ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ACRONYMS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
BPA	Beijing Platform for Action
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DoW	Department of Women
DSW	Department of Social Welfare
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunity
EUS	Employment and Unemployment Survey
FIBoS	Fiji Islands Bureau of Statistics
FNCDP	Fiji National Council for Disabled People
FWCC	Fiji Women's Crisis Centre
FWRM	Fiji Women's Rights Movement
IATF	Inter-Agency Task Force
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MWCPA	Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation
NCW	National Council of Women
NWM	National Women's Machinery
PIDF	Pacific Islands Development Forum
PIFS	Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
PMU	Poverty Monitoring Unit
PS	Permanent Secretary
RDSSED	Roadmap for Democracy and Sustainable Socio-Economic Development
SFCCO-	Strategic Framework for Change Coordinating Office
SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
SSVM	Soqosoqo Vakamarama
SWIA	Senior Women's Interest Assistant
SWIO	Senior Women's Interest Officer
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
VAWG	Violence Against Women and Girls
WIA	Women's Interest Assistant
WIO	Women's Interest Officer
WPA	Women's Plan of Action

INTRODUCTION

It is now widely recognised that development and governance processes will not be effective or sustainable until women and men participate in and benefit from such processes on a basis of both formal and substantive equality. Despite this, women continue to be significantly under-represented in governance and development processes, and experience discrimination and diminished opportunity in virtually all development sectors. Contrary to a wide range of commitments that Pacific Island governments have made to achieving equality between men and women, women's perspectives and contributions continue in many cases to be on the periphery of development and governance dialogue.

'Mainstreaming' a gender perspective across all development sectors and integrating gender equality into governance initiatives was universally recognised in 1995 at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China as a critical strategy for achieving government commitments to gender equality and sustainable development. The Beijing Platform for Action (BPA) states that:

> Governments and other actors should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policies and programmes so that, before decisions are taken, an analysis is made of the effects on women and men, respectively (UN Women 1995: para 202).

Gender mainstreaming was also recognised in the BPA as key to ensuring the enjoyment of human rights (ibid. para 229). The overarching objective of gender mainstreaming should thus be to ensure that all development processes proactively contribute to achieving gender equality.

Definition of gender mainstreaming

... the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.

(ECOSOC 1997)

The committee tasked with monitoring implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (UNCEDAW), which is the principle international human rights treaty that defines and firmly embeds equality of women and men as a core element of the international legal order, and which has been ratified by 97 per cent of UN member countries, has explicitly called on States Parties to adopt a policy of gender mainstreaming as a strategy for achieving gender equality. For all Pacific Island countries and territories that have undergone an examination before the CEDAW Committee, the committee has either commended existing efforts at gender mainstreaming (where such efforts were actively in place) or, more commonly, urged the State Party to develop or strengthen its gender mainstreaming policies and capacity where they were absent or insufficient (UNCEDAW 2007). Linked with this are the committee's recommendations to strengthen the government machinery for gender equality (national women's machinery — NWM) with adequate human, financial and technical resources and the authority and decision-

making powers that are necessary for them to coordinate and work effectively for the promotion of gender equality and gender mainstreaming.

1. OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

While gender mainstreaming gained significant momentum in the Pacific in the lead up to and early years following the Beijing Conference, perceptions are that the momentum was not maintained and that national governments do not have the necessary capacity to systematically integrate gender perspectives, including the provisions of CEDAW, into development processes. Without this capacity Pacific Island countries and territories will not be able to achieve national, regional and international commitments to gender equality.

This stocktake was designed to determine the extent to which capacity for effective gender mainstreaming exists in national governments, and to identify potential areas of strategic intervention to strengthen such capacity.

It is an initiative of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), in collaboration with national governments and with support from the Australian aid program. It is being carried out in phases throughout the Pacific region in response to a call from Pacific Island ministers responsible for gender equality and the advancement of women. It is their hope that the stocktake will provide guidance to strategically strengthen the institutional capacity of governments to mainstream gender and realise their international commitments to equality between women and men.

The underlying premise of the stocktake is that national women's machineries (NWMs) are key catalysts for the mainstreaming of gender and women's human rights *but they are not the sole agencies responsible for achieving it*. To be effective NWMs need both strong internal capacity and a wider government structure that is supportive of gender equality and mainstreaming. That wider structure must include a strong legal and policy framework supportive of gender equality and mainstreaming, genuine government commitment, a supportive organisational culture, clear accountability mechanisms, strong technical capacity and adequate resources — in short, an enabling environment (see Box 1).

SPC's initiative is thus designed firstly to take stock of that enabling environment, and secondly to collaborate with national governments and other development partners in the design and implementation of concrete, evidence-based strategies for enhancing it.

The stocktake does not evaluate the work of government or specific efforts at mainstreaming; rather it simply *identifies* the degree to which there is an enabling environment for mainstreaming to take place.

The Fiji Stocktake process involved desk research and in-country semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. The in-country research was undertaken in May 2014. Fifteen interviews were conducted with government agencies. In some cases interviews involved single departments and in some cases representatives from multiple departments within a ministry took part.

Interviews included both central and sector ministries and informants were primarily senior government officials or their representatives, with responsibility for planning, policy development and programme implementation. Not including the Department for Women, 60 government staff (30 men and 30 women) were interviewed. As well, the stocktake team had in-depth discussions with staff of the Department for Women about issues of gender mainstreaming in government and the department's technical capacity

to promote gender mainstreaming. In addition, focus group discussions were held with 10 female representatives from eight civil society organisations and with development partner representatives from four agencies. Appendix 2 contains a list of offices and organisations interviewed or consulted.

The stocktake methodology has limitations. These include the rapid appraisal nature of the exercise, the dependence on the Fijian Government's selection of individuals to be interviewed by the stocktake team, and the variation in knowledge and seniority of respondents. In addition not all respondents answered all questions. These factors can result in gaps of information in the stocktake. To compensate and try to minimise these gaps, the draft report has been circulated to government for review prior to finalisation and formal discussion. The stocktake is a snapshot in time and information will inevitably evolve.

Box 1

Enabling environment requirements for gender mainstreaming

1. **Political will**: Demonstrated political will means that action is taken on stated gender equality commitments and action is formalised within systems and mechanisms to ensure mainstreaming is sustainable
2. **Organisational culture**: The extent to which the attitudes of staff and institutional systems, policies and structures support or marginalise gender equality as an issue
3. **Legal and policy framework**: The extent to which gender equality and mainstreaming commitments are in place by virtue of ratification of relevant international human rights treaties, existence of constitutional and legislative provisions, and existence of government policy mandates
4. **Technical capacity**: The extent of skills and experience that organisations can draw on to support gender and human rights mainstreaming initiatives across and within their operations and programmes
5. **Adequate resources**: The allocation and application of human and financial resources in relation to the scope of the task of mainstreaming
6. **Accountability and responsibility**: The ways in which action on commitments to gender mainstreaming can be traced and monitored within organisations, and the mechanisms through which individuals at different levels demonstrate gender equality related results

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2. Country Overview

A. Facts and figures

Fiji	
Population[1]	837,271 (427,176 men; 410,095 women) (2007 census)
Land area[2]	18,333 km^2
EEZ[3]	1,281,122 km^2
Geography	Made up of 322 islands and many smaller islets of which 106 are permanently inhabited. The two largest islands — Viti Levu and Vanua Levu — constitute 87% of the land area and are of volcanic origin. Both are mountainous with the windward sides covered with tropical forests.
Political system	A coup in 2006 led to an appointed government with 12 ministers responsible for all portfolios. However, a 50-seat, at-large parliament was elected in 2014.
Women's representation in parliament[4]	Women hold eight seats in parliament including the position of Speaker of the House (2014)
GDP per capita[5]	USD 4,438 (2012)
Main languages	Fijian (official), English (official) and Hindustani
Life expectancy[6]	69.26 men / 74.62 women (2013 est.)
Labour force participation[7]	52% men /28% women (2007)
Human Development Index[8]	.702 — ranked 96 out of 187 countries (2012)
Gender Development Index	n/a
Gender Empowerment Measure	n/a

Sources:
[1] Fiji Bureau of Statistics http://www.statsfiji.gov.fj/
[2] Fiji Bureau of Statistics http://www.spc.int/prism/fjtest/Releases/FFF2010.pdf
[3] Sea Around Us Project http://www.seaaroundus.org/eez/242.aspx
[4] Government of Fiji http://www.fiji.gov.fj/Government-Directory/Government-Who-s-Who.aspx
[5] World Bank databank http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD
[6] CIA World Fact Book 2013 https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/fj.html
[7] Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, Pacific Region MDG Tracking Report http://www.forumsec.org/resources/uploads/attachments/documents/MDG%20Track%20Rpt%20web%2020122.pdf
[8] UNDP international human development indicators http://hdrstats.undp.org/images/explanations/FJI.pdf

B. Key gender issues

This section highlights key gender issues noted in government's guiding documents and raised during stocktake consultations.

The national People's Charter for Change, Peace and Progress identified the need to legislate non-discrimination as part of its electoral reform process, including non-discrimination on the basis of 'race, religion, gender or circumstance'. The Roadmap for Democracy and Sustainable Socio-Economic Development (RDSSED) 2010–2014, is Fiji's high-level strategic planning document. It recognises that women have not benefited from development to the same extent as men and identifies key issues linked to variations in men's and women's status:

> The major challenges to enhancing the development of women include implementation and monitoring of the Equal Employment Opportunity Policy in all workplaces; presence of occupational discrimination and gender segregation in labour markets; monitoring the compliance of laws and administrative practices and procedures to CEDAW Articles; maintaining effective social safety nets for the employed, in particular training and investment to promote alternative livelihoods for women displaced from the manufacturing sector; promoting rural women's advancement in economic activities without destroying sustainability of women's fisheries and therefore household food security; continuing social impact analysis of trade agreements on impact on women's health of imported, low-quality foods; increasing incidences of domestic violence; decreasing fertility of women especially rural i-Taukei women; spreading of HIV/AIDS as an epidemic; and collection and analysis of gender-sensitive data.

The recently endorsed National Gender Policy supplements the longstanding National Women's Plan of Action and reinforces the RDSSED. The gender policy articulates four objectives related to, i) improved human rights and quality of life, ii) reinforcing links between gender equality and sustainable development, iii) promoting gender mainstreaming in government, and iv) removing all forms of gender-related discrimination. These are broader but encompass the five areas of concern that are the main emphasis of the National Plan of Action.

The abovementioned strategic policy and planning statements emphasise three overarching gender issues: i) ensuring equal rights and economic opportunity for men and women and reducing poverty and vulnerability, ii) ending violence against women, and iii) improving and increasing government's capacity to mainstream gender issues into the mandates of sector and central ministries — including those bodies responsible for monitoring human rights,

In addition, a gender imbalance in decision-making is a key issue for Fiji. This is highlighted in the National Women's Plan of Action and noted in the most recent CEDAW report. International research has clarified that under-representation of women in leadership contributes to weak efforts to mainstream gender equality as a development issue. Stocktake respondents noted that cultural norms and traditions have impacted both men's and women's ability to envision more equal sharing of decision-making at all levels from the home to community, in the private sector and government. Respondents noted gradual change in this area resulting from the influence of education, peer modelling and exposure to other value sets through the media. While the recently held general elections has brought about a 14% representation of women in parliament, the impact of this change in ensuring equality in development processes will

not be immediately evident.

