 (b) Develop a Restitution Policy and establish a Commission to deal with and address alienated land issues. The intended outcome is a policy on restitution to original landowners.
- 5.1.2.7 (d) To encourage landowners and land resource owners to participate in economic development activities and become partners in development opportunities. The intended outcome is for landowners/resource owners to become partners in economic development.
- 5.1.2.7 (g) Improve systems of allocation of urban land, recording and registration of customary land. The intended outcome is an equitable, professional and ethical delivery of land services.
- 5.1.2.7 (h) Establish the customary land reconciliation and recording commission that will focus on land reconciliation and recording. The intended outcome is an amendment to the Customary Land Records Act.

- **The purpose of the by-laws, as described in drafting instructions for amendments to the Customary Land Records Acts/ Regulations 2017, is to set out the key areas to embed unhindered participation, accountability, transparency, inclusivity, and equitable governance of landholding groups.** This includes ensuring equal and equitable participation and representation of men and women in decision-making and benefit sharing; protecting women’s rights and access to land<sup>25</sup>; coordinating and liaising with potential investors for the use

<sup>24</sup> CEDAW General Recommendation 21 on Equality in Marriage and Family Relations sets out that when countries are setting out programmes for agrarian reform and redistribution of land, rights of women regardless of their marital status should be observed to ensure that there is equality in such programmes.

<sup>25</sup> Indicator 5.a.2 of SDG-5 provides for measuring to extent is the legal framework of a country (including customary law) guarantees women’s equal rights to land ownership and/or control.

of land and natural resource on the land; preserving land for farming and community gardens; facilitating opportunities for farmers for income-earning activities; preserving resources for housing and other customary uses; addressing land degradation and promoting sustainable farming practices; coordinating educational and economic opportunities for the group members to gain income; educating the community on the customary land recording process and related matters; and facilitating business ventures of the land holding group. If institutionalized that way, the landholding groups will emerge as the most important, modern, dynamic and democratic structure of local level governance. In fact, it will have the potential to become third tier of the governance in SI where there is no effective local level governance available beyond provincial government.

- The project recommended suitable amendments and additions to democratize existing laws such as Customary Land Records Act/Regulations, and The Mines and Minerals Act to remove several procedural and administrative obstacles and barriers to pave the way for customary landholding groups to take place as effective local governance organizations in the Solomon Islands.** Another crucial amendment has been recommended in The Mines and Minerals Act to protect the permanent right of the customary landholding groups on their customary lands. The Act, in its existing shape prescribes procedures for the grant of licenses, permits or leases and other matters to regulate and control mining. Though the Act recognizes that all minerals of every description are jointly owned by the people and government of SI.<sup>26</sup> But the law provides for compulsory acquisition of land by the government for mining if there is no prospect of negotiation for acquisition is acceptable to both the parties.<sup>27</sup> An amendment has been recommended to limit the application of this provision only to recorded customary land. At the sub-national level, number of provincial assemblies have already passed Resource Management Ordinances which allow provinces to establish protected areas over land or sea through Resource Management Orders. There is already a partial recognition of customary environmental practices through Provincial and Ward instruments. As such no recommendation has been made to amend any provincial law.
- The key government officials as well as the tribal leaders have alluded to number of examples and impressions which speak about the unintended, yet positive, potential, or realized, impact of the IGNR project.** The IGNR project has effectively intervened at policy, institutional and grassroots level to achieve its objective of strengthening legislation and policies regarding land and natural resource management in Solomon Islands. In doing so, the IGNR project could address number of other challenges faced by the society in Solomon Islands. Below are some of the key, unintended results that have not been captured through the project's results framework.

[Table: Key interlinked but unintended results – beyond IGNR Project's results framework](#)

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<sup>26</sup> Ownership of mineral: 2.- (1) All minerals of every description in or under all lands of whatsoever ownership or tenure or in whatsoever possession or enjoyment they may be, are and shall be deemed always to have been, vested in the people and the Government of Solomon Islands.

<sup>27</sup> Compulsory acquisition of land for mining: 33.-(1) Where there is no prospect of the negotiations provided for in section 32 being concluded on a basis acceptable to the parties, or where the delay in arriving at a satisfactory settlement is not in the public interest the Minister may, in consultation with the Minister charged with responsibility under the Land and Titles Act, require the Commissioner of Lands to exercise the powers conferred by Division 2 of Part V of the Land and Titles Act and any other power vested in him in that behalf. (2) Where any land is compulsorily acquired pursuant to subsection (1), such purpose shall in relation to the exercise of any such powers be deemed to be in the public interest.

Key results	Example(s)	Source / reference
Institutional capacity of the government ministries/ institutions at national and sub-national level	<p>Apart from direct technical assistance to NYC in revitalizing four (04) provincial youth caucuses, there are other examples which indicates an overall impact of the IGNR project on institutional capacity development of relevant government ministries. For example.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MTGPEA expressed that now they have the capacity to hold public consultations at a scale and compile recommendations as desired by the SI Parliament's BLC.</li> <li>• MHLS shared that they could roll out the Land Recording Programme with IGNG support, and now they have the required technical skills (though they lack financial resources) to expand the recording of customary lands to remaining tribes.</li> <li>• MWCYFA, NYC, provincial caucuses shared that they have better coordination mechanisms in place for engagement on policy and institutional matters that affect the lives of the women, youth and children.</li> </ul>	Shared by the officials/ representative of the relevant miniseries/ institutions during key informant interviews.
Addressing issues of rapid urbanization through local economic development	<p>Solomon Islands is one of the fastest urbanizing society, with rapid and high rates of migration of youth from rural areas to capital Honiara and other peri-urban centers. This has increased the pressure, and related conflicts, over the ownership, rights, use and benefits from land and natural resources in centers.</p> <p>The MHLS shared that the young men in the communities, where land recording process is completed, are now considering the options to stay in their respective communities and work towards productive development of their own lands and natural resources.</p> <p>For example. a young boy who is fresh graduate in business studies from Malaita province expressed, during public consultations on amendment to customary land records Act, that now instead of moving to Honiara for a job, he plans to stay back on his customary land and prepare a business plan for funding from government and other sources.</p>	Shared by the officials of MLHS Voices of young people and women during public consultations on traditional governance system
Shift towards sustainable use of land and natural resources, beyond lagging	<p>Interestingly, women and young people expressed their interest in more innovative and sustainable business ideas. Unlike traditional sources of income i.e., logging, fishing, mining contracts; women and young people expressed their interest in comprehensive land use planning, conservation, and management of customary recorded lands to generate employment opportunities at a local level, improve environment, and have prospects for growth. Some of the sustainable and more productive uses of the land, as identified during public consultations, were gardening, plantations, buildings for residential purposes, establishment of canteens, resorts and</p>	Shared by the officials of MLHS Voices of young people and women during public consultations on traditional governance system

Key results	Example(s)	Source / reference
	telecommunication towers, crops and herbs, more regulated contracts for fishing and logging, etc.	

