

Word count: – 5,010

Fourth cycle Universal Periodic Review Of Nauru



Joint Submission of the UN Country Team

Introduction

1. The United Nations Resident Coordinator Micronesia is accredited to the five Micronesian countries: Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), Nauru, and Kiribati. To host and support the UN RC Micronesia, the UN Multi-Country Office Micronesia was established in the last quarter of 2021 in Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia. In the other four countries, including Nauru, the UN presence has been bolstered by Country Coordination Officers (CCOs). In addition to the RCO, UNFPA and UNDP have presence in Nauru. Other UN entities cover Nauru as non-resident, i.e. FAO, UN Human Rights, UN Women, UNCTAD, UNEP, UNICEF, UNODC, WFP, WMO, and WHO.

2. The UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2023 - 2027¹ is a five-year strategic framework that outlines the collective response of the UN system to the development priorities in 14 Pacific Island countries and territories, including Nauru, and supports governments and peoples in the Pacific to advance a localized response to the global 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

1. BACKGROUND AND FRAMEWORK

A. Treaty ratification, reporting and cooperation with UN human rights mechanisms

3. Nauru has ratified/acceded to the following core human rights instruments and optional protocols: Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW); Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT) and its Optional Protocol (OP-CAT); Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), in 1995; the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). Since the conclusion of the last UPR cycle, Nauru has not ratified other human rights treaties.

4. Nauru is late in reporting to CAT (I report), CRC (II-VI reports) and CRPD (initially due on 2014). Though Nauru has issued a standing invitation to special procedures mandate holders in 2011, it has never received a country-visit of a mandate holder. The Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrant workers visited the regional processing centres in Nauru during as part of his country visit to Australia.²

5. Nauru is not a signatory to either the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons or the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness (the Statelessness Conventions).

Recommendations:

- a. Consider acceding to other core human rights instruments.
- b. Consider collaborating with special procedures mandate holders for a country-visit.
- c. Consider acceding to the Statelessness Conventions, in consultation with UNHCR.

¹ <https://micronesia.un.org/en/download/137489/236410>

² [A/HRC/35/25/Add.3](https://www.unhcr.org/refugees-and-asylum-seekers/2023/03/35/25/Add.3)

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS OBLIGATIONS

A. Constitutional, legislative and policy framework on human rights

6. Part II of the Constitution of Nauru is entitled “Protection of fundamental rights and freedoms”. It recognizes that every person in Nauru has fundamental rights and freedoms whatever their “race, place of origin, political opinions, colour, creed or sex...”. The constitution does not cover economic, social and cultural rights.

Recommendations:

- a. Consider expanding the constitutional protection of human rights to include economic, social and cultural rights and other human rights, as the right to development and the right to clean, healthy and sustainable environment.

A. Gender equality and human rights of women and girls

7. Nauru has made strides in promoting gender equality and protecting the human rights of women and girls, as highlighted in the 2024 Nauru National Review for Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action³ and other national documents. The establishment of the Department of Women and Social Development Affairs (WASDA) in 2020 has been pivotal, providing a dedicated focus on gender equality and women's empowerment. Key policies such as the recently adopted Nauru Action Plan for National Gender Equality Policies 2025-2030, together with Domestic Violence and Family Protection Act 2017 and the Crimes Act 2016 have strengthened legal frameworks to protect women from violence, including intimate partner violence and marital rape.

8. Despite these advancements, challenges remain. The prevalence of gender-based violence is high, with nearly half of ever-partnered women reporting physical or sexual violence according to the 2014 Family Health and Support Study, undermining the human rights of women and girls. Implementing multi-sectoral gender-based violence coordination mechanisms and creating conditions for confidential, quality service provision for survivors in the small island nation is challenging, particularly with a limited social and health workforce. Caseloads for the social workforce are reportedly too high to meet international standards for quality of case management and care. Efforts to address this include the renovation of safe houses, establishment of helplines, and employment of trained counselors.

