

# SOLOMON ISLANDS

## Building the evidence base for 'Safe Families'— a comprehensive community-led model for violence prevention in Solomon Islands

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### BACKGROUND

Safe Families is the first long-term, intensive, locally-developed community mobilization-based violence prevention program to be implemented in Solomon Islands. The project model facilitates sustained normative change by mobilising communities to understand the root causes of family and sexual violence, and to take action to address these causes. Safe Families also includes a significant focus on addressing systemic drivers, such as policies, access to resources, and coordination of stakeholder response. The intervention is currently being implemented in Malaita and Temotu provinces.

### INNOVATION

This research will contribute to building the evidence for primary prevention of family and sexual violence in Solomon Islands and globally, in a number of important ways:

1. **Expanding the evidence from the Pacific region:** The Pacific has some of the highest rates of violence against women globally. However, evidence on the effectiveness of any primary prevention interventions from the region remains scarce.
2. **Growing the evidence from post-conflict, high prevalence settings:** This research will provide much-needed nuanced evidence on what works to prevent violence in low resource, post-conflict, high prevalence settings such as in Solomon Islands.
3. **Increasing the evidence of social norms driving violence against women:** Identifying the contextually-specific social norms that underpin violence against women, and what works to address them, will represent a significant advance in knowledge and an excellent complement to Solomon Islands national prevalence figures.
4. **Progressing methodological approaches to researching violence against women:** This research project will advance our understanding of how to conduct research on violence against women that is ethical, safe and rigorous in the context of small, geographically disparate communities where violence is relatively normalised.

### AIMS

To evaluate the effectiveness of the Safe Families primary prevention intervention, and to understand the processes of change to harmful social norms that drive family and sexual violence in Solomon Islands.

### OBJECTIVES

#### Primary objective:

To evaluate the Safe Families model to better understand what is working and why, and identify further refinements needed to optimise and scale up the intervention.

#### Secondary objectives:

5. To better understand the specific norms that are driving family and sexual violence in two unique provinces in Solomon Islands, and the mechanisms and pathways of change to these norms.
6. To share information on effective violence prevention interventions within Solomon Islands and the broader Pacific region.

### METHODS AND TIMEFRAMES

This in-depth qualitative study will include:

- A thorough review of all monitoring data from Safe Families
- Participant observation, including observation of community conversations and other key activities
- In-depth interviews with community members
- In-depth interviews with project team members, and facilitators
- Key informant interviews with key stakeholders and community leaders
- Focus group discussion with different sub-groups of the community to understand specific social norms contributing to and driving family and sexual violence in Solomon Islands. This would include the need to undertake work on what appropriate measures of social norms are (new measures and utilising well-established measures), and how to apply them ethically in the landscape of Solomon Islands (i.e. small communities, geographically disparate).

This research will be undertaken between June 2017 and December 2018.

### IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FIELD / PROGRAMMING / POLICY

- Safe Families is the first model of its kind in Solomon Islands, and one of the first in the Pacific region. This study will help to build the documentation and evidence for the effectiveness of this intervention in the Solomon Islands and the Pacific, allowing for the intervention to be refined, optimised and scaled-up.
- Greater understanding of complexities and dynamics of family and sexual violence in Solomon Islands, beyond prevalence.