### 3.5. Impact and Sustainability of Results

The extent to which the intervention has generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended, or unintended, higher-level effects and if the net benefits of the interventions continue or are likely to continue.

#### Supporting data, evidence, and commentary

- The IGNR project design featured the sustainability of results, especially the technical assistance by the project was geared towards enabling and equipping the Government of Solomon Islands and relevant ministries in strengthening engagement with the citizens.** The IGNR project interventions were in support of the Government; therefore, it led to building the capacity of the government to institutionalize, regulate and manage the customary land and traditional governance systems. The project added value by providing strategic planning support, developing a roadmap for reforms, and facilitating collaboration for the implementation of critical initiatives.
- Over 60% of the project-supported policy, institutional, administrative and process reforms re- traditional governance and management of land and natural resources have been institutionalized, sustained, and scaled up by the respective ministries of the Solomon Islands.** The relevance, coherence, efficiency, and effectiveness define the continuation or likely continuation of benefits of the project in the context of Solomon Islands. The suitability of the results guarantees the perpetual value of the project and its results. Below is the analysis of interventions supported by the project, their impact, and an explanation of reasons why these interventions and related results are leading toward a sustainable change or otherwise.

Interventions and related results	Rationale/ justification
<b>1. At the policy level, amendment to the Traditional Governance and Customs Facilitation Bill (TGB), Customary Land Records Act/ Regulations and bylaws of customary landholding groups.</b>	<p><b>Likely to sustain.</b></p> <p>This reflects the policy level reforms being supported by the IGNR project to strengthen i.e. institutionalization, regulation and management, the customary law and traditional governance system related to land and natural resources in the Solomon Islands.</p> <p>There are two compelling reasons to believe that these interventions and related results will be sustained after the exit of the IGNR project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Firstly, there is wider consensus among stakeholders such as the political leadership, government administrations, tribal leaders, church, communities, especially women and youth, and the private sector on the urgency and need for some degree of institutionalization, regulation, and management of traditional governance system related to land and natural resources in the Solomon Islands.</li> <li>Secondly, a clearly defined roadmap to policy and institutional reforms has already been developed in line with the recommendation of the SI Parliament's BLC and with the technical assistance of the IGNR project. Also, a number of</li> </ul>

	<p>steps toward this result “amendment to the TGB” have already been either completed or at an advanced stage of completion.</p> <p><b>However</b>, the diverse viewpoint of government offices/officials on the definition, scope and extent of institutionalization, regulation, and management of traditional government systems, as well as a weak technical and financial capacity of responsible ministries might undermine the overall process of amendment to the TGB, Customary Land Records Act/Regulations and the by-laws of customary landholding groups.</p>
<p><b>2. At the institutional level, recording of customary lands, including process of dispute resolution</b></p>	<p><b>Highly likely to sustain.</b></p> <p>This reflects support to the MLHS (particularly the Land Recording Unit/ Programme) in accelerating its initiative of recording of customary lands. So-far, 6 customary lands have been recorded and were issued the certificates with the support of IGNR project; however, the task is enormous as remaining 200+ customary lands and islands are yet to be recorded.</p> <p>There are two reasons to believe that this intervention, and related results will be sustained. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Firstly, around 60 applications from tribal leaders and their customary landholding groups or similar structures have been received by the Land Recording Unit, which indicates interest of and demand for recording of customary lands by the tribal leaders and their communities.</li> <li>• Secondly, while recognizing technical and financial constraints, the Land Recording Unit of the MLHS has developed a strategy to sustain and accelerate the recording of customary lands. This includes cluster-based approach to recording customary lands; establish a cadre of land recording office; and options for in-kind contribution of tribal communities during land recording process.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. At the community/ individual level, more aware and empowered communities, particularly women and youth, to participate in decision-making of land and natural resources and to counter violence against women and girls.</b></p>	<p><b>Somewhat likely to sustain.</b></p> <p>In collaboration with the counterpart government ministries/institutions, the IGNR project has worked towards this objective through: awareness raising and participation of women, youth and communities in public consultations on matters relating to land and natural resource management; representation of women at institutional levels, including in tribal leadership structures and customary landholding groups; and inclusive, robust, and informed legislation.</p> <p>There are three reasons to believe that this impact will sustain after the IGNR project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Firstly, there is wider recognition among policy makers that without the representation of women and youth in the traditional governance systems of Solomon Islands, an inclusive, equitable, and sustainable development is not possible. And there is always a risk of violence and disputes if women and youth (which makes up to 70% of the population) continue to feel grieved, excluded and deprived of their rights to participate in decision making and share benefits.</li> <li>• Secondly, the IGNR project support to revitalizing (four) provincial youth caucuses, and strengthening the role of NYC, provincial youth caucuses and provincial women caucuses ensures that women and youth will be somewhat represented,</li> </ul>



	<p>and their rights will be safeguarded, in policy and institutional matter on land, natural resources and beyond.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thirdly, there are number of recommendations/ provisions – identified and recommended under the IGNR project – which if approved/endorsed will ensure more equal participation of women and youth in the traditional governance system.</li> </ul> <p><b>However</b>, there are some caveats to the actual realization of impact and its sustainability. For example.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Despite wider consensus, the policy recommendations that provide for more equal participation of women (and youth in few instances) are yet to be approved for incorporation in the amendments to the TGB, Customary Land Records Act/Regulations and bylaws of the customary landholding groups.</li> <li>• Similarly, the establishment of customary landholding groups as a mandatory requirement for recording of customary lands is yet to be approved. Though marginal, but there is some resistance to this provision as opponents consider it over institutionalization and regulation of traditional land and natural resource management structures.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. At the community level, sustainable business ideas/ pilots, and land forum to mobilize investments for more productive, inclusive, and sustainable development.</b></p>	<p><b>Somewhat likely to sustain.</b></p> <p>The IGNR project, through technical to the Government of SI, has helped address blockades to more equitable, inclusive, and sustainable development.</p> <p>There are two reasons to believe that this intervention, and related results will be sustained.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Firstly, communities including tribal leaders and customary landholding groups or similar structures have realized that recording of land is the first step towards local economic development, and a pre-condition to attracting external investments.</li> <li>• Secondly, there are wider opportunities, beyond logging, fishing, mining, which they can explore to increase local development, employment, and income diversification.</li> </ul> <p><b>However</b>, this is an initial assessment of this result and its sustainable. There are many factors that might affect the actual achievement of results and its sustainability in the long run. For example.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the local communities including landholding groups will be able to register their land in near future. Only 6 customary lands have been recorded so-far.</li> <li>• If the local communities will have the capacity to develop ‘sustainable business plans’, considering the land and other natural resource they have.</li> <li>• If the bylaws of the customary landholding groups will be notified and enforced, and with these if women and youth representation can be ensured in decision-making in land and natural resources and related matters such as sharing of benefits.</li> <li>• If the private, government and other sources of investment will be available to finance the business plans of the communities.</li> </ul>

