

# **MAINSTREAMING GENDER IN FIJI REDD PLUS**



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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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We acknowledge the strong partnership of local government officers at district, provincial and national level who provided their time to be interviewed and offered valuable information in relation to the project.

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We sincerely thank executives of Government Departments and NGOs for their invaluable contribution on information shared.

At this juncture, we acknowledge the support and guidance provided by the Fiji REDD+ unit team.

**Vinaka Vakalevu**

## **ACRONYMS**

DBFCC	Drawa Block Forest Community Cooperative
FCPF	Facility of Carbon Partnership Funding
UNDRIP	UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People
NGP	National Gender Policy

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Commitments to the Cancun Agreements (Decision 1/CP .16) paragraph 70 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), is indicative of Fiji's investment in the protection of forests from deforestation, degradation and its sustainable management is highly valued for the conservation and enhancement of forest carbon stocks under the REDD+ initiative. This is an added bonus to its already structured programme under Ministry of Forestry on national sustainable development and mitigation efforts towards climate change.

The social inclusive approach of World Bank's Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) encouraged vulnerable social groups such as women and indigenous people to be treated as partners in the planning and operation processes of REDD+ Readiness phase.

It provide incentives to forest owners with gender considerations to protect its forest ecosystems, strengthen the socio-economic status of its forest resource owners; contribute towards global efforts to reduce greenhouse gases (ghgs) emission; identifies appropriate scope, scale, distribution of equal benefits between women and men, institutional support, and safeguards for the implementation of REDD+.

Hence, Fiji's prominent role in climate change issues has secured our leadership position in the international arena on critical issues that is common across all small island developing states.

Fiji's COP 23 Presidency marks a new era for Fiji's position in global advocacy and international platform on climate and re-enforced its regional commitment to be the voice of its Pacific neighbors.

The country's high level political commitment is reflected in our engagement in a national multi sectorial approach to address the development of the national REDD+ Readiness Phase as structured by the national REDD+ Steering Committee and the REDD+ policy.

The REDD+ policy has six safeguards that guides the implementation of Fiji National REDD+ strategy.

This report specifically focuses on safeguard (ii)'...full and effective participation of indigenous people and other relevant stakeholders' and (iv) '...consideration of gender issues in all phases of decision making and implementation.'

The report highlights the results of data collected from Draubuta village located in the interior south west of Nadroga, Navosa province and Drawa village located in the eastern interior of Cakaudrove province to inform gender considerations of Fiji REDD+ processes.

It attempts to assess the roles of men and women, what they are involved in and how they are impacted differently by these formal and informal rules and institutions and their vulnerabilities and capacity to cope and adapt.

Landowners of the Emalu REDD+ pilot site forest reside in Draubuta village located in the South West of Fiji's main island Viti Levu in the province of Navosa in the Tikina of Noikoro with a total of nine villages. A subsistence farming community depending on yaqona, dalo and cassava as cash crops for main source of income.

With a population of 2,019 men and women; its main source of energy is solar power. Draubuta is exposed to drastic change of weather patterns such as heavy rain that consistently contributes to flooding of rivers banks and excessive landslides destroying its natural environment. Landowners of Emalu residing in Draubuta have recently officially agreed to lease their 16,000 acres of land for REDD+ program.

On the other side of Fiji's second largest island Vanua Levu is Drawa village. It is situated in the eastern interior of Cakaudrove in the Tikina of Wailevu with an overall population of 60 men and women. It practice subsistence farming with yaqona and honey as main source of income. It has limited access to vehicle because of the undeveloped road used by residents and households are completely powered by solar energy. Apart from its involvement with REDD+ as a pilot site, it is a beneficiary to a successful Rural Bee Keeping Livelihood project that is implemented by the Drawa Block Forest Community Cooperative (DBFCC) with direct support and mentoring by Live and Learn Environmental Education funded by NZAID.

## 2.0 BACKGROUND

Gender Equality is a goal that has been accepted by governments and international organizations. It is enshrined in international agreements and commitments and has been accepted as a powerful force for sustainable growth and development, good governance and reduction of poverty. Such commitments from governments and international communities is the direct results of global patterns of inequalities existing between women and men that plague lives of more women than men. (OSAGI, 2002).

Globally, more women are living in poverty; women suffer more violence and even death at the hands of their intimate partner; women's participation in politics and other high level of decision making is low, women and men have different economic opportunities and much more.

Clearly, Fiji is not immune to these problems and has since join the global campaign of protecting human rights of women since the 1980s to improve the lives of its citizens as it strives for sustainable development.

Fiji Islands consists of an archipelago of more than 330 islands, of which 110 are permanently inhabited. The two major islands of Viti Levu and Vanua Levu account for more than 80 per cent of the total population. Fiji is divided into four administrative divisions (Central, Eastern, Northern and Western), which are further subdivided into fourteen provinces.

Fiji's population after the 2017 census stands at 884,887; an increase of 5.7 per cent from the 2007 census. Men's population stands at 50.7 % while women make up 49.3% with a sex ratio of 102 males for every 100 females. Half of our population of males is below the age of 27.5 compared to 27.8 for females and a great proportion of the female population (60%) live above 60+ indicating female longevity.

Out of the two main ethnic groups populating Fiji; the i-Taukei (indigenous Fijians) make up about 57% of the total population and Fijians of Indian descent make up about 37% of the total population. The urban population stands at 494,292 an increase of 16.3 per cent from 2007 while 44.1% live in rural areas; a decline of 5.3% from the last census (FBOS, 2017).

Government according to the 5 year National Development Plan (2017-2021) continue to inject substantial resources to implement targeted development programs and policies for the realization of socio-economic rights of rural dwellers as guaranteed under the Fijian Constitution.

Substantial funding is provided towards the provision of clean water, access to electricity, and physical and digital connectivity, the provision of better health services, access to justice and enforcement of law and order.<sup>1</sup>

## **2.1 Government Commitment to Achieve Gender Equality**

For gender equality to be achieved and the empowerment of women and girls as per Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Goal 5, it will require more vigorous efforts, including legal frameworks, to counter deeply rooted gender-based discrimination that often results from patriarchal attitudes and related social norms that are active and well camouflaged in our lives.

