



CHELSEA LICENSED

# **GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND REDD+** **IN FIJI:** TACKLING RESOURCE CONFLICT AND ADDRESSING GENDER- BASED RISK IN THE ENVIRONMENT

## **Gender and Environment Analysis**

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## ACRONYM LIST

ADS	Automated Directive Systems
AGM	Annual General Meeting
CEDAW	Convention of Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DBFCC	Drawa Block Forest Communities Cooperative
DVRO	Domestic Violence Restraining Order
ER-P	Emissions Reduction Programme
ER-PD	Emissions Reduction Programme Document
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FGRM	Feedback and Grievance Redress Mechanism
FGRM+	GBV-Inclusive Feedback and Grievance Redress Mechanism
FPIC	Free, Prior, and Informed Consent
FWCC	Fiji Women’s Crisis Centre
FWRM	Fiji Women’s Rights Movement
G&E	Gender and Environment
GAP	Gender Action Plan
GBR	Gender-based Risks
GBV	Gender-based Violence
GBV/FGRM+	Gender-based Violence and REDD+ in Fiji: Tackling Resource Conflict and Addressing Gender-based Risk in the Environment
GESI	Gender and Social Inclusion
GoF	Government of Fiji
IGWG	Interagency Gender Working Group
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
KII	Key Informant Interview
LoU	Landowning Unit
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MoE	Ministry of Economy
MoF	Ministry of Forestry
MoHMS	Ministry of Health and Medical Services
MoWCPA	Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation
MSP	Medical Services Pacific

NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NRSC	National REDD+ Steering Committee
NTFP	Non-timber Forests Products
ODPP	Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
RISE	Resilient, Inclusive, and Sustainable Environments
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SESA	Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment
SME	Subject Matter Expert
SSV	<i>Soqosoqo Vakamarama iTaukei e Viti</i>
TLFC	iTaukei Land and Fisheries Commission
TLTB	iTaukei Land Trust Board
U.S.	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAWG	Violence Against Women and Girls
WI-HER	Women Influencing Health, Education, and Rule of Law

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# Executive Summary

This Gender and Environment (G&E) Analysis examines the linkages that exist between environmental/resource-based conflict and gender-based violence (GBV) under the REDD+ benefit-sharing scheme in Fiji. Funded by the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID) Resilient, Inclusive, and Sustainable Environments (RISE) Challenge; Marstel-Day (an environmental consulting firm) and its partner Women Influencing Health, Education, and Rule of Law (WI-HER, a gender integration and mainstreaming organization) came together (GBV/FGRM+ Team) to build on a previous World Bank-funded Activity that provided a framework for the resolution of any grievances that could arise as a result of REDD+ readiness or implementation.

Evident from the World Bank Activity, and inherent in the design of the Fiji REDD+ Feedback, Grievance, and Redress Mechanism (FGRM), is a need for its iterative improvement, based on identified patterns and trends and needs of community members so that REDD+ benefits are truly accessible to all. As such, the USAID RISE Challenge provides an opportunity to improve the Fiji REDD+ FGRM design and its ability to respond to and address GBV and gender-based risk (GBR). By building an evidence base for the linkages that exists between gender risks and environmental programming, this G&E Analysis takes the critical first step of identifying gender and social inclusion gaps and barriers in land and resource rights and conservation in Fiji and the potential for GBRs that may occur as a result of activities under Fiji's REDD+ Programme.

The GBV/FGRM+ Team undertook a rapid and rigorous desk review and conducted 24 key informant interviews and one focus group discussion. Through this research the Team explored the context and dynamics of land rights, benefits-sharing, and conservation and their inter-woven connection to gender and GBV in Fiji. Through this lens, the G&E Analysis process identified existing REDD+ related grievances (including any associated with GBV) and potential for GBR or GBV-related grievances, assessed drivers of GBR/GBV under REDD+, and provides recommendations based on findings for the integration of these risks into Fiji REDD+ FGRM.

## APPLYING USAID'S FIVE GENDER DOMAINS

The G&E Analysis' desk review was guided by USAID's five gender domains (laws, policies, regulations, and institutional practices; cultural norms and beliefs; gender roles, responsibilities, and time use; access to and control over assets and resources; and patterns of power and decision making) and revealed a number of key findings, confirmed through qualitative data collection. These domains provided the needed context and framework to examine gender and its relationship to the environment and resource use and access, relevant for the GBV/FGRM+ Team's understanding for how GBV and GBR could be integrated into the FGRM. Further detailed in this G&E Analysis, key aspects include:

- While Fiji has an enabling policy environment for gender equality, including provisions in environmental policies protecting the rights of women, there is a lack of information on the implementation and effects of these policies.
- Women inherit land as landowners in the *mataqali* (clan) into which they are born and are legally entitled to benefit from this land; yet, cultural norms and beliefs about gender and social status tend to restrict women's abilities to participate in public life and decision-making about land.

- Women are expected to lead household responsibilities and care giving, which also prevents them from participating in public meetings and decisions due to conflicting demands on their time.
- Married women, who most often move to their husband's village, remain landowners in their own *mataqali* but are not able to participate in decisions about or benefit from land use or agreements in their husbands' *mataqali*.

## IDENTIFYING EXISTING AND POTENTIAL GENDER RISKS

Through qualitative analysis, the GBV/FGRM+ Team identified potential risks and causes of GBR and GBV related to land and resource use, specifically impacted by REDD+. Again, further detailed in the G&E, and summarized at a high-level here:

1. Women are unaware of the obligations of REDD+
2. Women are unclear and unaware of benefits associated with REDD+
3. Women are inconsistently included in land use planning
4. Married women face additional exclusions from decision-making and benefits
5. Women face repercussions for voicing their complaints or adopting new ideas
6. The financial impacts of conservation projects like REDD+ increase women's risk of violence
7. Benefits under REDD+ are distributed through bank accounts, and women lack access to bank accounts
8. Women face consequences when men and/or traditional leadership do not approve of women's activities

## INTEGRATION RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of these findings, the GBV/FGRM+ Team provided thoughtful recommendations on how to consider and integrate GBR and GBV into the existing FGRM, including:

- Increase knowledge and awareness of the functions and benefits of the FGRM+
- Affirm key features of the design and implementation of the FGRM+
- Protect privacy and confidentiality of complainants
- Refer into existing reporting pathways and mechanisms for cases of GBV
- Encourage buy-in of traditional leadership and community members
- Raise awareness on women's and men's rights in relation to land use and GBV
- Collaborate with existing community structures to promote utilization of the FGRM+
- Consider expansion of individuals involved in on-the-ground, verbal reporting

- Train all individuals and agencies that uptake grievances in the FGRM+ on GBR- and GBV-sensitive responses to complaints

These recommendations will guide the GBV/FGRM+ Team's collaborative efforts with the Government of Fiji to design the next iteration of the FGRM that is GBR- and GBV-inclusive – **the FGRM+**.



Inheritance patterns for land rights vary from area to area, and while women can legally inherit land, their brothers or husbands often dominate decision making on land use.

FAO & SPC, 2019

## Introduction

The USAID RISE Challenge aims to identify and implement interventions to reduce GBV in environmental programming through the funding of promising or proven tools, practices, or approaches. Select interventions identified through USAID RISE are to be explored under the Challenge, testing their merit in the effective prevention and response to GBR that may be unintended consequences of environmental conservation activities. The ultimate purpose of USAID RISE is to build a stronger evidence base to support donor-funded interventions by identifying/designing sustainable and integrated solutions to address GBV for USAID and its partners' environmental programming and investments.

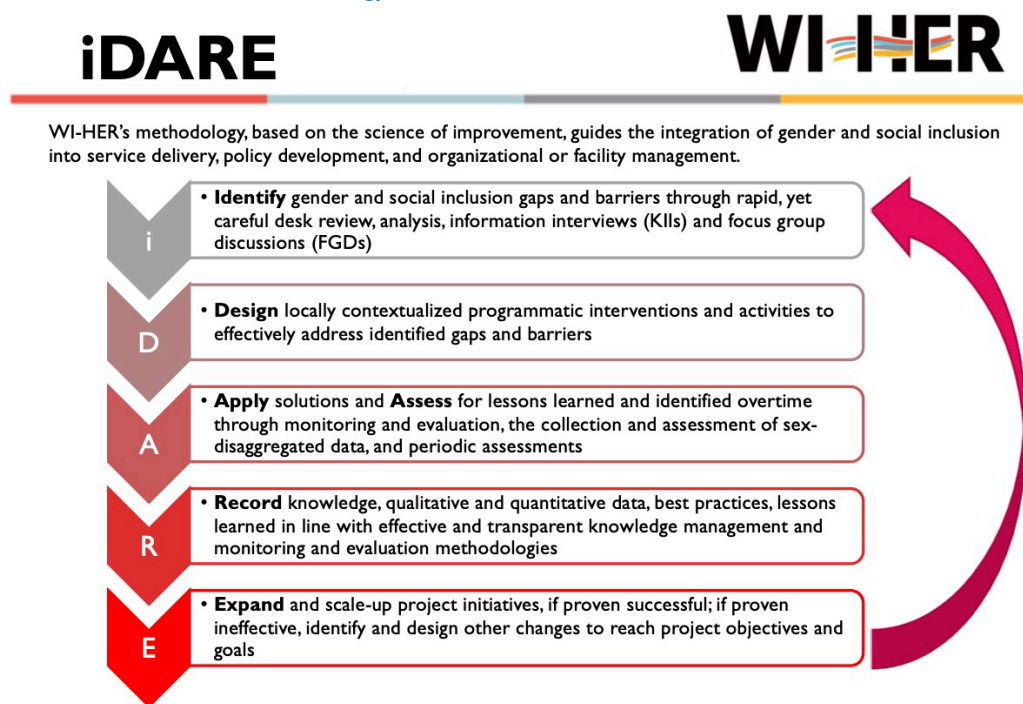
Marstel-Day and its partner WI-HER are working alongside local counterparts, government ministries, and project beneficiaries to identify and implement interventions to reduce GBV in environmental programming by examining the linkages between environmental/resource-based conflict and GBV under benefit-sharing schemes in Fiji. The “Gender-based Violence and REDD+ in Fiji: Tackling Resource Conflict and Addressing Gender-based Risk in the Environment” Activity (henceforth referred to as “GBV/FGRM+”) is evaluating Fiji’s National Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (Fiji’s REDD+)¹ Programme to determine how it is (1) currently identifying and responding to conflicts, concerns, complaints, and disputes that are the result of REDD+ readiness or implementation activities in the country, through a previously designed FGRM [**Situational Assessment**]; (2) what are the GBRs that may occur as a result of REDD+ activities and existing policy/institutional implications [**Gender and Environment (G&E) Analysis**]; (3) if/how the FGRM is effectively addressing, incorporating, and responding to a variety of grievance types; and (4) then applying findings, incorporating feedback, and enhancing the design of the mechanism to be more GBV-inclusive [**Design of GBV Inclusive FGRM**]. The GBV/FGRM+ Team will then train potential FGRM Staff and Representatives on how to identify, address, appropriately flag, report, and respond to potential GBV-related disputes within the FGRM+ system.

¹ The “+” indicates that Fiji’s REDD+ Programme emphasizes the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks as part of their programming.

## iDARE – METHODOLOGY FOR INTEGRATING GENDER AND SOCIAL INCLUSION INTO THE FGRM

The iDARE methodology, developed by WI-HER and applied in over 35 countries, is an approach to mainstream and integrate gender and social inclusion (GESI) institutionally and throughout program implementation (see *Figure 1*). iDARE is the framework through which the GBV/FGRM+ Team will propose adaptations to the existing FGRM design, to achieve a more effective and responsive mechanism that is GBR responsive and GBV inclusive (FGRM+). The *G&E Analysis* takes the first step of iDARE by (I)dentifying potential GBV incidences and opportunities to improve the FGRM’s ability to process and respond. The findings from this Analysis will then feed into and inform the next phase, (D)esign recommendations for improved process and response and for addressing gaps in the FGRM.

Figure 1. WI-HER’s iDARE Methodology



## PARALLEL PROCESS FOR THE DESIGN OF THE FGRM+

A parallel process intended to improve the design of the FGRM began with the previously submitted *Situational Assessment* and continues with its companion study, this *G&E Analysis*. Together, the *Situational Assessment* and the *G&E Analysis* will inform the design of a GBV-Inclusive FGRM (FGRM+), where specific policies, procedures, and processes could benefit from modification or inclusion to improve gender integration and better address GBR/GBV in REDD+ Programming in Fiji. The *Situational Assessment* was the first step towards improving the design of the FGRM, focused solely on the design (infrastructure) of the existing FGRM and its current operational status. This *G&E Analysis* is the second coordinating step that builds on the Assessment, identifying linkages that exist between GBV and environmental activities, with a clear focus on REDD+ programming efforts (conservation/ payment for ecosystem services/benefit-sharing schemes).

## STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

As the next step towards an enhanced design of the FGRM, the GBV/FGRM+ Team conducted an in-depth analysis of gender and GBV issues in Fiji and their relationship to environmental programming efforts and initiatives, identifying existing and potential areas of GBR to (and as a possible result of) the Fiji REDD+ Programme.

This report is structured, thusly:

9. **Introduction:** Outline of the *G&E Analysis Report*, includes approach, objectives, methodology, and data collection techniques as well as limitations/constraints.
10. **Gender and the Environment in Fiji:** Further analysis into the linkages that exist between GBV and land rights, resource rights, and conservation using the iDARE methodology, and following the *USAID Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy (2012)*<sup>2</sup> and the *USAID Automated Directive Systems (ADS) Chapter 205* (USAID, 2012; USAID, 2017).
11. **Gender-based Violence in Fiji:** Examination of GBV in Fiji and the systems currently in place for response and referral within the country's dual system of governance (customary and formal).
12. **Gender-based Risk, Gender-based Violence, and REDD+:** Reexamination of existing REDD+ related grievances through a gender lens, with a focus on GBR and GBV, the potential for increased or introduced GBR and GBV as a result of REDD+, and the inclusion of drivers of gender-based inequities and risk in REDD+ implementation.
13. **Integration of Gender-based Risk and Gender-based Violence into the FGRM:** Building on the proposed action items from the *Situational Assessment*, this section addresses the feasibility of the inclusion of GBR and GBV into an operational FGRM+ and provides initial recommendations based on findings.

**AN OUTPUT OF THIS ANALYSIS WILL BE AN INCREASED UNDERSTANDING** of the contextual situation of GBR and GBV in Fiji. This knowledge will facilitate the identification of existing and potential drivers for GBR/GBV in the context of land use and conservation and will also inform recommendations for adaptations to be made to the design of the FGRM to create the FGRM+.

## OBJECTIVES AND APPROACH

The *G&E Analysis* examines how GBR/GBV cases and grievances are currently resolved in Fiji and where gaps in understanding, policy, and action exist that the next iteration of the FGRM will have to address. This Analysis identifies existing and potential areas of GBR as a result of REDD+, detailing current and potential conflicts that are likely to be at the core of REDD+ activities.

The collection and analysis of qualitative evidence and learnings from stakeholders and community members around GBR and GBV issues identified gaps and potential linkages between gender, GBV, and

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<sup>2</sup> At the time of this report, a draft of the policy was available for public comment. The draft 2020 revision does not change the gender analysis domains or approach contained in US ADS 205 but does include an increased focus on gender in land and property rights and natural resource management, aligning with the scope of the GBV/FGRM+ project. The draft was available at: <https://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/gender-equality-and-womens-empowerment/2020-policy-draft>

the environment. This evidence informed the initial set of recommendations (found at the end of this report) and will be used to develop local capacity and sensitize community members and other FGRM+ actors; designing solutions to strengthen the mechanism’s capacity to respond to REDD+ related grievances and incorporate appropriate practices that are GBR responsive and GBV inclusive.

**As such, the G&E Analysis has the following primary objectives:**

- Identify gender and social inclusion gaps and barriers related to land rights, resource rights, and conservation (REDD+ related)
- Identify institutional and legal challenges from a gender perspective related to REDD+
- Identify existing and potential risks (to include reexamination of drivers previously identified under the Situational Assessment) and impacts of REDD+ readiness and implementation on women’s livelihoods and wellbeing

**FINDINGS FROM THE G&E ANALYSIS WILL SUPPORT PROPOSED RECOMMENDATIONS** to improve the existing FGRM’s policies, protocols, and procedures so that the FGRM+ is more responsive to the needs of the REDD+ beneficiaries, provides greater accessibility to all members of the community, and is better able to responsibly and effectively detect and process GBR/GBV cases for REDD+-related grievances. In describing the FGRM, the G&E Analysis will discuss the existing mechanism’s ability to respond to grievances that may include risks of GBV or incidences of GBV. The use of the term “response” does not indicate that the FGRM+ will be positioned to respond directly to, handle, or resolve cases or incidences of GBV. Instead, the FGRM+ will be able to recognize and flag GBV/GBR-grievances, track patterns and trends, and channel those cases responsibly and effectively (with sensitivity and confidentiality) to the proper agencies or entities without doing harm.

**DEFINING GBR AND GBV**

**Gender-based Risk (GBR):** The GBV/FGRM+ Team uses the term “Gender-based Risk” to refer to those risks to which an individual may be exposed as a result or consequence of their gender, including societal norms, roles, and practices governing gender identity and expression in societies. An illustrative example of GBR under this definition would be men’s increased risk of accidental injury as a result of activities prescribed to be ‘masculine’ in the gendered division of labor (e.g., manufacturing jobs).

**Gender-based Violence (GBV):** The GBV/FGRM+ Team employs the use of the term “Gender-based Violence”<sup>3</sup> as defined by the Interagency Gender Working Group (IGWG): “Gender-based violence (GBV) is a human rights violation, a public health challenge, and a barrier to civic, social, political, and economic participation.

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<sup>3</sup> For additional information on USAID’s efforts to prevent and respond to GBV, please see: Preventing and Responding to Gender-based Violence. (n.d.). USAID. <https://www.usaid.gov/gbv>



Gender-based violence (GBV) in the broadest terms, is violence that is directed at individuals based on their biological sex, gender identity, or perceived adherence to culturally-defined expectations of what it means to be a woman and man, girl and boy. GBV includes physical, sexual, and psychological abuse; threats; coercion; arbitrary deprivation of liberty; and economic deprivation. Whether occurring in public or private, GBV is a human rights violation, a public health challenge, and a barrier to civic, social, political, and economic participation.

While gender-based violence is often defined only by physical violence, the reality is much broader. GBV can include but is not limited to female infanticide; early and forced marriage, “honor” killings, and female genital cutting/mutilation; child sexual abuse and exploitation; trafficking in persons; sexual coercion, harassment and abuse; neglect; domestic violence; economic deprivation, and elder abuse.

While it impacts everyone, women and men, girls, and boys, it disproportionately affects women across their life cycle. It undermines not only the safety, dignity, overall health status, and human rights of the millions of individuals who experience it, but also the public health, economic stability, and security of nations.”

– IGWG, n.d.

Through interviews with people in Fiji we learned that the term ‘GBV’ was less understood amongst certain stakeholders who were more familiar with the term ‘violence against women and girls’ (VAWG). This is in alignment with preferred terminology within United Nations (UN) agencies and institutions; the UN defines violence against women as “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life” (UN General Assembly, 1993). The Team accounted for this understanding during our interviews and in our analysis, noting that VAWG does not comprise all forms of GBV and that GBV affects people of all genders, though women tend to experience GBV at higher rates.

## METHODOLOGY

The GBV/FGRM+ Team used qualitative data collection processes for the *G&E Analysis* through desk review, key informant interviews (KIIs), and focus group discussion (FGD). The Team then identified common themes through the data to code and analyze qualitative data to analyze the linkages that exist between gender and the environment, and how those linkages can either create and/or exacerbate GBR and GBV and the implications for programming such as REDD+.

### DATA COLLECTION APPROACH AND TECHNIQUES

#### DESK REVIEW

The *G&E Analysis* began with a desk review of available documentation relating to GBV issues in Fiji and expanded to include more targeted research on conflicts and issues related to land and resource rights with specific implications or linkages to gender, and GBV. As part of the preparation for the *Situational Assessment*, the GBV/FGRM+ Team reviewed project reports, government documents, and land and resource-based conflict studies, prepared as part of the initial FGRM consultancy in Fiji. The Team then supplemented this review with further research into government documents, policy shifts and trends,

and relevant reports and publications on land and resource-based conflicts issues to understand the current status of Fiji REDD+ – including Emissions Reduction Programme Documents (ER-PD) for the Fiji REDD+ Programme and other REDD+ donor-funded research to review existing research on gender and REDD+ linkages. Additional materials reviewed included peer-reviewed publications, policy papers, gender analyses, case studies, literature reviews, publicly available data, project evaluations, government policies and documents, program reports, grey literature, and other materials. Only materials from the last 10 years were included unless no updated materials existed. The Team identified gaps in the literature which informed the qualitative data collection process and the development of KII and FGD guides.

## KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

The GBV/FGRM+ Team identified participants for KIIs by building on the *Situational Assessment*, mapping key stakeholders specifically involved in REDD+ readiness, land and resource rights and management, women’s rights, and GBV in Fiji. The Team then produced a gender-focused stakeholder map (see *Attachment 1: Stakeholder Map*), allowing the GBV/FGRM+ Team to identify participants for KIIs to contribute information to the *G&E Analysis*. Participants were identified based on their level of knowledge and probability to be able to provide in-depth information about women’s rights and protections in Fiji, gender, GBR, GBV, and their relationship to land and resources conservation. Additional interview participants, particularly those relating to women’s rights and GBV in Fiji, were identified through the process of the desk review. The GBV/FGRM+ Team also used snowball sampling – a sampling technique where existing study subjects recruit future subjects from among their acquaintances – to identify additional potential informants through the course of interviews, as suggested by participants. This approach was particularly helpful in identifying stakeholders of whom the Team had not been aware, and also allowed for participants to facilitate personal introductions between their acquaintances and the research team, building trust and acceptability.

The GBV/FGRM+ team used three approaches for KIIs – virtual, written response, and in-person. Most interviews were held remotely (Skype, Zoom, WhatsApp, GoogleMeet) and were led by the **GBV/FGRM+ Gender and Impact Expert, Allison Annette Foster** and **GBV Researcher, Maddison Leigh Hall**. For virtual interviews, when possible, both audio and video were used to allow for face-to-face interaction. Additionally, our **Land Tenure and Law Expert, Mr. Ulai Baya**, also conducted one (1) KII in-person, where technology was a barrier to the use of a more virtual platform. This in-person interview followed structured interview protocols and was transcribed for the Team..

### Pre-Interview Questionnaire

As part of the KII process, identified respondents were sent an initial email invitation that included a link to a *Pre-interview Questionnaire* using GoogleForms.<sup>4</sup> The questionnaire posed multiple choice questions to capture quantitative data using a Likert scale.<sup>5</sup> The purpose of the questionnaire was to reveal insights and perceptions across the different stakeholder groups about the status of women in Fiji, the availability and accessibility of laws and systems that protect women’s rights, and the relationship between land conservation efforts and inequalities or risks women face, including their risk of experiencing gender

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<sup>4</sup> GoogleForms is a web-based data collection platform within GoogleSuite.

<sup>5</sup> A bipolar scaling method, measuring either positive or negative response to a statement.

based violence. Responses from the questionnaire supported informed questioning during interviews. The pre-interview questionnaire can be found in *Attachment 2 – Data Collection Tools*.

## FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

The GBV/FGRM+ Team, working with local counterparts, facilitated one FGD with three women community members from Drawa to better understand issues experienced by an existing REDD+ community in Fiji. A male facilitator from outside the Drawa community attended the meeting to enable telecommunications support and provide iTaukei language clarification (where some concepts needed to be explained contextually), when necessary. In light of this male presence and to adhere to the principle of “do no harm,” interviewers limited question topics and allowed participants to expound per their comfort level. Due to connectivity issues in Drawa, the counterparts assisting the Team identified community members who were able to travel to Labasa, where internet connection was available, and provided them with transportation.

### Language

The GBV/FGRM+ Team’s research efforts were predominantly conducted in English, which is one of the three official languages used in Fiji (in addition to iTaukei and Hindi). All interview materials, including the pre-interview questionnaire, consent forms, and interview guides, were piloted with the GBV/FGRM+ Team’s local Fijian subject matter experts to ensure the appropriateness and accessibility of language. Only one key informant preferred to hold a conversation in iTaukei, and this interview was conducted in iTaukei by GBV/FGRM+ Land Tenure and Law Expert, Mr. Ulai Baya. The remaining key informants and focus group participants were fluent in English and agreed to partake in conversations in English. Explain that English was acceptable and interviews were fluent. With focus group participants, iTaukei interpretation was provided in the few instances where technical terms relating to FGRM processes needed clarification to add nuance and explanation.