- **The project strengthened the idea that land is a source of peace and prosperity and not only that of conflict.** Through its activities and outreach, the project contributed to promoting the dialogue on transforming the vision about land and natural resources from the one that was being seen as a source of conflict to a source of economic development, prosperity, and peace for people in the Solomon Islands. The modernization of the society of Solomon Islands, and the influx of foreign direct investments has further unveiled the reality that customary lands (if recorded/registered) can be used in a much productive, inclusive, and sustainable manner to promote local economic development and promote prosperity. Tribal leaders, customary landholding groups have started to identify business development ideas beyond traditional use of land and natural resource which involve logging, mining, fishing, and some form of agriculture.

*The successful recording of customary land has broadened our vision and dreams on how we can use our land, and our resources to support our young generation as well as our leaders to empower and build a resilient tribal group with equality for all. We are particularly keen on building a recreational center or learning center for the “environmental education” of our young generation. We also have plans to establish a sports complex/ facility and a community center for our young people and tribal community.*

- Respondents of FGDs, Western Province

- **The project helped the stakeholders harness the culture of peacebuilding, transparency, and accountability in natural resource governance in the Solomon Islands.** The project activities providing an interface to communities (traditional leaders/chiefs, women, youth, PWDs), government, and private sector have reassured stakeholders that issues with existing legislation and traditional governance are manageable, and no one will be left behind from accessing the benefits of the development of customary lands. The project activities created and popularized the demand for more transparency and accountability in processes relating to business ideas on land owned by the customary landholding groups. Moreover, it provided a forum for reaffirming the societal consensus on the preservation of traditional rights, leveraging the influence and power of the structures of traditional governance, and codifying the customary laws – also referred to as ‘traditional by-laws’.
- **The project has floated the model of a dynamic organization of customary landholding groups.** The IGNR has proposed a successful model for institutionalization of the customary landholding organization in order to make it more democratic and ensure benefit sharing among all group members, including women. The institutionalization of the group as an organisation will remove the barrier to partnership between customary landholding groups and the private sector ridding the system of the corrupt conduit of fake “Trusts” to the benefit of both sides.<sup>28</sup> In order to pave the way for bylaws effectively governing the Customary Landholding Groups, amendments have been proposed in the Customary Land Records Act and the Customary Land Records Regulations (2007). The key proposal is for amending the Customary Land Records Act to require landholding groups to establish themselves as legal entities with bylaws and to set out standard requirements for bylaws. The bylaws are a requirement of the land recording process. The establishment of landholding groups as legal entities across the country will provide an impetus for the majority population of the SI based in rural areas to exercise their right of association and

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<sup>28</sup> Under the Land and Titles Act, Perpetual Estates are held by up to five ‘duly appointed representatives’ listed as ‘Trustees’ in the land title (section 46)

collective bargaining, which is well aligned with The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (DRIP).<sup>29</sup>

## SECTION 4: CONCLUSIONS

### Relevance

#### Relevance of the project (overall) **Highly relevant**

- The IGNR project design sufficiently addressed the political, social, and economic causes of the conflicts and violent disputes in the Solomon Islands.
- The project approach, focus areas and main interventions were designed in consultation with the relevant Government stakeholders and responded to the strategic priorities of the UN Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund.
- The IGNR project directly responded to the priorities set under the Solomon Islands' NDS Medium Term Strategy (MTS), i.e., strengthening land reform and other programmes to encourage economic development in urban, rural and customary lands.
- Working with both: the demand-side representing women, youth, church, tribal leaders, and broader communities; and the supply-side representing policymakers, legislators and duty bearers strengthened the process of customary laws, traditional governance, and related land reforms.
- In addition to countering immediate causes of conflicts and violent disputes, the IGNR project sufficiently accounted for impending issues such as rapid urbanization and pressure on resources, modernization and distortion of the customary laws, environment and sustainable development, and the need for more balanced, local economic development.
- The project interventions adequately considered the inclusion of women, girls and young people in the decision-making of rights and benefits from customary lands and natural resources.
- There has been a slight shift in the priorities of the Government of SIs; however, the institutionalization, management and regulation of the traditional governance system continued to remain a top priority.

### Coherence

#### Coherence (overall) **Highly coherent**

- UNDP and UN Women collaborated to strengthen the supply side and demand side of the IGNR project, which led to increased engagement, collaboration, and trust of citizens in the Government of Solomon Islands and its commitment towards inclusive governance of land and natural resources.
- The two outcomes and subsequent outputs were logical to cover the broader gaps and areas of improvement in policy, institutional and community-level governance of land and natural resources.

<sup>29</sup> The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (DRIP) sets out the collective and individual rights of indigenous peoples. The Declaration recognizes that 'control by indigenous people over developments affecting them and their lands, territories and resources will enable them to maintain and strengthen their institutions, cultures and traditions, and to promote their development in accordance with their aspirations and needs.'

- Recording of customary lands strengthened the synergies among stakeholders, including relevant government authorities, communities, and the private sector, for local economic development.
- The project exhibited an inter-connected and holistic approach towards reforms, discouraging piecemeal approach.
- The project interventions very prudently built upon the effects and outcomes of previous PBF project, namely SPIT and the EYAPSCSI.
- The IGNR project effectively leveraged existing structures such as national youth council (NYC), provincial youth councils, provincial women caucuses, and their community-based structures to strengthen engagement of women and youth in traditional governance of land and natural resources.