Fiji government understands that in pursuing the goal of gender equality between men and women require change at many levels including change in policies, legal frameworks, and political decision making structures and in attitudes and relationships.

Such commitment is articulated in the 5 to 10 years national development plan as government press forward to achieve political, social, economic, cultural and environmental security among all peoples in the country- leaving no one behind.

Committing to international and regional obligations, government has progress in establishing critical legal frameworks, policies and institutions guaranteeing women empowerment and the achievement of gender equality that is vital for sustainable development.

A significant landmark for Fijian women was the ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Form of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 28 August, 1995 to achieve gender equality. Article 2 of CEDAW require government to guarantee a range of fundamental rights and freedoms in the constitution including substantive equality and freedom from discrimination on the grounds of sex, marital status, sexual orientation, HIV status and disability.

Government endorsed gender mainstreaming as the recognized and reliable strategy to achieving the goal of gender equality in the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA).

The strategy of gender mainstreaming as defined by the United Nations Economic and Social Council agreed conclusions;1997/2, as... *“the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned actions, including legislations, policies or programs, in all areas and at all levels.”*

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<sup>1</sup> Economic and Fiscal update supplement to the 2019-2020 Budget Address, Ministry of Economy.

Furthermore, a Parliament Standing Order 110(2) in place require all parliamentary committees to undertake gender analysis when carrying out legislative oversight and scrutiny work. Such an oversight at this level of decision making ensures gender concerns remain visible.

At national level, the Constitution (2013) as the supreme instrument in the land guarantees the rights of women and all Fijians to equality and freedom and non-discrimination. Under section 26 (1): every person is equal before the law and has the right to equal protection, treatment and benefit of the law; and (3) a person is protected from any unfair discrimination that directly or indirectly on the grounds of his or her: (a) actual or supposed personal characteristic 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.

Several laws and decrees supporting non-discrimination and women's rights to equality are in place such as the Family Law Act, the HIV Decree, Domestic Violence Decree and the Crimes Decree.

The National Gender Policy (NGP) is aligned to the Constitution to eradicate and modify institutional and social barriers with strategies to promote gender equality and social justice in all aspects of Fiji's development.

It envisioned a Fijian society free from all forms of gender based discrimination and to ensure that both men and women participate fully and enjoy equitably the development benefits and outcomes.

The policy is a written commitment from government, recognizing that gender equality is a fundamental human right and an integral component of economic growth and development.

It provides a framework for including gender perspectives in all activities of government and civil societies –thus promoting the full and equal participation of women and men in development process.

Given Fiji's political will to mainstream gender, the five year national development plan (2017-2021) has in place gender equality objectives and indicators that direct ministries to address women empowerment interventions to achieve gender equality in five major areas:

- (i) Increasing women's participation in formal sector employment;
- (ii) Increase women's representation at all levels of government and civil society;

- (iii) Eliminate violence against women and children; through responsive policing and coordinated referral network;
- (iv) Improve women's access to all social services and
- (v) Review of legislations and policies.

All ministries are monitored on progress made by the Implementing and Coordinating Office.

This agenda for empowerment and advancement of women remove all obstacles to women's active participation in all spheres of public and private life through a full and equal share in economic, social, cultural and political decision making.

This means that the principle of shared power and responsibility should be established between women and men at home, in the workplace and in the wider national and international communities.

### **2.1.1 Women in Education**

Fiji has managed to eliminate gender disparities in education and has been achieving the Millennium Development Goal of universal primary education with a net enrollment rate of almost 100%. Female enrollment in secondary school exceed male enrollment in both gross and net enrollment rates.

Early Childhood education (ECE) is not available yet in all parts of Fiji and has a low gross enrollment rate for girls and boys. ECE sets the foundation for children's future learning and so government is committed to attaching ECE facilities to primary schools to further improve access and quality of childhood education.

According to the 2015-2016 Employment and Unemployment Survey (EUS), a total of 3,182 persons aged 6-17 years were reported to have left school; a decrease of 9.1% when compared to the 2010-2011 EUS survey. The two major reasons cited were:

- (i) Not interested in continuing with studies=48.5%
- (ii) Cannot afford =4.8%

Majority(95.5%) of those in the working age population have completed primary education or above, 22.5% have attained secondary education or above, while 17.5% had attained tertiary level education.

There is apparent disparities in the commitment made towards education in the two major ethnic communities as shown by the difference in household expenditure on education between the two

groups. This gap has narrowed over the years, and I Taukei Fijian have increasingly placed education as the pathway to better economic opportunities.

## **2.1.2 Women in Decision Making**

Men and women have distinct traditional gender roles that in many ways influence economic opportunities, political participation and their representation in decision making domain.

Traditionally, indigenous Fijian women are excluded from the hierarchy of decision making processes especially in the public sphere unless of chiefly descent.

Participation of Fijian women at the political level is always very low. Women holding seats during the rule of the interim government from 2006-2014 was only 1 woman out of the 12 member ruling council of ministers. The September elections saw women holding only 8 of the 50 seats in parliament. This is also reflected in the low representation of women at all levels of decision making and across sectors. Despite Fiji ratifying CEDAW, government did not support Temporary Special Measures offered. Women entering into decision making positions is only upon merited performance.

Pushing for greater representation of women in decision making is recognized by government to be an area that needs improvement as repeatedly highlighted in the Roadmap for Democracy and Sustainable Social Economic Development (2010-2014), the current 5 year National Development Plan (2017-2021) and the Women Plan of Action (2009-2018).

In rural communities, the Ministry of I Taukei Affairs encourage the participation of women in boards and councils under the I Taukei administration which extends right across to *Tikina* (districts) and village councils at village levels. Everyone residing within the village boundary is encouraged to participate including young people. With such structures in place, women are guided by unwritten traditional protocols that position men in decision making helms.

Hence continuous awareness on shared decision making benefits will need to be strengthened to change traditional mindsets.