### COVID-19 Precautions

The GBV/FGRM+ Research Team followed COVID-19 protocols as mandated by the Government of Fiji in conducting all qualitative research during the *G&E Analysis*. At the time of the FGD, local travel within Fiji was permitted without restriction. The Government of Fiji has not instituted a mask mandate. The Government of Fiji had issued a restriction on gatherings exceeding 100 persons. Additional details about the state of the COVID-19 pandemic in Fiji can be found below in *Constraints and Limitations*.

## INTERVIEW SUMMARY RESULTS

A significant amount of information and valuable perspectives were captured by the GBV/FGRM+ Team through interviews and discussions; undertaking a total of 25 interviews (24 KIIs and 1 FGD) for the G&E Analysis (see Table 1).

TABLE 1. INTERVIEWS COMPLETED				
Stakeholder Group	KII	FGD	Sex Disaggregated	
			Male	Female
Community Members and Leaders	6	1 (3-person FGD)	3	6
Government Ministries/Agencies involved in REDD+	6		1	5
Ministry of Forestry (MoF) Forest Officers	2		1	1
Women's and GBV-related Organizations	3		1	2
Research and Harmonizing Agencies	7		2	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>19</b>

## STAKEHOLDER GROUP DELINEATION

Participants from both the KIIs and FGD were grouped according to the perspectives they were able to provide during the course of qualitative data collection. Community members and leaders were those informants that provided greater insight into community-level functions, both in REDD+ sites and in other areas. The GBV/FGRM+ Team sought perspectives from a variety of community members, including community members who did and did not hold community-level leadership positions or own land. Representatives of government ministries involved in REDD+ provided distant perspective on their ministry's experience in land use and conservation, in relation to gender. Ministry of Forestry (MoF) Forest Officers, though government employees, have distinct experience as they work more closely with communities and are not closely involved in high-level decisions or planning. Representatives of women's and GBV-focused organizations offered insight into the current status of women's rights and GBV, including programming, in Fiji and the Pacific. Finally, representatives of research and harmonizing agencies, or those agencies also working in the areas of land use and conservation, were selected to offer perspective on current efforts in land use and conservation and any linkages to gender or GBV. Despite these delineations, it is important to note that most key informants themselves are also members of communities in Fiji and were able to offer community-level perspective in addition to their subject matter expertise.

## INTERVIEW GUIDES, PROTOCOLS, AND SAFEGUARDING OF INFORMATION

Prior to conducting any KIIs or FGD, the GBV/FGRM+ Team developed guides for each stakeholder group, developed a process for seeking informed consent and a form to secure said consent, sought approval following in-country protocols for interviews and secured appropriate permissions to conduct local community interviews, and established necessary protocols for the safeguarding and protection of respondents and data. The Team was prepared to have forms and instructions translated in *iTaukei*, however this was not needed as all respondents indicated, including community members, fluency in English. The Guides, Consent Form, and approval letters (letters of support) are provided in *Attachment 2— Data Collection Tools*.

## GUIDES

The GBV/FGRM+ Team developed guides for each participant stakeholder group that were tailored to gain the unique knowledge and perspectives from that group.

## INFORMED CONSENT

All key informants were provided informed consent forms before proceeding with any interview or discussion questions. Key informants either provided consent using an online form, or verbal or written consent where the online form was not accessible. Any key informant that completed the online consent process also verbally confirmed their consent at the beginning of their interview. The GBV/FGRM+ Team provided all key informants and focus group participants with the ability to ask questions during the consent process. The consent process and all interviews were conducted in English, and clarification was provided in *iTaukei* with the assistance of local counterparts when needed.

## APPROVALS AND GOVERNMENT CONCURRENCE

When seeking approval for the USAID RISE Challenge activity in Fiji, the MoF used customary procedures to meet with the commissioners and *Roko Tui* (provincial representatives) to receive feedback, input, and approval. The MoF has provided approval for all research undertaken as part of the USAID RISE Challenge. The MoF also provided the necessary letters of permission for all community-based research and community consultations. No other research ethics approvals or exemptions were deemed necessary under local guidance.

## DATA STORAGE AND PROTECTION

The GBV/FGRM+ team employed a “do no harm” policy to ensure safe and ethical data collection and storage methods were utilized. Further, WI-HER, as the lead GBV partner, has been designated as responsible for data storage; strictly adhering to this safeguarding policy and process. As such, WI-HER will retain access to the collected data and the consent forms. Anonymized notes (e.g., notes that did not include identify information such as name, occupation, or town of residence/origin) were taken during the interviews and additional consent was received prior to the use of recordings to verify and check the accuracy of those notes. Both notes and recordings are stored on WI-HER computers with password protection, and files will be transferred to a USB and stored in a secure location. All files will be stored for three years and then will be destroyed.

## CONSTRAINTS AND LIMITATIONS

### COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS

As noted in the *Situational Assessment*, the COVID-19 pandemic continued to present time, technological, and logistical challenges for the *G&E Analysis*.

Due to ongoing travel restrictions, the GBV/FGRM+ Team was not able to travel to Fiji to undertake in-person consultations or data collection as hoped. As a result, the Team devised more flexible and innovative means, such as remote approaches to KIIs and FGDs, and stronger utilization of our local counterparts and consultants to provide facilitated support and (for one KII) collect of data. Building on lessons learned during the *Situational Assessment*, the Team sent out a pre-call survey, which introduced key informants to the topics at hand and provided the Team with additional information upon which to

base follow-up questions. The Team then used a multitude of web-based platforms to facilitate interviews and overcome connectivity challenges. The use of video conferencing, when possible, helped address challenges in establishing rapport remotely.

Given norms around interpersonal communication in Fiji, the GBV/FGRM+ Team also faced challenges in receiving responses from all selected stakeholders. Several informants noted that Fijian norms can limit willingness to engage in more formal interactions, as there is unfamiliarity with interviewers or the project; and that further, some individuals are uneasy with communications over the internet or the phone, preferring face-to-face, in-person interaction. Additionally, some respondents preferred to converse in *iTaukei* and/or were uncomfortable with written responses. Despite these challenges, most identified participants did respond to invitations for interviews and were forthcoming in conversations. In some cases, participants also facilitated introductions to additional KII participants (snowballing).

As of the date of this report's submission, the following is the most readily available information regarding travel and logistical restrictions:

- Travel by non-Fiji citizens for tourism or visits is not permitted, with limited cases possible by U.S. citizens who hold Fiji permanent residency or work permits with permission from the Government of Fiji (GoF). Fiji Airways has suspended international passenger flights through the end of September 2020.
- Returning citizens are quarantined for 14 days in a hotel (travelers must pay for the cost of the stay in quarantine) and then can go home with isolation for an additional 14 days.
- Gatherings of up to 100 people are now permitted in Fiji, though there is still an abundance of caution being practiced. A nationwide curfew is in effect from 11 p.m. to 4 a.m. nightly.

#### LIMITED ACCESS TO REDD+ SITE COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Since travel to Fiji was not possible, the GBV/FGRM+ Team was unable to hold FGDs with community members in REDD+ sites as originally envisioned. Due to the remoteness of the Drawa and Emalu communities, network coverage was limited. Thus, the Team was not able to hold remote interviews with community members within their villages. The GBV/FGRM+ Team was able to overcome this limitation by seeking community-level perspectives in other ways. The majority of data collected during the *G&E Analysis* was sourced through key informants. Many were also native Fijian and members of landowning units (LoUs) and able to share information on women's issues in Fiji from personal accounts and their own community experiences. These community perspectives, though not from REDD+ sites, supplemented findings from the FGD to provide important insights and a deeper understanding of the potential risks for women and exposure to violence linked to environment and land conservation agreements.

#### COMPETING PRIORITIES

The pandemic has also placed significant resource strain on local advocacy groups and created competing priorities for civil society organizations (CSOs) and other groups, including those engaged on women's rights and GBV issues. For example, the GBV/FGRM+ Team hoped to engage local GBV response and advocacy group, Fiji Women's Crisis Centre (FWCC), for an interview or possible FGD

(Fiji Women's Crisis Centre, n.d.). However, as a result of COVID-19, they have become inundated by cases and did not have the bandwidth to provide responses.

The GBV/FGRM+ Team's inability to be in country to conduct interviews also resulted in less willingness by some agencies to be interviewed, as Fijian norms limit willingness to engage in formal interactions without familiarity with the interviewers or the project. For example, the Team was not able to arrange an interview with any representatives of the iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB) or Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation (MoWCPA), despite numerous attempts electronically and or through engagement by our local counterparts or consultants.

In addition, financial resources in Fiji have become quite limited as well, with the National Budget recently passing with upsetting results for the Fijian CSO Alliance (Kumar, 2020). The Ministry of Economy (MoE) has stated that "increased external financing through multilateral partners like the Asian Development Bank, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, World Bank, and bilateral partners like the Japanese Government will help sustain expenditure." The Alliance (where many women's advocacy groups are members) is now receiving limited funding despite the increase in need for their services.

## **CULTURAL CONSIDERATION AROUND GENDER IDENTITY AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION**

As gender, social inclusion, and GBV researchers, the GBV/FGRM+ Team was careful to consider a variety of intersecting identities in planning and carrying out research under the *G&E Analysis*. Fiji has a history of diversity in gender identity and sexual orientation; in Fiji, *vaka sa lewa lewa* is an iTaukei term used to refer to third gender persons. Recent evidence suggests that sexual and gender minorities in Fiji face increased risk for violence in the wake of natural disasters (Dwyer & Woolf, 2018). In consultation with local subject matter experts and gender and social inclusion professionals, the GBV/FGRM+ Team determine it would not be possible to probe around gender identity and sexual orientation during data collection in the *G&E Analysis*. This was due to cultural considerations that were enhanced by the remote data collection methods employed. This necessarily limits the Team's findings and provides an opportunity for further exploration as the project continues.

## **MITIGATION EFFORTS**

The GBV/FGRM+ Team hopes for a future opportunity to travel to Fiji by February 2021 to develop deeper understandings of violence at the community-level in REDD+ communities, namely Drawa. Meanwhile, the Team is continuing to actively explore options to engage with community members through remote means. For example, the Team is in the process of setting up a webinar for the next deliverable, a *Socialization Event* to share the findings of both the *Situational Assessment* and *G&E Analysis* with key stakeholders for feedback. In addition, the Team is working with our local Counterpart, Live & Learn Fiji,<sup>6</sup> who runs the REDD+ project site in Drawa, to participate in the upcoming Annual General Meeting (AGM), where all communities involved in the Drawa Block Forest Communities Cooperative (DBFCC) will have representation presenting an opportunity to introduce the USAID RISE Activity to the community and gain insights from questions or comments during open discussion.

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<sup>6</sup> Live & Learn Fiji is a regional NGO network that has extensive experience supporting REDD+ initiatives, both in country and across the Pacific.



# Gender and the Environment in Fiji

## LAND RIGHTS, RESOURCE RIGHTS, AND CONSERVATION

Communities in Fiji exist in a complex context of norms, beliefs, policies, and laws that interact to influence the experiences of people of all genders. Understanding these factors is critical to addressing the influence of gender and in the environment. In this section the GBV/FGRM+ Team undertook deeper analysis of how GBR and GBV issues in Fiji are connected to and influenced by the environment – to include access to and the management and use of land and natural resources and conservation.

“[The biggest challenge to women’s rights] in Fiji and across the Pacific is the way we were brought up, in terms of the delineation of roles and responsibilities from an early age, where we were taught, ‘A man should be engaged in this, and women should be engaged in other activities.’ We grow up with it, and it’s hard to try to change these as people are growing up.”

-KEY INFORMANT

The *G&E Analysis* was guided by USAID’s *Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy* (2012)<sup>7</sup>, and *ADS Chapter 205* (2012, 2017). The GBV/FGRM+ Team applied the five gender analysis domains (laws, policies, regulations, and institutional practices; cultural norms and beliefs; gender roles, responsibilities, and time use; access to and control over assets and resources; and patterns of power and decision making) as a framework to guide identification of key issues, gaps, challenges, and opportunities faced by women and vulnerable gender groups in Fiji.

A scoping review of gender research in the Pacific identified that there is a dearth of research relating to gender, GBR, GBV, or VAWG as it relates to issues of climate change and the environment (Underhill-Sem, Chan Tung, Martsers, & Pene, 2016). Recent research from the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) identifies several pathways through which environment-related efforts influence gender equity and GBV (Itzá Castañeda, et al, 2020). Globally, gender inequalities are pervasive in land use and environmental issues, affecting both the status of women and their ability to access and control resources. Gender roles, like firewood collection, may expose women to risk of violence, and violence may be used as a tactic of control and to maintain structures of power. The scarcity resulting from environmental degradation may also trigger violence in communities.

<sup>7</sup> At the time of this report, a draft of the policy was available for public comment. The draft 2020 revision does not change the gender analysis domains or approach contained in US ADS 205 but does include an increased focus on gender in land and property rights and natural resource management, aligning with the scope of the GBV/FGRM+ project. The draft was available at: <https://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/gender-equality-and-womens-empowerment/2020-policy-draft>



## LAWS, POLICIES, REGULATIONS, AND INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES

### GENDER EQUALITY AND PROTECTION

**FIJI HAS MADE EXTENSIVE PROGRESS** in constructing an environment of laws, policies, regulations, and institutional policies that facilitate and protect rights based on gender (see *Table 2*), has subscribed to international mechanisms to promote gender equality and address GBV.<sup>8</sup> The *Fiji National Gender Policy*, adopted in 2014, is the key document guiding efforts and policies relating to gender and gender equality in all aspects of development in Fiji (Fiji Ministry for Social Welfare, Women & Poverty Alleviation, 2014). The policy aims to promote women’s human rights, integrate a gender perspective into planning and decision-making for development, establish systems for gender mainstreaming across government sectors and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), to provide guidelines for identifying and addressing gender concerns, to strengthen institutions promoting the rights of women (especially those relating to GBV), to change “material conditions” to achieve security for women and men (including conditions which will build peace), and to encourage legislative change and public awareness. Notably, the policy specifically references the need to promote gender-sensitive plans and strategies in agriculture, rural development, and the environment. It also aims to improve data collection and provide training on gender equity as it relates to the division of labor and economic empowerment in these sectors. Though the policy requires regular updates to be made on the status of its implementation, the GBV/FGRM+ Team did not locate any information on the policy’s implementation either through the desk review or qualitative research.

The *Women’s Plan of Action (2010-2019)*, building upon the prior 1999-2008 plan, has provided a strategic framework for action to promote sustainable development and good governance, especially as it relates to women (Fiji Ministry for Social Welfare, Women & Poverty Alleviation, 2009). The plan focused on five key areas: improving women’s economic rights and independence, promoting equity in decision-making, eliminating violence against women and children, ensuring access to basic services, and improving legal regulations and access to justice. The plan does not include any specific strategies or approaches to improve women’s role in land use, conservation, agriculture, the environment, or other related areas. To the Team’s knowledge the plan has not yet been replaced with a new action plan for 2020-2024, nor has there been an assessment on the status of implementation of the plan.

In early 2020, the GoF also announced the development of a *National Action to Prevent Violence against Women and Girls (2020-2025)* (*Fiji to develop a national action plan, 2020*). The plan will engage the whole of government to prevent all forms of violence against women and girls. Based on reports from key informants, the plan is still being developed and some phases of development have been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The plan has not yet been released.

Despite some evidence of an enabling policy environment, women do face legal and institutional challenges that affect their status in society and their livelihoods. The legal and institutional environment places significant barriers to Fijians seeking to formalize their employment or business activities. These barriers are more pronounced for women as they are less likely to have the skills and assets needed to navigate the business registration process, which has high fees and complex filing requirements (ADB,

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<sup>8</sup> For example, Fiji is signatory to the *Convention of Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)*, the *Beijing Platform for Action*, and has committed to Goal 5 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to “achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls” (*FGRM Assessment and Recommendations of Existing Issues and Structures, 2017; World Bank, 2012*)

2016). A key informant explained that women often face more challenges in completing required forms due to gaps in literacy or education. Women also struggle to access the financial resources needed to travel to filing offices and pay filing fees.

<b>TABLE 2. LAWS AND POLICIES RELATING TO GENDER EQUALITY AND PROTECTION IN FIJI</b>	
<b>Law or Policy</b>	<b>Description</b>
<i>5-Year and 20-Year National Development Plans (2017-2021 and 2017-2036)</i>	Outlines the role of women in development for the period 2017-2021 and 2017-2036. Focuses on women’s economic empowerment, leadership and decision-making, and health. Includes focus on providing support to GBV survivors (Fiji MoE, 2017).
<i>Fiji National Gender Policy (2014)</i>	Guides all policy and efforts to promote gender equality across development sectors. Includes a requirement to improve the provision of services to GBV survivors (Fiji Ministry for Social Welfare, Women & Poverty Alleviation, 2014).
<i>Women’s Plan of Action (2010-2019)</i>	Offers a strategic framework to improve women’s role in sustainable development across five key areas (Fiji Ministry for Social Welfare, Women & Poverty Alleviation, 2009).
<i>Domestic Violence Decree 2009</i>	Provides a definition of domestic violence, which applies to individuals in domestic or family relationships, that covers actual or threatened physical or sexual violence, property damage, harassment, persistent cruel behavior, or stalking. Focuses on providing protection for survivors of domestic violence and clarifying the role of police services. Institutes the use of Domestic Violence Restraining Orders (DVROs) (Republic of Fiji Islands, 2009b).
<i>Crimes Decree 2009</i>	Provides legal definitions and penalties for crimes in Fiji, which include sexual violence and rape as crimes against humanity. Other forms of GBV are not covered in the legal definitions (Republic of Fiji Islands, 2009a).
<i>Family Law Act 2003</i>	Establishes the Family Court, which focuses on issues of marriage, divorce, maintenance, and custody. Does not include provisions imposing penalties for violence within marriage but does institute protections for women and children (Republic of Fiji Islands, 2003). A 2012 amendment to the act requires the provisions to cover de facto partnerships (FWRM, 2017).
<i>Fiji Police Force “No Drop Policy” (1995)</i>	Requires all police offers and prosecutors to bring any filed case of domestic violence to court (FWRM, 2017).

## ENVIRONMENT AND LIVELIHOODS

Female members of a LoU are entitled to land ownership; this entitlement is protected not only by *iTaukei* tradition but also by law. In fact, the *iTaukei Lands Act 1905* (last amended in 2013), which is the legal document governing land ownership under traditional *iTaukei* systems, includes a special provision to protect the rights of married women (Republic of Fiji Islands, 1905). Under the Act, any person who does not reside in their home community for a period of two or more years may be forcefully divested from the LoU; however, the Act declares that this provision may not be applied to women who are married and residing with their husbands, or to youth residing with their legal guardians.

In 2019, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) partnered with Pacific Community (SPC) to undertake a gender assessment of the agriculture and rural sectors in Fiji (FAO & SPC, 2019). Part of the assessment focused on understanding the enabling environment for gender mainstreaming in these sectors, including in the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), Ministry of Fisheries, and MoF. The policy environment was found to be enabling for gender mainstreaming, with representatives of ministries expressing interest in gaining capacity on gender responsive work. Overall, these policies are also linked directly to action and the implementation of programs. However, there is limited funding

to undertake gender mainstreaming, and there are key gaps in analysis, planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. Despite this commitment to gender mainstreaming, there appears to be a lack of explicit mention of gender in the objectives and policies of both the MoA and MoF, though women are assumed to be included in much of the gender-neutral language (*FGRM Assessment and Recommendations of Existing Issues and Structures*, 2017). Information on the level of gender mainstreaming on laws and policies relevant to REDD+, the environment, land use, and conservation efforts in Fiji is presented in *Table 3*.

Despite gender neutrality in MoF policies, the ministry has long undertaken efforts to include women in programs like forestry workshops, tree planting programs, and traditional medicine initiatives. These efforts have helped to address women's inclusion, but not necessarily their participation in leadership and decision-making within the ministry (Vuke & Elder, 2014). The MoF has recently undertaken renewed efforts and research to ensure the inclusion of women and vulnerable groups across activities and in REDD+, including the 2019 *Strategic Environmental Social Assessment (SESA)*, 2019 Gender Action Plan (GAP), the 2019 *Fiji REDD+ Gender Guideline*, and *Mainstreaming Gender in Fiji REDD Plus*. This research, and its accompanying guidelines and plans, demonstrates a tangible commitment to the inclusion of women in Fiji's approaches to forest management, including REDD+. The *Strategic Environmental Social Assessment (SESA)*, completed in 2019 with funding from the World Bank, includes key challenges and barriers women and vulnerable groups (e.g., youth, elderly, people with disabilities) may face in REDD+ readiness and implementation, but did not examine GBR or GBV (Fiji MoF, 2019b). The three key gender issues identified under the *SESA* include women's limited participation in formal forest resource management and conservation activities, women's barriers to accessing credit and markets to facilitate their participation in livelihood activities, and the lack of organized approaches to promote women's leadership and gender-responsive activities in the MoF. Also in 2019, the MoF funded formative research on gender mainstreaming in REDD+, which informed the development of a the World Bank-funded Gender Action Plan (GAP), which provides guidance on gender analyses in the design, implementation, and evaluation of the Emissions Reduction Programme (ER-P) (Tebtebba, 2019). The GAP proposes actions and strategies to ensure women are included in decision-making, planning, and the distribution of benefits across all phases of the ER-P. The ER-PD demonstrates evidence of the GAP in action, as it outlines the needs for including women and provides for the implementation of the GAP (Fiji MoF, 2019a). The GAP is complemented by the *Fiji REDD+ Gender Guideline*, produced for the MoF by *Soqosoqo Vakamarama iTaukei e Viti (SSV)*, an iTaukei women's NGO, to provide practical guidelines and recommendations for REDD+ readiness and implementation (Seniloli & Qereqeretabua, 2019). These guidelines were complemented by research on *Mainstreaming Gender in Fiji REDD Plus*, also conducted by SSV (SSV, n.d.).

A key area of regulation to consider in relation to land agreements and gender is benefit sharing. In early 2019, Conservation International held a workshop with key stakeholders to discuss the creation of a REDD+ benefit sharing mechanism (Conservation International, 2019). Participations established principles for benefit sharing, one of which was to make benefit sharing "inclusive, with special attention to participation of women, youth and ethnic minorities." There are a variety of monetary and non-monetary benefits emerging from land use and conservation projects and agreements like REDD+. Based on information from Conservation International on benefits and benefit sharing in Fiji, the only benefit that currently has guidelines around gender equality or social inclusion is *Community Development Projects*. Guidelines indicate that the project should benefit a wider proportion of the population, including women, youth, and other vulnerable or marginalized groups.

<b>TABLE 3. ENVIRONMENTAL LAWS AND POLICIES RELATING TO GENDER AND SOCIAL INCLUSION IN FIJI</b>	
<b>Law or Policy</b>	<b>Description</b>
<i>Climate Change Bill, 2019 (Draft)</i>	Includes a principle to “respect, promote and consider gender equality and responsiveness, women’s human rights and the empowerment of women, including in the areas of formal sector employment and livelihoods, participation in decision-making and access to services, health, education, water, sanitation, housing and transport.” Requires the development and implementation of the NCCP to “embed gender, human-rights, and social and cultural issues.” Prioritizes gender-responsiveness and social inclusion in guidance for at-risk community relocation (Parliament of the Republic of Fiji, 2019).
<i>National Climate Change Policy (NCCP) 2019-2030</i>	Calls for the design of climate change-related interventions to capture the needs of all social groups, in particular vulnerable groups, through a participatory approach (Conservation International, 2019).
<i>National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2017-2024 (NBSAP)<sup>9</sup></i>	Includes a principle on gender mainstreaming: “Principle 4. Gender Mainstreaming: recognizing the importance of integrating gender views and concerns into implementation of nature-based solutions” (Conservation International, 2019).
<i>5-Year and 20-Year National Development Plans (2017-2021 and 2017-2036)</i>	Plans for approaches to cross-sectoral development in Fiji. Details the approach for enhancing land use administration in the country by 2022. Includes women in socio-economic development, but sections relating to land use and administration are not gender mainstreamed (Fiji MoE, 2017).
<i>A Green Growth Framework for Fiji (GGFF) (2014)</i>	Positions green growth in support of social inclusion and gender equality. Recognizes barriers and gaps, including GBV, to the inclusion and participation of women and other marginalized groups in economic growth, and proposes short-, medium- and long-term strategies to address these challenges (Fiji Ministry of Strategic Planning, National Development and Statistics, 2014).
<i>Fiji REDD-Plus Policy (2011)</i>	Requires the consideration of gender issues in all phases of decision-making and implementation (Ministry of Primary Industries Fiji, 2011). However, the UN REDD+ National Strategy/Action Plan summary document does not describe or include any challenges, actions, or strategies specific to gender, GBV, or other issues of social inclusion, and REDD+ is not linked to broader development objectives in these areas (UN REDD Programme, 2015).
<i>Land Use Decree 2010</i>	Governs use of native ( <i>iTaukei</i> ) land and establishes a Land Use Unit to help ensure all parties involved in land owning units benefit from lease agreements. Though not explicitly mentioned, this decree is noted as a key protection to ensure all LoU members, including women, reap the benefits of lease agreements (Republic of Fiji Islands, 2010).
<i>Fiji Forest Policy Statement (2007)</i>	Guides the sustainable management of forests but does not currently mention or include provisions relating to gender or women involved in forestry (Fiji MoF, 2007).

