

SDG 5 – Gender Equality

TARGETS	INDICATORS
5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere	5.1.1 Whether or not legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex
5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation	5.2.1 Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by form of violence and by age
	5.2.2 Proportion of women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by age and place of occurrence
5.3 Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation	5.3.1 Proportion of women aged 20-24 years who were married or in a union before age 15 and before age 18
	5.3.2 Proportion of girls and women aged 15-49 years who have undergone female genital mutilation/cutting, by age
5.4 Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate	5.4.1 Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex, age and location
5.5 Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life	5.5.1 Proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments and local governments
	5.5.2 Proportion of women in managerial positions
5.6 Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences	5.6.1 Proportion of women aged 15-49 years who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care
	5.6.2 Number of countries with laws and regulations that guarantee women aged 15-49 years access to sexual and reproductive health care, information and education
5.A Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws	5.A.1 (a) Proportion of total agricultural population with ownership or secure rights over agricultural land, by sex; and (b) share of women among owners or rights-bearers of agricultural land, by type of tenure
	5.A.2 Proportion of countries where the legal framework (including customary law) guarantees women's equal rights to land ownership and/or control
5.B Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women	5.B.1 Proportion of individuals who own a mobile telephone, by sex

5.C Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels

5.C.1 Proportion of countries with systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment

SDG 5 in the Fiji National Development Plan

- The prevalence of patriarchal and heteronormative values, entrenched ideas about gender roles and discrimination are all impediments to the economic advancement of women in Fiji.
- In order to overcome these patriarchal ideas, the Fiji Women's Right Movement is working in communities to strengthen community awareness.
- Women will be empowered to allow them greater opportunities to participate in leadership and decision making.
- Gender based violence will be properly dealt with.
- Gender inequality will be eliminated and women's access to education, employment and career advancement will be supported.
- Decisions regarding sexual and reproductive health will be shared and respected.
- Women will be consulted in all development planning, with women acting as key agents to change unsustainable consumption and production practices in the community.
- There has been a noticeable improvement in female literacy rate in the last 40 years and there has been improvement in female participation in the labour force.
- Achieving gender equality is crucial for sustainable development.
- The National Gender Policy and the Women's Plan of Action are being implemented.
- Domestic violence legislation has also been developed and utilized. A toll-free 24-hours hotline has also been established to provide counselling and referral for survivors of Gender Based Violence.

Definitions

What is Gender Based Violence?

GBV is violence directed against a person because of that person's gender or violence that affects persons of a particular gender disproportionately. Although women and girls are the main victims of GBV, it also causes severe harm to families and communities.

SOURCE:

https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/gender-based-violence/what-gender-based-violence_en#:~:text=GBV%20is%20violence%20directed%20against,of%20a%20particular%20gender%20disproportionately.

READING: <https://www.openglobalrights.org/data-improving-justice-gender-based-violence-fiji/>

Fiji National Development Policy 3.1.9 – Women in Development

The government aims to “empower women to reach their full development potential”

Economic and Political opportunities

- The potential of women needs to be harnessed for the benefit of the whole population.
- The government will provide equal opportunities in education, leadership and economic development.
- In the last election female representation in parliament improved and is now one of the highest in the Pacific region.
- Equal opportunities in education, health and social services will raise female participation in the workforce.

Domestic violence

- The Domestic Violence Act and the Elimination of Violence Against Women Task Force will help to eliminate discrimination and violence against women.
- Greater help will be available to women experiencing domestic violence with better access to health care services, advocacy, counselling, police protection and the justice system.
- Partnerships with the government, police, NGOs and agencies will help to prevent gender-based violence.

Social equality

- In line with SDG 5, women's participation in decision making will be increased through strategies that focus on economic participation, recognition of domestic workers and elimination of discrimination.
- Shared-decision making in areas such as family planning, child care and choices of work will be encouraged in relationships.

Strategies

- Fiji will value women as an important resource and the government will continue to empower and develop women.
- The government will work with women's groups to support income-generation and the National Women's Expo will continue to market products made by women.
- These aims will be realized through the Women's Plan of Action and the National Gender policy.



Figure 1: The National Women's Expo



Figure 2: A Fiji women's group

FURTHER INFORMATION

Female representation in Parliament

Following the 2018 elections, 10 women were elected to parliament (just under 20% of all seats), this is 2 more than in the 2014 election and positions Fiji as one of the highest-performing Pacific countries in this regard.

READING: <https://devpolicy.org/womens-representation-in-the-2018-fiji-election-20190225/>

Elimination of Violence Against Women Task Force

The Women's Plan of Action (1999-2008) outlines the broad direction for government action on this issue. The Violence against Women taskforce includes many stakeholders such as the police, the Department for Women, and NGOs such as the Salvation Army.

READING:

https://www.un.org/womenwatch/ianwge/taskforces/vaw/Fiji_VAW_Assessment_2008.pdf

National Women's Expo

The 5th National Women's Expo was held in June 2019 and 500 women had the chance to showcase their products. The expo plays an important part in empowering rural women artisans by offering women the opportunity to refine their business skills and showcase their products.

