

FIJI REDD+ GENDER GUIDELINE

Produced by

Soqosoqo Vakamarama i Taukei e Viti



Rolling hills of Navosa

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	2
Key Definitions	2-3
Acronyms	4
SECTION 1: PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW	5
1.0 INTRODUCTION	6
2.0 GENDER ISSUES IN SUSTAINABLE FORESTS MANAGEMENT 2.1 Understanding Gender Difference in Forest Management 2.2 Forest Degradation 2.3 Women's Participation	9 -13
SECTION 2	
3.0 INTEGRATING GENDER INTO SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT • Institutional Strengthening • National REDD+ Management • Consultation and Participation	16 -17
4.0 NATIONAL REDD+ STRATEGY • Land Use Management • Benefit Sharing • Feedback, Grievances & Reporting Mechanism • National Forest Monitoring	21 -25
SECTION 3	
5.0 STRENGTHENING ACCOUNTABILITY FOR GENDER IMPACT • Creating enabling environment for Gender Programming • Organizational Development • Monitoring and Evaluation	28-31
• REFERENCES	32

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KEY DEFINITIONS

Gender: it describes all socially constructed attributes, roles, activities and responsibilities associated with being male and female in a given society and vary widely from place to place. Gender defines social and cultural expectations about what behavior and activities are allowed, what attributes are valued, and what rights and power one has in the family, community and nation. For example, in one society women may be expected to focus on the family's domestic needs while men engage in the formal paid workforce, whereas in another, both men and women may be expected to contribute to the family's cash income.

Gender analysis aims to make often overlooked gender differences visible.

Gender analysis includes:

- Analyzing sex- and gender-disaggregated data to identify trends and patterns of status including inequalities;
- Reviewing women and men's needs, constraints and opportunities;
- Identifying challenges and opportunities in the wider social environment; and
- Assessing the capacities of service providers to address gender inequalities.

Gender Blind: Someone or something is gender-blind if he or she (or it, i.e. a policy or a program) does not recognize the differences between men and women. Gender-blindness is thus the failure to recognize that gender is an essential determinant of social outcomes, which then

Gender Muteness on the other hand is the failure to reflect, and articulate gender perspectives in the agenda and content of discussions, documents, policy and programmers indicating deliberate disregard towards especially women.

Gender impacts policies and development projects. A gender-blind approach assumes that a policy or intervention does not have unequal (even if unintended) outcomes on women and men.

Gender-sensitive: one is aware about the differences that exist between men and women – their different needs and their different ways of using and benefiting from resources. When one is gender-sensitive, one can then take further action by critically examining gender norms and creating new opportunities to strengthen and support gender equality for women, men, boys and girls.

Gender Roles: arise from our socially perceived differences between men and women that define how men and women should think, act and feel. Gender roles are constantly changing, and can vary between and within cultures.

Gender-disaggregated data can also provide gender analytical information that explains why there might be gender differences and inequalities. Gender-disaggregated data might clarify, for example, the political, socio-economic and cultural reasons why female membership and participation in community forest committees tends to be lower compared to their male counterparts.

Gender equality: it is giving men and women the freedom to develop their personal abilities and make choices without the limitations set by stereotypes, rigid gender roles, or prejudices. Men and woman's rights, responsibilities and opportunities should not depend on whether they are born male or female. It does not mean that men and women have to become the same.

Gender inequality: it is when men tend to have more decision-making power and control over resources than women and this have negative impacts on women and girls. Efforts to advance gender equality need to focus specifically on improving situation and status of women and girls in their societies. For example, specific actions may be taken to ensure that women's views and priorities are adequately and directly heard in forests management committees.

Gender equity: Refers to fairness of treatment for women and men according to their respective needs and interest. This may include equal benefits in benefit sharing mechanism.

Gender-sensitive: someone possesses the ability to acknowledge and highlight existing gender differences, issues and inequalities, and to then incorporate them into strategies and actions.

Power relations: this is to do with capacities of individuals and groups to initiate action and determine outcomes which change existing social, political and economic systems and norms, influencing gender relations.

Sex: The biological characteristics that define humans as either male or female.

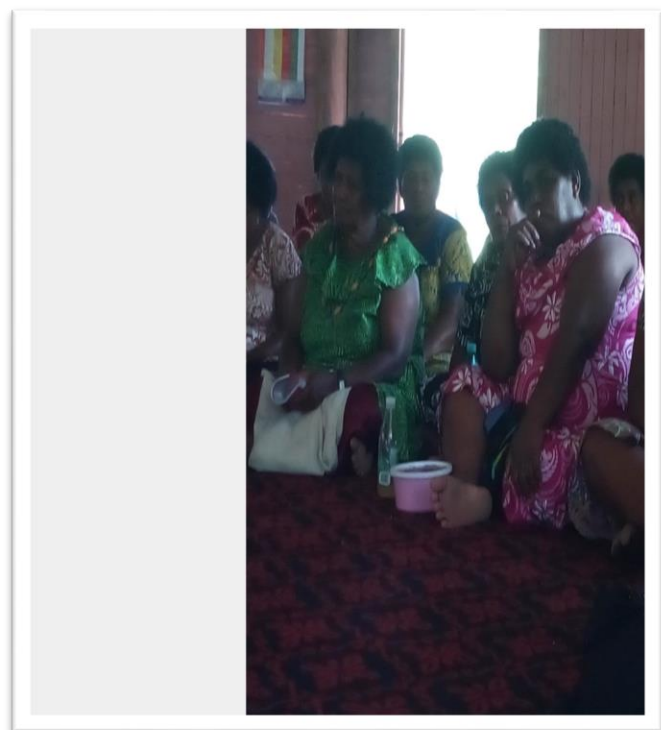
Sex-disaggregated data: is data broken down into male and female categories that offer statistical information on the differences and inequalities between women and men. For example, sex-disaggregated data can reveal quantitative differences between men and women employment in Forestry sector.