9. The National Gender Mainstreaming Policy and initiatives for gender-responsive budgeting aim to integrate gender perspectives across all sectors. Economic empowerment and participation in decision-making are also key focus areas, with programs to support women entrepreneurs and increase women's representation in leadership roles. However, harmful cultural practices and limited resources continue to pose barriers. The significant burden of domestic work, including household work, chores and care of children, older people and persons with disabilities limit women's economic and educational opportunities. The persistent cultural values and religious views further reinforce gender stereotypes and discrimination. Moving forward, priorities include enhancing healthcare access, improving education outcomes, and increasing political participation to ensure a comprehensive approach to gender equality and human rights for women and girls in Nauru.

³ https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024-11/b30_report_nauru_en.pdf

10. In its Beijing + 30 national review, Nauru identified increasing women’s political participation and representation as one of three priority actions for the next five years. National Sustainable Development Strategy 2019-2030 lists “more women in leadership and political decision-making positions” as a Key Performance Indicator under the Governance and Institutions pillar. Notwithstanding, Nauru has not instituted any temporary special measures, and although the percentage of women increased from 5.3% to 10.5% after the 2022 elections, women still hold only two of 19 parliamentary seats.

11. In April 2024, Nauru hosted the second Micronesian Ministers for Women Conference where the “An Towepo Declaration” was adopted, prioritizing ending violence against women, women's economic empowerment, health, education, gender and culture, and people with disabilities as key issues of importance for governments to address in the Micronesia region.

12. During 2024, Nauru adopted and trained its health care workforce on the "Clinical Practice Guideline for Survivors of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence" to strengthen survivor-centered, health-sector response to gender-based violence in Nauru, with the technical support of UNFPA. A regular plan for periodic training and mentoring is required to continue skill building and ensure continuity of care, considering the mobility of the workforce.

13. While there is protection from discrimination on the basis of sex in policy and legal frameworks, there was no definition of gender in Nauru policy and legislative frameworks up until 2024, which limited the scope of legal protection and quality of service provision for some women and men, and LGBTQI+ persons. During 2024, drafting of a “contextualised definition of Gender” for Nauru was in progress.

14. In the last UPR Plenary, several countries commended Nauru’s effort to prevent and respond to gender-based violence. They also recommended effective implementation of “measures against domestic violence, including strengthening domestic violence laws and improving the handling of domestic violence cases by investing in training for local and national authorities to assist victims of domestic violence”. This remains an area for improvement.

Recommendations:

- a. Review legal frameworks to offer broader protection for all people, including eliminating discrimination on the basis of gender and sexual orientation.
- b. Continue to strengthen health care and broader multi-sectoral services and coordination to address the needs of all survivors of GBV, including child survivors, ensuring that standards for quality of care and systems to protect survivor data are implemented in line with ethical and safety guidelines.
- c. Create long-term social and healthcare workforce plan to ensure continuity of life-saving social and health services for all survivors, and to protect the well-being of Nauru’s staff and volunteers who work to support survivors.
- d. Provide capacity building to service providers including counsellors to ensure the protection of women’s rights is front and center.
- e. Revisit the policy of requiring husband’s approval for tubal ligation.
- f. Strengthen referral services and case management, ensuring timely and confidential services are provided.
- g. Provide capacity building to WASDA staff and rank in file to support delivery of mandate.
- h. Invest in the availability of gender, age and disability-disaggregated data to inform policy and programme development/implementation/monitoring
- i. Develop a strategy towards gender parity in politics that includes temporary special measures, targeted political leadership training for women, addressing stereotypes and

awareness raising on women's equal right to political participation and representation, and measures to address harassment, discrimination and other forms of violence against women in politics.

- j. Promote technical and vocational education and training initiatives dedicated to women.
- k. Undertake initiatives on education on women's rights and counselling for men

B. Rights of the child

15. Nauru faces challenges in ensuring children's rights despite being a high-income economy. With children representing 45% of the 12,900 population, addressing child rights issues is critical for the nation's development.