## Efficiency

### Efficiency (overall) **Mostly efficient**

- The IGNR project successfully delivered over 80% of its planned interventions and outputs within available resources and timelines; wherein, out of 10 output indicators, the project exceeded targets against two indicators, met targets for four indicators, and partially achieved the targets on remaining four indicators.
- The 25-months duration of the IGNR project was too short given the ambition to support and influence complex policy, institutional and community-level reforms related to the traditional system of land and natural resource management
- The IGNR project was highly efficient in leveraging political buy-in and support from the Government of Solomon Islands and its relevant ministries; however, the role of the Project Board remained weak.
- The IGNR project took an opportunist and entrepreneurial approach, with right set of entry points, to strengthen various dimensions of the customary laws governing land and natural resources.
- The project took a highly cautious approach – reflecting low-risk appetite of PBF, UNDP and UN Women – towards customary laws and policies governing land and natural resources, which is leading to a delay in concluding some of the critical milestones.
- The project’s internal management system such as monitoring and evaluation, risk management, learning and adaptive programming could have been better instituted and employed to address the complexities of the project.
- Most of the risks to achievement of IGNR project’s objectives (risks matrix) were being managed through effective project designing and implementation strategies; however, other operational risks were seen to be ignored during project life.

## Effectiveness

### Effectiveness **Mostly effective**

- The ToC logic, drivers of change and related assumptions remained/ proved valid during the life of the project and based on the trajectory of change; however, there are still some conditions (relating to political will and institutional capacity of the Government of SI) which need to be met for the ultimate change to happen.
- To achieve a meaningful change at the outcome level, the project should have considered longer-term engagement beyond direct technical assistance to influencing the fundamental changes.

- In terms of effectiveness, the project played a catalytic role in generating the momentum for institutionalization, management and regulation of traditional governance system including legislative arrangements, land recording process, customary landholding groups, and effective and sustainable use of land and natural resources.
- Among all interventions, recording of customary lands is being perceived as a most promising and high-impact intervention by the tribal leaders/ customary landholding groups.
- There is a strong, though initial, evidence that suggests women’s regained role in decision-making, and access and control over land and natural resources.
- The project set the direction of the development discourse and adroitly built on the policy pledge of the Government of the Solomon Islands.
- The project recommended suitable amendments and additions to democratize existing laws such as Customary Land Records Act/Regulations, and The Mines and Minerals Act to remove several procedural and administrative obstacles and barriers to pave the way for customary landholding groups to take place as effective local governance organizations in Solomon Islands.
- The key government officials as well as the tribal leaders have alluded to number of examples and impressions which speak about the unintended, yet positive, potential or realized, impact of the IGNR project.

## Impact and sustainability of results

### Impact and sustainability of results

**Likely to have high sustainable impact**

- The IGNR project design featured the sustainability of results, especially the technical assistance by the project was geared towards enabling and equipping the Government of Solomon Islands and relevant ministries in strengthening engagement with the citizens.
- Over 60% of the project supported policy, institutional, administrative and process reforms re-traditional governance and management of land and natural resources have been institutionalized, sustained and scaled-up by the respective ministries of Solomon Islands.
- The project strengthened the idea that land is a source of peace and prosperity and not only that of conflict.
- The project helped the stakeholders harness the culture of peacebuilding, transparency and accountability on natural resource governance in Solomon Islands.
- The project has floated the model of a dynamic organization of customary landholding groups. It is highly recommended that one of the future investments be made to support making it reality.

## Social dialogue, gender inclusion and human rights

### Social dialogue, gender inclusion and human rights

**Highly Significant, with clear evidence of achieving/ exceeding project gender markers, and inclusive results.**

- The IGNR project fundamentally builds on principles of social dialogue, as almost all project supported interventions involved facilitation to the Government of SIs in holding consultations with women, youth and tribal communities on governance and management of land and natural resource management.

- 70% of the IGNR project results' indicators (7 out of 10 output indicators) directly involved interventions aimed at increasing participation and representation of women, youth and tribal communities in policy, legislative and management of land and natural resource management.
- Females represent over 50% of participants (100% on the TGB 2018, 40% on Land Regulations Act and Bylaws of Customary Landholding Groups) in all public consultations held under the IGNR project.
- The social dialogue and public consultations on policy issues, such as the amendment to the TGB 2018, Land Registration Act, and the bylaws of customary landholding groups ensured democratic governance (voice & accountability, participatory governance, government effectiveness, rule of law, and the regulatory quality) in the process of legislation and policymaking related to land and natural resource management in the Solomon Islands.
- Development of bylaws of customary landholding groups a major step towards increasing decision-making of women, youth, and tribal communities in the management of land and natural resources.

## SECTION 5: RECOMMENDATIONS

### 4.1. Technical assistance projects, such as the IGNR project, offer a higher value for money (in terms of efficiency, effectiveness, and cost-effectiveness) for the PBF's investments.

#### Recommendations (efficiency and effectiveness):

- The technical assistance to the Government of SI has increased outreach, influence, and impact of PBF's IGNR project at policy, institutional and community levels. Also, investing in the government's capacity warrants sustainability of results. It is therefore recommended that the PBF may consider more of these initiatives, which will enable the government to adhere to its policy commitments towards a peaceful and prosperous Solomon Islands.

### 4.2. Project design phase consultations were key to securing the buy-in of technical assistance at the political and bureaucratic levels.

#### Recommendations (relevance):

- The project design phase consultations enhanced the alignment, ownership, and sense of shared responsibility towards the project objective of inclusive governance of natural resources for social cohesion in the Solomon Islands. It also increased the understanding of key government counterparts on the project's logic model, its approaches, and drivers of change. It is, therefore, a 'best practice' that should be replicated across all PBF-funded projects.

### 4.3. Technical assistance projects such as the IGNR require shared responsibility of implementing partners and the Government counterparts; therefore, the role of the Project Board is critical to ensure that all stakeholders deliver their part of the commitment to ensure successful delivery and culmination of results.

#### Recommendations (efficiency):

- Since the IGNR project was supporting the Government of SI in responding to its political, social, economic, and environmental priorities (and related constitutional and legal obligations), it was important that the project results framework(s) should have clearly defined the (i) responsibility for delivering the results; and (ii) the risks and assumptions which can positively or negatively influence the achievement of results. Similarly, the progress against results must be discussed in

joint meetings with all those who are responsible for the delivery of project activities. The establishment of the Project Board is a good practice to institute and formalize this process; however, on the IGNR project, the members of the Project Board were not effectively engaged to perform this role, which has led to delayed implementation of some of the activities and corresponding results. It is therefore highly recommended that the establishment and regular functioning of the Project Board must be ensured on all PBF's funded projects.