## **CULTURAL NORMS AND BELIEFS**

**CULTURAL NORMS AND BELIEFS IN FIJI EMPHASIZE THE NOTION OF COLLECTIVITY**, often placing the needs of the community at a higher level of importance than the needs or rights of an individual (FAO & SPC, 2019). These norms are at odds with notions of individual rights, including the idea of women’s rights. Key informants and community members consistently noted that there is resistance to the “Western ideal” of women’s rights as women’s individual liberation is at odds with traditional and cultural norms about gender, social status, and collectivity.

<sup>9</sup> The full text of this policy was not located during the desk review.

Social norms in Fiji also dictate the proper public behavior of women and men; at times, these norms restrict women's abilities to participate in public meetings and dialogues to contribute to community-level decisions (FAO & SPC, 2019). Key informants continually explained that norms typically prohibit women from speaking in public. These norms vary slightly for women in positions of leadership or of higher social status, who may be granted more access to public meetings. For example, women who are members of families with chiefly status, married to chiefs, hold leadership roles in women's groups, or, in rare cases, hold the position of chief in a village are more able to participate in public meetings due to their higher social status.

Importantly, cultural norms about gender intersect with norms about social status in Fijian communities. As key informants described, the social status of an individual's family, which is passed through inheritance, dictates their appropriate actions in society. Individuals of high status, which key informants referred to as chiefly status (though it is not restricted only to the Village Chief), are more freely permitted to participate in public life, while individuals of lower status face more restrictions on their participation in public life. Additionally, as key informants described, elders are more freely able to participate in public life than youth. These norms about age and social status apply to both men and women, meaning that men who are younger or if lower social status face restrictions in the extent to which they can participate in public life, and add an additional layer of protocol to the abilities of women's having a voice in their communities.

Qualitative research highlights the pervasive, persistent influence of gender norms and beliefs on the status of women and girls in Fiji (Chattier, 2013). Despite women and girls' increasing educational attainment and economic participation, they are still expected to meet domestic demands and are often confined to so-called "feminine" employment opportunities. Norms about gender roles will be explored in more detail in the next section.

Some shifts have been observed in norms associated with masculinity (World Bank, 2012), which key informants echoed during qualitative research. In interrogating the role and practices of the "good husband," men note that there has been a shift from husbands being "strict" teachers of moral standards. In more recent conceptions of the "good husband," men are expected to promote family unity and morals while also prioritizing time spent with family and listening to their wives. Key informants affirmed these shifts from what they considered to be the traditional way of doing things, though they acknowledged that norms about the role of men are still persistent, especially in more rural areas. This shift toward reframing norms about masculinity at both the familial and societal level have important implications for gender dynamics and ultimately GBV, over time reducing the effects of entrenched norms about masculine dominance that can lead to GBV.

## **GENDER ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND TIME USE**

The system of norms and beliefs also manifests in gender roles, responsibilities, and time use. Women and girls are expected to contribute significant amounts of time to domestic work, including housework and care, while men and boys are expected to contribute more to market-based or income generating work (Chattier, 2013; FAO & SPC, 2019). Key informants explained that norms about gender roles are strongly related to norms about marriage; wives are expected to dutifully contribute to the functioning of the households, and husbands enforce these roles.

Gender roles in Fiji also influence how women’s and men’s time is used (ADB, 2016). The expectation that women contribute more heavily to household work results in women spending significantly more time than men on work activities each week; when combining time spent on employment and household work, women on average spend approximately 20 more hours per week on work-related activities than men. This is true for women in both paid and unpaid employment, though both men and women in paid employment tend to work more hours. These gender roles and responsibilities tend to be more rigid in rural communities than in urban communities, where key informants note more progress has been made to shift gender norms.

These norms influence women’s participation in employment in the labor force. Though Fiji has made efforts to improve women’s involvement in the labor force, the female labor force participation rate in the country has remained largely stagnant in recent years, hovering between 30% and 40% participation (World Bank, 2020; Fiji Ministry of National Planning, 2010). The most recent estimates of labor force participation, from the 2017 Population and Housing Census, highlight a 40-percentage point gap between the male labor force participation rate (76.4%) and the female labor force participation rate (37.4%) (FBoS, 2018). Family-level responsibilities are the main reason women are not economically active (ADB, 2016).



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“Women, as always, they are not in the frontline [of decision-making], even though they are the ones at the frontline facing the problems, the challenges of natural resource development. When there is a problem, it’s women that face the problem.”

– Key Informant

However, in Fiji and other Pacific communities, formal employment represents only a fraction of economic activity. A focus on formal employment as a means of income generation undermines and hides the informal paid and unpaid labor also existing in communities that allow for empowering livelihoods (McKinnon, Carnegie, Gibson, & Rowland, 2016). Women are much more likely to be involved in informal employment, including subsistence activities that provide for the household. Women are also more likely than men to be unpaid family workers. Among *iTaukei* women, informal employment in markets and trade is also common (ADB, 2016).

Expectations and norms related to gender also result in occupational segregation in both formal and informal employment. There is evidence of occupational segregation existing even in secondary schooling systems, where boys are more likely to enroll in courses on information technology and physics and girls are more likely to enroll in courses on home economics and biology (ADB, 2016). Key informants also noted occupational segregation in informal employment, with women contributing to subsistence farming and the collection of natural resources (e.g., plants, fish) to support families and the communities, while men were more likely to participate in formal, large-scale extractive efforts like logging, mining, or agroforestry. This division of labor was supported and reinforced by perceptions about the appropriateness of work for women or men, including the physical demands of certain types of work like agroforestry, and is apparent across agriculture and fisheries in Fiji, with men taking on more physically strenuous roles and women taking on time-intensive roles (FAO & SPC, 2019).

Women in Fiji, especially *iTaukei* women in rural areas, rely heavily on subsistence work as a key form of economic activity, including the growing of crops, rearing of livestock, and fishing (ADB, 2016). Many of these activities are for household consumption but represent critical contributions women make to the livelihoods of their families and communities. However, a significant proportion of *iTaukei* women are also hired as farmworkers and are often preferred due to the perception that women are physically strong enough to carry out physically demanding work and are more careful and more trustworthy than men. Women are also commonly involved in the production of traditional and cultural products that rely on natural resources (Australian AID, 2013). All of these activities rely heavily on access to land and natural resources.

Women's livelihoods in forests are tied strongly to harvesting plants, including plants used for consumption, medicinal purposes, traditional crafts, and ceremonies. While some women are involved in firewood collection, men are more commonly involved in timber-related activities in forests (e.g., commercial harvesting, clearing for agricultural use). Men are also more likely to be involved in the production and sale of high-revenue forest items, like sandalwood, cash crops, and large livestock (SSV, n.d.). Because of women's role in preserving traditional knowledge about the use of non-timber resources, they are a critical group to engage in forestry conservation work (ADB, 2016; Fiji MoF, 2019c). This need was echoed by several key informants, with the caveat that women should be included in programs but should not be the entire focus of programs as this may cause concern or discord in communities.

## **ACCESS TO AND CONTROL OVER ASSETS AND RESOURCES**

Data indicate no significant gender gaps in present access to education at all levels in Fijian society (ADB, 2016). However, gaps in educational attainment and literacy exist amongst older generations in Fiji as women in those generations faced limited access to education. Women are poorly represented in education and training for technical trades, limiting their access to technical trade related jobs.

Disparities in educational access are heightened amongst rural communities due to limited financial resources. Girls in rural areas may face an increased challenge in school attendance if they are restricted from traveling long distances to school. These gaps in access to education also influence women’s and girls’ abilities to access and control other key assets and resources. Women and girls with disabilities face a great level of restriction in access to and control over resources.

Most land in Fiji is held under customary *iTaukei* systems of land tenure (FAO & SPC, 2019). In this system, *mataqali* (clans) own land and make decisions about its use. Members of the *mataqali* who are registered in the *Vola ni Kawa Bula*, the traditional registry book, are able to access, use, and receive benefits from the land. All women, men, and children born into a *mataqali* are registered in the *Vola ni Kawa Bula*. A majority of members of the *mataqali* (60%) must agree to all decisions made about land use and land agreements. However, when women are married, they are not registered to the *Vola ni Kawa Bula* of their husband’s village; instead, they maintain registration in their home villages. Women and men must seek permission from their *mataqali* to access and use land. This process often serves as a barrier preventing women’s ability to use land for economic purposes.



JAMALBRIZKI LICENSED

“...it’s always the men that make the decisions in terms of natural resource development, even though women are recognized that they have the biggest impact on the development of a resource. But when it comes to decision-making, they are always the last voice or second voice as compared to the husbands, the men.”

– Key Informant

The nature of land inheritance and customary land tenure rights in Fiji also influences women’s abilities to access benefits of land agreements. As key informants noted, women are entitled to inherit land from the villages in which they are registered. However, when women are married, they typically move to the villages of their husbands. Married women, whether *iTaukei*, Indo-Fijian, or a member of another ethnic



group, are not registered in the village into which they marry, so they are not able to access the benefits of land agreements (though, their husbands and children are). Their status also restricts their ability to participate in community-level decisions about land use and land agreements. Additionally, key informants explained that married women who seek to use land in their husbands' *mataqali* face barriers. The community may not perceive that she has a right to lease the land and prevent her from leasing. If married women are able to secure a lease on their husbands' land and invest in the land, they typically lose access to the benefits of their investment after their husbands' death. Key informants described that widowed women are expected to return to their own *mataqali* and leave behind any land they have been leasing or using in their husband's *mataqali* without recompense.

Women also have less access to financial resources and are at higher risk of entering into poverty, especially in more rural areas (Tebtebba, 2019). As of 2017, only 6 in 10 Fijians had a bank account, and a larger proportion of males hold bank accounts than females (68.5% and 56.8%, respectively) (FBoS, 2018). The difference between the proportion of males and females holding bank accounts is increased in rural areas, where fewer Fijians hold bank accounts overall. Only 44.3% of rural females have access to a bank account, compared to 57.8% of rural males. This is a key barrier to women's ability to receive the benefits of lease agreements, as all registered members of the *mataqali* must have their own bank account to receive benefits directly from TLTB. Travel and paperwork serve as key barriers to women seeking to open bank accounts. Further, in preparatory research for the FGRM, it was discovered that women landowners have been asked to sign consent forms after lease agreements have been made and sometimes after payments have been distributed, resulting in a loss of pay (FGRM Assessment and Recommendations of Existing Issues and Structures, 2017).

A limited number of households in Fiji are headed by women (approximately one in ten) (ADB, 2016). Despite trends of access to and control over financial resources, households headed by women tend to have lower rates of poverty than those headed by men. This is largely due to the proportion of households headed by married women who receive a higher level of remittances, likely from migrant partners; households headed by divorced or never-married women tend to have higher rates of poverty.

As key informants described, women's limited access to financial resources also affects their ability to undertake independent economic pursuits. In the case of women who hope to run businesses, they must have a lease from the landowning unit to use the land for that purpose. However, many women must rely on family or their husbands to generate the funds needed to apply for and secure a lease. This aligns with findings from qualitative research in Fiji, which also indicate the need for wives to gain the support of their husbands in undertaking business or income generating activities (Chattier & Tararia, 2014). This expectation is reflective of a need for shared decision-making to ensure a balance within the household, though it appears that men are not held to the same standard of seeking support from their wives for decisions relating to income or land. There may be consequences if women seek to access resources or undertake income generating activities without the approval of their husbands. Women in rural communities in Fiji explained that, if women do make decisions without their husbands' support, they face risk of increased household tension and potential violence (Chattier & Tararia, 2014).

While key informants described some variation in access to land and natural resources, they identified a stark, gendered difference in *control* over land and natural resources. Even though both men and women who are registered to a *mataqali* share equal rights in land ownership, men in Fiji have traditionally held decision-making power over land and natural resources. In *iTaukei* communities, land is held through a

patrilineal process, where each *mataqali* holds the rights to land. While women are able to inherit land rights, men in each *mataqali* more commonly control decisions about how land is used (ADB, 2016). This even remains true when women are able to begin income generating activities on land, which may provide them with additional control over income, but does not provide any decision-making or control over land use (Chattier & Tararia, 2014). Due to existing hierarchical and predominantly patriarchal social systems, women are often not as active in participating in community-level meetings where land decisions are made, and grievances are addressed. However, village leaders may choose to actively seek the opinions of women who are members of the *mataqali* (FGRM Assessment and Recommendations of Existing Issues and Structures, 2017).

The majority of key informants interviewed thought men had more influence than women in land use and conservation in Fiji (see Figure 2a). Informants were mixed in their view on women’s and men’s access to information in their communities; half believed men and women did have equal access, while the other half did not. Similarly, respondents were nearly evenly split in their perspectives about women’s and men’s equal access to resources and opportunities (see Figure 2b). Slightly more key informants believed women and men were not equal in their representation in leadership and decision-making with regards to land use and conservation.

Figure 2a. Key informants’ perspectives on women’s level of involvement and access in land use and conservation (n=17)

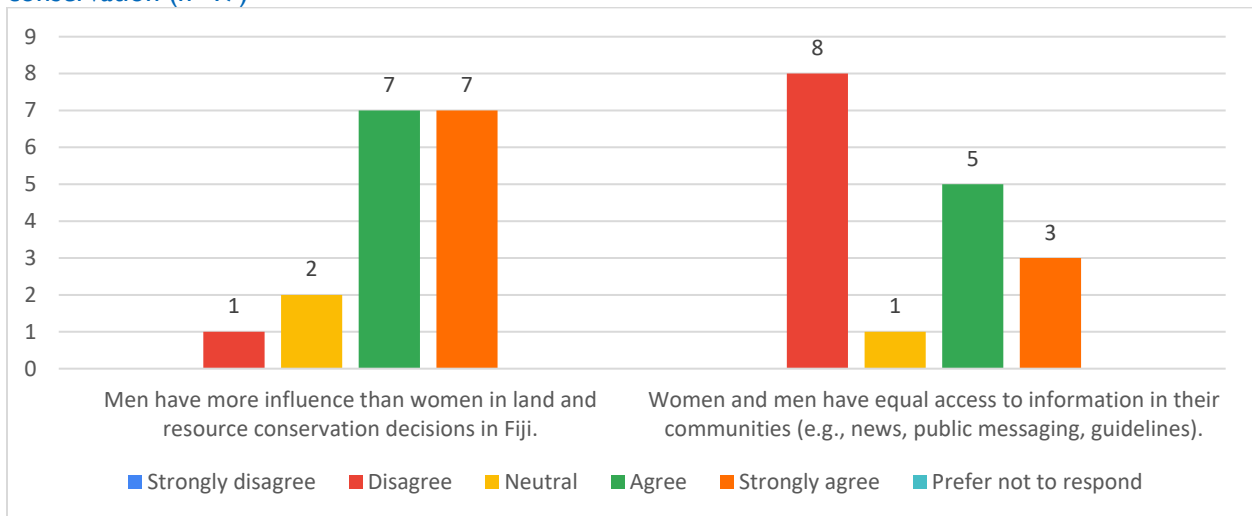
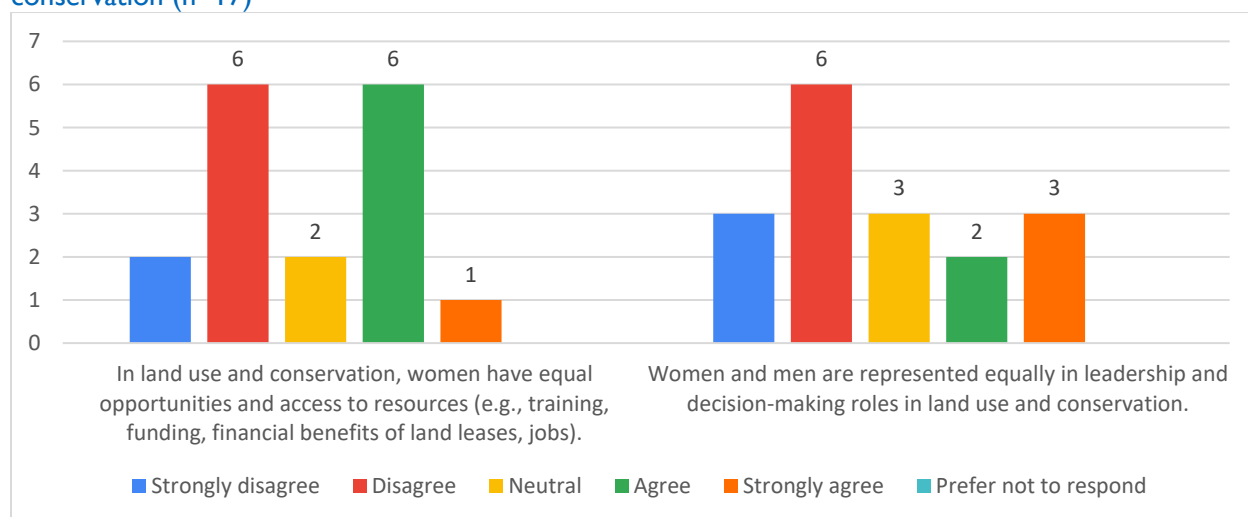


Figure 2b. Key informants' perspectives on women's level of involvement and access in land use and conservation (n=17)



Many conservation efforts, including REDD+, have made a conscious effort to include women in their development and implementation. Key informants explained the common practice of holding separate community consultations with women to ensure their voices are heard. However, at times, this is not practiced or is not practiced in a way that allows for a full understanding of women's experiences. Furthermore, including women in consultations does not always ensure their voices are heard in decision-making, planning, or implementation. Including women in consultations also does not completely overcome barriers women experience in accessing information (Fiji MoF, 2019c). Additionally, consultations may conflict with women's gender roles and responsibilities, preventing them from attending these meetings and voicing their opinions (*FGRM Assessment and Recommendations of Existing Issues and Structures, 2017*).

One key mechanism to provide women with access to benefits from land agreements is establishing women's projects. Key informants noted that, in many areas, women's groups have established women's focused projects. Key informants described women's activities like plant and seedling nurseries, poultry rearing, tourism efforts, honey farming, vanilla growing, and small business development (e.g., village stores or markets). These new activities can give women who are and are not registered members of the *mataqali* access to new avenues for income. These benefits are especially important for women who are married and not registered members of the *mataqali*. However, as key informants described, it is critical to have the support of both men and women in establishing women's projects to ensure the project is accepted. In extreme cases, married women who participated in new income generating projects were subjected to violence if their husband did not approve of the activity.

### PATTERNS OF POWER AND DECISION-MAKING

While women in Fiji have found greater independence in educational and economic opportunities, this has not translated into social power (Chattier, 2013). This may be due in part to traditional structures of leadership and decision-making in Fiji, in which men have had more access to both formal and informal leadership and decision-making roles and positions.

## FORMAL SYSTEMS

In formal systems, women hold very few leadership positions, though the GoF has set goals and targets for women's inclusion in leadership and decision-making across ministries. Overall, women make up only one-third of legislators, senior officials, and managers (ADB, 2016). Public perceptions of women's leadership tend to indicate a preference for gender equity. Fijians also recognize that women face more barriers in attaining leadership positions, including limited educational opportunities and cultural barriers (Dumarū & Pene, 2014). In education systems, women hold few leadership positions, and even fewer women are in positions of power in rural schools (ADB, 2016). However, key informants noted shifts in women's representation in formal systems. For example, despite persisting norms about women's role in leadership, one-fifth of Members of Parliament in Fiji are now women, representing an increase from 14% of representation in 2014 (*Fiji Country Profile*, n.d.; Chatter, 2015).

## CUSTOMARY / TRADITIONAL SYSTEMS

Within traditional systems, there are even greater barriers to women's ability to access power and influence decision-making for themselves and at the community level. Key informants consistently cited the "hierarchical" and "patriarchal" leadership structures in villages as being traditionally dominated by men in leadership roles and in decision-making. Men in families are expected to be the "public voice" of the family in community meetings and decision-making (FAO & SPC, 2019).

However, there have been instances of women holding high-level leadership positions in traditional *iTaukei* structures. Data indicate that, in some provinces, women hold up to 17% of positions as village chief or head of LoUs in *iTaukei* communities, though the quality of data about these positions is questioned (ADB, 2016). A key informant described instances of women holding high-level leadership positions, but also noted the ability of village-level committees, also dominated by men, to contradict or undermine the decisions of women in these positions.

The practice of patrilocality can also prevent women from being actively involved in decisions made about land use in their own *mataqali* (Tebtebba, 2019). Key informants noted that married women may express their opinions through male family members still residing in their village, and in some cases these male family members will solicit their opinions. As married women are still registered members of their own *mataqali*, their consent must be sought when entering into new agreements to reach the 60% threshold. However, married women often do not travel back to participate in consultations or discussions relating to new agreements or projects, which may leave them uninformed about the nature of the agreements, including benefits. The MoF has undertaken partnerships with SSV to help address these concerns and educate women on their land rights (Forest Carbon Partnership Facility, 2014). Informants noted that community members, and particularly women, need multiple consultations and awareness raising / educational events to understand their land rights – and particularly with regard to REDD+ or similar agreements, which they may believe to understand in initial educational events but find later that they in fact do not understand.

Women may have more power and influence in decision-making in the private sphere. Several key informants noted that women may exert power and influence in communities in the household by influencing the opinions of their husbands or male family members. A key informant had explored this pattern of behavior in research in rural communities, noting that both men and women acknowledged the ability of wives to shape the opinions of their husbands, who then carry those opinions into open, community dialogues. This perspective was echoed in the experiences of other key informants across

topical areas. However, women must also be careful in how they exert power in the private sphere; key informants noted that, if community members become aware a man is being influenced by his wife, especially if he holds a position of power, the community may begin to mistrust his decisions or criticize his choices. In extreme cases, this has even led to intimate partner violence if a man's independence or decision-making authority is questioned in the community.

Women have also identified other avenues or mechanisms through which their voices can be heard in public settings. Key informants explained that individual or groups of women may turn to using proxies to express their ideas or concerns at the community level. Women are aware of the complex social structures of society and are able to navigate and understand who to engage to speak on their behalf. Women's groups are a critical forum for women in *iTaukei* communities to come together and discuss their concerns. Leaders and representatives of women's groups, who often hold high social status or chiefly status, can be designated to speak in public meetings on behalf of women to raise their issues. In addition to influencing their husbands' decision-making, women may also engage their husbands to express their unique complaints or desires if the husband is in agreement on the issue. Women may even pressure their husbands to broach the issue in public or private meetings.

Yet, there also appears to be an emerging desire for these norms and practices to shift to construct more equitable patterns of power and decision-making (McKinnon et al., 2016). There is recognition amongst both women and men that men have traditionally not valued the contributions of women and girls, or dedicated time or energy to the household domain. Recent qualitative research in communities in Fiji and the Solomon Islands has revealed that there is social value placed on collaborative, balanced decision-making between men and women. This aspirational desire for balance does not seek to place women and men in the same roles or grant them the same power, but instead focuses on respecting and honoring contributions despite gendered differences in roles or perspectives.



CSO Alliance representatives from the Fiji Women's Rights Movement, FWCC, and FRIEND Fiji are tackling inequalities, sexual exploitation, and VAWG issues in Fiji.

