



Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development

Fiji Country Plan Summary

Background

Through a 10-year commitment, Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development (*Pacific Women*) connects more than 170 gender equality initiatives supported by Australia and implemented by over 160 partners across 14 Pacific Island countries.

Pacific Women is one of the largest global commitments to gender equality. It partners with governments, local and international non-government organisations (NGOs), private sector, disabled people's organisations, coalitions and others to improve the political, economic and social opportunities of Pacific women and to end violence against women and girls. Its emphasis is on partnerships and locally-driven development.

Providing technical, knowledge sharing and convening support to the portfolio of partners is *Pacific Women's* Support Unit, working to improve the long-term impact of gender equality projects in the Pacific. The Support Unit's office is in Suva, Fiji, with a sub-office in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea.

Pacific Women was announced at the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders' meeting in August 2012. It commits up to AUD320 million over 10 years in 14 Pacific Islands Forum member countries.

Pacific Women initiatives respond to the commitments in the 2012 Pacific Leaders' Gender Equality Declaration, while also supporting Australia's Pacific Step-up and its Partnerships for Recovery approach of working together with Pacific partners to address COVID-19 impacts on women, girls and their communities.

The outcomes sought through *Pacific Women* are:

- **Ending Violence against Women:** Violence against women is reduced and survivors of violence have access to support services and to justice.
- **Economic Empowerment:** Women have expanded economic opportunities to earn an income and accumulate economic assets.
- **Leadership and Decision Making:** Women, and women's interests, are increasingly and effectively represented and visible through leadership at all levels of decision making.
- **Enhancing Agency:** Women in the Pacific will have a stronger sense of their own agency, supported by a changing legal and social environment and through increased access to the services they need.

Since 2012, an estimated 1.22 million Pacific Island women, men and children have been able to access services and information across 14 partner countries through initiatives supported by *Pacific Women*.



Fiji

Fiji is a country comprised of over 300 islands and has one of the more developed economies in the Pacific region. As such, it fares well compared to its neighbours, ranking 91 out of 188 countries on the Human Development Index.¹ However, the 2017 Global Gender Gap Report ranked Fiji 125 out of 144 countries in terms of the Global Gender Gap Index,² which measures gender disparity across four broad areas including: economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, political empowerment and health and survival.

The Government of Fiji is committed to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. The Fiji National Gender Policy 2014³ focuses on the promotion of women's human rights and gender mainstreaming across development planning and decision-making processes within government, as well as addressing structural and social barriers that impede gender equality.

Pacific Women Country Plan

Through *Pacific Women*, the Australian Government will spend approximately **\$26 million over 10 years** (2012–2022) on initiatives supporting women's empowerment in Fiji.

Country Plans are the mechanism through which *Pacific Women* outcomes and activities are planned and agreed between DFAT and counterpart governments, following extensive national consultations. They provide detail on what will be funded and how these funding decisions are made. The first Fiji Country Plan was developed in 2013 based on consultations with women's civil society organisations, Australian Government funded aid programs working in Fiji and development partners. It was updated in 2015 to better reflect the Government of Fiji's and Government of Australia's shared commitment to implement the National Gender Policy (2014) and related gender equality commitments. The Country Plan has an accompanying Monitoring and Evaluation Framework to track progress and learning.

A review of the Fiji Country Plan was conducted in 2017. The review focused on the extent to which women's economic empowerment and women's leadership and decision-making activities have contributed to positive change for women in Fiji. Violence against women was not reviewed, as that topic had previously undergone multiple evaluations and continues to be well programmed under the existing Country Plan portfolio.

The second Fiji Country Plan (2018–2021) builds on successes and lessons learned from the first and includes support to increase women's accessibility to safe spaces to practice leadership and build confidence to influence national policy processes. It will continue to create opportunities that contribute to an enabling environment that supports women's participation in community, local and national level leadership. It also supports female market vendors to work together to lead market reform. Vendors are economically and socially empowered by improving infrastructure, systems, relations, safety and services in the markets. The Country Plan also encourages coalitions of women's rights organisations committed to a Pacific where there is gender justice, ecological sustainability, peace, freedom, equality and human rights for all.

¹ Human Development Index 2017, United Nations Development Programme. <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/FJI>

² 2017 Global Gender Gap Report, World Economic Forum. http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2017.pdf

³ Ministry for Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation, 2014. *Fiji National Gender Policy*.