#### 4.4. A high-risk project requires greater risk appetite, thinking and working political and a more proactive approach to learning and adaptive programming.

##### Recommendations (relevance):

- Despite being assessed/classified as a 'high-risk initiative', the PBF and its partners UNDP and UN Women embarked on the challenge of working on the IGNR project with an aim to address the issues of institutionalization, regulation and management of customary laws and related systems of traditional governance. However, the IGNR project followed a highly cautious approach, especially while intervening at the policy/legislative level. The project defined its boundaries to engage in public consultations, drafting instructions, etc.; however, not extend its support in developing and influencing the actual amendments to the TGB, Customary Land Record Act/Regulations and the by-laws of customary landholding groups. Considering the existing capacity of the related ministries such as MTGPEA, MLHS, etc., it is unclear if the Government of SI would be able to use the inputs being produced by the IGNR project to make amendments to the customary laws and traditional government systems. Considering this learning, the future PBF projects and the UNDP and UN Women need to consider the following for projects that are political, high-profile, and critical in nature:
  - Assess risk rating, define what it means for PBF and its partners, and clarify the extent to which the PBF and its partners are willing to take the risk. Also, the project results framework should include a column to highlight the "risks and assumptions" against results areas and targets. The risk management and mitigation framework should also be updated/ maintained on a regular basis.
  - Undertake regular political economy analysis (PEA) to identify/document conditions, actors, and interests that are in favour of the project interventions and/or otherwise. It is also important to use PEA to inform the project's stakeholder engagement and influencing strategies i.e. how to leverage conditions, actors and interests that are in favor, and how to navigate those who are not in favor.
  - Document learning to inform course correction and adaptive programming. On a project which is highly complex, political, and dynamic – like the IGNR, this function should be institutionalized as part of the project's monitoring and evaluation and project management. Adaptive programming also requires the project (design) to be highly flexible and responsive to emerging contexts, political priorities, opportunities, and entry points.

#### 4.5. The duration of the project was too short compared to its ambition and the pace of action by the Government counterpart ministries/institutions.

##### Recommendations (impact and sustainability of results):

- Addressing policy-level issues, especially which are complex in nature and are long-standing issues requires long-term engagement. The IGNR project could have considered a wider plan of engagement and support to the Government of SI i.e. from identification of the project, project designing, and direct technical assistance to supporting advocacy and influencing the changes towards the desired results. Given the current status of progress against outcome level results, the PBF may consider launching phase-II of the IGNR project till 2024. This will ensure the sustainability of results achieved under the IGNR project.

**4.6. In terms of project management, it is important to ensure effective/sustained deployment of core, project management and delivery teams.**

**Recommendations (efficiency):**

- UNDP and UN Women, as PBF partners, should develop their internal management and HR mechanism to ensure the continuity of key roles on the project. This might include using technical resources from a pool of qualified experts or deploying staff from other projects. The recommendation is particularly in the context of the IGNR project, which suffered from a lack of staffing on the project manager, deputy project manager, and M&E roles.

**4.7. To ensure the best value for money for IGNR investments in the traditional governance system of the Solomon Islands, a second phase of the project is highly recommended. There are so many near-to-completion activities, and still Government of Solomon Islands and its ministries need continued technical assistance for at least another two years to ensure that the communities, particularly women and youth, are included in the decision-making process related to land and natural resources.**

**Recommendations (effectiveness, impact and sustainability):**

- Most of the outputs are delivered during the life of the IGNR project; however, it is not enough to assume that these outputs will lead to changes at the outcome and impact level. The output level results indicate the scope and quality of interventions or early results delivered by the project; however, there is a need for continued engagement and support to realize the ultimate results. It is therefore recommended that the second phase of the IGNR project could be launched, without much interruption, to ensure the continuity of support to the government in addressing issues of land and natural resources for peacebuilding and social cohesion in the Solomon Islands.

**4.8. For a technical assistance project, it is important to gauge the ‘extend to which the institutional capacities are built to adopt, up-scale, and sustain’ the reform process. Without an appropriate measure, it is hard to assume if the government ministries and related institutions will be able to sustain the momentum of institutionalization, regulation and management of traditional governance.**

**Recommendations (effectiveness, sustainability):**

- On technical assistance projects, one of the results’ dimensions should be the “degree to which institutional capacity of government counterpart ministries/institutions is built to adopt, institutionalize and scale-up the project interventions and related reforms”. Since this has not been defined as a result indicator within the IGNR’s results framework, it is unclear if the Government of Solomon Island and its relevant ministries will be able to complete the next steps in the process towards a more inclusive, robust, and informed system of traditional governance relating to land and natural resources.

**4.9. After realizing that there are diverse, somewhat opposing views on the definition, scope and extent of institutionalization, regulation and management of traditional governance system; the IGNR project might have adapted to shift the focus towards high-impact, low-risk activities such as the establishment of inclusive customary landholding groups and support to MLHS in the recording of customary lands.**

**Recommendations (relevance, effectiveness):**

- The adaptive programming, as an approach, should have been more practically used to remain relevant, efficient and results-focused. The IGNR project has documented the learnings quite regularly as part of its bi-annual and annual reporting; however, there is little or no mention of how the project responded to these learning. For example. The COVID-19 pandemic is raised as a risk, but there is no mention of how the project responded to this. Similarly, there is a mention of



diverse and opposing viewpoints among key policymakers on the definition, objective and extent of institutionalization, regulation, and management of traditional governance systems; however, there is no mention of how the project responded to this. Through a better understanding of the political-economy situation, stakeholders and their incentives, the IGNR project could have better managed the risk associated with the interventions.

#### 4.10. The Government of the Solomon Islands explores the possibility of regional and international partnerships for land and natural resource management reforms.

##### Recommendations (impact – for Government of SIs):

- One way of securing new partnerships is to organize land summits and work towards the prospects of a regional treaty organisation of Melanesian countries on land rights of indigenous people with proposed initiatives of Land Banks, Protecting Women’s Right to Land, Climate Action and Climate Justice for Customary Landholding people etc. It is highly likely that several of such initiatives may find development partners and financiers from across the region and the world. Joining already established or introducing new ways of partnerships for instance, in the shape of regional treaty organizations etc., may also help. This recommendation is particularly for the Government of SI to mobilize additional technical and financial assistance to continue the process of strengthening traditional governance of land and natural resources.

#### 4.11. Parliament should amend Land and Titles Acts and provide legitimate mechanisms of dispute resolutions so as to reduce the workload of courts.

