



MINISTRY FOR SOCIAL WELFARE, WOMEN & POVERTY ALLEVIATION

# FIJI NATIONAL GENDER POLICY



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*Appendix 1 – List of Stakeholders consulted in drawing up this Policy*

## 1.0 OBJECTIVES

**This is the National Gender Policy for the Republic of Fiji. The Government of Fiji commits to the aims and strategies set out in this Policy, and to the realisation of all policies designed to promote gender equality in Fiji.**

The overall goal of this policy is to promote gender equity, equality, social justice and sustainable development in the Republic of Fiji. The Government of Fiji is committed to removing gender inequality in Fiji. This Policy, endorsed by Cabinet, 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.

This Policy aims to improve awareness among policy makers, planners, implementers and the general public of the provisions of the local and international instruments related to gender, and to identify strategies to implement these instruments. It provides a written commitment by government which the population can monitor and evaluate. It recognises that gender equality is a fundamental human right, and that it is an inherent component of economic growth and development. It recognises that ethnicity, disability, religion and gender often intersect and create a multiplicity of sources of discrimination against women in Fiji.

This policy intends to promote gender equality in all aspects of Fiji's development, and to eradicate or modify institutional and social barriers to such equality. The policy is consistent with the 2013 Constitution of Fiji, and with ratified international conventions and instruments.

Specifically, this Policy aims:

- To promote the development of women's human rights in accordance with Fiji's obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women and its General Recommendations, and all other conventions and international laws relevant to women.
- To incorporate and to integrate a gender perspective in all development planning and decision making processes as the strategy for promoting gender

equity and ‘fairness’ so that development planning itself becomes fundamentally gendered.

- To establish a system of gender mainstreaming which binds all sectors of government, and guides community and faith based organisations, women’s and men’s organisations.
- To provide policy makers and other key actors involved with human and social development, with guidelines for identifying and addressing gender concerns in order to inform public policy, including guidelines on the evaluation of the social division of labour.
- To identify and strengthen institutions in Fiji which promote and protect the human rights of women, in particular in relation to gender-based violence.
- To transform material conditions to achieve economic, social and physical security of men and women, including conditions which will build peace
- To facilitate legislative change and public awareness of relevant legislation and their implications.

## **1.1 Strategies to Achieve Policy Objectives**

The strategies involved are:

- Sensitisation and training on gender issues at all levels.
- Advocating for substantive gender equality and for the promotion of women in leadership in all sections of Fijian society.
- Promoting an approach that is grounded in research, based on age and sex disaggregated data collection, and a gender analysis of roles and social relations of women and men.
- Ensuring that there are mechanisms in place for public awareness of the effect of Government policies on women in Fiji.
- Ensuring ownership of this Policy by promoting public education and creating awareness of it amongst men, women and children.
- Promoting women’s economic empowerment and gender equity in government, in relation to the environment, in the education system, and within civil society, as the key to sustainable development.
- Establishing gender responsive implementation, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for development within government and other agencies.

- Promoting the use of gender-sensitive and gender-inclusive language in legislation, government documents and educational material.
- Increasing the participation and access of women to the expression of their opinions and to decision making in and through the media including their involvement in new technologies of communication.
- Promoting a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media through training.
- Promoting access to all services by women.
- Promoting gender equity and child protection strategies amongst adolescent girls and boys.

## **2.0 Vision**

The vision of the National Gender Policy is to set Fijian society free of all forms of gender based discrimination and to ensure that both men and women participate fully in and enjoy equitably the development processes and outcomes.

## **2.1 Mission**

The main mission of this policy is to contribute to the elimination of gender inequalities in all sectors of national life, in order to achieve the nation's goal of sustainable development.

### 3.0 BACKGROUND

The National Gender Policy provides a framework for including gender perspectives in all activities of government and civil society, thereby promoting the full and equal participation of men and women in the development process. Development strategies are more equitable when they consider the different needs, constraints, opportunities and priorities of men and women. Compelling evidence suggests that such inclusive strategies are also far more effective and sustainable.

The Fiji Government's current policy agenda, to attain developed country status by 2015 places human development at the nucleus of national development. The National Gender Policy provides a comprehensive platform on which to include gender aware approaches in development, thereby enhancing the possibility of successful, effective and sustainable outcomes in that initiative. The policy is also consistent with the Government's commitment to implementing the Women's Plan of Action (WPA 2010- 2019) based on the Beijing Platform for Action, and with Fiji's commitment to the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

The National Gender Policy is based on an analysis of the development situation in the Republic of Fiji, to ascertain the needs and priorities of men and women, as well as the inequalities faced in opportunities and outcomes. The document is formulated on selected sector strategies, enhanced by gender based analyses, extensive consultation<sup>1</sup> and the establishment of gender equality goals.

The impact of the Policy will be monitored by two main approaches. The first is by the adoption of specific policies in identified sectors, and the second, by the inclusion of gender as a cross-cutting theme in all sectors. Mainstreaming will be used to identify, take full account of and integrate the needs and interests of women and men into relevant policies, strategies, administrative and financial activities within the sectors.

Health, education, family, labour, economics, acts of violence, the provision of basic amenities, opportunities for education and training, and fair recourse to justice are some of the key areas which have different experiences for men and women, and in which their roles and expectations are often divergent. Men and women may require different services in these sectors, and the ways in which they make use of them, may differ. The policies and related recommendations in this Policy demonstrate a systematic approach to gender-awareness so as to accommodate and support these differences, on a path to effective and sustainable socioeconomic development. Changes must come from all sectors and levels, across a range of disciplines and interests and must be effected for

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<sup>1</sup> Consultations were held with non-government and government stakeholders at an initial meeting with the consultant who prepared the Policy, their input was included in the drafts and a second consultation was held with national stakeholders on a second draft before the final version was presented to the Minister for Women, Social welfare and Poverty Alleviation. The Policy in its final version will have the endorsement of Cabinet and will be available to the public. A list of all the organisations represented at the consultations can be found at Appendix 1

both sexes in all classes and age groups, both within government and in civil society.