Fiji Village

## Gender-based Violence in Fiji

The FWCC undertook Fiji's only national-level study, *Somebody's Life, Everybody's Business* (2013), of GBV prevalence between 2010 and 2011 (published in 2013) and have maintained a database for cases of GBV that they receive, including attempted suicide, since 1984 (FWCC, 2013; *Fiji Women's Crisis Centre Statistics*, 2020). The national survey focused on women's experience of GBV and did not include data relating to men's or other genders' experience of GBV. The lifetime prevalence of physical and sexual violence amongst women in Fiji is 71%, regardless of perpetrator. In Fiji, intimate partners are the most common perpetrators of GBV (ADB, 2016). The FWCC survey found that 64% of women who have been in an intimate relationship had experienced physical or sexual violence from their partner in their lifetime; this is more than double the global lifetime prevalence of physical and sexual violence (FWCC, 2013). One-quarter of women were currently experiencing physical or sexual violence from intimate partner. The prevalence of extreme physical violence (e.g., choking, burning, threatened use or actual use of a weapon) was strikingly high at 44%. The prevalence of intimate partner violence, including extreme violence, is higher in rural areas and amongst *iTaukei* women. Key informants also noted recent spikes in levels of extreme violence, including femicide<sup>10</sup>, in recent years.

Sexual and physical violence from non-partners are less common in Fiji, but still prevalent; around one-third of women and girls have experienced physical or sexual violence from someone other than a partner since age 15 (FWCC, 2013). In cases of non-partner physical and sexual violence, the perpetrator is most often known to the survivor. Non-partner perpetrators of physical and sexual violence are most often male family members, teachers, and female family members.

The lifetime prevalence of emotional violence from a partner was 58% (FWCC, 2013). Control from partners is another common form of GBV, with 69% of women indicating that their partner had used at least one method of control. Around four in ten women are required to seek permission from their partner to seek health services, and just over half of women (57%) must alert their husbands to their whereabouts at all times. Levels of control of women's mobility are even higher in rural areas.

<sup>10</sup> It is worth noting that this was not noted in other documents accessible to the GBV/FRGM+ Team during the course of desk review.

**NOT ONLY IS VIOLENCE COMMON IN FIJI**, community sanctioned violence also appears to be acceptable in Fijian society, where 43% of women believe that husbands are justified to use physical violence against their wives in at least one of seven given situations (FWCC, 2013). Key informants consistently noted both the presence and acceptance of mild levels of violence in communities amongst people of all ages and genders. However, a recent survey completed amongst employed men and women in three workplaces in Fiji found low levels of acceptance of violence (Lockley & Hameed, 2019). The majority of women (92%) thought violence was unacceptable, while a lower proportion of men though violence was unacceptable (84%). This could indicate shifting norms, or could indicate variation based on location, education, or employment status.



RAFAEL BEN-ARI LICENSED

“We find that key barriers [to reporting violence] include not knowing where to go, not having the information, the remoteness of location – which also creates barriers – the costliness of transport to the centers that provide the services, the complexity of filling in the forms and going into various offices, the stigma and discrimination in communities, and, somewhat, the role of the police also comes into effect.”

– Key Informant

Women have identified jealousy, asserting dominance or control, disobedience, and alcohol use as factors contributing to the perpetration of violence (ADB, 2016). Alcohol and drug use were commonly cited as contributing factors to violence in key informant interviews. Inequitable gender norms also contribute to the perpetration of violence (FWCC, 2013). Many women believe “good wives” should obey their husbands (60%), and one-third of women believe wives are obligated to provide sex to their husbands. There also appears to be widespread beliefs that husbands must demonstrate their ability to control their wives. These same factors are often used to justify the perpetration of violence.

GBV often goes unreported due to these high levels of acceptance, and there is a wide-spread belief amongst women that people outside the family should not intervene if a husband mistreats his wife (ADB, 2016; FWCC, 2013). Some evidence from key informants suggests that extreme forms of physical or sexual violence, particularly when perpetrated by a stranger, are becoming increasingly less acceptable, especially in urban areas. Beliefs about the acceptability of violence discourage women from reporting violence formally and from discussing violence. This necessarily affects the quality of any data related to GBV, whether collected through surveys or official crime statistics. GBV survivors may be unwilling to answer survey questions truthfully due to shame or fear. Official reports on cases filed and pursued by law enforcement officials or the judicial system will also under-represent the actual incidence of GBV. Nonetheless, the data available on GBV provide important insight into the national context, though it likely under-represents the extent of GBV prevalence and incidence.

Most commonly, women who experience GBV do not seek out support services (FWCC, 2013). Fear of stigma, shame, and norms around obedience often discourage women from disclosing violence or seeking support for violence. Only half of women (53%) who had experienced GBV had ever told anyone about their experience of violence. Women most commonly speak with friends or family members, and only one in four (24%) of women have sought support from a formal agency or authority. In those cases, women most frequently access health and police services. *iTaukei* women are less likely than Indo-Fijian women to share their experience of violence with immediate family members (though they do often disclose their experience to extended family), and most often seek out support from health services or religious leaders. Key informants confirmed that women rarely share experience of GBV with others but identified several places where women may seek support after they experience GBV: such as, women's groups, pastors, pastors' wives, friends, relatives, schoolteachers, and the village nurse. Additionally, in a recent workplace survey on violence, there was a perception that accessing GBV services is challenging due to limited capacity and availability or confusing referral systems (Lockley & Hameed, 2019).

## EXISTING COMPLAINT AND RESOLUTION SYSTEMS IN FIJI

In order to understand how GBV is identified, understood, and reported (or not) it is important to understand that Fiji operates within a dual system of governance, a non-legal or customary structure, where most disputes are resolved within *iTaukei* communities, and a formalized legal structure that resolves grievances prior to a use of a judicial system/court to determine resolution. This bifurcation has existed in relative harmony, where it is often preferred and even encouraged by institutions and community members to resolve disputes at the customary-level. This section provides an overview of both systems;<sup>11</sup> their processes for grievance redress; and how they handle potential cases of violence and GBV. It is important to note that these mechanisms of reporting are not the only avenues through which GBV survivors may choose to report or address instances of GBV (see ADR below) and that the GBV/FGRM+ is not placing judgement/value on these systems – merely presenting their purpose, process, and how they currently are handling GBV cases. Additional information on other methods for GBV response and referral can be found in the next section.

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<sup>11</sup> More detailed information of the two systems of governance can be found in the *FGRM Study and Analysis: Assessment and Recommendations of Existing Issues and Structures*, World Bank and Government of Fiji, February 2018.



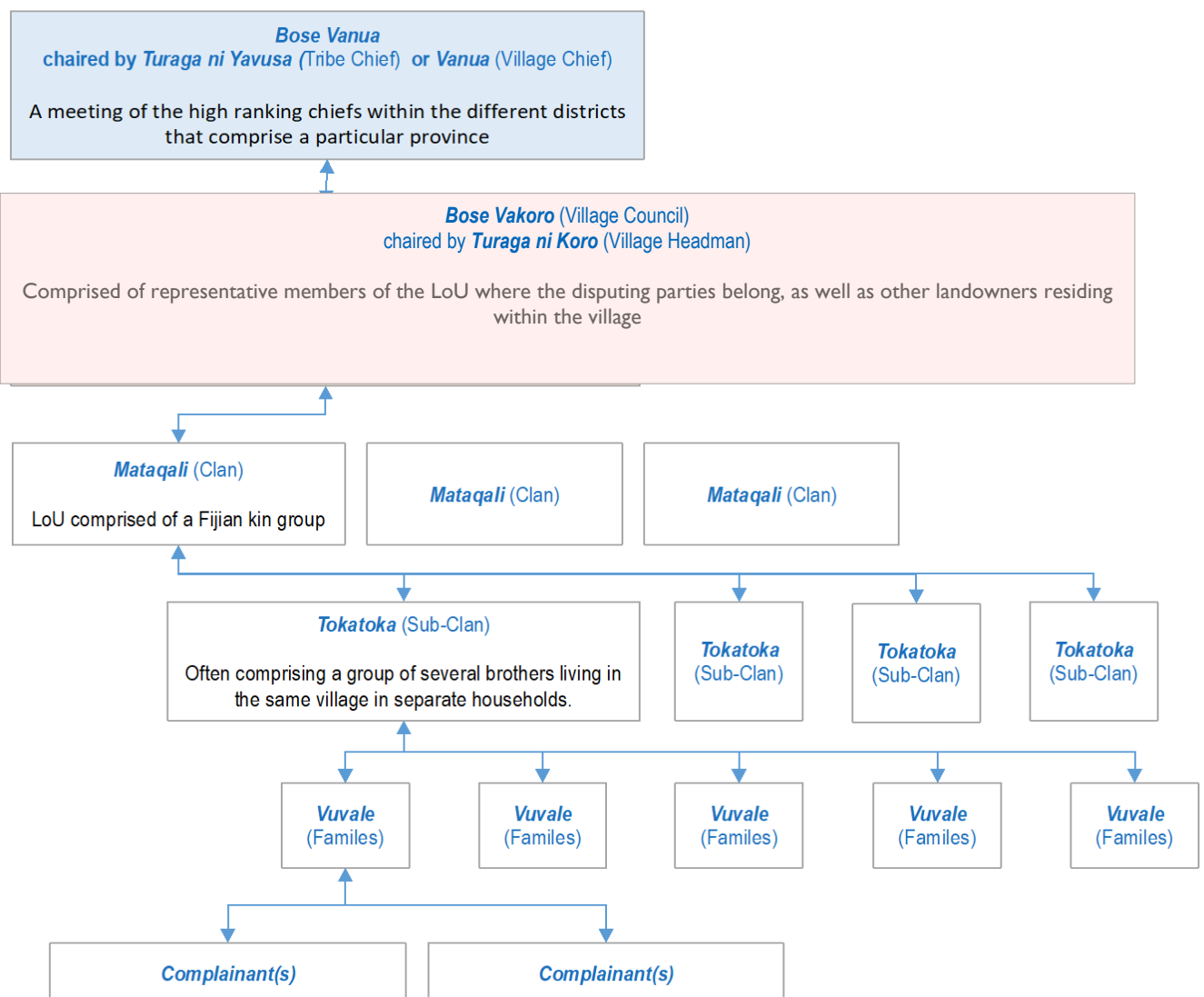
## CUSTOMARY SYSTEM

The customary system operates outside of legal tenure and is how many disputes are handled by *iTaukei*. This system capitalizes on traditional means of conflict resolution that are mostly verbal and are decided under leadership of the Village Headman or Chief. There is a higher value placed on maintenance of good relationships amongst villagers and therefore decisions receive greater support and buy-in.

### PROCESS

Disputes move through a traditional hierarchy and are decided upon by village leaders (see Figure 3). Anyone is allowed to voice a grievance in the village, including women, youth, and other vulnerable peoples. Informal procedures for dispute and resolution and the implementation of decisions are well known to villagers and are the most common and preferred way to handle conflict in Fiji. According to community members the grievance system is almost completely undocumented and is based on an oral tradition for dispute resolution.

Figure 3. Customary System



Once a complaint is made the first step is to resolve the issue at the *Vuvale* (Family), *Tokatoka* (Sub-Clan), and *Mataqali* (Clan) levels, where the leader of each social body decides upon the outcome after talking to the injured parties and reviewing the complaint (FGRM Assessment and Recommendations of Existing Issues and Structures, 2017). Should the dispute remain unresolved (either because the decision is seen as unsatisfactory to the majority or because it is perceived as biased) then the dispute is elevated to the *Bose Vakoro* (Village Council), which is chaired by the *Turaga ni Koro* (Village Headman). The Village Council is comprised of representatives of all members of the LoU where the disputing parties belong, as well as other landowners residing within the village and the Village Council makes a decision. The Village Headman can resolve the issue independently or convene the council to resolve the dispute. To circumvent doubt and to negate allegations of bias (perceived or actual) it is often the case that the Village Headman seeks the decision of the Village Council to show a wider basis of consideration ensuring community participation at the same time fostering community reception to the decision.

### HANDLING OF GBV COMPLAINTS

**FIJIANS WHO EXPERIENCE GBV, ESPECIALLY WOMEN, RARELY DISCLOSE THE VIOLENCE** to anyone, including family or friends. Complaints are also rarely made; however, if complaints are made, they are often taken to customary leadership for resolution. Key informants and community members explained that if someone experienced violence and wanted to report it, they would need to bring the issue directly to the *Turaga ni Koro* (Village Headman). Thus GBV, when disclosed, elevates above the sub-clan and clan level discussion/resolution noted above and is brought directly to the *Turaga ni Koro*. The instance of violence would be addressed by bringing together the complainant, the perpetrator, and their families to discuss and agree to reconcile and grant forgiveness.



RAFAEL BEN-ARI LICENSED

#### *iTaukei Bulubulu*

##### **Traditional process of reconciliation in *iTaukei* communities**

In practice, *bulubulu* ceremonies are held to allow perpetrators or “wrongdoers” to seek reconciliation and forgiveness for their wrongdoing (ICAAD, 2013). Often, gifts and compensation are exchanged, and forgiveness is sought from an elder male family member, as opposed to the person who experienced the wrongdoing. Women’s rights advocates in Fiji argue that *bulubulu* is not an appropriate avenue to address instances of GBV or other forms of violence. Further, *bulubulu* was not traditionally used to resolve cases of GBV in communities; instead, sexual violence was punishable by death (this is no longer the case). However, in recent decades, perpetrators of GBV have begun utilizing *bulubulu* to avoid facing punishment from the formal legal system.

Community respondents only discussed *bulubulu* indirectly, and if travel permits, the GBV/FGRM+ Team hopes to better understand this process through in-person discussions. This will be important to understand the potential acceptability of the FGRM+ to receive cases related to GBV and help articulate its use (or other more formal reporting mechanisms) to report on GBV.

The customary system also interacts with formal systems for reporting and responding to GBV. Traditional leaders exert power over police officers in rural communities, often causing police officers to avoid pursuing formal approaches to resolve cases of GBV for fear of conflict (ADB, 2016). Key informants and community members explained that instances of violence would only be escalated from the customary system to the formal system (law enforcement officials) if community-level reconciliation was unsuccessful, if the offense was considered to be “severe,” or if the offense was repeated. However, key informants did note that traditional leadership can sometimes rely on police to visit the village and raise awareness about violence in communities.

### Indo-Fijian

Indo-Fijians are not landowners, thus they were not a population of focus in this Analysis, however they can be involved in disputes as the result of land leasing and it is important to note that in these instances grievances and disputes are addressed differently. Indo-Fijian communities have their own structured mechanism for resolving issues pertaining to land-use or livelihood, with an expressed a preference for resolving issues informally where possible. If the land issues or land disputes are not able to be resolved internally the police department is consulted and, depending on the issue, the matter is referred to the appropriate government line ministry. The GBV/FGRM+ Team did not conduct further research on how issues of GBV were/are handled within the community, as they are not a stakeholder group for REDD+.

## ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanisms in Fiji function as a second tier to dispute resolution, exercised as an option if disputes are not resolved at the informal-level and/or may be the proposed course of action to avoid the more costly and time intensive court system. ADRs can include mitigation, arbitration, conciliation, or some combination of the different approaches. These ADRs exist inside and outside of government line agencies through tribunals, inside government ministries as mediation units, and in the informal sector as a method to create better-informed decisions that may require a more complex technical understanding (e.g., requiring expert knowledge of human rights, land, resource, or environmental law).

## PROCESS

Within Fiji there does not seem to be a consistent application of ADR types across jurisdictions, instead there is a variety of approaches used. For example, facilitation and mediation is used in the DBFCC through the partnership the Block has with Live & Learn. In this capacity Live & Learn has engaged in disputes at the informal-level (primarily as a mediating force for disputes within the Block; secondarily as a facilitator for market-based agreements and concessions) and to a lesser extent at the formal-level as a facilitator and negotiator for the terms of their conservation lease with *iTaukei* Land Trust Board (TLTB)<sup>12</sup>. Live & Learn, under the Nakau Programme, also has a GRM<sup>13</sup> in place that is meant to be used to handle issues and disputes as it may arise during their REDD+ implementor-lead program in Drawa.

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<sup>12</sup> TLTB is the custodian of *iTaukei* land in Fiji. Almost 90% of land in Fiji is customary owned. The Board provides guidance on the use of *iTaukei* land and represents the interests of *iTaukei* landowners on land dealings.

<sup>13</sup> [http://www.nakau.org/uploads/5/2/2/5/52251233/nakau\\_methodology\\_framework\\_d2.1\\_v1.1\\_201540513v1b.pdf](http://www.nakau.org/uploads/5/2/2/5/52251233/nakau_methodology_framework_d2.1_v1.1_201540513v1b.pdf)

## HANDLING OF GBV COMPLAINTS

While Live & Learn does have a GRM in place, key informants interviewed and participants of the FGD under the Analysis were unaware of its process, ability to handle any disputes, or use. Informants were also not aware of GBV in relationship to the project, nor aware of any GBV in Drawa, whether related to land or not. Based on our interviews, the GBV/FGRM+ Team's understanding is that the Live & Learn GRM has not received any disputes (including disputes related to GBV) so the Team is not able to detail the process or speak to how the GRM would handle cases of GBV.

## FORMAL SYSTEM

The formal legal system in Fiji is comprised of a four-tier judicial system, which holds jurisdiction over matters concerning formal laws in Fiji (*Pacific Courts – Fiji Islands, n.d.*). The lowest level are Magistrates' Courts, which cover civil proceedings and criminal proceedings that carry sentences of less than 10 years or fines of less than 150 penalty units – Magistrates may refer any case to High Court. Notably, while Magistrates' Courts have fixed locations, key informants explained that territorial Magistrates travel approximately one time per month to increase access to the courts to hear cases in remote locations. High Courts also hear civil and criminal proceedings carrying higher penalties. Both Courts can hear cases of domestic violence and sexual violence, depending on the severity of the acts (*Rape & Sexual Assault, n.d.*; Republic of Fiji Islands, 2009b). The nation's appellate courts are the Court of Appeals and Supreme Court, which hear both criminal and civil cases; the Court of Appeals may hear cases referred from the High Court, and the Supreme Court hears cases referred from the Court of Appeals (*Pacific Courts – Fiji Islands, n.d.*). Key informants explained that, as many land issues in Fiji occur under customary law, the formal legal system is not able to hear or decide on these cases.

## PROCESS

Trends in crime statistics, reporting, and court cases demonstrate the low number of GBV cases reported and filed in Fiji. The most recent sex-disaggregated crime statistics from Fiji, covering the period 2009 to 2014, do not capture incidents of GBV (FBoS, 2015). The statistics do present information on rape and attempted rape and defilement. Between 2009 and 2014, there were more than 200 reported cases of rape or attempted rape per year, with females representing the majority of victims.<sup>14</sup> The number of reported rape or attempted rape cases reached a peak in 2012 (444 cases) and, also in that year, males represented a high proportion of victims (24%). During the same period, there were between 100 and 200 cases of defilement (ages 16 and under).

In addition to crime statistics, the Fiji Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP) has recently begun publishing statistics on sexual violence cases pursued (ODPP, 2020). In 2019, 271 people were charged in the High Court with perpetrating acts of sexual violence. All charged perpetrators were male, and most victims were female (256 out of 269). In 107 of the cases, the violence took place in a domestic relationship or was perpetrated by someone known to the victim, following similar patterns to the FWCC GBV prevalence survey.

The Fiji Women's Rights Movement (FWRM), an NGO focused on protecting and promoting women's rights, completed an analysis of the High Court's decisions on rape cases heard or decided in 2019

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<sup>14</sup> While this analysis uses the term "survivor" in reference to those who have experienced violence, the term "victim" is used in reports of crime statistics and legal cases. This terminology has been preserved from the source documents.

(FWRM, 2020). The High Court of Fiji made decisions in 101 cases of rape in 2019. The average time between the perpetration of violence and a court decision was 2.7 years. In decided cases all perpetrators were male, and all victims were female. In two-thirds of cases, the perpetrator was known to the victim prior to the incident. Of the 101 cases, the court handed down 62 guilty verdicts on the charge of rape, with remaining cases resulting in guilty verdicts for lesser charges (7) or acquittals (32).

FWCC has also collected and published data on the *new* cases of GBV received in the FWCC system between 1984 and 2020 (*Fiji Women's Crisis Centre Statistics, 2020*). This does not constitute data on prevalence of GBV, nor does it represent cases of GBV received in the legal system. Between 2015 and 2019, FWCC received between 800 and 1000 new cases of GBV per year. Domestic violence represents at least half of cases received by FWCC in that time period. FWCC does not provide a definition for domestic violence or any of the other categories of cases it receives.

### HANDLING OF GBV COMPLAINTS

Though formal systems exist to provide protections for survivors of GBV, they are very rarely used due to stigma, fear of retribution, and limited awareness (ADB, 2016). Data from the FWRM in Fiji indicates that women wait on average 868 days from onset of violence before ever pursuing support from the legal system or law enforcement (FWRM, 2017).

Awareness of formal legal systems is especially limited in rural communities amongst both community members and police officers (ADB, 2016). This likely contributes to low levels of utilization. GBV survivors in rural areas face the additional challenge of access to formal systems. Magistrate Courts, who provide much of the legal response for cases of GBV, are not located in rural areas. To address this, magistrate courts do allow some support services, like restraining orders, to be delivered over the phone, but GBV survivors in rural communities rarely use this option.

Activists in Fiji have also identified pervasive bias against GBV survivors in the legal system amongst judges, lawyers, and police officials (ADB, 2016). Traditional practices from the customary system, including *bulubulu*, have been seen to influence law enforcement officials and judges in Fiji to pursue reconciliation in cases of GBV (ICAAD, 2013). Not only has informal reconciliation been used to avoid formal legal charges, it has also been cited as a mitigating factor to allow judges to administer reduced punishments for GBV. For example, in an analysis of 55 cases of domestic violence or sexual assault between 1977 and 2013, judges provided reduced sentencing because the perpetrator had pursued traditional reconciliation. The GoF has undertaken recent efforts to avoid the undue influence of reconciliation in cases of GBV. The *Domestic Violence Decree 2009* and the *Criminal Procedure Decree 2009*, which both provide clarification that judges should not rely on informal reconciliation in sentencing or promote formal reconciliation if it is not in the best interest of the complainant, has instigated a decrease in judge's reliance on reconciliation as a mitigating factor (Republic of Fiji Islands, 2009b, 2009c). The "No Drop Policy" of the Fiji Police Force is also intended to prevent police officers and prosecutors from dropping cases of GBV for any reason, including reconciliation (FWRM, 2017). Further, guidance from the recent GBV service delivery protocols instructs that, if reconciliation is pursued in a court setting, it should be done in the best interest of the survivor, which is in alignment with the *Criminal Procedure Decree 2009* (Fiji MoWCPA, 2018). The respondents did not report whether they felt that this was in fact the result.

**THE POLICE FORCE IS TASKED WITH ENFORCING LAWS RELATING TO GBV.** However, norms about GBV are deeply entrenched amongst police officers, which affects their work. Only a limited number of police officers in family and sexual violence units are trained on basic counseling skills (Australia DFAT, 2017). One-fifth of police officers are women, and very few hold positions of power, which may lead to mistrust amongst women seeking to report violence (ADB, 2016). A key informant voiced concerns with the ability of police officers to protect confidential information, especially information relating to sexual violence. Furthermore, the “No Drop Policy,” which requires law enforcement officials to pursue all cases of GBV reported, may have unintended consequences within the police force. Information from key informants indicates that police officers may use the terms of the “No Drop Policy” to discourage women from making final complaints, citing the consequences to the perpetrator if the case were to move forward formally. Yet, some key informants thought the police were the best option for women to report violence.

The *Fiji National Service Delivery Protocol for Responding to Cases of Gender Based Violence* provide guidance on mandatory reporting to the police for service providers who become aware of cases of violence against both children and adults (MoWCPA, 2018). Mandatory reporting is required in instances where a child is the survivor of violence, if a child is likely to be affected by the violence, if the survivor is at risk of harming themselves or others, if the survivor is in severe or immediate danger, if the survivor requires urgent or emergency medical care (e.g., if the survivor is unconscious), or if a service provider is mandated by law to testify in the court system. If none of these circumstances are present, service providers are not required to report GBV cases to the police and may only do so with the informed consent of the survivor. Pathways for referral for cases of child abuse follow unique pathways outlined in the *Child Welfare Act 2010*.