READING: http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-06/12/c_138136810.htm

Women's Plan of Action

The first Fiji Women Plan of Action (1999-2008) served as a blueprint to integrate women and promote gender equality in the development process. The new Women's Plan of Action (2010-2019) was formulated in collaboration with development partners and community organisation. The new plan has 5 key priority areas which should work to improve the lives of women, children and families in Fiji:

1. Formal Sector Employment
2. Equal Participation in Decision Making
3. Elimination of Violence Against Women
4. Access to services
5. Women and the Law

READING:

https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CEDAW/Shared%20Documents/FJI/INT_CEDAW_ADR_FJI_24460_E.pdf

Fiji National Development Plan Target 3.1.5 – Education

The government aims to provide “quality education for all”.

- Education is essential to create a skilled and adaptable workforce.
- The Constitution guarantees the right of every child to early-childhood, primary, secondary and further education, regardless of gender.

Primary and Secondary education

- Universal access to primary education has been achieved and net enrolment in secondary education stands at 80%.
- The free-education initiative, free bus fares and free textbooks have helped to increase levels of enrolment, particularly for girls as parents do not have to choose which child should go to school.

Early childhood education (ECE)

- To achieve universal access, an ECE centre will be attached to each primary school.

University and colleges

- Grant funding has helped improve education infrastructure and the quality of teaching and learning.
- Scholarships and the loan scheme have increased access and affordability.
- There has been increased investment in vocational skills and technical colleges have been established.

Curriculum

- The curriculum is continually reviewed and is used to incorporate contemporary areas such as:
 - Gender
 - Nutrition
 - Respectful relationships
 - Environment
 - Alcohol and drugs
- It is hoped that these areas will help to overcome some of society’s issues such as NCDs, drug misuse, gender based violence and teenage pregnancy.



Figure 1: A Fijian Primary School



Figure 2: Fiji National University

FURTHER INFORMATION

Early Childhood Education

Fiji categorises all forms of education from birth to the age of 8 as a part of Early Childhood Education; this includes education at home, at religious places and pre-schools. A very high proportion of learning takes place at this age and therefore anything taught at this age can help them to reach a more prosperous future. ECE also helps to build links between a child's home and their school.

The Fijian government believes that the provision of Early Childhood Education plays a very important role in providing high quality education and therefore in turn developing a knowledge-based workforce.

It is now mandatory in Fiji that all primary schools have an associated ECE centre, these are within vicinity of the villages to ensure that no child is left behind.

FURTHER READING:

<https://www.fnu.ac.fj/new/uncategorised/1597-why-govt-is-investing-in-early-childhood-education>

http://www.education.gov.fj/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/ECE_Policy_-_2013_Final.pdf

University Loan Scheme Provided by the Government

The Tertiary Education Loans Scheme (TELS) is a fund to provide finance to Fijian students who have qualified for higher education but are unable to support themselves financially. This provision helps to increase equitable access to higher education.

FURTHER READING: <https://www.tslb.com.fj/Home>

SDG 5 in Figures

19.6% - proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments (2019)

3 - number of female cabinet ministers

29% - proportion of leadership positions in the Civil Service that are held by women

SDG 2019 Review

Overview

- Fiji is working to create a society free from all forms of gender-based discrimination and recognises gender equality as a key component for national development.
- Fiji's Constitution, the National Development Plan and the National Gender Policy guide the work of the government.
- Fiji moved up 15 places from 121 to 106 between 2015 and 2018 in the World Economic Forum's global gender gap.

Women's Plan of Action

- The Women's Plan of Action is aligned with the Beijing Platform of Action.
- The Plan will be reviewed and updated for the next 10 years.

Women Participation in Leadership

- Women represent 20% of parliamentary seats.
- 3 female parliamentarians are appointed to the cabinet as Ministers and 2 as assistant ministers.
- In 2014 and 2018 the Fiji Parliament had the first female speaker of the house.
- 29% of leadership positions in the Civil Service are held by women.
- Women hold 30% of diplomatic posts.
- Progress is also visible in the iTaukei traditional social structure with women holding 7% of village chief positions.

Formal Sector Employment and Livelihood

- 37.4% of females are employed in the Fijian labour force compared to 76.4% of males.

- Market vendors are predominantly women and therefore market places are important places to create social and economic change for women. 9 of the 12 market vendor associations are led by women.

Parenthood Assistance

- In 2018, the Fijian Government introduced Parenthood Assistance Payments through which mothers from households that earn less than \$30,000 are granted \$1,000 on the birth of a child.
- Paid maternity leave has been increased from 84 working days to 98.

Legal Framework

- Since 2015 the government has introduced several key pieces of legislation, policies and strategies including for example the Online Safety Act that protects women and girls from online exploitation.

Collaboration

- Fiji aims to address high prevalence of sexual violence through collaboration between the Ministry of women and other stakeholders.
- Efforts will be taken to strengthen the procedures that apply to the collection and use of forensic evidence in violence cases.
- There is a lack of gender data which limits current statistics, therefore support has been given to the Ministry of Women to establish a comprehensive database.
- The government will continue its efforts to promote gender equality and empower women and girls, largely through the work of the Ministry of Women.
- The Ministry of women is in the process of adopting a National Gender Policy which will outline key targets that are aligned to the National Development Plan and the Sustainable Development Goals.