16. Child health outcomes show mixed progress. Under-5 mortality stands at 9 per 1,000 live births, with nearly 90% of deaths happening in infants under the age of one year, indicating gaps in maternal and childcare quality (UNIGME 2024). Immunization coverage requires improvement, with 83% coverage of measles second dose, falling short of the 95% target needed for herd immunity. (WUENIC 2024).

17. Nutrition challenges are evident: 16% of children under 5 suffer from stunting, while 8% are overweight and 4% underweight, indicating an extra burden of malnutrition. Only 48% of children aged 6-23 months receive minimum dietary diversity, and exclusive breastfeeding rates reach 53%, suggesting need for improved infant and young child feeding practices.

18. There are significant gaps in maternal health. Only 51% of pregnant mothers attend the recommended minimum four antenatal visits, well below the target, indicating barriers to accessing quality maternal healthcare.

19. Educational access shows trends with primary attendance at 78% for girls and 88% for boys. Secondary attendance drops to 61% for girls and 68% for boys, with upper secondary completion reaching only 45%. Out-of-school rates are particularly high at secondary level (30%), limiting children's future opportunities.

20. Violence against children remains high, with 81% of children experiencing violent discipline in 2023, including 13% experiencing severe physical punishment. According to the 2021 National Census Data, 18.2% of females aged 20-24 were married before age 18, although the Child Protection and Welfare Act 2024 prohibits marriage before 18. While this is a significant improvement from the previous 2007 measurement of 27%, Child, Early and Forced marriage remains a serious issue to be addressed. Birth registration coverage is nearly universal at 99%.

21. Adolescent fertility is very high in Nauru: 80.6 births per 1,000 females aged 15-19, according to the UN Population Division, which is the highest in the Pacific Region. Estimates from the 2021 census (66), the CVRS (75) and MICS (78) are somewhat lower, but still in concerning level. The 2023 MICS survey determined 12 percent of women aged 20-49 years had a live birth before age 18.

22. In terms of Social Protection, children benefit from relatively wide coverage at 66%, indicating good progress in safety net provision.

Recommendations:

- a. Strengthen immunization systems to achieve 95% coverage for all vaccines through improved service delivery and community engagement by 2028.
- b. Implement comprehensive nutrition interventions including promotion of exclusive breastfeeding, improved complementary feeding practices, and school nutrition

- programs to address the double burden of malnutrition.
- c. Strengthen antenatal care services to achieve universal coverage of at least four visits during pregnancy, with focus on quality service provision.
 - d. Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to eliminate violent discipline against children, including awareness campaigns and positive parenting programs.
 - e. Strengthen enforcement of child marriage laws and implement targeted interventions to address adolescent pregnancy through comprehensive sexuality education and youth-friendly health services.
 - f. Improve educational access and quality, particularly at secondary level, through targeted interventions to reduce dropout rates and improve learning outcomes.
 - g. Enhance access to sexual and reproductive health services and information for youth, with targeted programmes for adolescent girls, to address their specific needs.
 - h. Organize more human rights education and awareness campaigns on the rights of the child in schools and communities.

C. Rights of persons with disabilities

23. In 2023, Nauru adopted an Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities Act. This act established a dedicated Department of People Living with Disabilities, which included specific functions and powers of a Minister and a Secretary to monitor and promote rights of persons with disabilities. The Act also established a Disability Coordinating Council. Nauru has also prepared a draft terms of reference aligning to the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities Act.

24. Significant gaps remain in comprehensive data collection and inclusive service provision. The absence of disaggregated data on disability prevalence, types, and specific needs severely hampers policy development and targeted interventions. This particularly affects understanding of barriers faced by women and girls with disabilities in accessing healthcare, education, and protection services. Limited information exists on accessibility of health, education, and social services for persons with disabilities, particularly in the context of Nauru's small population and geographic constraints.