##### Recommendations (coherence):

- The exercise of quasi-judicial powers by the Acquisition Officers is one-factor increasing land-related litigations. They hold summary hearings to determine land ownership.<sup>30</sup> Acquisition officers’ decisions are regularly challenged<sup>31</sup> as a result, the courts are clogged with land disputes. There is an urgent need that land disputes must be resolved quickly and by institutions that are recognized as legitimate so that they do not further exacerbate ‘tensions, and courts’ workload could also be reduced. Also, parallel appeal and review structures provide the litigants with the choice of ‘forum shopping’ It is high time appeal and review forums for land disputes-related litigation be reformed, and their number be rationalized in accordance with jurisprudence, relevance and logic. This step alone will have a direct positive bearing on the state of peacebuilding in the SIs.

## SECTION 6. INTEGRATING SOCIAL DIALOGUE, GENDER INCLUSION AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The extent to which cross-cutting issues such as social dialogue, gender inclusion and human rights have been addressed through project design, its implementation approaches, and activities.

<sup>30</sup> Section 61–65 of the Land and Titles Act

<sup>31</sup> Appeals were filed under Section 66 of the Land and Titles Act

The review of project documents and meetings with key government officials and local/ tribal leaders confirmed an increased emphasis of the project on an inclusive, participatory and gender-responsive project design, implementation approaches and the selection of interventions. Particularly, this represents an add-on by UN agencies to project-induced peacebuilding efforts, wherein women, youth and other wider tribal communities were made part of the project interventions. The social dialogue and public consultations also increased the realization of the issues of disruption, exploitation, and marginalization in the traditional governance system (as it evolved over time) and the need for some degree of institutionalization, regulation, and management for inclusion. This also reinforced that the marginalization and exclusion of women and young people from political, social and economic opportunities increase grievances, concerns and frustrations and the risks of violence and conflict in society.

Specifically, the IGNR project ensured social dialogue and integration of human rights and gender in the following ways:

- The public consultations, which were an important feature of the IGNR project, have worked in many ways for the empowerment and inclusion of women and youth in land and natural resources management. This resulted in the compilation of consensus-based recommendations for inclusive TGB 2018, Land Regulations Act and the bylaws of customary landholding groups.
- Out of 10 output level indicators in the IGNR results framework, 7 indicators directly contribute to strengthening the role of women and young people in the traditional governance systems, particularly in the management of land and natural resources and avoiding any potential VAWG. In addition, female represents over 50% of all individuals being consulted by the IGNR project for policy and institutional reforms relating to land and natural resources.
- The IGNR project directly responded to the weaknesses in TGB 2018, which was withdrawn from further consideration due to inadequate public consultations, particularly with women, youth and tribal communities. The project facilitated exclusive consultations and policy dialogue with women in nine localities and compiled over 50 recommendations for making TGB more inclusive, informed, and robust.
- The project has floated the model of a dynamic organization of customary landholding groups in order to make it more democratic and ensure benefit sharing among all group members, including women. The establishment of landholding groups as legal entities across the country will provide an impetus for the majority population of the SI based in rural areas to exercise their right of association and collective bargaining, which is well aligned with The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (DRIP).
- The IGNR project provided an impetus for fulfilling the obligations of the state under CEDAW by supporting the government of SI in taking steps for women's empowerment and protection of their land rights. This includes taking steps in laws, policies, and other measures to ensure that women are not discriminated against in land governance claims to inheritance and land rights.
- Majority of the respondents (tribal leaders, community members) in both matrilineal and patrilineal societies believe that women and young people can play an active and meaningful role in the management of customary lands, provided they are well represented at all levels, i.e. from community-based customary landholding groups to house of chiefs. The respondents further expressed that this would address the grievances and sense of deprivation among women and youth, which is a major risk to the long-term stability, peace and prosperity of the Solomon Islands.

Having said that, the IGNR project and its government counterparts in the Solomon Islands have an unfinished agenda around the incorporation of recommendations emerging from these public consultations in the policy/legislative frameworks and traditional governance practices that ensure equitable representation of women, young people and wider communities in the management of land and natural resources in the Solomon Islands.

## SECTION 7: ANNEXURES

### Annex-7.1. Evaluation TORs

### Annex-7.2. Evaluation inception report

### Annex-7.3. List of documents reviewed

S. No.	Documents	Purpose
1	Project design document, including result framework	<input type="checkbox"/> To understand the IGNR projects, its background, objectives/ results hierarchy, project interventions, partnership and collaborations, budget and implementation approaches.
2	Risk matrix, including risk mitigation measures	<input type="checkbox"/> To understand, assess and analyse if risks were adequately monitoring and mitigated to achieve the project results and impact (under efficiency, and efficient management)
3	Progress reports – bi-annual reports, annual reports, and project completion report.	<input type="checkbox"/> To review and analyze project progress, especially the key interventions and how these contributed/ing to achievement of project outcomes and impact.
4	Project work plan and budget, including spending and other contributions	<input type="checkbox"/> To review and analyze the project activities, link to results and amount invested to achieve specific results. (Under efficiency, and cost-effectiveness)
5	Consultation report(s) and recommendations on the Traditional Governance and Customs Facilitation Bill	<input type="checkbox"/> To review, assess and analyze how well the concerns of stakeholders (re-inclusiveness of bill/ TB&CF Bill) have been addressed.
6	Anthropological study	<input type="checkbox"/> To review the study (as a deliverable), and assess and analyze how well the study has identified and captured the dynamics of customary land and concepts of traditional custodianship. Also, to analyze the recommendations of the study in addressing concerns on the 2018 TGB.
7	Land Forum report	<input type="checkbox"/> To analyze prospective of key stakeholders (civil society, etc.) and the commitments of government towards conflict-sensitive, inclusive, and productive use of the natural resources.
8	Conflict-sensitivity, and/ or political economy analysis	<input type="checkbox"/> To understand the factors which were/ are and will might be restricting the enactment of these Bills (i.e. the Traditional Governance and Customs Facilitation Bill, and the Land Title Act)
9	Traditional Governance and Customs Facilitation Bill 2018	<input type="checkbox"/> To understand provisions in the TGB 2018, and related gaps/ areas of improvements identified in the Bill. This will help understand the rationale of the project, and how well the project activities responded to the concerns and gaps in the 2018 Bill.
10	Report of Committee (the Bills and Legislation) on the Traditional Governance and Customs Facilitation Bill 2018	
11	Draft policy paper (based on consultations) to inform the development of the by-law.	<input type="checkbox"/> To assess and analyze the quality of consultations, and the outcome of these consultations in terms of policy recommendations for an inclusive TGB.
12	IGNR's project baseline survey indicating women's willingness and ability to contribute to land	<input type="checkbox"/> To assess the relevance of the project, and how effectively the project leveraged women's interest, willingness, and abilities to increase their decision-making role in national resource planning and management.