Economic opportunity, poverty and vulnerability

The Fiji Government Roadmap for Democracy and Sustainable Socio-Economic Development (RDSSED) 2010–2014 highlights concern about women's declining role in the economy and states that 'governments over the years have failed to commit to creating an enabling environment, to enable women to participate fully in the socio-economic development of the country' (p. 112).

Six per cent of Fiji's population had incomes lower than $1.25/day in 2009.[1] Related to this, the roadmap notes that, 'Women's higher risk of poverty and destitution is associated with labour force discrimination, increasing divorce and separation rates and problems in collecting maintenance payments from a departed spouse. Women constitute the majority of beneficiaries under the Social Welfare Department's Family Assistance Scheme' (p. 114).

From the 1996 to the 2007 censuses, unemployment in Fiji increased from 3.7 to 8.6 per cent and twice as many women than men were unemployed, which was due, in part, to the near collapse of the garment industry that employed large numbers of women. Urban unemployment overall was 10.5% in 2007 although it varied between men and women and across ethnic groups. More women are unemployed in urban areas as they have less opportunity to engage in subsistence production and sale of excess produce.

The roadmap notes that occupational discrimination and gender segregation are strong and persistent. This is despite government's commitments to gender equality and despite the fact that young women are now graduating from secondary and tertiary education in higher numbers than young men. Even though more young women have more qualifications than men they are not being given equal opportunity in employment.

Women from all ethnic groups in Fiji are often engaged in small-scale entrepreneurship but although there is no formal discrimination in men's and women's eligibility to access loans and credit through commercial banks, women still report difficulty accessing credit due to lack of independently owned collateral. This marginalisation is exacerbated by women's multiple roles and responsibilities in the community and family and their lack of access to time to invest in developing business networks and relevant skills.

Violence against women

Government has recognised that women are integral to the success and sustainability of development of Fiji. It has also identified that a key challenge to their engagement in development is the fact that they are subjected to violence, and that most often violence against women and girls takes place in the home, perpetrated by family members and intimate partners.

A national survey exploring the prevalence, incidence and attitudes to intimate partner violence in Fiji conducted in 2010/2011 by the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre, identified Fiji rates of violence against women and girls as among the very highest in the world with 64% of women who have ever been in an intimate relationship having experienced physical or sexual violence by a husband or intimate partner in their lifetime, and 24% are suffering physical or sexual partner violence today (p. 2). The findings demonstrate

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[1] UNFPA ICPD Beyond 2014 Country Profile http://icpdbeyond2014.org/about/view/19-country-implementation-profiles

the health, social and economic impacts of the high levels of violence against women and girls which include:

- severe short-term and long-term impacts on the physical, reproductive and mental health of individual women
- short-term and long-term impacts on children
- economic and social costs to families, communities and the nation (p. 4)[2].

As noted above and according to government's CEDAW report, gender-based violence is not confined to any particular ethnic group and is common amongst all Fijians.

Civil society organisations have been highly active working to end violence against women for many years. They have made significant strides to analyse issues, establish good practice guidelines and develop capacity. Regionally, the work of Fiji civil society groups is highly respected; they provide counselling for victims, training for police, judiciary, communities, shelter workers and others, and they raise awareness of human rights issues related to violence against women.

In Fiji, due to the political situation, government and civil society have not worked closely on this issue in recent years and this has undermined progress to end violence and improve development results in all areas. Following each of the four coups (two in 1987, 2000, 2006) reports of violence against women increased and anecdotal information indicates that police responses went down.[3] At present, the Department of Women has reactivated the Inter-Agency Task Force to end Violence against Women and Girls in an effort to address this growing concern. However, stocktake interviews indicated that efforts to end violence against women and girls have not been widely integrated as a core concern by sector ministries.

There are new initiatives being developed in the health sector to address gaps in service to survivors of violence. Development partners are collaborating with government to improve the health sector response to violence against women through research, analysis, capacity development and improved delivery of coordinated services. In addition the Sexual Offenses Unit of the police participates in training provided by the civil society organisation, Fiji Women's Crisis Centre, and works with the Ministries of Health and Social Welfare to address sexual violence issues.

Gender inequality in decision-making

Decision-making takes place at all levels of society including in the home, the community, in workplaces and in politics. There are of course variations in patterns of decision-making based on individuals and circumstances, but in general men take a greater role than women in decision-making in the public sphere and hold more senior level posts in both the private and public sectors. Within households, as discussed below in the section on diversity, traditional values tend to shape patterns of decision-making and the patriarchal roots of indigenous i-Taukei and Indo-Fijian societies influence roles and normalise men as heads and primary leaders of families.

The entrenchment of these patterns at all levels of society makes it more difficult for girls and women to envision themselves as leaders and undermines their abilities to challenge boys or men for leadership positions at any level. In addition, when violence against women is high in a society, fear of violence and harassment may be an inhibiting factor that prevents girls and women from stepping into territory where there are few female role models. Men may also face ridicule and stigma if they challenge existing standards of masculinity to become stay at home care-givers while their wives or

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[2] Somebody's Life, Everybody's Business

[3] http://www.gdn.int/admin/uploads/editor/files/2013Conf_Papers/CharlotteTaylor_paper.pdf

partners work. The stocktake process revealed efforts by the Department of Women to address these issues at a grassroots level through a Zero Tolerance for VAW initiative being implemented in a number of villages across the country with more than 26 villages being declared as Zero Tolerant following a series of assessments, and 29 other villages making a commitment to participate in the initiative.

Participation of women in decision-making bodies has continued to be a major challenge in Fiji and undermines development results. Since 2003, successive governments have had a policy of 30% representation of women in political parties; however, this has never been enforced or achieved. In 2006 there were eight women parliamentarians amongst the 71 members of the House of Representatives and five women senators in the 42 member Upper House (Senate).

However, the 2014 general elections in Fiji has brought about the best results for women in Fiji's history since independence in 1970. The new Minister for Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation, first time candidate, Minister Rosy Sofia Akbar was one of the successful female candidates. Minister Akbar took over from Minister Jiko Luveni as the new minister for the national women's machinery. This significant increase showed women taking up eight (16%) of the fifty MPs elected into parliament - up from 11% after the last election in 2006.

The result initially placed Fiji slightly above the Pacific-wide average of 15% and closer to the global average of 22% of politicians, with the proportion of women MPs dropping slightly to 14%, with one of the eight elected women, Jiko Luveni, vacating her parliamentary seat to become the Speaker of the House. Her appointment as Speaker makes her the second female Speaker in the Pacific Islands, following the lead of the Cook Islands in the 1960s.[4]

The increase in the number of women in parliament opens the opportunity for women to have influence at the highest level of decision-making, which responds to government's second and third report to the CEDAW Committee which identifies this as a significant concern. Women are a small minority of directors on boards of state-owned enterprises and are under-represented at senior government levels, in the police and in the military.

Mainstreaming gender equality in government

The National Gender Policy harmonises the key priorities of the Roadmap for Democracy and Sustainable Socio-Economic Development with Fiji's international commitments. It identifies that to address gender inequality, fulfil its obligations as a duty bearer for human rights, and promote development success, government needs to ensure gender responsive analysis, planning and programming are core areas of business for central and sectoral ministries. The policy specifically identifies that mainstreaming should be evident in legislation and policy documents; that it should be required within government operations and that government practice should 'guide' mainstreaming in churches and community organisations (p. 4).

The National Gender Policy also identifies a series of implementation strategies and both the policy and the roadmap note that this work will require an increase and improvement of sex-disaggregated data collection and analysis.

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[4] http://theconversation.com/fijis-women-speak-up-in-growing-numbers-inside-parliament-32739

Diversity contextualises gender issues in Fiji[5]

There are different ethnic groups within Fiji and within those groups there is some variation in gender relations related to access to resources, education and participation in economic and social affairs. There are also general commonalities between female Fijian citizens across ethnic groups; these include the prevalence of patriarchal traditions, women participating less in decision-making than men in the same ethnic group, and women having lower levels of control of economic resources and less access to credit than men. In addition violence against women is a shared concern across all ethnic groups.

The 2007 Population and Housing Census counted a total population of 837,271 people. Of these, 475,739 were indigenous Fijian or i-Taukei; there were 313 798 Fijians of Indian descent, and 47,734 others including Asians and Caucasians.

i-Taukei society tends to be culturally homogenous, social differences are based on traditional rank and, increasingly, on socio-economic status. Historically there has been considerable emphasis on respect for traditional cultural values and for chiefs, who are predominantly male. Traditional institutions allow women few, if any, rights to inherit land or formally own property, or to take part in public decision-making. Women can only inherit a title if there is no male survivor. i-Taukei women cannot traditionally receive shares of communally owned assets and are only entitled private and personally acquired family wealth.

i-Taukei cultural norms do not place restrictions on women's mobility or on most types of economic participation. Increasingly, i-Taukei value secondary and higher education for both girls and boys as a means of social and economic mobility. As greater numbers of i-Taukei move into the urban middle class, perceptions about girls' and women's rights are becoming more liberal.

There are fewer gender-related differences between the lifestyles of i-Taukei and other ethnic communities in urban areas than in rural areas. In rural areas most i-Taukei live in kin-based village settlements under semi-traditional local government and generally cultivate subsistence and cash crops on small plots of land held according to customary tenure. Rural Indo-Fijians tend to live on leased land or agricultural small holdings or rent accommodation in proximity to district centres. In addition, Indo-Fijian societies are more culturally diverse than i-Taukei, as Indo-Fijians originate from many different parts of the Indian subcontinent and their specific customs and traditions have held over several generations. The majority of Indo-Fijians belong to various Hindu denominations, but there are also Muslim, Christian and Sikh minorities.

Each of the separate religious and cultural traditions may influence gender relations within Indo-Fijian families; all tend to emphasise formal male authority in decision-making and over property. There has been a recent tendency for more restrictive patterns of control on women, including seclusion and veiling within some Muslim communities in Fiji. Some communities place restrictions on women's mobility and some communities, particularly rural, consider it more socially acceptable or prestigious for women to work only in the home, family compound or in family businesses or small holdings. Education and employment for women and men are highly valued and among the urban middle class and in many cases education has had a liberalising effect on gender relations.