Recommendations:

- a. Upgrade able schools to cater for children with disability.
- b. Organize trainings to public officials and service providers on different disabilities and the resources needed for supporting the rights of persons with that disability.
- c. Conduct a study to assess the specific barriers that women and girls with disabilities face in accessing healthcare (including sexual and reproductive health care), protection from violence, employment and education by 2027.
- d. Establish a national data collection system on disability disaggregated by age, sex, and type of disability to inform policy and program development. This data would help in understanding the prevalence and specific needs of persons with disabilities, including sexual and reproductive health and rights, and monitoring progress in implementing the CRPD.
- e. Develop and implement awareness-raising campaigns targeting the general public, community leaders, and service providers to combat stigma and discrimination against persons with disabilities, especially women and girls. These campaigns should promote a positive image of disability and emphasize the rights and capabilities of persons with disabilities.

D. Administration of justice, good governance and the rule of law

25. Nauru lacks a law on access to public information. The Government Information Office releases some budget information. Officials are not required to disclose financial information.

26. The Nauru Declaration on Judicial Well-being⁴ was adopted on 24 July 2024, declaring seven core principles for healthier, resilient, and ethical judiciaries, that contribute to enhancing the quality of justice worldwide. The UN General Assembly resolution [79/266](#), adopted on March 4, 2025, officially proclaimed July 25th as the International Day for Judicial Well-being. This day acknowledges the critical link between judicial well-being, integrity, and the delivery of quality justice.

27. During a community dialogue facilitated by the UN Human Rights Office in 2024, participants considered that there was limited engagement with human rights mechanisms, and little knowledge about human rights standards. They also mentioned that the judiciary required further training on customary law.

Recommendations:

- a. Establish public library with government public documents.
- b. Adopt an act regulating access to freedom of information.
- c. Continue to champion and lead by example on the promotion of judicial well-being.
- d. Conduct capacity building trainings on customary law to be part of judicial decision making process.
- e. Establish an Ombudsman's office to align the laws to international human rights law.

E. Rights to freedom of opinion and expression, association, and assembly

28. The constitution and law provide for freedom of expression, including of the press; however, the government owns all media and exercises editorial control over content. All journalists in Nauru are employees of the Nauru Media Bureau. They are classified as public servants and take an oath of allegiance to the government.

Recommendations:

- a. Allow establishment of private media outlet and government media to report on controversial government decisions.

F. Adequate standard of living and right to development

Right to food

29. The right to food in Nauru remains a critical concern, particularly in light of the country's extreme dependence on imported food and its vulnerability to external supply chain disruptions. Over 90% of Nauru's food is imported, and recent crises—such as the 2025 rice shortage—have exposed the fragility of its food systems, leading to food insecurity and public distress. Structural challenges, including limited arable land due to historical phosphate mining and climate-related risks, further constrain local food production. While the government has taken steps to improve food security through social protection programs and school feeding initiatives, these efforts are hampered by limited infrastructure, weak monitoring systems, and inconsistent access to nutritious food.

⁴ <https://judicialwellbeing.info/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Nauru-Declaration-on-Judicial-Well-being.pdf>

30. Nauru's participation in the UN Food Systems Summit reaffirmed its commitment to transforming its food systems by 2030, emphasizing the need for international cooperation, climate-resilient agriculture, and reduced food waste. However, realizing the right to adequate food for all Nauruans will require sustained investment, stronger governance, and the establishment of strategic reserves and early warning systems to prevent future crises.

Water and sanitation

31. As a small island state affected by historical phosphate mining, Nauru faces unique water security challenges, with saltwater intrusion threatening freshwater supplies due to climate change impacts.

32. While Nauru achieves 97% coverage for basic drinking water access, gaps remain in sanitation with only 66% population coverage. School WASH infrastructure shows better performance with 100% coverage for water and sanitation, and 90% for hygiene services.