S. No.	Documents	Purpose
	and the natural decision-making processes.	
13	Reports on customary land titles recording process	<input type="checkbox"/> To review, assess and analyze the efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the customary land titles recording process. Also, to understand and analyze if this process was inclusive, and led by communication.
14	Sustainable pilot business plans/ documents	<input type="checkbox"/> To review, assess and analyze the natural resource business plans, as if these are inclusive, reflect the wider interest of the communities in particularly women and youth, and provide sustainable (beyond logging) economic opportunities.
15	Report on community related land resources grievances	<input type="checkbox"/> To analyze how well the process addressed (or have the provisions to address) the community (including women and youth) related land resources grievances.
16	Gender sensitive by law framework, including recommendations on resource management committee membership.	<input type="checkbox"/> To analyze project effectiveness and impact re- role of women and youth in decision-making and local governance process through national resource management committees.
17	Report on awareness sessions and pre- and post-awareness level of women on laws and policies that protect women and girls from VAWG.	<input type="checkbox"/> To analyze the effectiveness of project in raising awareness of women on laws and policies that protect women and girls from VAWG.
18	UN Peacebuilding Fund, and the eligibility documents for PBF in country	<input type="checkbox"/> To understand the UN's global agenda around peacebuilding; and key objectives, focus areas, strategic priorities and management and QA of the PBF; and how the EYAPSCSI project is aligned with the UN's PBF?

## Annex-7.4. List of KIIs and FGDs

Key Stakeholders/ Organisations	S. No	Gender	Designation	Key informant's profile
<b>A. Key informant interviews with Government counterparts – recipients of IGNR project's technical assistance</b>				
Ministry of Traditional Governance, Peace and Ecclesiastical Affairs (MTGPEA)	1	Female	Deputy Director Traditional Governance Division	Technical/ legal expert(s) from MTGPEA involved in consultations and anthropological study for TGB and its amendment/ improvement
Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey (MLHS) – 2 interviews	2	Female	ASST. Director Reform	Focal person(s) from ministry (ministerial or secretariat level) on TGB 2018 and Lands & Title Act.
	3	Female	Land Recording Officer	Land Recording Officer (01) or the National Recorder, Customary Land Reform Division (Tribal Land Recording Unit)
Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs (MWYCFA)	4	Female	Direct/ Representative	Focal person(s) from ministry (ministerial or secretariat level) on TGB 2018

Key Stakeholders/ Organisations	S. No	Gender	Designation	Key informant's profile
National Youth Council/ Youth Caucus	5	Male	Chairman, National Youth Congress	Representative of national youth council
Provincial Governments of Malaita, Guadalcanal and Western Provinces – (Provincial Women's Caucuses; and Provincial Youth Council)	6	Male	President, Malaita Youth Council	Provincial Government representative on TGB and related consultations
	7	Female	Guadalcanal Provincial Council of Women/ Board member	Provincial Government representative on TGB and related consultations
IGNR's technical expert (consultant) for anthropological study	8	Female	National consultant	Technical expert (team) on the anthropological study
Consultants - TGCFB consultations and bylaw consultation	9	Female	Consultant	Technical consultants (team) involved in consultations on TGCFB and bylaws
<b>B. Focus group discussions with community-based stakeholders (including tribal leaders, and members of customary land holding groups)</b>				
Communities, including tribal leaders, women and youth leaders	1	Mixed	Malaita Province - Raroasi & Paehusi	Out of 6 community groups, who participated in consultations on bylaws of Customary Landholdings Groups; and have registered their customary lands.
	2	Mixed	Western Province - Patu Boasiota & Petunia	

## Annex-7.5. Evaluation management response

Evaluation recommendations	Evaluation management response					
	Remarks (fully agreed/ agreed/ disagreed)	Action recommendation	Responsible organization(s)/ official(s)	Applicability – IGNR project and/ or future projects	Significance (high/ medium/ low)	Resource requirement
<b>A. Improving relevance</b>						
<p>1. The IGNR project design phase consultations were vital in securing the buy-in of technical assistance at the political and administrative levels. The project design phase consultations enhanced the alignment, ownership, and sense of shared responsibility towards the project objective of inclusive governance of natural resources for social cohesion in the Solomon Islands. It also increased the understanding of key government counterparts on the project’s logic model, its approaches, and drivers of change. It is, therefore, a ‘best practice’ that should be replicated across all PBF-funded projects.</p>						
<p>2. The IGNR project was assessed and classified as a ‘high-risk initiative’. Nonetheless, the IGNR project followed a highly cautious approach, especially while intervening at the policy/legislative level. The project deliberately avoided any involvement in the drafting of amendments to the TGB, Customary Land Records Act/ Regulations and the by-laws of customary landholding groups. Considering the existing capacity of the related ministries such as MTGPEA, MLHS, etc., it is unclear if the Government of SI would be able to use the inputs being produced by the IGNR project to make amendments to the customary laws and traditional government systems. Considering this learning, the future PBF projects and the UNDP and UN Women need to consider the following for projects that are political, high-profile, and critical in nature:</p> <p>(i) assess risk rating, define what it means for PBF and its partners, and clarify the extent to which the PBF and its partners are willing to take the risk. Also, the project results framework should include a column to highlight the “risks and assumptions” against results areas and targets. The risk management and mitigation framework should also be updated/ maintained on a regular basis;</p> <p>(ii) undertake regular political economy analysis (PEA) to identify/document conditions, actors, and interests that are in favour of the project interventions and/or otherwise. It is also important to</p>						