The Ministry of Women in fulfilling its mandates as a policy adviser to government on women empowerment and elimination of discriminatory practices, face challenges despite an increase in their budget in recent years. The lack of gender analysis skills within the Ministry of Women and across government continue to see gender concerns left out in across sector planning and

implementations. Basic sex and age disaggregated data is also not available in most government ministries affecting quality of data provided.

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### **2.1.3 Women and the Economy**

Economic growth is a principal driver of sustainable development. When this growth is sustained and inclusive, more women and men can escape poverty as opportunities for full and productive employment expand.

The Employment Relations Promulgation (2007) provides a framework that is aligned to international obligations supporting human rights and eliminates direct and indirect discrimination on all grounds including gender as highlighted in Section 75.

In the 2017 census, from a total of 593,620 persons aged 15 and over, only 346,214 were in the labor force, resulting in the labor force<sup>2</sup> participation rate of 58.3% while the labor force participation rate for women was 39.1%.

Females' unemployment rate is higher at 7.8% compared to males at 2.9%.

There are more females at the age of 15 years and over in the urban areas of the four major divisions but this is not translated into the percentage of females in the labor force.

According to the EUS 2015-16 women's participation in the labor force from 15 years and over is 37.4% compared with 76.4 for males.

The top five Occupation Groups are:

- a) Skilled Agricultural, Fishery Workers – 27.3%
- b) Services and Sales Workers – 14.0%.
- c) Craft and Trade Related Workers – 12.0%.
- d) Elementary Occupations – 11.8%.
- e) Professionals – 8.6%.

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<sup>2</sup> Labour force is made up of all persons age 15+ either reporting to be employed or unemployed during the reference period.

Of the top most occupation group of “Skilled Agricultural, Fishery workers”, basically 74,807 (83.5%) live in the rural areas.

Fiji’s rural population has decreased from 390,635 in 2007 to 21,790 (5.3%) in 2017. Only 44% of the total populations are rural dwellers.<sup>3</sup>

Persons with tertiary level education attainment have high labor force participatory rate of 81.2% in rural areas. It was higher for men at 91.9%. With Secondary education attainment, 59.4% from rural areas, and only 35.8% were female.

### **Labor force status at the Rural Divisional level:**

<b>Labor Force Status</b>	<b>Central</b>		<b>Eastern</b>		<b>Western</b>		<b>Northern</b>	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Unemployment rate	867 6.1%	342 1.1%	152 3.5%	41 0.4%	1621 9.6%	841 1.8%	519 5.2%	262 1.0%
Labor Force Participation rate	14,149 40.9%	30,302 81.6	4,258 44.0%	9,848 84.3%	16,814 31.8%	45,679 80.5%	9,900 33.2%	26,936 82.9%

When looking at savings with Bank Accounts; a total of 392,148 persons have accounts; 62.7% were males and 56.8% were females. The margin of difference is quite small which supported the fact that women are good at savings compared to men.

### **Unremunerated Work Driven by Women**

For the population outside the labor Force who were neither employed nor unemployed and were cited as doing household work as their reason for being inactive were mainly women at 71% while only 4.6% of men. This rates is higher in the rural compared to the urban at 66.5%. For men, the reason they are not in the labor force is full time study (47.3%) and compared to women at 18.7%.

Women contribute to development in rural communities not only through remunerated work but also through undocumented unremunerated work. Women contributes to the production of goods

<sup>3</sup> Fiji Bureau of Statistics; 2017.

and services for the market and household's consumption, in agriculture, food production in family enterprises. Women have been affected by the economic situation and restructuring processes that have led to loss of jobs even for professional and skilled women. The lack of bargaining power resulting from gender inequality have forced women to accept low pay and poor working conditions.

Although women contribute to household income, they are not relieved or exempted from their responsibility to household work and community work(see Table 1 below).

***Table1. Average hours of Household work for wage and salary earners***

<b>Employment Status</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>(F-M)</b>
Wages	24	10	14	14
Salary	24	11	16	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>14.0</b>

*Note: Any discrepancy in totals and sum of components are due to rounding.*

When combining paid employment with unpaid household and caregiving work, women are working far longer hours than men. Employed women spend an average of 26 hours per week on household chores, compared with 10 hours spent by men.

Women perform a great majority of unremunerated domestic work, community work which includes caring for children and older persons, preparing food for the family, protecting the environment and providing voluntary assistance to vulnerable and disadvantaged individuals in the villages (see Table 2).Unfortunately, this work is not valued in national accounts and so women's contribution to development is seriously underestimated.

Lack of attention to gender perspectives continue to result in women's contributions and concerns remaining ignored in economic structures such as labor markets, taxation, social security systems, economic and social infrastructures. As a result, many policies and programs will continue to contribute to inequalities between women and men.

***Table 2. Average Household work by Age (hours per week)***

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>(F-M)</b>
6-13	5	4	4	1.0
14-18	13	8	10	5.0
19-21	24	9	16	15.0
22-29	37	11	24	26.0
30-34	39	14	26	25.0
> 34	32	12	22	20.0
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>16.0</b>

*Note: Any discrepancy in totals and sum of components are due to rounding.*

#### **2.1.4 Women's Access and Control of Land and Other Natural Resources**

Land is a vital economic resource and so decisions on traditional inheritances favor men.

Land ownership in Fiji follows the traditional structure recorded by the British Colonial Administration. Almost 90% of the land is communally owned by the *Yavusa*-customary land owning units and is mostly headed by a most senior male member of the clan. The clan is then subdivided into kinship groups based on patrilineal descent. Generally, male members of the clan will be allocated a plot of land to plant and use for his household's use. Women in many cases have the user rights to access the customary land and also their households but are generally excluded from inheritance rights to customary land (Nayacakalou, 2001).

Land in Fiji is classified and managed under three tenure types; Crown land with a total land area (4.3%), Freehold land (5.8%) and *I Taukei* land (89.9%). Over 1.52 million hectares of land in Fiji is communally owned by the communal land owning units called the *mataqali* or *i Tokatoka* as registered under the *i-Taukei* Land Register. The *i-Taukei* Land Trust Board is the sole legal custodian of *I-Taukei* land in Fiji, mandated to act on behalf of the land owning units to secure, protect and manage land ownership rights and expedite all commercial transaction

involved including leases of native lands.<sup>4</sup> Lands that are not leased are in plots to individual members of the *mataqali* who have personal use rights.