## **SYSTEMS IN PLACE FOR GBV RESPONSE AND REFERRAL**

As of 2010, Fiji had made little progress toward providing coordinated response for GBV survivors (UNFPA Asia and the Pacific Regional Office, 2010). However, recent developments have begun to strengthen the systems, and there is a complex multisectoral landscape providing services for GBV response and referral in Fiji. In 2018, key stakeholders came together to develop the *Fiji National Service Delivery Protocol for Responding to Cases of Gender Based Violence*, which presents standard operating procedures to provide a coordinated, interagency response to GBV, linking together government services, NGOs, and CSOs (Fiji MoWCPA, 2018). The protocol covers agencies providing social, police, health, and legal/justice services to GBV survivors and build upon pre-existing protocols, laws, and policies relating to gender and GBV. The protocol establishes minimum standards for care and service provision, referral pathways, descriptions of key roles of multisectoral response agencies, best practices for informed consent and confidentiality, and standards for inclusive response and support practices. The survivor-centered approach outlined in the protocol provides definitions and standards for key principles for all agencies involved in service provision: safety, empowerment, respect, confidentiality, non-discrimination, empathy, and maintaining the best interest of children.

The *Fiji National Service Delivery Protocol for Responding to Cases of Gender Based Violence* recognizes the right of GBV survivors to report to whomever they choose and puts into place necessary referral processes if the survivor consents to referral (Fiji MoWCPA, 2018). The referral pathway map in the

protocol (see Figure 4) describes the procedures organizations and agencies should follow in making referrals to other services.<sup>15</sup>

Figure 4. Fiji national response pathway for cases of gender-based violence (Fiji MoWCPA, 2018)

**FIJI NATIONAL RESPONSE PATHWAY FOR CASES OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE**

FIVE IMMEDIATE ACTIONS: Responding to cases of gender-based violence.

1. **Provide immediate emotional support.** Comfort and tell survivor it is not her fault, Believe her.
2. **Provide a safe environment.** If a woman is with her partner, and it is a domestic violence/intimate partner case, talk to her alone. Prioritize her safety and security always.
3. **Be attentive and listen carefully.** Give the person time to say what they need to say.
4. **Share information** about what you can do to help her: For example, if you are the police, explain what you can do, etc.
5. **Refer the survivor** to trained professionals as in the GBV referral guidelines below.

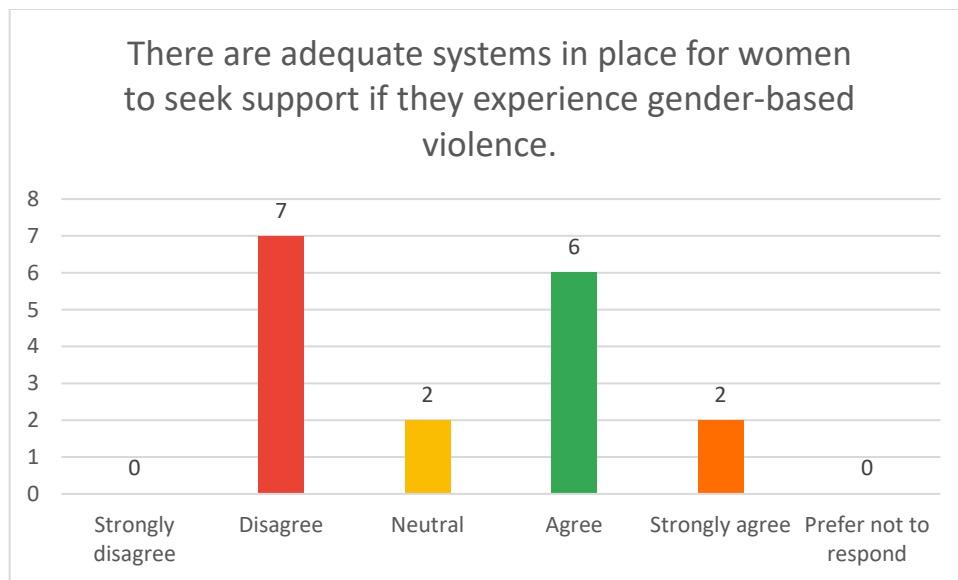
Referral Guidelines Based on Type of Case and age			
ADULT - Sexual Violence (rape, sexual assault)	ADULT - Physical Violence (Domestic Violence, Intimate Partner Violence)	CHILD - Sexual/Physical (child sexual abuse, incest, child neglect and/or physical abuse)	OTHER TYPES Sexual harassment (non-physical), DV that is non-physical or sexual, other)
<p><b>Follow these steps for referral:</b></p> <p><b>Step 1: Assess the immediate needs</b> and obtain informed consent for referrals to health, counselling, police, shelter, and/or legal aid.</p> <p>***If this is case of sexual violence within 5 days (of the assault) an immediate referral for health care is needed.</p> <p>***If a case is reported first to police, health, legal aid providers, offer a referral to a GBV counselling agency.</p> <p><b>Step 2:</b> Make plans for referral and accompaniment based on survivor wishes.</p> <p><b>Step 3:</b> Explain/ plan for/or deliver any services and actions that you are responsible for.</p> <p><b>Step 4:</b> Conduct any follow up required.</p>	<p><b>Follow these steps for referral:</b></p> <p><b>Step 1: Assess the immediate needs</b> and obtain informed consent for referrals to health, counselling, police, shelter and /or legal aid. If you do not know who to refer to call 1560.</p> <p>***If the survivor is injured, a medical referral should take priority</p> <p>***If a case is reported first to police, health or legal aid, make a referral to GBV counselling agency.</p> <p><b>Step 2:</b> Make plans for referral and accompaniment based on survivor wishes.</p> <p><b>Step 3:</b> Explain/ plan for/or deliver any services and actions that you are responsible for. (For example, DVRO).</p> <p><b>Step 4:</b> Conduct any follow up required.</p>	<p><b>Follow these steps for referral:</b></p> <p><b>Step 1: Assess immediate needs and refer to social welfare services.</b> if you do not know who to refer to call 1325</p> <p>***If this is case of sexual violence within 5 days make a simultaneous, immediate referral for health care.</p> <p><b>Step 2:</b> Obtain consent from a legal guardian for an immediate referral for clinical care for sexual/ physical violence.</p> <p><b>Step 3:</b> Make a referral to a GBV counselling service provider for emotional support, advocacy throughout care and treatment.</p> <p><b>Step 4:</b> Explain/ plan for/or deliver any services and actions that you are responsible for in terms of responding to the case.</p>	<p><b>Follow these steps for referral:</b></p> <p><b>Step 1:</b> Assess the immediate needs, with a focus on need for referral to a GBV counselling agency.</p> <p><b>Step 2:</b> Obtain informed consent to make referrals or take any action needed to ensure the survivors safety.</p> <p><b>Step 3:</b> Explain/ plan for/or deliver any services and actions that you are responsible for in terms of responding to the case.</p> <p>Give the survivor as much information as you have about what services are available, where she can get help.</p>

<sup>15</sup> A list of organizations and agencies involved in GBV response and support and details the types of service provided in Attachment 3 – Organizations and Agencies Involved in GBV Response and Support.

Many of the key services available to GBV survivors are not widely available across the many islands of Fiji or in rural areas. It is well-known that health centers in rural areas may not be able to offer comprehensive care for sexual assault (ADB, 2016). Rural *iTaukei* communities are especially impacted by limited number of services and lack of qualified health providers. Some providers, including FWCC and Medical Services Pacific (MSP), have begun offering mobile counseling and medical care, and there are several phone-based counseling options available (Fiji MoWCPA, 2018; *Counselling and Support*, n.d.). While these efforts increase the accessibility of psychosocial support for GBV survivors in rural areas, there may still be barriers to access. GBV survivors may still have to travel to mobile clinic locations, which may not be possible due to financial, time, and permission constraints. Phone counselling requires the financial resources to obtain and maintain a phone and access network coverage, which is still weak in some rural and remote areas. Key informants expressed that NGOs and the Government of Fiji have increase publicity for GBV hotlines during the COVID-19 pandemic, and they also recounted anecdotal evidence in increase in the use of these hotlines during the pandemic.

Though the development and the adoption of the Service Delivery Protocols represent an important step toward the provision of coordinated, survivor-centered care and response, the protocols have yet to be institutionalized across Fiji. As key informants noted, ongoing training efforts are being undertaken for providers across sectors, but there is still work needed to ensure all providers are aware of and actively using the protocol. As key informants explained, a key weakness of the referral pathways as they exist is that they do not provide guidance for how to use the pathways in the absence of services. Current work is being undertaken to map services at a more local and divisional level to identify the presence of services. Additional efforts will be needed to design referral pathways for islands or areas that lack services in different sectors to determine how to provide robust, holistic support to GBV survivors. Overall, key informants’ responses were mixed when determining the adequacy of GBV support services (see *Figure 5*).

Figure 5. Key informants’ perspectives on GBV support services (n=17)







# Gender-based Risk, Gender-based Violence, and REDD+

After examining in-depth the complex and interlinked relationship between gender and the environment around land rights, resource rights, and conservation, the GBV/FGRM+ Team probed deeper into how and what GBR are present in existing REDD+ related activities and the potential for future GBR and GBV-related risk by examining drivers of conflict. This section builds on the previous findings of the *Situational Assessment* and integrates information from a community-level FGD, community representatives, and key informants familiar with REDD+ project sites and issues in land use and conservation and gender.

“Planting seedlings is shared between women and men. However, adult men including young men usually plant non timber, native and exotic timber sapling in the deep forest while women assist in planting fruits trees and yasi around and outside village boundaries. Timber extraction is traditionally men’s work that may happen once or twice a year especially when building new houses. Men are compelled to visit the forest on these occasions and also when collecting medicinal plants.”

## EXISTING REDD+ RELATED GRIEVANCES

The previous *FGRM Study and Analysis* conducted a thorough review and assessment of existing grievances related to REDD+ during the readiness phase of the program (2018). Under the GBV/FGRM+ Activity, the Team revisited REDD+ sites to reassess REDD+ related risks and grievances, marking new cases and trends since 2018.

## GRIEVANCES IDENTIFIED DURING THE SITUATIONAL ASSESSMENT

Under the *Situational Assessment*, the GBV/FGRM+ Team identified a few complaints regarding the delay of benefits from REDD+, where only one was elevated to the MoF REDD+ Coordinator by a Forest Officer from Emalu (although it was not recorded in writing or resolved through any formal means). The GBV/FGRM+ Team sought to confirm the findings about existing REDD+ related grievances in active REDD+ sites, but due to travel restrictions was unable to speak with community members directly to corroborate or distinguish claims. While the Team was not able to speak with community members in Emalu to confirm the complaint identified by the MoF regarding illegal logging, one key informant did note that there have been misunderstandings about logging in the community. This was linked to misunderstandings about the types of activities that are and are not permitted under REDD+. While it was communicated that this has been addressed and resolved through community meetings and information sessions from the MoF (to clarify about permitted and prohibited activities), the GBV/FGRM+ Team was not able to determine whether this resolution was effective or accepted by the community.

SSV, N.D.

## GRIEVANCES IDENTIFIED DURING THE G&E ANALYSIS

During the course of conversations with community members and key informants working directly in REDD+ sites, the GBV/FGRM+ Team identified two additional grievances related to REDD+:

- The DBFCC received a complaint from community members that they are dissatisfied with the monetary benefits associated with REDD+. Community members expected to receive higher levels of monetary benefits. This complaint has not been made in a formal mechanism (e.g., the Live & Learn GRM) and has not yet been resolved. The DBFCC plans to address the complaint through community-level conversations and information sharing in the upcoming AGM. Live & Learn confirmed that the DBFCC had received this complaint and will support plans to address it during the meeting.
- The MoF also received a verbal complaint from the Emalu project site about the frequency of community level visits and interactions with the REDD+ Unit. The complaint was not reported formally nor recorded. The GBV/FGRM+ Team has not determined if this case has been considered “resolved” by the community at this time, but Team was informed that the complaint has since been addressed through an increased frequency of planned and more frequent visits to the site.

## EXISTING REDD+ RELATED GRIEVANCES LINKED TO GBR OR GBV

Though nearly all key informants identified the potential for GBR in relation to land use, conservation, and REDD+ readiness and implementation, very few key informants were able to provide examples of this occurring in REDD+ sites. When key informants were asked if they were aware of instances of GBV occurring in relation to REDD+, all key informants said they were unaware of any reported or unreported cases of GBV in relation to REDD+. This may be due to a complex variety of reasons: perceptions about what constitutes violence, the fact that violence is kept behind closed doors, or the true absence of GBR or GBV in these areas. Two REDD+ related complaints associated with gender were identified during the key informant interviews and FGD:

- **In Drawa**, there have been complaints from women who are registered in the *Vola ni Kawa Bula*<sup>16</sup> but do not live in the villages because they have married or moved to urban areas. These women have not been included in the community consultations about REDD+ and are not aware of the decisions that have been made, how benefits are supposed to be shared, and other terms of the agreement. Because of their lack of knowledge, they have been voicing complaints about the lack of benefits associated with REDD+. This complaint has only been discussed in the community and has not been taken up in an informal or formal mechanism.
- **In Emalu**, there have been complaints from women in community about the REDD+ agreement affecting their livelihoods and alternative livelihood activities. Women have expressed concerns about restrictions on their livelihoods and the need to travel a far distance to access unrestricted land. They have also complained about the inability to maintain their small businesses due to the poor road infrastructure. These complaints have been discussed with the Forest Warden and within the traditional, informal leadership structure. The complaints from

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<sup>16</sup> commonly known as the VKB (or “Red Book”), it is the official Fijian register of native landowners.

women are viewed as community-level complaints and have been addressed within the customary system. When needed (e.g., for the road), traditional leadership has appealed to the provincial offices for funding for road infrastructure.

## **POTENTIAL FOR GENDER-BASED RISK AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN REDD+**

In addition to discussing existing grievances in relation to REDD+, informants provided information about potential risks and causes of GBR and GBV in relation to REDD+. These potential risks were identified based on personal experience as members of LoUs and work with communities on land use and conservation. While some of the risks are general risks to land use and conservation issues, they also apply directly to concerns linked with REDD+ readiness and implementation.

**Women are unaware of the obligations of REDD+.** As discovered in prior research on the FGRM (*FGRM Assessment and Recommendations of Existing Issues and Structures, 2017*), key informants confirmed in this analysis that the main drivers for grievance and conflicts in relation to land agreements and REDD+ is a lack of awareness about the obligations associated with such agreements. Preparatory research for REDD+ revealed that lack of awareness about the obligations of REDD+ is even more pronounced amongst women (Tebtebba, 2019). Key informants confirmed that women may not be as actively included in consultations to prepare for the implementation of REDD+, placing them at higher risk to be unaware of the terms of the agreement. This could lead to women violating the agreement if they are unaware of its terms, exposing them to risk of accountability and potentially causing environmental degradation. Further, women may not understand the distinctions between allowable and prohibited activities and may believe some protected activities, like collecting certain non-timber forest products (NTFP), are prohibited. This misunderstanding may unnecessarily affect their livelihoods and subject them to higher risks of GBV.

**Women are unclear and unaware of benefits associated with REDD+.** Linked to lack of awareness about the obligations of REDD+ are misunderstandings about benefits associated with REDD+. This was one of the primary drivers for potential conflict and grievances as identified by key informants and focus group participants, with a key informant noting that issues in communities are almost always hinged on money. Misunderstandings about benefits include a lack of transparency about their distribution, disappointment, or confusion over the magnitude of benefits, and the allocation of shared or community-level benefits. Though this was identified as a driver for complaints for all community members, women can be uniquely affected. A key informant noted that women must be clearly identified as beneficiaries in awareness raising with communities to ensure the communities' understanding and avoid potential conflict and increased levels of GBV. Misunderstandings and lack of knowledge about benefits are pronounced amongst women of the *mataqali* who have moved away either due to marriage or employment. These women are often not included in consultations as they no longer live in their village; thus, they are not well informed on the terms of land agreements or benefits. As described above, this issue has arisen in Drawa.

**Women are inconsistently included in land use planning.** Land use planning is a necessary component of REDD+ implementation in which communities designate the allowable activities for different portions of land. Key informants noted that, in general, disagreements about how land should be designated and used would be a driver for conflict in communities. At present, there are no national land use policies in Fiji and thus no requirements about who should be included in planning or how the

planning process should be undertaken. Many women worry that the terms of lease agreements will impact their livelihood activities by restricting access to the land they have always used. Key informants explained that women may not be included in the process of land use planning, and there have been cases in other projects when women were not included. In these instances, women have been affected when their perspective and activities have not been taken into account. This might affect women's economic opportunities, increase their vulnerability, and subject them or heighten their risk to GBV. For example, in some communities, women were forced to travel much longer distances to collect firewood when the land closer to their community was designated as a conservation area without their consultation. This concern about women having to travel long distances to perform their daily or livelihood activities was a consistent concern amongst key informants. In Drawa, complaints have been raised that women are not included in all phases of land use planning and land has not been designated according to their needs. Now communities are trying to make adaptations based on the real needs of women. However, two key informants who had been involved in land use planning in Drawa asserted that women were involved and directly consulted in the process, highlighting a potential disconnect between efforts made to include women and their actual, meaningful inclusion. If women are not consulted and not able to actively participate in land use planning, then they face the risk of being negatively affected by land use plans that do not take their livelihoods or activities into account.

**Married women face additional exclusions from decision-making and benefits.** As married women are not registered members of their *mataqali* of residence, they are often not included in decision-making for land use and conservation issues, and they are not able to receive the benefits afforded to registered *mataqali* members from land agreements. However, their lives are affected by the terms of land use agreements and conservation activities. Key informants noted that married women were often actively engaged in alternative livelihoods projects and conservation activities, but, in some communities, it may be challenging to motivate married women to engage in conservation if they do not receive benefits. Married women who have traditionally used land in their husband's *mataqali* may be affected by decisions made in the formation of land agreements, which could impact their livelihoods, increase their vulnerability, and subject them or heightened their risk to GBV.

**Women face repercussions for voicing their complaints or adopting new ideas.** A key informant noted that there is always a risk for violence when women act in opposition to traditional norms. As described, traditional cultural expectations in Fiji and in *iTaukei* communities can limit women's abilities to participate in public meetings or voice their complaints. It is not traditionally expected that women should have their voices heard in regard to how land is used. Fear of repercussions and being subjected to GBV for violating these norms prevents many women from raising issues or complaints. If women do choose to voice their complaints, they may face a variety of consequences including GBV. These range from damage to her reputation or her family's reputation, shame, being isolated or ostracized, loss of access to resources in the community, or, in extreme cases, being forced to move or being subjected to violence. This is especially important to consider as conservation projects like REDD+ seek to promote the active inclusion and participation of women in their efforts. Additionally, key informants explained that women's involvement in conservation activities, including REDD+, exposes them to new ideas and approaches for conservation and, potentially, to new ideas about women's empowerment. These new ideas may expose women to risk of violence if they attempt to effect too much change too quickly, upsetting traditional norms. A key informant described that if a woman were to expose that her husband was undertaking activity in violation of a conservation or land agreement, then her husband may retaliate with violence.

**The financial impacts of conservation projects like REDD+ increase women’s risk of violence.** As noted, key informants identified money as a central cause for complaints and grievances in relation to land use, conservation, and REDD+. Typically, men are in positions of power in Fiji in relation to money and changing the income of a family can have impacts on family dynamics. The benefits women receive, whether monetary or non-monetary, as a part of conservation projects may also be a trigger for violence. Providing women with more income through land agreement payments or alternative livelihood activities can provide women with more power, upsetting the traditional structures in the family and potentially leading to violence. This is especially true if women are the main focus of conservation and livelihood projects or if they are given more opportunities than men in communities. Key informants explained that this has occurred in the fisheries sector in initiatives that have focused only on improving women’s economic status. A key informant noted that potential conflict over financial benefits related to conservation projects may prevent women from participating in those projects so as to avoid conflict. Additionally, increasing overall income in the family has been linked to alcohol use, which is a significant factor contributing to all types of violence, including GBV, in Fiji. In relation, restricting activities in a community may limit a family’s income, which can cause discord in the family and, in some cases, violence.

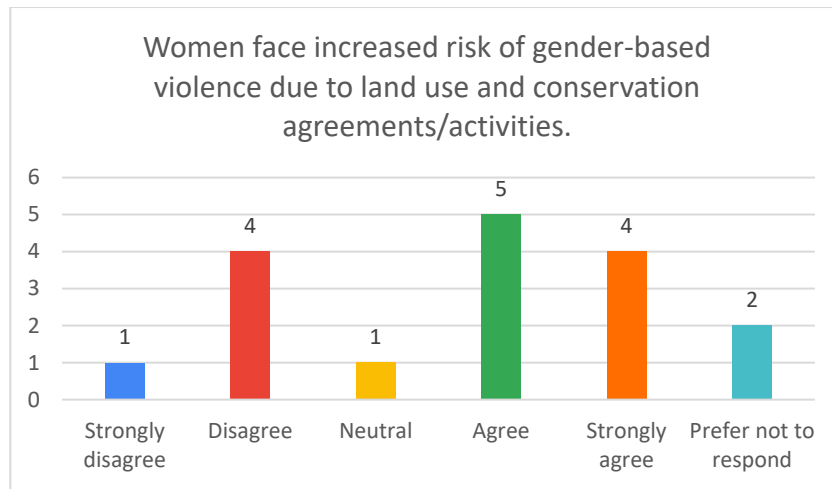
**Benefits under REDD+ are distributed through bank accounts, and women lack access to bank accounts.** In an effort to reform benefit distribution for land lease agreements, all *mataqali* members are required to have their own bank accounts into which each individual’s share of the benefits are deposited. This requirement is intended to ensure the equitable distribution of benefits amongst all registered members of the *mataqali*. Evidence from Fiji, confirmed by key informants, indicates that women are less likely to have access to bank accounts both due to lack of financial resources and logistical challenges associated with opening an account (e.g., travel, paperwork). If women do not have their own bank accounts, or any other mechanism to secure fund transfers, they may not be able to receive monetary benefits, which may cause complaints or grievances. Additionally, because women have not traditionally managed financial resources, they often lack key financial literacy skills to manage money and advocate for the receipt of benefits, which subjects them to higher levels of vulnerability.

**Women face consequences when men and/or traditional leadership do not approve of women’s activities.** Many conservation efforts, including REDD+, integrate targeted interventions to involve women in conservation activities and alternative livelihoods. Key informants emphasized the necessity of the careful design of these activities to ensure that they do not upset gender norms or roles in communities. In addition, community-level buy-in from women, men, and traditional leadership is necessary to ensure the success of the project. If men and traditional leadership are not consulted about women’s activities, this may cause disagreement within the community and potentially subject women to violence if they participate in an activity of which their husbands do not agree.

## **CASES OF GBV RELATED TO LAND USE AND CONSERVATION**

In addition to noting potential areas for GBV or GBR in REDD+, key informants also provided information about instances of violence (or threats of violence) in relation to land use and conservation. More key informants believed that women faced increased risk of GBV due to land use and conservation agreements or activities, though some key informants did not think there was an increased risk (see *Figure 6*).

Figure 6. Key informants' perspectives on women's risk for violence in land use and conservation (n=17)



Many of these instances of violence align with the potential areas for violence as identified by key informants. It should be noted that many key informants did not have knowledge of GBV occurring in relation to land use and conservation. However, those key informants also noted that there has been little attention paid to the intersections between land use, conservation, and GBV.