The National Gender Policy, has at its heart a recognition and appreciation of the differences between men and women; differences that are based on physiological and biological realities, as well as social ones. Bearing in mind these differences, this Policy attempts to identify a range of issues, systems and institutions that must consider these differences and secure for men and women alike the opportunities to maximize their potential as human beings, and as valuable citizens of the Republic of Fiji. It is now recognised globally that development strategies are more equitable when they consider the different needs, constraints, opportunities and priorities of men and women, and that such inclusive strategies are also far more effective and sustainable.

## **4.0 DEFINITIONS**

### **4.1 AIDS**

Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome

### **4.2 Counselling**

A professional relationship between a tertiary trained and registered counsellor or psychologist and a client where therapy is used to help clients to understand their views of their life experiences as well as to reach goals that they have decided are important to them. The aim is to assist the client to feel and become more in control of their feelings and or their life.

### **4.3 Development**

A process by which the members of society increase their personal and institutional capacities to mobilize and manage resources to produce sustainable improvements in their quality of life. As a process, development can take many paths and that the path(s) to development is/are often determined by past legacies, the vision of the society, the availability of resources, and the perceived approach for their use.

### **4.4 Empowerment**

Achieving control over one's life through expanded choices. Empowerment encompasses self-sufficiency and self-confidence and is inherently linked to knowledge and voice. Empowerment is a function of individual initiative, which is facilitated by institutional change.

### **4.5 Gender**

The social roles, responsibilities, behaviour, attitudes and identities deemed particular to men and women, and boys and girls, as a consequence of social, cultural and historical factors, as opposed to biological differences which are termed sex. Gender within a development context provides the tools to analyse the situation of men and women (often comparatively), their socio-economic status, needs, and constraints. It allows planners and policy-makers to identify approaches necessary to promote the equitable development of men and women, and boys and girls.

### **4.6 Gender Analysis**

Refers to the systematic assessment of policy and practice on women and men respectively and on the social and economic relationships between the two. Gender analysis refers to the application of a gender perspective to the development issue which is being addressed. It requires an analysis of the gender division of labour, the identification of the needs and priorities of

women and men, the identification of existing opportunities and constraints to the achievement of development objectives, and the choice of an intervention strategy to address these.

#### **4.7 Gender Aware**

Refers to recognition of the differences in the interests, needs and roles of women and men in society and how this results in differences in power, status and privilege. Gender awareness also signifies the ability to identify problems arising from gender inequity and discrimination.

#### **4.8 Gender Aware Policies**

Seek to transform existing gender relations, where necessary, to build a more equitable society. These policies may be redistributive and/ or transformative, and involve altering the balance of power between men and women, and addressing both their practical gender needs and strategic gender interests.

#### **4.9 Gender Based Violence**

Gender based violence is any act (including threats of such act) that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, emotional or psychological harm to women, and which results from power inequalities that are based on gender roles in which a perpetrator gains power and exerts control over the other person. Emotional/psychological abuse accompanies all physical and sexual abuse, but can and is also inflicted on women without any accompanying physical or sexual assault. Gender based violence can occur throughout a woman's lifecycle, and includes everything from early childhood marriage and genital mutilation, to sexual abuse, domestic violence, coercion and structural violence such as arbitrary deprivations of liberty, legal discrimination and exploitation. Gender-based violence is a violation of women's human rights and may occur in either public or in private life.

#### **4.10 Gender Blindness or Neutrality**

The inability to perceive that there are different gender based expectations and responsibilities and, consequently, the failure to realise that policies, programmes and projects may have different impact on women and men.

#### **4.11 Gender Competent Counselling**

Gender-competent counselling involves rights based non-exploitative, impartial, non-judgmental, and ethical counselling assistance with an emphasis on understanding the gendered structures and processes in society that affect men and women's lives. Gender-competent counselling is focused on empowering women to a higher level of functioning in society and is based on the premise that Gender-based Violence is a violation of a woman's fundamental human rights as contained in the Universal Declaration of Human

Rights. This form of counselling also examines the role of relationships in a woman's life and takes into consideration all the unique challenges that women face in patriarchal cultures. It values each woman and her relative experiences as authentic and special. It allows women to be liberated from personal barriers and to develop the skills to attain their goals, while assisting women with issues regarding relationships, career, reproductive concerns, and any history of physical, sexual or emotional abuse.

#### **4.12 Gender Concerns/Issues**

Arise where an instance of gender inequality is recognised as unjust. The fact that women are paid less than men for similar jobs is a gender concern and would need to be taken into account in labour legislation and practice. Other examples of gender-specific issues are violence against women, and discrimination against men in family planning services.

#### **4.13 Gender Discrimination**

Any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.

#### **4.14 Gender Equality**

Means that women and men enjoy the same status. Gender equality means that women and men have equal conditions for realizing their full human rights and potential to contribute to political, economic, social and cultural development, locally, nationally and internationally, and to benefit from the results. Sameness of treatment and opportunity does not necessarily ensure equality in outcomes. Thus gender equality must be accompanied by equity (fairness).

#### **4.15 Gender Equity**

Fairness of treatment for women and men, according to their respective needs. This may include equal treatment or treatment that is different but which is considered equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations and opportunities. In the development context, a gender equity goal often requires built-in measures to compensate for the historical and social disadvantages of women.

#### **4.16 Gender Justice**

Gender justice can be conceived of in terms of entitlements and choice, absence of discrimination, or positive rights. Here it is defined as the ending of inequalities between women and men that result in women's subordination to men. Gender justice as a process differs from 'women's empowerment' by explicitly including accountability.

#### **4.17 Gender Mainstreaming**

May be conceptualized in two different ways: (a) on the one hand it is a strategy for integrating gender issues into the existing development policies, programmes and activities of government. (b) On the other hand, mainstreaming also means agenda setting that implies transformation of the existing development agenda using a gendered perspective. These two concepts are not exclusive and actually work best in combination to ensure equity and equality of outcomes.

#### **4.18 Gender Responsive**

Multidimensional approaches that intentionally integrates an understanding of the gender equality and equity to affect and guide programmes and services and is responsive to the issues and needs of the women and men.