Youth and right to development

33. From 2024-2025, Nauru developed a Youth Monograph with the support of UNFPA, analyzing and disseminating population data to inform decision making and programmatic interventions for youth in line with its National Development Policy.

Recommendations:

- a. Strengthen climate-resilient water and sanitation infrastructure to address saltwater intrusion and ensure sustainable access to safe water and sanitation services for all children and families.
- b. Maintain and enhance school WASH standards while expanding hygiene education programs to promote behavioural change and prevent waterborne diseases.
- c. Continue to strengthen data knowledge, availability and use to support monitoring and implementation of the National Development Policy, increasing the number of trained staff and data-related policies across different ministries and departments by 2028.
- d. Ensure digital inclusion and development initiatives incorporate safeguards, particularly for women, youth and persons with disabilities, to ensure their safety from technology-facilitated violence.
- e. Promote initiatives for sustainable production of healthy food, including the support to kitchen gardens.
- f. Adopt regulations to curb unhealthy food imports.

G. Right to health

34. Nauru's States Parties Annual Self-Assessment Reporting (SPAR) 2024 reveals notable disparities across its core International Health Regulations (IHR) capacities, with the most critical gap found in IHR Coordination and National Focal Point (NFP) functions, which scored only 33%. Specifically, NFP functions are severely underdeveloped at 20%, limiting effective communication with the World Health Organization, while multisectoral coordination mechanisms scored 40%, highlighting a lack of integrated, whole-of-government emergency response. Despite these challenges, Nauru shows strength in managing zoonotic events and maintaining a health workforce, both scoring 80%. Laboratory systems and surveillance are moderately developed at 60%, though improvements are needed. Risk communication remains limited (40%), indicating gaps in public engagement and messaging. Additionally, legislation

and financing both score below 60%, weakening institutional readiness. Points of entry capacity is fair (60%) but lacks strong systemic backing. Overall, urgent action to strengthen IHR coordination and NFP functionality is essential to enhance Nauru's public health preparedness and response capabilities. In response to the gaps identified in the SPAR assessment, WHO has supported the Nauru Ministry of Health through several targeted interventions. Notably, WHO facilitated Exercise Crystal, a simulation exercise aimed at strengthening emergency communication systems. Nauru performed commendably during the exercise, demonstrating significant progress in coordination and information flow, one of the key recommendations from SPAR 2023. Additionally, WHO supported the Ministry in convening a multisectoral IHR capacity assessment workshop, which enhanced collaboration and coordination among key sectors, contributing to improved IHR implementation. Further support was provided through a Pandemic Influenza simulation exercise, which informed the development of a national Pandemic Influenza Response Plan, helping Nauru better prepare for future public health threats.

35. The Nauru Ministry of Health has long realized that the Public Health Ordinance of 1925 is out of date and does not serve the Government or its people in realizing its health system priorities. Although this was known for some time, and a reform effort was made in 2012, the COVID-19 experience demonstrated that there is a lack of mechanisms to collect data, identify, and respond to public health risks from the community level through to national and international risks. Over a period of two years, the WHO has been working with relevant ministries to consider how to reform a 100-year-old law to better address policy priorities and operational functions in a manner that is context-sensitive and implementable. The WHO delivered a draft Public Health Bill to the Ministry of Health and Medical Services and the Ministry of Public Health. The WHO team travelled to Nauru to meet with the MoH Team, the Attorney General's Department, and other stakeholders to discuss the Bill. WHO also delivered a Health and Medical Services Bill and discussed senior management and RON hospital.

