CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted in September 2015 includes for the first time a goal on peaceful and inclusive society (Goal 16), however, this doesn't include a specific target on women. While the inclusion of a dedicated goal on gender equality (Goal 5) is a welcome development, its isolation from the rest of the post-2015 agenda calls into question the so-called "gender mainstreaming" that the UN has adopted as a global strategy since the Beijing Platform for Action in 1995. Furthermore, the following is needed from Fiji:

- Clear articulation from the Fiji government of their commitments to SDGs; existing mechanisms that monitor the implementation of the SDGs need to be strengthened.

- The Fiji government must avoid working in a silo and strengthen the engagement and participation of CSO's not only in existing working groups or task forces, but also through efforts such as sharing data and resources and collaborative research and baseline studies.

- Effective communication strategies amongst existing Pacific regional mechanisms and bodies in both policy changes as well as monitoring of the government's implementation of SDGs.

- Strengthened existing regional mechanisms and programs that focus on engaging with Non-State Actors in the region and that link key thematic focus to the broader Agenda 2030.

The Fiji Women's Forum in its first outcome statement (12th April, 2012) of the Women's Consultation on National Democratic Processes a collective call was made for:

- Upholding and advancing Respect for Human Rights

- Defining the role of the security forces

- Promotion of women's participation in decision making and democratisation processes

- A rights based, respectful, open and participatory constitution-making process

Monitoring and Review of the Sustainable Development Goals & Development Justice

Reviewed by
FIJI WOMEN'S FORUM

FIJI

Palma Ratio (Income Inequality)
2.2

UNDP Gender Inequality Rank
87

FIJI'S HEALTH BUDGET USD 122 MILLION VS MILITARY BUDGET USD 4.3 MILLION

COUNTRY CONTEXT

Fiji is an archipelagic nation with a population of 869,458[1]. Fiji is comprised of 332 islands, with the majority of its population residing on the two main islands, Viti Levu (75%) and Vanua Levu (18%). Indigenous Fijians (i-Taukei) make up more than half the population, while about two fifths are Fijian of Indian descent. About 50% of the population lives in rural areas, but based on the current growth rate Fiji's urban population is expected to grow to about 60% by 2030[2].

In recent decades Fiji has undergone a series of political crises that have resulted in political fragmentation and had major impacts on the economic growth of the country. Rooted in elitism on the part of indigenous Fijian leaders as well as persisting tensions between indigenous Fijian and Indo-Fijian ethnic groups, the country saw the overthrow of democratically elected governments in 1987 and 2006 and a period of significant civil unrest in May 2000.[3] The political turmoil, in combination with natural disasters such as tropical cyclones, has had a major impact on the two main sectors of Fiji's economy, tourism and sugar.

The country has recently made efforts to rebuild its democracy, and a lot of work and focus have gone towards the process of reconciliation between ethnic groups, societies and the nation. However, Fiji has not committed to institutionalise a reconciliation program.

In the past, the Fijian government largely failed to meet MDG 3 to promote gender equality and empower women. While Fiji has made some strides in achieving gender parity in education, women's participation in non-agricultural sectors remains low, and there remains much work to be done in the areas of decision making, gender responsive government programmes and policies, women's economic empowerment, ending violence against women, and reproductive and health services.[4] Efforts to rebuild Fiji's democracy offered an opportunity to advance the country's commitment towards gender equality for women and girls and also towards addressing peace and security. The 2006 military coup highlighted the need for women's mobilisation and participation in rebuilding Fiji's democracy, however there is still a need for recognition of women's equal contribution towards nation building and for using this recognition to catalyse positive change.

1 http://www.statsfiji.gov.fj/
2 Country Partnership Strategy, Fiji 2014-2018. https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/linked-documents/cps-fij-2014-2018-ea.pdf
3 http://press-files.anu.edu.au/downloads/press/p97751/pdf/ch0513.pdf
4 http://www.forumsec.org/resources/uploads/embeds/file/2015%20Pacific%20Regional%20MDGs%20Tracking%20Report.pdf

OVERVIEW OF SYSTEMIC & STRUCTURAL BARRIERS TOWARDS ACHIEVING DEVELOPMENT JUSTICE

The Fiji Women's Forum has identified some of the systemic barriers of achieving gender equality in Fiji. These include; the lack of representation of women in decision making spaces, discrimination, oppressive gender stereotypes, and violence against women. A persisting patriarchal structure in indigenous communities is a major barrier preventing women from participating in national political engagements. For example, many women were not ready to participate in the 2014 national elections, as there was no financial security if they lost in the elections.

Climate change is another major challenge in securing Development Justice. Rising sea levels are direct symptoms of unsustainable development and globalization, and Fiji is amongst the small island

nations already suffering the greatest burden of a crisis caused by the actions and emissions of larger countries.