In addition to *Pacific Women*, DFAT makes an important contribution to gender equality in Fiji through mainstreaming gender outcomes in the aid program, as well as through political, diplomatic and corporate activities.

Rationale for activities in the Country Plan

Fiji is a multicultural society with varying cultural traditions and values. Strong patriarchal practices dominate decision making structures with little to no participation of women in decision making and formal planning. High rates of violence against women persist and analysis of gender inequality in Fiji highlights the need for a multi-pronged approach to address this complex issue. These include targeted interventions with individuals, families and communities, through to strategies that address formal systems and structures at the national level that discriminate against women.

(a) Increasing women's leadership and decision making

Despite progress, men still largely dominate the political arena. When women do participate in politics, they tend to do so in small numbers. Differences among women (as among men) on the basis of class, religion, race, ethnicity and age tend to play out in different ways in the representation of women in national level leadership.⁴

(b) Increasing economic opportunities for women

Women's active participation in the economy is critical for economic growth and prosperity. While Fiji's laws accord its men and women citizens the same rights to inheritance,⁵ women face discriminatory customary laws and traditions that prohibit inheritance on traditional land titles.⁶ Inequitable financial policies and practices further marginalise women in accessing loan schemes and women have limited opportunities to pursue higher paying occupations.⁷

(c) Reducing violence against women and expanding support services

Rates of violence against women and girls in Fiji are among the highest in the world. According to the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre,⁸ 64 per cent of women who have ever been in an intimate relationship have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by a husband or intimate partner in their lifetime. Strong and consistent anti-violence advocacy from individuals, women's groups and civil society organisations has helped to develop accessible referral pathways for services for survivors of violence, legislative reform and greater community awareness of ending violence against women.

(d) Enhancing women's agency

Ultimately, the implementation of the Country Plan is intended to strengthen women's organisations, groups and coalitions for change, addressing the structural barriers and recognising enablers of change are essential in building an enabling environment in support of women's agency.

⁴ Chatter, P. 2015. Women in the House (of Parliament) in Fiji: What's gender got to do with it?

⁵ See *Inheritance (Family Provision) Act* 2004, Art. 3 http://www.paclii.org/fj/legis/num_act/ipa2004304/ and *Succession, Probate and Administration Act* (revised 1985), Art. 6 http://www.paclii.org/fj/legis/consol_act_OK/spaaa376/ (accessed 12 April 2018).

⁶ See *Property Law Act*, Art. 21(1) http://www.paclii.org/fj/legis/consol_act/pla179/ and *Married Women's Property Act*, Art. 3(1) http://www.paclii.org/fj/legis/consol_act/mwpa290/ (accessed 12 April 2018)

⁷ Asian Development Bank. (2006) Country Gender Assessment.

⁸ Fiji Women's Crisis Centre, 2003. Somebody's Life, Everybody's Business! <http://www.fijiwomen.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/National-Survey-Summary.pdf>



The Fiji Women's Fund

In 2017, the program established the Fiji Women's Fund (the Fund). The Fund provides \$10.5 million from July 2017–June 2022 to support women's groups, organisations and networks in Fiji to expand and enhance their work on women's empowerment and gender equality in Fiji.⁹ One of the goals of the Fund is to transition to an independent local entity with secured resourcing from other donors, private sector and local philanthropy by June 2022. The Fund is co-located with the existing *Pacific Women Support Unit* office in Suva, Fiji, and operates as an independent entity to support grant and capacity building activities of Fiji-based implementing partners.

The Fund is governed by a Steering Committee comprising Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation, DFAT, women's civil society and the private sector who provide overall strategic guidance and support to ensure the Fund is making positive progress against its intended outcomes.

⁹ The Fiji Women's Fund is aimed at reaching women living in rural and remote locations and those who are marginalised, including women with disabilities and those facing discrimination based on their sexual orientation or gender identity. It contributes to the National Gender Policy, the Beijing Platform for Action, Pacific Leaders' Gender Equality Declaration (2012) and the Sustainable Development Goals 2030.



