

GENDER INTEGRATION IN COOPERATIVES

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Gender Integration in Co-operatives

Report of the Country Survey

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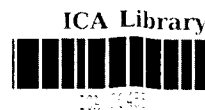
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PREFACE

The ICA Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (Earlier called South East Asia) launched a special Women's Programme during the Women's decade (1975-1985). This programme, headed by a Women specialist, had been able to create an awareness and conditions for enhancing women's participation in co-operatives.

The Programme in particular achieved success in the areas of influencing cooperative authorities to provide positive legal environment for women's participation in cooperative leadership and business. Many co-operative movements established women's committees at various levels and also incorporated representatives in their management committees. Many training activities were organised at the national and regional levels by the Women's Section of the ICA ROEC.

However, due to the financial constraints faced by the ICA during the mid-eighties, the Regional Women's Programme as well as many other programmes had to be curtailed. After completion of the restructuring process, we are now in a position to look back and start re-thinking on the gender issues with a new outlook.

The concept of Women in Development (WID) has undergone substantial changes during the eighties. When the feminist movement was subject to re-assessment, many new WID approaches have emerged. Approach of gender planning has become popular at present with a broader concept of gender. This change is also due to the results of evaluation on the women's position in the society after the UN Women's Decade. Many have felt that the approaches introduced during this period have either become obsolete or have not shown results as expected in the process of global socio-economic changes. Therefore, UN agencies as well as many international NGOs have revived their WID programmes, keeping gender issues in mind.

As for the co-operative movements in the Region, the same situation is visible. Many co-operative movements continue to adopt the WID strategies introduced in nineteen seventies. Therefore, it has become vital to access the current WID situation in co-operatives in terms of concepts, strategies and the cost benefits of the existing programmes. Any future planning for WID programmes or Gender Planning mechanisms in co-operatives should be based on such an evaluation.

The Human Resource Development Project, established in 1990 by the ICA incorporated gender issues as a priority field. With a view to launch an effective

programme in the future, a study has been undertaken covering 14 countries in Asia and the Pacific, which are representative of developed and developing economies. The studies have been carried out by specialists on gender issues on a common format and guidelines provided by the ICA ROAP. These country studies would provide a macro level situation in the respective countries.

The country study will form an important basis for future planning for the ICA ROAP and for respective countries. I am happy that we are able to share the findings of the country studies with those who are concerned with gender issues in cooperatives. The ultimate hope we have is that the gender integration in cooperatives would bring about more productivity and strength to them by utilising human resources to the optimum.

I would like to thank the country researchers, cooperative movements and the staff of the HRD project at the ICA ROAP for undertaking the ground work for future gender programmes in cooperatives. e

New Delhi
August 18, 1992

G.K.Sharma
Regional Director

FOREWORD

This publication series of country studies on Gender Integration and Women in Cooperatives covers 14 developed and developing countries in Asia and the Pacific. On the other hand, the studies are representative of open, mixed and centrally planned economies.

The country research had the following objectives :

- to assess as to what extent the gender integration has taken place for economic and social development and the activities of cooperatives of the country given,
- to assess the level of participation of women in decision making and activities in co-operatives,
- to compare the level of socio-economic developments of a given country with gender situation,
- to identify the socio-cultural and economic factors hindering gender integration in development with special emphasis on co-operatives,
- to identify critical areas for future strategies for promoting gender awareness and gender participation, resulting in gender integration in co-operative development,
- to create awareness among the authorities and all concerned in gender issues on the level of development a given country has shown and the gap which exists in co-operatives.

The ICA ROAP engaged the services of competent and independent researchers through the national co-operative unions and some of them through other sources. A format was designed and used in order to ensure the conformity to the set of objectives laid down and to facilitate the data processing process. The methodology consisted of data from primary sources, authoritative documents and interviews by random samples.

We have tried to analyse the data collected through country reports and identify common features as well as special features in the region in the field of gender integration in co-operatives. We have also attempted to highlight the common and contradictory conclusions made by the researchers. A Regional Overview of gender integration has been published separately embodying these summaries.

Our sincere expectation from the publication of the country studies and the overview is to create an awareness of all co-operative movements and governmental and inter-governmental agencies to assess the present gender strategies in co-operatives and improve upon their planning mechanism for ensuring the equal participation of gender in co-operative development.

I would like to thank all country researchers who undertook the task within a short time and with limited resources and sources of information. National level co-operative organisations and the ILO Co-operative Project in Indonesia supported the project through consultation and their resources. We appreciate their common interest for the cause. a

Mr. P. Nair, Desk Top Publisher and Secretary of the HRD Project, did the computer-based DTP work. Mr. S.S. Kukkal, a renowned artist in Delhi prepared the cover page. Document Press made the printing job very attractive. I would like to note our appreciation to them for their devoted work.

New Delhi
August, 1992

W.U.Herath
Advisor-Human Resource Development

Introduction

Fiji's greatest and most dependable resource are its people. Fiji is a plural society with Fijians, Indians, Europeans, Chinese and other descents. We in Fiji therefore have a rich cultural heritage and a diverse pool of human resources.

Women constitute half the population of the world and therefore 50% of the world's manpower. In Fiji women also constitute approximately half (352,807) of Fiji's total of 715,375 and therefore 50% of its manpower. Women are survivors and have inherent qualities and characteristics that enable them to preserve and nurture others to survive.

Women in Fiji, and one could safely assume this to be so in other Third World countries as well, have tended to be accorded lower and subordinate status. Prevailing cultural beliefs, prejudices and attitudes have also tended to reinforce this, so much so that in most developing countries, "improving the status of women" has become a very important development goal in itself rather than being a means to other development goals. This has come about as a result of the failure to see women as a resource with great potential. There are more data and information that emphasise women's inequality than there are data and information gathered to help better utilise this section of the labour force or half of our manpower.

To utilise this resource to the fullest in order to achieve development goals, must be a measure that should be pursued. The thrust of programmes for women therefore should aim at providing women with knowledge, skills and other resources in order that they get access into the economic and political sectors and also strengthen their status in the social sector.

Fiji, in keeping with the efforts spearheaded by the United Nations to promote women, has not been unaware of women's potential and has sought to provide for the realisation of this in a practical way. Moves by women for a bigger and more efficient national machinery came to fruition in September, 1987 by the creation of a Ministry for Women although the needs of women as a special category had been to some extent catered for in the past by the existence of a

Women's Interest Section in government since 1960.

In the traditional Fijian society a woman's first responsibility is her home and family. Her key roles are that of wife, mother and home-maker. Those who are free do not tend to be the exception rather than the rule. In general, especially in rural subsistence agriculture and even with the newer concept of the "breadwinner" role for women as complementary or subordinate it's importance can never be over-emphasised.

As a wife, mother and home-maker, women provide the basic education in the first formative years of life. Women are also basic providers of food, health, community welfare and home comforts. If we recognise these roles as essential and we therefore accord them the importance they deserve, it should then follow that development programmes should be aimed at making women more efficient and effective in undertaking these roles in order to produce a healthy, intelligent and responsible manpower ready to tackle the demands of the future.

This research has attempted to compile findings through visits and interviews and also through references to papers and workshops on the Cooperative sector. The Cooperatives Department staff and their Annual Reports have also been very helpful. Otherwise specifically mentioned, all figures in this research are from the Bureau of Statistics.

General Features

1.1. Fiji comprises about 300 islands with a total land area of about 18,333 sq km spread over about 1.3 million sq km of ocean. About one-third of these islands are permanently inhabited. The two major islands, Viti Levu (10,429 sq km) and Vanua Levu (5,556 sq km) together account for 87% of the total land area where about 90% of the total population live. The Fiji Group lies between latitudes 15 and 22 degrees south and longitudes 177 degrees west and 175 degrees east. Fiji includes within its territory the island of Rotuma. Please refer to the map of Fiji attached as Appendix 1.

1.2 The indigenous people of Fiji are of predominantly Melanesian stock, but Eastern Fiji has strong ethnic and cultural influences from Western Polynesia in particular, Tonga.

1.3 By comparison with other South Pacific island states, Fiji is the third largest (after PNG and Solomon Islands) in land area, and its economy is considered more diversified and developed than most other South Pacific Island Countries. Because it is centrally placed among other South Pacific Island nations, Fiji has become the crossroads of air and shipping services between North America, Australia and New Zealand.

1.4 Fiji enjoys a warm tropical climate which favours agriculture and tourism development. There is very small seasonal variation with temperatures ranging between 65 degrees and 88 degrees fahrenheit all the year round. At times, the group experiences adverse weather conditions such as hurricanes, floods and droughts which can be very disruptive to the economy and the people. Rainfall averages around 1230 inches per year on the wind ward side of Viti Levu where non-sugar agricultural crops and dairy production thrives, and between 70 and 80 inches on the leeward side. Sugarcane is mostly grown on the drier leeward side of the two main islands.

1.5 Fiji was a British Colony for almost a century. It became independent in October, 1970, opting for a democratic system of constitutional government with a Dominion status in the Commonwealth. This status was changed in October,

1987 when the second of two military Coups d'etat disrupted what had been a period of peaceful political transition from colonial rule.

1.6 With the declaration of Fiji as a Republic under Military rule in October 1987, its membership in the Commonwealth lapsed and its constitution, adopted in 1970 was revoked. However, with the reinstatement of a civilian government in December 1987, the formalization of a republican system of government took place and has continued since.

1.6.1 Under the present Republic, the President is the head of state with an Interim government led by a Prime Minister and seventeen state Ministers. The executive and legislative authority effectively rests with the Interim Government until such time as the country is returned to a normal parliamentary system.

1.6.2 The present Interim Government has been charged with stabilising and reviving the economy and returning the country to democracy. A new Constitution was promulgated in 1990 and preparations are underway for the general elections, announced recently to be held in July, 1992.

1.6.3 The new Constitution allows for a Parliament consisting of a President and two houses; an elected House of Representatives, (50 members) an appointed Senate (34 members).

The President is the Commander-in-Chief of Fiji and is appointed (for five years) by the Great Council of Chiefs. The House of Representatives members are elected to represent constituencies by voters who are registered on one of 4 separate rolls, 37 Fijians, 27 Indians, 1 Rotuman and 5 others.

1.6.4 For the Senate, 24 Fijian members appointed by the President on the advice of the Great Council of Chiefs; 1 Rotuman appointed by the President on the advice of the Rotuma Island Council and 9 members appointed by the President in his own deliberate judgement from other communities. The term of office for Senate members is four years.

1.7 The Civil Service has 17 Ministries headed by 17 Cabinet Ministers. There are over 60 smaller departments set up to help organise and systematize services provided for the general public. The Public Service Commission is charged with the general control, organisation, management and accommodation of the Civil Service. The PSC also has the power to make appointments to public offices (including power to confirm these appointments) and to remove and to exercise disciplinary control over persons holding or acting in such offices. The Constitution does not allow appeals against appointments, promotions and transfers made by the Public Service Commission.

1.8 The city and town councils administration administers and manages the affairs of the cities and towns in the urban centres In the rural areas the

Provincial, District and Village Councils look after the affairs of villagers in Fijian set up. In the Indian society the Indian Advisory Councils of each district are responsible for administration of the affairs of the Indian community in the districts.

1.8.1 In Fiji there are 2 major cities namely Suva and Lautoka who have their own elected city councils. About seven proclaimed townships have their own town councils. Other smaller towns come under rural local authority who runs the townships from Government grants through the Health Office. Members to these rural local authorities are appointed by the Minister for Health.

1.8.2 In the Fijian set up, the councils at the three levels, (village, district and province) plan programmes at each level before they are taken up to the next level and finally to the Provincial Office which then communicates the issues and requests to the relevant Ministries and departments.

1.9 Like many other countries in the world, the Judiciary in Fiji functions independently of the executive or any other authorities. The Constitution allows for a High Court, a Fiji Court of Appeal which is the final appellate Court and such other courts as may be established by law.

1.10 Extensive roads (particularly rural roads) port facilities, small jetties, and small airports and airstrips have been constructed in order to connect Fiji's remotest communities to social and economic service facilities.

1.10.1 Fiji now has an extensive road network with most of the circuminsular, transinsular and other major roads completed. The marine and air transport infrastructure facilities have developed steadily. The development of transportation for isolated regions and for those areas with development potential continues to be given priority. Improved road network to provide basic links between commercial centres and access to agricultural development will continue to be emphasized.

1.11 Marine anchorage facilities and inter-island shipping services have both been items of concern for the government. Inter-island shipping has been the major issue and the government is continuing a programme of phased withdrawal of the Government fleet from commercial services. In doing so, the Government hopes to create an environment in which the private sector can eventually satisfy all shipping needs adequately and efficiently. These problems of inadequate and irregular shipping services adversely affect cooperatives in outlying islands.

In some instances, these islands do not get supplies for months on end and they depend very much on root crops, self-grown vegetables and marine resources.

1.12 Air transport facilities are provided in many of these outlying islands and

the least accessible areas of Fiji. During its DP9 period, the government has continued a programme of outer island airstrip construction wherever demand for air services justify their construction. As a result only a few of these outlying islands are without airstrips.

1.13 However, problems of maintenance and cost are sometimes detrimental to such services. While the majority of Fiji's population now live close to a road or marine anchorage facility, an increasing proportion has telecommunication facilities within easy access.

1.13.1 The only problem here, is when these facilities (e.g. post offices and telephone exchanges) are left unmanned for longer periods. Telephones and postal services in Fiji have improved greatly since 1986 and with Posts and Telecommunications Ltd. now privatized, it is hoped that these services will further develop to cater the Fiji's increasing demands.

1.14 Of the total land area of about 18,333 sq km, about 12.6% (2320 sq km) is considered arable; 35% (6472 sq km) is suitable for tree crops/ pastures; 46.2% (9585 sq km) is covered with forests and 6% is unused. Freehold land which makes up 8.2% of the total is largely individually owned. Native land (82.4%) is exclusively and communally owned by Fijians and administered on behalf of the owners by the Native Land Trust Board. The balance of 9.4% is owned by the State.

Economic Policy and Status

Trends and Policy Issues

The Fiji economy is based primarily on sugar production and tourism. Both industries performed poorly in the early 1980s. Sugar prices were low and production suffered badly from drought and cyclones. Tourism was adversely affected by the world recession.

2.1.1 A revival of the economy in the mid 1980s was interrupted by political events of 1987. 1988 and 1989 were years of recovery, helped by strong revival in sugar prices and rapid recovery of tourism. GDP grew by about 12% in real terms in 1989. Growth of about 4.5% is expected for 1990.

2.1.2 Some progress has been made in the diversification of the economy away from the tourism. Forestry is currently in transition from plantation management to pulchips and sawn timber exporting, and is expected to become an industry of major significance in the next ten years. Gold production has expanded dramatically and is now the second largest export commodity. Non-sugar agriculture, including ginger, cocoa and root crops, is expanding, though it still remains small in absolute terms. There has also been some diversification through import substitution, for example in meat, rice and dairy products, but costs have been relatively high. Manufacturing industry is expanding most notably the production of garments for export. Production and exports from the fisheries sector have also shown substantial growth over the last four years. Additional investments in the expansion of the vessel fleet and canning capacity are planned.

2.1.3 Real per capita incomes in Fiji dollars are estimated to have fallen by about 1% p.a. over the period 1980 to 1988. However, the rapid growth in 1989 has restored real per capita income roughly to the 1980 level. National GDP per capita in 1988 is estimated at US \$ 1350.

2.1.4 There was a persistent weakness in investment in the 1980s, particularly after the completion of major public sector infrastructure projects in the early part of the decade. There were signs of a revival of investment in 1989,

particularly in tourism and manufacturing and there is a good prospect of further expansion in 1990. A strong rise in private investment in the near future is crucial to the growth of the economy in the 1990s.

2.1.5 Devaluation of the Fiji dollar by about 35% in 1987 strengthened the international competitive position of Fiji and gave encouragement to exporting. It also caused a surge in the rate of inflation. The average Consumer Price Index for 1988 was 11.9% above 1987. Such a high rate of increase had not been experienced since 1980 and 1981, following the rise in international oil prices. The average rate of inflation for the period 1980 to 1988 was 7.6%. Inflation has now moderated, with an increase of 6.1% for 1989.

2.1.6 The Tripartite Forum, which set wage guidelines in the late 1970s and early 1980s, effectively came to an end in 1984 when a wage freeze was imposed. Deregulation of wage determination is seen as the most effective way of ensuring Fiji's international competitiveness in the medium term, but Government will issue guidelines until it is satisfied that labour market conditions make deregulation feasible.

2.1.7. Economic prospects for the medium term are good provided that the current revival in private investment is maintained and strengthened. The tourist industry offers the most immediate prospect for substantial investment but there is also need for major investment in other sectors. Continued efforts will be made to increase output of non-sugar agriculture. There is also substantial scope for further expansion of exports of manufactured goods. There is also substantial scope for further expansion of exports of manufactured goods.