Source: for definitions of concepts: Gender Equality Index, 2015

ACRONYMS

BSM	Benefit sharing mechanism
ERP	Emission Reduction program
FGRM	Feedback grievances and reporting mechanism
FCPF	Forest Carbon Partnership Facility
i-Taukei	The indigenous communities in Fiji
Mataqali	Is a one clan made up of several <i>i Tokatoka</i> (a family unit)
NTFPs	Non Timber Forest Products
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (+) the role of forest conservation, sustainable management of forests and forest carbon stock enhancement
R-PP	Readiness Preparation Proposal for the FCPF REDD+ Readiness Funding
SESA	Strategic Environment and Social Assessment
Tikina	District
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

SECTION 1



SECTION 1: Purpose and Overview

1.0 INTRODUCTION

2.0 GENDER ISSUES IN SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT

- 2.1 Understanding Gender Difference
- 2.2 Forest Degradation - increasing work burden
- 2.3 Women Participation in Forest Management

Photo: Women of Draubuta village that participated in the focus group discussion.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This guideline is developed to ensure that all REDD+ processes are gender sensitive and not gender mute where women and men in indigenous and local communities participate equally and that their voices, interests and aspiration are heard, seen and considered at all levels of decision making when implementing REDD+ strategy. It will also ensure that the development of future key policies and programs take into account and encapsulate and recognize distinction between the sexes.

It is increasingly recognized that sound developments such as REDD+ initiative must be based on a clear assessment of the contributions of women as well as men and the potential impact of planned interventions on both women and men and their productivity.

Achieving gender equality is an important goal which refers to equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men of all ages and in all spheres of life. It is not just a women's issue and it is now accepted and pursued by governments and international organizations. Promoting gender equality between women and men can also contribute to the achievements of other social and economic objectives.

Gender mainstreaming is the strategy for promoting gender equality and it is defined in the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) agreed conclusions 1997/2, as *“the process of assessing the implication for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or program in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women as well as men's concerns and experiences an integrated dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated.”* It is envisioned that when such an approach is adopted, it will ensure that forest stakeholders can access, control, and obtain equitable benefits from forestry related policies and interventions. This will ultimately contribute to the sustainable management of land, forests and its resources.

This guideline is intended to assist all stakeholders contributing to the implementation of Fiji REDD Plus Readiness Programme to incorporate effective gender sensitive and inclusive approaches into REDD+ strategies when implementing the REDD Plus Readiness Programme in existing and future REDD+ committed sites.

Gender sensitive approaches in this guideline will address needs, concerns and interests of both men and women in sustainable forests management. More attention is placed on addressing

A practical guide to gender sensitive approaches for Fiji REDD+ initiative

needs of women, as it is recognized that women are more disadvantaged in deforestation and forest degradation due to unequal power relations resulting from prescribed gender roles and responsibilities. These disadvantages can be inflated within some communities and cultures especially when women are single, childless, divorced, widowed and disabled, mentally challenged and chronically ill.

This guideline identify key issues to consider, and gender sensitive actions to take when working in the different phases of REDD Plus Readiness Programme. It draws on practical experiences from local communities in Draubuta; Navosa and Drawa in Wailevu, Cakaudrove and also considered broader international experiences.

Listed below are international and local frameworks emphasizing gender mainstreaming at all levels of discussions and decision making:

Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

- Viewed gender mainstreaming as a global strategy for promoting gender equality;
- An agenda for action aimed at removing all obstacles to women's active participation in all spheres of public and private life;
- Covered gender mainstreaming in relation to poverty, education and training of women, economics, power and decision making, institutional mechanisms for women's advancement, human rights and the environment.

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)

- A principal instrument for the promotion of gender equality;
- The most comprehensive legal instrument, often referred to as the Bill of Rights for Women;
- State Parties including Fiji must ensure equal rights of men and women to enjoy all economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights.

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP)

- Explicitly states that all the rights and freedoms must be equally guaranteed to male and female indigenous individuals;
- Guarantees that particular attention is paid to the special rights and needs of women in its implementation;

- Indigenous women and children enjoy the full protection and guarantees against all forms of violence and discrimination;
- Relates directly to the forest sector, i.e. in connection to rights, to management, protection and conservation of the environment and resources with equal participation in decision making.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

- Achieve gender equality and empower all women with human rights;
- Some targets are:
 - ✓ end all forms of discrimination against all women and girls,
 - ✓ eliminate all form of violence and harmful practices,
 - ✓ Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work,
 - ✓ Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership;
 - ✓ Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights and
 - ✓ Undertake reforms to women's equal rights to economic resources.