Although every male and female registered as i-Taukei is part of a *mataqali*, not all have access to land. Women can inherit user rights to native land but male members of *mataqali* dominate decision makings about the land.

Fiji's Constitution (2013) Section 28 ensures that the ownership of the i-Taukei, Rotuman and Banaban lands remains with its customary owners and all land acquired by the State for public purpose must revert to the customary owners if the land is no longer required. This provide the protection of customary rights relating to forests and it limits the powers of the State to deal with forest resources without the approval of the owner. The approval of the i-Taukei Land Trust Board (TLTB) is required in all dealings with the i-Taukei lands.

Decision making processes concerning the management of forests and use of forests products is made and controlled by men. This includes any decision making on management of other natural resources and any development concerning Fijian communities-especially in village settings.

Hence, women's participation in forest governance at community level and at national level is very limited. This is also reflected in the under-representation of women in top management positions in the administration sector (Veikila & Elder; 2014).

Women's main roles in rural communities includes gathering wild fruit, plants, medicinal herbs, fishing, minding children and elderlies including making handcrafts like mats, baskets, potteries and ornaments.

This translates into agriculture practices where men tend to operate and manage large scale agriculture in which mainly cash crops are grown such as yaqona, taro, cassava, ginger, pineapples, sugar and rice. Clearly women and men cooperate in productive activities and their different roles and responsibilities complement each other.

Women work in family food productions and cottage niche industries such as floriculture, honey, spices and small scale coconut oil production, while men clear land and carry out fencing.

However, there are variations in gendered roles in iTaukei households across other provinces.

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<sup>4</sup> Emission Reductions program Document (ER-PD)

### **2.1.5 Gender Based Violence**

Gender based violence is a violation of women's human rights and may occur in either public or private life. It is any act (including threats of such acts) that results or is likely to result in physical, sexual, emotional or psychological harm to women and which results from power inequalities that are based on gender roles in which a perpetrator gain power and exerts control over the other person. Emotional/psychological abuse accompanies all physical and sexual abuse, but can and is also inflicted on women without any physical or sexual assault.

Violence against women come in various forms based on information collated. It includes domestic violence, rape within marriage, sexual violence, prostitution and trafficking.

A national research conducted by Fiji Women's Crisis Centre (FWCC) in 2008 revealed that 66% of women surveyed have been abused by their partners, 30% suffered repeated physical abuse, and 44% were being hit while pregnant.

Women while trying to escape violence are faced with religious-cultural expectation to keep the family together, are under pressure that problems that occur within the family is private, reminded of their commitment to their marriage vows that tend to discourage women from seeking support for issues that is widely considered "private" and/or encouraged to accept the acts of violence a in their relationship as part of marriage.

Women who report domestic violence are seen to be disrespectful of their marriage vows and are seen to be going against the cultural norms that believes in keeping the family together even when women's lives and safety is threatened.

While women, men, boys and girls can be victims/survivors of gender base violence, women and girls are the main victims/survivors.

The Fiji Police "No Drop Policy" allows a reported case of violence to be prosecuted in court and it does not recognize partners reconciling after the incident of violence.

The Policy states that...*every complaint coming under this definition: "violence between heterosexual adults who are living together or have previously lived together as husband and wife (conjugal relationship)" will be fully investigated and offenders taken to court. This policy applies to police officers too and under no circumstances will Police Officers promote reconciliation in domestic violence cases.*

The survey revealed that 74% of female victims of violence do not report violence faced to the police or seek medical care. Some women report cases of violence domestic violence to non-legal bodies such as their religious leaders, family members or others in their support network.

Women's lack of economic independence is identified as a key factor that disallow them from reporting domestic violence to police. Financial dependency on husbands or partners who are perpetrators makes it difficult to escape violence for their safety and in many cases for the safety of their children who are exposed to such violence.

Under the Domestic Violence Decree, a restraining order can be applied for by the victim, a care-giver of the victim, a parent or guardian of a child, a person who normally resides with a child who is the victim, children over the age of 16 years if they are the victims, a police officer, a social welfare officer, the Public Trustee or any other person where it appears to the court to be necessary for the safety or wellbeing of the victim. As such, Non-Government Organization and Women's Organizations, have rights of audience before all the courts in Fiji order can make an application for a domestic violence restraining order.

Apparently, inequalities between men and women continues to be exposed as women suffer violence at the hands of their intimate partners more often than men.

Unless women are empowered to be economically independent, they cannot remove themselves from violence and other domestic abuses. Hence engaging women in economic activity such as income generation projects is a significant step to improving their status and their family.

### **2.1.6 Women and Climate Change**

With existing gender inequality, climate change have a disproportionate effect on the lives of women and men, particularly on the lives of indigenous women and men in local communities dependent on lands and forests as main sources of livelihoods.

Women's activities are less valued than men, less visible and not recognized at most levelsof decision making including their contribution to the economy.

Fiji REDD+ program is aligned to international conventions (CEDAW, BPfA, UNFCCC, UNDRIP) that the Fiji government is party to; ensuring that gender perspective is reflected in all its policies and strategies.

Hence, Fiji REDD+ programs and projects seek to understand and address specific needs of forest based women and men relating to land, forest and other natural resources so that there is equally shared benefits and outcomes.

Some of the lessons learned from REDD+ experiences in implementing countries such as India and Nepal indicated that financial flows from Emission Reduction program is distributed unequally amongst men and women and funds are invested in resources or activities that does not directly benefit women (Agarwal,2002).

It is vital that women and men participating in the implementation of the Emission Reduction (ER) activities must be rewarded according to efforts contributed towards reduced deforestation, degradation, conservation and carbon stock enhancement. Benefit sharing should include intentional transfer of monetary and non-monetary goods and services to men and women as community stakeholders.