National Development Policies and Strategies

2.2.1 Major changes in policy emerged in reaction to the poor economic performance of the early years of the 1980s and were firmly adopted by the Interim Government which took office in December 1987. Previous policies of regulation in pursuit of import replacement have been abandoned in favour of a strategy of promoting economic growth through expansion of exports.

2.2.2 A programme of economic deregulation is being pursued to bring domestic prices more into line with international prices. Import licence requirements on a wide range of manufactured goods were removed in 1989 and similar changes for agricultural products are envisaged.

2.2.3 The success of the strategy depends heavily on private initiative and it is envisaged that the public sector will become smaller in relation to GDP, both to reduce its demands on the private sector and to release resources for private enterprise.

2.2.4 Tax reforms to provide greater incentive to risk taking and effort are also being introduced. Rates of income tax were reduced in the 1990 budget and some at valorem rates of excise tax were introduced. A broader and more uniform system of indirect taxation is envisaged.

2.2.5 For a small island country endowed with limited land and sea resources, Fiji has invested substantially in the development of these resources. This has, to a large extent dictated the structure of the economy and the direction of the country's future development efforts.

2.2.6 Fiji is endowed with a favourable geological environment. Its known epithermal deposits have attracted increased investment in mineral prospecting. Gold production, which contributes about 2% of GDP, has continued to dominate the Mining and Quarrying sector. Silver, a byproduct of gold mining activities, has been exported for many years. The existence of copper deposits was established in the 1970s but the commercial exploitation of these are likely to be determined by future trends in the market price of copper. Oil exploration by private entities within the country's EEZ have been in progress since the seventies.

2.2.7 The potential for the exploitation and development of the living and non-living resource within Fiji's 1.3 m sq km maritime Exclusive Economic zone is immense. Significant progress has been made to further develop fish and other sea food on a commercial basis both for local consumption and export. The contribution of the fishing sector to domestic exports in 1988 was 10%. Other marine products such as beche-de-mer, mother of pearl, black corals and others are also being exploited and are growing in importance as sources of foreign exchange receipts.

2.3 Agriculture

Despite the relatively small proportion of available arable land Fiji's economy has always had an agricultural base. Sugarcane together with other crops such as copra, rice and ginger, make up the agricultural sector which remains dominant and contributes 24% of GDP and 47% of total employment. The forestry sector is making an increasing impact on the country's economy. In particular the returns from substantial investments in pine plantation forests two decades ago are now coming on stream. This together with the continued exploitation of natural indigenous forests should boost the country's timber industry in immediate future.

2.3.1 In 1989 the agricultural sector accounted for approximately 24% of GDP an estimated 47% of total employment, and over 50% of the country's domestic

exports the agricultural sector is very important to Fiji's economy and this reflects the country's comparative advantages stemming from a relatively pest/disease free environment, a geographic location which enables the production of several off-seasonal crops for overseas markets and efficiency in the production of commodities such as sugar, ginger and many fresh tropical fruits.

2.3.2 Notwithstanding these favourable factors the country faces a number of constraints which have tended to determine many of the efforts towards agricultural development. These constraints include geographic isolation from the major overseas markets which has implications for communication and transport costs; the small size of the domestic market which restricts the realisation of economies of scale; the heavy dependence on a narrow range of commodities and the adverse and damaging effects of natural disasters such as hurricanes and floods.

2.3.3 Various measures have already been put in place, in an attempt to minimize the adverse impact of these constraints, particularly improving domestic transport and marketing infrastructure and product diversification.

2.3.4 The sector with a targeted annual average growth rate of at least 3-4% aims to make a substantial contribution to the overall rate of economic growth. The sector is also expected to make a major contribution to employment generation in the rural areas.

2.3.5 The efforts to diversify the agriculture base, especially towards exports, has so far met with only limited success. In this respect new policies and strategies, placing greater emphasis on market forces and incentives and less on direct intervention and government involvement in new agricultural programmes, are now in place.

2.3.6 Three major new agricultural development programmes have been identified for implementation focussing on improved extension services, infrastructure and land use management. These programmes aim to realise the agricultural potential of areas particularly in the outer islands, Vanua Levu and north west Viti Levu.

2.3.7 The potential importance of expanded sugar production on the national economy is also recognised and a feasibility study of this potential and its likely implications for the economy will be undertaken.

2.4 Fisheries

The value of fish exports have risen from \$11.7 million in 1985 to an estimated \$50.2 million, or 12% of total domestic exports, in 1989. The principal export product is canned tuna from the Pacific Fishing Company (PAFCO) which is

presently a wholly owned government company where majority of the workers are women.

2.4.1 PAFCO is the largest economic entity operating in the eastern islands of the country. The "multiplier effect" of its activities in terms of employment and income generation in this region, one of the poorest in the country, is significant.

2.4.2 Given the current prospects for further growth in the tuna industry the government will put in place an expansion programme for PAFCO which will include capacity and storage facilities.

2.4.3 The rural artisanal fisheries are also expanding and providing employment and income generation opportunities in the rural coastal areas. The value of rural catches is estimated at more than \$15 million for 1989. In order to ensure the long term sustainability of commercial rural fisheries the Government will improve resource assessment and resource management capabilities within the sector.

2.4.4 It must be mentioned here that women also play a vital role in this sector in which they make fishing a major occupation not only for family consumption but also for additional income.

2.5 *Forestry*

Through government investment in large scale plantation development the forestry industry is now entering a period of major structural change from forest development and research to harvesting and processing for export. It is envisaged that by the year 2000 the sector will contribute 15% of GDP and that the total employment generated directly and indirectly could reach 11,000.

2.5.1 To achieve this target it is envisaged that 4500 hectares of hardwood, mainly mahogany, will be planted annually. Furthermore, under the existing extension programmes, 1000 hectares of pine will be planted annually to match the current rate of harvesting.

2.5.2 One of the major challenges now facing the sector is to restructure its activities to take advantage of the new opportunities for employment and income generation in the rural areas.

2.5.3 The government will also improve courses and facilities for training in plantation management and logging techniques to ensure the continuing success of the sector.

2.5.4 Due to the expansion of harvesting that has been undertaken greater attention has been given to environmental issues so that logged areas do not suffer high levels of erosion and degradation.

2.6 Mineral Resources

The favourable geological environment and the already discovered epithermal gold deposits in some areas have attracted considerable exploration interest in the country. Recognising the increasing importance of the sector in terms of foreign exchange and the growing interest in exploration, the Government will ensure a good geoscientific database and an efficient administration that will respond to investor enquiries. The Government intend to review the mining legislation and royalty policies so as to ensure efficiency and an equitable return.

2.6.1 The lack of a comprehensive and appropriate policy framework for the management and development of the sector is regarded as a major potential constraint. The early formulation of such policy framework will take account of the changes in mining technology, diversity of exploration activities and the potential exploitable resources.

2.7 Tourism

Tourism is one of the key sectors of the Fiji economy. It is estimated to contribute approximately 12% to GDP and 25% of gross foreign exchange earnings.

2.7.1 The number of visitor arrivals grew from 190,000 in 1980 to 258,000 in 1986, an annual rate of increase of 5.2%. The two subsequent years, 1987 and 1988, were difficult ones for the industry but there was a strong recovery in 1989 with the number of arrivals expected to have reached the 1986 level again.

2.7.2 The sector is poised for continued growth and the two principal constraints to this, namely the availability of up market accommodation and the shortage of airline seat capacity from source markets, are being addressed as a matter of priority.

2.7.3 Private investment in tourism development is currently expanding with several major hotel developments recently commenced. Government is providing support for the sector in the form of infrastructure and a range of incentives.

2.7.4 Increased funding has been provided for Fiji Visitor's Bureau promotional activities. Addressing the training needs of the industry is also a major concern and the provision of improved training facilities is planned.

2.8 Manufacturing and Commerce

During the 1970's and early 1980's development of the manufacturing sector concentrated on processing of the output of the agriculture and fisheries sectors

and import substitution. The sector is currently undergoing a significant restructuring which focuses on deregulation and export orientation.

A major impetus for growth in the sector has been the establishment of the Tax Free Factory (TFF) Tax Free Zone (TFZ) scheme which has attracted considerable investment interest, notably in the garment industry.

2.8.1 Rapid expansion of the sector has provided Government with two immediate challenges involving the provision of serviced land and skilled manpower. These challenges are being addressed through the development of export processing zones and through a programme for industrial skill development. Preferential market access arrangements (through SPARTECA and the Lome Convention) also require close monitoring and changing market opportunities underline the need to encourage diversified investments in manufacturing, both in terms of products and markets.

2.8.2 As the manufacturing sector grows in sophistication greater emphasis will be placed on technology and productivity. Efforts will be made to safeguard Fiji's reputation for quality in foreign markets.

Population

3.1 The population of Fiji at the 1986 Population Census number 715,375 of whom 50.7% were males and 49.3% were females. This was an increase of 127,307 (21.6% over the 1976 population giving an average annual population growth of 2.0% p.a. over the last ten years. This rate shows a slight reduction from 2.1% recorded between the 1966 and 1976 censuses.

3.2 There is ethnic diversity in Fiji's population where two major races the ethnic Fijians (329,305 - 46%) and the Indians (345,704 -- 48.7%) make up 94.7% of the total population. The remaining 5.3% (37,366) comprise Europeans, Chinese and other Pacific Islanders. Since Fiji has a young population with 38.2 percent below the age of 15, the dependency ratio is relatively high at 70.3%.

The following table shows the age composition of population in Fiji.

Table 1: Age Composition of Population

Age Group (Years)	Fijian		Indian		Others		Total 1986	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
0 - 14	129019	39.1	130957	37.6	13487	36.1	273463	38.2
15 - 59	181265	55.2	203874	58.5	21378	57.2	406517	56.9
60 +	17765	5.3	12969	3.7	2298	6.2	33032	4.6
Not stated	1256	0.4	904	0.2	203	0.5	2363	0.3
Total	329305	100	348704	100	37366	100	715375	100

Source: Bureau of Statistics, 1986 Census

3.3 Fiji population is spread between the urban (38.7%) and rural areas (61.3%). This has been the pattern in the previous historical causes and effects which to some extent, determine the levels of economic achievement of the two major ethnic groups. Most Fijians still living in the rural areas, whereas Indians and other ethnic groups tend to concentrate in and around the urban centres.

However, in the later years, Fijian movement towards the towns became evident resulting in a gradual increase in the ratio of Fijians settling in the urban centres. 38.7% or 277,025 persons lived in urban areas and the remaining 438,350 (61.3%) in rural areas. The proportions of urban and rural dwellers in 1976 were 37.2% and 62.8% respectively. As recorded in the 1986 census 38.7 of Fiji's population or 277,025 persons lived in urban areas and 438,350 (61.3%) in rural areas. Please refer to Table 2 showing Urban/Rural Distribution of Population.

Table 2: Urban/Rural Distribution of Population, 1986

<i>Ethnic Origin</i>		<i>Urban</i>	<i>Rural</i>	<i>Total</i>
Fijians	Number	107,780	221,525	329,305
	%	32.7	67.3	100.0
Indians	Number	144,533	204,171	348,704
	%	41.4	58.6	100.0
Others	Number	24,712	12,654	37,366
	%	66.1	33.9	100.0
Total	Number	277,025	438,350	715,375
	%	38.7	61.3	100.0

Source: Bureau of Statistics, 1986 Census

3.4 More than 1/3 (38.6%) of the population or 275,840 were married in 1986 census, 411,517 (57.5%) never married 19,930 (2.8%) widowed and 7,741 (1.1%) divorced. Please refer to Table 3 showing Population by Marital Status.

Table 3: Population by Marital Status

Marital Status	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Never Married	219,609	60.6	191,908	54.4	411,517	57.5
Married	136,530	37.7	139,310	39.5	275,840	38.6
Widowed	3,642	1.0	16,288	4.6	19,930	2.8
Divorced	2,588	0.7	5,153	1.5	7,741	1.1
Not Stated	199	0.0	148	0.0	347	0.0
Total	362,568	100.0	352,807	100.0	715,375	100.0

Source: Bureau of Statistics, 1986 Census

3.5 More than half of the population i.e. 378,452 persons (52.9%) stated in the 1986 census that they were Christians, 273,088 (38.1%) Hindu; 56,004 (7.8%) Muslim; 4,674 (0.7%) Sikh and 460 (0.1%) of other religions.

3.6 The crude birth rate (number of live births per 1,000) in 1986 was 27. For Fijians the rate was 30 and for Indians the rate was 24.3. There has been a remarkable decline in fertility in Fiji over the 20 years period between 1966 and 1986, the total fertility rate (average number of live births per women) was 3.4. The decline is much more pronounced among Indian women than Fijian women. The Indian Total Fertility Rate (TFR) declined from 5.4. in 1966 to 2.8 in 1986 while for Fijians the figures were 5.6 and 4.1 respectively.

3.7 Migration has significantly influenced the rate of population growth. In the early eighties, the emigration figures ranged from 3785 in 1980 to 6589 in 1986. The year 1987 was exceptional in that the net loss through emigration reached an unprecedented level of 18,359 residents, of whom 1105 were Fijians, 14,328 were Indians, and 2926 were others. However, in 1988 net migration fell to 10,630 residents and this downward trend is likely to continue and is expected to stabilise at the 1986 level, probably by 1990.

3.8 Fiji's demographic history has shown a consistent downward trend in population growth rate from the 3.3% annual average recorded for the ten years to 1966. Concern over the high population growth rate led to the pursuit of a successful family planning campaign in the late sixties and early seventies. This, combined with a steady and sizeable level of emigration from the early 1970s gave rise to a marked decline in the average population growth rate between 1966 and 1976 which was 2.1% and which further fell to 2.0% between 1976 and 1986.

3.9 Following the events of 1987, Fiji experienced a negative population growth rate. Based on the combined effects of births, deaths and emigration, Fiji's population is estimated to have declined to 714,00 in 1987. Heavy emigration (18,359 residents) during the year was largely responsible for this decline. However, in 1988 net emigration fell to about half (10,000) of the 1987 level resulting in a modest population growth for that year. Fiji's population in 1990 is estimated at 726,000, representing a growth rate well below 2%. Table 4 shows the recent changes in the country's population.

3.10 Fiji's labour force growth in the long term depends primarily on population growth and emigration. The 1986 census recorded Fiji's labour force at 241,000, an increase of about 65,000 (or 37.2%) since the 1976 census. This represents an annual growth rate of 3.2% which was much faster than the growth of population (2.0%). Of particular interest was the rapid rise in the female labour force implying that more women were looking for paid employment in the last decade. This trend arose out of the marked improvement in the education

level of the entire labour force and of women in particular. In 1986, over 70% of the labour force had completed some secondary or higher education as against 27% in 1976. Under these circumstances, it was to be expected that the economic recession in the early eighties would result in high incidence of educated unemployed youth. The net annual entrants into the labour force in the eighties were estimated at 5-6,000 people per year. Please refer to the table below.

Table 4: Population, Labour Force and Employment

	('000)				
	1986	1987	1988	1989 <i>Est.</i>	1990 <i>Proj.</i>
Population	715.4	714.0	719.0	722.0	726.0
Labour Force	241.2	247.2	249.4	252.1	254.9
Paid Employment:					
March	-	77.6	76.6	88.7	-
June	79.9	-	77.7	88.2	-
September	-	-	80.4	89.8	-
December	80.8	77.7	81.9	-	91.0
Unemployment	18.2	23.5	25.8	22.4	21.1
Unemployment Rate (%)	7.5	9.5	10.3	8.9	8.3

*Source: 1986, Census of Population
1987 - 90 Bureau of Statistics*

3.11 Recent demographic change has had a substantial impact on the size and character of Fiji's Labour Force. In the short term the annual inflows into the Labour force from 1987 onwards will have declined from 6,000 to 3,000 persons per annum. This is desirable if the employment absorptive capacity of the economy is low. However, the country is already facing a skilled and professional labour supply problem given the current rapid expansion in the economy. This situation is deteriorating as the majority of those emigrating are highly skilled.

3.12 On balance, the country faces the prospect of a reduction in the size of annual new entrants into the Labour force. Unfortunately, the skill level of this labour force has significantly declined and this is likely to adversely affect the overall productivity and output of the Labour force in the short to medium term.

Health

4.1 The Health of the majority of the population in Fiji is good, in comparison with other developing countries of the Pacific Islands region such as Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. Fiji is fortunate in the absence of malaria and in the existence of a fairly efficient and accessible rural health service offering "grass root" woman to woman communication. The gains that have been made in the public health area have been of great benefit to women, leading to decreasing maternal and infant mortality rates and increasing life expectancy.