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

- COP7 of 2001 held in Marrakech resulted in a decision on the enhancement of women's participation at all levels of decision making related to climate change;
- Called also for women's engagement in key positions, in decision making and climate change negotiations.

Adapted from FAO& BECROFTC; 2016.

Constitution of Republic of Fiji (2013)

- In Chapter 2 under the Bill of Rights; Section 26-(1) every person is equal before the law and has the right to equal protection, treatment and benefit of the law.
- Section 26-(3) person must NOT be unfairly discriminated against directly or indirectly on the grounds of his or her: actual or supposed personal characteristics or circumstances including race, culture, ethnic or social origin, color, place of origin, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, birth,

primary language, economic or social or health status, disability, age, religion, conscience, marital status or pregnancy.

National Gender Policy (2014)

- A written commitment from government recognizing that gender equality is a fundamental human right and an integral component of economic growth and development.
- It's a framework that provides for the inclusion of gender perspectives in all activities of government and civil societies. It promotes the full and equal participation of women and men in development process.

Parliament Standing Order 110(2)¹

- requires parliamentary Committees to undertake gender analysis when undertaking their legislative, oversight and scrutiny work.
- a gender tool kit is also in place to assist members of parliaments and committees to undertake gender analysis.

Hence, it is essential that men and women officers at all levels within the National REDD+ and Ministry of Forestry and other key stakeholders develop a deeper understanding of gender issues in sustainable forest management, conservation and forest carbon stock enhancement to become committed to the implementation of gender sensitive processes. To achieve this, key messages and recommended steps are included in key processes and documents of REDD+ Readiness Phase.

2.0 GENDER ISSUES IN SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT

Experiences of being male and female differ dramatically from culture to culture and especially so in our Fijian communities who are dependent on forest resources like inhabitants of Drawa village in Cakaudrove, Vanua Levu and Draubuta village in Navosa on Viti Levu. Depending on a society or community's norms and traditions; people are assigned social roles, tasks, activities and responsibilities connected to being a male and female referred to as gender roles. Women and

¹The Standing Orders of the Parliament of the Republic of Fiji.

men are expected to think and act depending on how society is organized –determining their gender identity. Hence, gender manifests itself in qualities and behaviors that's considered appropriate by a society for men and women (Groverman & Gurung, 2001). Women and men in their different experiences contribute to forest management differently.

Implications of Gender –Assigned Roles²

Since tasks and responsibilities allotted to men and women are based on society's value system and norms, it is unequally distributed between women and men. Women tend to labor more in 'reproductive work' which is considered to be a natural part of nurturing activities, domestic tasks and so time and energy devoted to this work is considered free and unpaid. As a consequence, women who do most of the reproductive work are considered "not to be doing any work". Defining household duties as "not work", women are seen as having a lot of free time and assigned an additional task which often leads to overburden of work. As for men, they are involved more in community gatherings doing community work and 'productive activities' where most decisions are made and are considered to be decision makers. Women's presences in such meetings tend to be less and so their needs and interests are rarely discussed and addressed. Productive activities are "considered work" and are paid in cash or kind or for subsistence purposes. This work includes the production of goods and services for income or subsistence. This work is mainly recognized by and valued as work by individuals and societies and is most commonly included in national economic statistics. In reality both women and men perform productive work but women's contribution is not valued or rewarded the same with men.

Gender relations or social relationships between men and women are relations of cooperation, connection and mutual support and also of conflict, separation and competition.

How these relations are defined by societies can also lead men and women to inequalities in:

- ✓ their access to and control over land and forest resources (who can use and inherit lands, enjoy its benefits and its management);
 - ✓ decision making powers (who has voice and sits on community councils and committees)
- Hence, systematic differences can be created and reproduced based on women and men's position in a given society or community and the way power is distributed between

² *FAO and RECOFTC, 2016*

sexes. This gender relations vary according to time, place, and between different groups of people. It also vary according to social relations such as class, ethnic group, disability etc..

The combined effect of these differences and inequalities means that women and girls, men and boys face different levels and types of exposures and vulnerabilities to inequalities, shaping their particular use, experiences and knowledge and management practices of forest resources. Men and women respond differently to related incentive measures, public policy interventions, have different relationships with institutions and use the forest and forest resources differently.

Forests make a significant influence in Fijian people's culture, history, environment and economy.³ In Fiji, a large percentage of lands with forest cover is communally owned by land owning units referred to as *mataqali* and also known as clan. For the two pilot sites considered in this study; Draubuta village has nine landowning *mataqali* and Drawa village has a total of five *mataqali*.

The Fiji National Forest Policy emphasizes sustainable forest management principles and improving livelihoods of rural forest owners and Fiji REDD+ Policy offer an excellent opportunity to conserve forests and citizens to benefit from forests biodiversity. REDD+ serves as an ideal instrument to achieve these goals and plays an important role in Fiji's development path by strengthening the socio-economic status of forest resource owners, protect and restore its forest ecosystems while it contributes towards global climate change mitigation. In such situation, relationships between men and women are powerful dynamics to consider where the national REDD+ program need to fully engage resource owners and involve them in all decision making processes.