Table 1: Bilateral Activities

PROJECT NAME AND PARTNER	DESCRIPTION	BUDGET
Outcome: Leadership and Decision Making		
Support for Women's Weather Watch Preparedness, Participation and Protection campaign (femLINKpacific)	Ensured that disaster preparedness plans, media and information communication systems were gender inclusive.	\$823,131 (2013–2018)
Enhancing women's participation in decision making through strengthened community radio transmission (femLINKpacific)	Upgraded community radio infrastructure to increase the reach of FemTALK 89FM's radio transmission (including for damage following Tropical Cyclone Winston). Increase women's awareness and participation in national disaster management response and recovery.	\$362,131 (2013–2017)
Outcome: Economic Empowerment		
Markets for Change (UN Women)	Improving market governance, management, infrastructure and access to financial services to increase women's economic empowerment. Ensuring markets are more sustainable, accessible and safe for women vendors in Fiji. Additional funds provided to enable recovery and response after Tropical Cyclone Winston.	\$20,199,533 ¹⁰ (2014–2020)
Value Chain Analysis and Market Assessment of selected Handicrafts in Fiji (Consultant)	Researching and designing an economic empowerment project to enhance Fiji women cultural industry producers' access to markets and sustainable incomes.	\$64,636 (2019–2020)
WINvest Fiji (study and report on 'The Business Case for Workplace Responses to Domestic and Sexual Violence in Fiji') (International Finance Corporation)	Closing the gender gap in Fiji's private sector through company peer learning, dissemination platforms and advisory engagements.	\$370,000 (2016–2020)
Makoi Women's Vocational Training Centre (Fiji Muslim Women's League)	Supported targeted training programs for women to enhance economic opportunities. Funded additional distribution of dignity, hygiene and household kits to women in rural and remote areas of Ba and Ra affected by Tropical Cyclone Winston.	\$251,796 (2015–2016)
Support to community-based women's organisations (Ra Naari Parishad)	Supported the establishment of the Ra Naari Centre to enable the organisation to deliver economic livelihood activities.	\$20,000 (2015–2016)

¹⁰ This project is supported by the regional program (\$11,289,510), Fiji bilateral program (\$4,200,000), Solomon Islands bilateral program (\$1,280,946) and Vanuatu bilateral program (\$3,429,077).



PROJECT NAME AND PARTNER	DESCRIPTION	BUDGET
Support for women's civil society organisations (Women in Fisheries Network – Fiji)	Assisted with the re-establishment of the Women in Fisheries Network-Fiji. Enabled a platform for knowledge sharing, collaboration and the exchange of information to strengthen the involvement of, and improve the conditions for, women in the fisheries sector.	\$85,000 (2015–2016)
Support for women's economic empowerment (South Pacific Academy of Beauty Therapy)	Provided scholarships for women from low socio-economic backgrounds and from rural and remote areas where access to employment is low, to complete the Certificate IV in beauty and spa therapy.	\$916,672 (2014–2020)
Feasibility study on increasing women's economic opportunities in Fiji (Consultant)	Undertook a participatory scoping study on options for expanding women's economic opportunities across urban and rural areas in Fiji.	\$47,638 (2014–2015)
Outcome: Ending Violence against Women		
Fiji Women's Crisis Centre programs to End Violence against Women in Fiji and the Pacific (Fiji Women's Crisis Centre)	Continuing core funding to the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre, the leading crisis and support service for women and girls in Fiji.	\$7,050,000 (2016–2020) ¹¹
WEAVERS project (Pacific Conference of Churches)	Promoted using a rights-based theological approach to eliminating violence against women. Provided communities with rights-based ecumenical messages to support the prevention of violence against women and link women to crisis services.	\$83,000 (2016)
Support for women's empowerment through holistic and sustainable service delivery (Empower Pacific)	Built skills, enhanced knowledge and increased awareness of community members and other local service providers in addressing social issues that impact women's empowerment, well-being and safety.	\$270,000 (2015–2016)
Support for sexual and reproductive health services for women and youth (Medical Services Pacific)	Supported targeted programs to increase access to clinical health care for women and girls and to justice and child protection services for vulnerable children and youth. Funded additional sexual and reproductive health services to rural and remote women affected by Tropical Cyclone Winston.	\$988,423 (2014–2017)
Support for gender equality through ecumenical-based approaches (House of Sarah)	Supported increased collaboration between church leaders and clergy on advocacy for ending violence against women.	\$131,000 (2014–2017)

¹¹ This project is supported by the regional program (\$2,250,000), Fiji bilateral program (\$4,800,000).