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[5] This section has been largely drawn from the Asian Development Bank Country Gender Assessment, Republic of Fiji Islands, March, 2006

Summary of Findings

1. NATIONAL WOMEN'S MACHINERY

a. Policy framework and structure of national women's machinery

Government commitment to gender equality

Fiji ratified the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1995 and has submitted two reports to the UN CEDAW Committee. The initial report was submitted in 2000 with the combined second, third and fourth periodic report submitted in 2008 and presented to the CEDAW Committee in July 2010. In addition to CEDAW, the Fiji Government is party to seven other major international and/or regional agreements on gender equality and the advancement of women. These include the:

- Pacific Platform of Action for the Advancement of Women and Gender Equality and subsequent revision
- Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Jakarta Declaration for the Advancement of Women in Asia and the Pacific
- Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action
- Millennium Development Goals
- Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality
- Pacific Plan.

The constitution ensures non-discrimination under the Bill of Rights and states that a person must not be unfairly discriminated against based on his or her 'sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression.'

Government policy and plans

Fiji formulated the National Women's Plan of Action 1999–2008 following the 1995 Fourth UN World Conference on Women in Beijing. The plan is government's living document to guide work on gender equality and women's empowerment. It has been reviewed and revised once in 2005, and now covers the period 2009–2018. Current areas of focus are:

- Women and the Law
- Formal Sector Employment and Livelihoods
- Access to Services (incl. Health and Reproductive Health, HIV and AIDS, Education and Resources)
- Equal Participation in Decision-Making
- Elimination of Violence Against Women and Children.

These areas overlap with the key gender issues identified in the roadmap and the National Gender Policy. Fiji's first National Gender Policy was launched in 2014 with its overall goal to promote gender equity, equality, social justice and sustainable development in the Republic of Fiji. The policy document outlines the government's commitment to eliminate gender inequality in Fiji and aims to:

- improve the quality of life of men, women, boys and girls, at all levels of society through the promotion of gender equity and equality
- reinforce the inextricable links between gender equality and sustainable development goals in national development
- promote active and visible gender mainstreaming in all sectors and within civil society to ensure agency for gender equity and equality in all spheres of national

life
- remove all forms of gender inequality and gender discrimination in Fiji.

The following table outlines the year to year budgets of the Department of Women. The department has seen a significant increase in its 2014 budget although it remains small (0.01%) relative to the overall government budget. A considerable part of the programming increase is related to a programming agreement with UNFPA.[6]

The main programme expenditures of the department are on, a) implementation of the Women's Plan of Action (2009–2018), b) development of women's resource centres in rural i-Taukei villages, and c) support to the members of the Fiji Women's Federation who act as implementing partners to support collaborative initiatives with government. At the time of the stocktake, the department has assisted the establishment of 16 women's resource centres and 30 extension centres.

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[6] As of May 2015, the Ministry for Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation received technical assistance from DFAT in the form of a monitoring and evaluation advisor and gender advisor to support gender mainstreaming within the ministry and across government.

Table 1. Budget information: Department of Women

Activity	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Government Expenditure (total)	1,715,453,500	1,961,718,300	2,077,929,300	2,327,385,400	2,883,261,100
DoW HR & Ops	873,300	809,600	829,200	894,000	1,065,500
DoW WPA	400,000	450,000	650,000	650,000	850,000
DoW Cottage Industry	100,000				
DoW One off Events				50,000	10,000
FWF	160,000	160,000	160,000	160,000	160,000
WRCs			96,000	150,000	180,000
Donor Funds					** 140,000

Women's office mandate and structure

The mandate of the Department of Women is to implement the National Women's Plan of Action, the National Gender Policy and to meet objectives articulated in the gender equality and women's development section of the roadmap. The structure of the department is aligned primarily with the Women's Plan of Action (2009–2018) priorities and the responsibility to deliver on other commitments is assigned to the director. The National Gender Policy complements the plan of action with more focus on gender mainstreaming across the whole of government.

Since 1960 government has had a focus on issues of women's welfare. At that time, under the colonial administration, the Fiji Women's Interest Office was established to deliver services to women and respond to their basic needs. The office was also supportive of newly emerging feminist civil society organisations.

In 1987, 17 years after independence, and perhaps reflecting the influence of the global conferences on women in Nairobi and Mexico City, the government established the Department for Women and Culture as the first national machinery for women in Fiji. In 1998, following government's formal commitment to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the department was raised in status to become the Ministry of Women. Over time, the national women's machinery has evolved from being solely a service delivery organisation to also addressing strategic policy issues related to gender equality.

In 2009, the national women's machinery again became a department within a ministry. It is currently called the Department of Women and it sits within the Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation. The Department of Women has continued to pursue its role as primary advisor to government on public policies related to gender equality while concurrently providing practical services to rural women and promoting women's empowerment.

A 2009 review of the Women's Plan of Action made recommendations that the role and functions of the department needed clarification and focus. The department's mandate now clearly includes providing policy advice on women's and gender concerns and the responsibility to catalyse the whole of government to implement the Women's Plan of Action (2009–2018). However, there are outstanding gaps related to technical capacity

and adequate human and financial resources. This is discussed in more detail in the following analysis section.

CURRENT STRUCTURE

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                          DIRECTOR WOMEN
                               │
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                          PRINCIPAL
                       RESEARCH OFFICER
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SWIO CEDA	SWIO WPA	SWIO FSE&L	SWIO P&R

WIO CCENTRAL	WIO EAST	WIO NORTH	WIO

SWIA C		SWIA N	SWIA W

- WIA NAUSORI
- WIA
- WIA LAU/KADAV
- WIA
- WIA REWA
- WIA
- WIA TAILEVU
- WIA NADI
- WIA BA
- WIA
- WIA
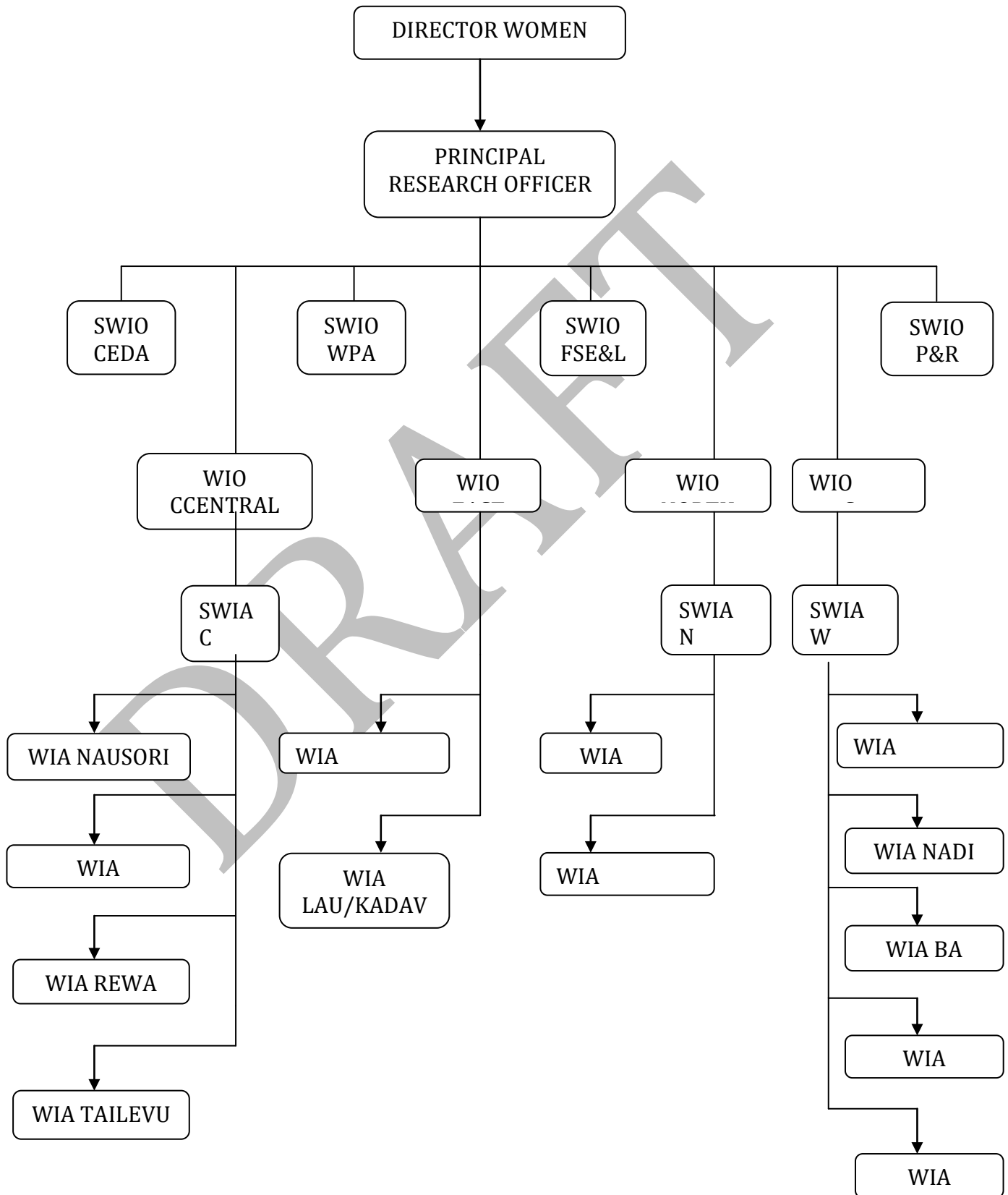
The National Women's Plan of Action is the most long-standing policy related document on gender equality and women's empowerment. Successive governments have, to varying degrees, incorporated priority areas of the plan into their respective national development strategies. While there has been some variation in focus, the overarching direction of the Women's Plan of Action has provided some consistency to how gender has been addressed at the macro level.

As noted, the current interim government has maintained this commitment in its medium development plans and the most detailed direction is found in the Roadmap for Democracy and Sustainable Socio-Economic Development (RDSSED) 2009–2014. Government has identified gender equality and women's development as one of three cross-cutting issues alongside Poverty Reduction and Public Sector Reform. However, no structural changes have been made to support cross-sectoral implementation. During the stocktake both central and sector agencies indicated that they felt it was the responsibility of the Department of Women to support all sectors to set their strategic priorities towards achieving gender equality at the corporate plan level.

The Department of Women has established inter-agency task forces from each of the thematic areas of the National Plan of Action. The task forces have members from government, civil society and academic institutions and their stated role is to facilitate, as much as possible, the cross-sector implementation of work to promote results on each thematic area.

The task forces have not been as active or robust as envisaged due to competing priorities, and in some cases multiple task forces have overlapping membership, which makes participation very time consuming for some members. Some realignment is currently being done to improve coordination and make the task force work more output focused.

The central government has a monitoring unit within the Strategic Framework for Change Coordinating Office (SFCCO) that tracks the delivery of the commitments in the roadmap through stated objectives in the annual corporate plans of all ministries. Many ministries' corporate plans have commitments related to improving the gender balance of ministries' staff, with a few ministries identifying substantive mandate related objectives. The SFCCO monitors the annual corporate plans from year to year and those data will provide a useful baseline against which to measure mainstreaming progress.