### **3.0 METHODOLOGY**

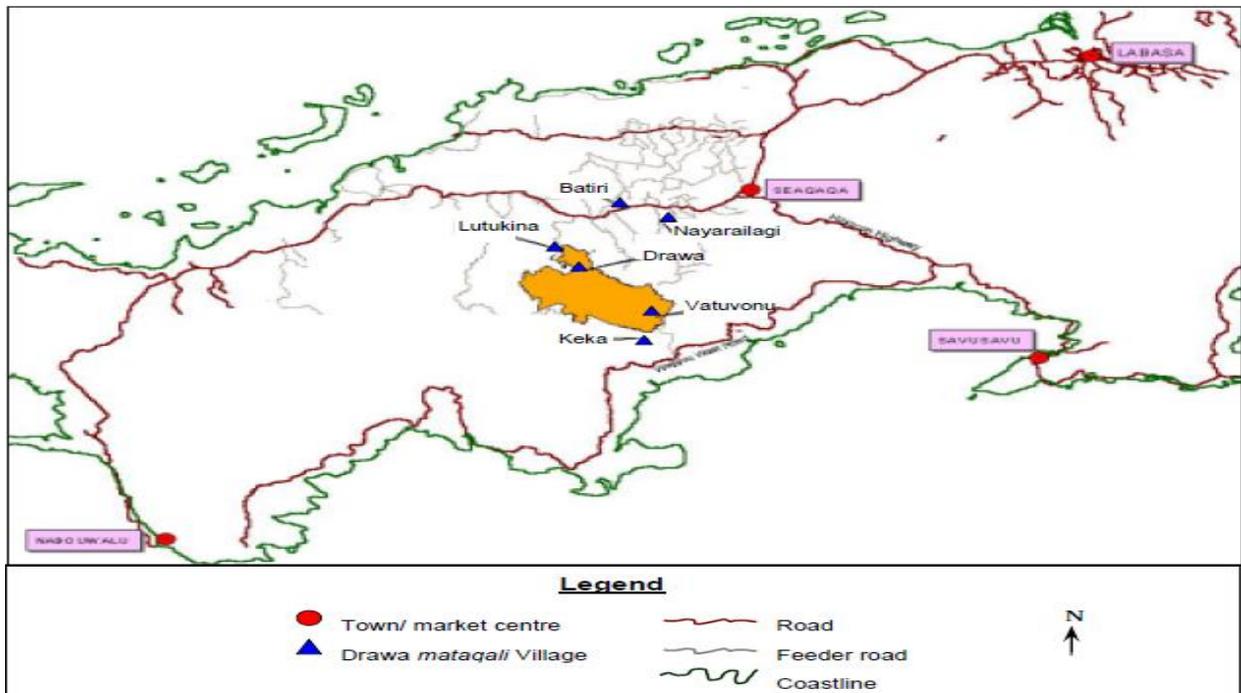
#### **3.1 Context**

The Ministry of Forestry is committed to ensuring the effective inclusion of gender perspectives into the REDD+ Readiness Phase which is made possible by the FCPF. For such commitment, a contract was awarded to Soqosoqo Vakamarama I Taukei to conduct a study in two National REDD+ pilot sites: Draubuta community located in the upper highlands of Nadroga in Navosa (Fig 1) and Drawa village (Fig 2) located in the interior of Cakaudrove.

**Figure 1: DRAUBUTA VILLAGE**



**Figure 2: MAP OF DRAWA**



The study addresses two key players in the communities; land owners and land users and was inclusive in its approach by obtaining information equally from adult men and women and young men and young women where possible.

**3.2. Ethical Issues:** Following traditional Fijian protocol, the ‘i Sevusevu’ was presented to village elders, they were explain in vernacular the purpose of the study and methods chosen to encourage full participatory of men and women and young men and young women alike. This was received well by the elders giving their blessings and support for the study.

### **3.3 Method of Data Collection**

Two rural communities –that are current pilot sites of the REDD+ Readiness phase were visited and perspectives and experiences of men and women were obtained on key areas surrounding forest use and management using basic gender analysis. Quantitative and qualitative data obtained from primary and secondary sources were used for the study. Participatory methods was used to obtain sex and age disaggregated views and experiences of men and women from two pilot sites.

Overall Assessment tools used for the study were:

- (i) Desk Review was carried out using a collection of relevant reports, policies and legislations produced by relevant government agencies together with relevant reports and strategic documents from the REDD+ initiatives and successive reports and good practices in REDD+ implementing countries;
- (ii) Questionnaire;
- (iii) Appreciative interview;
- (iv) Observations and
- (v) Focus group discussions (FGD)
- (vi) Participatory Learning Assessment tools
- (vii) Gender analysis

At Draubuta village, two focus groups was conducted, one with women only and men only discussions. In addition were appreciative interview held with:

Mr Semi Kuru-Roko Tui Nadroga/Navosa

Mr Semi Neicula-(50) Mata ni Tikina –Noikoro,

Mr Lemeki Toutou (65yrs) -Liuliu ni Mataqali –Emalu,

Mr Seveci Taka (41 yrs)- Forest Warden in Navosa;

Mr Laitia – Emalu Landowner Representative

Mr Joave Ratuva (63) –Liuliu ni Yavusa-Koroivabeka

Ms Joana Gaso (Liuliu ni Soqosoqo Vakamarama.)

For Drawa Village, a FGD was held with a group of six young males (25-45 yrs) and a group of three women only (30-55 yrs). Also conducted an appreciative interview with:

-Timoci Ratusaki (Head of the Yavusa(88yrs)-head of the clan.

- Jerry -Secretary of the Drawa Block Forest Community Cooperative (DBFCC),

-Live and Learn Environment Education Representative

**Table 1. Participants at Community Level by Sex**

	VILLAGE	No. of Groups	Assessment tools used	Participants		Age
				female	male	
1	<b>Draubuta</b>	3	FGD	11	10	40-70
			Appreciative interview		2	40-70
			Observation	12	13	40-70
2	<b>Drawa</b>	2	FGD	3	7	25-55
		3	Appreciative interview	3	2	30-90
			Observation	3	9	25-90

### 3.4 Method of Analysis

Data collated from questionnaires and other tools used in informal interviews were placed in excel tables and relevant charts for analysis of findings.