2.1 Understanding Gender Differences in Forest Management

Roles of women in forests resources management are very important although less visible compared to men. Gathering of forest products to meet subsistence requirements and supplement family income by selling products at the local market is generally the responsibility of women. Women are informed of the domestic, nutritive and medicinal values of timber trees, shrubs and plants more than men because of time devoted to collecting forest products to feed and meet general family needs for daily use. Women in Fiji REDD+ sites are directly involved in forestry

³ Readiness Preparation Proposal (R-PP) for Fiji, Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF), Page 9.

and forestry related activities as they have to collect fuel woods, forage for foods and frequently obtain NTFPs from forests and nearby vegetation.

2.2 Forest Degradation - increasing work burden in women's lives

Effects of deforestation and forest degradation is particularly severe on women as they have to walk long distances to collect fuel woods, traditional medicines and gather wild fruits and nuts, edible ferns, leaves and wild yams for daily household needs. Women now spend more time looking for NTFPs for fuel woods, fruit trees due to indiscriminate cutting of woods through destructive logging and spreading of wild fires and destruction of vegetation due to natural disasters such as floods. The increased distances to walk and seek forest resources have increased their work burden and are unable to perform more important household work.

2.3 Women Participation in Forest Management

It is a legal requirement to undertake a consultative process that is inclusive of all stakeholders when drafting national policies for cabinet's endorsement. Such procedure has provided a consultative pathway dealing with climate change mitigation, forest management especially national consultation on R-PP development and implementation. The national REDD+ initiative in recognition of the extensive roles stakeholders play in the success of its initiative, has developed a Consultation and Participatory Plan in an effort to fully engage them at all levels of decision makings.

Women land owners of REDD+ pilot sites must participate equally in decision making spaces. Reality is such that they are dispersed in various urban and rural provinces of Fiji while some reside overseas. Migration of female '*mataqali*' members with land owning rights is mainly based on marital obligations and may affect long term regular connection with male members of land owning units residing in the village. Such dispersion of members pose some challenges in consultations sites where only male members are present. Male landowners assumed in these cases that women land owners do not necessarily need to be consulted. The fact is; women land

owners hold the same legal and traditional rights as male members and REDD+ mechanism in place ensures that direct consultations with all registered land owners are carried out.⁴

2.3.1 Women is not a Homogeneous Group

There is an interplay of gender roles and gender relations between men and women and among women as a diverse group. This highlights the fact that women are not a homogeneous group based on social status, marital status, age, education, religion etc. Women may hesitate to voice their concerns and views in meetings not only in the presence of men, demanding separate meetings for women to be arranged (Agarwal, 2001). Some women may withdraw their participation in the presence of other women in the group. For example, depending on communities, foreign women married into the village may gain social status that can enhance their speaking position or can even inhibit their speaking position (based on cultural relations) to voice their opinion freely and can force them to be 'silent spectators'. This vary in communities depending on existing traditional culture and protocol. Participation of local women who are born, bred and married into households in the same community is also governed by various unwritten rules influencing their participation and speaking position as well. This is also true for females born into chiefly Yavusa (tribe) and mataqali (clan) that place them at a higher rank than others. This reveals the inequalities that exist between groups, hence establishing the need to not only separate women from men, but also further dividing women groups during consultations.

2.3.2 Other Factors Hindering Women's Participation

Participation of women is constrained by number of factors based on their gender roles and responsibilities. At times women are:

- ✓ not informed through formal district and provincial structure of information dissemination. Although menfolk may be aware of the meeting, but men do not inform and/or consult women (wives) on matters to be discussed;
- ✓

⁴Readiness Preparation Proposal (R-PP) for Fiji, Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF), Page 37

A practical guide to gender sensitive approaches for Fiji REDD+ initiative

- ✓ time for meeting is unsuitable for women - women are engaged with multiple household tasks to perform;
- ✓ women perceive no gain/benefits from attending such meetings and that their presence are viewed only as a formality and getting the box ticked for the organizers (Singh, 2001).
- ✓ inappropriate spaces: women's participation is low if done in public places and also difficult sitting arrangements hinders participation;
- ✓ environmental factors: weather changes such as rain, thunderstorms and excessive heat can affect participation.

SECTION 2



SECTION 2

3.0 INTEGRATING GENDER INTO SUSTAINABLE FORESTS MANAGEMENT

16 -17

3.1 INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING FOR REDD+

3.1.1 National REDD+ Management

3.1.2 Consultation and Participation

4.0 NATIONAL REDD+ STRATEGY

21-24

4.1 Land Use Management

4.2 Benefit Sharing

4.3 Feedback, Grievances And Reporting Mechanism

5.0 STRENGTHENING ACCOUNTABILITY FOR GENDER IMPACT

28-31

5.1. Creating Enabling Environment

5.2 Organizational Development

5.3. Monitoring Progress

Photo: Massive soil erosion in the village of Draubuta, as a result of poorly planned road construction.

3.0 INTEGRATING GENDER INTO FORESTS SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT⁵.

A stronger capability to effectively address gender issues in forest conservation, sustainable forest management and the enhancement of forest carbon needs to be developed within Fiji REDD+ and the Ministry of Forestry. To do this, significant steps in capacity building need to be undertaken to reinforce institutional characteristics and commitment that will ultimately lead to gender sensitive programming.