4.2 Life expectancies at birth estimated from the 1986 census have reached 61 years for males and 65.2 years for females, showing a higher life expectancy for females than for males in the total population. By developing country standards life expectancy is comparatively high in Fiji.

4.3 Infant mortality rates (deaths among infants under one year per 1000 live births) show significant decline over the past ten years as can be seen in the table below:

Table 5: Infant Mortality by Sex & Race 1975, 1986

		<i>(per 1000 live births)</i>	
		1976	1986
Fijians	Male	37	20
	Female	28	19
Indians	Male	41	23
	Female	33	20
Total	Male	-	23
	Female	-	19

Source: Bureau of Statistics, 1988

In 1989 the Infant Mortality (0-12 birth rate was 17.3 and the Child Mortality (1-4 years) rate was 17.2. (Ministry of Health 1989)

4.4 The above figures show an improvement in the health status of the population and indicative of improvement in the social and economic well-being of the population over the past ten years. By comparison, the infant mortality rate (1980-1985) for Australia is 10 per thousand, for Western Samoa it is 33 per thousand and for Papua New Guinea the rate is 98 per thousand.

4.5 There are 409 persons per hospital bed and 2500 persons per doctor. (Ministry of Health 1989)

4.6 The Government of Fiji continues to encourage family planning as part of its national primary health care and preventative medical programme. Family Planning is promoted by public health nurses in association with infant and maternal health programmes. Services are available at all government and private health facilities throughout the country and contraceptives sold through private pharmacies are subsidized by the government.

4.7 33.4% of women between the ages of 15-44 uses family planning. Of the total number of acceptors in 1984, Indians made up 68.9% and the Fijians made up 28.1%. The Ministry of Health has given that in 1989 the Family Planning Prevalence Rate was 32%.

4.8 The Family Planning Acceptors by percent of methods in 1989 as given by the Ministry of Health is shown below:

Pills	-	11%
IUDs	-	75%
Injectable	-	8.6%
Condoms	-	9.8%
Female Sterilisation	-	52.1%
Male Sterilization	-	1%

As pills and condoms are easily available from private pharmacies the true percent is not available. The above figures show that women are the major acceptors of family planning methods in Fiji.

4.9 The National Nutrition Survey carried out in 1980 showed that there was a 15% malnutrition in children.

Literacy and Education

5.1 Because Fiji had attained almost universal primary education, there are no government sponsored literacy programmes outside the school system. The literacy rates among adults in Fiji has increased from 79% in 1976 to 87% in 1986. The female literacy rate have increased steadily. Literacy rates among Fijians are higher overall than among Indians. Literacy rates among Fijian females were only 2% lower than those among Fijian males, whereas among Indian females literacy rates were 10% lower than among Indian males.

5.2 In 1989 there were 72,286 males enrolled in Primary schools in Fiji as compared to 68,486 females. As recorded by the Ministry for Education, Youth and Sports, only 2200 children of school age not enrolled with 1120 males and 1080 females.

5.3 In the secondary enrolments in 1989, 23,900 were males and 23,786 females.

5.4 The majority of women in technical training institutions are being trained for clerical and secretarial employment. Very few women opt for training in agriculture, trades and technical fields. These are traditionally "male" areas. This trend is also evident in the enrolment at the Fiji Institute of Technology shown in the table below:

Table 6: Technical Enrolments, 1986

	Male	Female
Technical/Vocational	1309	407
Agriculture	161	24
General & Secretarial	65	1496

(Figures for 1989 - 1990 were not released for this research)

5.5 Gender - stereotyping is influential in technical education in Fiji. The majority of women in technical training institutions train for clerical and secretarial employment (an occupational category oversupplied with potential workers). Relatively few women train in agriculture trades and allied technical fields where there is more employment potential, including potential for self - employment.

Employment

6.1 Women play a significant role in the economy of Fiji not only at the subsistence level but also in the commercial, manufacturing and service sectors. Although emphasis has always been placed on the traditional role of women, developments over the last twenty years has drawn attention to the need to enhance womens' contribution, in the socio-economic development of the country through their participation in mainstream economic activities.

6.2 Although it is widely recognised that women play a major role in the development of the country, their contribution is largely concentrated in the traditional role of motherhood and housekeeping, both of which are classified as being "economically inactive" by the Fiji census.

This is a misrepresentation of the value of their work which often combines home management, fishing, subsistence cultivation and income, generating activities.

6.3 Over the 1976-1986 decade total employment grew by 54,825 (32.6%) from 168,096 in 1976 to 222,971 in 1986. This represented an average annual growth rate of 3.2%. On the other hand, unemployment, as a result grew from 11,820 (6.70%) in 1976 to 18,189 (7.5%) in 1986. It is also notable that rural employment grew much faster than urban employment with the agriculture sector absorbing well over 45% of the entire labour force.

6.4 For the entire labour force in employment, the 1986 population census recorded 120,231(54%) in the two categories of "own account" and "unpaid family" workers, with the remaining 102,000 (46%) in the paid employment category. This latter category is further borken down into wage\salary employees (80,000) and seasonal workers such as cane cutters (22,000). For the wage\salary employment sector, one third is employed in public sector while two-thirds were in the private sector.

6.5 The downturn in the economy at the end of 1987 had a dramatic effect on the wage\salary sector employment. While wage cuts were instituted in a number of public sector establishments, major job losses in the private sector generally led

to rising unemployment and a growth of the 'own account' and 'unpaid family workers category during that time.

6.6 However, by the end of 1988 wage/salary employment had improved remarkably, gaining 7% over the 1987 employment level. This growth continued and by September 1989 total wage/salary employment had exceeded the 1986 level and reached an unprecedented level of 89,000.

It is estimated that in 1990 this figure will further rise to 91,000. The complete turn around in the paid employment sector reflects the overall growth in the economy, the devaluations of 1987, the continuing weak labour market, and the favourable provisions of the Tax Free Factory/Tax Free Zone Scheme. Employment growth will continue as building and constructing sector activities gather momentum in the wake of rising tourism demand for increased capacity.

6.7 Female participation in the labour force, especially in the wage and salaried employment, has been increasing steadily over the past few years. This apparent increase in women's participation can be attributed to the improvement in the level of educational attainment amongst females. In 1986 of a total of 241,160 who were considered to be 'economically active' females comprised only 21% (51231) of the work force compared to 79% males, although the number is minimal compared to males, this showed an actual increase of 4% since the 1976 census. In 1986, of the 51,231 women who were economically active, 7855 were unemployed. This figure included women who were housewives and mothers who had to stay home and mind their babies. In all counts there are more men than women. The unpaid family workers are those who work in family farms and small business. Please refer to Table 7 below:

Table 7: Economically Active Population by Employment Status: 1986

Employment	Male	%	Female	%	Total
Self Employed	72706	89.7	8294	10.3	8100
Public Employee	28396	74.5	9706	25.5	38102
Private Employee	46607	73.3	1946	26.7	63553
Unpaid Family Workers	31200	79.5	8031	20.5	39231
Unemployed	10334	56.8	7855	43.2	18189
Not Stated	686	62.8	399	36.2	1085
Total	189,929	79.0	51,231	21.0	241,160

Source: Bureau of Statistics, 1986 Census.

6.8 The table below shows the economically active population by occupation and sex. The table shows the distribution of the economically active population by occupation and sex. It can be seen from the table that the majority of the women are employed as clerical (47%) and service workers (48%) both of which are lowly paid occupations.

Table 8: Economically Active Population by Occupation and Sex

Occupational Classification	Male	%	Female	%	Total
Professional, Technical	10,725	60.4	7,049	39.6	17,774
Administrative Managerial	2,515	91.0	251	9.0	2,766
Clerical & Related	8,242	53.0	7,327	47.0	15,569
Sales	10,540	71.0	4,321	29.0	14,861
Service Workers	7,979	51.8	7,443	48.2	15,422
Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries Production	93,925	87.7	11,999	11.3	105,924
Transport	44,439	90.7	4,561	9.3	49,000
Seeking Employment	10,331	57.0	7,851	43.0	18,182
Not Stated	1,233	74.2	429	25.8	16,662
Total	189,929	79.0	51,231	21.0	241,160

Source: Bureau of Statistics, 1986 Census

6.9 Over the last few years expansion has taken place at the fish factory and garment industry. The majority of workers are women. A point worth noting is that no statistics exist for the large number of women who are engaged in the informal sector.

Gender Participation in Services

7.1 The table below (Table 9) shows the distribution of the workforce by industry. 52% of all female employment is concentrated in the agriculture and service sectors, the latter being the largest employer of women. Most of the women in the service industry work in the hotel and restaurant industry as cooks, waiters, housemaids etc.

Table 9: Economically Active Population by Industry and Sex, 1986

Industry	Male	%	Female	%	Total
Agriculture	94,133	88.6	12,172	11.4	106,305
Mining	1,270	94.5	75	5.5	1,345
Manufacturing	13,684	75.6	4,422	24.4	18,106
Electricity	2,049	95.2	105	4.8	2,154
Construction	11,557	98.0	229	2.0	11,786
Trade	17,679	68.0	8,331	32.0	26,010
Transport	12,048	91.7	1,103	8.3	13,151
Finance	4,073	67.8	1,943	32.2	6,016
Services	22,172	60.6	14,447	39.4	36,619
Not Stated/Unemployed	11,264	57.0	8,404	42.0	19,668
Total	189,929	79.0	51,231	21.0	241,160

Source: Bureau of Statistics, 1986 Census.

7.2 According to statistics kept by the Public Service Commission, the number of women employed in the Civil Service as at 15 March 1991 totals 6833 as compared to 9401 men. Table 10 shows a breakdown by occupational class. On

the management group, there are only 20 women as compared to 188 men. Of the 65 cooperative officers only one is a female. As reported by the Cooperative Department there are now three female cooperative officers.

7.3 In the Police Force only 63 of the 1983 total are females as compared to 1920 males. The armed forces did not take in female officers until after 1987 and figures were not released for this research.

Table 10: Civil Service Male - Female Analysis by Occupational Class

<i>Grade & Job Title</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Total</i>
Management Officers	188	20	208
Administrative Officers	733	463	1196
Accounting Officers	102	46	148
Archives Officers	6	4	10
Audit Officers	28	8	36
Cooperative Officers	64	1	65
Court Officers	69	9	78
Customs Officers	167	11	178
Economists	21	7	28
E.D.P. Officers	16	7	23
Education Officers	62	27	89
Immigration Officers	38	21	59
Information Officers	26	6	32
Labour Officers	36	1	37
Library Officers	9	19	28
Social Welfare Officers	28	40	68
Statistics Officers	28	24	52
Tax Officers	51	22	73
Transport Officers	33	2	35
Architects & Arch. Tech.	72	3	75
Civil Eng. & CE Tech.	243	3	246
Quantity Surveyors	1	-	1
Dentists	66	68	134
Legal Officers	10	3	13
Medical Officers	228	72	300

<i>Grade & Job Title</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Total</i>
Mech. & Elect. Eng.	90	-	90
Agricultural Officers	338	34	372
Fisheries Officers	74	5	79
Forestry Officers	119	1	120
Hydrologists	11	1	12
Scientific Officers	154	10	164
Surveying Officers	144	21	165
Town Planners	6	-	6
Valuers	12	-	12
Vet Officers	5	-	5
Nursing Officers	64	1483	1547
Pharmacy Officers	16	14	30
Police Officers	1920	63	1983
Dietitians Nutritionists	1	24	25
Health Inspectors	77	13	90
Physiotherapists	2	20	22
Radiographers & Related	40	11	51
Prison Officers	411	21	432
Radio & Electronic	11	-	11
Hydrographic Officers	2	-	2
E.D.P. Officers	9	42	51
Reporting & Typewriting	2	517	519
Supplies & Stores Officers	126	1	127
Teachers	3192	3563	6755
General Tech. Officers	17	1	18
Institutional Ser. Officers	31	36	67
Marine Officers	78	-	78
Printing & Stationery	44	6	50
Ship Building Officers	16	-	16
Hydrographers	16	-	16
Telecommunicaiton	7	32	39
Total	9401	6833	16,234

Political Participation

8.1. Women in Fiji were given the right to vote in 1966 and since then only 3 women have been elected into Parliament. Also 3 women have been appointed into the Senate.

8.2 The last parliamentary election was held in April 1987. However, after the events of May 1987, the new Parliament was dissolved and since then an interim government was put in place where only 2 of the 17 Ministers are women. The new elections are scheduled for July 1992.

8.3 Almost, all major Trade Unions in Fiji have women's Wings. The Fiji Public Service Association as at 31.12.90 has a total number of 4384 of which 1315 are females and 3069 males.

8.4 The Constitution contains certain provisions that protect women's status and also discriminates against them. Section 4 of the Constitution incorporates the general doctrine of equality that protects the fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual irrespective of race, sex, place of origin political opinions, colour, religion or creed.

8.5 Section 16 of the Constitution prevents the making of any discriminatory legislation. Section 16 states that:

- (a) "no law shall make any provision that is discriminatory either of itself or in its effect; and
- (b) no person shall be treated in a discriminatory manner by any person acting by virtue of any written law or in performance of the functions of any public office or any public authority.

8.5.1 Discrimination is defined as "affording different treatment to different persons attributable wholly or mainly to their respective descriptions by race, sex, place of origin, political opinion, colour, religion or creed, whereby persons of one such description are subjected to disabilities or restrictions to which persons of another such description are not made subject or are accorded privileges or advantages which are not accorded to persons of another such description".

8.5.2 An indication of the improvement in the status of women is the inclusion of “sex” in section 16, a factor that was not part of the 1970 Constitution.

8.6 In spite of this provision the Citizenship law discriminates against women who cannot have their husbands obtain automatic citizenship. Expatriate women who among Fiji are guaranteed almost automatic citizenship.

8.7 The Constitution also allows female participation in politics. In Fiji today there are many women active in party politics. Women’s Wings are also set up in political parties. Whether these women find themselves in Parliament in the forthcoming elections is entirely a “wait and see” concept.

8.8 To date Fiji has no anti-discrimination legislation and no equal pay Act. Fiji women are indeed aware of political activities and implications and have become more aware of political affairs and developments in the country.

Legal Environment for Gender Issues

9.1. The Constitution does not have special arrangements for men and women as such. What actually exists are some affirmative actions, as shown in section 18 of the Constitution. Section 18 provides for affirmative action. It states that: "Nothing contained in Section 16 of this Constitution shall preclude the enactment of any law or any programme or activity that has as its object and purpose the amelioration of conditions of disadvantaged individuals or groups including those that are disadvantaged because of race, sex, place or origin, political opinions, colour, religion or creed." This section allows for positive discrimination for disadvantaged groups. One of its possible advantages is that the women of Fiji may be able to use this provision to improve their status. However, to be able to do that, the policy makers would need to be convinced that "women" are a disadvantaged group needing special emphasis. ¹

9.2 Section 26 of the Constitution discriminates against women as earlier stated. (Citizenship Law), the Property Law also discriminates against women where financial contribution is a criteria for ownership of properties when it comes to divorce and separation cases.

9.3 There is no legal requirement in Fiji for employers to pay the same wage to women as is paid to men for equal or similar work.

9.4 Women are protected by discriminatory legislation which forbids women to be employed at night and which requires employers to give 84 days maternity leave. However, Maternity Leave with full pay for all children need to be introduced since at present this is allowed only for the first three confinements.

9.5 Although rape and domestic violence against women are problems found in all societies, increasing recognition is being given to the magnitude of the problem in Fiji. The incidence of rape appears to be increasing, according to crime statistics cited by officers of the Department of Social Welfare; for example between January and August 1988, 200 rapes were reported in the Southern division, compared to 47 reports for the same period in 1987. It is possible that the increased incidence may represent an increase in reporting the offense as

women become more aware of their legal rights. Alternatively the figures may indicate a sharp increase of the offense, indicating a law and order problem.

9.6 The Women's Caucus Group under the Leadership of the Minister for Women, Culture and Social Welfare has already, during 1989 until to-date, communicated its concern about rapes, indecent assaults, Fiji National Provident, Inland Revenue chargeable income ceiling and other issues discriminating against women to the appropriate authorities and also to the National Economic Summits in 1989 and in May 1991. A few of these issues have appropriately being dealt with by the Government. The Women's caucus was set up in 1989 with representatives from all women's Groups in the country.

9.7 The Fiji Co-operative Societies Act of 1978 and the subsidiary legislation of 1985, does not have any special provisions for women's issues. Women are treated equally with men as provided by the legislation.

Socio - Cultural Environment & Gender Issues

10.1 Women play an important role in religious activities in Fiji. Although Women were not allowed to become priests in many of the Churches, now they have been accepted into the priesthood e.g. the Methodist and the Anglican Churches.

10.2 In other Church activities, the women provide major services in facilitating and organising these activities. Women also are the initiators and implementors of fund raising activities for the churches.

10.3 Both in the Fijian and Indian communities social and cultural factors exert a strong influence over the status of women.

10.3.1 Fijian society has become more homogenous since the advent of colonial administration in the 1870s. While different dialects are still spoken in various parts of the country, a standard form of the language is understood, written and spoken nationally, based on the dialect of Bau in eastern Fiji. Similarly, regional differences in culture exist, but a single national protocol is recognized, and it is possible to speak of “a Fijian way of life” with common characteristics throughout the land.

10.3.2 The administrative system adopted by the British colonial government adapted Fijian political institution in order to facilitate a system of indirect rule. Four administrative divisions were organized and within each, groups of vanua (“tribes” or states) in adjacent territories with social and political affiliations were formed into administrative units or provinces (yasana). Within these provinces, Vanua became administrative sub-units or districts (tikina). Each level of organisation was represented by a man of appropriate rank and standing according to Fijian custom.

10.3.3 Women have conditional rights within the social structure. Since villages (koro) are made up of related sub-clans (mataqali), persons related through patrilineal links do not intermarry. Thus most people marry into other villages, to members of mataqali to whom they are not related on their father’s side. The convention is that women reside with their husband’s kin after marriage, so most

women marry away from their own kin. They have no formal rights in their husband's village. Their status is derived from their husband's and they are expected to defer to, and to serve him and his relatives.

10.3.4 There are four types of land classification in Fiji: native reserve, native land (outside the reserve), crown land and freehold land. There are 181,035 ha of freehold land and 91,125 ha of crown land, of which most of the latter is leased on a 99-year basis. Land in these categories tends to be the prime agricultural and residential land.

10.3.5 Approximately 83 per cent of all land is vested in perpetuity in Fijian ownership, but Fijians only control land classified as native reserve. This comprises land which was close to Fijian settlements during the 1930s. Native reserve land may not be leased, but an arrangement termed "Tenancy at Will" is permitted by which members of a land-owning clan (mataqali) may allow land to be used by other Fijians. Most native reserve land is of low quality in terms of its development potential for commercial agriculture.

10.3.6 About two million acres (51 per cent) of Fijian land is classified as native land and comes under the control of the Native Lands Trust Board (NLTB). Most of the land in this category is leased under various classification terms, for agriculture, forestry, residential use and hotel development. Leases may be taken out by Fijians and other races; there are currently about 24,000 leases, of which 75 per cent held by Fiji Indians. Land may be leased irrespective of sex, although in practice most leaseholders are male.

10.3.7 Fijian social structure is patrilineal, meaning that inheritance rights and membership of social units are traced primarily through paternal descent. Extended patrilineal-related families are referred to as tokatoka. The basic landowning unit is the mataqali, the sub-clan or lineage. Groups of mataqali form yavusa (clans) and groups of yavusa form vanua ("tribes" or confederations of vanua with common historical and political links. Chiefly offices are associated with the senior and highest ranking branches of the yavusa and vanua. Paramount chiefs are those collectively recognized by a confederation of vanua.

10.3.8 The NLTB collects rent for leases of native land on behalf of the land-owning sub-clan (mataqali), whose rank and file members (lewe ni mataqali) receive about 45 per cent of the money collected. NLTB deducts 25 per cent poundage for administration. Of the balance, 5 per cent is paid to the turaga ni vanua (paramount chief of the land-owning group), 10 per cent to the turaga ni qali (chief of the clan to which the land-owning sub-clan belongs) and 15 per cent to the turaga ni mataqali (head of the land-owning sub-clan). NLTB takes 10 per cent of royalty payments from timber and mining extraction, and the balance is distributed in a similar manner to that of land rents.

10.3.9 Fijians have special privileges as *vasu* or matrilineal relatives in their mother's village, but they may only inherit land rights through their father, unless they are registered with NLTB as members of their mother's *mataqali*, which is permitted in one of the three traditional confederacies of Fiji; *Tovata*, which comprises the districts of Lau, Cakaudrove, Bua and Macuata. In the confederacies of Kabuna and Burebasaga registration is only made in the father's name. Under this system women rarely exercise the rights they have in land belonging to their own kin, because they live with their husband's kin. They may use land belonging to their husband's people, but only with permission. However, women are counted as members of the *mataqali* into which they are born, and receive a share of rent and royalty payments from its non-reserve land.

10.3.10 Almost all Fijians are Christian, and while the Christian teaching has ameliorated the traditional status of women to some extent, the patriarchal teachings of St. Paul are strongly emphasized by most Christian denominations. Masculine authority and the superior status of males is widely considered to have been ordained by God, as well as by Fijian custom.

10.3.11 While increasing numbers of Fijians are joining the urban middle class, those with education and material success are expected to maintain many of their traditional kinship ties and obligations. Fijian society values sharing resources and towns on overt competition. The current political climate in Fiji is one which emphasizes the value and importance of Fijian custom.

10.4 Fiji Indians originate from many different parts of India and most have lost touch with the communities from whom they originally came. Most Indians in Fiji have lived in the islands for several generations, but cultural traditions from the Indian sub-continent remain strong. Most Fiji Indians do not adhere to a caste system, this having been discarded by the first generation of settlers, but traditional religious and cultural precepts strongly influence Indian communities.

10.4.1 The various cultural and religious sub-groups among Fiji Indians retain traditional legal concepts which still influence contemporary society. For example, Hindu customs of inheritance are based on the idea that it is the responsibility of sons to care for parents in their old age. Thus sons are favoured as heirs over daughters. Muslim concepts of inheritance are similarly influenced by religious teaching. Such values influence attitudes towards women, particularly that women should be subject to masculine authority and protection throughout their lives, first by their fathers, then their husbands, and in widowhood, by their sons. These values are still strongly held by conservative rural communities, but tend to be modified among middle class, urban-based Indian communities.

10.4.2 Although Fiji Indians think of themselves as "individualistic" relative to Fijian, kinship forms as strong a bond as it does among Fijians. The extended

family is of central importance and relatives help one another in daily life. Rural households are quite often based on joint families, with two or more brothers, their wives and children and their elderly parents living in separate dwellings in a single compound and farming or running small businesses together. Because of the small size of most land holdings however, most men aspire to own or lease their own land if they can. The high rate of migration among Indians (one which has increased considerably since 1987) means that many Indian families have relatives living in at least one country outside Fiji, and family ties continue strongly across international boundaries.

10.4.3 Traditional economic and religious values circumscribe the status of Indian women. Most girls are raised to regard marriage as their primary goal in life and a girl's share of family property is usually her wedding feast, clothing and jewellery.

10.4.4 Fiji Indians value competition and people compete for social status through education, employment, marital connections, and material success. This encourages a high degree of social mobility. Social mobility is the most powerful force in elevating the status of women. Girls who achieve well at school and who gain professional qualifications are likely to marry men of similar achievement, as well as obtaining well-paid employment. Thus, without changing traditional value, parents have a motive for educating their daughters.

10.5 All women in Fiji look after housekeeping in their families. In case where the women of the households keep full-time employment, additional household helpers are employed especially where small babies and children need looking after. It is not uncommon to find women performing multiple roles; many are involved in income-earning and income-substituting roles in addition to the traditional domestic household chores. These women make a vital contribution to the economy of their households and to improving the standard of living for the families.

10.6 There were 124,098 households at 31 August 1986 compared with 97,589 in 1976, an increase of 26,589 (27.3%) over the past ten years. The average number of persons per household has decreased from 6.0 in 1976 to 5.8 in 1986. (refer to Table 11)

Table 11: Average Persons per Household 1986

Type of Area	No. of Persons	No. of Households	Average persons/household
Urban Areas	277,025	49,579	5.6
Rural Areas	438,350	74,519	5.9
All Areas	715,375	124,098	5.8

10.7 More than one-third (38.6%) of the population 275,840 were married, 411,517 (57.5%) never married, 19,930 (2.8%) widowed and 7,741 (1.1%) divorced. The age distribution of the 275,840 married persons is shown on Table 12.

Table 12: Population by Marital Status

Marital Status	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Never Married	219,609	60.6	191,908	54.4	411,517	57.5
Married	136,530	37.7	139,310	39.5	275,840	38.6
Widowed	3,642	1.0	16,288	4.6	19,930	2.8
Divorced	2,588	0.7	5,153	1.5	7,741	1.1
Not Stated	199	0.0	148	0.0	347	0.0
Total	362,568	100	352,807	100	715,375	100

10.7 The financial decisions in the family were primarily the responsibility of the head of the family who, in those days, were mostly men. Nowadays, the picture is somewhat different. With the advent of many households headed by women, the financial decisions rest with them. The 1986 Fiji Census indicates that female heads of households make up 12.4% (15,370) of total heads of households. Of this 1,5370, only 39.6% are employed. However, another picture seems to be increasingly becoming more pertinent and that is situations where both the husband and the wife are co-operating and working together in making these decisions. In other instances, we have the men bringing in the money which is then distributed for use in the family by their wives.

10.8 Fiji census data distinguish between those who are "economically active" and those deemed not to be economically active. The ways in which the census questions are framed do not provide an accurate depiction of the employment of rural women. For example, rural women commonly state that their occupation in this performed last week was "housework". Those stating their occupation in this manner are likely to be classified as "not economically active", a most misleading description of able bodied rural women, particularly Fijians. Fijian women tend to work longer hours than men, and to perform a greater variety of tasks. The work of village women is no less "economic" in character than the work of men, yet village men are more likely to describe their activities in such a way that they are classified as "unpaid family workers."

10.9 Fiji Census data include the actual number of women engaged in agriculture and fishing in the economically "not active" category, who were counted at 1,714 in 1986. Women who stated that they were "farmers" numbered 8,577 and "fishermen" 1,227.

10.10 Careful observation has shown that "housework" for Fijian women differs greatly from such work as it is defined in industrial societies. Village houses typically have one large multipurpose room which is cleaned by sweeping the mats that cover the floor. Clothes are washed each day and sleeping mats are put in the sun for a while if weather permits. This takes up a few hours each day, cooking food and washing up a few hours more. Other routine chores are collecting water, food and firewood. Most women in coastal communities parts of Fiji, women cultivate patches of cassava and other food crops and although clearing land for new food gardens is usually done by men; weeding, maintenance and harvesting is done by women in most parts of Fiji. Women also spend long periods of time weaving for household use, exchange and sale.

10.11 In Eastern Fiji, particularly in the Lau islands, women do very little agricultural work, but most of the subsistence fishing. Where cash crops are important, men are likely to spend the greater proportion of their time working on them. Women also assist in the management and harvesting of cash crops.

10.12 The work of rural Fiji Indian women varies by the type of small holder crop that is being grown and by season. One of the most time-consuming routine tasks carried out by Indian women is cooking, as Indian food is labor intensive. Women help their husbands during the agricultural cycle, for example among rice growers, women do seasonal tasks like spraying, and hulling and winnowing rice for home consumption. At harvest time they will either take part in the work or spend their time cooking to feed hired labor, which reduces the cost of labor. Most Indian women grow pulses and vegetables for home consumption. Only in the most prosperous farming households do women devote themselves entirely to their home.

10.13 The service sector is the largest employer of women and within that sector the hotel and restaurant industry is the major employer; 6,022 women were counted in the occupational categories "cooks, waiters, barmen" and "maids" in the 1986 census.

10.14 The hotel industry in Fiji is concentrated in the Western District with a string of large resort hotels located along the coast and on the offshore islands. Women employed in the hotel industry are predominantly Fijian.

10.15 The Fiji Employment and Development Mission (1984) noted that between 1975 and 1980 women secured 48 per cent of the total increase in wage

and salaried employment. The advance was over all sectors, so that women increased their share of jobs in all sectors, although 80 per cent of women worked in only three sectors in 1983. The same concentration of women in clerical, sales and service work was recorded in 1986.

10.15 Other significant areas of employment for women are:

- (a) The PAFCO tuna factory at Levuka, where 700 women from the Lomaiviti area were employed in 1988, mainly as process workers cleaning, filleting and packing fish. Most of these workers are Fijian from village households in Levuka. The PAFCO is a joint venture fishing operation between the Government of Fiji and a Japanese partner.
- (b) The garment industry, where more than 16 factories with tax-free status employ somewhere between 1,408 workers (initial staffing) and 2,453 workers (establishment staffing) of whom 85 to 90 per cent are female.
- (c) The garment industry has been criticized as exploitative of women since many locally owned factories were paying low wages. Staff of the Trade and Investment Board consider that this improved with increased competition for skilled workers. The Fiji National Training Council is planning to establish training facilities to train machinists for the industry.
- (d) The ginger processing industry employs a small, predominantly female labor forces as process workers and packers. This is seasonal work and female workers are paid on a piecework basis.
- (e) A large number of women of both major ethnic groups work as domestic servants. No statistics exist for this informal sector of the economy.
- (f) A large number of Fijian women sell agricultural produce and smoked fish and shellfish in municipal markets around Fiji. No statistics exist to quantify women's role in this sector of the economy.

10.16 Data collected in a 1982 employment survey showed that 30.5 per cent of the female workforce were in the lowest paid categories of work. By comparison, only 11.3 per cent of the male workforce was in the lowest paid category.

10.17 The next highest concentration of women was in middle level salaried position where 27.9 per cent of the women workers were found and 3.5 per cent of male workers.

10.18 The Cooperative Movement in Fiji welcome participation by women, although there are only three field staff employed. 14.51 per cent of the total membership of cooperatives in Fiji is female.

10.19 The most successful area of Fijian women's participation in the cooperative movement is in the operation of village stores. Among Indian women, the

Thrift and Credit Cooperatives have been very successful. A proposal was developed to strengthen women's role in cooperatives in Fiji by an ILO cooperatives officer in 1985 but there was lack of support from the Government's aid Coordinating Committee. The Cooperatives Department is still pursuing its interest in increasing the role of women in Cooperatives.

10.20 The Institute of Technology show women concentrate general and secretarial studies (59%), business studies (21%), and hotel and catering services (9.2%). Only two out of 62 students enrolled for building and civil engineering were female. The previous year showed a similar pattern. Automotive and electrical engineering courses in that year and had only one (out of 119) and three (out of 188) women students enrolled. There were no female students enrolled in the mechanical engineering course.

10.21 University of the South Pacific, women comprised 42% of the students enrolled at the USP in 1990. USP enrolment figures indicate that, of a total of 626 Fiji students on government sponsorship in 1990 272(43%) were women.

10.22 A majority (58%) of primary school teachers are women. Women also comprise 46% of secondary school teachers and 56% of special education teachers. Despite their high profile in this profession, they are poorly represented in posts of responsibility and hold few principals in secondary schools.

Women's Participation in the Economy

10.23.1 Despite the crucial role they play in subsistence food production and in small-scale commerce, women in Fiji continue to be invisible in a society which defines work primarily in monetary terms. Official statistics seriously misrepresent the role that women play by continuing to depict them as economically inactive. The 1986 Census, for instance, enumerated only 51,231 women (as compared with 189,929 men) as economically active.

10.23.2 Largely as a consequence of this 'invisibility', women enjoy limited access to agricultural and fishery training programs and extension services and to other development resources, including new technology. This is especially the case where rural Indo-Fijian women, who are engaged in even more 'invisible' home-based production are concerned.

10.23.3 Official statistics on wage and salary employment provide more accurate picture of women's employment. However, it is unlikely that these figures reliably record female employment in smaller and especially family businesses; in outwork in the food processing industry; or in domestic service. Similarly, seasonal and casual female employment, in both the agricultural and industrial sectors, is undoubtedly under-recorded. Women employed as seasonal farm labour engage

in tobacco harvesting, ginger root washing and cocoa pod picking. Those employed as casual industrial labour are hired in peak production periods and then 'slacked off'.

10.23.4 From statistics that are available, it is clear that women are mainly employed in traditionally female occupations and industries. A breakdown of census figures on the 241,160 economically active women in 1986, shows women mainly employed in services (28%) which include health, education and government services and cleaning and domestic service jobs. A further 24% were recorded as engaged in agriculture (mainly subsistence). About 16% were engaged in trade (mainly as sales girls in retail stores and as maids and waitresses in the hotel and catering trade) and 8.6% were employed in manufacturing. The last figure, which is based on the numbers of women engaged in manufacturing prior to the garment industry boom, is now out of date.

10.23.5 Although women appear to be significantly represented in the professional, technical and related industries category, a breakdown by occupation shows them concentrated in the teaching and nursing professions.

10.23.6 The pattern of women's employment and their concentration in service type jobs clearly accord with their domestic responsibilities and thus reinforces prevailing ideas about women's role in society and their subordinate status. Cultural notions of appropriate work for women continue to influence aspirations and determine school curricula, and thus provide a major constraint to wider career choices. There are no programs of equal opportunity or affirmative action for women. The employment boom women are enjoying in the manufacturing sector may well be short lived and is based on the intensive exploitation of their cheap labour.

10.23.7 Women's participation in wage and salary employment has increased significantly in the last 15 years. In 1984, the Fiji Employment and Development Mission noted, between 1975 and 1980, women secure 48% of the total number of new jobs created and that, between 1976 and 1982 the number of employment increased by 40% compared with 10% increase in the numbers of employed men in the same period. The Mission also noted that women were assuming a larger proportion of jobs in low-wage manufacturing industries.

10.23.8 Women's increased participation in wage employment is indicative of their increasing economic responsibilities. A majority of garment workers are disadvantaged women-mothers without partners, deserted wives-who have dependents and are often sole income earners in their households. In 1989, 12.4% of Fiji households reported that they had a female head.

Institutions Dealing with Gender Issues

11.1.1 The government recognizes the major and important role that women in Fiji play. In addition to being mothers and homemakers women have entered into the sphere of economic activity.

11.1.2 Women are also involved in development programmes such as family planning, combating malnutrition and subsistence activities. Without women, these programmes would fail. Therefore, government recognizes the need to provide greater encouragement to fully develop and utilize women's non-domestic capabilities and potentials.

11.2 During the DP9 period, greater efforts were being made to ensure that women are fully integrated into the national development process. It was also during this period that the Department for Women was set up with defined functions to coordinate research and analyse data on matters relating to women; develop programmes and projects relevant to women's needs; and enhance participation in decision-making at all levels.

11.2.1 The Department of Women and Culture comes under the Ministry of Women, Culture & Social Welfare. The Ministry was created by the interim Government in September 1987 but prior to its creation, a Women's Interest Section existed within the Ministry of Fijian Affairs, and subsequently, within the Ministry of Rural Development. The staff member and functions of the Women's Interest Section have been transferred to the new Ministry.

11.2.2 The Women's Interest Section was first established in the Ministry of Education in 1960. The philosophy underlying the operations of women's interest activities was that through domestic improvement programs directed to women, such as cooking, sewing, hygiene, and child care, social development could be promoted among Fijian villagers. The origins of this philosophy can be traced to nineteenth century educational activities conducted for Fijian women by Christian missionaries, and continued by the churches to the present day.

11.2.3 Until the advent of mass education, with the exception of a single select government school with an academic curriculum, for Fijian boys, Fijian education

emphasized agriculture and manual arts for boys and men, and home economics for girls and women. This education policy assumed that the great majority of Fijians would continue to live in villages, in a semi-subsistence, communal environment.

11.2.4 The contemporary aspirations of Fijians have led to changes in educational policies, but the approach to “women’s interest” activities remained unchanged until an ILO sponsored review of the Women’s Interest Section was conducted in 1986.

11.2.5 Following the review, the Section formulated a program for its activity based upon six components:

- home improvement;
- clothing and textiles;
- food and nutrition;
- family education;
- craft development; and
- income generation

11.2.6 The section has a field staff establishment of 24 who work in the four administrative divisions of Fiji. Each division has a Divisional Women’s Interest Assistants and a number of Women’s Interest Assistants. These Field staff have the responsibility of coordinating women’s activities in each division, as far as this is possible, and of offering training in the six program components referred to above.

11.2.7 The field staff, occupy the lowest grades of the public service and have no career path for advancement in the public service. Most staff do not have formal qualifications as educators, but have varying degrees of expertise in home economics and a few other topics, mainly acquired on an in-service training basis.

11.2.8 The section has worked almost exclusively with rural Fijian women in the past, and its NGO links have been primarily with Soqosoqo Vakamarama, a national organization of Fijian women with branches in all villages. The Department plans to broaden the outreach of women’s interest programs in order to reach Indian women and women of minority ethnic groups, as well as Fijians, and to reach urban as well as rural women.

11.2.9 The Department has convened a task force called the Women’s Caucus on education, legal issues, health, employment and child care to provide advice through a consultative process. This process will help the Department in its role of assisting in the formulation of government policy, and in developing and strengthening its programs for women. The Women’s Caucus consists of

representatives of all major Women's Groups in the country.

11.2.10 The Department continues to implement plans to improve the qualifications of its staff in areas relevant to its programs for women through staff training programs and the recruitment of new staff, and to seek to upgrade the levels of staffing in order to provide a career structure in women's affairs.

11.2.11 The Department has already begun the work of collecting data on the status of Fiji women, which will provide a basis for planning programs and for evaluating the progress of programs. In 1989-1990 data collection was being carried out by a Japanese volunteer statistician. Data collected so far will require analysis and interpretation in order for it to be useful. So far, it comprises graphs of selected census reports. This year, 1991, the Department has had problems in Data Collection after the Japanese Volunteer left. However, a Statistician will be appointed very soon.

Department of Health

11.3.1 The Department of Health, through its national preventative and primary health care service, encourages community involvement in health at village and provincial level; each village is encouraged to have a health committee under the leadership of the turaga ni koro (village head man). Each village health committee sends representatives to the provincial health committee. Villages select persons from the community to be trained by the department as a Community Health Worker (CHW).

11.3.2 This assists even the most isolated rural communities to link to the national health system. Most CHWs are women and are paid by the community. They dispense basic medicines and act as "eyes" for provincial nursing staff, noting cases of malnutrition and other health problems in the community to be brought to the attention of the nurse when she visits the community.

Ministry of Education

11.4.1 Girls are proportionately close to equality in enrolments with boys in Fiji's secondary education system. Disparity appears at the technical and academic levels (see para 64). The Ministry awards tertiary places and scholarships on the basis of student applications, ethnic quotas and academic merit, without discrimination on the basis of gender. Gender stereotyping in technical education and gender disparity in academic tertiary education is due to social and economic factors which may be analyzed in the future by the Department for women.

11.4.2. The Ministry of Education has a Non-Formal Section responsible for

youth, sports, multicraft and adult education. This section works with women through high school-based multicraft, community and adult education programs and Provincial Youth councils.

The Ministry of Primary Industries

11.5.1 There have been several studies of women in the fisheries sector in Fiji and in 1986, 1987 and 1988, four training courses were offered by the Fiji Fisheries Division with assistance from FAO & UNDP. The Fisheries Division actively supports the involvement of women in fisheries development activities and would welcome funding for further training and in-shore fisheries projects for women for "mainstreaming" the activities of women in fishing households.

11.5.2 The Agricultural Extension Department employs a number of women among its field staff with the aim of including women in the activities associated with agricultural extension. The Department hopes to recruit more women to its field staff in the future, since it recognizes the value of involving women in agricultural projects.

Department of Social Welfare

11.6.1 The Department of Social Welfare comes under the Ministry of Women's Affairs, Social Welfare and Culture. It was first established in 1968 under the British colonial administration, and works closely with the Ministry of Justice, which is responsible for probation, prison after-care, child welfare, adoption, family assistance and marriage guidance. The Department is in charge of payment of a destitute allowance, the maximum of which is about US\$35.00 per month. This was instituted during the British administration for destitute Fiji Indian families who had no bread-winner. The allowance is now received by Fijians as well as Indians. The Department employs a Public legal advisor who represents disadvantaged persons in the courts. These are mainly women seeking maintenance and child support from their husbands, or their children's father; women who have been beaten by their husband or partner; and low-income of destitute women seeking other kinds of legal redress.

The Business Opportunity and Management Advisory Service

11.7.1 The Business Opportunity and Management Advisory Service (BOMAS) is located within the Ministry of Fijian Affairs. It was established in recognition of the fact that due to historical circumstances, very few Fijians are involved in independent businesses. The unit was set up to provide advisory services to

Fijians wishing to establish businesses. It includes a training officer and coordinator for women in business, whose post is funded by UNDP/UNIFEM through ILO, as part of the ILO project Adult Education and Training for Rural Women. This project started in 1983 and will conclude this year.

11.7.2 Established and prospective businesses assisted by the BOMAS training officer and coordinator for women in business encompass a variety of small business ventures including general retail stores, draperies, tailoring services, producing and retailing agricultural products, catering services and restaurants, beauty salons, handicraft ventures, service stations, bakeries kindergartens, cleaning services, and small manufacturing industries.

Non-Government Organisations (NGOs)

11.8.1 Fiji has over one hundred local and international non-governmental organizations which undertake programmes that support social and community welfare and development. Women play a significant role in most of these organizations. The following NGOs represent a spectrum of those concerned with women in social and economic development.

11.8.2 The National Council of Women, Fiji (NCWF) is an umbrella organization for approximately fifty localized and national women's associations. The council was established in 1976 with the objectives of;

- promoting sympathy of thought and purpose among the women of Fiji by constituting a coordinating body, at national level, of representatives of national women's organizations and district women's advisory councils;
- studying the needs of the community, especially of women and children, and organizing resources for action;
- collecting and distributing information of service to the community; and
- linking with National Councils of Women in other countries through the International Council of Women.

11.8.3 Soqosoqo Vakamarama

The Soqosoqo Vakamarama I Taukei (Association of Fijian Women) is a long established organization for Fijian women, with a very large, active membership.

Leadership follows Fijian social structure and the organization encourages the traditional arts and crafts of Fijian women and promotes home improvement, village health, another domestically-oriented programmes for women in Fijian

villages. Soqosoqo Vakamarama I Taukei has been involved in a number of externally funded WID projects. The most recent is the establishment of facilities for women food vendors at the Suva municipal market who have been displaced by infrastructural development of nearby port facilities.

11.8.4 The Women's Crisis Center

The Women's Crisis Center provides counselling and referral services to victims of rape and domestic violence. The Center is run by a collective of over twenty members and employs four full-time staff. Non-staff members of the centre provide voluntary supporting services to women who call on the assistance of the centre, which is dependent on donations from the public and funding from various international sources.

11.8.5 The Association of Fiji Women Graduates

The Association of Fiji Women Graduates, a network of women graduates resident in Fiji, is committed to the educational, economic and social advancement of women in Fiji and internationally. The Association holds regular meetings with guest speakers and conferences every two years on topics of relevance to women's advancement and well-being.

11.8.6 The Fiji Council of Social Services

The Fiji Council of Social Services (FCOSS) is not a women's organization but an umbrella organization for over forty voluntary service organizations or NGOs. FCOSS aims to define their problems and needs and to coordinate and mobilize their resources for action. Its national programs include a newsletter, a social development resources information center, an agency for volunteer services and inter-NGO disaster preparedness working group, and a development program fund.

11.8.7 The FCOSS development program fund has received grants from a number of sources, including the United States Agency for International Development and then Australian International Development Assistance Bureau, to finance small projects and programs among member organizations, including women's projects and programs which benefit women. The Chairman of FCOSS noted in his annual report of 1987 that "women's groups showed better skills in the management of projects and funds".

11.8.8. FCOSS can offer international lending and development agencies a comprehensive view of NGO activity, and a source of contact with NGOs in Fiji.

One of the most common problems in small-scale development assistance in Fiji is duplication of effort and lack of coordination. FCOSS has the capability of identifying the kinds of activities being undertaken by NGOs in Fiji as well as gaps in existing efforts and areas of current and future need.

11.8.9 The Housing and Relief Trust

The Housing and Relief Trust (HART) provide housing at minimal rental for the poorest members of the community, among whom women predominate, and who are not eligible to be housed by the Fiji Housing Authority. HART also acts as an advocate for the poor on housing issues. HART has established several self-help settlements in areas adjacent to major towns, together with supporting welfare services and community development programs.

11.8.10 The Bayly Clinic

The Bayly Clinic is run by a trust which provides income enabling the clinic to offer health care and other forms of relief for the poor. A significant amount of the clinic's work is done by women volunteers and the majority of its beneficiaries are poor and low income women.

11.8.11 The Fiji Women's Rights Movement

The Fiji Women's Rights Movement (FWRM) is a voluntary Association supported by a significant number of professional and academic women, which aims to improve the domestic, social, legal, economic and political status of women in Fiji; to remove all discrimination in the law and treatment of women throughout Fiji; to provide women with more practical and protective support services and to create equal opportunities and equal rights for Fiji women. FWRM works by lobbying government and public opinion on issues associated with women's rights.

Women in Cooperatives

12.1 In 1947 a section was established within the Agricultural Department and was charged with the responsibility of promoting, establishing and supervising copra marketing cooperatives. Because the few local officers in the section had no experience with cooperatives and also because the senior British officers involved had only experiences in consumer cooperatives in Britain, these copra marketing cooperatives evolved into dual functional units that tended to concentrate more on the function of supplying consumer goods to the rural people.

12.2 The concept of cooperative development remained confined to, and was determined by the colonial, subjective role of the local population who had no rights and privileges and of no major concern for the administration until the middle sixties.

12.3 In 1955 the administrative section of the Agriculture department was hired off and set up as the Department of Cooperatives. During the same period, training of the administrative personnel began to gain importance. However, such training laid emphasis on and concentrated on technical aspects such as the interpretation of the Cooperative Act, the supervision of cooperatives, proper and accurate recording of transactions etc. There was no consideration given to development planning and implementation of such programmes.

12.4 During the sixties, with the localisation of the more senior posts in the department, the general concept regarding the purpose behind the establishment and growth of a cooperative movement underwent a gradual but inevitable change. Cooperative development by the government began to emerge as, and be recognised as a welfare function with a specific objective of spreading economic opportunities and economic development more evenly throughout the country.

It began to be seen as the main vehicle and infrastructure to ensure the involvement and participation of the largely subsistence-based rural sector in the mainstream of economic development. The welfare objectives, functions and potential of the cooperative system within the development process were being recognised.

12.5 As a consequence of such changes in the political and administrative structure and thought, the cooperative system (and its potential) underwent an analysis in terms of development objectives and functions, and the result was that the strategy of diversifying the movement to meet other rural needs and to provide other services, was adopted.

12.6 It was also during this period that new types of cooperatives such as savings and loans (thrift and credit cooperatives) were promoted and began to be established. In addition there were some other types such as land settlement cooperatives and grazing and marketing cooperatives which were established to meet the needs of the rural people in different areas.

12.7 According to DP9, the cooperative movement was established to facilitate economic activities especially in the rural areas where for commercial reasons private entrepreneurs would not be able to fully service needs of the rural population, this role has become questionable in view of the significant developments in the economy and the greater access to credit facilities, thus enabling individual entrepreneurs to undertake vital services to rural areas. Moreover, the performance of the cooperative movement, and its overall structure, has continuous difficulties and require a re-examination of the movement especially in view of the progress made to date in entrepreneurs and managerial development.

12.8 The cooperative movement in Fiji was supported by Government since the 1940's in order to provide for the organisation of resources (land, labour and capital) to ensure an efficient system of production and marketing for the benefit of the country as a whole but more specifically for the rural people.

12.9 Both the Development Plans 7 (1976-1980) and 8 (1981-1985) had the same long term objectives and these include:

- (a) providing cooperative trading facilities in retail and wholesale fields;
- (b) stimulating savings in order to enable significant productive leading to increased production;
- (c) giving market assistance to individual producers or fragmented groups of copra, fish, root crops, handicraft and other agricultural producers;
- (d) training people in the application of business and commerce principles in order that they may run their own societies effectively and efficiently.

12.10 The Development Plan 9 (1986-1990) has a different set of objectives which aim to:

- (a) "consolidate the activities of consumer/marketing primary and secondary cooperatives;

- (b) increase promotion of agricultural production and marketing cooperative ventures in close cooperation with the National Marketing Authority;
- (c) encourage the Fiji Cooperative Association Ltd to operate on a fully commercial basis; and
- (d) review the operations of the Ministry of Cooperatives so as to rationalise the use of public resources in the sector (DP9 5.6.3 p. 84-85).

12.11 As can be seen from the above discussion, there is no mention of women or their involvement in cooperatives in all these Development Plans and none of the programmes and projects is addressed specifically to women. Whether this is due to the overall population and should be treated equally as men or that the government has erred in its plans to consider women as a separate group who could contribute successfully to the cooperative sector is the question. It is encouraging to report here that there has been a considerable increase in the number of women cooperatives set up in Fiji today. Many have taken over cooperatives which were previously run by men and which have failed and closed.

12.12 In many cases these women operated cooperatives were those that were either dormant or mismanaged by men. The women had worked hard and were able to turn these cooperatives into successful and viable concerns. The Department of Cooperatives attributes the success of these women's enterprises to the following factors:

"Women in cooperatives are less inclined to give credit sales, are more parsimonious and honest in their operations and are able to keep up the more menial tasks such as record keeping, costing and cleanliness in a much better condition" (Ministry of Cooperatives, Workshop June 1984).