Key informants in the communities and focus groups discussions were organized into categories depending on groups of presenting respondents:

- Representatives of the Provincial council and
- Community leaders: men and women holding strategic positions in the villages such as the head of *Yavusa* and *mataqali*, *Leader of the Soqosoqso vakamarama*,
- NGO and CSOs operating directly in pilot sites and also as REDD+ implementing agents in the greater Suva area.
- Young men and women.

Appreciative interview was also used with:

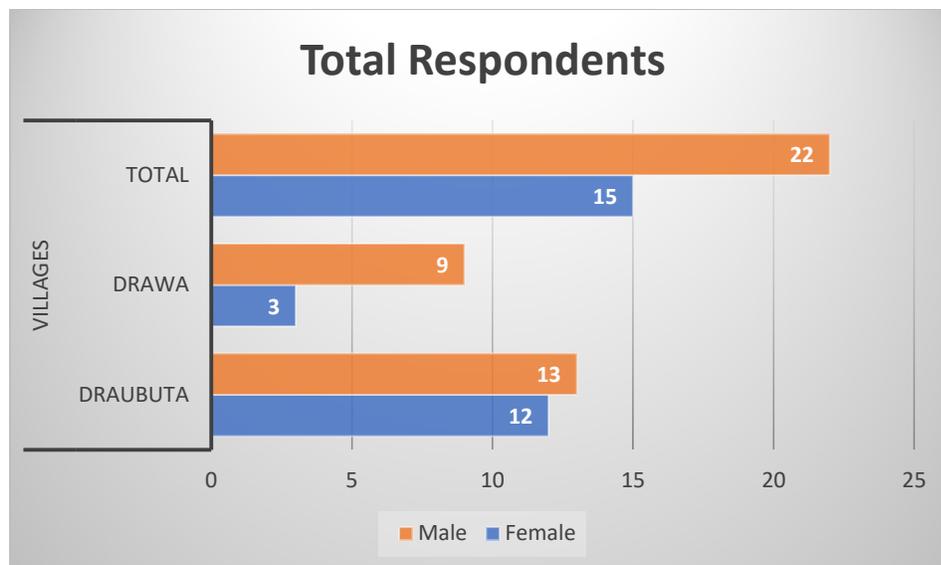
- Key informants in the communities- representatives of the Provincial council and men and women holding key positions in the villages such as the head of *Yavusa* and *mataqali*, *Leader of the Soqosoqo Vakamarama I Taukei –Draubuta* and representative of an NGO (Live and Learn) that work closely with community of Drawa, and two board members of the DBFCC.

Qualitative data was collected through questions asked in the vernacular language to key informants to help ease understanding of the issues raised. Participatory Learning tools were utilised for basic gender analysis for men and women and young men and women in the two REDD+ project pilot sites. For key stakeholders in government ministries and NGOs. Questionnaires were distributed to government ministries and NGO partners. For some key agencies, who are key implementing partners of REDD+, questionnaires was supported by informal interviews.

### **3.5. Respondents**

- Key informants in the communities identified and interviewed: Roko Tui, Head of the Mataqali (Turaga ni Yavusa), Mata ni Tikina, Village Health Worker, Leader of the Soqosoqo Vakamarama, Forest Warden of Draubuta, Project representatives of Emalu and Drawa and representatives of key NGOs serving as implementing partners in the project;
- Adult men and women and young men and women.

Altogether 37 respondents participated in the study: Draubuta: Female=12, Males=13 and Drawa: Females=3, Males=9.



## 4.0 LIMITATIONS

Questionnaires sent out via emails to key NGO and government stakeholders of REDD+ was unanswered except for one from Secretariat of the Pacific community.

### For Emalu:

- i) the relocation and migration of female land owners has made it difficult to interview them for their personal views and experiences in the management of the local forest. About 80% of landowners are women and through marriage have dispersed and settled in other provinces around Fiji.
- ii) The whole community were in mourning and were preoccupied over the loss of a senior member of their community; making it difficult to obtain views and experiences of all members;
- iii) Young men and women were absent from the meeting hall despite our repeated attempts and pleas through the *Turaga ni koro* that we wish to consult youth and obtain their views, concerns and contribution to forest management.
- iv) The Research team had to leave early around 10:00am on the second day of our visit due to broadcasted bad weather that was about to hit the highland area of Navosa. This is to minimise risks faced from possible further landslides and soil erosion created by poor road construction in the area.

### **For Drawa:**

- i) More than 80% of land owners have resettled into two settlements (Batiri and Narailagi) with their households towards the eastern side of the island opting for improved access to infrastructures such as roads and communications and other public services such as schools, and health centres for pregnant mothers and children;
- ii) The field visit coincided with a funeral that was held in one of the neighbouring village of Lutukina and most adult men and youth were absent from the village attending it.
- iii) The Turaga ni koro has just died two weeks earlier depriving us from obtaining vital information about the residents.
- iv) Residing villagers interviewed were dominated by young males with ages ranging from 18-45years. They have maternal blood links to the *Turaga ni Yavusa of Drawa*-traditionally called the *Turaga na Navunicau*.
- v) Time spent at the village was reduced to just one full day. Due to unfavourable weather faced during the trip. The inaccessible road to the village was quite hard to manoeuvre by the vehicle used by the team and so it had to be towed by the village's four wheel drive to steer the car out of trouble posed by the rough terrain.

## **5.0 KEY FINDINGS**

It is important to note the significant differences on information gathered from women and men from the two study sites due to reasons below:

- (i) For Emalu, women who were directly involved in the focus group discussions and interviews were forest users but not forest resource owners. Women land owners have relocated to other provinces through marriage and were not present during the field visit.
- (ii) For Drawa, only three women were interviewed and the rest were male youth as per challenges mentioned above.
- (iii) Young men of Drawa interviewed, shared that the apparent absence of young women from the village was mainly due to the inaccessible road and public services and have moved to urban areas pursuing further studies and formal employment. This also pose

the greatest challenge to young men finding it hard to settle down for marriage as partners are not willing to settle in such a remote location.