#### **4.19 Gender Responsive Budgeting**

Gender-responsive budgeting is government planning, programming and budgeting that contributes to the advancement of gender equality and the fulfilment of women's rights. It entails identifying and reflecting needed interventions, including the need to work with development partners to achieve the Millennium Development Goals on gender equality, to address gender gaps in sector and local government policies, plans and budgets. Gender-responsive budgeting also aims to analyze the gender-differentiated impact of revenue-raising policies and the allocation of domestic resources and Official Development Assistance.

#### **4.20 Gender Sensitivity**

Is an awareness of, openness and responsiveness to the issues relating to the social relations between women and men, within specific societies and contexts. It also reflects an ability to apply gender analysis to areas of work and life where it is applicable.

#### **4.21 Gender Statistics**

Gender statistics are statistics that adequately reflect the differences and inequalities in between women and men in all areas of life. Producing gender statistics entails disaggregating individual data by sex (and other characteristics) to reveal those differences or inequalities, and collecting data on specific issues that affect one sex more than the other or relate to gender relations between women and men.

#### **4.22 HIV**

Human Immuno Deficiency Virus

#### **4.23 Marginalised Groups**

Community groups that are negatively perceived as socially and or physically outside the larger community structure, and are prevented from, or are unable to, participate in, or interact with, the mainstream community groups.

#### **4.24 Media**

Any organisation or person which or who disseminates information, news, entertainment, opinion, advertisements, and similar items to the public, and includes newspapers, magazines, television, audio visual and radio broadcasts and electronic means of communication.

#### **4.25 Persons living with disabilities**

Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

#### **4.26 Practical Gender Interests/Needs**

Relate to those emanating from the actual condition women and men experience due to differential gender roles and responsibilities ascribed to them by society. Often women's practical gender needs are related to roles as mothers, homemakers, wives, and community managers. The relative position of women to men and in society is not necessarily changed when practical gender needs are met, such as providing more adequate child care opportunities for single female heads of households.

#### **4.27 Sex and Age Disaggregated Data**

The collection, collation and analysis of information on the basis of sex and age, data on the status and socio-economic roles of different groups of men and women, boys and girls, including employment status, job classification, income and sectors, and educational attainment of boys and girls.

#### **4.28 Sexual Harassment**

A worker is sexually harassed in his or her workplace, or places where workers are gathered for work-related purposes including social activity, when an employer or its representative or a co-worker—

- (a) Makes a request of a worker for sexual intercourse, sexual contact or any other form of sexual activity which contains an implied or overt—
  - (i) Promise of preferential treatment in that worker's employment;
  - (ii) Threat of detrimental treatment in that worker's employment; or
  - (iii) Threat about the present or future employment status of that worker;
- (b) By the use of a word (whether written or spoken) of a sexual nature or materials of a sexual nature;
- (c) By physical behaviour or gestures of a sexual nature; or
- (d) Creates an intimidating, hostile or humiliating work environment by conduct, word or both on the basis of gender, that subjects the worker to behaviour which is unwelcome or offensive to that worker (whether or not that is conveyed to the employer, its representative or the perpetrator) and which is either repeated or of such a nature that it has a detrimental effect on the worker's employment, job performance or job satisfaction; In this context, detrimental effect includes the creation of an environment which affects a worker's physical, emotional or mental health and well-being.

#### **4.29 Sustainable Development**

Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The term includes two key concepts; 1. The concept of needs, and in particular the essential needs of the world's poor, to which overriding priority must be given; and 2. The idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organisation on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs.<sup>2</sup>

#### **4.30 STI**

Means sexually transmitted infection.

#### **4.31 Woman or women**

Includes girl or girls.

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<sup>2</sup> Part of the Brundtland Commission definition which goes on to say that the goals of economic and social development must be defined in terms of sustainability and must be centrally planned. Development is a progressive transformation of economy and society. Such sustainability must consider considerations such as access to resources, and the distribution of costs and benefits. There are narrow and broader definitions of this term, but there is a consensus that sustainability implies social equity between and within generations.

## **5.0 SPECIFIC POLICIES**

### **CONSTITUTIONAL, LEGISLATIVE AND INTERNATIONAL SOURCES**

- Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) including the General Recommendations
- Concluding and General Observations of the CEDAW Committee
- Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
- UN Convention on the Rights of Persons living with Disabilities (UNCRPD)
- UN Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (UNCERD)
- Hague Convention on Child Abduction
- Geneva Convention on Armed Conflict
- ILO Conventions and Protocols relevant to gender equity in the work place
- The UN Declaration on HIV/AIDS
- The Constitution of Fiji 2013
- People's Charter for Change, Peace and Progress 2008
- Fiji State of the Nation and the Economy Report- August 2008
- Women's Plan of Action (2010-2019)
- The 2007 National Policy on Sexual Harassment in the Work Place
- Domestic Violence Decree (2009)
- Crimes Decree (2009)
- Juveniles Act
- Family Law Act (2003) and Regulations
- Criminal Procedure Decree (2009)
- Sentencing and Penalties Decree (2009)
- Child Welfare Decree (2010)
- Employment Relations Promulgation (2007)
- Human Rights Commission Decree (2009)
- HIV/AIDS Decree (2011)
- Land Use Decree (2011)

### **5.1 Development and Planning**

1. Integrate gender equity and social justice criteria into policy development and implementation at the macro-level, as well as into trade negotiations and bi-lateral, multilateral and technical co-operation agreements.
2. Create and use gender sensitive indicators in the economic planning processes to monitor the attainment of gender strategic goals.

### **5.2 Employment and Labour**

1. Evaluate the existing labour laws of the Republic of Fiji, to ensure they promote gender equity and remove barriers to the equitable participation of men and women,

giving consideration to the harmonization of both local and international instruments.

2. Create and revise where necessary, legislation mandating gender equity in hiring, promotion, salaries, separation and other conditions of work. Such revision will include a consideration of violence against women in the work place.

3. Establish institutional mechanisms to effectively monitor and promote equal employment opportunities of men and women in the public and private sectors and conduct gender audits including spot checks, at all levels in relation to recruitment, promotion, separation, conditions of work, salary, minimum wage, and gender equity issues.