Evaluation recommendations	Evaluation management response					
	Remarks (fully agreed/ agreed/ disagreed)	Action recommendation on	Responsible organization(s)/ official(s)	Applicability – IGNR project and/ or future projects	Significance (high/ medium/ low)	Resource requirement
<p>use PEA to inform the project’s stakeholder engagement and influencing strategies i.e. how to leverage conditions, actors and interests that are in favor, and how to navigate those who are not in favor; and</p> <p>(iii) document learning to inform course correction and adaptive programming. On a project which is highly complex, political, and dynamic – like the IGNR, this function should be institutionalized as part of the project’s monitoring and evaluation and project management. Adaptive programming also requires the project (design) to be highly flexible and responsive to emerging contexts, political priorities, opportunities, and entry points. In a nutshell, a high-risk project requires greater risk appetite, thinking and working political and a more proactive approach to learning and adaptive programming.</p>						
<b>B. Improving coherence</b>						
<p>3. The modernization of Solomon Islands society, rapid urbanization, the influx of private investments, gradual distortion of customary laws and traditional practices, and exclusion of women and youth from decision-making related to land and natural resource management have increased the number of disputes and related incidents of violence in the Solomon Islands. The courts are clogged with cases of land disputes. The amendment to the Traditional Governance Bill 2018 is meant to have some degree of institutionalization, management and regulation of customary laws related to land and natural resources. However, it appears that the amendment to the TGB would take time as it requires some critical processes and steps to be completed before agreement and enactment of the revised Bill. In the interim period, the IGNR project could have supported the Government of SI in some administrative and process level improvements in the Land and Titles Acts and related sub-legislations to provide legitimate mechanisms of dispute resolutions so as to reduce the workload of courts. Learning from this experience, it is important for the PBF project, like IGNR, to remain strategic, agile and flexible to achieve the desired results.</p>						
<b>C. Improving efficiency</b>						

Evaluation recommendations	Evaluation management response					
	Remarks (fully agreed/ agreed/ disagreed)	Action recommendation on	Responsible organization(s)/ official(s)	Applicability – IGNR project and/ or future projects	Significance (high/ medium/ low)	Resource requirement
<p>4. The technical assistance projects such as the IGNR project offer a higher value for money (in terms of efficiency, effectiveness, and cost-effectiveness) for the PBF's investments. The technical assistance to the Government of SI has increased outreach, influence, and impact of PBF project at policy, institutional and community levels. Also, investing in the government's capacity warrants sustainability of results. It is therefore recommended that the PBF may consider more of these TA initiatives to enable the government of SI to adhere its policy commitments towards a peaceful and prosperous Solomon Islands.</p>						
<p>5. Technical assistance initiatives such as the IGNR project require the shared responsibility of implementing partners and government counterparts to ensure successful delivery and culmination of results. In practice, this means that the project results framework(s) is clearly defined in terms of (i) responsibility for delivering the results; and (ii) the risks and assumptions which can positively or negatively influence the achievement of results. Similarly, the progress against results must be discussed in joint meetings with all those who are responsible for the delivery of project activities. The establishment of the Project Board is a good practice to institute and formalize this process; however, on the IGNR project, the members of the Project Board were not effectively engaged to perform this role, which has led to delayed implementation of some of the activities and corresponding results. It is therefore highly recommended that the establishment and regular functioning of the Project Board must be ensured on all PBF's funded projects.</p>						
<p>6. In terms of project management, it is important to ensure effective/sustained deployment of core, project management and delivery teams. The recommendation is particularly in the context of the IGNR project, which suffered from a lack of staffing for the project manager, deputy project manager, and M&amp;E roles. UNDP and UN Women, as PBF partners, may develop their internal management and HR mechanism to ensure the continuity of key roles on the project. This might include using technical resources from a pool of qualified experts or deploying staff from other projects.</p>						
<b>C. Improving effectiveness</b>						



Evaluation recommendations	Evaluation management response					
	Remarks (fully agreed/ agreed/ disagreed)	Action recommendation on	Responsible organization(s)/ official(s)	Applicability – IGNR project and/ or future projects	Significance (high/ medium/ low)	Resource requirement
7. For a technical assistance project, it is important to gauge the 'degree to which institutional capacity of government counterpart ministries/institutions is built to adopt, institutionalize and scale-up the project interventions and related reforms". Since this has not been defined as a result indicator within the IGNR's results framework, it is unclear if the Government of Solomon Island and its relevant ministries will be able to complete the next steps in the process towards a more robust, inclusive, and informed system of traditional governance relating to land and natural resources.						
8. After realizing that there are diverse, somewhat opposing views on the definition, scope and extent of institutionalization, regulation and management of traditional governance system; the IGNR project might have adapted to shift the focus towards high-impact, low-risk activities such as the establishment of inclusive customary landholding groups and support to MLHS in the recording of customary lands. The adaptive programming, as an approach, should have been more practically used to remain relevant, efficient and results focused. The IGNR project has documented the learnings quite regularly as part of its bi-annual and annual reporting; however, there is little or no mention of how the project responded to these learning. Through a better understanding of the political-economy situation, stakeholders and their incentives, the IGNR project could have better managed the risk associated with these policy-level interventions.						
9. It is also recommended that PBF projects such as EYAPSCSI – having short-duration, deeper focus, and community-level interventions – should take a focused approach i.e., by concentrating on selected geographical location – instead of expanding the geographical outreach – to demonstrate more substantial and sustainable change/impact.						
<b>Improving impact and sustainability</b>						

Evaluation recommendations	Evaluation management response					
	Remarks (fully agreed/ agreed/ disagreed)	Action recommendation on	Responsible organization(s)/ official(s)	Applicability – IGNR project and/ or future projects	Significance (high/ medium/ low)	Resource requirement
<p>10. To ensure the best value for money for IGNR investments in the traditional governance system of the Solomon Islands, a second phase of the project is highly recommended. Most of the outputs are delivered during the life of the IGNR project; however, it is not enough to assume that these outputs will lead to changes at the outcome and impact level. The output level results indicate the scope and quality of interventions or early results delivered by the project; however, there is a need for continued engagement and support to realize the ultimate results. It is therefore recommended that the second phase of the IGNR project could be launched, without much interruption, to ensure the continuity of support to the government in addressing issues of land and natural resources for peacebuilding and social cohesion in the Solomon Islands.</p>						
<p>11. The Government of the Solomon Islands may explore the possibility of regional and international partnerships for land and natural resource management reforms. One way of securing new partnerships is to organize land summits and work towards the prospects of a regional treaty organisation of Melanesian countries on land rights of indigenous people with proposed initiatives of land banks, protecting women’s right to land, climate action and climate justice for customary landholding groups etc. It is highly likely that several of such initiatives may find development partners and financiers from across the region and the world. Joining already established or introducing new ways of partnerships for instance, in the shape of regional treaty organizations etc., may also help. This recommendation is particularly for the Government of SI to mobilize additional technical and financial assistance to continue the process of strengthening traditional governance of land and natural resources.</p>						