

Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development: Fiji

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. 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 Australian Government, through *Pacific Women*, has committed approximately \$26 million over 10 years (2012–2022) on initiatives to support women's empowerment in Fiji.

Figures¹

<i>Community awareness and outreach</i>	<i>Crisis support and prevention services</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">More than 25 women's groups supported by the Fiji Women's Fund (FWF) through three rounds of grants (2017–2020).146 community mobilisation and prevention sessions in 2019 led by the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre (FWCC).2,321 women participated in Market Vendor Association decision-making processes.90 recipients of scholarships benefitting from training and employment in the beauty and spa industry (2015–2020).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">7,063 counselling sessions delivered by FWCC in 2018, including for 2,206 new clients.Two changes in Fiji's laws from advocacy led by FWCC and partners – a new sentencing tariff for child rape and the introduction of special measures for survivors during trials.1,658 male advocates (including from agencies supporting women survivors of violence) since 2014 have undertaken the FWCC Male Advocacy for Women's Human Rights and Against Violence against Women program, a joint initiative with the government's Violence against Women Taskforce.

Achievements

Leadership and Decision Making

- 12 committees working to prevent crime are enabling vendors to drive improved safety in markets (June 2019). Simultaneously, women vendors are being included by Municipal councils' infrastructure planning to ensure design and construction is gender responsive, such as ensuring more women's toilets given the majority of vendors are women.
- Fiji Young Women's Forum's distribution of 3,000 My Guide to Voting booklets helped diverse women to participate in the 2018 Fijian General Election. More than half of those receiving the booklet lived in rural locations.

Economic Empowerment

- Women now comprise 40 per cent of Nausori Town Council's market staff through support from UN Women's Markets for Change (M4C). Previously, market staff were almost exclusively men.
- FWF's new booklet documents three grantees' promising practices in women's economic empowerment. It sets out the common steps that women's groups can take so that women participants can actualise high-value market opportunities.
- A review of Spa Academy scholarship recipients revealed they feel more confident and valuable, have increased decision-making power in their families and have improved their economic situations through employment in Fiji's lucrative spa and beauty industry.
- IFC's business case for employer-supported childcare demonstrates the need for affordable, quality childcare for working parents and outlines a range of possible actions to support working parents. Following the release of the business case, the Government of Fiji has allocated funding for an exploratory committee to establish day-care centres near major hubs of employment.

Ending Violence against Women

- FWCC, the longest serving crisis centre in the region, continues to be supported for its Pacific-led methodology to train male advocates regionally and to lobby successfully for changes in law, policy and increased resourcing by governments.

¹ Information collated from *Pacific Women* implementing partner reports cumulative to June 2019 unless otherwise stated.



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- The Pacific Women's Network Against Violence Against Women, with FWCC as Secretariat, continues to support emerging and expanding crisis centres in Vanuatu, Tonga and Kiribati.

Enhancing Agency

- Support for the Pacific Feminist Forums in 2016 and 2019 mobilised diverse women to share, celebrate and strategise to achieve women's human rights. More than 100 women participated in inter-generational dialogue at the Forums, convened by the Fiji Women's Forum and Fiji Young Women's Forum National Convention and supported by The We Rise Coalition.
- Incubation of the \$10.5 million FWF has resulted in the first fund of its kind in the Pacific region, with plans to transition to an independent local entity. FWF supports women's empowerment and gender equality through women's groups and networks, including in remote and rural areas.
- Fiji has become a leader in the region for integrating gender mainstreaming into national planning, with advisory support to the Ministry of Economy resulting in gender equality principles being embedded in Fiji's National Development Plan. This commitment has been affirmed through the training of the first cohort of 26 male public servants to become gender equality advocates.
- IWDA and Fiji Bureau of Statistics surveyed 2,967 Fijians using the Individual Deprivation Measure, showing women were more likely than men to be extremely disadvantaged and to have limited capacity to raise concerns and effect change in their community. Men were twice as likely to be not deprived of Voice, with the gender difference being largest in urban areas.
- UnitingWorld worked with ministers and church leaders around gender equality theology, resulting in churches adopting their first gender equality theology approaches in sermons and practice.
- The Women in Fisheries Network – Fiji national stock take has revealed gender inequalities in the fishery industry and the data is being used to enhance women's involvement in fisheries and natural resources management policy and decision-making forums.
- Through a new public-private partnership, staff at ANZ and the Bank of South Pacific are receiving on-site sexual and reproductive health and rights services from the Reproductive and Family Health Association of Fiji. In turn, the banks are providing financial training and resources to the Association.

Pacific Women Partners

Government of Fiji: Fiji Bureau of Statistics; Ministry of Women.

Fijian civil society partners: Diverse Voices and Action for Equality; femLINKpacific; Fiji Muslim Women's League; Fiji Women's Crisis Centre (FWCC); Fiji Women's Rights Movement (FWRM); House of Sarah; Ra Naari Parishad; Women in Fisheries Network.

Other partners: Australian International and Community Relations Office, Australian Department of the House of Representatives; Australian National University; Burnet Institute; Developmental Leadership Program, La Trobe University; International Planned Parenthood Federation (with local partner Reproductive and Family Health Association of Fiji) International Women's Development Agency (IWDA); Medical Services Pacific; the Pacific Community: Progressing Gender Equality in the Pacific (PGEP) and the Regional Rights Resource Team; Pacific Conference of Churches; the Protection and Pacific Network; Shifting the Power Coalition; South Pacific Academy of Beauty Therapy; UNICEF; UnitingWorld; UN Women's Markets for Change (M4C) and Pacific Fund to End Violence Against Women; WaterAid; We Rise Coalition; and *Pacific Women's* regional partners.

Fiji Women's Fund (FWF): Ensuring funds reach the most remote and rural women's groups by incubating the region's first women's fund, *Pacific Women* supports the FWF to work with: Adventist Development Relief Agency Fiji; Aging with Empowerment and Dignity; Delailasakau Women's Group; Edge Effect; femLINKpacific; Fiji Association of the Deaf; Fiji Disabled People's Federation; Fiji Girl Guides Association; Fiji Trades Union Congress - Women's Wing; Fiji Women's Rights Movement; Graduate Women (Fiji); House of Sarah; LājeRotuma Initiative; Medical Services Pacific; Naitasiri Women in Diary Group; Pacific Sexual and Gender Diversity Network; Partners in Community Development Fiji; Ra Naari Parishad; Reproductive and Family Health Association of Fiji; Rise Beyond the Reef; Striders Rugby Women's Club; Survival Advocacy Network; Talanoa Treks; Women Entrepreneurs and Business Council; Women in Fisheries Network – Fiji; 2nd Pacific Feminist Forum Working Group.