4. Promote strategies addressing issues of and related to HIV and AIDS in the workplace, including the removal of potential for gender discriminatory practices and discriminatory practices in relation to gender identity and sexuality, ensuring all existing standards and protocols are in keeping with gender sensitive International Labour Organization standards of HIV and AIDS in the workplace.

5. Ongoing review through the HIV Board appointed under the HIV/AIDS Decree 2011, and with the Ministry of Health, of the effectiveness of the HIV/AIDS Decree in removing stigma and discrimination for those living with or affected by HIV and AIDS in relation to the right to employment, promotion and employment opportunities.

6. Evaluate existing labour policies and establishment of new ones which promote women's economic empowerment, including policies which reduce the need for women to transact sex for money, thereby increasing their exposure to the transmission of HIV and other STI's.

7. Promote gender equality at all worksites, mandating gender awareness in the provision of adequate occupational health and safety, sanitary, and changing room facilities for both men and women to ensure that they are protected and not excluded from possible employment opportunities due to the inadequate provision of such facilities, especially in areas that may be non-traditional to them.

8. Advance wider workforce participation by men and women through the promotion of gender sensitive institutional arrangements which facilitate the balancing of men and women's private and public gender roles and responsibilities; such as flexible working hours, and increased access to quality child care facilities. Such arrangements will include work-based models where suitable; homework centres, after-school clubs, recreation and extra-curricular training facilities for children, on a cost sharing basis, and subsidised for lower-income families.

9. Demonstrate commitment to promoting greater levels of gender balance in power and decision-making positions at all levels and sectors, including governmental bodies, the judiciary, trade unions, the private sector, political parties, employer's organizations, research and academic institutions, and national

corporations, to enhance women's increased participation in leadership and the efficacy of governance in the nation.

10. Continue monitoring through the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Women, the effectiveness of the National Policy on Sexual Harassment, and its implementation by employers.

11. Promote laws and policies which recognise the right to equal work for equal pay, and for gender aware minimum wage policies.

12. Promote policies and laws which are consistent with the UNCRRPD, which recognise the intersection of discrimination which can arise from being a woman from a marginalized group and/or being a person living with disabilities, and which promote access to all services and amenities in Fiji.

### **5.3 Social Justice and Allocation of Resources**

1. Integrate gender analysis in National Poverty Reduction Strategies, and Social Sector Investment Programming, including utilization of sex and age disaggregated data, and gender aware approaches to promote gender equity in the distribution of resources and poverty alleviation.

2. Implement gender responsive budgeting in relation to rural women, women from marginalised groups and women living with disabilities.

3. Monitor and evaluate existing poverty alleviation initiatives to ensure equity and gender balance in the distribution of resources to all marginalised groups.

4. Increase consultation with communities, and with civil society, on the identification, coordination, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of poverty reduction initiatives, from a gender justice perspective.

### **5.4 Agriculture, rural development and the environment**

1. Promote gender aware and gender sensitive policies, plans and strategies in the Ministry of Rural Development, Ministry of Agriculture, and the itaukei Land Trust Board, which foster gender equality in the agriculture and rural development sectors, and promote strategies to increase the participation of women in decision-making at all levels, including issues of land rentals, applications for financing from banks and financial institutions, and the distribution of rental and lease monies under the Land Use Decree 2011.

2. Facilitate the acquisition of data on the role played by women in the rural and agricultural sector and using such data for gender responsive budgeting and national planning in agriculture. Such planning will consider equitable access to micro financing and credit facilities.

3. Promote increased regard for environmental sensitivity, climate change impacts and disaster risks and the role of men and women at all levels in facilitating the harmonious and sustainable use of the country's limited natural resources, and the utilization of gender impact assessments, gender analysis and gender aware approaches in assessing environmental issues and on the utilization, exploitation and preservation of natural resources in Fiji through training and continuous monitoring.
4. Train men and women on gender equity in the division of labour and on the economic empowerment of women in the agricultural sector.

## **5.5 Access to information, technology and buildings**

1. Provide increased innovative opportunities for women and men engaged in unwaged housework to access information communications technology, lifelong learning, and opportunities for part-time, short and long-term income earning possibilities. Such opportunities will include contemporary employment strategies that allow persons to work from home, or take extended work leave to care for young children and the elderly, and return to the job market without penalty and loss of opportunities.
2. Provide gender aware and accessible facilities within public and private buildings, through defined specifications, equipped for the changing of babies, providing areas where nursing mothers can feed babies, safely extract and store breast milk, and attend to the needs of very young children, and commitment to the review of the Fiji Building Code to ensure the provision of such facilities in every new building constructed in Fiji.

## **5.6 Families**

1. Promote initiatives that support and strengthen domestic and family life, and increase the participation of men and women in shared family responsibilities.
2. Develop legislation to provide paternity leave with safeguards to prevent misuse and abuse, consistent with the minimum ILO recommended leave with benefits, and continue to provide for paid maternity leave.
3. Ensure the provision of resources to enable the effective enforcement of parenting orders and maintenance orders in the Family Court and review laws on the effectiveness of gender competent mediation as a remedy for such enforcement.
4. Work towards the accessibility and affordability of improved technology and mechanisms for determining paternity such as DNA tests.
5. Revise social protection measures and policies that affect older persons for improved responsiveness to the differential experiences and needs of women and

men, with provisions not only determined by contributions made in the productive sector, but also determined by the burden of care and reproductive work provided by women throughout their lives.

6. Promote housing policies which include practical gender interests and that provide for the appropriate and quality accommodation of older men and women and for persons living with disabilities.

7. Establish increased community participation in health within the framework of gender and family, by improved coordination of health education and promotion programmes particularly that of preventative and primary health care and accommodation of new methods that facilitate family involvement and support in health care.

8. Promote improved male health seeking behaviour, including initiation of Men's Clinics staffed by men, to decrease the impact of debilitating diseases such as non-communicable diseases on men and their families, especially on women.