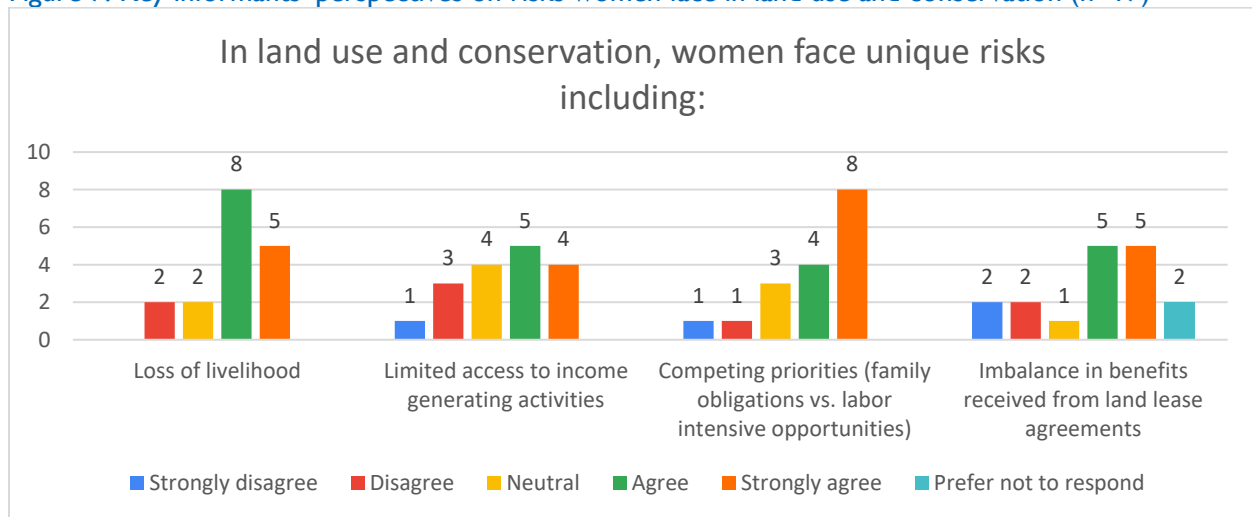
- In one community, a woman was entrusted with negotiation powers for her LoU for decisions around land use and land agreements. However, the community has not agreed with all of her decisions and, as a result, she has received threats of violence from community members.
- A key informant who had worked extensively in communities had heard of several instances in which a woman expressed a complaint in relation to a land issue, and her husband or partner became embarrassed about this, leading to intimate partner violence.
- Land boundary disputes have been linked to community-level violence, which has also manifested as GBV. In these disputes, families from within the same community or different communities have taken issue with land boundaries, resulting in violence between the families that may also spill over and include or affect other community members. In these instances, the iTaukei Land Commission, which is entrusted with resolving land boundary disputes, has taken direct action in communities to address the violence between and among community members by resolving the land boundary dispute. In addition, the Commission has reported perpetrators of violence to the relevant legal authorities based on the types of violence perpetrated.
- A community had established an alternative livelihood project to engage women in the community in ecotourism. The project included women who were registered in the *mataqali* and women married into the *mataqali*. One woman who was married into the *mataqali* and was a part of the project became subjected to GBV due to her participation in the project. Her husband had not given permission for her involvement to attend the project activities and women's group meetings.
- A key informant who engages with communities in land conservation work noted the higher levels of violence present in communities where men are engaged in growing *kava*, a high

revenue crop. The increased income from selling *kava* provides men with a higher level of disposable income, which is often dedicated to purchasing alcohol and is sometimes used to purchase sex. This increased income and the associated behaviors has been linked to conflict within families and violence between partners.

## DRIVERS OF GENDER-BASED INEQUITIES AND RISKS IN REDD+ IMPLEMENTATION

Under the original *FGRM Study and Analysis* and examined under the *Situational Assessment*, potential REDD+-related grievances drivers were identified through an analysis of: (1) existing grievances (non-REDD+ related) from land and forest governance and (2) REDD+/carbon offset grievances identified at the time of the study. These drivers were then categorized and ranked based on different types of conflict. The GBV/FGRM+ Team then reassessed these potential drivers of risk to account for the recent changes in policy and progress on REDD+ activities to date, to include any issues/concerns that were uncovered during KIIs and the FGD. Under the *G&E Analysis*, the GBV/FGRM+ Team used information gained from key informants to identify gender-related gaps, barriers, and risks for REDD+ implementation tied to previously identified drivers of risk. Information collected in the pre-interview survey illustrated more key informants thought that, in the context of land use and conservation, women faced risks in relation to loss of livelihood and competing priorities and demands (see *Figure 7*).

Figure 7. Key informants’ perspectives on risks women face in land use and conservation (n=17)



Though land rights and conservation approaches may bring about incidences of GBV through a complex system of drivers, conservation efforts may also have a protective effect against GBV. Climate change and climate-based disasters are associated with increased GBV and other forms of violence and abuse; thus, conservation efforts that can help mitigate or avoid such climate disasters could also help communities avoid the increased levels of violence that come as a result of these disasters (DeVoe et al., 2013; UN Women Fiji Multi-Country Office, 2014). Limited access to income generating activities and imbalance in benefits received were also considered to be risks, though fewer key informants identified them as such. The revised list of drivers of risk developed in the *Situational Assessment* is presented in *Table 4*, and a gender lens has been applied to better describe gender or GBV-related risks.

**TABLE 4. REVISED DRIVERS FOR POTENTIAL GRIEVANCE WITH REDD+ READINESS AND IMPLEMENTATION WITH POTENTIAL GENDER-RELATED IMPACTS**

Category	Potential Driver	Impact on Landowner	Landowner Coping Strategy	Potential for Grievance Rating		Gender-related Risk
				Previous	Revised	
<b>SOCIO-ECONOMIC</b>	Limitation on type of allowable alternative land use as other permissible land use cannot be inconsistent with REDD+ activities	Limited diversification opportunities on the land to increase alternative income	Source alternative income from non-land-based activities like fishing or plant extractions for medicinal purposes	High	Medium (community land use planning, but still no national land use plan)	If women are not consulted in land use planning, their activities (e.g., subsistence farming) may be negatively affected by decisions to allocate land in certain ways. This can result in increased burdens on women's time to travel to designated land, which may also pose safety risks.
	Changing interest of forest user	Need for more products to enhance alternative livelihood	Engage in non-forest dependent livelihood like beekeeping	High	High	Many women rely on the forest for livelihoods and daily activities (e.g., collection of food). Women's interests in the use of land may change either in response to the degradation of land, the need to identify new opportunities for income, or shifting value of resources. Restrictions on the types of permissible activities or limited flexibility in land use can negatively affect women who rely on forests to a greater extent as their interests change.
	There is no benefit-sharing REDD+ model in Fiji (Draawa pilot site has a model in place, but there is not a national model)	Unequal distribution of benefits	Review of benefit-sharing institutional arrangements and advocacy for transparent and accountable governance structure	High	Medium (models have been evaluated and selection is in process)	Historically, women have been disadvantaged in benefit sharing, and have often been excluded. Women's lack of access to bank accounts can also prevent them from receiving direct deposits of benefits from TLTB.
<b>LEGAL</b>	Lack of National Land Use Plan	Random land use that are not fit for purpose	Advocacy	High	High	Women may not be included in land use planning, especially if there are no requirements to do so. If women are not included, land use plans may not take their unique needs into account.
	Leasing and licensing disputes	Bad relationship with investors	Advocacy	High	High	Women may not be included in the terms of leases or licenses, leading to causes for disputes if they are not aware of or do not agree with the terms.



**TABLE 4. REVISED DRIVERS FOR POTENTIAL GRIEVANCE WITH REDD+ READINESS AND IMPLEMENTATION WITH POTENTIAL GENDER-RELATED IMPACTS**

Category	Potential Driver	Impact on Landowner	Landowner Coping Strategy	Potential for Grievance Rating		Gender-related Risk
				Previous	Revised	
	Poor implementation and/or enforcement of the law (or no legislation around REDD+)	Impacts on forest management and use, including developments around REDD+ sites (e.g., illegal logging, mining)	Awareness and advocacy	High	Medium (if Env. Bill passes)	If regulations are not implemented around REDD+, women's livelihoods are likely to be negatively affected by environmental degradation.
	Carbon property issues	Uncertain economic future and loss of income	Seek other alternative economic sources	Medium	Low (if Env. Bill passes)	Women who are not members of the LoU are not able to benefit from carbon shares and often rely on land-based income generation. If more members of the <i>matagali</i> are engaging in alternative livelihoods, this may affect these women's ability to use land.
	Lack of awareness of legislation that addresses unsustainable land use practices	Loss of land quality	Advocacy	Medium	Medium	Women have restricted access to information and may not be included in consultations. Information suggests that, if women receive information, they are strong stewards of the land. Unsustainable land use practices from any community members are likely to have a strong effect on women's livelihoods.
	Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) not practiced	Rights not respected	Advocacy	Medium	Medium	There has been evidence of women who are members of LoUs not being fully included in receiving information, which poses a risk to FPIC. Further, information is not adequately explained or reinforced over time, and women are often not fully informed of their rights. If women are not included or do not understand the terms of agreements (benefits and obligations), they may violate the agreement or, if they do not know their rights under the agreement, they are unable to protect those rights.
	Boundary disputes between landowners	Cannot provide good title due to uncertainty and loss of investment	Seek Conflict Resolution/Advocacy	Low	Low	These disputes may lead to violence at the community level and have in the past. Often these disputes are between men, but violence may spill over and affect women.

**TABLE 4. REVISED DRIVERS FOR POTENTIAL GRIEVANCE WITH REDD+ READINESS AND IMPLEMENTATION WITH POTENTIAL GENDER-RELATED IMPACTS**

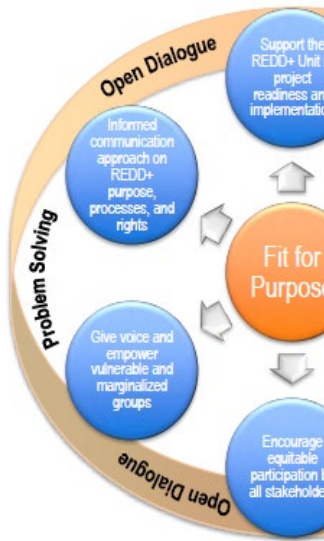
Category	Potential Driver	Impact on Landowner	Landowner Coping Strategy	Potential for Grievance Rating		Gender-related Risk
				Previous	Revised	
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL</b>	Loss of usable land	Current and future land needs of the LoU at threat.	Seeking of customary access and land use rights from other LoU.	High	High	If land is not able to be used to produce food, women may face consequences, including violence, if they are perceived as not being able to provide for their families.
	Eroded customary land for conservation	Corruption or encroachment of farming and logging in REDD+ sites and conflicts within LoU	Awareness	Medium	Medium	The erosion of land has a pronounced effect on women's livelihoods.
	Loss of water resources	Current and future water needs of members no longer sustainable	Advocacy or Migration to other LoU land through customary arrangements	Low	Low	Women rely heavily on clean water sources for livelihoods and for household activities. Loss of these resources affects their income and wellbeing.
	Natural disasters (cyclone, draught), or forest fires	Damage to conservation areas impacting forest investments	Awareness	Low	Low	Evidence from Fiji indicates that the aftermath of natural disasters (e.g., Tropical Cyclone Winston) can result in GBV related to displacement (Live & Learn Fiji Islands, 2016; Cowley, 2020).
<b>REDD+ PROGRAMME</b>	Inadequate information sharing and participation of stakeholders	Loss of community support and information gaps	Advocacy	Medium	High (lack of comm. leading to impatience)	Women are less likely to be included, much less actively included, in consultations and meetings relating to REDD+. Household obligations prevent meeting attendance, and cultural norms prevent active participation in public meetings. Women of the <i>matiqali</i> who are married and live outside the <i>matiqali</i> are unlikely to travel back for meetings or consultations.
	Perception about the value of ecosystem services not good	Limited possibilities of alternative income	Advocacy	Medium	Medium	Women have been the traditional stewards of land in <i>ITaukei</i> communities and have demonstrated greater levels of interest in conservation and the preservation of land, placing high priority on the future needs of

**TABLE 4. REVISED DRIVERS FOR POTENTIAL GRIEVANCE WITH REDD+ READINESS AND IMPLEMENTATION WITH POTENTIAL GENDER-RELATED IMPACTS**

Category	Potential Driver	Impact on Landowner	Landowner Coping Strategy	Potential for Grievance Rating		Gender-related Risk
				Previous	Revised	
						their children. However, men, who hold greater decision-making power in land use, have traditionally not placed high value on the preservation of the ecosystem and environment. Women's livelihoods and wellbeing can be negatively affected if men make decisions that do not value the ecosystem and protect natural resources.
	Benefit-sharing with landowners	Unclear basis of benefit-sharing	Advocacy	Medium	Medium	Married women who are not registered in the LoU are not able to receive benefits, which can cause confusion and discord in communities. There may also be disagreement about LoU members who reside away from the <i>matagall</i> being included in benefits.
	Poor implementation of safeguards requirements	Forest and Environment degradation and cascading loss	Advocacy	Medium	Medium	The erosion of land has a pronounced effect on women's livelihoods.
	Poorly designed or managed REDD+ project	Unintended consequences and loss of potential income and economic opportunities	Advocacy	Medium	High (debated ownership of FGRM)	If women are not actively included in project design and management, they may not understand the benefits and obligations and, thus, may (1) not respect the terms of agreements, (2) not become invested in upholding the agreement and/or (3) women cannot exercise their rights or have a voice
<b>POLITICAL</b>	Lack of community ownership	Greater reliance on the government for maintenance support	FPIC and Awareness	Low	Low	Women will have less opportunities to have a voice and exercise participation and agency.
	Insecurity of Land Tenure	Impossible to provide a good title thus loss of investment opportunity	Seek informal and formal resolutions through advocacy	Low	Low	If women's economic security is tenuous, thus making them more vulnerable to be subjected to GBV.

**TABLE 4. REVISED DRIVERS FOR POTENTIAL GRIEVANCE WITH REDD+ READINESS AND IMPLEMENTATION WITH POTENTIAL GENDER-RELATED IMPACTS**

Category	Potential Driver	Impact on Landowner	Landowner Coping Strategy	Potential for Grievance Rating		Gender-related Risk
				Previous	Revised	
<b>CULTURAL</b>	Corruption (undue influence, bribery)	Improper dealings, non-transparent and loss of economic opportunities	Advocacy	Low	Medium (debated ownership of FGRM)	Corruption affects women's and men's income and ownership, which increases levels of vulnerability among women and being subjected to GBV.
	Indo-Fijian not recognized as customary landholders	Potential conflict in regard to leasing of the land and who owns the carbon rights	Awareness	Low	Low	
	Forest-dependent peoples that have access to the land, but are not owners (expatriate women, etc.)	They may live or rely on resources from conservation areas and this could cause conflict	Involve them in the consultation and participation process and allow them to serve as monitors and stewards for conservation.	Low	Low	Married women who are not members of the LoU may be affected, but their voices are not able to be heard in decision-making process.



# Integration of Gender-based Risk and Violence into the FGRM

Understanding the gender-related risks and drivers, The GBV/FGRM+ Team also examined important structural or process-related concerns that need to be considered to enable the feasibility of FGRM+ to achieve inclusiveness. It reinforced the need for institutionalization of the mechanism and plans for long-term sustainability. This, along with knowledge of GBR and GBV-related concerns, enabled the Team to identify an initial set of recommendations for the inclusion of GBR and GBV in the FGRM+.

The overarching goal of the FGRM is to channel grievances through a system that is fit for purpose. Fit for purpose, signifies that the focus of the mechanism is on facilitating open dialogue as a way for stakeholders to discuss grievances that are both culturally acceptable, legally enforceable, and readily accessible that results in a transparent and easily understood problem-solving process for all stakeholders involved. The next iteration of the mechanism (FGRM+) must stay true to this goal, expanding that purpose to be more inclusive of vulnerable women and other gender groups.

FGRM DESIGN AND REPORTING

## FEASIBILITY TO ADDRESS GBR/GBV

Based on feedback from key informants and community-based informants, the next iteration of the FGRM can be well-positioned to address concerns at the community-level. The FGRM+ will continue to provide a complimentary system to existing formal and customary structures that, if well implemented, provides the opportunity for community members to receive resolutions for their REDD+ related concerns and addresses issues of GBR. It will be important for the mechanism not to be seen as inconsistent with existing complaint resolution systems and/or current protocols around handling GBV cases in Fiji. Overall, key informants responded positively to the idea of the FGRM+ and explained that women would be likely to use it to raise the complaints *if* they could be assured of the mechanism’s functionality, integrity, and confidentiality. Key informants emphasized that the FGRM+ would be better suited if it did not establish itself as a parallel system attempting to function outside of/supplant existing reporting mechanisms/channels when receiving complaints and grievances in relation to GBV. This is in alignment with the original design of the FGRM to offer an additional opportunity to raise and address complaints in harmonization with existing systems.

## SUSTAINABILITY CONCERNS

An overarching concern expressed by key informants was the sustainability of the FGRM+. A key informant referenced ongoing restrictions on the MoF budget, which could pose a challenge to operationalizing and maintaining the FGRM+. In addition, human resources needed to staff the FGRM+ represent a new financial commitment, which requires ongoing training and capacity building.

**THE GBV/FGRM+ TEAM RECOMMENDS ADDRESSING THESE CHALLENGES NEAR-TERM** in order for the FGRM+ to be feasible and sustainable. The mechanism must function and be sustained at an institutional level, with the financial resources to hire and maintain well-trained staff that can include GBR and GBV in their responsiveness. Furthermore, if the FGRM+ is not sustained and community members (especially women) have come to trust in the mechanism, they may exercise agency and voice their concerns without reliable institutional support.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Through analysis of information provided from key informants and focus groups, the GBV/FGRM+ Team identified components and steps that could position the FGRM+ to respond to both GBR and GBV adequately and appropriately. In addition, the GBV/FGRM+ Team identified methods to increase acceptability of the FGRM+ amongst REDD+ communities and amongst women. The following recommendations will be used to help evaluate and design the GBV-Inclusive FGRM+.

### INTEGRATION METHODS TO CONSIDER FOR ACCEPTABILITY OF THE FGRM+

**Increase knowledge and awareness of the functions and benefits of the FGRM+.** Lack of awareness has been identified as a key challenge in REDD+ readiness and implementation, and it can also negatively affect the use of the FGRM+. In general, key informants explained that community members and women have not been made aware of other formal complaint mechanisms or systems, which has been a key barrier to their use. Key informants recommended the creation and utilization of a robust communications plan to ensure community-level knowledge and buy-in of the FGRM+. Informants recommended including multiple methods of communication (e.g., workshops, handouts/leaflets, radio, social media, posters in village halls), and emphasized the delivery of face-to-face information on a regular basis to promote awareness and acceptance. The GBV/FGRM+ Team suggests delivering all communications in English and *iTaukei*, ensuring concepts are well translated or interpreted to encourage understanding. The Team suggests that any communications plan not only describe exactly how the FGRM+ will function, but also clearly identify the types of grievances appropriate for the FGRM+ and the benefits associated with using the FGRM+. Based on information from interviews, the plan can be more successful if it also clearly communicates how the FGRM+ will address complaints received from direct beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries so women who are married into the *mataqali* can more clearly understand their ability to access the FGRM+.

**Affirm key features of the design and implementation of the FGRM+.** One of the main reasons the FGRM, as it was originally designed, is well-positioned to receive and resolve complaints and grievances in communities is the key features in its design. The initial design of the FGRM addresses many of the prime concerns key informants associated with existing formal and informal/customary reporting systems, namely the lack of independence and transparency in decision-making, slow response times, complicated and burdensome reporting requirements, and absence of record-keeping (*FGRM Assessment and Recommendations of Existing Issues and Structures*, 2017; *FGRM Design of the FGRM and Reporting Forms*, 2017). The GBV/FGRM+ Team recommends addressing these key benefits in the awareness raising approaches described above, including emphasizing and affirming certain features to increase the acceptability of the FGRM+. Key informants highlighted that the simplicity of the system and clear reporting pathways and templates would provide further reassurance to community members. Additionally, as the FGRM+ begins to be used and complaints are resolved (or referred) within the

mechanism, key informants emphasize the need to highlight the mechanism's functionality and draw attention to its ability to address complaints (protecting the identity of the complainant and/or survivor).

**Protect privacy and confidentiality of complainants.** Key informants explained that women often refrain from reporting their issues or complaints due to concerns about preserving their privacy and confidentiality. Concerns about confidentiality affect all community members, as in traditional settings it is typical to report complaints in public meetings and both women and men may decline to raise an issue in this public forum. The FGRM+ can provide an opportunity to address these concerns. The GBV/FGRM+ Team suggests putting measures in place to protect privacy and confidentiality in complaints. To do so, the Team recommends that individuals who uptake complaints are carefully selected so that they may offer opportunities to make complaints to individuals outside of the network of family and relations. The Team recommends providing training to these individuals on 'do no harm' principles, safe and ethical data collection, and information management. The Team also recommends establishing systems so reporting forms and databases are kept confidential. This is especially important because key informants explained that both women and men can face risk of retaliation, conflict, or violence from the community if their identity is disclosed, particularly in the case of reporting sensitive issues like GBV. Key informants also noted that having phone-based reporting options, including SMS-based reporting, may help preserve privacy. Phone-based reporting addresses the concern that someone may be seen filing a report, and also provides an alternative mechanism if an individual does not trust the person trained to receive reports. Though the GBV/FGRM+ Team did not identify any formal assessment of the level of women's telecommunications access, key informants explained that many women across Fiji have access to their own cell phones (as opposed to shared phones), both smart phones and basic cell phones. In remote communities like Drawa and Emalu, many women also have phones, though their access to the network is limited and sporadic.

**Refer into existing reporting pathways and mechanisms for cases of GBV.** Key informants explained that there is risk of positioning the FGRM+ as an ADR mechanism for GBV cases because informal mechanisms of redress have not functioned well in Fijian communities, and robust efforts have been made to strengthen the legal system and other support services available to GBV survivors. As such, the Team suggests that the FGRM+ remain a semi-formal structure (ADR) and be integrated with and link to appropriate existing systems to provide complainants with direct referrals to the services of their choice. For example, referrals could be made to the Fiji Legal Aid Commission, where women can receive legal counseling and representation, or referrals could be made to psychosocial and medical supports services like FWCC, MSP, and Empower Pacific. To mitigate risks of unintended negative consequences, the GBV/FGRM+ Team cautions against the FGRM+ referring directly to law enforcement officials without the explicit informed consent of the complainant due to the "No Drop Policy," which prevents individuals from withdrawing GBV complaints after they are made. The initial FGRM has already been designed to make referrals when receiving complaints that are not able to be addressed in the FGRM (non-REDD+ related /ineligible complaints) and the mechanism could employ similar procedures when receiving cases of GBV.

**Encourage buy-in of traditional leadership and community members.** Land use issues and, in some communities GBV, are considered to be under the purview of traditional leaders (*Toraga ni Koro* and *Roko Tui*). Key informants explained that in many communities there are norms dictating that community members use these existing, informal avenues to have their issues resolved and they may not feel comfortable circumventing these systems to use the FGRM+. Key informants identified that there is

a risk that the FGRM+ may not be accepted if it is seen as a competing mechanism to traditional resolution mechanisms. As such, the GBV/FGRM+ Team suggests continuing to present the FGRM+ as an alternative, complementary mechanism be used when the customary system fails (a resolution cannot be reached or upheld, the case is too complex, and/or the Complainant finds the resolution unsatisfactory). The Team also recommends that traditional leadership continue to be engaged in the design of the next iteration of the mechanism, as well as on the communication strategy, awareness raising, and rollout of the FGRM+ to encourage understanding and acceptance of the mechanism.

**Raise awareness on women’s and men’s rights in relation to land use and GBV.** According to key informants, there is a critical gap in knowledge in communities and amongst women and men about women’s and men’s rights in relation to land use, land agreements, and GBV. Key informants described that when women do not know about their rights in relation to land use or GBV, they are unlikely to be aware that they are able to bring complaints or seek redress. The GBV/FGRM+ Team suggests identifying methods to increase knowledge and awareness about rights in relation to land use and GBV. Raising awareness on women’s and men’s rights with all community members can also help address concerns around shifting gender roles or norms that may result from conservation activities that affect family and community dynamics. Increasing knowledge on rights, especially land rights, can remove stigma about women bringing complaints in relation to land and can cultivate normalization about reporting on all types of grievances experienced by women. Awareness efforts can also be coupled with ongoing violence prevention efforts in communities, which include sensitizing communities to existing laws around violence. Efforts could also focus on the intersection of gender with other indicators of social inclusion, like age and social status. Notably, interviews with key informants revealed that the concept of individual rights, and women’s rights, is a sensitive subject in Fiji as it can be seen to be in opposition of the communal nature of societies. In light of this finding, the GBV/FGRM+ team recommends that discretion and care be used when promoting understanding of individual rights, and also recommends using culturally appropriate approaches. For example, the MoF could link with other organizations (e.g., NGOs, CSOs, churches) working to promote the knowledge of women’s rights amongst all community members (men, women, children, and leaders) to raise awareness and acceptance.

**Collaborate with existing community structures to promote utilization of the FGRM+.** Key informants underscored that there are a number of community structures women already trust to discuss their concerns and complaints. Based on the recommendations of key informants, the GBV/FGRM+ Team suggests that the FGRM+ should make efforts to collaborate with these groups to raise their awareness of the FGRM+. Women’s groups, which are present in nearly every community, are a trusted source of information and support for women in many communities. Women will often disclose their concerns, including concerns relating to GBV, in these groups. Women’s group members and leaders could be important promoters of the FGRM+. Existing village committees, like the DBFCC in Drawa, that already serve as central points for discussing complaints could also be trained on the use of the FGRM+. When committees receive complaints that could be resolved in the FGRM+, they can educate community members on its existence as an option for resolution. Church leaders (pastors) and their wives are also trusted figures in the community, and many men and women bring their concerns and issues into the church community as a first source of support. The MoF has already engaged faith-based communities to promote REDD+ at the community level and could also engage church leaders and communities to encourage understanding of the FGRM+.