REDD+ must consider multiple key functions and various sectors that are involved across its phases of implementations. This integrated approach is the foundation on which Fiji REDD+ programs and projects is built that contributes to reforestation, conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks.

To achieve this, information and basic guides provided is hoped to help acquire basic gender perspectives for gender sensitive practices addressing key safeguards in the Fiji REDD+ Policy, the REDD+ Readiness Phase and Strategy Implementation.

3.1. INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING FOR REDD+

3.1.1 National REDD+ Management

Setting up systems and processes for effective, efficient and sustainable management is pertinent for REDD+ sustainability and success in the nation. Multiple stakeholder consultations held, guaranteed broad community support including the full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders. The extensive stakeholder consultation and awareness on the national REDD+ program from policy level across to local communities assisted in putting in place relevant bodies such as the National REDD+ Steering Committee with developed Terms of Reference (TOR) in place. Divisional REDD+ working groups in the Northern and Western division were established in two REDD+ pilot sites and Expert REDD+ Technical Thematic Working Groups were also in place providing technical inputs on major components of Fiji REDD+ program. Close collaborations and trust built between stakeholders in the forestry sector has resulted in the development of relevant policies, legislations and plans. The development of the Fiji REDD+ Policy supports the implementation of REDD+ framework, especially local efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and socio- economic development of forests resource owners and local communities. In the different levels of consultations held with stakeholders, there is a certain depth of:

⁵Adapted from International Federation of RED Cross and RED Crescent Societies, 2010

- Raising awareness and understanding on REDD+ issues;
- Informing relevant stakeholders of REDD+ readiness activities contributing to the development of REDD+ plans, activities and programs;
- Establishment of decision making bodies to make relevant decisions and key instruments in the implementation of REDD+ framework.

Gender Sensitive Stakeholder Consultation

Applying a gender perspective earlier on in the project design will allow officers and stakeholders to plan, implement interventions that highlights and address the needs of both women and men of different ages and socio-economic groups. During consultation, you are accounting for and incorporating the needs of those who have a 'stake' in the project. A gender sensitive approach will look at stakeholders as "women" and "men" with specific needs and priorities and so their specific perspectives shall be considered and addressed by the project.

Checklist for Good Gender Practice

- Identify male and female individual stakeholders, institutions, and groups that should be involved in the project formulation and implementation;
- Use tools and approaches that best address their interests, needs and determine their priorities and aspirations;
- Identify and address the constraints of men and women to participate or access project benefits;
- Be clear on how different females and males stakeholders are likely to affect or be affected by the REDD+ projects;
- Make informed decisions on how to and how much you involve each stakeholder.
- While making your decisions, consider constraints and barriers that may hinders women from actively participating in the forum.
- Weave in a desired gender outcome.

3.1.2 Consultation and Participation

Fijian forests has significance in the history, tradition, cultural, environment and economy for Fijian people. As such, the establishment of a REDD+ consultation and participation plan guides the

consultation and awareness process of all phases of REDD+ designing, implementation and monitoring system. Such framework ensures consultations with stakeholders are carried out effectively and at the same time supports efficient documentation of stakeholders input into the REDD+ programme. This C & P plan integrates REDD+ consultation and participation objectives into existing outreach structures, systems and norms making it effective in its consultation campaign.

To ensure gender sensitive participatory approaches in REDD+ programme –both women and men are consulted. Gender issues such as greater time burden for poor women and widows due to increased environmental degradation, inaccessible roads and poor communications can be captured this way. Stakeholders need to be aware of the various types of participation in development projects and apply one that will achieve maximum participation and equitable benefits. The table below lists various type of participation in development forum:

3.1.2.1. Typology of Participation-Gender Sensitive Participation

Type of Participation	Features
Nominal Participation	Participants are members of organizations (e.g. forest user groups, project-based farmer groups or village associations) with participation only in name not practice (sometimes also called numerical participation).
Passive Participation	Participants are asked to attend meetings or are informed about decisions or plans by others
Consultative Participation	Participants are asked for their views but do not have the chance to influence whether these will be considered in decision-making
Activity Specific Participation	Participants are asked to carry out tasks
Active Participation	Participants convey views without being called upon or engage spontaneously in activities.
Interactive or Empowering participation	Participants are able to influence group or collective decisions and gain benefits and power.

(Source: Agarwal, 2001)

Supporting Women's Participation

The participation of women in consultations and meetings can be constrained by a number of factors due to their child bearing and caring roles at home. Awareness among women need to be increased as they need to be involved from the very beginning of the REDD+ program initial consultations. Benefits accrued to them in attending and participating in the project early stages need to be properly explained and examined to create and maintain their interest in the project/ program. These benefits need to be quick and tangible as they serve as incentives for women and young men and women to stay committed. Communications sent out for next or future consultations need to be timely as you are sensitive to the multiple roles women play in the household. This will give women ample time to organize themselves to ensure their participation.

This also applies to young women and young men's participation that is relatively weak in community forum. For example young women and young men of Draubuta village did not participate at all in consultations and interviews organized by research team despite several attempts to hear their voices. Among various problems listed by adult men and women, it was highlighted that overindulgence of young men in smoking locally planted marijuana was feared to be one of the key factors affecting youth lives and their active participation in the project.