9. Implement the right to information about family planning and reproductive health.

## **5.7 Legislative Review**

1. Conduct an analysis of the implementation of the Fiji Constitution 2013 in relation to gender equality and gender based discrimination, through the Ministry of Social Welfare, Women and Poverty Alleviation, and the Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Commission.

2. Conduct an ongoing review of all legislation and policies relevant to women and gender equality including the Family Law Act and Regulations, the Domestic Violence Decree, the Crimes Decree, the Criminal Procedure Decree, the Sentencing and Penalties Decree, the Child Welfare Decree, the Employment Relations Promulgation, the Constitutional Redress Rules, the Human Rights Commission Decree and the HIV/AIDS Decree.

3. Enact a statute to establish the Fiji Women's Federation as a body created to work in partnership with the Ministry of Social Welfare, Women and Poverty Alleviation to implement this Policy and to act as an advisory body to the Minister.

4. Ensure a regular analysis of the impact of legislation and national policies on women, including the way in which particular laws are being implemented by government and law enforcement agencies, and ensuring that all legislation is gender inclusive.

5. Conduct regular analyses of human rights and international law in the context of gender equality, and ensure the conduct of an analysis of the role of the Fijian judges and magistrates in implementing gender equity through the courts.

6. Conduct an analysis of gender based violence in Fiji including an analysis of the effectiveness of Constitutional bodies such as the Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Commission to national policies on gender equality and unfair gender discrimination.
7. Ensure continuous law reform to further implement CEDAW.
8. Ensure an analysis by the Ministry of Labour every 5 years, of Fiji's employment laws and human resource development in the context of gender equality and practical gender interests.

## **5.8 Media**

1. Support women-led media initiatives including community radio, television and print media, and consider financial support for the supply and importation of media equipment
2. Allocate at least 30% of Public Service Broadcasting funding for the promotion of CEDAW and gender equality projects, and requiring all Public Service Broadcasting to have a gender policy and gender codes.
3. Ensure the training and competence of all government media personnel on CEDAW, gender equity and women's empowerment, conducted by the Ministry of Information and/or the Ministry of Women.
4. Review the Media Industry Development Decree from a gender perspective, and in particular regular reviews of the Codes of Conduct in the Media Industry Development Decree 2009 to incorporate a gender perspective of media ethics in Fiji.
5. Conduct annual qualitative and quantitative gender audits by the Ministry of Information of content produced by government information networks using the Global Media Monitoring Guidelines, and support other media organisations in the conduct of similar audits for other media.
6. Consult with Information Communications Technology specialists from women's media organisations when any reform is contemplated in relation to the regulation of Information Communications Technology.

## **5.9 Religion and Culture**

1. Regularly consult with traditional and religious leaders and with provincial administrators and organisations from all Fijian community groups to ensure the progressive modification of any cultural practices which discriminate against women.

2. Consult with all faith based organisations to ensure the inclusion of gender competence training in all faith based seminars and workshops to ensure that religion is not used to entrench gender inequity.

## **5.10 Peace and Security**

1. Ensure an ongoing commitment to peace, security and an environment of non-violence for all citizens of Fiji, and a commitment to the policy that all human security includes women's security.
2. Ensure an ongoing commitment to the implementation of the Crimes Decree on offences against women, the Domestic Violence Decree, proposed legislation on Cyber Security, proposed amendments to the Arms and Ammunitions Act, and consideration of the ratification by Fiji of the Arms Treaty and the Small Arms and Light Weapons Convention.
3. Commit to the Fiji Government Security Framework and its implementation.
4. Ensure that humanitarian relief is administered and distributed in a gender aware process.
5. Include conflict resolution and peace building skills in the schools curriculum in the Ministry of Education, for children from Class 1 to Form
6. Implement gender mainstreaming and the leadership of women and young women in conflict prevention and management, in political decision-making, in peace building and in peacekeeping.
7. Implement gender mainstreaming and women and young women's participation in security sector oversight and accountability.

## **5.11 Responsive Gender Budgeting and Planning**

1. Introduce Gender Responsive Budgeting and gender audits in the planning, implementation, evaluation and monitoring of the national budgetary process and promote gender responsive budgeting by development practitioners to ensure optimum benefits to rural and urban women.
2. Create and utilise gender sensitive indicators in the economic planning processes to monitor the attainment of gender strategic goals.
3. Reinforce social justice programmes, particularly to improve the situation of marginalised groups of men and women in Fijian society.
4. Hold sustained dialogue before the 1<sup>st</sup> of August each year, with ministries responsible for trade, finance, manufacturing and commerce, tourism and agriculture, fisheries, labour, social welfare, women, poverty alleviation, health,

education, youth and sports, local government organisations and town and city councils, the private sector, and gender based NGOs, to ensure that gender is integrated into Fiji's annual budget.

5. Consult with NGO gender based groups both before the Budget has been drawn up and after the Budget has been announced to enable women to understand the Budget process and to have input into it.
6. Evaluate and monitor the progress towards greater levels of equality in the representation of women and men through collection, analysis and dissemination of quantitative and qualitative data on women and men at all levels in various decision making positions, with a view to promoting their increased access to the full range of appointments in positions of power and decision-making.
7. Establish performance indicators including performance appraisals on gender equality in decision-making, distribution of public funds and investments in programming for youth.

## **5.12 Access to Health Services**

### **General Public Health**

1. Promote men's and women's equal access throughout their life cycle to appropriate, affordable and quality health care, information and related services, ensuring that health facilities are fully equipped to educate and treat the leading causes of illness and disease leading to mortality and morbidity of men and women in Fiji, especially for persons residing in the underserved areas.
2. Support increased community participation in health within the framework of gender and family, through improved coordination of health education programmes which are gender sensitive, and which engage women, men, boys and girls. Such programs should be focused, on preventative and primary health care that encourages family involvement and initiates action for improved health care and healthy living.
3. Train health workers to ensure that there is no discrimination against patients in relation to access to the quality of health care, on the grounds of ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, marital status and gender identity, and in particular ensure confidential and non judgmental assistance for survivors of sexual assault and in relation to unplanned pregnancy due to sexual assault. Health workers shall be provided with rights based training around gender equality and gender based violence.
4. Recognize the need for holistic health care in the development of health care policies which acknowledges the psychological health care needs of both men and women and the differences between the two genders.

