



Save the Children

# FROM PROMISE TO PRACTICE

## THE NEED FOR PUBLIC INVESTMENT IN CHILDREN'S SERVICES IN SOLOMON ISLANDS

### Why this issue matters

Public investment in children's services in Solomon Islands is critical for social, economic and human development. Despite recent efforts to strengthen systems and services, governments urgently require sustained and targeted public funding to uphold their commitments and obligations to children's rights.

### Scale and impact of child marriage

Violence against children in Solomon Islands has significant human and economic costs. The economic cost of violence against children in 2021 was the equivalent of 9% of GDP including direct and indirect costs such as health care and lost productivity.<sup>1</sup>

Social norms that tolerate physical punishment and violence further increase risks for children, with a very high proportion experiencing violent discipline at home and many girls facing physical or sexual violence.<sup>2</sup>

### The need to invest in children's health, education and protection

#### Strengthening child protection systems

The government has developed the Child and Family Welfare System Multi-Sectoral Implementation Plan 2025–2030 that aims to coordinate efforts across health, education, justice and social services to protect children and strengthen families. Adequate and sustained public funding is essential to translate government policies and plans to ensure children's basic needs, health, education and protection, are realised across Solomon Islands, especially in rural and remote provinces.

#### Health and nutrition services for children

Maternal, newborn and child health remains a priority area. Persistent health risks, such as preventable illness, malnutrition and limited access to health facilities, means children often miss out on essential early-life care. Public investment in primary care, outreach services, nutrition programs and maternal health can reduce preventable childhood deaths and improve long-term development outcomes.

#### Education access, quality and safety

Schools in many parts of Solomon Islands lack basic infrastructure such as clean water, sanitation and cyclone-resilient buildings. These challenges directly impact children's ability to learn safely. International partners are investing in education infrastructure and teacher training, but domestic public investment is needed to scale improvements, attract and retain teachers, improve education access in outer islands and strengthen safety measures in schools.

#### Climate vulnerability impacts children

Solomon Islands is one of the Pacific's most climate-vulnerable nations. Intensifying climate-related events including cyclones, floods and sea-level rise, regularly disrupt schooling, health access and community stability, disproportionately affecting children. Investing in child-focused climate resilience actions, including disaster-resilient schools and community preparedness programs, protects children's rights to education and wellbeing in a changing climate.

<sup>1</sup> Economic Costs of Violence Against Children in Solomon Islands, UNICEF Pacific, 2025

<sup>2</sup> Regional Child Protection Situational Analysis Pacific, Save the Children, 2024



## Benefits of investing in children

### Stronger future workforce and economy

Investments that improve early childhood health and education outcomes build human capital that contributes to economic growth.

### Break cycles of violence and poverty

Funding preventive and responsive services such as community-based child protection, parenting programs and social support can disrupt patterns of violence, exploitation and intergenerational poverty.

### The role of public and donor investment

While international partners provide significant support, child-focused public spending can help mainstream services, reach children in isolated communities and create long-term change.

## Key recommendations to Government of Solomon Islands

Civil society urges the Government to:

- Increase budget allocations for child-focused sectors, health, education and child welfare (protection).
- Introduce child-responsive budgeting mechanisms to track, monitor and publicly report on public investment in children. This is critical for the government to understand what it is investing in to help make informed decisions, taking a 'treasure what you measure' approach.
- Allocate adequate and sustained resources for the implementation of the Child and Family Welfare System Multi-Sectoral Implementation Plan, including prevention and response services for child survivors of violence.



## Find out more:

Fredrick Seni

Director for Advocacy, Campaigns, Communications and Media

Save the Children Solomon Islands

fredrick.seni@savethechildren.org.au

[savethechildren.org.au](https://savethechildren.org.au)