Checklist for Good Gender Practice

(i) Consultation at District and Divisional Level:

- Ensure inclusivity: full and active participation of men and boys and women and girls in all communities in Fiji taking into account all ethnic communities, men and women with special needs, the marginalized and those living in informal settlements;
- Collect sex disaggregated data that offer statistical information on the differences and inequalities between women and men. It may reveal for example quantitative differences between women and men in access and control of forest resources or differences between male and females membership in community decision making forum and even differences in their participation. This highlights the diversity of the community as well as inequalities and differences that are gender specific to inform plans and actions.
- If using participatory Learning Assessment (PLA) tools in your consultations and awareness, ensure that women and vulnerable groups are not 'silent spectators'- that all voices are heard and considered.
- Be sensitive to age differences -it can inhibit young women and young men from talking; showing respect to older women and older men in the group. Ensure that young women/men and other marginalized women in the group (widows, single mothers, and disabled persons) are provided adequate spaces to express their views and raise concerns, interests and aspirations.

(ii) Appointing Candidates in Decision Making Bodies (at Communities or Policy making Institutions)

- Understand that there is always power imbalance in formal decision making structures (community councils, governments etc.) due to gender relations. The low representation of women will mean low visibility of women's perspectives, their different priorities, needs and interests will not be apparent.
- Always seek views and inputs of women and men as there are often significant differences in their priorities.

(iii) Development of policy documents and programs

- Include the promotion of gender equality as one of the goals;
- Strategies and activities to have gender perspectives.
- Ensure that the identification and analyses of problems and the formulation of policy options are informed by gender considerations.

4.0 NATIONAL REDD+ STRATEGY

4.1. Land Use and Management

Results from analysis of drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, SESA, R-PP and ER-PIN undertaken at the ERP accounting area identified direct and indirect drivers. Some of the direct drivers are forest conversion to agriculture; poorly planned infrastructure development, conventional logging, natural disasters, invasive species and mining. In the accounted area of REDD+ sites in Navosa in Viti Levu, farmers are transitioning local forests to agroforestry, or to grazing livestock such as cattle and goats.

Commercial farming engage large areas of land through mono-crop planting of either yaqona or dalo. In the province of Macuata in Vanua Levu, forests have shifted to commercial root crop production which is mainly yaqona and dalo. Key contributors to deforestation is indiscriminate clearing of forest for both commercial agriculture and subsistence farming.⁶

Increasing local and global market demands and prices for mono-crops like yaqona and dalo has made it best alternatives for many rural land owners who are mainly male farmers. Conversion to mono-cropping is basically to meet increasing domestic household needs such as good education for family members and increase drive to improve household economic needs.

Women's influence on forest resources are mainly centered around NTFPs that are found on fringes of forests. Locations of such much needed resources such as edible ferns and wild yams and other root crops are now becoming scarce and hard to find. Hence, not only do women have to spend longer hours walking to search and obtain such useful NTFPs, nutritional supplies are also

⁶Readiness Preparation Proposal (R-PP) for Fiji, Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF), Page 66

affected compromising nutrients contents of meals served. Women are now resorting to easily available items from the shops such as noodles, rice and flour to supplement meals served.

Women and forests resources

Women and young girls' specific gender roles, rights and responsibilities influence their knowledge and use of lands and forests. This tend to shape their experiences differently. Women generally collect NTFPs which are mostly medicinal and ornamental plants and fuel woods. They gather wild nuts, fruits and root crops and sell in local markets to meet daily household needs. Disappearance of local plants also contributed by natural disasters such as flooding have pushed women to look for available cheap alternatives to meet increasing family demands. Search for fast cash has added to changes in forests management practices that leads to some less visible activities by women that is contributing to deforestation. For example; the surrounding hills of Draubuta village in Navosa is rich with wild turmeric plants that serve as one of the multiple products, women often sell at local markets earning them fast cash. When digging for wild turmeric, women burn the top thickets, exposing the branching roots making it visible and easy to dig. Such burning technique used by women leads to environmental degradation.~~tend to spread beyond intended boundaries and contributes to the destruction of the local vegetation and ecosystem.~~

Checklist for Good Gender Practice

You It must be recognized that relationships between people and forests can be difficult and dynamic to understand (Colfer, 2013). To help make things clearer, a simple sex disaggregated data is recommended by getting answers to following questions to inform applied strategies, for example:

- -Who does what in relation to land use and forest management?
-Who controls what in terms of the utilization of lands and forests resources?
-What are views and experiences on problems caused by deforestation and forest degradation?
-Do women and men have equal access to forest resources?
- Obtain basic socio-economic and cultural information on men and women in communities within the project zone and neighboring communities influenced by the project and identify potential risks to forests management.
- Introduce SMEs that is sensitive to women and men's different gender roles to adequately support financial needs and at the same time alleviate pressure on forest resources.

4.2. Benefit Sharing

Women and men participating in Emission Reduction (ER) activities should be adequately rewarded based on contributions to reduce deforestation, degradation, conservations and carbon

stock enhancement. The distribution of benefits generated from REDD+ implementation is significant incentives and measures established to conserve native forests and reducing carbon emissions. Such an arrangement should be fair and widely accepted by local men and women. It is also important to inform landowners (women and men) of the direct, indirect, hidden and unforeseen costs and consequences of emissions reduction activities that are borne by various stakeholders.