12.13 For Fiji, Women in Cooperatives have shown that women's participation is important and that the Government should encourage this and also enhance and actively promote women's participation in decision making.

12.14 Women in Fiji continue to see their role in cooperative development as a matter of course especially when this contribution will ensure a better and more successful financial endeavour which will result in better way of life.

Present Status of Women in the Cooperative Movement

13.1 The Fiji Cooperative Act 1947 is the legislation which governs the operations of the Cooperative Movement. Like the Development Plans 7, 8 and 9, the Cooperative Act does not have any special sections on women in cooperatives. The advent of women into this sector was most importantly for the reason of financial survival for the country and these women believe in their ability to succeed. With their management experience in the family, the women used their resources to reactivate and manage the cooperative to succeed.

13.2 Many of these men who failed in their attempts to run these cooperatives are husbands and relatives of their women who took over the operations. The women did not want to see this source of supply (cooperatives) of goods and services close or fail. They too, will suffer as a result.

13.3 The Department of Cooperatives continue to encourage women participation in the operations of cooperatives. According to the Department, there were 24 operating Women Consumer and Consumer/Marketing Cooperatives by 1984 and these cooperatives returned 3.6% on sales.

13.4 The cooperative movement in Fiji is controlled by the Government through it's Department of Cooperatives.

13.5 The Department of Cooperatives became part of the Ministry of Primary industries in January 1990. While the cooperative movement in Fiji is actively supported by government, the day to day operations of the Movement are in the hands of the societies. However, the government carries out its statutory functions relating to registration of societies, inspection of books of accounts, audit of accounts, settlement of disputes etc. The non-statutory functions include consultancy and advisory services, education and training, and the planning of the growth of the Movement to meet national objectives.

13.6 The Department of Cooperatives is also responsible for the formulation of policies pertaining to cooperative development, laying down strategies for the

promotion and establishment of cooperatives and the monitoring of their implementation.

13.7 The Government of Fiji recognizes cooperatives as an important instrument to encourage initiative, self help and mutual assistance of social cohesion and harmony, and to allow self interest to be met by group action. It is also seen as an important channel for use in implementing the country's rural development programmes thereby playing a potential role in improving the lot of the rural people.

13.8 The Government of Fiji will continue to play the role of a facilitator through policy initiatives and create congenial environment for cooperatives to play their role in full as people's organisations.

13.9 The extension services of the Department of Cooperatives are divided into four geographical divisions which have head office located in the main urban centre in the region. Then there are district and sub-district offices located strategically in the outer areas within the region. At the headquarters there is a Consultancy and Development division that draws up future project proposals that come through the extension staff in the field. The assessment checks out the viability of such proposals to determine if their specific goals are in line with the broader national objectives.

13.10 The most successful area of women participation in the cooperative movement is in the operation of village store. Among Indian women, the Thrift and Credit Cooperatives have been very successful. (Department of Cooperatives 1988).

13.11 In Fiji, a Women's cooperative was defined as a registered cooperative where women make up a majority of committee members and shareholders" (Department of Cooperatives). Cooperatives with mixed or all male member committees but have women managers or de Facto control by women are identified using these criteria. For the purpose of this research I intend to use the same criteria.

13.12 Today, women are actively involved in managing a variety of 34 successful cooperatives in the country including consumer, handicrafts, tailoring and manufacture of incense sticks. This figure shows an increase of 10 women cooperatives since 1984. Of the total 631 operating cooperatives, in 1990 only 34 are run by women showing 5.38% participation as compared to 3% in 1984. The Department, recognizing the capabilities of women and their success stories, is trying to capitalise on these and encourage further involvements of women. However, it has failed to elaborate and illustrate women's participation in its 1990 Annual Report.

13.13 To enhance development of women cooperatives, the Department of Cooperatives has recruited three women cooperative extension officers to help supervise the women cooperative societies in the country. (Department of Cooperatives Annual Report 1990).

13.14 As mentioned earlier, there is no officially stated policy for women's participation in this sector. However, the Department is working on enhancing women's participation and involvement in cooperatives. The Department, as confirmed by their senior officers, is encouraging women's attendance and participation at all decision making levels and meetings. Traditionally, women are not included in such activities but some villages, districts and provinces have already included women representatives in to their meetings and have also welcomed their participation.

13.15 The department has reported through interviews with senior staff members that they feel that women have shown that they are more easily able than men to manage their cooperatives with striker business sense divorcing culture from their business dealings. I personally believe that women are able to do this as part of their serious attempts and endeavours to develop themselves and improve their living standards and also allow their menfolks to concentrate on other development and income generating projects. Also, the women are concerned with the overall national development and show their support for the national development objectives and for their intervention in the cooperative sector and their involvement in reviving and assisting unsuccessful cooperatives have shown proof to the above. Therefore determination and willpower to preserve and succeed for very important and vital reasons.

13.16 In 1984, during a workshop on cooperatives, several problems were identified as common to operations of consumer cooperatives by women participants. These problems included:

- 1) "Lack of involvement in decision making at all levels of operations;
- 2) lack of business management and book keeping expertise;
- 3) insufficient assistance from the Government;
- 4) lack of attendance or participation by members at meetings due to domestic commitments;
- 5) difficulties and fluctuations in supplies of stocks from Fiji Coop distribution centres". (Workshop Reports--Department of Cooperatives)

13.17 Also included in this list, as a result of this research are the following problems:

- 1) Discontinuation of Shipping facilities and trips to maritime villages thus

causing absence of essential food items and other goods from store shelves.

- 2) Too many social/traditional and customary obligations which demand women's time and efforts.
- 3) Mismanagement by leaders.

13.18 When the major suppliers and merchants closed operations in many of these outlying areas they also pulled away their shipping/transport services. The Cooperatives which took over operations did not have the same services resulting in their insufficient operations.

13.19 At time the suppliers in the stores were taken out on credit terms for social and customary activities and these debts were difficult to pay back. Also women and men spent a lot of time in these activities rather than developmental work which could ensure success in operations.

13.20 There were many problems faced by cooperatives since they were set up and there was very little review and strategic planning input by the Government. The above problems need more serious attention by the Government and improvements in the areas mentioned are needed.

13.21 The Department needs to include "Women in Cooperative Development" into their policy statements and ultimately in the Development Plans. Cooperative officials need to capitalise on strengths and viability of women participation in cooperatives and come up with a workable plan for strategising actions and programmes.

13.22 However, it is apparent that more training courses are needed if women are to become increasingly effective as business managers and take a more active part in the decision-making process. The Department of Cooperatives recognizes this need and therefore further workshops should be planned, particularly in other areas of Fiji. However, without injection of considerable funds, the Department is hampered in implementing such training.

13.23 Funds and access to interest-free or very low-interest loans are essential if the necessary injection of capital into women's cooperatives is to be made. The women have demonstrated their efficiency in running viable operations. The Government should recognize this.

By helping women in the cooperative movement to provide a better life for themselves their families and in turn, their communities, the Government can greatly assist in the rural development of Fiji.

13.24 There are sufficient data relating to women's overall involvement in cooperatives. Further surveys need to be carried out. It is essential that Government recognize the important role played by women and that they are

given incentives and assistance to expand their activities.

13.25 One of the problems faced by women in cooperatives is lack of training in business management and associated areas. More courses are needed in order to equip larger numbers of women to become more effective cooperators.

13.26 Funds are needed to finance such courses, provide needed capital and serviceable loans to women's cooperatives.

13.27 Women have demonstrated that they are able to successfully manage profitable cooperative societies yet many women continue to be excluded from decision-making at village levels. Women's participation in decision-making must be enhanced and actively promoted.

Statistics on the Cooperative Movement

(As given by the Department of Cooperatives)

14.1 In the Cooperative Sector, the major focus now is to shift to producer and marketing cooperatives.

14.2 There are 5 broad sectors i.e. Agricultural Production and Marketing, Consumer, Thrift and Credit, Land and other types. Brief details of these sectors are given below.

14.2.1 Agricultural, Producer and Marketing Sector

Cooperative Societies in all the Divisions are involved in some kind of production and marketing activities. Some of the commodities produced include: cocoa, dairy, copra, yagona, root crops, sugarcane, fish, marine products and handicrafts. Production is carried out either communally or by individual members but the marketing is done through cooperative societies.

14.2.2 (a) Cocoa Cooperatives

Cocoa development in the Central Division is concentrated in the Northern part of the Tailevu Province. There are 6 cooperatives in this type which have cultivated 636 hectares of cocoa which have yet to reach bearing stage. However, 12 other multi-purpose cooperatives in the area supplied 23.1 tones of grade I dried beans valued at \$29,801.00 to the National Marketing Authority.

In the Northern Division there are seven cocoa cooperatives of which only the Matasawalevu Cooperative in the Macuata Province has reached commercial production. In 1990 this cooperative produced 77 tones of grade one cocoa valued at \$100,949.00. The six other cooperatives--3 in Cakaudrove, 2 in Bua and one in Macuata Province are in various stages of production. Total area under cultivation is 515 hectares.

14.2.3 Dairy Cooperatives

The six dairy cooperatives in the Central Division produced and supplied 1,001,783 litres of fresh milk valued at \$310,553.00 to Rewa Cooperative Dairy Company Limited. There was an increase in production by 43,744 litres compared to previous year. These cooperatives also supplied 38,491 kg butterfat valued at \$31,427.00 and 892 kg cream valued at \$4,438.00. Cattle sales by these cooperatives totalled \$40,830.00.

14.2.4 Ginger Farmers Cooperatives

Ginger is another commodity produced and marketed by farmers/members of Lomaivuna Cooperative in the Central Division. During 1990 season 626 tones of ginger was produced valued at \$206,613.00 and supplied to Tropical Food Products Limited, a subsidiary of National Marketing Authority.

Compared to 1989 season the production has increased by 22 tones in 1990. This cooperative also supplied farming inputs and other requirements to the members as advances to be recovered later during the harvesting.

14.2.5 Tomato Farmers Cooperatives

Two producer cooperatives in Toga and Nuku supplied 233.5 tones of Tomatoes valued at \$33,300.00 to Food Processors Limited, another subsidiary of National Marketing Authority. Compared to 1989 season the production of tomatoes has increased during the 1990 season by 65.5.

14.2.6 Rice Farmers Cooperatives

The Central Division cooperatives have embarked on rice production under the Agricultural Development Project of Ministry of Primary Industries. Twenty such cooperatives have been formed on Mataqali basis and development of land and other infrastructure are in various stages. The only rice milling and marketing cooperative which is in Mavua sold milled rice for the members valued at \$35,619.00 during 1990 season. Other commodities handled by cooperatives in the Central division are yaqona, root crops, fish and some copra. Figures for these are given hereunder in Table 13.

Table 13: Other Commodities handled by Cooperatives

Commodity	Quantity	Value
Yaqona	60 kg	\$600.00
Dalo	1,628 kg	\$1,140.00
Fish	-	\$6,202.00
Copra	1.5 kg	\$412.00

Copra Marketing-Northern Division

Cooperatives in the Northern Division also handled copra marketing and supplied grade I copra to the Copra Millers of Fiji in Savusavu. The production and value by Province are shown hereunder in Table 14.

Table 14: Production and Value of Copra by Province

Province	Quantity	Grade	Value
Cakaudrove	1,273 tones	1	\$381,987
Bua	70 tones	1	\$20,820
Macuata	67 tones	1	19,849
	1,410 tones		\$422,656

A cooperative in Macuata Province, the Tadratadravula Cooperative has diversified from grazing to sugarcane farming on communal basis. Last season the cooperative produced 1,964 tones of sugarcane valued at \$75,614.00.

14.2.8 Copra and Other Produce--Eastern Division

This Division has been very actively involved in marketing various commodities through its cooperative network during 1990. The quantity and value of commodities marketed are shown in Table 15.

Table 15: Quantity and Value of Commodities Marketed by Province

Province	Commodity	Quantity (in tones)	Value (in \$)
Lau	Copra	1,087.4	309,284
	Yaqona	-	14,971
	Livestock	-	3,142
	Marine Produce	-	122,433
	Handicrafts	-	170,795
	Others	-	14,071
			633,796
Lomaiviti	Copra	685.1	205,464
	Yaqona	-	126,030
	Others	-	200,098
			531,592
Kadavu	Copra	23	6,890
	Yaqona	-	126,030
	Marine Produce	-	24,571
			157,491
Rotuma	Copra	1,220.9	323,312
	Livestock	-	7,815
			331,127

Table 16: Production and Value of Commodities Marketed

Province	Commodity	Quantity (in tones)	Value (in \$)
Mataqali Navakalolo	Pawpaw	50.60	14,989
Valley Industrial	Maize	2,967.00	16,192
Qalele Landholding	Sugarcane	8,308.0 dozen	32,376
			152,443

14.3 Consumer Sector

14.3.1 The consumer sector of the Cooperative Movement is a three-tier organisation in a pyramid structure format of supply service. Consumer Cooperatives deal mainly in basic essential consumer goods and operate to serve the rural Fijian population.

This sector provides a much needed consumer service in isolated islands and remote rural locations where very few private retail merchants care to trade today, for reasons affecting business profitability in the local environment (i.e. Price Control, irregular shipping, distance from main centres, and areas of concentrated population). On average a village cooperative shop may carry as much as 85% of its stock in food items. The total number of 618 registered Consumer and Consumer/Marketing Cooperatives in Fiji (including Rotuma) today have been village based cooperatives all throughout their existence. It is interesting to note therefore that the cooperative market share in the food distribution in rural Fiji has been quite high.

14.3.2 Of the 618 Consumer/Marketing Cooperatives, 354 were fully operational, 173 were not operating and 91 societies were in various stages of liquidation.

14.3.3 Primary Consumer Cooperatives in all the four divisions have had good performances during 1990. The total annual sales in 1990 of \$11,332,641.00 has increased by \$1,948,674.00 or 20.76% compared to the previous year. There was also a dramatic increase in total net profit of \$503,563 and increase of 15.66% which is considered favourable for consumer cooperatives. These results are attributed to good management and viable cooperatives which remain in the management after liquidation of non-viable cooperatives.

14.3.4 The operational performance for years 1989 and 1990 is shown by Divisions hereunder in Table 17.

Table 17: Operational Performance in 1989 and 1990

Division	1989		1990	
	Sales	Net Profit	Sales	Net Profit
Northern	1,620,450	60,631	1,910,087	61,600
Eastern	3,562,465	207,656	4,210,270	270,166
Central	2,720,168	114,017	3,380,059	109,135
Western	1,480,884	53,062	1,832,225	62,662
	\$ 9,383,967	453,366	11,332,641	503,563

Fiji Cooperative Association Limited closed its operations immediately after the close of financial year ending 30 June 1990 when its major credit, the National Bank of Fiji, foreclosed the mortgage and took over the Association's major assets.

14.4 Thrift and Credit Sector

The earliest thrift and credit cooperatives date back to 1954 when the first rural thrift and credit cooperative was registered. This sector gained momentum in 1967 when a rural indebtedness survey was conducted amongst the sugarcane farmers in Fiji on the direction of the Government, to determine an estimate of their indebtedness. The survey revealed that sugarcane farmers earning a total of \$12.4m in 1966/67 season were indebted to the extent of \$11.6 m: i.e. an average of some 93% of their gross annual income. Today, there are 161 village thrift and credit cooperatives in the Western and Northern Divisions. The individual members totalling 4,493 have collectively accumulated \$749,194.00 in their respective cooperatives. Capital accumulation by Fijian members account for 48% of the total shares.

14.4.1 These cooperatives lend to the members for productive and provident purposes at between 5-10% interest per annum. During the year ended 30/06/90, 622 loans were issued by the primary societies to the value of \$303,967.00.

14.4.2 Cane Farmer's Cooperative Savings and Loans Association Ltd. (CCSLA Ltd.)

The CCSLA LTD is the apex organisation of primary Thrift and Credit Cooperative Societies. As at 30/06/90, 103 primary cooperatives and 1,297 individual (direct) members were affiliated to CCSLA LTD. Total investment of the members amounted to \$484,281.00 During the year, 242 loans valued at \$576,488.00 were approved for the members, mostly for discharge of debts, farm implement and machinery and farm housing. Since its inception in 1968 this organisation has made remarkable progress.

14.5 Land Settlement Sector

A total of 4,978 families have benefitted from land settlement cooperatives throughout the country. Members of 44 such societies have invested into 11,981 hectares of freehold and leasehold valued at \$5,432,601.00

A summary by Division is shown in Table 18.