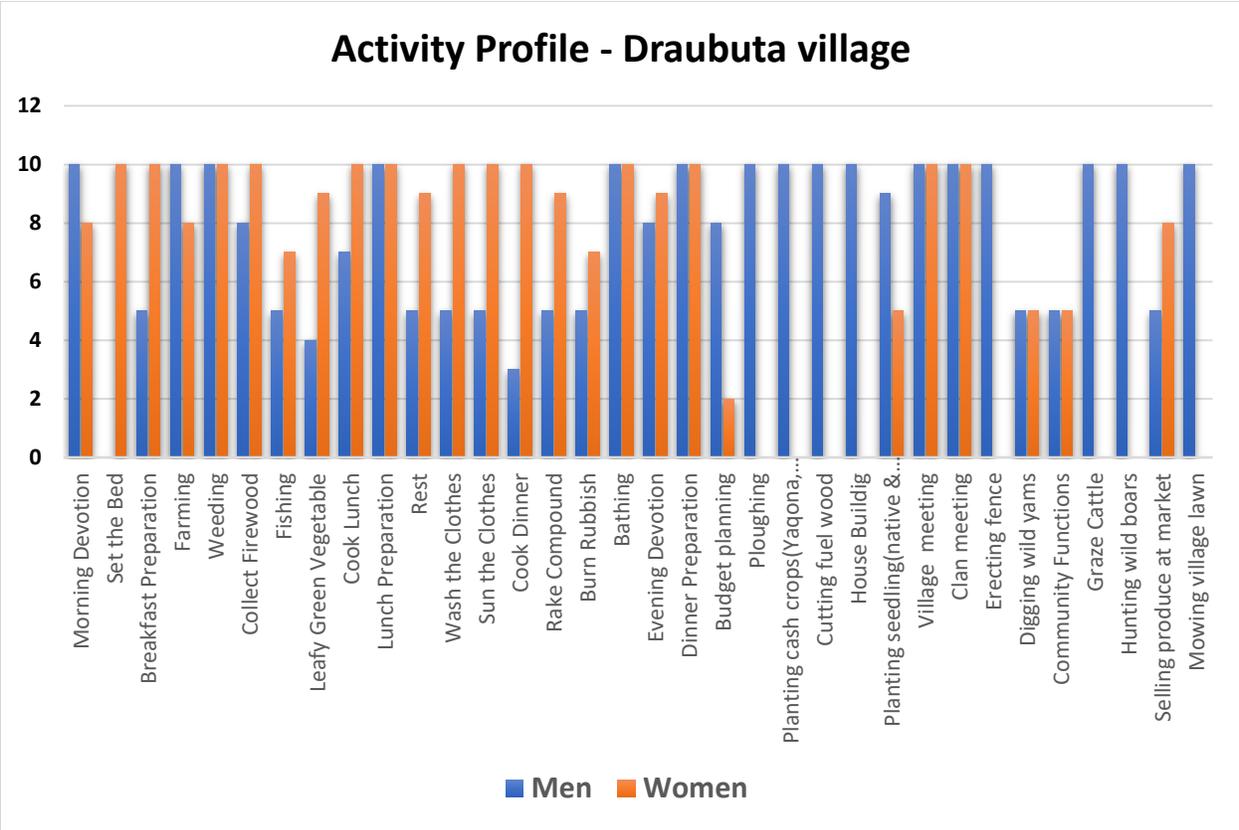
### **5.1 Engagement of women in labor intensive activities**

Women clearly carry out their triple roles and responsibilities according to Moser's Framework (1986); such as reproductive, productive and community work.

Women spend more time in labor intensive activities and carry out more activities than men such as subsistence farming, weeding, harvesting, fishing and selling farm produce at the market. Preparing produce to sell at the market requires a lot of preparation and planning. Obtaining produce from the farm may take more than two hours just to reach the farm walking on foot and men generally travel on horseback as this is the cheapest mode of transport to cart produce back home. The travel down to the nearest market take almost two hours or more and so villagers mostly come on Fridays and Saturdays as they believe that demands for their produce is high. Carriers are the commonly used vehicles that will bring produce of mostly groups of women and some men down to urban centres. Farm produce sold include yaqona, dalo, cassava, dalonitana, vegetables such as egg plants, bele, chillies including seasonal fruits (pawpaw, avocado, quwawa, moli, ivi, dawa, wi and honey).

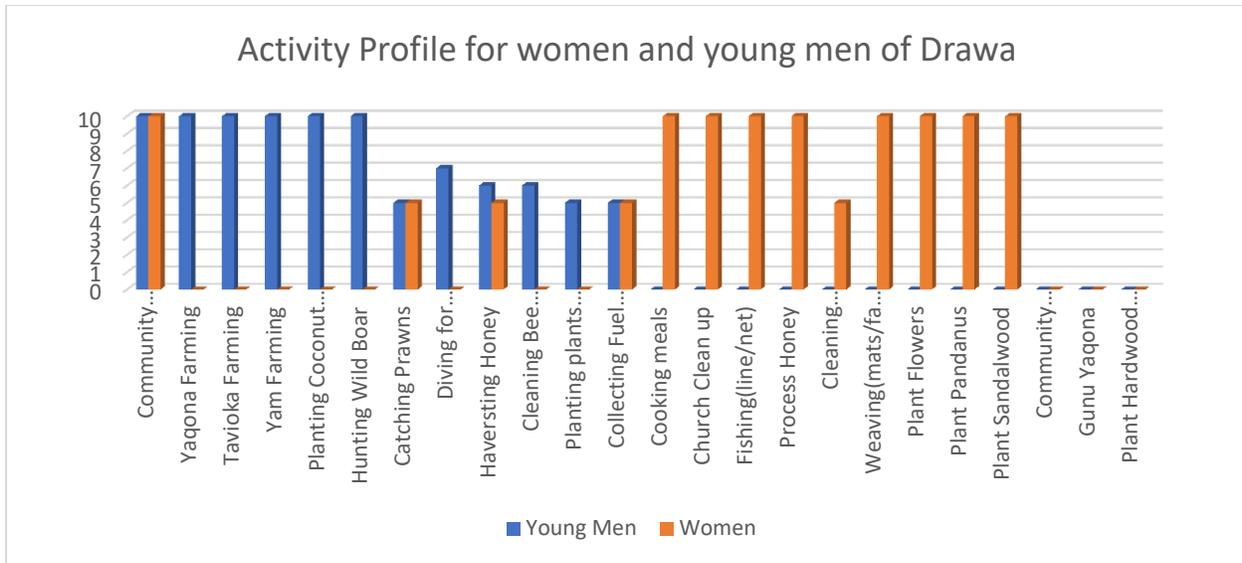
Women's reproductive role involves raising children and looking after the elderly and sickly, doing laundry work, house cleaning and preparing three meals in a day.