Fiji's political situation and the subsequent militarization of the public sector pose a continuing challenge to maintaining peace and stability and securing Development Justice. Fiji's recent history of political unrest, lingering ethnic tensions, indigenous elitism, and corrupted leaders and governments have contributed to a lack of stable leadership in the country and served as a major barrier to sustainable development.[5] The 2006 military coup saw the overthrow of a democratically elected government and sidelined two of the most influential institutions in the country, the Methodist Church of Fiji and the Great Council of Chiefs.[6] The crippling of major institutions in Fiji also saw the rise in militarisation of the public sector, which has severely affected the capacity for CSO's to engage and intervene in policy change aimed at advancing the rights of women and sustaining peace and stability in our country.[7]

ARCHITECTURE FOR SDGs IMPLEMENTATION

In Fiji, an SDGs Taskforce, based in the Ministry of Economy, is leading the implementation of Fiji's commitment to the SDGs. However, this has not been clearly articulated in any form of information provided online and even to CSO's or within government ministries. The Speaker of Parliament, in a recent speech on Fiji's commitment to SDGs, highlighted the role of parliament in enacting legislative and policy reform in line with the SDGs. The Speaker noted the importance of transparent, accountable, and inclusive institutions for achieving the goals, but did not offer any specific processes or procedures.[8]

The regional mechanisms that clearly articulate the Pacific region's commitments to the SDGs are the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway outcome document (2014) and the Framework for Pacific Regionalism which outlines the commitments towards the sustainability and livelihood of Small Island States. [9] The role of Civil Society in monitoring the government's implementation of the SDGs is crucial to ensure accountability and cohesiveness with existing mechanisms. However, CSO's and women's organizations face many challenges in receiving information and being engaged in consultations regarding the governments existing mechanisms on SDGs.

CSOs are primarily only able to engage in SDGs processes when invited to policy reform consultations by the government or through the Parliament Standing Committees. Currently the Fiji government parliamentary standing committees are - Standing Committee on Economic Affairs; Standing Committee on Natural Resources; Standing Committee on Public Accounts; Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence; and Standing Committee on Justice, Law and Human Rights.
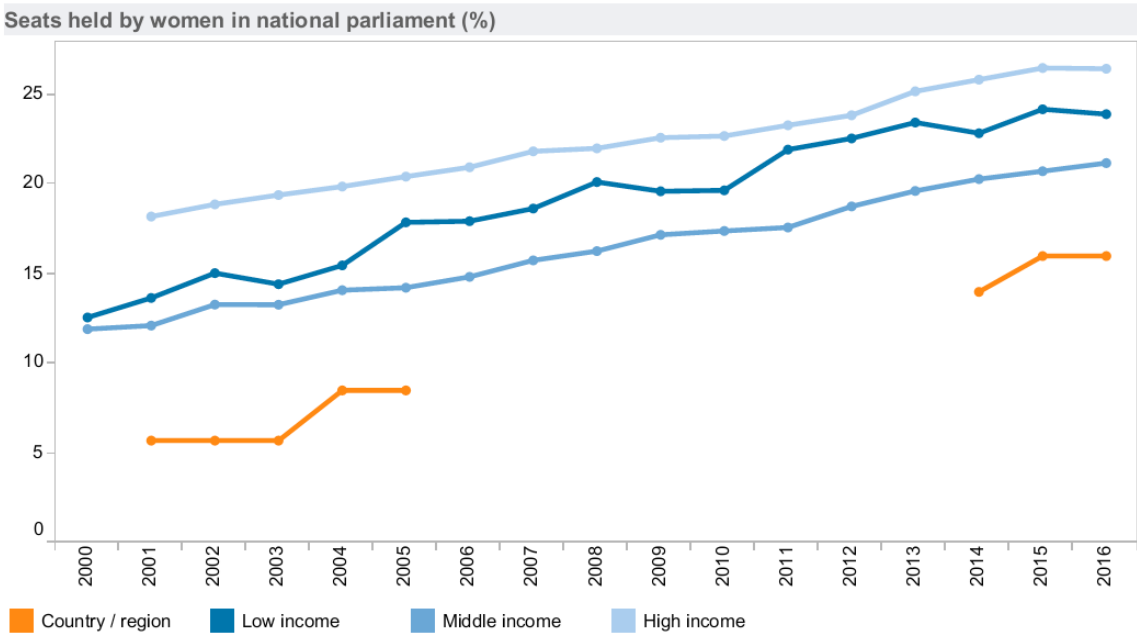
NITIAL FINDINGS ON SELECTED GOALS & TARGETS

World Economic Forum Gender Gap Ranking	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009
	not available	121	122	117	113	109	108	103

There is a lack of clear and accessible information regarding the government's implementation of the SDGs.

Goal 5 - There is a lack of data available online relating to the representation of women in municipal/local government.[10] During the elections in September of 2014, eight women were elected to the 50-seat parliament. As of 2016, women comprised 14% of the proportion of Parliament. Fiji now has its first female Speaker of the House, and while this is a significant advancement, it must be noted that in the 2014 elections women only received 15% of the overall votes, and women's participation in politics remains low.[11] Fiji is placed 123rd on the World's Women's representation in Parliament.[12]

Proportion of Women in Ministerial Level Positions (%)

Seats held by women in national parliament (%)

Legend: Country / region · Low income · Middle income · High income

5 https://researchspace.auckland.ac.nz/handle/2292/15230?show=full
6 Lal. V, Brij, 'Anxiety, uncertainty and fear in our land': Fiji's road to military coup, 2006.
7 http://www.femlinkpacific.org.fj/index.php/en/actions/archive/423-recommendations-for-the-national-security-strategy
8 http://www.parliament.gov.fj/News/Speaker-outlines-Parliament-s-commitment-to-SDGs
9 http://www.sids2014.org/index.php?menu=1537

10 http://wilgpacific.org/files/7114/0425/7379/Low_Res_Fiji_SWPMG_Position_Paper_1_Where_are_the_Women__Final_.pdf
11 http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Documents/pwspd-fiji-country-plan-2016.pdf
12 http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm