

Pacific Sub-Regional Office

Serving the Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.



***Making Fiji markets better for women and girls:
Gender Equality & Empowerment of women in Marketplace
Governance and development***

INTRODUCTION:

Marketplaces are a central feature of the social, economic and cultural life of Melanesian cities, towns, provincial and district hubs and communities. They are also important to the economy of rural families and communities. Most markets are administered by City Halls and local governments as a ‘service’ for both vendors and buyers. However, the operations of most fresh food market are far from optimal, especially for vendors, the majority of whom are women and girls, whose hard earned incomes are very important to their families’ quality of life, ability to pay school fees, and to the provision and upkeep of important community institutions (church, temples, community halls and events). Rural vendors also contribute substantially to City Hall revenues.

Well planned and well governed and gender responsive local market places are consistent with a pro-poor economic framework that supports economic growth and supports women’s economic security and rights. However, the conditions prevailing in market places throughout the Melanesia and the wider Pacific result in livelihoods being earned by thousands of women and girls in harsh, demanding, insecure unhealthy and unsafe working conditions. Too often markets are poorly planned and managed, consisting of rudimentary and often run-down facilities with minimal maintenance of assets, financed by the fees collected. Ironically, planning, operations and budgeting in relation to markets are male dominated. It is time for women market vendors to be empowered, and their choices to be heard in ways that lead for better outcomes for all.

This project is about developing mechanisms and processes for effective dialogue between market authorities and women market vendors, with the aim of building a

better, more mutual understanding of the needs of both parties, in terms of making markets run better, more fairly and more productively.

By building partnerships and institutionalizing dialogue and cooperation between market managers (duty bearers) and vendors (rights holders) new plans, costing exercises, taxing regimes and budgets can be prepared for the improvement of selected markets in Fiji. This is a rights-based, gender responsive and empowering approach to improving markets, which is a better strategy than quick-fix, top down, donor dependent projects to fix *only* the physical infrastructure. It is also an opportunity to bring markets into the modern economy and city environment, and to revitalize peri-urban and rural areas as important social, economic and potentially information, education, technical service and knowledge disseminating centers.

The proposal for a project to pilot market places improvements in 5 selected sites in Fiji goes beyond simply grant-making to finance improvements to the physical infrastructure. The project addresses the gendered relations of power between Local governments and their market managers and staff (mostly men) on the one hand, and the vendors who use the market (mostly women) on the other. This process is seen as an important entry point for building women and girls' knowledge and confidence as citizens, to engage in policy, by-laws, budgets and day to day management and operations on the market. It contributes to greater leadership and participation by women in local governance.

To date the UN Women project to improve market places in Melanesia has engaged a number of local partners: interested municipalities, the Commonwealth Local Government Forum and UNDP. It has been largely funded from UN Women's own core resources.

The project is focused on marginalized women, namely rural women and girls food producer-sellers, and the urban poor women and girls who constitute the increasing proportion of marketplace retailers, who buy from rural women and resell on main

and satellite markets to and earn their livelihood. The project integrates UN Women's core business of advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women, in the specific context of city and rural local marketplaces. The project is linked to all three core programming areas of UN Women, namely:

- increasing women's understanding of and participation in local level governance,
- strengthening women's economic security and rights through trade in the informal economy and
- Increasing women's safety, security and their agency in good governance public facilities and spaces.

The project also specifically contributes to local governments implementing national commitments to gender Equality, specifically, Article 14 of CEDAW and MDG3.

BACKGROUND

In 2008 UN Women initiated a 4-country project: Partnerships to Improve Markets in Fiji, PNG, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. 50 markets in Melanesia (PNG, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Fiji) surveyed and a gender analysis of the physical, social and economic aspects of marketplace operations was conducted. Common problems that oppress women vendors, and reflect gender blindness among market managers were found and plans were made for further country specific in-depth analysis of problems and the development of strategies and tools to address them. Innovations in marketplace improvement were initiated in selected markets undertaken in each country. In Fiji, this work was focused on Suva city Market and 4 Provincial markets and addressed:

1. Updating and Engendering Marketplace By-laws
2. Strengthening local government capacity in Market asset management and maintenance

3. Economic analysis: Vendor Incomes / Local Govt. market tax revenues with the aim of introducing the concept of GRB
4. Development of a user friendly guide for strengthening local govt. and vendor association partnerships to improve markets
5. strengthening local govt. and vendor association partnerships to plan and budget projects to improve markets

A parallel knowledge building process was set up to share lessons learned through pilot initiatives in selected market of PNG, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Fiji. Several workshops were conducted with selected local government authorities and leaders of women market vendors with the aim of guiding the production of a Generic Toolkit to support **Partnerships to Improve Markets**, based on the lessons learned in piloting various approaches and tools developed with managing authorities, vendors and patrons of markets.

LESSONS FROM FIJI

In 2009, UN Women tasked the Foundation for Development Cooperation (FDC) to implement phase 2 of its Partnership to Improve Markets (PIM) project in Fiji. FDC was tasked to develop approaches, strategies and tools to:

- make local government and other bodies that manage markets more sensitive and responsive to the key Gender issues in marketplace planning, operations and governance
- Facilitate the empowerment of women market vendors by conducting a more detailed analysis of their exclusion and marginalization in marketplace governance and operations.
- contribute to the cooperation of market managers and vendors for improvement of the physical, social, and economic conditions of women market vendors;

Phase 1 of the project identified a number of problems including: lack of transport facilities to get themselves and their goods to and from the market; lack of basic facilities (toilets, shelter, water supply, clean surrounding); lack of safety and security measures to protect women; uncooperative and sometimes obstructive local government authorities; outdated or vague regulations regarding market vendors and their rights ; lack of organized vendor representation; lack of business development services for women vendors (i.e. microfinance and other services) and disorganized and sometimes very primitive or no asset management and maintenance systems.

All of these problems have a negative impact on the marketplace economy as well as the dignity, quality of life, health and safety of women vendors. Fundamental to solving this problem is creating a better working relationship and mutual cooperation between market vendors and managers, as well as market patrons and private enterprise operating in the vicinity as secondary players

In Phase 2 of UN Women's project, the Foundation for Development Cooperation (FDC) was contracted to conduct more in-depth surveys and analysis in 5 selected markets in Fiji. FDC's findings confirmed that the problems facing women market vendors in their 'workplace' include outdated infrastructure, insufficient services compared to taxes and fees collected, gender/ blind and insensitive management. Through extensive consultations and involvement of city councils and local governments their responsiveness to gender justice and decent workplace issues has increased, but they have not yet taken steps to formalize the establishment and institutionalisation of mechanisms and processes to hear the voices of women vendors and to include their priorities, needs and concerns (that were identified through interviews and focus group discussions) in marketplace planning, prioritizing and budgeting for marketplace improvements.

The recommendations for marketplace improvement and a better return to vendors on the daily taxes they pay focused on three key areas: 1) better market management and governance 2) better marketplace facilities and services 3) improved marketplace

infrastructure. In terms of infrastructure women's priorities included toilet and washroom facilities; shelter for market vendors; secure and accessible storage facilities; better control and management of waste within the market areas, improved market locations and hours for selling, improved information and services to be available in the market such as agriculture and health information, access to financial services and business training.

These findings and the piloting of strategies and tools to address it are documented in a set of documents prepared by FDC. (Annex 1)

WAY FORWARD

Work to improve the mutual understanding and cooperation of Municipal Market authorities with Women Market vendors, remains incomplete. There is a critical need to stimulate and strengthen organisations of women in the informal economy. This will facilitate increased awareness by women of their rights to determine and priorities improvements in the operation and economic outcomes of informal economies. It will also enable more informed debates on gender responsive fiscal policies and legislation. This will contribute to improved governance, operations and conditions by, for example, introducing gender responsive budgeting and alternative ways of managing taxes so they can be re-invested in maintaining and improving the assets and facilities of markets.

Municipalities are enthusiastic about improving their market infrastructure, but need support to do this in ways that are consultative, gender sensitive and contribute to the development of long-term and sustainable mechanisms and processes for empowering women vendors and advancing gender equality in the marketplace. More intensive efforts, involving training and capacity development of both parties is required. Making municipalities more gender aware, paralleled by a programme of building strategies for women to have voice in planning and budgeting for market improvements is proposed. This can be achieved using a toolkit for training and skill building, based on the best of tools and templates developed to date by UN Women.

UN Women is proposing a Phase 3 of its project: Partnerships to Improve Markets in Fiji that will pilot infrastructural improvements based on decisions reached through dialogue and partnership between municipalities and vendors. The aim is to develop and test new and gender sensitive approaches to managing and developing markets that can be documented, added to a toolkit and used to replicate and scale up projects and to stimulate national and local level interest and awareness and formation of for a on improvement of markets to enable ongoing knowledge building, commitment to change and effective women led lobbying for legislative, policy and budgeting and financing changes in markets across Fiji.

Project design Framework:

Goal: Selected Fiji marketplaces are improved through the establishment of dialogue between municipalities' market management and women vendors and their partnership to identify, prioritise plan, cost and implement market infrastructural improvements

Outcome 1. Effective dialogue established between municipal market management and leaders of organizations of women market vendors

Output 1.1: A Generic Toolkit for Partners Improving markets is produced, and adapted for specific markets in Fiji.

Output 1.2: An associated training programme is delivered at pilot projects sites to support formation of market vendors organisations, sensitisation of local government market management effective and institutionalized dialogue between local governments and organisations of women market vendors

Outcome 2: Gender responsive market infrastructure Improvement Projects are identified, prioritized, planned, budgeted and minor works completed in markets by municipalities, based on new dialogue and planning processes in 5 selected markets**

Output 2.1: Gender sensitive and women inclusive consultations, planning and costing for marketplace improvements are facilitated in 5 selected markets

Output 2.2: Scope of works for prioritized pilot infrastructure improvements are developed for each market

Output 2.3: Detailed project proposals and /or minor infrastructural works are completed at each project site

Output 2.4: Visual and narrative case studies are prepared for each of the 5 markets highlighting lessons learned and good practice in gender mainstreaming in marketplace governance and development.

** ¹ Suva City Market, Sigatoka market, Nausori Market, Labasa market, Rakiraki market were proposed in the study FDC completed under contract to UN Women.

Proposed Next Phase:

1. Toolkit Production and training

*A Workshop to Consolidate a toolkit of materials, templates, case studies, audiovisual documentaries was held in late April 2011. **Half of the participants were from Fiji.** Five selected markets in Fiji run by local governments or councils – who have indicated willingness to change and participate in processes to make markets better for women– were active participants and contributors in toolkit production. Fiji participants include representatives from 5 local governments’ market management and administration, five local facilitators and resource people, 2 Fijian NGO reps, and staff of the Fiji based Commonwealth Local Govt, Forum and association of Women in local Government. The workshop was sponsored by UN Women with a contribution from the Commonwealth Local Government Forum.*

The lead researcher from FDC also participated to provide continuity to UN Women’s PIM project. Representatives from counterpart market projects in PNG, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu also participate in a South-South learning exchange and exposure (including guided visits to three markets).

The project budget attached covers the cost of 2 phases of post workshop production of a generic Toolkit for Partnerships to Improve markets, (edit and format of content and graphic design and production of 100 kits) The toolkit will be based on the strategies shared and tools designed and developed in the workshop and will form as the basis of consultations, facilitation of the formation of organisations of vendor associations and commitments by local government to operate and develop markets in a more gender sensitive manner.

2. Pilot Projects for improvement in Market infrastructure and operations

Five selected markets in Fiji run by local governments or councils - willing to change and participate in processes to make markets better for women – are active participants in preparing a project design for piloting infrastructural improvements.

A project of at least AUD1.2million is envisaged of which AUD200,000 is allocated to support the processes of empowering organisations of women market vendors and gender sensitizing local governments and AUD1million would be available for a contractor to work with the 5 local governments to plan and construct the infrastructural improvements prioritized and agreed to in the dialogue between women market vendors and municipalities responsible for the selected markets.

3. Field visits for to prepare Project sites and Stakeholders

The former team leader of the FDC team that completed an initial study and pilot work on gender in the governance and development of markets in Fiji will lead a team made up of the UN Women project staff, Local Government and the NGO women in Local Government to meet with the local government management of the 5 selected markets, to develop a full project design for UN Women. The team will prepare a call for tenders for an appropriate person or company to prepare a final project proposal. The successful bidder will be required to:

- Participate in a project briefing from UN Women project staff and management and the FDC consultant / researcher covering the buy-in and consent of municipalities and the ownership and commitment by respective parties.
- Prepare preliminary costing of these minor construction works in the selected markets.
- Lead a de-briefing with UN Women staff and AusAID and discuss and provide recommendations full project design
- In consultation with UN Women, develop a full project design with log frame and budget, by the field site consultations, castings and feedback on debriefing to be prepared and submitted by mid June 2011.

- Submit Partnerships to Improve Markets proposal which includes contracting a suitable NGO to use the toolkit to deliver training to strengthen formation and capacity of vendors associations and to gender sensitize local governments as foundation processes guiding governance and infrastructure improvements in markets. The project will specify the priority pilot infrastructure improvements proposed as a result of dialogue with vendors and management.

National Seminar/Forum on partnerships to Improve markets

The stakeholders involved in the Fiji Partners to improve Markets Project have mutually and unanimously requested UN Women and UNDP Pacific Centre, in partnership with the emerging Association of Women in Local government, to host a national forum, over 2 days, to raise awareness on the PIM Initiative, to share progress made on this project, to share the toolkit and how it can be used, and to stimulate national and local level decisions and actions towards the establishment of a national Forum on Improving market planning, budgeting, governance and linking that with MDG acceleration, legal empowerment of the poor, financial inclusion and literacy, and the justification for more women to be more proactively engaged with and in local government.

Proposed Budget:

Item	Costs	UN Women	AusAID
Toolkit Production Workshop			
Consultant toolkit writers, editors, designers (May/June 2011)	Post workshop toolkit refinement, editing, illustrating, translating		10,800
Post workshop toolkit print and production costs (June 2011)	Contract to graphic designer/print, audio, audio-visual production team		19,200
Costs of local consultant (Ex FDC team leader, now based in Melbourne) for orientation and follow-up links with previous phase May 2011)	Travel: Return airfare to Fiji		2,000
	Other costs		8,000
Contractor: Project design and costing			
Fiji PIM Team (UN Women, Women in Local Govt (NGO), Senior staff of Dept of Local Govt. and a technical adviser tour selected markets for briefings, consultations and meetings. (May2011)	Local travel, meetings and workshops (venue and equipment hire) and fees for technical work to prepare for project		10,000
Fiji national conference on Improving markets (led by UN Women, UNDP PC, and women in Local Government) (June 2011)	Awareness, advocacy, formation of national and local for market improvement, and linking to women in local government, MDG acceleration and Legal Empowerment of the Poor.		13,000
Contractor to design project proposal to be submitted to AusAID (June 2011)	Prepare project proposal with UN Women and stakeholders		25,000
UN Women Technical advisor on process			5,458

Item	Costs	UN Women	AusAID
Toolkit Production Workshop			
Management overheads (7%)			6,542
Total			AUD100,000

UN Women – PIM Project Reference Materials

Produced by FDC under contract to UN Women

- 1. Fiji Market Improvement Handbook – DRAFT.**
- 2. Basics of Project Management**
- 3. Partnerships to Improve Markets Project, Fiji. Phase Two. Focus Group 4. Economic Analysis Report. Four Markets. Suva, Nausori, Sigatoka, Labasa. October 2010**
- 5. Fiji Market Improvement Handbook**
- 6. Framework – Market Rules.**
- 7. Piloting New Initiatives for “Empowerment of Women Vendors and Engendering Market Management in Melanesia”, Phase 2. Final Report. December 2010.**
- 8. Revision of Suva, Nausori, Sigatoka and Labasa By-laws. Summary of Review Process and Amendments Proposed.**
- 9. List of contacts. Stakeholders Contact List.**
- 10. Building and Forming Associations Workshop. Participant Booklet.**
- 11. Team Building and Forming Associations Workshop – Trainer Booklet.**
- 12. FDC Basics of Project Management. Trainer’s Guide. 2010.**