Table 18: Land Settlement Cooperatives as at 30.6.90

	Members (Families)	Area (Hectare)	Capital Cost in \$
Western			
Land Purchase/Landholding	553	4,984	2,057,952
Housing Cooperatives	382	91	599,145
Central			
Land Purchase/Landholding	1,893	422	694,087
Housing Cooperatives	512	138	133,000
Eastern			
Land Purchase/Landholding	91	2,133	763,714
Northern			
Land Purchase/Landholding	1,547	4,213	1,184,703
Total	4,978	11,981	5,432,601

14.6 *Other Types of Cooperatives*

Cooperative Societies in this category are operating satisfactorily in all the Divisions. Brief description of each by Division are given below.

14.6.1 *Central Division*

(a) Marama Cooperative Society Limited

This is a tailoring cooperative of about 80 Fijian women members. During last financial year, the cooperative's total sales was \$168,737.00 and net profit realized was \$5,178,000.

(b) Mucunabitu Iron-works Cooperative Society Limited

This Cooperative has been set up by 18 members at the Kalabu Industrial Sub-division to do all kinds of iron works. During the financial year ended 30/06/90, the cooperative had a total sales of \$341,167.00 and realized a net profit of \$31,302.00

(c) Suva Industrial Cooperative Society Limited

This cooperative's main objective is to provide vehicle repair and maintenance services to its 11 members and outsiders. Last financial year the total garage earnings was \$17,045.00 and net profit registered was \$10,425.00

14.6.2 Eastern Division

(d) Rotuma Investment Cooperative Association Limited

This cooperative acts as an investment agent for Rotuma Cooperative Association Limited. It has invested \$61,393.00 into Inter-Ports Shipping Corporation Limited with the view to improving shipping services by M.V. Wairua to Rotuma.

(e) Bulou Industrial Cooperative Society Limited

This is another tailoring cooperative in Kadavu operated by 854 Fijian women members. As at 30/06/90 the cooperative had a total sale of \$23,058.00 and realized a net profit of \$1,045.00

14.6.3 Western Division

(f) Nadi Industrial Cooperative Society Limited

This is an incense manufacturing cooperative based at Narewa Village, Nadi, and is operated by Fijian women in the village. The cooperative has been beset by a number of problems in the past year. It has faced strong competition with overseas products in the market and also products manufactured locally by ISKCON (Hare Krishna) and K.K. Trust. The cooperative has no building of its own to operate from and has been renting premises from the Narewa Methodist Church on temporary arrangement. During the financial year ended 30/06/90 the cooperative realized a total sales of \$32,376.00 as against the sales of \$84,314.00 in 1989.

(g) Votualevu Cooperative Technical Training School

The technical training school trains farmers' children on how to repair and maintain farm implements and machineries. This is a two year course and trainees are awarded certificates in the end. Some of the trainees have been able to secure jobs in the urban areas whilst others have been assisting in the repair and maintenance of farm machineries in their farms.

14.7 Organisation Structure - Village Connection

The Organisation Chart attached as Appendix 2 shows the various levels within the department. The Cooperative officers are spread over the country looking after different areas and districts.

Decision-making in Cooperatives

15.1 One of the problems identified by women as common to their operations of Consumer Cooperatives in 1984 was the lack of involvement in decision-making in the operation of these cooperatives. During 1989 and 1990, women in the cooperative movement have reported an increase in the incidents and degree of involvement both in the management and the operations of their cooperative.

15.2 In the cooperatives where Women make up less than 50% of the total membership total, Women members are seldom or not involved at all in decision-making except on occasions when they are required to participate in catering and preparing for feasts during functions for the cooperatives. In other cases Women who are involved in the Management have hardly any decision-making powers.

15.3 The 34 Successful Cooperatives in the country which are operated by women who for some of these cooperatives had worked to reactivate and have them operating more successfully.

15.4 In Fiji there are no advisory Committees in Cooperatives. However, the Department of Cooperatives provides advisory assistance and runs training Programmes for Cooperative Members and Managers.

Also the Department for Women and the Fiji Development Bank, through their Women's Interest Assistants and Advisors, do provide training and development programmes, counselling and advisory services for Women in business. The Peace Corps Volunteers have a "Women in Business" programme which allows for women to receive expert advice and training on Business Management. All these assistance could be seen as support services for "Women in Cooperatives".

15.5 The Department for Women has in the recent months shifted some focus of attention and assistance to providing financial grants and aids to a few Women Cooperatives. Parts of these funds were allocated to provide for more development for women in the cooperatives and also to help them in their attempts to revive inoperative cooperatives e.g. to pay for bad debts etc.

15.6 Decision-making in the Cooperatives are left entirely to the operators. While it can be said that the Cooperative Movement in Fiji is actively supported by the Government, the day to day operations of the Movement are in the hands of the Societies. The Government carries out its statutory functions relating to registration of Societies, inspection of books of accounts, audit of accounts, settlement of disputes etc. The non-statutory functions include consultancy and advisory services, education and training, and in particular, the planning of the growth of the Movement to meet national objectives.

15.7 As mentioned, Women members in cooperatives operated by men do not participate meaningfully in business and business planning. However, where the cooperatives are run and managed by Women (women cooperatives) the overall planning; implementation and all decisions are made by Women.

In cooperatives the Women produce, sell, market, and manage the complete operations for example the Marama Cooperative Society.

15.8 Women in Cooperatives in Fiji are becoming increasingly more aware of the need to improve their performance in the business sector. Once they understand procedures and regulations, the women are able to use available resources and organise their operations. In the 34 Women's Cooperatives already mentioned, women participate fully in business and business planning. The members and share-holders of these cooperatives meet regularly when major projects need to be decided. Annual General Meetings are also arranged where bonus payments are made.

15.9 In the operating of Cooperatives in Fiji only those 34 Women Cooperatives have Special Projects for Women Members. For the purpose of the Department for Women the Women Cooperatives are Special Projects which are income generating. In the other male operated Cooperatives, there are no direct Special Projects for Women.

15.10 However, one could conclude that these cooperatives have enabled the members to obtain income through bonus payments. Fishing projects, sugarcane farming and harvesting projects, ginger projects are some of the additional activities arranged to benefit members. In some cases, the Cooperatives Society bonus are saved and used to pay for Community Projects like Community halls, village clinics and Water Projects.

15.11 Cooperatives in Fiji do not have special forums for Women's activities. However, there are separate Community forums for Women's activities. In Fijian Village Setting, because all members of the Village would be members of the same Cooperatives, the facilities provided are by the Community for the benefit of the whole Community.

Employment in Cooperatives

16 The Cooperative Movement in Fiji has been a source of rural employment to the members and their families. Some are on full-time basis while others work part-time. Initially, the three main sectors providing employment in the Cooperative Movement were: Consumer, Consumer/Marketing and Thrift and Credit. Now the Movement has expanded and diversified into agro-based income-generating projects. These have provided numerous employment opportunities to the rural population in the subject areas. As at 30th June, 1990 the Cooperative Movement provided employment to 139 full-time and 1,042 part-time employees earning a total wage bill of \$817,486.00

Conclusions

17.1 In Fiji, Women in Development is increasingly becoming a very popular topic. Although the Government does not have a separate Development Plan for its Women, it has committed a section to Women in Development in the Social and Community Development Chapter.

17.2 In its Development Plan Nine (1986-1990) the government, in recognition that there is need to provide greater encouragement to fully develop and utilise Women's non-domestic capabilities and potentials, it is making greater efforts to ensure that women are fully integrated into the national development process, as equal partners with men. The Government also understands that Women's development needs are not any different from those of their male counterparts in the sense that they too need training, information, technical support, credit and other facilities.

17.3 The Government, in committing itself to enhance and encourage Women's participation in the social and economic development of the nation, has set up a Ministry for Women. By doing so, through its programmes and Projects the Ministry for Women has provided and will continue to provide greater encouragement, to fully develop and utilize both domestic and non-domestic capabilities and potentials of Women in the Country.

17.4 Women in Fiji, as common in the World today play various roles. They play a major and important role not only as mothers and homemakers, but also in the field of economic activity both in the rural and urban areas. Women who participate in wage and salaried employment make vital contributions to many Socio-economic activities. These include:

- (1) their responsibility for and impact on basic needs provision, nutrition, health, family planning etc.;
- (2) their contribution to such activities as subsistence farming, fishing, serving and food preservation;
- (3) their contribution to family incomes through the production and marketing of surplus agricultural produce, handicrafts, garments etc.;

- (4) their increasing involvement in their own family run business, as well as cooperative societies; and
- (5) their volunteer work in Social, community and charitable organisations and fund-raising Projects, especially in major Provincial Projects.

17.5 The Ministry for Women is committed, to helping women in Fiji to improve their quality of life through training and development programmes and projects. These programmes and projects, in many ways, assist the Women and attempt to make them perform their roles better and more efficiently and also help them get income from handicrafts and catering services. This research will include in more details the activities of the Ministry for Women at this point in order to show the various programmes run by government to assist women in Fiji.

17.6 In 1987 the Department of Women and Culture in the Ministry of Women and Social Welfare was established with the aim of incorporating women in the nation-building process with equal participation. It was felt that with this kind of emphasis, it would be possible to focus more fully on the design of specific strategies to trap women's potential for involvement in the development process.

17.7 Policies are geared towards enhancing women's contribution to socio-economic development, notably through their participation in mainstream economic activities and through improving their access to services which will enhance their productivity. Other objectives include:

- the involvement and consultation of women at all levels especially in policy planning areas as well as representation of Boards/Committees;
- review of legislation relating to women concerns/issues including employment;
- assist in creating greater opportunities for women's participation in economic production sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, tourism and manufacturing/industry;
- provide support service for women such as making available credit facilities and access to market outlets;
- coordinate research and analyse data on matters relating to women.
- provide training of women so as to increase their chances of employment.
- enhance participation in decision making at all levels.

17.8 Current Sector Performance

(a) Consultation of Women

This issue has taken a better position in the administration of all provinces in

Fiji. Women are being consulted at all levels and this involvement has proved beneficial for many concerned.

Also women's wings have been established in many trade unions and organisations in the country.

(b) Training

Vocational training for both girls and young women has taken up an important place in the plans of many women's organisations. It is noted that more government and public input, needs to be made in the provision of equipment and expertise in this area. Church groups and Youth organisations have also assisted.

It is felt that policies should include more adult training where parents could receive leadership and attitudinal training.

(c) Human Resource Development

The Department is quite active in this area. It organises a number of courses, workshops and seminars for women to upgrade their skills, increase their employability and improve their standard of living in the family and the community.

Some of the courses that are organised by the department are listed below:

- Income generating and business skills;
- Family Education;
- Leadership and Club Management;
- Clothing and Textiles;
- Sewing machine maintenance;
- Food and Nutrition and Home Gardening;
- Craft Development;
- Simple Home Repairs and Home Improvement;
- Appropriate Technology.

The above courses are organised on the basis of the assessed needs in each area.

17.9 There has been a significant increase in women's composition within the domestic labour market since 1987 which is now estimated at around 25%.

17.10 In 1988 a total of 348 training programmes were conducted which were attended by 6933 participants. In 1989 351 training programmes were nominated and 6590 participants attended. An evaluation of these programmes were carried out at the beginning of 1990. As a result, the training programmes became more specialised so as to equip and assist women in securing employment in the labour

market as well as increasing their participation in Economic and Social development projects. 219 of this revised training programmes were conducted in 1990 while 238 is planned for 1991.

17.11 Non Government Organisation's (NGO) Links

The Department has been working mainly with women group running training and development programmes and planning, funding, implementing, monitoring and evaluating small development projects which are identified by these women.

The Department's NGO links have been mainly with the "Soqosoqo Vakamarama" a national organization of Fijian women with branches in most villages. Close cooperation with the organisation has proved beneficial for all, particularly in the rural areas.

17.12 Capital Projects

Since its establishment in 1987, the achievement of the Department and all the women's organisations in advancing the interest of women have been commendable. In 1989, the number of projects and programmes, more than doubled that of 1988 and benefits are quite visible in improving the standard of living of our people in the rural and the urban areas.

17.13 The department funds women specific projects which involve their participation and the benefits generally accrue to women but in the end everyone benefits. The general criteria is that the projects should be communally oriented i.e. where a group of women is involved rather than an individual endeavour. Like the Rural Development projects there is a cash contribution by the group amounting to one-third of the total costs. Contribution in way of labour may also be taken into consideration towards the community's input.

17.14 Between 1988 to 1990 a total of 101 projects were funded by the Department. A breakdown by Division (also showing total costs for each year) is give in Table 19.

17.15 Lack of gender specific data is a major obstacle for the Department non-existent. This is an impediment to the formulation of national policies for women.

17.16 The department has a small information section and after its Japanese Volunteer statistician, who had begun the work on collection women specific data left in May 1990, the task for information collection has become one of its problems.

Table 19:

	1988	1989	1990	Total
Western	4 (\$8,658.49)	7 (\$9,534.20)	20 (\$37,223.00)	31 (\$55,415.69)
Northern	1 (\$5,000.00)	7 (\$9,035.00)	5 (\$3,555.00)	13 (\$17,590.00)
Eastern	4 (\$9,889.00)	8 (\$7,425.80)	2 (\$1,226.12)	14 (\$18,540.92)
Central	8 (\$19,506.91)	18 (\$38,528.50)	17 (\$45,904.90)	43 (\$103,940.31)
Total	17 (\$43,054.40)	40 (\$64,523.15)	44 (\$87,909.02)	101 (\$195,486.92)

Source: Department of Women & Culture

17.17 It is hoped that inclusion of the Sector report of the Ministry for Women will provide some information on the Policy approaches need in Fiji.

17.18 In general women in Fiji are increasingly becoming involved in areas which were traditionally "male". Women are also becoming more involved in income generating projects.

17.19 Women play an important role in the economy of Fiji, in subsistence agriculture and fisheries, local food marketing, a number of primary and manufacturing industries, and in the service sector, particularly tourism. Formal recognition of women's participation in society has tended to focus on a growing recognition of women's contribution to the national economy and of the need to provide relevant education, training and consideration to women in development planning.

17.20 In terms of rural economy it is necessary to consider women's roles in relation to their ethnicity, since the social and economic structure of Fijian and Indian communities differs widely. In the urban sector, these differences are not as marked, and it is possible to generalise more about women's roles.

17.21 Fiji women have been making good progress, relative to many other developing countries, in health and education. This research sees the greatest advantage to women, in terms of national economic goals, to be linked to increasing the productivity and well-being of agriculture and fishing households, to increasing opportunities for women, particularly in management and technical fields, to encouraging capabilities in the cooperative sector and other income generating activities and in the provision of other training opportunities for women in relation to areas of growth or potential growth in the economy.

17.22 As can be seen from the list of roles of men and women, the women have more roles than men. This is because of Women's reproduction role which includes child bearing and rearing responsibilities. Women's community managing role is also an important role which almost all women, especially in the Fijian Community, are involved in. From the experience of the Department for Women, it has been noted that Community projects and activities have been largely the responsibilities of women. When hard and difficult work is required, then men are involved. Women identify the Community needs in improvement of public health, quality of life and income generating activities; fund raise for these projects and in some cases provide the labour and implement the projects.

17.23 Women in Fiji have productive workers role as either supplementary income earners or principal earners. In some cases, it is not uncommon to see women earning more than their husbands. In such cases these women make very substantial contributions to the family, the community and to the nation as a whole. Where women are in paid employment, their other roles are not avoided. These women are expected by their families and the community to fulfil their other roles.

17.24 It is encouraging to note that whatever the responsibilities, women are expected to carry through their reproductive, community managing and productive workers roles. Even women who are not in paid employment find ways of obtaining additional income. They market subsistence crop; they are the ones mostly involved in the small consumer and tailoring cooperatives and businesses.

17.25 As common in the other parts of the world, majority of women in Fiji are employed as clerical and service workers. Both these occupations are lowly paid. The male literacy rates are higher than females'. Both these indicators show that women are the less fortunate and this could be attributed to the fact that women's education, training and development were not of high priority as men. Boys were sent to schools and girls were kept at home in the olden days. When the family has financial difficulties it is the girls who are pulled out of school. In the past boys continue on to higher education and more academic development

rather than girls. However, nowadays, the number of girls kept at school until higher education is increasing.

17.26 More females are returning with graduate and post graduate degrees. At the time of this research, the actual number of these women are still being completed. Although the number of women in the high echelons of the employment sector is minimal, it is increasing steadily. Both Primary and secondary enrolments do not show any marked difference. There is only a difference of 40 between boys and girls in the number of unenrolled figures in 1989. The trend in the employment sector by gender will show marked improvement and there is also marked increase in the higher paid employment. More females are being given training opportunities, and it is hoped that more women will start their own businesses.

With more priority focused on "Women in Development" it is also hoped that more assistance will be given in financing more social and income generating projects.

17.27 It is hoped that through these projects and through more government input into improving the status of Women in employment and development the women of Fiji will improve their quality of life and their general status and well-being.