PROJECT NAME AND PARTNER	DESCRIPTION	BUDGET
Pacific Partnership to End Violence Against Women and Girls (UN Women and Fijian partners)	Funding for key projects under the Pacific Partnership to End Violence Against Women include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Preventing Violence Against Women in Fiji's Faith Settings (House of Sarah, UN Women).¹² ▪ Get into Rugby PLUS (UN Women). ▪ 'One Voice' campaign (Pacific Conference of Churches). ▪ Supporting the development of Standard Operating Procedures. ▪ Increased the capacity of the Fijian Government to develop a National Action Plan to prevent violence against women and girls. ▪ Zero Tolerance Violence Free Communities to Address Violence Against Women (Fijian Government) 	\$7,627,948 (2018–2022) ¹³
Outcome: Enhancing Agency		
Fiji Women's Fund	Supporting local women's groups, organisations and networks in Fiji to expand and enhance their work on women's empowerment and gender equality. Reaching women living in rural and remote locations and those who are marginalised.	\$10,500,000 (2016–2022)
Pacific Girl: Girls Arise (Fiji Women's Rights Movement)	Building life skills and confidence for 10–12 year old girls living outside of Fiji's capital Suva, sharing FWRM's approach in a toolkit and raising the profile of girls' issues with decision makers.	\$301,021 (2019–2022)
We Rise Coalition (Partnership between the Fiji Women's Rights Movement, Diverse Voices and Action for Equality; femLINKpacific and International Women's Development Agency)	Supported a coalition of four women's rights organisations committed to a Pacific where there is gender justice, ecological sustainability, peace, freedom, equality and human rights for all.	\$4,800,000 (2015–2019) ¹⁴
Support to the Ministry of Women (Ministry of Women)	Supported the Ministry of Women to implement the National Gender Policy and strengthened their monitoring and evaluation capacity.	\$434,334 (2015–2017) \$325,585 (2019–2020)

¹² This project is co-funded with the Fiji Women's Fund.

¹³ This project is supported by the regional program and this allocation is not for Fiji alone but for multiple countries under the Pacific Partnership to End Violence Against Women and Girls project.

¹⁴ This project was supported by the regional program (\$2,000,000) and Fiji bilateral program (\$2,800,000).



PROJECT NAME AND PARTNER	DESCRIPTION	BUDGET
Feasibility study on establishing a women's fund to support women focused organisations in Fiji (Consultant)	Completed a study, building on recommendations of a DFAT-commissioned civil society analysis, on the situation of women-focused civil society organisations in Fiji and how DFAT could best support their work.	\$60,612 (2015–2016)
Individual Deprivation Measure (International Women's Development Agency, Australian National University, and the Fiji Bureau of Statistics)	Applied the Individual Deprivation Measure tool to measure the gendered aspects of poverty in communities. Provided gender sensitive data to inform national policy and decision makers on programs and services for women and vulnerable groups.	\$346,659 (2013–2017)



Table 2: Regional Programs with Activities in Fiji

PROJECT NAME AND PARTNER	DESCRIPTION	BUDGET ¹⁵
Outcome: Leadership and Decision Making		
<p>Strengthening Diverse Women's Leadership in Humanitarian Action (Shifting the Power Coalition: ActionAid Australia, femLINKpacific, Pacific Disability Forum, Nazareth Centre, Transcend Oceania, Talitha Project, YWCA PNG, YWCA Samoa, Vanuatu Young Women for Change, Vois Blong Mere, ActionAid Vanuatu)</p>	<p>Ensuring diverse Pacific women's voices provide leadership in disaster planning and response through a coalition approach. Supporting diverse women leaders to engage in disaster coordination mechanisms and influence decision making. Documenting needs and capacities in crises. Establishing platforms to strengthen diverse Pacific women's voices to influence policy and decision making.</p>	<p>\$895,000 (2018–2021)</p>
<p>Pacific Women Parliamentary Partnerships (Australian International and Community Relations Office, Department of the House of Representatives)</p>	<p>Supported building the capacity of Pacific women parliamentarians and their staff to ensure gender equality issues are better addressed in parliament.</p>	<p>\$2,850,037 (2013–2018)</p>
Outcome: Ending Violence against Women		
<p>Pacific Partnership to End Violence Against Women and Girls (UN Women)</p>	<p>Promoting gender equality and reducing violence against women and girls across communities and nations in the Pacific, while producing promising practices. Focusing on three essential intervention areas: formal and informal education; contextualised, community-based prevention approaches; and civil society organisations' capacity to engage with national and regional institutions and authorities. Refer to Table 1 for more information.</p>	<p>\$7,627,948 (2018–2022)</p>
<p>Gender Equality Theology – Institutional Transformation (GET-IT) (UnitingWorld)</p>	<p>Supporting institutional transformation within churches and participating organisations by challenging and shifting traditional gender theologies, then reviewing church policies to align them with new gender equality theologies. Establishing procedures and response mechanisms for situations of violence that respect the rights of women and that act in accordance with protection laws.</p>	<p>\$1,895,451 (2018–2021)</p>