Civil society and private sector

Women's NGOs in Fiji have been instrumental in the advancement of gender equality and women's empowerment, and government recognises the significance of that role. In the recent past, the political situation has fragmented relationships within civil society and between civil society and government.

Currently the main formal linkages between government and CSOs are through women's advisory committees, also known as the Fiji Women's Federation and through the engagement of these groups in the five task forces of the WPA. The Fiji Women's Federation and the task force CSOs are listed in Appendices 2 and 3.

In the area of ending violence against women and girls, there are additional partnerships between government and women's NGOs. The Fiji Government is receiving assistance from the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre (FWCC), which conducts awareness and education programmes in peri-urban squatter settlements through the government's Zero Tolerance to VAWG programme. Since the project began in 2008, 26 settlements have made public declarations to end VAWG and 29 have declared their intent to work towards establishing zero tolerance to VAWG in their communities. Through

engagements with femLINKpacific, the Department of Women receives support for awareness raising and reporting on international commitments, particularly in the area of women, peace and security and UN Security Resolution 1325 which emphasises the role of women as peace builders during times of conflict.

b. Analysis of supports and constraints for national women's machinery

Mandate

As noted, the overarching mandate of the Department of Women is grounded in the government's roadmap document, the National Women's Plan of Action and the new National Gender Policy. At a more immediate level the 2014 Annual Corporate Plan for the Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation shows the complexity of implementing such a wide and cross-cutting mandate in a country with serious gender inequalities compounded by rural/urban and ethnic differences.

The corporate plan includes an extensive table of outputs, performance indicators and substantive targets that are to be met by the Department of Women. The workload appears to exceed human resource capacity and includes 80 training sessions to a range of different types of groups on different topics and including support to other ministries to mainstream gender; 20 reports prepared ranging from the state CEDAW report to monthly monitoring; database development; project support to over 35 community groups; four capital projects; as well as publication of a training manual and extensive advocacy for health, ending violence against women and engaging men in gender equality. This work is to be done by senior staff of whom only three have tertiary qualifications.

The role of the Department of Women has evolved since 1998 to take on more policy formulation and intervention and to be the primary adviser to government on public policy issues that affect women. However, the technical capacity within the department to provide advice on how to mainstream gender equality commitments across government is very limited. The department has continued to maintain a 'women in development' approach to address the socio-economic gap between rural and urban women, and to improve the situation of women in rural and semi-urban areas through the building of women's resource centres and the distribution of sewing machines to help with income generation.

Stocktake respondents indicated their awareness that gender equality has been identified as a cross-cutting area of work in the roadmap but noted that work to integrate gender considerations in planning and programming is progressing only slowly in some sectors and not at all in other sectors. Respondents noted that there is little ownership of this agenda across government. The majority of those interviewed indicated there is an assumption that mainstreaming is the responsibility of the Department of Women. This reflects a misunderstanding of the concept of gender mainstreaming and a lack of analysis about how gender inequalities impact development at central and sectoral levels.

The Department of Women has nine staff with university qualifications, five at HQ and four in the field offices, one of whom is the director and is responsible for management of the department itself. Most of its officers and advisers have been trained to work on delivery of basic skills and services linked to women's basic needs and its core mandate of support to women's empowerment. This leaves two critical gaps in the department's ability to, a) analyse, catalyse and support implementation of gender mainstreaming, and b) hold other ministries responsible to analyse gender issues relative to their core mandates, deliver gender responsive programmes, and track related results.

Location in government

As noted earlier, the Department for Women is situated within the Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation. As such the department lacks the authority to effectively manage cross-sector mainstreaming for the whole of government. The Roadmap for Democracy and Sustainable Socio-Economic Development identifies three cross-cutting outcomes for government. They are Public Sector Reform, Poverty Alleviation and Gender Equality. However there have been different investments and approaches used to support implementation of this cross-sector work. Public sector reform is being addressed through significant changes and shifting of responsibility from the Public Service Commission to permanent secretaries and individual ministries' human resource management sections.

Poverty and gender equality are overlapping cross-cutting issues that have both social and broad economic implications. The responsibility to address them falls under the same sector ministry. However, to ensure poverty issues are mainstreamed across government, a Poverty Monitoring Unit has been set up within the Prime Minister's Office. This unit has the authority of the Prime Minister and is responsible to monitor the work of select ministries on a rotating basis (i.e. different ministries are supported each year) to review programmes, conduct research, collect data and contribute to planning that supports poverty reduction. As yet no such unit has been discussed to support government commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment. Stocktake discussions with a number of agencies did indicate that this approach could be successful as it would centralise the authority for gender mainstreaming, support additional analytical and planning work and allow the Department of Women to focus on the mandate of the Women's Plan of Action and promotion of women's empowerment.

With regard to its service delivery mandate for women's empowerment the current location in government is relatively effective although it is constrained by lack of technical, material and financial resources. Women's Interest staff are fielded to divisions and, to the extent that resources permit, they work directly with community groups mainly in service delivery.

Resources and capacity

The Director for Women leads the work of the department with technical and management assistance provided by the Principal Research Officer. Together they manage strategic planning, coordination, research, writing of international, regional and national reports, provision of financial oversight, as well as mainstreaming. The other staff (see organisational chart above) provide support as directed, in line with the department's mandate and the areas of work identified in successive annual corporate plans.

The majority of programme staff in the Department of Women are focused on providing services to rural women and women in peri-urban settlements. Six senior staff work at HQ level and the remaining 21 are in the field offices across the country.

Fiji's geography of mountains and islands, combined with limited and expensive transport infrastructure and limited departmental resources, create constraints on the type and amount of assistance that can be provided for women in the maritime islands and remote inland villages. In some cases women's interest officers responsible for these areas are limited to clerical duties within the offices they are based in and can provide only occasional support to the remote communities. In other cases they try to 'piggyback' on the transport resources of other divisions or district based ministries to reach beneficiaries.

During the stocktake process, the Director for Women identified a need to review the roles of the officers at the divisional and district levels. The aim of such a review would

be to ensure more strategic interventions are made that link the department's work to programmes and activities in other sectors. Currently staff are mainly providing programme support to women's resource centres and related income generation projects such as sewing or small-scale production of virgin coconut oil and other by-products. In addition to this, they also promote the Zero Tolerance to Violence programmes.

The department recently implemented plans to strengthen research capacity at the national level with the creation of a Gender Information Systems Officer position. The terms of reference include establishing a database on gender related work in other sectors. It is envisioned that this database will be used to generate information and evidence and will become a baseline against which to measure change. Evidence generated through analysis of these data can then be used to leverage human and financial resources and to rationalise gender mainstreaming across the whole of government.

Technical capacity

The in-depth assessment of the Department of Women to catalyse gender mainstreaming highlighted that there are significant constraints in technical capacity within the department. As previously mentioned, only two staff, the director and principal research officer, have the skills to conduct gender analysis and negotiate within government hierarchy for gender mainstreaming. There are two others who, along with the abovementioned staff, have qualifications to provide gender training.

There are no staff with skills related to human rights and legal literacy training, gender-responsive budgeting or cross-sector gender analysis. Professional writing and reporting skills are also limited, and due to workload and capacity constraints, external consultants have been used in 2013 and 2014 to prepare international reports.

One senior staff person who was on a year-long study leave has returned with enhanced gender analysis and programming skills. Other staff have attended short-term training courses over the years on a number of gender-related issues but the application of these skills to the provision of strategic policy and programme intervention has been limited.

These observations underline findings from the 2009 review of the Women's Plan of Action which identified that concerted capacity building will be required to support the department in its role as a gender mainstreaming catalyst. Recommendations from that report included training in multiple areas including policy analysis and mainstreaming, human rights, data analysis and leadership. However, the stocktake assessment of the department also clarified that most people feel that training alone has a limited impact on technical capacity. Respondents stressed that staff need ongoing support and mentoring to apply what they have learned in the context of their work — particularly if they have not previously done much analysis, writing or advocacy.

Reporting mechanisms

The Department of Women reports against key outcomes and outputs from the ministry's annual corporate plan. There are key performance indicators for each output, and the department is expected to provide written monthly monitoring reports to the Strategic Framework for Change Coordinating Office (SFCCO).

The outcomes and outputs in the corporate plan are further broken down into activities in the department's business plan which is directly linked to individual work plans. These work plans are monitored in performance assessments conducted every year. The department director and other senior staff report fortnightly to the minister and the director also reports to the permanent secretary on budget expenditures. All government ministries have been directed by the Prime Minister's Office to meet a

target of 60% budget expenditure by the end of the second quarter of the fiscal year. It was noted that meeting this target creates significant pressure to spend their budgets by a deadline and that it is more important to achieve the expenditure than to plan for quality of delivery programmes and services. During all the stocktake interviews there were similar comments about pressure to expend the budget, diverting attention from substantive programmes.

The department also identified that the amount of regular reporting at multiple levels detracts from effective implementation of its mandate. Balancing accountability and reporting against the time required to actually deliver a mandate was raised as a point of discussion in many of the stocktake interviews. There was discussion with the department about the need to design gender-mainstreaming interventions in the context of existing mechanisms so that it does not add to workloads.

In addition to national reporting the Department of Women is responsible for reporting against international and regional commitments. This requirement strains the human and financial resources of the department; consequently many of the international reports are completed with technical and financial assistance from development partners.

Sex-disaggregated data

The assessment of the department included discussions about the collection and use of sex-disaggregated data as an analysis tool and accountability mechanism to track progress on mainstreaming. The department has limited research capacity and to date has relied on task force members, external consultants and reports from regional agencies and development partners to collect and collate sex-disaggregated information. The new research positions in the department will move some of this expertise in-house.

The role of civil society

In the past civil society organisations have played a key role in supporting the national women's machinery to empower women, and in some cases supporting gender mainstreaming. Civil society groups such as Fiji Women's Crisis Centre and Fiji Women's Rights Movement have linked their work to human rights issues and ending violence against women. As such they have supported integrating gender considerations into the work of the police, the judiciary and to some extent in health. Other organisations such as femLINKpacific have supported the department to report on international commitments in particular relation to women, peace and security and to articulate gender and development issues in the media.

In the current political climate[7] a number of civil society groups have distanced themselves from government and there has been factionalism among and within groups. Government is currently working primarily with service oriented groups through the Fiji Women's Federation (FWF) mechanism which operates as a unit under the Ministry for Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation

However, stocktake consultations with the federation highlighted that the members of the federation do not have a clear understanding of what government expects of them and they do not feel the quarterly meetings are serving their interests. They expressed that there is untapped potential and that government needs to facilitate networking among members and support collaborative dissemination of services. This would improve delivery of government programmes and also create synergies among the groups, allowing them to better coordinate with other government partners and foster mainstreaming approaches to women's empowerment. Members of the federation

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[7] Prior to the 2014 Fiji national elections

stated they had access to the voices of women in the community who often expressed concerns about various issues pertaining to government, and their relationship with the department placed them in a good position to highlight these issues, but this is not being done in a systematic manner and was considered a missed opportunity.