36. Nauru's Essential Medicines List (EML), originally established in 2010 and last revised in 2015, is currently maintained in an Excel format. Over time, a supplementary medicines list has been continuously adjusted to accommodate the arrival of new doctors and evolving treatment protocols. The Chief Pharmacist has identified two major challenges: the high turnover of specialists, which leads to inconsistent treatment regimes, and an increasing number of patients being referred for overseas treatment, which places additional strain on local pharmaceutical capacity. In 2025, Nauru formally prioritized a comprehensive revision of its EML - a process that began in 2023–2024. However, this effort faces a significant constraint due to the absence of dedicated funding. In response to the challenges identified with Nauru's Essential Medicines List (EML), concrete actions have been initiated to advance its revision. A series of virtual meetings and consultations have been conducted. Building on these discussions, WHO has commenced drafting a revised version of the national EML. This work is being carried out through ongoing remote collaboration to ensure the updated list reflects stakeholder input and aligns with national treatment needs.

37. Nauru has a relatively high density of nurses and midwives—6.6 per 1,000 population—compared to other Pacific Island Countries (PICs) and above the global median of 4.9 health workers (doctors, nurses, and midwives) per 1,000 population. However, this higher density does not appear to translate into improved Universal Health Coverage Service Coverage Index (UHC SCI), which stood at 60 in 2021. Currently, Nauru lacks accredited health professional training institutions. Preliminary analysis highlights several workforce challenges, including high vacancy rates, heavy reliance on foreign-trained and foreign-born professionals, and anecdotal concerns around high attrition, mobility, skill imbalances, an ageing workforce, low productivity, burnout, mismatched training and workforce needs, restrictive regulations, and weak integration of health workforce management with broader health sector policies. In July 2024, a preliminary analysis of Nauru's nursing workforce was

conducted using the health labour market framework. This assessed education and production (both the number and type of nurses), entry into the workforce, geographic and facility-level distribution, and exit patterns. The analysis identified several policy options with associated advantages and disadvantages and proposed strategic actions, including a 'nested program' approach for nursing workforce training and employment.

38. According to 2007 DHS data, 24% of married women in Nauru have unmet needs for family planning, with a higher rate of 37% of unmet need among women aged 20-24 years. Preliminary data from the 2023 MICS survey, indicates significant needs remain including to support women's choices for spacing and limiting number of children.

39. In 2024, Nauru conducted its first Family Planning training, resulting in the certification of 10 healthcare providers, based on global best practice guidelines. Youth Friendly Health Service guidelines were also adopted. These interventions increase access and quality of reproductive health services in Nauru, including counselling, information and provision of contraception in line with a human rights based approach.

40. Abortion is criminalized in Nauru, penalizing the provider, the woman and anyone who assists, except in circumstances a medical provider administers the procedure to save a mother's life. This can potentially lead to unsafe abortions and preventable maternal morbidity and mortality.

Recommendations:

- a. Continue strengthening family planning services and access to sexual and reproductive health information to significantly reduce unmet needs by 2027.
- b. Develop integrated adolescent health services addressing the high adolescent fertility rates and supporting comprehensive youth development.
- c. Continue to invest in and strengthen family planning services and access to sexual and reproductive health information, significantly reducing the unmet need for family planning by 2027.
- d. Review and amend laws to decriminalise abortion and expand access to information and services for sexual and reproductive health.
- e. Strengthen its health security based on SPAR 2024 findings
- f. Prioritize improving its International Health Regulations National Focal Point functionality and establish strong multisectoral coordination mechanisms.
- g. Enhance risk communication, updating legal and financial frameworks, and strengthening surveillance and laboratory systems.
- h. Conduct regular simulation exercises and the development of a national International Health Regulations implementation plan that helps sustain progress.
- i. Review the draft bills as needed and as advised by the Secretaries of the Ministry of Health, to prepare the necessary documentation to support the progression of a bill through the cabinet approval process and into Parliament, and to assist the Ministry in developing and activating an implementation plan to ensure the new law is well understood and practical to implement.
- j. Lead comprehensive stakeholder consultations, in collaboration with WHO, to review and endorse the revised Essential Medicines List (EML), ensuring it reflects input from clinical specialists and newly arrived experts. Secure funding for these consultations and related capacity-building efforts, improve EML accessibility via digital platforms, and integrate the updated list into clinical guidelines and procurement tools.
- k. Implement strategic actions for a structured 'Nested Programme' on nursing workforce development to establish a continuous cycle of training, upskilling, and employment within the health system.