¹⁵ Except where indicated, this allocation is not for Fiji alone but for multiple countries under *Pacific Women*.



PROJECT NAME AND PARTNER	DESCRIPTION	BUDGET ¹⁵
Support to the Pacific Community Regional Rights Resource Team (The Pacific Community (SPC))	Supporting work on ending violence against women, human rights and good governance with Pacific Island governments and civil society organisations. Providing technical assistance and training. Advocating for women and girls to have increased access to justice for domestic violence and to promote and protect human rights commitments.	\$5,750,000 (2015–2020)
Partnering Women for Change (UnitingWorld)	Supported work with churches to ensure that women, girls and people living with disabilities have increased safety and well-being in their homes, communities and churches.	\$370,000 (2015–2018)
UNICEF Pacific Child Protection Program (UNICEF)	Worked across 14 Pacific Island Countries to strengthening protection of children from violence, abuse and exploitation.	\$7,000,000 (2014–2018)
Pacific Fund to End Violence against Women (UN Women)	Supported civil society organisations and governments to prevent violence and provide services for survivors of violence, including for counselling, paralegal aid, shelter and referral services. Strengthened the capacity of organisations working to end violence against women through training in advocacy, law reform, women's human rights, community education and counselling services.	\$1,500,000 (2014–2017)
Outcome: Enhancing Agency		
Pacific Girl	<i>Pacific Women's</i> dedicated program to support adolescent girls. Working with Pacific-based organisations to support change in the social norms that underpin gender inequality and perpetuate discrimination against adolescent girls aged 10–19 years in the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu. Refer to Table 1 for more information.	\$4,500,000 (2018–2022)
Partnerships for Health and Rights: Working for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights for all in the Pacific (International Planned Parenthood Federation)	Supporting the expansion of access to sexual and reproductive health services in the Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu and from phase two, Papua New Guinea.	\$3,000,000 (2015–2022)
The Last Taboo: Research on managing menstruation in the Pacific (Burnet Institute, WaterAid, the International Women's Development Agency)	Researched barriers to women's and girls' effective menstrual management and potential impacts on their participation in education and income generation in Fiji, Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands.	\$500,000 (2016–2017)



PROJECT NAME AND PARTNER	DESCRIPTION	BUDGET ¹⁵
Women's Leadership Research (Developmental Leadership Program, La Trobe University)	Researched women's leadership programs at a community level in the Pacific and assessed how working politically and through coalitions can contribute to program outcomes.	\$250,000 (2014–2016)
Gender Equality and Climate Change in the Pacific (The Protection and Pacific (ProPa) Network)	Raised awareness of the nexus between gender equality and climate change. Generated more informed decision making in this space to ensure women's voices influence decision making, and that climate agreements are implemented in a gender-responsive way in the Pacific.	\$500,000 (2015–2017)
Progressing Gender Equality in the Pacific (The Pacific Community (SPC))	Phase one (completed) conducted stocktakes of Pacific Island governments' capacity to integrate gender equality and women's empowerment into policies, legislation and programs and strengthened the collection and analysis of data to better track outcomes. Phase two is supporting Pacific Island countries to adopt evidence-informed policies and legislation that promote gender equality and women's human rights.	\$3,941,712 (2013–2018) \$5,494,203 (2019–2023)