Women Land owners' migration

Land ownership in i-Taukei communities is equally shared between men and women members of land owning units. In some landowning *mataqali*, women landowners have migrated to other provinces, districts and locations as a result of marital obligations, inaccessibility to good roads and other much needed public services such as health, education and communication. In such cases, under-representation of women landowners' and nominal participation in meetings may affect accrued benefits based on commitment and performance and relationships on the ground.

Checklist for Good Gender Practice

Given the gender differences and equalities that exist within societies, it cannot be assumed that women and men will benefit equally from development. Hence having gender and sex disaggregated data might ~~clarify~~ is necessary to provide clarity.

- Analyze by sex the beneficiaries of current distribution mechanism of forest benefits;
- Identify different benefits for men and women;
- Benefits derived from any activity, project, programme, intervention and policy that engages women and men must be fairly shared between them;
- Identify possible risks (social, economic and cultural) on women and men ~~The~~ and create a mechanism in place and address it;
- Develop strategies and policies to ensure fair and equitable benefits from economic, political and social development;
- When considering non-monetary benefits, it is significant to equally address the different gender needs, interests and perspectives of both women and men;
- Improved representation and visibility of female landowners through an empowered female representative is pertinent for their visibility in decision making forum;
- Dependence on forests is often resulting from lack of alternative ways to make a living in forest dependent communities (FAO, 2014). When introducing other social economic benefits, consider women's multiple roles that they are not overburdened.

4.3. Feedback, Grievances and Reporting Mechanism

This is an appropriate mechanism developed to respond to concerns, complaints, disputes and any other contentious issues that may arise during the readiness and implementation phase of the national

REDD+ program. This is a two way communication process between local landowners, land owning units and National REDD+. This structure serves to reduce conflicts on issues related to land use, land tenure, and land management by building constructive relationships and trust.

A standard feedback and grievance report (FGR) form has been developed. The first FGR form is to be used by i-Taukei Village Headman (*TuraganiKoro*) which is to be supported through the Bose Vakoro –recording and reporting grievances relating to REDD+ activities under their authority. The second form is designed for FGRM Officers (Forest Officers from the Ministry of Forest (MoF) and the REDD+ Liaison Officer (R+LO) from the REDD+ Unit) to record and report issues and grievances relating to REDD+ activities under their authority.

Patriarchal Structures

I Taukei communities have a patriarchal set up and is reflected in local decision making ~~forum~~ fosuch as the “*Bose Vakoro, Bose ni Tikina* and even *Bose ni Yasana*.” Such setup has existed for centuries and women are still peripheral in participation and decision making. Seeing “communities” as undifferentiated, REDD+ stakeholders implementing sub national REDD+ projects that are sensitive to the needs of forest based people, may fail to understand or address the specific needs and interests of women related to forests and REDD+ policies. In such cases, women’s views and grievances relative to men are less likely to be represented, valued and recognized. Women may still be left out (Gurung and Setyowati, 2012).

Checklist for Good Gender Practice

- Women are under-represented in political processes throughout the world including Fiji. It is important to look at and understand gender differences in power within the different levels of formal decision making structures in government, policy making institutions and community councils at provincial, and district level.
- At the community level, make sure that both men and women are empowered to contribute to and understand the process, documentation requirements of feedback and grievance mechanism;
- Given the under-representation of women and low visibility of women's perspectives in existing decision making bodies, ensure grievances from women are visible and documented.
- Ensure that self-proposed and joint problem-solving results uploaded to the FGRM database is sex disaggregated.
- Create a safe space for vulnerable (women, young men and women, elderly, disabled) people and marginalized groups to have their grievances heard and resolved in view of patriarchal system in place.
- Registration of grievances need to consider the remote locations of pilot sites, poor communication network in existence and provide sensible turn around period for responses.
- Be sensitive about the invisible patriarchal barriers that exist within; depriving women's grievances of being heard or documented.

4.4. National Forest Monitoring

This system allows for regular and systematic quantification and monitoring of net emissions and removals associated with the different REDD+ activities.

REDD+ monitoring, measurement and reporting requirements has provided Fiji Ministry of Forestry (MoF) with the opportunity to build on existing data collection activities related to forest resources management.

A newly formed Remote Sensing Unit in Management Service Division (MoF) regularly and consistently develops activity data sets required for National Forest Monitoring.

This significant progress is Fiji's ability to consistently report forest change statistics into the future and improve land management decisions.

This unit works closely with ground data collection unit, aimed at improving the quality and completeness of the inventory data collated. Development of procedures and protocols for community participation in monitoring will define roles of local communities in how the data are collected, whom to report it to and how they are archived building on existing community reporting framework of the Ministry of I Taukei Affairs and other government agencies.

Community Participation

Built in participation of local communities in the monitoring commitment is an empowering strategy for local men and women and one which will have positive consequences to the sustainability of the project. Building capacities of young women and men will also prove useful for forests management and community development.

Check list for Good Gender Practice

- Develop gender sensitive indicators to ensure that both women and men benefit from the REDD+ program.
- Collect and analyze gender and sex disaggregated data for M & E to track implementation progress and the participatory monitoring of both men and women.
- Consider capacity building and active participation of young men and women who are mostly high school drop outs for community forest monitoring to positively occupy them and ensure impartation of right knowledge and skills for sustainable behaviors.