The role of development partners

The Department of Women works with a number of regional and international partners including UN agencies, Asian Development Bank, and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community. However, this work has been relatively limited in recent years due to the political situation and donors' hesitancy to support the unelected military government. Now that Fiji has held elections there is a relaxation of development funding restrictions and more talks are taking place with the department and with other ministries. Current areas of focus where gender-specific, donor funded, programmes are being designed or delivered include in forestry and climate change, health, youth, and in ending violence against women.

A stocktake focus group meeting with development partners reinforced issues related to challenges in mainstreaming gender including: marginalisation of the Department of Women, the tendency of government ministries to work in silos and not communicate across sectors, low numbers of women currently in senior leadership positions in the public and private sector, shortage of sex-disaggregated data, lack of gender analysis skills, and the limited capacity and resources available to the Department of Women.

Development partners did specifically note that Fiji is perceived as a leader in the Pacific in terms of work on gender equality. This is partly due to the high profile work of some of its civil society groups, but linked to the reality that in the past government has adopted many recommendations from civil society to improve the situation of women in relation to men. Because of this it was noted that Fiji is an ideal place to model gender mainstreaming and lessons learned could be considered and adapted by other countries in the region.

Development partners themselves noted that they also have internal challenges that undermine gender mainstreaming efforts, which parallel those faced by government, including tendency to work in silos and the resistance of sector specialists to take proactive responsibility for making their work gender responsive. Most development agencies have gender policies that stipulate gender should be integrated in programmes and technical assistance across sectors. However, they also face challenges in that sector staff who manage and deliver those programmes may not themselves have skills in gender analysis and/or they may not be held accountable to implement their own gender policies. To overcome this there is a need for stronger accountability mechanisms in development agencies and in government — to generate demand from the government and to ensure delivery of gender responsive programmes regardless of what sector they are in.

2. ENABLING ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW

This overview of Fiji's enabling environment for gender mainstreaming looks at the factors required to successfully integrate gender equality considerations into the work of government. An explanation of these categories has been provided above in Box 1 and definitions are restated at the beginning of each section below. Of the factors that enable gender mainstreaming, political will and organisational culture are less tangible and more difficult to measure but they can have significant influence on how government staff behave, make decisions and whether they are aware and supportive of gender mainstreaming. Other factors that contribute to the enabling environment — including legal frameworks, technical capacity, financial resources and accountability mechanisms

— are more concrete, but understanding of those issues varies depending on an individual's background and position in government. However, for these latter factors, defined targets can be set and tracked to measure progress towards norms and standards.

Each of the enabling environment factors cut across and influence the others and shape the way a government approaches their duty to fulfil women's and men's human rights and thereby promote gender equality. The sections below look first at the perceptions about political will and organisational culture and then at the more tangible aspects of Fiji's enabling environment for gender mainstreaming. It is interesting to note the types of constraints and supports identified for categories that are perception based and for those that examine more tangible factors.

a. Perceptions about political will

Demonstrated political will means that action is taken on stated gender equality commitments and action is formalised within systems and mechanisms to ensure mainstreaming is sustainable.

Perceived level of political will for gender mainstreaming among government respondents
High/medium high – 53% Moderate – 33% Low – 14%

When asked to rate the level of political will that exists in Fiji for gender mainstreaming more than 50% of stocktake respondents felt it was high. It should be noted that some respondents assessed the political will in their own ministries, some assessed it at the overarching central government level, and some stated their views on both.

A number of respondents thought that development of the National Gender Policy combined with central government's recognition of gender equality as a key cross-cutting issue were solid reflections of political will.

Others felt that commitment to gender equality was demonstrated through, a) their ministries' annual corporate plans which, in the majority of cases state objectives for equal numbers of women and men to be employed — although not necessarily specifying equal numbers at all staffing levels or, b) their programmes which had objectives such as to ensure engagement of male and female beneficiaries or participants in programmes and consultations. A few ministries reflected programmes in place which attempted to address gender inequality through the identification of a quota for women's representation in specific activities (Ministry of Youth/Fisheries and Forests).

Among respondents (47%) who rated political commitment to gender equality as moderate or low, concerns were raised about the existence of gaps between statements of commitment to gender equality and meaningful action on those statements. Some respondents also pointed out that government is making commitments to gender equality but not investing in staff's technical capacity to facilitate implementation, of those commitments.

b. Perceptions about organisational culture of government

The extent to which the attitudes of staff and institutional systems, policies and structures support or marginalise gender equality as an issue

Responses on amount of attention given to gender as a development issue in respondent's ministry or division

High – 33%
Medium – 40%
Low – 27%

When asked about whether the organisational culture in their department or ministry supports gender mainstreaming 33% of the stocktake respondents said that attitudes to gender equality are positive and that there is considerable attention paid to gender issues. The majority of those interviewed (40%) said organisational culture was moderately supportive to work on gender equality and 27% indicated it was low or not conducive to promoting gender issues.

Those who felt organisational culture was highly supportive to gender mainstreaming identified ways in which their sectors had taken ownership of the issue of gender equality, and designed specific initiatives to ensure gender responsive implementation of programmes and activities. Others said that the balance in the numbers of men and women within their ministries/departments reflected high levels of attention to gender equality.

Individuals who ranked organisational culture as moderate, cited new levels of attention to balancing staff numbers — particularly in sectors that were male dominated such as forestry, fisheries and agriculture. But there was also concern that working conditions were not family friendly or supportive of women with children who have to balance work with family responsibilities. It was noted that changes are happening in some sections or programmes and that among some staff there is more openness to discussions on gender, but this is not yet widespread and is not integrated into the way each ministry or department conducts its work.

Those who ranked organisational culture as low highlighted the absence of accountability mechanisms to ensure gender issues are addressed, the lack of discussion of gender equality issues in the context of sector mandates, and the lack of awareness by staff that gender equality is an issue related to their work. This was mentioned in the context of ministries that have technical, environmental or economic mandates, but also in some social sector ministries.

In most ministries/departments, respondents who were appointed to take part in the stocktake interviews were middle management staff, with a large number from the Human Resources or Corporate Services Department, who were considered to be responsible for gender mainstreaming within the ministries. While the stocktake process, requests the availability of senior management staff who have an overview of the technical function of the ministry, the level of the staff assigned to provide information during the stocktake process is a reflection of the organisational culture within government, which sees gender mainstreaming as primarily a staffing issue or an ad hoc add-on to programming. There seemed to be little understanding of who is supposed to be responsible for implementation of mainstreaming or what mainstreaming gender commitments entail.

The majority of those interviewed do not have regular interaction with the Department of Women or with other NGOs or ministries that have ongoing gender equality initiatives. There were no formal gender focal points in any of the ministries engaged in the stocktake, although in some cases there were staff who were recognised as understanding gender issues because of the nature of their work. Examples include the

Sexual Offences Unit in the police and the Sexual and Reproductive Health section of Ministry of Health.

It was also noted that offices work in siloes with only occasional contact with the Department of Women. Examples include when participation is required in events on International Women's Day or advocacy events to end violence against women. Some respondents also pointed out that special initiatives or programmes funded by development partners may have high levels of attention to gender in one specific area of a ministry's work. However, if there was little analysis or integration of gender equality issues into the rest of the ministry's work, the organisational culture was considered to be low.

Similarly, ministries can be involved in one-off consultations on gender issues, for example, to feed into international reporting like MDGs or CEDAW; but this does not necessarily reflect a high level of responsiveness to gender issues, or a positive organisational culture for gender. However, when these initiatives result in raised awareness among staff and are recognised as relevant to better development results in a sector's work, then organisational culture can change. This is why gender analysis of sector mandates is critical — it triggers people's understanding of how gender is relevant to improving their work and that changes organisational culture in favour of gender mainstreaming.

The numbers of men and women working in an agency can influence the organisational culture so it becomes more open to gender equality, but simply having more women on staff does not automatically mean the work of the office or agency will be gender responsive. This is particularly true if, like in Fiji, there are low numbers of women at senior levels and low numbers of men in junior and clerical levels. Gender responsive policy, plans and programmes result from intentional analysis of gender issues. Doing gender analysis requires a framework for thinking through development issues and tools to support decision-making. It is important to clarify that male and female decision makers can lead and support gender mainstreaming but they need to have awareness, analysis skills and tools to do it.

Table 2. Staffing balance in divisions and ministries/offices interviewed[8]

Post	Position or majority of positions filled by women	Position or majority of positions filled by men
Highest post	2 positions	7 positions
Second highest level posts	2 positions	12 positions
Third highest level posts	17 positions	21 positions

c. Legal and policy framework

The extent to which gender equality and mainstreaming commitments are in place by virtue of ratification of relevant international human rights treaties, existence of constitutional and legislative provisions, and existence of government policy mandates

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[8] Table shows the number of ministries or offices interviewed who provided information. As an example, the table shows that out of nine ministries, in two offices the senior position is held by a woman; in seven ministries the senior position is held by a man. It is to be noted that these ministries cover more than one department.

Fiji has signed international conventions, as well as global and regional agreements that require and/or guide government to integrate gender into its work to ensure inclusive development results are achieved and that those results benefit men and women in an equitable way. Commitment to international agreements on gender equality is positive for the enabling environment although there are still gaps pointed out in the Universal Periodic Review. In particular Fiji has not signed the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and there are general comments from the treaty committee that provide useful guidance to states on core gender and governance issues.

This section provides an overview of the main agreements Fiji is a party to and indicates, in the case of the Convention on the Rights of Disabled People, where Fiji has declared intent to sign the convention. These conventions and their supplementary documents provide clear analysis of gender issues and identify realistic indicators where changes in gender equality can be measured in the context of each agreement. As such they provide a good basis and solid grounding for government's work in gender mainstreaming.

Table 3. Main agreement Fiji is party to

Commitment	Ratification/ signing date	Gender-related guidance on convention
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)	1995	All articles related to gender equality and non-discrimination
Convention on the Rights of the Child	1993	Addresses gender equality directly and addresses issues of non-discrimination
Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	Not signed but declared	The preamble and seven articles specify gender issues related to persons with disabilities
Convention on Biodiversity	1993	Provides interpretation of gender issues, gender strategies and action plans related to the convention
Framework Convention on Climate Change	1994	Provides interpretation of gender issues, gender strategies and action plans related to the convention
Convention on Desertification	1998	Convention body and UN organisations have produced fact sheets and guides on gender issues related to desertification

Millennium Development Goals

Gender equality results are related to all MDGs but are identified specifically in MDG 3. Results are mixed depending on which indicators are examined. Related to MDG 1, women are among the most vulnerable to poverty, and in rural areas the number of those living in poverty has remained constant or increased. Some work has been done by government, including provision of food vouchers to the most vulnerable, which include large numbers of female-headed households, both rural, peri-urban and urban.