5. Provide increased access to free psychological counselling, and preventative psychiatric health care for both men and women throughout the country, in keeping with the ideal of providing a holistic health care – policy framework.
6. Ensure young people including adolescents have access to youth friendly services to assist them to make responsible choices to protect and safeguard their health, with particular reference to unplanned and early pregnancies, STI and HIV and sexual abuse.
7. Recognise the importance of having a balanced ratio of male and female health providers in health services and facilities, and ensure equal opportunities, without discrimination in recruitment and promotion criteria, for men and women in the health sector.
8. Recognise the role that women and girls play as primary carers in supporting elderly relatives in Fiji and promoting services to support carers for the elderly.
9. Ensure development programs are inclusive of actions to assist elderly women, widows, and single mothers who are highly vulnerable to social economic pressures or disasters and who may have a high risk of poverty related diseases.
10. Recognise the special security requirements of women and girls including the young and the elderly. Ensure safe, equipped, confidential facilities for the provision of health care services which have adequate lighting, safe pathways, and protective infrastructure are available and maintained.

### **Reproductive health**

11. Ensure that all women have quality services during pregnancy, labour and delivery to ensure successful pregnancy outcomes by making services available and accessible across Fiji.
12. Support the introduction and strengthening of women and family friendly hospital practices which encourage fathers' involvement in pre-natal, birthing, and post-natal activities, female friendly birthing procedures, and parents' ability to stay overnight with children who are ill.
13. Ensure that in cases of abortion, doctors are trained and sensitised to ensure that women give informed consent to terminations of pregnancy in accordance with the Crimes Decree and subject to the conditions set out in that Decree, and are adequately and gender responsively counselled on the choices they make.
14. Ensure the availability of free male and female condoms especially in public toilets, universities, hotels and bars, in order to protect against sexually transmitted diseases, HIV and unplanned pregnancy.
15. Ensure that sanitary products are available in vending machines in public women's toilets.

16. Support the national reproductive health program to provide comprehensive and integrated reproductive health services and ensuring universal access to reproductive health care (including access to family planning) for women and girls across Fiji.

### **Abusive Substances**

17. Strengthen and/ or expand current measures, including gendered approaches, aimed at reducing alcoholism and other forms of drug abuse, viewing them as critical health issues with serious adverse effects for men, women, and children, and promote controls in alcohol and tobacco advertising, especially targeted marketing towards minors and young persons, with a view toward the reduction of domestic violence, child abuse, road deaths and disabilities.

18. Pass legislation aimed at reducing substance abuse and promotion rehabilitation programmes for drug and substance addiction.

19. Promotion of improved health seeking behaviour for all, including the promotion of the early detection of health issues to decrease the impact of debilitating diseases on men and women and their families, and providing suitable protections.

### **HIV and AIDS**

20. Utilise gender aware approaches in promoting societal understanding, acceptance, and comprehensive attention to the gender issues associated with HIV transmission and AIDS.

21. Promote gender sensitive institutional and other care and support services for women and men living with or affected by HIV and AIDS.

22. Promote respect for the rights of women, men and children living with or affected by HIV and AIDS, and develop strategies to increase opportunities for both women and men to take responsibility for prevention and protection.

23. Identify vulnerable groups in relation to HIV and AIDS and support the HIV Board appointed under the HIV/AIDS Decree to ensure the availability of adequate resources for education and safe sex counselling for such vulnerable groups.

24. Promote social awareness that HIV and AIDS is a greater risk for societies in which women have limited sexual autonomy, and in which there is a high incidence of gender based violence.

### **5.13 Agriculture**

1. Strengthen equitable access by men and women to the factors of agricultural production, paying particular attention to the gender differences in access to and repayment of credit, beneficiaries of land purchase, land titling, amenities, extension services and technology, taking into consideration the disadvantaged position of the most vulnerable women in rural areas.

### **5.14 Education**

1. Support the building of familial relationships through education on improved parenting skills by both women and men.
2. Support and continue the Family Life Programme in all schools and consider commencing the programme at Class 1 level.
3. Support the provision of flexible working hours and engage in constructive dialogue with the Fiji Commerce and Employers' Federation on the subject to ensure that both parents are able to build family relationships and take care of their children.
4. Support and continue the Girl Guides and Scouts Educational Programme in all primary schools and consider introduction of the Rangers and Rovers Programme (target age group: 16-21 yrs) in all Secondary and Vocational Schools.
5. Strengthen the Girl Guides and Boy Scouts Programme in all schools through the posting of one teacher to each such organisation and provide In-centre Grant support.

### **5.15 Access to Energy, Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change**

1. Continue to support and develop a gender aware policy on climate change and humanitarian relief in "The Strategy for Disaster and Climate Resilient Development in the Pacific" a regional initiative which works towards a uniform and gender aware disaster relief and climate change strategy for all the countries of the Pacific, and implement its provisions in Fiji as part of Fiji's policies on disaster relief and climate change.
2. Ensure and implement a policy of access to energy supplies to all persons in Fiji and to ensure that women in communities are consulted in any energy projects, and recognizing that women in rural communities have the most limited access to energy sources including access to renewable energy sources.
3. Ensure and monitor the effect of some energy sources which may have a detrimental effect on the health of women and ensuring an enabling environment for affordable access to energy sources.

4. Recognise for the purpose of resource allocation the special vulnerabilities of women in relation to natural disasters and climate change, and develop partnerships with development agencies to ensure gender aware resource allocation.

### **5.16 Access to Financial Services**

1. Support micro-financing schemes and projects including micro loans and safety nets through the Fiji Institute of Banks, the Reserve Bank, the Fiji Development Bank and the Housing Authority.

2. Ensure that applications for loans, home finance schemes and bank account availability are constructed to take into account the differential access to financial independence of men and women, and to work towards removing barriers to access to finances experienced by women.

### **5.17 Gender Statistics and Research**

1. Revise national data collection and collation systems related to the economy to ensure disaggregation of data by sex and age and the inclusion of gender perspectives to inform all economic policy decisions.