SECTION 3



SECTION 3

5.0 STRENGTHENING ACCOUNTABILITY FOR GENDER IMPACT	28-31
5.1 Creating Enabling Environment for Gender	28
5.2 Organizational Development	30
5.3 Monitoring and Evaluation for Gender Sensitive programming	30
6.0 REFERENCES	32

Photo: An indigenous "Vesi tree" growing in Drawa village in Macuata, Cakaudrove.

5.0 STRENGTHENING ACCOUNTABILITY FOR GENDER IMPACT

5.1. Creating Enabling Environment for Gender programming

Achieving gender equality and inclusiveness in pursuit for sustainable forests management and poverty reduction requires actions that ensures:

- improved access to opportunities, resources and benefits by women and girls;
- interactive or empowering participation and leadership of women in decision making processes
- gender mainstreaming as the reliable approach towards achieving gender equality;
- improved understanding on the different needs and interest of women and girls that shape their experience and management of land and forests resources;
- strengthened capacity building of local women and men on gender and REDD+.

Women are valuable partners

Implementing stakeholders of REDD+ project need to recognize that women are change agents and to ensure that they are given spaces to express their views and concerns, participate and are represented and visible in all decision making forum. Women have valuable experiences, resources and perspectives that is useful to REDD+ program. Women represent half the resources and half the potential in any society. This potential remain unrealized when women are constrained by inequality and discrimination. Women and men should be encouraged to work together as partners in development.

Checklist for Good Gender Practice

This checklist ensures that gender sensitivity is catered for in this aspect of REDD+ programming.

- Recognize that our society is patriarchal and decision making in the communities are traditionally male dominated and so women may require substantial support to build confidence and mentored to participate meaningfully in decision making forum,
- Ensure that representatives of women, women CSOs, youth, disabled and other marginalized groups are included in decision making ~~forum~~ fora
- Continue to build knowledge, capacities and management skills of these groups for gender sensitive approaches
- Develop partnerships with organizations and gender specialists to access available resources and improved approaches,
- Develop strategies that ensure women and marginalized groups are actively involved in the design, implementation and monitoring of activities.
- Make certain that women land owners are equally represented in relevant decision making forums by a female representative based on gender specific interests and concerns.
- Work with partners and stakeholders to develop progress and success indicators and other ways of assessing the impact of REDD+ in forest management,
- Ensure sufficient funds is allocated to support these efforts and activities.
- Guard against misinformation and under information when communicating with men and women in rural communities by using method/source that is sensitive to level of accessibility, literacy and mobility.

Adapted from World Bank, 2009

5.2. Organizational Development

Considering the key safeguards for National REDD+ initiatives and projects in Fiji; programs, services and workplaces should be gender sensitive-protecting human rights of indigenous resource owners for the achievement of gender equality and reduction of poverty. This is by ensuring that all REDD+ activities benefit women and men equally. The systematic integration of women's and men's respective needs, interests and priorities in policies, activities of REDD+ projects and Ministry of Forests is vital.

Strategies to Adopt

An effective organization will develop its processes to achieve its purpose by meeting the needs and wants of its stakeholders, matching its resources to opportunities, adapting flexibilities to environmental changes and creating a culture that promotes commitment, creativity, shared values and mutual trust (Armstrong 2002, p.151).

Check list for Good Gender Practice

- Recognize the National Gender Policy to guide stakeholders, activities and programming at all levels;
- Ensure staff and volunteers are gender sensitized and skilled in gender analysis;
- Recruit a gender focal point (male or female) to coordinate and facilitate the implementation of gender strategies where feasible;
- Continue to promote equal opportunities in the recruitment and working conditions of males and female staff and volunteers.

5.3. Monitoring and Evaluation to Achieve Gender Sensitive Programming

When detailed forests management and REDD+ assessments are in place, together with strategies to increase gender inclusiveness; information should be collated and analyzed regularly to assess progress and outcomes. Gender information should be relatively easy to collect, reliable and accurate.

Information need to be made available in a timely manner to inform changes or corrective actions and approaches to achieve objectives of sustainable forests management and gender equality.

Monitoring Progress

Both qualitative and quantitative data information should be captured in order to work out for example- how many men and women at community level were reached during consultations, and how many participated and views that were contributed to decision making and if the various mechanism put in place benefit resource owners in meeting needs and priorities in a timely manner.

Hence, both programme objectives and performance indicators that are developed should follow 'SMART' principles: Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound.

Check List for Better Gender Practices

- Capacity building and professional development programme should include adequate gender and forests management content;
- Gender and sex disaggregated data is routinely included in reports and the programming implications are addressed;
- Gender and sex disaggregated information on local, international staff and volunteers working on programme, people in decision making positions is routinely collected, analyzed and follow up actions are taken to ensure balanced and proportional representation and influence.
- Funds are explicitly earmarked for the implementation of gender sensitive activities;
- Adequate human resources are allocated to the implementation of gender sensitive activities;
- Gender and REDD+ issues are discussed during staff performance appraisals and good performance on gender is rewarded, recognized and shared with relevant stakeholders.

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