**Consider expansion of individuals involved in on-the-ground, verbal reporting.** Key informants described that there is a need to ensure that reporting is accessible to all community members and providing consistent access to on-the-ground, in-person reporting can address many barriers community members and women may face to accessing other reporting systems or services. As the FGRM was initially designed, on-the-ground reports are able to be received through Forest Officers, REDD+ Liaison Officer, or through advocate Resource and Support Groups<sup>17</sup> (NGOs, CSOs, legal, academic, or other designated interest groups) acting on behalf of or in accompaniment to the Complainant (*FGRM Design of the FGRM and Reporting Forms*, 2017). Key informants expressed concerns that community members may not trust or feel comfortable speaking to someone who is perceived to be a government representative about issues in relation to a government program. While some key informants thought community members would trust Forest Officers, especially to address issues around land use, it may not be acceptable to all community members or for all types of grievances. Additionally, many Forest Officers are male, and this may present as a barrier to women seeking to present or report their concerns or complaints, especially if they are reporting instances of violence. As Forest Officers often travel between communities and are not always present, key informants emphasized the need to have grievances reported to someone more regularly present in the community to increase opportunities for reporting at the community-level (i.e., Resource and Support Groups). Additionally, the FGRM as designed, is meant to handle grievances that cannot be resolved at the informal-level, as determined by the Complainant. As reporting directly to *Toraga ni Koro* may be a barrier to women or other vulnerable groups who may not feel comfortable presenting the complaint in a public meeting it will be important for these vulnerable groups to understand that their complaint can be elevated if it is unsatisfactory “resolved” in the customary system. Suggestions for providing additional in-person reporting includes appointing a women’s representative, involving existing village committees (and ensuring gender-balance on the community), and including the village nurse/social worker. Each of these suggestions presents unique challenges, particularly relating to confidentiality as these individuals are community members. The GBV/FGRM+ Team recommends exploring this option further, including having community-by-community considerations to respond to the existing structures unique to the community.

**Train all individuals and agencies that uptake grievances in the FGRM+ on GBR- and GBV-sensitive responses to complaints.** The GBV/FGRM+ Team recommends training all individuals and agencies involved in the uptake of grievances to provide GBR- and GBV-sensitive responses when receiving complaints from women on land use issues and in cases of GBV. Currently, Forest Officers do not receive training on gender, GBR, or GBV. GBR- and GBV-sensitive response could be incorporated into the existing training on the FGRM to ensure all stakeholders and counterparts involved are able to adopt the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to receive and respond to complaints and to avoid unintended consequences (in alignment with principles of the iDARE methodology).

## NEXT STEPS

Using the information gathered during key informant interviews and the FGD, the GBV/FGRM+ Team will begin the next phase of the iDARE methodology to (D)esign the GBR- and GBV-inclusive FGRM+. The Team will incorporate findings from both the *Situational Assessment* and the *G&E Analysis* into the

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<sup>17</sup> As forest-users wishing to enter a grievance may experience issues with submissions or feel uncertain about engagement for a multitude of reasons, which may include a remoteness issue, group complaint submission, perceived bias, resource constraint, or lack of understanding about the FGRM process. These groups can provide assistance through preparation and submission of grievances.

design of the FGRM+ to be more responsive to the needs of all community members, with an emphasis on women and vulnerable gender groups. The GBV/FGRM+ Team will present all during the forthcoming *Socialization Event*. This event will include many of the key stakeholders interviewed during the Assessment and Analysis, with additional representation from other members of the NRSC, to include community-level representation from the Drawa and Emalu project sites. The Team will solicit feedback on the findings and will incorporate this feedback into the next phase of the project, the updated FGRM+ Communication Plan and design. As needed, the Team will continue to solicit insight and feedback from key partners or from new stakeholders identified through ongoing communication with local agencies and organizations.

# Attachment I

## Stakeholder Map

### FGRM+ STAKEHOLDERS

#### Organization/Entity

#### COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND LEADERS

Roko Tui

Provincial Conservation Officer

DBFCC Community Members

Village Chief

SMEs in land tenure, land law, GBV, and gender and social inclusion

#### GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES/AGENCIES INVOLVED IN REDD+

iTaukei Land Trust Board

Ministry of Agriculture

Ministry of Economy

Ministry of Forestry

Ministry of iTaukei Affairs

Ministry of Lands and Mineral Resources

Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty

#### MINISTRY OF FORESTRY (MOF) FOREST OFFICERS

Forest Warden/Officers

#### WOMEN'S AND GBV-RELATED ORGANIZATIONS

Grace Trifam

Nature Fiji

Fiji Women's Rights Movement

Fiji Women's Crisis Centre

Live & Learn Fiji

Fiji Environmental Law Association (FELA)

Conservation International

World Wildlife Fund

*Sogosoqo Vakamarama iTaukei*

REDD+ Civil Society Organization Platform

FemLink Pacific

#### RESEARCH AND HARMONIZING AGENCIES

University of the South Pacific

*Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)*

Pacific Community (SPC)

UN Women Fiji Multi-Country Office

World Bank

USAID

# Attachment 2

## Data Collection Tools

### Consent Form

**USAID RISE Challenge**  
**Consent to Participate in a Gender and Environment Analysis**  
**Key Informant Interview**  
July 2020

**Title of the Study:** USAID RISE Challenge Gender and Environment Analysis for REDD+ in Fiji

**Principal Investigators:** Corey Nelson, Senior Director and Emerging Markets Program Lead, Marstel-Day, LLC; Dr. Taroub Harb Faramand, President, WI-HER, LLC.

**What Is the Research About?** We are asking you to take part in a research study about disputes and grievances, including gender-based violence, in land use, conservation, and REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation) implementation in Fiji. Through this study we hope to learn how the different experiences and status of women and men may facilitate or influence the disputes or grievances they experience in land use, conservation, and REDD+ implementation. You are being invited to participate in a research study because we value your unique perspective.

**Who Is Leading the Study?** The people in charge of this study are Corey Nelson of Marstel-Day, LLC and Dr. Taroub Harb Faramand of WI-HER, LLC. This research is being funded by The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) with support from the Fiji Ministry of Forests/ REDD+ Unit. The interviewers for this study are Allison Annette Foster (Vice President) of WI-HER, LLC; Maddison Hall (Program Coordinator) of WI-HER, LLC; Mereseini Seniloli (Social Inclusion and Gender Expert); and Ulai Baya (Land Tenure and Law Expert).

**Do I Have to Take Part in this Study?** If you decide to take part in the study, it should be because you want to volunteer. There will be no penalty and you will not lose any benefits or rights you would normally have if you choose not to volunteer. Even if you decide to be part of the study now, you may change your mind and stop at any time. If you decide to withdraw before this study is completed, we will delete your responses.

**Who Will See the Information I Give?** The report will not include anyone's name or identity. You will not be identified in any published or presented materials. We have procedures in place to limit who can connect you/your name to your answers and we will not record your name with your responses. Only the research team will have access to the collected data and all data will be stored on computers with password protection.

**What If I Have Questions?** You may ask questions now or at any time during the interview. Later, if you have questions about the study, you can contact Allison Annette Foster, at [evaluationandlearning@wi-her.org](mailto:evaluationandlearning@wi-her.org).

#### **Research Participant Statement and Agreement**

By saying yes to the following statement on the consent form, you are agreeing to be in this study.

"I understand what the study involves, and my questions so far have been answered. I understand that my participation in this research study is voluntary. I agree to take part in this study."

Yes, I am willing to participate.

No, I am not willing to participate.

*\*Note: consent to be delivered through GoogleForms Survey or orally*

## Pre-Interview Questionnaire

Bula – We are asking you to take part in a research study about disputes and grievances, including gender-based violence, in land use, conservation, and REDD+ implementation in Fiji. If you take part in this study, you will be one of about 20 people to do so. You are being invited to participate in a research study because we value your unique perspective. The people who are collecting these surveys and following up with interviews are Corey Nelson of Marstel-Day, LLC, Allison Annette Foster of WI-HER, LLC, and Maddison Hall of WI-HER, LLC. This research is being funded by The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) with support from the Ministry of Forestry / REDD+ Unit.

1. What is your Name? \_\_\_\_\_

We have also sent you a consent form to participate in the study. Please read the consent form (below): and answer the following question:

[Consent form is inserted in GoogleForm]

By saying yes to the following statement on the consent form, you are agreeing to be in this study. “I have read the consent form. I understand what the study involves, and my questions so far have been answered. I understand that my participation in this research study is voluntary. I agree to take part in this study.”

Yes, I am willing to participate.

No, I am not willing to participate.

We would like to ask you some questions before we have our phone call. This is an online survey that should take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Please select answers for all questions. You will need to press the button to Submit at the end of the survey so we can receive your answers. Vinaka!

2. What is your job title or position?: \_\_\_\_\_
3. What is your ministry or organizational affiliation?: \_\_\_\_\_
4. What is your sex? (choose one): Male, Female, Prefer not to respond
5. What is your age?: 20-30 years, 30-40 years, 40-50 years, 50-60 years, Over 60 years, Prefer not to respond
6. What is your preferred email address?: \_\_\_\_\_
7. How would you like us to contact you for an interview? (e.g., Skype meeting, WhatsApp call, Zoom or other teleconference link): \_\_\_\_\_

No.	Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Prefer not to respond
8	Conservation is an important priority for Fiji's future.						
9	The GoF thinks it is important to protect the rights of women.						
10	Men have more influence than women in land and resource conservation decisions in Fiji.						
11	My institution has experience responding to complaints/grievances from women.						

12	Women and men have equal access to information in their communities (e.g., news, public messaging, guidelines).						
13	In land use and conservation, women face unique risks including:						
	a. Loss of livelihood						
	b. Limited access to income generating activities						
	c. Competing priorities (family obligations vs. labor intensive opportunities)						
	d. Imbalance in benefits received from land lease agreements						
14	Women face increased risk of gender-based violence due to land use and conservation agreements/activities.						
15	There are adequate systems in place for women to seek support if they experience gender-based violence.						
16	In land use and conservation, women have equal opportunities and access to resources (e.g., training, funding, financial benefits of land leases, jobs).						
17	Women believe that government systems will protect them from gender-based violence.						
18	Women and men are represented equally in leadership and decision-making roles in land use and conservation.						
19	The GoF promotes the rights of women.						
20	Women feel safe in reporting gender-based violence.						
21	I think that Fiji benefits from REDD+ implementation.						

\*Note: pre-call survey delivered through GoogleForms.

## Key Informant Interview Guides

### Group: Community Members and Leaders

My name is (Name of Interviewer) and I am (Position) at WI-HER, LLC. Our work in this project is to help improve the REDD+ feedback and grievance redress mechanism (FGRM) to make it acceptable and accessible to all people, especially women, and to ensure that people trust and feel safe using it to report complaints or disputes around land use, distribution of benefits, discrimination, and incidents relating to gender-based violence.

We would like to speak with you because of your role as a Forest Officer. We believe you can offer a critical perspective to understanding how we can make the FGRM more accessible, acceptable, and effective to help address all types of complaints, especially those that are uniquely experienced by women, including gender-based violence.

Before our call, we sent you a consent statement to read and sign. Have you read and agreed to the consent statement?

*[If the participant has not returned the consent statement, the interviewer will read the statement to them and receive verbal consent before proceeding.]*

We will be taking notes during our call, and we would like to record this interview so we can capture all of the details of what you say. Only members of the research team will have access to this recording, and it will be stored without your identifying information on a private, password protected computer. Do we have permission to record the interview?

*[The interviewer will receive verbal consent before beginning recording. If consent is not given for recording, only notes will be taken.]*

As a reminder, we will keep the information you provide confidential and it will not be associated with your name. If you choose not to participate in the interview, or you do not want to answer a question I ask, we can stop the interview at any time.

I have some questions I would like to ask you, but feel free to share anything relevant as it arises. Do you have any questions before we begin?

#### **Women's rights (general)**

1. Are men and women seen as equal in your community?
  - a. Probes: Do they have same access to opportunities, like work? Do they have the same access to services, like health or training programs? Do they have the same access to finances, like bank accounts? If no, describe differences?

#### **Women's rights/concerns in land use and conservation**

2. Do women and men have the same rights in relation to land use and conservation in your community?
  - a. Probes: If different, how are the different? Are they represented or included in leadership and/or decision-making? Do they have access to resources? Are they equally

included in projects or initiatives? Do they receive the same benefits from land agreements?

3. In your community, are women included in leadership and decision-making for the community?
  - a. Probes: If yes, how? Are all women included in decision-making or only some? Do women speak as often as men do in community discussions? If not, why not?
4. How do women make income from the use of land, forests, or natural resources?
  - a. Probes: How are these affected by land agreements, like REDD+? Is it different from men?
5. Do you think women's livelihoods are affected by land agreements, like REDD+?
  - a. Probes: Do land agreements like REDD+ provide any benefits to women's livelihoods (*explain*)? Do you feel that the land agreements, like REDD+, put women's livelihoods at risk (*explain*)?

### **Risks around land, resources, and grievances**

6. In your community, what have been the main causes of land use or conservation disputes or complaints?
  - a. Probes: Are there any differences between the complaints from men and women (*explain*)?
7. Have there been any grievances or disputes to your knowledge related to REDD+? If so, how are these grievances being reported and resolved?
  - a. Probes: (If they answer yes) What are these grievances? Why do you feel these conflicts or grievances are related to REDD+? If resolved in the customary system is REDD+/Live & Learn/MoF aware of these disputes and their resolution? Are any left unresolved?
  - b. *Interviews note – Corroborate what we heard about a dispute in Emalu from MoF / REDD+ and issues around the car accident in Drawa noted in D2.*
8. At this time, what typically happens if there is a dispute or complaint in relation to land use, REDD+, or other conservation mechanisms?
  - a. Probes: Is there a formal or informal process for making or resolving a complaint in the community? Who does it involve (*just the community, or others like the legal system*)?
  - b. Probes: Is it the same for men and women? If not, how?
9. Do you think the current methods for reporting disputes and complaints are accessible to everyone in the community?
  - a. Probes: Why or why not? Are they friendly to women, specifically? Are there other vulnerable groups that may make complaints? Are the methods friendly to them?
10. When making complaints, are there certain people or types of people that men or women would feel more comfortable speaking to?
  - a. Probes: Describe their features or behavior? Are there any people that women or men would not trust?
11. Do you think both women and men can make complaints safely (without fear of retribution from the community or their family)?
  - a. Probes: If only men or women, why do you think that is? If men and women make complaints, are they about the same things/issues (if different, how are they different)? Do you receive complaints from women about not receiving fair treatment in the land agreements?
  - b. Probes: When REDD+ establishes its complaint system, how do you think we could make it easy to use? Protect people's confidentiality? Is there anything we need to put in place to keep people safe from retribution (being shamed, excluded, harmed)?



12. Are there reasons that might stop women from making complaints?
  - a. Probes: In your experience, are there any negative effects women might experience from filing a complaint? Relating to safety? Relating to shame? Relating to being excluded/ostracized by their community? Would these concerns stop her from filing a complaint (if yes, explain)?

### **Safety and violence in communities**

13. Would you describe your community as a safe community?
14. Do you believe that women are at risk for violence or abuse in your communities? Why/please describe?
15. Does your community experience problems with violence against women?
  - a. Probes: If yes, do you know of any instances of violence against women? What does it look like when it happens? Is violence against women considered a violation of women's rights? What about violence between partners or in a couple?
16. Are acts of violence towards women in the community ever related to land use or conservation? How? Give precise examples.
  - a. Probes: How do you think the risks to these kinds of violence could increase during REDD+ readiness/implementation? Will REDD+ or other land agreements create new risks for women?
  - b. Probes: Do you know if this is seen as acceptable in the community?
17. Have you heard of any disputes or complaints related to gender or violence against women?
  - a. Probes: Can you describe what happened in the dispute? Can you describe how it was resolved? Do you know if referrals were made to any support services, like health care, legal services, or shelter?
18. Do you know if women in your community ever access legal services if they experience violence against women?

### **Recommendations/suggestions**

19. *Additional question for Live & Learn:* How do you feel the Live & Learn Grievance and Redress Mechanism (GRM) is functioning?
  - a. Probes: are there any challenges? Any successful features or procedures?
20. How would you recommend making the current methods for reporting complaints more accessible?
  - a. Probes: For women specifically? Are there other groups that may have difficulty access the complaint process? Who are they? How would you recommend making the process more accessible to them?
21. Are there any other individuals or organizations you think we should speak to regarding this project?

## **Group: Government Ministries/Agencies involved in REDD+**

My name is (Name of Interviewer) and I am (Position) at WI-HER, LLC. Our work in this project is to help improve the REDD+ feedback and grievance redress mechanism (FGRM) to make it acceptable and accessible to all people, especially women, and to ensure that people trust feel safe using it to report grievances or disputes around land use, distribution of benefits, discrimination, and incidents relating to gender-based violence.

We would like to speak with you because of your ministry's role in REDD+. We believe you can offer a critical perspective to understanding how we can make the FGRM more accessible, acceptable, and effective to help address all types of grievances, especially those that are uniquely experienced by women, including violence against women.

Before our call, we sent you a consent statement to read and sign. Have you read and agreed to the consent statement?

*[If the participant has not returned the consent statement, the interviewer will read the statement to them and receive verbal consent before proceeding.]*

We will be taking notes during our call, and we would like to record this interview so we can capture all of the details of what you say. Only members of the research team will have access to this recording, and it will be stored without your identifying information on a private, password protected computer. Do we have permission to record the interview?

*[The interviewer will receive verbal consent before beginning recording. If consent is not given for recording, only notes will be taken.]*

As a reminder, we will keep the information you provide confidential and it will not be associated with your name. If you choose not to participate in the interview, or you do not want to answer a question I ask, we can stop the interview at any time.

I have some questions I would like to ask you, but feel free to share anything relevant as it arises. Do you have any questions before we begin?

### **Women's rights (general)**

1. What do you think are the biggest challenges to women's rights in Fiji?

### **Women's rights/concerns in land use and conservation**

2. Could you briefly describe the role of your ministry in REDD+?
3. From your perspective, what do you see as the causes for disputes or grievances in REDD+ implementation?
4. How would you describe women's rights in relation to land use and conservation in Fiji?
  - a. Probes: Are they represented or included in leadership and/or decision-making? Do they have access to resources? Are they equally included in projects or initiatives (e.g., training for alternative livelihoods)? Are there any other unique challenges or risks they face?

5. What are the challenges that you have seen that communities face in accessing the benefits of land agreements?
  - a. Probes: Is there a difference between men and women? Why do you think that is? How can the difference be resolved?
6. Do you think women's livelihoods are affected by land agreements, like REDD+?
  - a. Probes: Do land agreements like REDD+ provide any benefits to women's livelihoods (*explain*)? Do you feel that the land agreements, like REDD+, put women's livelihoods at risk (*explain*)?
7. Are there any new (since 2018) laws, policies, or guidelines linking or protecting women's rights to land use and conservation?

### **Existing mechanisms to report grievances**

8. At this time, what typically happens if a dispute or grievance arises in relation to land use, REDD+, or other conservation mechanisms?
  - a. Probes: Is it the same for women and men? Is it the same depending on the type of grievance, complaint, or dispute?
9. What individuals, institutions, or systems do you think people trust more to discuss and address grievances, disputes, or complaints?
  - a. Probes: Describe why? Do they trust this individual/institution/system to handle their concern fairly? Does this apply to women and men in the same way? Are there systems or mechanisms that they *don't* trust?
10. Do women in communities feel comfortable using complaint systems when they have disputes?
  - a. Probes: Which systems (formal, customary, community)? Are some preferred (*why*)? Is it the same for men and women?
11. Are there factors that you think stop women from filing complaints or grievances?
  - a. Probes: Do any of the following play a role: cost, norms, family/community, trust in the institution or system, individual-level factors about the person taking the report? Does the "No Drop Policy" in the legal system influence women? Are there other legal or institutional challenges?
12. Do women face any risks if they make complaints?
  - a. Probes: Do they experience isolation, retribution, shame, exclusion from the community? Are they at risk of violence? Do you know of instances where this has happened (*explain*)?
13. *Additional question for Ministry of Forestry:* How are forest officers selected? Could you share any information/documentation with us about workforce demographics for the Forest Officers? Do you know what proportion are women? Do you know their ages? Do they come from the same communities that they work in? Do you know their education level? Do Forest Officers receive training on gender or gender-based violence?

### **Gender-based violence and land use / conservation**

14. Evidence from the Fiji Women's Crisis Center indicates that 2 in 3 women in Fiji have experienced physical or sexual violence. Why do you think this is the case?
  - a. Probes: Have you seen evidence of gender-based violence in your role/institution?
15. Do you think women are at risk for violence in relation to land use or conservation efforts, like REDD+?
  - a. Probes: If yes, what are the risks? What efforts, if any, are being made at the national level to mitigate those risks?
16. Do you think there is a need to mitigate risks related to violence in land use and conservation?

17. Are you aware of any efforts currently to provide support for women who have experienced violence related to land use or conservation?

- a. Probes: If yes, what are they? Do you think they have been effective? Do you know if there are referral systems in place?

### **Recommendations/suggestions**

18. How would you recommend making the current methods for reporting feedback, grievances, and disputes more accessible and appropriate?

- a. Probes: For women specifically? Are there other groups that may have difficulty access the complaint process? Who are they? How would you recommend making the process more accessible to them?

19. If we want to improve a grievance and dispute mechanism to make it more helpful for women, what do you think we should do?

20. What elements are necessary in a grievance redress mechanism to make it safe to use to report instances of violence in conservation sites, like REDD+?

- a. Probes: What about for violence against women, specifically? What about violence within the family?
- b. Probes: Who would they trust (institution and individual level)? What would make them feel their information/identity was protected? Who could we connect them to? Any variation based on gender or the type of grievance?

21. Are there any other individuals or organizations you think we should speak to regarding this project (relating to women, land use, and/or violence)?

## **Group: Ministry of Forestry (MoF) Forest Officers**

My name is (Name of Interviewer) and I am (Position) at WI-HER, LLC. Our work in this project is to help improve the REDD+ feedback and grievance redress mechanism (FGRM) to make it acceptable and accessible to all people, especially women, and to ensure that people trust and feel safe using it to report grievances or disputes around land use, distribution of benefits, discrimination, and incidents relating to gender-based violence.

We would like to speak with you because of your role as a Forest Officer. We believe you can offer a critical perspective to understanding how we can make the FGRM more accessible, acceptable, and effective to help address all types of grievances, especially those that are uniquely experienced by women, including violence against women.

Before our call, we sent you a consent statement to read and sign. Have you read and agreed to the consent statement?

*[If the participant has not returned the consent statement, the interviewer will read the statement to them and receive verbal consent before proceeding.]*

We will be taking notes during our call, and we would like to record this interview so we can capture all of the details of what you say. Only members of the research team will have access to this recording, and it will be stored without your identifying information on a private, password protected computer. Do we have permission to record the interview?

*[The interviewer will receive verbal consent before beginning recording. If consent is not given for recording, only notes will be taken.]*

As a reminder, we will keep the information you provide confidential and it will not be associated with your name. If you choose not to participate in the interview, or you do not want to answer a question I ask, we can stop the interview at any time.

I have some questions I would like to ask you, but feel free to share anything relevant as it arises. Do you have any questions before we begin?

### **Role of Forest Officers**

1. Can you briefly describe your role/job as a Forest Officer?
  - a. Probes: Which community or communities do you serve?

### **Women's rights/concerns in land use and conservation**

2. Are men and women seen as equal in the communities where you work?
  - a. Probes: Do they have same access to opportunities, like work? Do they have the same access to services, like health or training programs? Do they have the same access to finances, like bank accounts? If no, describe differences?
3. Do women and men have the same rights to land use and benefits in the communities where you work?
  - a. Probes: To water? To natural resources? If different, how are they different? If different, what unique challenges do women face?

4. In the communities where you work, are women included in leadership and decision-making for the community?
  - a. Probes: If yes, how? Are all women included in decision-making or only some? Do women speak as often as men do in community discussions? If not, why not?
5. How do women make income from the use of land, forests, or natural resources?
6. Do you think women's livelihoods are affected by land agreements, like REDD+?
  - a. Probes: Do land agreements like REDD+ provide any benefits to women's livelihoods (*explain*)? Do you feel that the land agreements, like REDD+, put women's livelihoods at risk (*explain*)?