2. Examine the potential differential impacts of trade and industrial development strategies, on men and women's accessibility and participation in sustainable secure employment, and wage equity.

3. Ensure the collection, collation and analysis of sex disaggregated data specific to representation in positions of power and decision-making.

4. Ensure the integration of gender analysis in National Poverty Reduction Strategies, and Social Sector Investment Programming, including utilization of sex disaggregated data, and gender aware approaches to promote gender equity in the distribution of resources and poverty alleviation.

5. Expand current social statistical data sets to include the collection, collation and analysis of relevant demographic and socio-economic data on male and female single headed households, including poverty levels and the welfare of children of such households.

6. Investigate national agricultural data, disaggregated by sex, to identify the gender differentials with regards to ownership, earnings, crop selection, marketing and other aspects of agriculture, to develop gender aware initiatives required to enhance the Agricultural sector.

7. Advance mechanisms that support increased production, and a better quality of life for men and women in agriculture and rural areas based on research of

employment trends, land ownership, earnings, payment and wages, access to credit, investment, and other related variables, giving recognition to the different and complementary roles men and women play in agricultural production.

8. Promote the collation, analysis and publication of findings from Census data on unremunerated household work, to provide statistical fact on the contribution of unwaged household work to national development.

9. Ensure the examination of sex and age disaggregated data and increase research on unpaid work in various sectors, including agriculture and family businesses, within the formal and informal contexts, as a basis for the allocation of resources for the training and development of unpaid workers.

10. Institutionalise gender mainstreaming in the health sector through:

- a) Disaggregation of health statistics by age and sex, identifying the full effects of gender difference on the status of health to identify policies and programmes that will improve the health and well being of both men and women.
- b) Utilization of gender analysis of health information supported by further research to develop gender sensitive health policy and programmes, and promotion including in the areas of mortality and morbidity, to develop programmes for disease prevention that meet the specific needs of both men and women.
- c) Facilitation of in-depth research drawing on the existing data sets but producing new frameworks to generate studies on the comparative situation of women and men in Republic of Fiji Islands in all spheres of life, including the use of gender and migration monographs.

## **5.18 Gender Based Violence**

### **Gender Based Violence Service Protocol**

1. Ensure the establishment and continuation of the Gender Based Violence Service Protocol to improve the provision and delivery of services to victims of gender based violence and individuals who are either vulnerable to domestic abuse or are likely to suffer harm due to physical, sexual, emotional or psychological abuse and /or neglect. The Protocol will recognise the need for cooperation and collaboration between the Fiji Police Force, the Ministry of Health, the Judicial Department and other services to ensure the appropriate provision of health care services, the timely investigations of reports of domestic violence, the prompt prosecution of cases and gender competent and appropriate counselling.

2. Ensure that the Gender Based Violence Service Protocol continues to provide an outline for action within the framework of the Domestic Violence Decree 2009, and that it provides guidelines for key service providers attending to victims of gender based violence, in order that they are able to recognise the signs of such violence and to respond effectively to such victims.

## **Training**

3. Institutionalise measures to promote gender equality and mutual respect between men, women, boys and girls within private and public spheres, as a means of curbing gender based violence, including promoting gender sensitivity and awareness training for key personnel in relevant agencies, including the media, judiciary, social services, schools, and faith based institutions.

4. Conduct public education and awareness initiatives to improve critical understanding of gender based violence, including domestic violence, sexual harassment, rape, child sexual abuse, human trafficking and incest, including legal rights in relation to gender based violence, and ensure access to redress and support services.

5. Incorporate gender based violence issues sensitively and appropriately into programmes in primary and secondary schools, including the strengthening of School Child Support Services and the training of social workers and appropriately trained teachers or non-government organizations at each school to deal with such cases, to reduce and treat effectively with the incidence of gender based violence.

6. Promote initiatives which will enable women, including young women, to successfully negotiate sexual relations; asserting their right to refrain from sexual activity or to engage in safe sex, and educate men and boys to respect the rights of women and girls, minimizing the impact of date rape, forced sex, and gender based violence, and the spread of HIV and other STI's.

7. Continue support for the Drug Education training programme with peer Education Training for Students and Training of Teachers within the integrated programme through the National Substance Abuse Advisory Council.

8. Support for self-report and victim surveys and research to identify the extent of dark figures of unreported crimes of gender based violence.

9. Identify social, cultural and institutional barriers preventing access to justice for women who have been victims of gender based violence, and develop policies to eradicate those barriers.

10. Conduct research and analyses of decisions and judgments of the courts in Fiji to assess any need for gender training of members of the judiciary and to make

appropriate recommendations on the basis of such analyses to the Judicial Services Commission.

11. Monitor through the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Women the effectiveness of the provisions of the Employment Relations Promulgation which require every employer to adopt and implement a sexual harassment policy.

12. Evaluate existing labour policies and establish new policies which promote women's economic empowerment including reducing the need for women to transact sex for money, thereby increasing their exposure to HIV and sexually transmitted diseases [STI's] and violent behaviour.

### **Coordination and institutional strengthening**

13. Establish functional collaborating protocols among social service agencies dealing with persons affected by gender based violence, and strengthen their response capacity.

14. Strengthen the Sexual Offences Units, to be operated by trained gender aware officers at police stations, to increase the level and quality of reporting of sexual offences, and to ensure that victims are appropriately assisted and supported through the investigative process.

15. Monitor the effectiveness of the no drop policy in domestic violence cases in the Fiji Police Force.

16. Expand the Police Zero Tolerance Violence Free Community Projects.

17. Institute legal literacy programmes for health care workers, with a focus on gender based violence.

18. Analyse the effectiveness of the Domestic Violence Decree 2009 and ensure continuing review of its provisions based on the effectiveness of the implementation of the law.

### **Victim Support**

19. Approve minimum guidelines for the establishment of shelters, refuges, and safe houses with professional gender competent counselling services for victims of abuse, and domestic violence. Implement strategies to ensure the provision of care for young men over twelve, whose mothers are victims of domestic violence, and who may be unable to be accommodated in most shelters. Such guidelines will include projects for income generation for victims of gender based violence.