Indicators from MDG 3 show that educational parity has been achieved although dropout rates continue to be high. However, educational achievement for girls does not translate into equal economic and employment opportunities and this reinforces women's risk of falling into poverty. Government is striving towards equal economic and employment opportunity but it remains a challenge and is constrained by gender-based violence and women's lack of decision-making control.

Fiji's progress on MDGs 4 and 5 show good results in some areas, particularly in access to maternal health care and supervised deliveries. In other areas, such as universal access to contraception, there are data gaps that make it difficult to assess progress. Information on unmet need is not available and adolescent pregnancy is relatively high, especially in rural areas. Likewise, information on women's control of decision-making

on issues of sexual and reproductive health issues is not available. All these gaps undermine analysis of MDG 5b and, in turn, the lack of knowledge on sexual and reproductive health issues makes it difficult to plan interventions to address the MDG 6 target for HIV prevention.

HIV rates are low overall but there has been significant increase in new cases, including among women. There are also data gaps related to HIV prevention and gender, including lack of information from men and women on condom use and the extent to which women and men understand how HIV is transmitted.

Environmental sustainability indicators for MDG 7 are on track in Fiji but conditions in squatter settlements indicate mixed results and risk to women and children who are marginalised from decision-making, have few economic resources and are undermined by laws and customs related to control of land. Resettlement of squatters to rural areas is underway with support programmes to address the most vulnerable, including women.

Regional agreements

Fiji endorsed the Pacific Platform for Action for the Advancement of Women and Gender Equality (PPA) as well as the Revised PPA in 2005.

There are also more recent regional agreements on gender equality that reflect Pacific Island countries' commitment to international norms and standards. The regional agreements reinforce the relevance of gender issues for Pacific states such as Fiji and support analysis and action on Pacific development priorities in the context of gender issues.[9] In 2012 forum leaders made a comprehensive agreement to 'commit with renewed energy to implement the gender equality actions of the:

- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)
- Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)
- Revised Pacific Platform for Action on Advancement of Women and Gender Equality (2005 to 2015)
- Pacific Plan
- 42nd Pacific Island Forum commitment to increase the representation of women in legislatures and decision-making
- 40th Pacific Island Forum commitment to eradicate sexual and gender based violence' [10].

Constitution and legal framework

The current constitution of Fiji was signed into law in 2013. It includes statements on non-discrimination on the basis of sex. The drafting of the constitution included public consultation.

The new constitution and legislative framework has not been fully analysed for CEDAW compliance; however, there have been some criticisms particularly in relation to human rights and rights of women and girls with disabilities. These were submitted to the CEDAW Committee and were considered as contributions to the committee's concluding observations on Fiji's most recent CEDAW report.

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[9] Fiji was suspended from the PIF in 2009 until the elections of 2014. It is a member of the Pacific Islands Forum but was not engaged in the process leading up to the 2012 Forum Leaders Gender Equality Declaration

[10] http://www.pina.com.fj/?p=pacnews&m=read&o=4535371750416152240ff11f10ecf5

A number of laws and decrees have been passed which have the potential to strengthen the enabling environment for gender mainstreaming. These include the Family Law Act, the HIV Decree, the Child Welfare Decree, the Domestic Violence Decree and the Crimes Decree.

There are still some gaps in legislation and policy and there is a need for evidence of how the decrees and laws are impacting social and economic relations between men and women. Development and implementation of gender responsive policies has been slow. Equal opportunities in employment and access to finance, implementation of anti-sexual harassment policies, and implementation of labour standards are examples of areas where the enabling environment still needs to be strengthened.

d. Technical capacity

The extent of skills and experience that organisations can draw on to support gender and human rights mainstreaming initiatives across and within their operations and programmes

How would you describe the technical ability of your staff to do gender mainstreaming?

High – 7%
Medium – 60%
Low – 33%

Technical capacity of staff to do gender mainstreaming was rated as moderate in nine of 15 stocktake interviews. It was rated high in only one interview. In the remaining five interviews respondents said they thought capacity in their offices was low to medium low.

Those citing low or medium levels of technical capacity indicated that specialised technical support was needed to develop staff awareness and skills. Specific awareness and skills were seen to be prerequisites for gender analysis and for mainstreaming gender issues into planning and programming in a consistent and effective manner.

A number of respondents reflected on a lack of understanding of gender mainstreaming as a concept. Many misinterpreted it as being primarily about gender balance among ministry staff. The stocktake interviews provided an opportunity to clarify that gender mainstreaming includes doing analysis of how men and women in Fiji engage with and benefit from the work of each ministry. This analysis must then be integrated into the mandated work of each ministry. Further discussions highlighted that most of the respondents did not see this approach as part of their responsibilities and felt that it would fall within the mandate of the Department of Women. Those observations in turn identify a low understanding of national commitments to gender equality within the development process.

A number of those interviewed highlighted that while staff do have analytical skills there needs to be corresponding policy and programming directives to undertake and report on gender mainstreaming. They noted that without specific direction, government staff are unlikely to apply their analytical skills to the issue of gender in the context of their core mandates.

Others felt that directives must be accompanied by guidance or training so staff clearly understand what is expected of them. An example from the Finance Ministry came up in relation to an attempt several years ago to integrate a question on gender into budget submission forms. Staff persons responsible for submitting budgets for their ministries were generally unclear about how to respond to the question and tended to leave it

blank. There was no follow-up to make the question mandatory and/or to provide training, and eventually the question was removed from the budget form.

The stocktake interviews asked for information on numbers of staff who had participated in training related to gender mainstreaming. In most cases it was noted that the divisions responsible for human resources keep track of training; very few respondents could identify staff who had received training on gender. The majority of those who had received training seemed to be located in central ministries such as Finance and Strategic Planning. In some cases training did have a positive influence and resulted in ongoing advocacy, but more often people who had received training did not make any major changes in their ways of working. This indicates that capacity development in itself is not adequate to support gender mainstreaming. It needs to be accompanied by changes in policy and programming approaches and in accountability mechanisms.

The stocktake also sought to clarify the extent to which government has supported gender mainstreaming capacity development of the civil service. Under its previous mandate the Public Service Commission provided some training in gender mainstreaming. Courses were made available to civil servants on request, and resource people were drawn from the Department of Women or technical specialists were brought in from outside government. The Public Service Commission's mandate has been changed and they no longer provide this type of training service. Most recently the Department of Women conducted training in gender mainstreaming for all permanent secretaries and there is some discussion on offering similar training to other senior levels of government administration. The training for permanent secretaries supported senior decision-makers to become more aware of how gender is related to their areas of work, and how integrating gender analysis can support improved development results.

Another area where technical capacity can be developed is in relation to programmes funded by development partners. Sometimes these programmes have gender-related requirements such as the engagement of men and women in consultations, collection of sex-disaggregated data and targeted integration of women and men as active participants and beneficiaries. Several stocktake respondents identified instances where exposure to gender responsive programmes has resulted in increased awareness about gender issues in the context of a ministry's mandate. At the same time it was noted that if ministries themselves do not require gender responsive programmes and planning then lessons learned in the context of a single initiative are likely to be lost over time.

The stocktake sought to collect feedback from interview participants on effective methods of capacity building in the context of ministries' core mandates. Recognising that different individuals learn in different ways, the purpose was to try and highlight options and key considerations relevant to Fiji. Government can use the information to set priorities for staff development and sustainable gender mainstreaming. A range of responses were received but the approaches that were identified most often included having in-house training that is adapted to each ministry's area of responsibility; having follow-up or coaching and mentoring from gender specialists; and having strategic interactions with the Department of Women that support and track gender mainstreaming initiatives. Some individuals also highlighted that to develop in-depth expertise some staff may benefit from longer-term training opportunities either in Fiji or abroad.

Overall the stocktake found that staff were generally supportive of gender mainstreaming although most indicated they did not understand it well enough to initiate action within their own work plans. There were no resource networks internal to ministries to support gender mainstreaming but some respondents felt having a system of focal points could contribute to both technical capacity and accountability.

Individuals also recognised the potential for mainstreaming to improve development outcomes but concurrently recognised that to be effective and sustainable more skill development, more accountability, and more ongoing support was needed.

e. Adequacy of financing for gender mainstreaming

The allocation and application of human and financial resources in relation to the scope of the task of mainstreaming

> **Are government and development partners financing gender equality adequately?**
>
> Yes – 33%
>
> No – 53%

When asked about the adequacy of resources to finance the work on gender equality, more than 50% of the respondents indicated that resources are inadequate. They noted that there is a lack of resources to address existing international and national commitments. Others noted that work to promote gender equality is considered an 'add-on' to the core responsibilities of ministries and it is not budgeted for at the planning stage. They also indicated that more focused investment is needed to be able to provide a more systematic consistent approach to gender mainstreaming across all of government.

Some respondents who felt financing for mainstreaming is adequate referred to the funding provided to the Department of Women. Further they indicated that the department should lead and take responsibility for implementation of gender equality commitments and that with more strategic approaches they would be able to accomplish that work. Some of the respondents felt that gender mainstreaming could be funded through donor-supported initiatives and that development partners could provide technical assistance on gender equality.

Relevant to the discussion of investment in gender mainstreaming, it was clear during the stocktake that few ministries have annual corporate plans with substantive objectives for gender. These plans are intended to set the stage for lower level planning and programming so in order to increase investment at the delivery level it is critical to identify how national gender commitments are to be delivered through each ministry's core mandate. Without this articulation of intent, funding allocations are unlikely to occur.

f. Accountability mechanisms

> *The ways in which action on commitments to gender mainstreaming can be traced and monitored within organisations, and the mechanisms through which individuals at different levels demonstrate gender equality related results*

> **Gender focal point in ministry?**
> Yes – 26%
> No – 66.7%
> Don't know – 6.7 %

One type of accountability mechanism to facilitate gender mainstreaming across government is to have a system of gender focal points who are responsible to help other staff do gender analysis of their work and integrate gender across work plans. In Fiji the stocktake respondents could not identify any government staff, outside the Department of Women, who have responsibilities related to gender mainstreaming in their job descriptions or terms of reference. Staff in the Department of Women are the only group with focused responsibility for gender equality issues and mainstreaming. Ministries where a few staff have gender-related issues in their terms of reference include the Fiji Police Sexual Offenses Unit and Health and Education, but these are not linked to the function of integrating gender, as a development issue, into the work of their sector.

People interviewed for the stocktake were asked if there are specific constraints to integrating responsibility for gender into staff positions in their ministries or departments.

Financial constraints were identified where respondents assumed that including additional responsibilities would inevitably lead to identification of gender issues needing more attention, which would lead to a bigger workload and eventually require an additional position. Most people said there were not any really significant constraints but that staff would need clear terms of reference and considerable training to actually make the role of gender focal points effective.

Other accountability mechanisms include tracking and analysing sex-disaggregated data and reporting specifically on gender issues. Of the 14 ministries and divisions that responded to the question, 'Does your ministry/division collect data?' nine said they always collect data and four said they sometimes collect data. Of this same group, three officers said their data are always sex-disaggregated, six said data were sometimes disaggregated; three said they were never disaggregated and two were not sure.

Sex-disaggregated data are critical to gender mainstreaming. They allows ministries to keep track of who is being engaged and who is benefiting from development initiatives. Analysis of these data over time can show how engagement of different groups — by sex and by age — impacts those groups and affects development results differently. This in turn can inform planning for better and more equitable development for all citizens. To support effective national development, gender analysis of sex-disaggregated data needs to take place within each ministry in the context of their specific strategic objectives and programme outputs. The stocktake interviews highlighted that in Fiji data collection efforts vary, but analysis levels are currently very low and require improvement.

Without consistent sex-disaggregated data collection it is very difficult to create an evidence base about gender issues and report on progress on equality and human rights. Some ministries of course collect mainly technical data that do not relate to people, but many said they collect information about households, communities or groups such as youth and children without specifying the differences between men and women, girls and boys.

There was a significant gap in gender analysis of data across government, including in the Bureau of Statistics. The bureau is in the process of strengthening capacity to do analysis internally, but unless government requests it, this will not include gender analysis. They currently do have an agreement with one development partner to prepare a gender monograph based on the 2007 census information. The monograph will be useful as a baseline against which to measure changes in gender equality at the next census in 2017.

3. ANALYSIS OF SUPPORTS AND CONSTRAINTS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING ACROSS THE WHOLE OF GOVERNMENT

In reviewing the information collected in the stocktake, a number of specific supports to gender mainstreaming stand out. These are itemised in this section and summarised as key findings and recommendations in Section 4.

a. Supports

Supports for gender mainstreaming in Fiji that can be built on and enhanced to increase and improve government efforts at mainstreaming include:

- the framework of international commitments that Fiji has established to guide and monitor its efforts at promoting gender equality. These commitments include CEDAW, CRC and the MDGs and Fiji has been working with international, regional and national partners to facilitate and measure progress
- constitutional and legal frameworks that support non-discrimination and equality between men and women and boys and girls. The legal framework, including new decrees on family law, domestic violence, sexual harassment and child welfare, recognises existing inequality in male–female power relations, the ways in which this inequality disadvantages and endangers women and children, and undermines social stability and economic progress
- a promising policy environment in Fiji that includes strategic planning direction to address gender equality as a development issue at the central government level and through the mandate of the national women's machinery. The Roadmap for Democracy and Sustainable Socio-Economic Development (RDSSED) 2009–2014 identifies gender as a cross-cutting issue that requires attention across the whole of government
- the Poverty Monitoring Unit of government which provides an example of a government-led mechanism which could be replicated or adapted to support rigorous and substantive implementation of national gender commitments
- a long-standing national plan of action for gender equality and women's empowerment and a new, cabinet-endorsed, gender policy. Both of these provide specific priorities and areas for 'whole of government' action
- some examples of substantive gender mainstreaming programmes in sector ministries that can provide lessons learned. Initiatives include tracking sex-disaggregated data in education; youth initiatives on gender equality in leadership; gender responsive agriculture and income generation programming; natural resource management with strategic recognition of women's key roles; and gender aspects of health and violence against women and children
- working models of cross-ministry collaboration to end violence against women and reduce poverty, and lessons learned can be applied to further mainstreaming efforts
- a long and strong history of non-government organisations working in Fiji to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women. This supports gender mainstreaming in government in multiple ways because NGOs can monitor and advocate for increased progress on gender issues and they can support implementation of national and international commitments for gender equality — for example in leadership, women's sexual and reproductive rights, and ending domestic violence
- development partners who want to actively re-engage with Fiji as the country moves back towards democracy. Partners are specifically seeking to support government's efforts to promote gender equality and mainstreaming and have demonstrated willingness to provide technical assistance, support for data collection and analysis, and collaborative gender responsive programme

development.

b. Constraints

To build on the supports mentioned above it will be necessary to remove or reduce existing constraints to gender mainstreaming. The stocktake interviews and meetings identified key constraints as follows:

- The disruption resulting from Fiji's history of political upheaval is a constraint to the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women. Momentum and relationship building by successive governments has been undermined. Collaboration with civil society groups specialising in social change, human rights and gender equality is currently weak.
- The current structure of government is a constraint to promoting 'whole of government' shared responsibility for gender mainstreaming. The Department of Women is expected to be a catalyst for all of government but it has actually been marginalised by its placement within the Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation and does not have clear authority to direct change within other ministries.
- While central government has a defined monitoring role in relation to gender mainstreaming it has not proactively established or enforced the requirement for ministries to identify and integrate substantive, mandate-oriented gender equality objectives in their own annual corporate plans. There is still a mistaken assumption that the Department of Women is 'doing gender mainstreaming' for all ministries.
- Information sharing across government is not well directed or coordinated. There are significant gaps in collection of sex-disaggregated data. In addition, data are collected but are not shared within or between ministries. In some cases there are inconsistencies in the raw data collected by the Fiji Statistics Bureau and sector ministries.
- Gender analysis is weak and this is symptomatic of the larger lack of data analysis generally.
- Financial investment in gender equality is low. The Department of Women receives less than 1% of the overall government budget. None of the ministries or departments interviewed for the stocktake kept records of spending on gender, and none had specific budget allocations linked to gender mainstreaming.
- Limited representation of women in decision-making bodies at all levels is a constraint to gender mainstreaming and to development generally. Women's absence from decision-making undermines the accuracy of analyses about development needs, weakens policy development, makes it difficult to design and plan initiatives and means that women and men do not own the development process equally.
- There are technical capacity weaknesses across government that make it difficult to do gender mainstreaming. Stocktake respondents noted that few staff understand what gender equality is or how it relates to development success. Further, they do not have the technical knowledge to analyse their sector issues from a gender perspective or integrate any analysis into policy, planning or programme design.
- The Department of Women also has limited technical capacity to do gender mainstreaming and there are not enough staff within the department to deliver on its entire mandate.
- Government operates in a hierarchical manner and junior officers are not encouraged to challenge decisions made, or approaches used, by more senior staff. This undermines gender mainstreaming and will make it difficult to foster change. It also means that to be effective gender mainstreaming needs to be a clear responsibility at the permanent secretary level and within the Office of the Prime Minister.

c. Additional factors impacting enabling environment for gender mainstreaming in Fiji

The cultural diversity of Fiji and its historic patterns of unequal treatment for indigenous citizens and citizens of Indian descent make all governance initiatives complex. As briefly discussed in the 'Key Gender Issues' section, there are variations in the development needs of women and men from different groups due to past policies and laws. This means that gender analysis will have to be regularly cross-cut with issues of race and ethnicity.

However, Fiji can also benefit from its diversity as it implements its commitments to gender mainstreaming. Literature on change management repeatedly sites evidence to show that change processes benefit from involving people with diverse experiences and worldviews. Therefore, in addition to building government staff's gender responsive technical analysis and planning capacity, government will need to deliver clear advocacy and awareness messages to help staff work with all development beneficiaries. Engaging men and women to understand what gender mainstreaming is and why it is important will be critical.

4. SUMMARY OF PRELIMINARY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDED STRATEGIC APPROACHES FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING

a. Political will and organisational culture

The findings from the Fiji Stocktake show that political will and commitment to gender mainstreaming are evidenced by government's commitment to international agreements and entrenchment of gender equality principles in the constitution, legislation and policy. In addition government funds the Department of Women to, a) deliver programmes and assistance to women, and b) work strategically to implement those commitments. However, organisational culture in support of gender mainstreaming is not particularly strong or consistent across government as a whole. The stocktake interview findings show an overall low to medium commitment to gender mainstreaming linked in part to lack of accountability mechanisms to enforce gender-mainstreaming commitments and low technical capacity in the area of gender and development. Organisational culture for gender mainstreaming is also undermined by other constraining factors that are common across government. These include the tendency to work in silos, the hierarchical nature of the public service, and cultural patterns that constrain women from speaking out with challenging opinions in decision-making forums.

Increased political will for gender mainstreaming will be evidenced by more effective implementation of gender-related laws, policies and strategic planning objectives, creation of accountability processes to enforce what is promised on paper, and investment in systems, structures and technical capacity to improve implementation of all existing commitments. These types of interventions will foster a more positive organisational culture by modelling and demonstrating that gender is a true priority of government. They will also demonstrate that gender mainstreaming is not just about women but that it is a human rights commitment and a critical aspect of the development process.

Specific strategic interventions related to political will and organisational culture are highlighted through the sections below, but immediate changes to improve organisational culture for gender mainstreaming include:

- Prime Minister's Office to profile gender mainstreaming as a responsibility of all ministries
- Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation and the Department of Women to re-establish a streamlined set of inter-agency task forces and use them, in part, to share information within ministries on how gender mainstreaming relates to improved development results
- SFCCO and the Prime Minister's Office to clarify the responsibility of each ministry to integrate substantive sector-related objectives for gender equality into annual corporate plans, in addition to objectives for staff balance at all post levels
- Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation to consider how to develop a gender mainstreaming monitoring function, based in central government, using the model of the Poverty Monitoring Unit of the Prime Minister's Office.

b. Legal and constitutional frameworks

Fiji has received concluding comments from the CEDAW Committee, which provide a detailed set of recommendations for strengthening the legislative and policy framework.

Since the 2006 coup more than 200 decrees or pieces of legislation have been enacted. This presents a serious implementation challenge for government. In addition the roadmap identifies that there are specific issues which need to be addressed to support economic development and include women as equal participants in economic growth, and to ensure women receive equitable treatment in employment. It has also recognised that violence against women and children is a major constraint to development success and noted that implementation of laws and policies to address these issues should be integrated across the work of government. In addition recent decrees on HIV and crimes have implications for gender equality and women's empowerment.

To improve and maximise the potential of the legal systems of the Fiji Government it is recommended that:

- the concluding comments from the CEDAW Committee be prioritised and responsibility for addressing them within specific time frames be assigned to relevant ministries with instruction that the Department of Women be kept informed of all work and decisions taken
- to facilitate rapid implementation of equal opportunity and domestic violence legislation/decrees, development partners support collaboration between civil society organisations and government to build legal literacy about recent legal changes across government, civil society and communities
- The Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation and the Prime Minister's Office support staff in the Department of Women and central government to understand new gender-related legislation and its implications for government's responsibilities to women and girls.

c. Technical capacity

Despite the fact that Fiji has close to two decades of experience addressing gender inequality and women's empowerment, there is still limited capacity within government to conduct sector-specific gender analysis. Since 1998, the role of the Ministry of Women has evolved from being a service delivery organisation to one that now includes policy formulation and advice. This two-pronged approach complies with international good practice.

However government's technical capacity to implement this two-pronged approach has not been upgraded in line with requirements. During the stocktake process, it became evident that there is a receptiveness within the different sectors of government to be

more strategic in how they address gender inequality and women's empowerment. However, respondents identified that they are constrained by lack of understanding about gender and development concepts and principles as well as by lack of appropriate analytical tools and the related technical knowledge of how to use them.

A 2009 Situational Analysis linked to review of the National Women's Plan of Action identified general areas where capacity development is needed and while these are still valid they need to be prioritised and strategically delivered to ensure effectiveness and sustainability.

Strategic recommendations for improving technical capacity for gender mainstreaming include:

- central government to establish targets for technical capacity development for gender mainstreaming across all ministries at senior management and programme staff levels. Targets to include numbers of staff trained, categories of training and training methodologies used. Monitoring of training initiatives to also include overall numbers of participants and balance of men and women trained
- each ministry to work with development partners to ensure key staff have access to coaching and mentoring on gender mainstreaming, data collection and results monitoring over a set two to five year time frame
- development partners to support government to provide training in gender mainstreaming and development, and results monitoring, with all programme staff of the Department of Women. This will enable the department to track the impacts of its programmes over time. Evidence created can be used to inform strategic planning and leverage changes and increased funding
- development partners and Department of Women to provide training in gender analysis of statistical information to the Fiji Bureau of Statistics staff and align Fiji's census and survey systems to international and regional gender indicator sets.

d. Financing

The majority of stocktake participants felt that financing for gender mainstreaming is inadequate. Further, no ministries had systems for tracking financial allocations and expenditures on gender.

Some respondents did feel spending was sufficient and they referred to the budget and human resources of the Department of Women as the main and adequate area of investment. These respondents had misconceptions about gender mainstreaming and did not understand that mainstreaming, by its very nature, is a responsibility of the whole of government. Other stocktake respondents felt that development partners should support costs of gender mainstreaming, but senior government staff interviewed indicated that Fiji is committed to owning the process itself which also implies building gender mainstreaming into core budget allocations. Development partners are committed to assist with the cost of gender mainstreaming but funding is always intended to be transitional until government takes full ownership.

Strategic steps to secure and sustain adequate financial resources for gender mainstreaming can include:

- government to establish targets for government-wide investment in gender mainstreaming using a five to ten year time frame
- government to identify budget indicators for gender specific programmes that can be used as proxies for gender mainstreaming and included in the programme budgets and budget requests of all ministries

- central government to monitor its spending on gender-specific programmes through existing strategic planning and finance mechanisms
- central government to monitor development funding targeted to gender by ministry, amount spent, length of investment and results reported.

e. Accountability mechanisms

The Department of Women does not have a strong, regularised working relationship with sector ministries. This makes it difficult to integrate and coordinate national priorities for gender equality and there is little opportunity to build cross-sector synergies. Periodic cross-sector consultation meetings to fulfil international reporting requirements do not meet this need and there is no system of ministry-based gender focal points. To date inter-agency task forces have not been well coordinated enough and have not had the mandate to mainstream gender in their own ministries.

Responsibilities of permanent secretaries have not been clarified in relation to delivering effective, relevant and quality gender mainstreaming that can improve development results in their ministries. Annual corporate plan objectives are not adequately addressing sectoral gender issues and there is a lack of understanding about the relationship between improving male/female staff balance and doing gender mainstreaming.

Collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated data in Fiji is weak and this undermines accountability to gender mainstreaming objectives in legislation, planning and policy. Information sharing and data consistency between ministries is weak and data collection is not fully aligned with international and regional indicators for gender equality. There have been clear technical capacity shortfalls across government in terms of research, information management and evidence creation and the Department of Women does not have the ability to fill these gaps.

Government has an accountability mechanism for poverty alleviation, which is one of its other cross-sector priority areas. The Poverty Monitoring Unit, situated in the Prime Minister's Office is an example of good practice for monitoring and supporting cross-sector initiatives and could be adapted or replicated to serve the same purpose for gender mainstreaming.

Strategic interventions to improve accountability for gender mainstreaming include:
- government to centralise the responsibility for mainstreaming gender within the Prime Minister's Office, by expanding the mandate (and changing the name) of the Poverty Monitoring Unit or by creating a parallel Gender Mainstreaming Monitoring Unit. Concurrently maintain and focus the Department of Women as a gender equality policy advisory body and the technical implementation arm for women's empowerment priorities
- government to identify and clarify the responsibilities and key performance indicators of permanent secretaries to deliver substantive results on gender mainstreaming within their respective ministries. Permanent secretaries and government to define most appropriate support mechanisms that can be established, consistently within each ministry, to achieve key performance indicators
- Ministry of Finance, Strategic Planning, National Development and Statistics, and Department of Women to work with development partners to improve the technical capacity of the Fiji Bureau of Statistics to collect and analyse sex-disaggregated data
- Bureau of Statistics and Department of Women to work with development partners to create a relevant and user-friendly set of gender indicators that are aligned to international and regional best practice for data collection and gender

analysis

- government to set time-bound targets for mandatory inclusion of sex-disaggregated data and use of gender indicators in every ministries' planning and reporting processes.

Conclusion

The Fiji Gender Stocktake has not only provided key information on the gaps that exist in enabling the advancement of gender equality measures across government, but the process itself has contributed to an increased awareness across sectors of what gender mainstreaming entails.

The Government of Fiji recognises that in order to ensure that women and men benefit equally from development processes and inequality is not perpetuated, there is a need for stronger political will, a supportive organisational culture, implementation of constitutional, legal and policy provisions, strong technical capacity, adequate resources and strong accountability mechanisms.

While the Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation is a key catalyst for the mainstreaming of gender and women's human rights, they are not the sole agency responsible for achieving it, with the responsibility for gender mainstreaming being one that rests across all of the government sectors and a need for accountability at the highest levels. The report highlights that government staff are generally supportive of this, though it is still not understood well enough to initiate action within work plans.

The stocktake report provides an opportunity for further dialogue and discussion across the various sectors of government to ensure that commitment and good will result in concrete results and action towards gender equality in Fiji. The report can be used strategically to advance gender equality in all spheres of national development.

APPENDIX 1

Roadmap for Democracy and Sustainable Socio-Economic Development: *Policy Objectives, Strategies and Key Performance Indicators for Gender Equality and Women's Development* **(pp. 139–141)**

Goal: Achievement of gender equality and empowerment of women		
Policy Objective	Strategies	Key Performance Indicators
Achievement of gender equality and empowerment of women through full participation in business and decision-making through entrepreneurial support in non-formal and formal sector and decision-making processes	• Laws in relation to UN CEDAW (articles 1–13) reviewed, implemented and monitored; gender mainstreaming institutions strengthened; a National Women's Plan of Action implemented, Domestic Violence Bill enacted, awareness training on the Family Law Act, and ensure appropriate sentencing penalties, including counselling for violent crimes against women and children • Increase ability of women and their access to income-generating activities including Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) such as Women's Socio-Economic Development (WOSED) (to be reviewed), targeted programmes for women in agriculture reform and equal training opportunities at all levels in government • Empower women, particularly rural women, through training on leadership, awareness of human and indigenous rights issues, health and quality of life through partnership, networking and coordination with women's groups and increased collaboration and partnership with NGOs • Mainstream gender perspectives in all ministries' strategic plans, corporate plans and business plans • Strengthen women's groups to increase awareness of the role that women play in societies • Conduct gender sensitisation workshops at national and district (including village) level • Mobilise and network with more men's and young boys' organisations to work as gender advocates • Increase partnerships with women's groups at community level, non-government organisations and civil society organisations to conduct empowerment programmes for women • Increase partnerships with research institutions such as the academia to provide evidence-based research and results to make informed policy decisions	• Share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector increased from 35.9% to 37.9% by 2011 (MDG) • Combined primary and secondary girls: boys ratio of 1:1 (MDG) • The proportion of female school principals, vice and assistant principals to be not less than 25% by 2011 • The proportion of female CEOs in government to be at least 20% by 2011 • At least one woman in each government board, committee, tribunal, council, and commission • Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament and municipal elections to be not less than 20% (MDG) • Number of women supported by micro-finance increased from 5,100 in 2006 to not less than 19,500 by 2010 • Cases of domestic violence

	• Support local and regional organisations in engaging with women's rights CSOs and indigenous women's groups to advocate and advance gender-equality initiatives • Adoption of a central data and information management system to reflect gender statistics and indicators disaggregated by ethnicity, age, disability, and employment status and other relevant status	recorded by police to be monitored and analysed • Availability of sex-disaggregated data • Maintain the 50% parity of young females • Full female parity (50%) in the top three occupation group in older age group • Percentage of females who are considered 'economically active' to rise from the 31% in 2004–05 to 37.9% by 2011 • Household work for economically active females reduced from 14 hours per week to less than five hours by 2011 • Improve average paid work for economically active women as compared with men from 17% to less than 10% by 2011

APPENDIX 2

Ministries and organisations consulted

Ministries and government offices

Department of Women
Ministry of Finance, Strategic Planning, National Development and Statistics
Strategic Framework for Change Coordination Office (SFCCO)
Budget Division (Ministry of Finance)
Ministry of Finance Corporate Services
Statistics Division
Ministry of Health
Ministry of Justice
Ministry of Tourism
Ministry of Public Enterprises
Ministry of Agriculture
Ministry of Fisheries and Forests
Ministry of Education
Ministry of Youth
Human Rights Commission
Department of Social Welfare
Public Service Commission
Ministry of Housing, Local Government, Town and Country Planning and Environment
Poverty Monitoring Unit
Police, Sexual Offences Unit

Development partner consultations

Organisation
UN Women
SPC
UNFPA
DFAT

Civil society organisation consultations

femLINKpacific	42
Fiji Women's Federation Representatives	
Catholic Women's League	
Island Bus Company	
Pan Pacific Society and SE Asia Women's Assoc. PPSEAWA	
Latter Day Saints Women's Association	
YWCA	
TISI	
Stri Sewa Sabha (Women's Welfare Society)	

APPENDIX 3

CSO members of inter-agency task forces

- Gender Mainstreaming Task Force
    - o National Council of Women (NCW)
    - o Soqosoqo Vakamarama (SSVM)
    - o Fiji Disabled People's Association (FDPA)
    - o Fiji National Council of Disabled Persons (FNCDP)
- Balancing Decision Making Task Force
    - o National Council of Women (NCW)
    - o Soqosoqo Vakamarama (SSVM)
    - o Fiji Employers Federation
    - o Fiji Trades Union Congress
    - o Pan Pacific Society and SE Asia Women's Association
    - o femLINKpacific
- Review of Laws Task Force
    - o Fiji Women's Rights Movement (FWRM)
    - o Fiji Women's Crisis Centre (FWCC)
    - o National Council of Women (NCW)
    - o Soqosoqo Vakamarama (SSVM)
- Micro Enterprise Development
    - o Micro Finance Unit/NCSMED
    - o National Council of Women (NCW)
    - o Soqosoqo Vakamarama (SSVM)
- Elimination of Violence Against Women Task Force
    - o Fiji Women's Rights Movement (FWRM)
    - o Fiji Women's Crisis Centre (FWCC)
    - o National Council of Women (NCW)
    - o Soqosoqo Vakamarama (SSVM)