### **Existing complaints and grievances**

7. From your perspective, what causes disputes or grievances in land and conservation activities?
  - a. Probe: How are those causes for disputes different for men and women? Why are they different?
8. In the communities where you work, do you ever receive complaints about land use or conservation?
  - a. Probes: Tell us more about those complaints. Are any complaints about how the land agreement activities are managed (*explain*)? Are any complaints about how benefits are given or received (*explain*)? Are any complaints coming from people who do not receive benefits (*explain*)? Are there any specific complaints about the REDD+ process (either in readiness or implementation phase)? If yes to any of these questions, explain?
9. Do both women and men make complaints?
  - a. Probes: If only men or women, why do you think that is? If men and women make complaints, are they about the same things/issues (if different, how are they different)? Do you receive complaints from women about not receiving fair treatment in the land agreements?
10. If you do receive complaints, what do you do with the complaint?
  - a. Probes: Do they send the complaint to someone? Do they write it down or file it? What if the complaint includes reference to risk of physical harm? Do you do something different with these types of complaints?
11. Have you ever received any training to receive or respond to complaints about land use, conservation, or REDD+ readiness or implementation?
  - a. Probes: Did you think your training prepared you to respond to the complaints you've described?

### **Safety and violence in communities**

12. Would you describe the community/communities where you work as safe communities?
13. Do you believe that women are at risk for violence or abuse in the communities where you work? Why/please describe?
14. Do you ever see instances of violence against women in the communities where you work?
  - a. Probes: What does it look like when it happens? Is violence against women considered a violation of women's rights? What about violence between partners or in a couple?
15. Are acts of violence towards women in the community ever related to land use or conservation? How? Give precise examples.
  - a. Probes: How do you think the risks to these kinds of violence could increase during REDD+ readiness/implementation? Do you think the violence will change? Why/why not?

### **Receiving complaints and grievances relating to violence**

16. Have you ever received a complaint or been asked to respond to a grievance about violence against women?
  - a. Probes: Can you describe what happened? How did you handle this complaint differently from others that are unrelated to violence against women?
17. Is there a procedure on how to handle or respond to complaints of violence against women?
  - a. Probes: Does this differ from how complaints are normally handled? Does the procedure include referrals to support services? Do you think referrals are commonly made to support services?
18. Do you know if women in your community ever access legal services if they experience violence against women?
  - a. Probes: Do you know if this is seen as acceptable in the community? Do you know if they access any other services?
19. Are there factors that you think stop women from filing complaints that has to do with her being a woman?
  - a. Probes: In your experience, are there any negative effects women might experience from filing a complaint? Relating to safety? Relating to shame? Relating to being excluded/ostracized by their community? Would these concerns stop her from filing a complaint (if yes, explain)?

### **Recommendations/suggestions**

20. How would you recommend making the current methods for reporting complaints more accessible?
  - a. Probes: For women specifically? Are there other groups that may have difficulty access the complaint process? Who are they? How would you recommend making the process more accessible to them?
21. What elements are necessary in a grievance redress mechanism to make it safe to use to report instances of violence in conservation sites, like REDD+?
  - a. Probes: What about for violence against women, specifically? What about violence within the family?
  - b. Probes: Who would they trust (institution and individual level)? What would make them feel their information/identity was protected? Who could we connect them to? Any variation based on gender or the type of grievance?
22. Are there any other individuals or organizations you think we should speak to regarding concerns related to women and violence and land?

## **Group: Women's and GBV-related Organizations**

My name is (Name of Interviewer) and I am (Position) at WI-HER, LLC. I am part of a research team studying the connections between land use and conservation and gender-based violence. Fiji has a national strategy to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, which is called REDD+. Communities with forest land can become labeled as REDD+ sites, meaning that they agree to abide by practices to protect the forest and reduce harm to the forest and environment. If there are concerns, complaints, or disputes that come about because of REDD+, then there is a feedback and grievance redress mechanism (FGRM) that people in those communities can use to voice their concerns and solve the dispute. Our work in this project is to help improve the feedback and grievance redress mechanism (FGRM) to make it accessible and acceptable to all people, especially women, and to ensure that people feel safe using it to report grievances or disputes around land use, distribution of benefits, discrimination, and incidents relating to gender-based violence.

We would like to speak with you because of your organization's work with women's rights and/or gender-based violence. We believe you can offer a critical perspective to understanding how we can make the feedback and grievance redress mechanism more responsive to women's needs, safe for women to use, and effective for addressing their concerns.

Before our call, we sent you a consent statement to read and sign. Have you read the consent statement?

*[If the participant has not returned the consent statement, the interviewer will read the statement to them and receive verbal consent before proceeding.]*

We will be taking notes during our call, and we would like to record this interview so we can capture all of the details of what you say. Only members of the research team will have access to this recording, and it will be stored without your identifying information on a private, password protected computer. Do we have permission to record the interview?

*[The interviewer will receive verbal consent before beginning recording. If consent is not given for recording, only notes will be taken.]*

As a reminder, we will keep the information you provide confidential and it will not be associated with your name. If you choose not to participate in the interview, or you do not want to answer a question I ask, we can stop the interview at any time.

I have some questions I would like to ask you, but feel free to share anything relevant as it arises. Do you have any questions before we begin?

### **Women's rights (general)**

1. What do you think is the status of women's rights in Fiji?
  - a. Probes: Is the same true in rural areas? Is gender-based violence a factor affecting women's rights?
2. What do you think are the government's biggest challenges in addressing women's rights?
  - a. Probes: What have they done in the past? What are they doing now? What has or has not been successful?



3. Evidence from the Fiji Women's Crisis Center indicates that 2 in 3 women in Fiji have experienced physical or sexual violence. Why do you think this is the case?
  - a. Probes: Have you seen evidence of gender-based violence in your role/institution?
4. What is your organizations role in relation to women's rights or gender-based violence?

### **Existing mechanisms to support women who experience gender-based violence**

5. Can you describe your organization's role or approach to gender-based violence response?
  - a. Probes: Do you take complaints, or help women with complaints? Do you provide services? If so, what are they?
6. What individuals, institutions, or systems do women trust most to discuss issues relating to gender?
  - a. Probes: Describe attributes or features? Is there variation by age or urbanicity? Is the same true for issues relating to violence?
7. How do women typically access information about gender-based violence/their rights?
  - a. Probes: Do they have ready access to: radio? Mobile phones? Social media? Print campaigns (posters, pamphlets)? Word of mouth? Public presentations? Does this change for rural/urban women?
8. Are there factors that stop women from filing complaints related to gender or gender-based violence?
  - a. Probes: Do any of the following play a role: cost, norms, family/community, trust in the institution or system, individual-level factors about the person taking the report? Does the "No Drop Policy" in the legal system influence women?
9. Are there some women that feel more comfortable using existing systems to report gender-based violence?
  - a. Probes: Is there variation based on age, education, income level, marital status, etc.?
10. Do women face any institutional or legal challenges around reporting or receiving support for gender-based violence?

### **Women's rights/concerns in land use and conservation**

11. How would you describe women's rights in relation to land use and conservation in Fiji?
  - a. Probes: Are they represented or included in leadership and/or decision-making? Do they have access to resources? Are they equally included in projects or initiatives?
12. Do you contribute to policies or laws protecting women's rights as they relate to land use or conservation?
13. Do you feel women are protected by policies in laws with regard to land use and conservation?
14. Do you know if there are referral systems in place to support women who experience violence in relation to land use/conservation?

### **Risks around land, resources, and grievances**

15. Do you think women face risks in land use or conservation?
  - a. Probes: Do they have access to resources? Do they have decision-making power? Do they face risk of violence?
16. Do women face losing their livelihood/income generation opportunities when land use agreements are implemented?
  - a. Probes: If yes, what types of livelihoods? Please explain.
17. Do you know what women typically do if they experience disputes or harms around land use? *(strong likelihood they will not know this, but we should try to ask)*

- a. Probes: Is it reported? If so, to whom or using what mechanism? Is it the same for general grievances and for those related to gender or gender-based violence? Do you know why women use this approach/method (e.g., features, trust)? Is there any variation by demographic characteristics (e.g., age, income)?
- 18. Have you ever heard of REDD+ or any methods that are being used to address disputes or conflicts that might arise as a result of REDD+ activities before we contacted you?
- 19. Does your organization have any information about gender-based violence incidents relating to land use or conservation?
  - a. Probe: Can you describe the situation, who support the survivor, etc.; has anyone ever come to your organization? Have you heard of anything?

### **Recommendations/suggestions**

- 20. What do you think would be the best way for women to report disputes around land use or conservation?
  - a. Probes: What would make them feel “heard” or supported? What would keep them safe?
- 21. What elements are necessary in a grievance redress mechanism to make it safe to use to report instances of violence in conservation sites, like REDD+?
  - a. Probes: What about for violence against women, specifically? What about violence within the family?
  - b. Probes: Who would they trust (institution and individual level)? What would make them feel their information/identity was protected? Who could we connect them to?
- 22. Are there any other individuals or organizations you think we should speak to regarding this project (relating to women, land use, and violence)?
- 23. Are you aware of any other programs that link land conservation with women’s rights, women’s protections, or gender-based violence?
  - a. Probes: If so, what are they?
- 24. Are there any reports or documents on this topic that you think we should read?
  - a. Probes: Are they publicly available, or could you share them with us?

## **Group: Research and Harmonizing Agencies**

My name is (Name of Interviewer) and I am (Position) at WI-HER, LLC. I am part of a research team studying the connections between land use and conservation and gender-based violence. Fiji has a national strategy to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, which is called REDD+. Communities with forest land can become labeled as REDD+ sites, meaning that they agree to abide by practices to protect the forest and reduce harm to the forest and environment. If there are concerns, complaints, or disputes that come about because of REDD+, then there is a feedback and grievance redress mechanism (FGRM) that people in those communities can use to voice their concerns and solve the dispute. Our work in this project is to help improve the feedback and grievance redress mechanism (FGRM) to make it accessible and acceptable to all people, especially women, and to ensure that people feel safe using it to report grievances or disputes around land use, distribution of benefits, discrimination, and incidents relating to gender-based violence.

We would like to speak with you because of your organization's work with women's rights and/or gender-based violence. We believe you can offer a critical perspective to understanding how we can make the feedback and grievance redress mechanism more responsive to women's needs, safe for women to use, and effective for addressing their concerns.

Before our call, we sent you a consent statement to read and sign. Have you read the consent statement?

*[If the participant has not returned the consent statement, the interviewer will read the statement to them and receive verbal consent before proceeding.]*

We will be taking notes during our call, and we would like to record this interview so we can capture all of the details of what you say. Only members of the research team will have access to this recording, and it will be stored without your identifying information on a private, password protected computer. Do we have permission to record the interview?

*[The interviewer will receive verbal consent before beginning recording. If consent is not given for recording, only notes will be taken.]*

As a reminder, we will keep the information you provide confidential and it will not be associated with your name. If you choose not to participate in the interview, or you do not want to answer a question I ask, we can stop the interview at any time.

I have some questions I would like to ask you, but feel free to share anything relevant as it arises. Do you have any questions before we begin?

### **Women's rights (general)**

1. What do you think are the biggest challenges to women's rights in Fiji?

### **Women's rights/concerns in land use and conservation**

2. Do you/your organization have any current work in land use, conservation, and women's rights or gender-based violence/violence against women?
  - a. Probes: Can you describe the details of that work?
3. How would you describe women's rights in relation to land use and conservation in Fiji?

- a. Probes: Are they represented or included in leadership and/or decision-making? Do they have access to resources? Are they equally included in projects or initiatives (e.g., training for alternative livelihoods)? Are there any other unique challenges or risks they face?
- 4. What are the challenges that you have seen that communities face in accessing the benefits of land agreements?
  - a. Probes: Is there a difference between men and women? Why do you think that is? How can the difference be resolved?
- 5. Do you think women's livelihoods are affected by land agreements, like REDD+?
  - a. Probes: Do land agreements like REDD+ provide any benefits to women's livelihoods (*explain*)? Do you feel that the land agreements, like REDD+, put women's livelihoods at risk (*explain*)?
- 6. Are there any new (since 2018) laws, policies, or guidelines linking or protecting women's rights to land use and conservation?

### **Existing mechanisms to report grievances**

- 7. Do you/your organization have any familiarity or experience working with REDD+?
- 8. At this time, what do you think typically happens if a dispute or grievance arises in relation to land use, REDD+, or other conservation mechanisms?
  - a. Probes: Is it the same for women and men? Is it the same depending on the type of grievance, complaint, or dispute?
- 9. What individuals, institutions, or systems do you think people trust more to discuss and address grievances, disputes, or complaints?
  - a. Probes: Describe why? Do they trust this individual/institution/system to handle their concern fairly? Does this apply to women and men in the same way? Are there systems or mechanisms that they *don't* trust?
- 10. Do women in communities feel comfortable using complaint systems when they have disputes?
  - a. Probes: Which systems (formal, customary, community)? Are some preferred (*why*)? Is it the same for men and women?
- 11. Are there factors that you think stop women from filing complaints or grievances?
  - a. Probes: Do any of the following play a role: cost, norms, family/community, trust in the institution or system, individual-level factors about the person taking the report? Does the "No Drop Policy" in the legal system influence women? Are there other legal or institutional challenges?
- 12. Do women face any risks if they make complaints?
  - a. Probes: Do they experience isolation, retribution, shame, exclusion from the community? Are they at risk of violence? Do you know of instances where this has happened (*explain*)?
- 13. *Additional question for Ministry of Forestry:* How are forest officers selected? Could you share any information/documentation with us about workforce demographics for the Forest Officers? Do you know what proportion are women? Do you know their ages? Do they come from the same communities that they work in? Do you know their education level? Do Forest Officers receive training on gender or gender-based violence?

### **Gender-based violence and land use / conservation**

- 14. Evidence from the Fiji Women's Crisis Center indicates that 2 in 3 women in Fiji have experienced physical or sexual violence. Why do you think this is the case?
  - a. Probes: Have you seen evidence of gender-based violence in your role/institution?

15. Do you think women are at risk for violence in relation to land use or conservation efforts, like REDD+?
  - a. Probes: If yes, what are the risks? What efforts, if any, are being made at the national level to mitigate those risks?
16. Do you think there is a need to mitigate risks related to violence in land use and conservation?
17. Are you aware of any efforts currently to provide support for women who have experienced violence related to land use or conservation?
  - a. Probes: If yes, what are they? Do you think they have been effective?
18. Are you aware of any other programs that link land conservation with women's rights, women's protections, or gender-based violence?

### **Recommendations/suggestions**

19. How would you recommend making the current methods for reporting feedback, grievances, and disputes more accessible and appropriate?
  - a. Probes: For women specifically? Are there other groups that may have difficulty access the complaint process? Who are they? How would you recommend making the process more accessible to them?
20. If we want to improve a grievance and dispute mechanism to make it more helpful for women, what do you think we should do?
21. What elements are necessary in a grievance redress mechanism to make it safe to use to report instances of violence in conservation sites, like REDD+?
  - a. Probes: What about for violence against women, specifically? What about violence within the family?
  - b. Probes: Who would they trust (institution and individual level)? What would make them feel their information/identity was protected? Who could we connect them to? Any variation based on gender or the type of grievance?
22. Are there any other individuals or organizations you think we should speak to regarding this project (relating to women, land use, and/or violence)?
23. Are there any reports or documents on this topic that you think we should read?
  - a. Probes: Are they publicly available, or could you share them with us?

## Focus Group Discussion Guide

### Group: Drawa Community Members

**Introductions: First, we would like to get to know a little bit more about each of you.**

1. We would like you to introduce yourselves with your first name and a little about who you are.
2. How many of you are members of a *mataqali* in the Drawa Block?
3. Are there women's groups in your villages?
  - a. Probes: *What are they/ what do they do? Are there members from only one village, or multiple villages? How are they led?*

**Women and land use: The first topic we would like to understand more about is women's work and relationship to land use and conservation in your communities.**

4. What kind of work do women do in your communities?
  - a. Probes: *Is it related to the land? Does it rely on natural resources? Are there any women's projects or activities in the community? How is your work or your projects different from men's work or men's projects?*
5. Have you, your family, or your *mataqali* ever had land agreements with the land you work on and use?
6. Do you know about REDD+?
  - a. Probes: *Can you describe how REDD+ has worked in your communities? (e.g., protected areas, livelihood projects, etc.)*
  - b. Follow-up if they know about REDD+: What do you think the benefits of REDD+ are? What do you think the challenges of REDD+ are?
    - i. Probes: *Does it affect your work? What about your family's/husband's work?*
7. How are decisions about land use and conservation made in your community?
  - a. Probes: *Are women involved? How are they involved?*

**Land use/conservation disputes: We would like to learn more about how *mataqali* and families solve disputes. Because we are talking about land use, we will use land disputes as an example for our discussion.**

8. Do you know of any disputes related to land use or REDD+ in your communities?
  - a. Probes: *What was the reason for the dispute? What happened? Was the dispute reported? To whom? Has the dispute been resolved? How was it resolved?*
9. Do you know of a dispute being taken up in a formal process? *[if not described above]*
  - a. Probes: *Describe what the persons(s) with the dispute did – who did she/he/they take it to? What happened next?*
10. Do women in your communities ever experience disputes or problems with land use or conservation?
  - a. Probes: *What kind of problems? (see above)*
  - b. Follow-up if they answer yes to question 10: What do women in your communities do if they experience a problem in land use?
    - i. Probes: *Do they tell someone? Do they make complaints? If so, who makes the complaint (individual woman or women's group, or someone else)?*
11. If we created a process to report and resolve disputes and problems, then what do you think women would want from that process?

**Safety and violence in communities: For the mechanism we are creating, we would like to make sure it is safe to use if anyone in the community experiences violence. Our last set of**

**questions will ask about whether there is violence against women or men in your communities.**

12. Have you ever heard of violence against women or men in your communities, or in other communities?
  - a. Probes: *What kind of violence (partner, family)?*
13. Do you know if violence is ever related to how land is used or conserved?
14. In general, do you know what women or men in your community do if they experienced violence?
  - a. Probes: *Do they talk to anyone? Do they ever report it? Do they talk to a pastor? Village head? Women's group?*
15. Do you know of any support services or groups for women or men who experience violence?
  - a. Probes: *Do you know of FWCC? Other groups? Do women or men use them?*
16. If a system is created for safe reporting of violence around land use, what should we do to make it easy and safe for women and men to use? If this system resolves disputes, will this be acceptable to families?

## Approvals - Letters of Support for Consultations





## MINISTRY OF FORESTRY

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**Ref:** FO/G/10-21

**Date:** 30/7/20

Ms Shamima Ali  
Director  
Fiji Women's Crisis Centre  
Suva

### MINISTRY OF FORESTRY SUPPORT LETTER

The Fiji Ministry of Forestry is most honored to provide a support letter for Marstel-Day and WI-HER for the **USAID Resilient, Inclusive, & Sustainable Environments (RISE)** initiative that focuses on interventions that will address gender and gender-based violence (GBV) challenges in the environment and in environmental programming. This support is based on the positive work that Marstel-Day has established with Fiji, having led the *Feedback, Grievance, and Redress Mechanism* (FGRM) for the World Bank Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF)/Fiji REDD+ Programme.

We are writing this letter to request support from the **Fiji Women's Crisis Centre (FWCC)** to serve as a counterpart organization for the USAID RISE Activity. As a leading and critical organization that helps to combat violence against women in Fiji, the FWCC is being asked to provide much needed expertise on GBV issues in Fiji and help with the sensitive task of community consultations for the protection and safeguarding of women, youth, and vulnerable groups as the RISE Activity looks at the linkages that may exist between GBV and the environment. The report and future work under this programme will further support Fiji's Emissions Reduction Programme implementation to commence in July 2020.

We thank you for your willingness to support the USAID RISE Activity.



Sanjana Lal  
Conservator of Forests



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**Ref:** FO/G/10-21

**Date:** 30/7/20

Emalu Trust  
Nadroga  
Navosa

**ATTN: Seveci Takaiwai, Forest Warden for Draubuta**

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We are writing this letter in support of and to help facilitate community consultations that may be needed in order to undertake study and analysis of any potential areas of concern or gender-based risks that may exist to vulnerable groups as a result of environmental programming, such as REDD+. This report will assist Fiji's FGRM work during the implementation of its Emission Reduction Programme commencing in July 2020.



.....  
Sanjana Lal  
Conservator of Forests



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**Ref:** FO/G/10-21

**Date:** 30/7/20

The Director  
Live & Learn Education  
Imthurm Road  
Suva

**ATTN: Mr. Peni Maisiri, Assistant Chair, Drawa Block, 8353295**  
**Ms. Waita Curuvale, Women Leader, Drawa Block, 8769662**

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The Fiji Ministry of Forestry is honored to provide a support letter for Marstel-Day and WI-HER for the **USAID Resilient, Inclusive, & Sustainable Environments (RISE)** initiative that focuses on interventions that will address gender and gender-based violence (GBV) challenges in the environment and in environmental programming. This support is based on the positive work that Marstel-Day has established with Fiji, having led the *Feedback, Grievance, and Redress Mechanism* (FGRM) for the World Bank Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) /Fiji REDD+ Programme.

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Sanjana Lal  
**Conservator of Forests**

## Attachment 3

# Organizations and Agencies Involved in GBV Response and Support

Organization or Agency	Type of Service	Description of roles or responsibilities
Ministry of Health and Medical Services (MoHMS)	Health and Medical	Delivers clinical care and management, emotional support, referral, and adequate documentation, including collection of evidence where needed or requested. Developed and manages the clinical guidelines for GBV care ( <i>Responding to Intimate Partner Violence and Sexual Violence against Women and Girls: Health Guidelines for Comprehensive Case Management</i> ) (Fiji MoHMS, 2015).
Medical Services Pacific (MSP)	Health and Medical	Manages a “One Stop Shop” facility for post-sexual assault care in Suva and Labasa, including medical care, legal aid, safety planning, and referrals to safe housing. MSP also has a mobile response team, which can respond to cases across the nation when requested by a client or law enforcement official.
Fiji Women’s Crisis Centre (FWCC)	Counseling and Survivor Advocacy	Provides crisis counseling, referrals for crisis counseling and mobile counseling, legal advice, and accompaniment to other services. FWCC has Crisis Centres in Labasa, Ba, Nadi and Suva, and also runs a national Domestic Violence Helpline.
Empower Pacific	Counseling and Survivor Advocacy	Offers GBV case management and counseling, screening for sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and GBV, income generation support, and relationship skills workshops for men and women.
House of Sarah*	Counseling	Provides training for a network of Christian women. These women, “Sarah Carers,” can provide basic counseling and referral to specialized counseling.
Lifeline Fiji*	Counseling	Offers phone-based counselling, crisis response, and can make referrals to ongoing support through the Fiji Lifeline Counselling Service (Australia DFAT, 2017).
Salvation Army	Safe Shelter	Offers emergency shelter in Family Care Centers in Lautoka, Suva, and Labasa. Residents in the centers are assigned a caseworker to provide support, refer to specialized services, and help secure permanent housing (Australia DFAT, 2017).
Homes of Hope (HOH)	Safe Shelter	Operates a long-term emergency GBV shelter in Suva, which provides residential care, a restoration program focused on counseling and life skills, and a reintegration program to provide long-term security, economic empowerment, and mediation.
Fiji Police Force (FPF)	Law Enforcement	Ensures cases of GBV are handled respectfully and reported appropriately, including appropriate collection of evidence, and filing of charges. Officers in the FPF must also explain the “No Drop Policy” in all GBV cases and file requests for DVROs.
Legal Aid Commission	Legal Aid	Provides free legal aid services (e.g., legal advice, filing, legal representation) to Fijians who are impoverished or disadvantaged in 16 offices across the nation.
Judicial Department	Law Enforcement	Hears cases of GBV (including DVRO requests), applies GBV-related laws and regulations to cases, and makes decisions on cases.
Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation (MoWCPA), Women’s Division	Coordination of Services	Coordinates the administration of the service delivery protocols to ensure agency compliance and makes recommendations for updates to the protocol and other relevant laws and policies.
Ministry of iTaukei Affairs – iTaukei Affairs Board	Coordination of Services	Encourages reporting in iTaukei communities and supports outreach for GBV prevention and response in communities.

Adapted from *Fiji National Service Delivery Protocol for Responding to Cases of Gender Based Violence* (Fiji MoWCPA, 2018).

\*Not included in the Fiji National Service Delivery Protocol but provides services

## Attachment 4

### Referenced Tools and Documents

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