20. Establish and continue safe houses for children who are victims of gender based violence and who need residential care in accordance with the Department of Social Welfare's "Minimum Standards of Care, Children in Residential Placement 2007"

21. Separate victims of abuse from juvenile offenders, and preventing victims of violence from sharing the same facility as suspects awaiting trial for juvenile and other crime.
22. Ensure the privacy of women and survivors of sexual assault is maintained and that their identity is only released to the public with their consent.

### **Families**

23. Institutionalise parenting support programs, which include gender sensitive approaches and increased support to parents in more effective ways of child rearing, fostering gender equity in upbringing boys and girls, and promoting non violent ways of discipline and child development.

### **Counselling Services for Perpetrators**

24. Ensure the availability of gender competent counselling services through the Ministry of Social Welfare and approved non-government groups for perpetrators of gender based violence.
25. Provide compulsory and gender competent counselling by counsellors who are gender aware, through the Ministry of Social Welfare and approved non-government groups for offenders who are serving terms of imprisonment within the correctional institutions for gender based violence.
26. Ensure that all counsellors in Fiji have a minimum qualification which includes gender competence counselling training, for providing counseling services to perpetrators of gender based violence, and provide a general registration regime for qualified counsellors.
27. Incorporate restorative justice in the counselling of perpetrators of gender-based violence, thus encouraging perpetrators to take responsibility for their behaviour.

## **5.19 Leadership, Training and Development**

### **Leadership**

1. Promote the increased representation of women with relevant skills and expertise at all levels of power and decision making thorough training and development, and implement the recognition of merit based appointment and promotion without discrimination.
2. Promote gender sensitive approaches to development among economists, planners and analysts in the economy and trade sectors through formal training, workshops, scholarships, specialized short courses, and the creation of analytical tools and frameworks.

3. Recognise and promote shared work and parental responsibilities between women and men in familial and child care activities in order to promote women's increased participation in public life and positions of power. Implement appropriate measures and practical gender measures to advance this, including mechanisms that reconcile family and public life, such as flexible working hours.

4. Review the electoral laws through the Electoral Commission to ensure that women have equal access to political leadership, and the identification of cultural, economic and institutional barriers to the political leadership of women in Fiji.

### **Training**

5. Promote gender equity in Fiji through compulsory gender studies programmes in all tertiary institutions.

6. Promote increased regard for environmental sensitivity and the important role of men and women at all levels in facilitating the harmonious and sustainable use of the country's limited natural resources, through training and continuous monitoring.

7. Promote increased numbers of men trained and qualified to work in non-traditional fields, including gender studies, social work, nursing, teaching and other care professions, to address false stereotypes about masculinity and to provide effective role models that demonstrate men's capacity to care and nurture in society.

8. Include gender training in all youth development initiatives.

### **Development**

9. Promote gender aware measures where appropriate that encourage recruiting agencies, including political parties, to ensure that women participate on an equal basis with men in all professions, and encourage the examination of structures and procedures to remove all barriers that directly and indirectly discriminate against the full professional participation of women.

10. Develop gender aware career enhancement and personal development programmes for women and men that include career planning, tracking, mentoring, coaching, training and retraining to equip them to achieve greater levels of equity in senior managerial, entrepreneurial, technical and leadership positions.

11. Institutionalise parenting support programmes, which include gender sensitive approaches and increased support to parents in more effective ways of child rearing, fostering gender equity in upbringing boys and girls, and

promoting non-violent ways of discipline and child development through education and awareness as well as identifying NGOs and institutions that can assist in these regards. Such programmes should include objectives of an increased sensitivity to the demands of fatherhood and the equal responsibility of fathers towards child rearing.

12. Include knowledge of gender aware policies, statistics on the lack of access of women to Government services, and the effect of Government policies on women, in key performance indicators in the public service, to measure the ability of civil servants to implement this Policy and other policies in a gender responsive and equitable manner.

13. Conduct compulsory gender competent training of all persons who will represent Fiji abroad including peace keepers, and diplomats.

## **6.0 Monitoring and Evaluation Framework**

### **Monitoring for mainstreaming gender**

1. The monitoring and evaluation process of the National Gender Policy is to ensure whether the following have mainstreamed gender: international policies, independent commission rules and regulations; sector policies, programs, projects and budgets; national laws; Integrated Rural Development Plans; performance contracts and other Monitoring and Evaluation mechanisms.

### **Process of Evaluation**

2. A periodic National Gender Policy evaluation of various activities shall be done to ensure that each of the parties named in the Policy is taking effective steps to implement the relevant policies assigned to them. Monitoring of the National Gender Policy will take the form of a meeting every 4 years to which various stakeholders will be invited to report on progress. This is to be in line with Fiji's CEDAW reporting mechanism. This meeting will be convened by the Ministry of National and Strategic Planning in collaboration with the Ministry for Social Welfare, Women and Poverty Alleviation.

3. The Ministry of National and Strategic Planning will be responsible for providing monitoring guidelines which will be used to collect information in government departments, private sector organizations and non-governmental organisations. The findings and recommendations from these reviews will be used to monitor and evaluate the Policy review process.

4. The Ministry of Social Welfare, Women and Poverty Alleviation will produce and disseminate periodic reports and publications on progress indicators in the implementation of the National Gender Policy.

### **Tools for Evaluation**

5. Translating the national gender policy into all the 3 major languages.

6. Developing gender analysis tools adapted to the Fijian context.

7. Conducting research and surveys on gender critical issues and developing gender sensitive indicators at national and local levels.

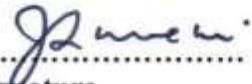
### **Tools for Dissemination**

8. Publication on the Ministry of Information website.

9. Incorporation into the Ministry of Education curriculum for Social Sciences.

10. Dissemination by the Fiji Women's Federation.

**7.0 APPROVED BY THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL WELFARE, WOMEN AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION, DR JIKO FATAFEHI LUVENI.**

  
.....  
Signature

05-03-2014  
.....  
Date

## 8.0 Appendix 1

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