17.28 It is very encouraging to note that the Department of Cooperatives, the Department for Women, many Provincial Councils and many country leaders have agreed that women are good business managers and organisers. The 34 cooperatives run by women, and community projects have shown proof to this. Many village elders interviewed also agreed that if it weren't for their women, many of their Projects would fail. These are clear indications that women are held in very high regard by both the government and men and they are aware of women capabilities. In gender participation for cooperative development activities, more training opportunities should be offered to both men and women. A review of the cooperative is needed and the inclusion of the role of women in cooperative in government policies and legislation will be the appropriate action to take. The fact that women make up a very capable unit in the cooperative movement should be considered and they should be encouraged to open or reactivate cooperative societies. Men should be encouraged to accept women as partners and should combine resources to cooperate to improve the image of the movement.

17.29 The country also lacks supporting facilities and services e.g. shipping and transport, cooperative training institute, more capable cooperative extension officers and increased government financial and developmental assistance.

17.30 To ensure integrated gender participation in the development of cooperatives the following are suggested:

- (1) a more viable means or method of integrating culture and business in order to control the management of cooperatives. It has been reported that women are more able to divorce culture from business. Traditionally, in many provinces in Fiji, men are the culture guardians and are more involved in these as compared to women. Women are expected to stay in the background.

If a method cannot be organised, then more development programmes should be run to help men and women separate their customary activities from their business ones.

The government must think of the possibility of developing a programme where men and women are compensated for amounts used in customary obligations. Incomes for most Fijians are often shared between family needs and customary activities and more often the former is prioritised in place of the latter. For Fijians, customs and culture are a way of life and because of this, many find it difficult to separate them from business. Many of the cooperatives which have failed were affected by the same problem. More efforts are needed to help cooperative managers to organise themselves in order that they are able to separate their customary obligations from their business dealings.

- (2) The department of Cooperatives have agreed that women are more successful in the cooperative sector. Also there is sufficient evidence to prove that women make capable cooperative managers. Because of this, and the importance of role played by women in the country's social and economic development, the government should provide incentives and assistance to expand their activities. A special section dealing with women cooperatives in the Department of Cooperatives should be established with more women officers with "Women in Development" focus.

17.31 The Government should assist more financial or credit facilities where women can get easy access. The problems faced by women trying to obtain loans from Commercial Banks and the Fiji Development Bank are many. Through the suggested scheme, women will be given ready access and be provided with capital and serviceable loans for their cooperatives.

17.32 A training programme to satisfy identified problems in the cooperative movement should be developed and implemented. The special needs of women and gender participation should be noted and taken into account. More exposures in other developing countries cooperatives movement are also essential.

17.33 The participation of women in decision making in cooperatives and also in other organisations must be enhanced through government intervention. Although some village and provincial councils are already involving women in meetings and decision making, more villages and provinces should follow.

17.34 There is need to strengthen advisory role of Department of Cooperatives.

17.35 Issues to be considered for gender planning in Cooperatives include the following:

- (a) Further surveys and reviews of involvement of women and also to investigate the appropriate factors operating which could allow women to become more involved in business without fear of reproach from other members in their culture.
- (b) Administrative arrangements for such planning.
- (c) Awareness Programme for both men and women on gender participation in Cooperatives and other field. Planners, policy makers and programmers women's involvement in cooperatives and business.
- (d) Training programme for adults and Cooperatives liaised subjects to be taught in schools. These programmes to include practical experiences.
- (e) Setting up of Advisory Council with the Department of Cooperatives.
- (f) Increase in number of women cooperative officers.
- (g) Financing facilities to be provided by Government.
- (h) Objectives of Planning to cover Women's needs.
- (i) Men's needs to be considered.
- (j) The cultural and customary demands and obligations.
- (k) The different roles of men and women.
- (l) The social, political, and economic situation of the Country.

17.36 In the quest to fulfil their listed roles women in Fiji have various needs. In their productive role, women need the support of their spouses and their family, both immediate and extended. Parents, grandparents, uncles and aunts have very important roles in child rearing both in the Indian and Fijian societies. In many families, the women are able to go to work because their relatives and paid servants are there to mind their children and look after their houses.

17.37 The husband's support is important in this instance to help lighten the women's responsibilities. Many husbands welcome the additional income and encourage their wives to find work. These men also take added responsibilities to support the family and assist by taking turns in baby sitting and housekeeping. These tasks are no longer regarded as women's roles and are shared.

17.38 In their community managing role women depend very much on government and non-government organisations to provide necessary facilities and capital. In family and village commitments, women become the planners and caterers who contribute time, labour and other material resources. Financial and basic social needs of the family and the village become major focus here and women need facilities and resources for projects to satisfy these needs.

17.39 As productive workers, women in Fiji need special legislation e.g. maternity and employment opportunities, to enhance their involvement. Training and development to provide and improve knowledge and skills are required by women. Kindergarten and baby sitting facilities are also needed.

17.40 Women have demonstrated that they are capable of managing profitable cooperative societies in addition to their other roles. Those women who are in paid employment also have demonstrated their abilities to perform more than two roles. Women who stay home and look after the house and help in the farm have shown abilities at earning incomes to supplement their husbands income. Women have also shown prowess at keeping and managing the family income even though their husbands' incomes are meagre. It is indeed true that women play very important roles in their families and communities and the nation.

17.41 The situations of women in Fiji as in other countries differ significantly according to their potential, economic, social, cultural, and religious conditions. A great variety of values and needs are also found depending on the social class, employment status, location, and family situation of the women in question. Women tend to be viewed as a largely homogeneous and uniformed group, but development aid to assist women must be based on a differentiated approach that gives consideration to the special characteristics of women in their specific communities.

17.42 In this process, consideration must not be limited to the social roles of men and women or the division of labour. Rather, means should be devised whereby women can participate more directly in the development process, while at the same time paying attention to the social and traditional factors that hamper their involvement. Furthermore, care must be taken that the rush to modernize does not bring with it the destruction of the culture and values of women. It is important, in this respect, to develop methods to foster development while at the same time preserving respect for women within their local communities.

17.43 Women in developing countries find themselves in a complex socio-economic situation which, in general, cannot be sufficiently improved under a conventional sector-by-sector approach. It is necessary, therefore, to take an integrated approach to women-related issues. In order to promote women's involvement in economic activities, it is important to provide them with better

access to technology, funding, and other sources of production, as well as to a wider range of information, education, and training services. Health and medical services must also be provided if health, a fundamental condition for sustained socioeconomic activity, is to be maintained.

It is obvious that projects promoting family planning cannot succeed if women's health and education are undermined. Administrators need to be aware that the economic power of women could often be a deciding factor for obtaining the means of family planning.

17.44 Furthermore, projects must be approached from the vantage point of comprehensive regional development if they are to accurately reflect the needs of women from their own perspectives. This approach attempts to integrate the politics, economics, and social structures of the community concerned, while in the process attempting to identify the role and needs of women and actively encouraging their direct participation in development. This is a fundamental approach for achieving effective and sustainable development of a local community as a whole.

SOME LONG TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The "Women in Development" (WID) perspective should be reflected in every process of development activities; planning, implementation and evaluation. WID perspectives see women not only as beneficiaries of development programmes but as main agents in their implementation. This basic idea should be reflected in every phases of aid programmes, from the very beginning to the very end. Even though WID perspectives are included in the initial planning stages of a development project, for example, if they are not adopted in the actual implementation, the aid will have little effect on women's situations and on society. In addition, if WID perspectives are not considered in the initial stages, it will be impossible in the final evaluation process to assess the degree of impact on and participation by men and women, respectively.

Emphasis on WID perspective does not mean eliminating male perspectives from development assistance. Rather, it means bringing multi-dimensional views to programmes. The conventional approaches have rarely viewed the beneficiaries and target groups in any detail, and so have tended to lack consideration for women, children and other socially disadvantaged groups. They have carried them the danger that the benefits of development may favour a specific groups and may not necessarily be available to a wider range of people. The inclusion of a gender specific perspective enables the discovery of more finely-tuned needs and will, in

the end, spur development efforts by the entire community, men and children included. This, in turn, promotes more equitable and sustainable development.

2. It is recommended that the three priority areas be considered and given consideration (a) promotion of economic participation, (b) promotion of education, (c) promotion of health, medicine and family planning, and (d) in addition, the following are considered priority issues as they will ensure effective development in these areas: reformation of the systems in developing countries (enhancement of national machinery and NGOs), and enhanced access to information.

These areas are to be both intrinsic and high-priority needs based on the Government Policy and the analysis of the status of women in Fiji and other developing countries. All of these areas are closely intertwined, and the long-term desirability of an integrated approach is an obvious fact.

(a) Promotion of Economic Participation

In carrying out "Women in Cooperatives" programmes, Government should give support to the economic activities of women through occupational and technical training programmes which will lead to expanded employment opportunities and higher incomes. However, this must be done at the same time lessening the often excessive labour required of women both at home and work and avoiding any negative impact on women's health.

A large number of women are engaged in agricultural production and developing countries in this sector and to give support for higher production and food security will eventually lead to increasing the productivity of the entire community. It is important, therefore, to develop and disseminate appropriate time and resource-saving technology for women, to have women participate in agricultural training, and to improve women's access to credit which would enable them to expand production activities or start-up new business. If support for organising women's groups should be also given, all assistance programmes would become even more effective.

Modernization processes have resulted in many women moving into urban industrial and service sectors. Improving women's situations in these sectors will therefore be an important component of aid programmes. In many cases women work in poor environments, their employment opportunities are limited, and they are rarely able to advance to decision-making and managerial levels. Many women, in addition, work in the informal sector where wages are low and job security is poor. In order to diversify women's employment opportunities, priority should be given to supporting occupational training programmes which include

courses in marketing and management, the creation of better work environments, and the education of female workers on their rights and legal conditions.

With these considerations, it is important that the Government development policy for Women in Cooperatives programmes value and support the following efforts:

- a. Develop and disseminate appropriate technology for women;
- b. Implement occupational and technical training programmes which will generate greater employment opportunities and higher incomes for women;
- c. Enhance women's access to credit facilities and other production resources;
- d. Improve labour conditions and work environments for women in the formal and informal sectors;
- e. Promote women's organisations in the community and their participation in agricultural cooperatives, labour unions and other organisational activities.

(b) Promotion of Education

Education is a necessary condition for sustainable development; it accelerates people's access to information and knowledge. However, women's educational levels are relatively low in many developing countries and it is difficult for women themselves to change this situation. In addition to improving literacy rates, and elementary school enrolment and completion rates, it is necessary to provide women with the opportunity to acquire basic knowledge about daily life activities.

The difference between male and female enrolment ratios in various countries, the sociocultural norms and customs that have slowed down female enrolment, and the reasons why female school dropout rates are high should be taken into full account. It is even more important to provide assistance for the universal elementary education, being the most basic and vital issues of all. Other dissemination of textbooks and educational materials which take into account socioeconomic factors and characteristics of the society, the training and education of female school teachers, and the provisions of educational facilities which can be used by women.

Literacy programmes and assistance should be extended not only to basic literacy, but also other practical and functional literacy programmes including job-related skills, sanitation, health and nutrition, family planning, and resource and environmental conservation. It is necessary, however, to provide education that is relevant to people in rural communities, thereby avoiding exacerbating the massive migration to urban areas and abroad. Educational opportunities must be

provided in a balanced way so as not to widen the gaps between the rich and poor groups of the society.

With these considerations, it is important that Government must consider developing such efforts as to:

- a. Promote elementary education, especially for women;
- b. Improve the quality of education through the training of female teachers and the creation and dissemination of textbooks and teaching materials suited to local social needs and conditions;
- c. Establish education and training facilities which can be used by women;
- d. Promote education and training opportunities in order to improve literacy rates among adult women, and allow women to acquire basic knowledge and information about daily life activities.

(c) Promotion of Health, Medicine and Family Planning

Traditionally, the issue of women and health has been viewed within the framework of maternal and child health, and population and family planning. However, women's health does not just concern the mothers who will produce and raise the next generation; it is in fact a more comprehensive and complex issue. Women have the role of promoting health not only at home, but also in local communities. In areas where medical facilities are scarce, or where women's participation is restricted due to religious or cultural reasons, female medical workers and volunteers play an absolutely vital role.

We should also not forget the fact that women have traditionally provided health and medical services as nurses, health workers, and mid-wives. In order to promote women's health, therefore, it is important to include sanitation and nutrition as a part of adult education, to provide assistance for programmes that improve access to health services, to reduce the volume of household tasks like fetching water and fuel wood, and to expand the range of gender-specific health and medical data available.

Infant mortality rates continue to be high in developing countries, and this, in and of itself, is a reflection of the lack of knowledge and information about sanitation and nutrition, the lack of economic power among women, and the poor state of health of mothers. In addition, there has been a surge in the number of woman-headed households in recent years due to the sharply accelerated urban population influx and the large numbers of men going to work overseas. This has in turn resulted in an increased workload for women.

It is necessary to create a firm base of primary health care oriented towards

maternal and child health in order to then promote family planning programmes which also encourage male's participation. At the same time, it is necessary to take into account demographic structures and population movements in each society.

With these considerations, it is important that Government must consider developing assistance programmes that value and support the following efforts:

- a. Enhance women's access to health and medical services and information, particularly local health services;
- b. Promote primary health care programmes oriented towards maternal and child health and family planning integrated into these programmes;
- c. Promote health education targeted as women;
- d. Collect gender-based data regarding nutrition, health, medicine, and demography (static and dynamic).

(d) Strengthen the Internal System

Many developing countries have national machinery, consisting of ministries of women's affairs, women affairs bureaus in social welfare ministries, women's affairs divisions in the prime minister's office and others. As a result of the United Nations decade for Women, they were launched in an attempt to view women's issues in a multi-dimensional fashion. For Fiji, the Department for Women has been established and more focus should be given to strengthening this department. The Department is responsible for advocating policies relating to women, promoting and coordinating the activities of governmental institutions and NGOs as they relate to women, campaigning to sensitize the public about crucial issues on women, carrying out development education, and exchanging information on an international level.

The Department plays a leading role for the advancement of women in Fiji. It is important that support be given to strengthen their organisation, system, functions, programme implementation and human resources.

Women's NGOs and grass-root NGOs are many in Fiji engaging in activities related to women in development. These NGOs are versed in Local social systems and work closely with local communities. Assistance administered through supporting NGOs should result in wide-spread, effective development. However, many of the grassroots NGOs in developing countries lack of ability to effectively plan, formulate, manage and carry out programmes. It is therefore vital that support be given to the strengthening these NGOs, thereby boosting the effectiveness of assistance, and supporting community-led, sustained develop-

ment through an extensive bottom-up approach.

With these considerations, it is important that Fiji's development programmes value and support the following efforts:

- a. Strengthen the capabilities of national machinery in its organisation, functions, human resources, technology, and programme implementation; establish and strengthen women-related centres for research, information and training; and promotion of information networking within and outside of a country;
- b. Promote formulation and implementation of national development plans and programmes which take into account the needs for women;
- c. Promote WID-related projects carried out by local and international NGOs active in developing countries.

(c) Expanded Access to Information

Women, in general, have limited access to information and knowledge, especially if they are living in rural areas with no electricity and poor transportation and communication systems. In some cases religious and traditional customs and norms restrict the range of women's activity and keep them alienated from certain types of information. There is, of course, much information which women need; information on ways to improve productivity, technology, marketing and management, sanitation, health, nutrition, medicine, family planning, environment, laws related to the family and land ownership, and other social services. By supporting efforts to make this information more easily available, Japan's assistance could improve their economic and social situations of women and promote their participation in development. As women learn for themselves how to collect, analyse and monitor important information, improvements not just for women, but for the quality of life in the entire community, will result.

It is important, therefore, to promote greater social opportunities for women through these sorts of "participatory information collection and monitoring" activities, thereby promoting the empowerment of women and assisting the autonomous development of a community as a whole.

In order to have an accurate grasp of the socioeconomic situations of women and to incorporate these realities in the mainstream of development policies and plans, it is necessary to include gender-specific data in all regularly conducted national censuses and population and household surveys. At the same time, a new set of gender-based indicators and statistics should be developed, and where necessary, sample surveys should be carried out.

With these considerations it is important that the government consider developing programmes to:

- a. Enhance women's access to information, and promote information systems able to organise the data needed and provide it in a comprehensive form; in particular, to disseminate information and knowledge to women in rural communities and outlying islands;
- b. Promote "participatory information collection and monitoring" in which women will be able, on their own, to improve their lives;
- c. Promote education, training, and technical cooperation related to national census, population and household surveys which will provide gender-based data on developing countries; promote gender-based sample surveys as needed;
- d. Promote networking among governments, local and international NGOs in regard to women-related issues.

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