1. Establish a specialized mental health clinic with qualified personnel and adequate premisses to support mental health needs of Nauruans, refugees and asylum seekers.

H. Right to education

41. Educational challenges in Nauru are multifaceted, with declining attendance from primary (78% girls, 88% boys) to secondary levels (61% girls, 68% boys). Upper secondary completion reaches only 45%, with 30% of upper secondary-age children out of school, indicating systemic barriers to educational progression.
42. Boys show higher attendance rates at primary level, but significant dropout affects both genders at secondary level. Rates of youth Not in Education, Employment, or Training (NEET) are concerning at 44% for young women and 30% for young men, indicating poor education-to-employment transitions.
43. Limited data on learning outcomes hampers assessment of educational quality, while high out-of-school rates suggest accessibility and relevance challenges.
44. Progress has been made in comprehensive sexuality education through the implementation of out-of-school Family Life Education programmes delivered via multi-sectoral partnerships. For example, the Department of Sports, Youth Affairs, Public Health, church representatives, the Nauru Police Force, and NGOs collaborated with UNFPA to deliver such a programme. However, coverage remains limited.

Recommendations:

- a. Implement targeted interventions to reduce out-of-school rates and improve secondary education completion, with particular focus on addressing barriers facing girls and boys differently.
- b. Expand comprehensive sexuality education through both in-school and out-of-school programs to address high adolescent fertility rates and support healthy development.
- c. Develop technical and vocational education programs aligned with local economic opportunities to reduce NEET rates and improve youth employment prospects.
- d. Strengthen data collection on learning outcomes to inform evidence-based improvements in education quality and relevance.
- e. Continue to implement the out-of-school Family Life curriculum, monitoring its quality and results, and consider if an in-school curriculum could further support addressing the needs of development and youth, particularly adolescent girls.

I. Right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment and climate change

45. As a small island state affected by phosphate mining, Nauru faces major climate vulnerabilities affecting their rights to health, education, and development. Historical phosphate mining has left only 20% of land suitable for agriculture, compounding climate adaptation challenges.
46. The Higher Ground initiative is one of the country's policies to address these challenges. Higher Ground Initiative (HGI) is the major component in updated NDC that aims to relocate vulnerable homes and critical infrastructure to higher elevation, significantly expand local food production, and restore degraded natural habitats.
47. Nauru has introduced a Gender-Responsive Climate Change Policy to integrate gender equality in climate action, disaster risk management, and pandemic response. The policy

supports the Nauru National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS).

48. As part of the health sector standard operational procedures on gender-based violence adopted in 2024, Nauru initiated policy work to be able to implement the Minimum Initial Service Package on Sexual and Reproductive Health in Emergencies and the Minimum Standards for Gender-based Violence in Emergencies Programming.

49. Despite these normative advances, implementation capacity remains limited, particularly affecting continuity of essential services for children during climate emergencies.

Recommendations:

- a. Implement policies, contingency plans and training to ensure the continuity of GBV and sexual and reproductive health services during emergencies and to address the protracted impacts of climate change, by 2028.
- b. Invest in community-based resilience building and livelihood diversification programs that empower women and girls and reduce their vulnerability to climate change impacts.
- c. Advocate for climate change mitigation policies
- d. Capacity development of Department of Climate Change and National Resilience (specifically Human and Financial resources) to address effectively the challenges of climate change.
- e. Take timely action to address the threat of accessing drinking water due to saltwater intrusion resulting from climate change.
- f. Address rights of women and of persons with disabilities while implementing programme on climate adaptation and mitigation.
- g. Integrate child-sensitive approaches into climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction planning to ensure continuity of education, health, and protection services during emergencies.
- h. Strengthen climate change education in schools to build children's awareness and adaptive capacity for environmental challenges.