In communal work, women are instrumental in assisting men organize and implement traditional community and official functions such as *solevu ni lotu*, *solevu ni vuli*, weddings, funerals, catering for visiting government officials and NGOs and other development teams. Women are also involve in special village meetings, clan meeting and church meetings.



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

Men are responsible for planting cash crops such as *yaqona*, *dalo*, *tavioka*, *vudi* and bananas including such activities as grazing cattle, cut firewood, plough farmlands, hunt wild boars, mowing village green and building village fences.



Women engage themselves in many activities that improve household income and village developments while at the same time attend to home making duties such as cooking meals and caring for children and the sick. These tasks are considered insignificant and remain invisible. Women generally spend time doing more activities in one day compared to men.

It is evident that women in these communities engage in 'triple roles' which includes reproductive<sup>i</sup>, productive<sup>ii</sup> and community work. In contrast men are only occupied in productive and community activities. About 80% of Emalu land owners are women and have permanently migrated to other neighboring provinces through marriage. This has made it even difficult to gauge their views, experiences and contribution to forest management and sustainability of Emalu forest

## 5.2 Women have no access and control on some forest resources compared to men

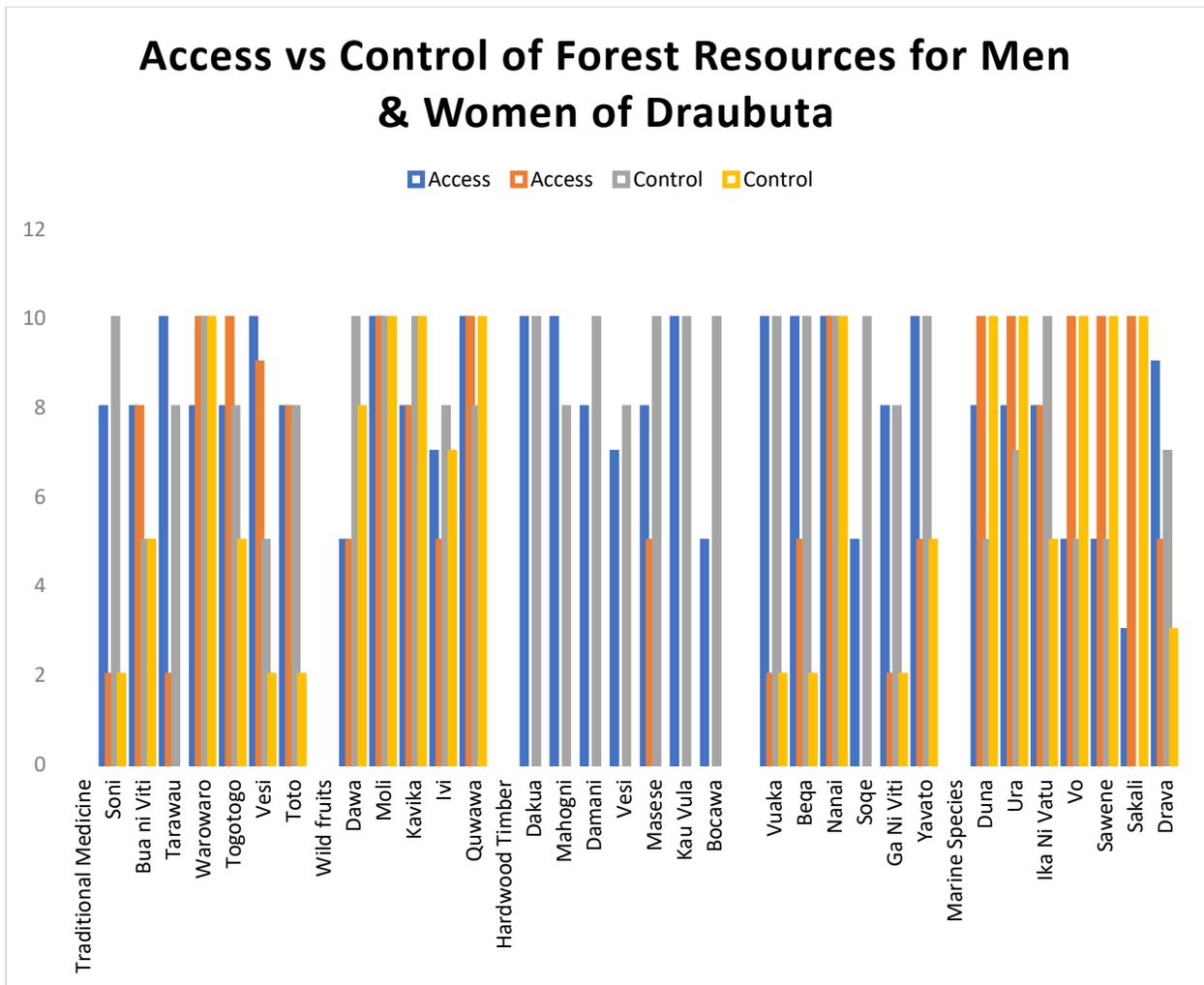
Women have no access and control on softwoods and hard wood timber. Only men have full access and control to all exotic and native timber trees such as dakua, vesi, damanu, kauvula, yasi, kaudamu, sasawira, togotogo, mahogany etc.

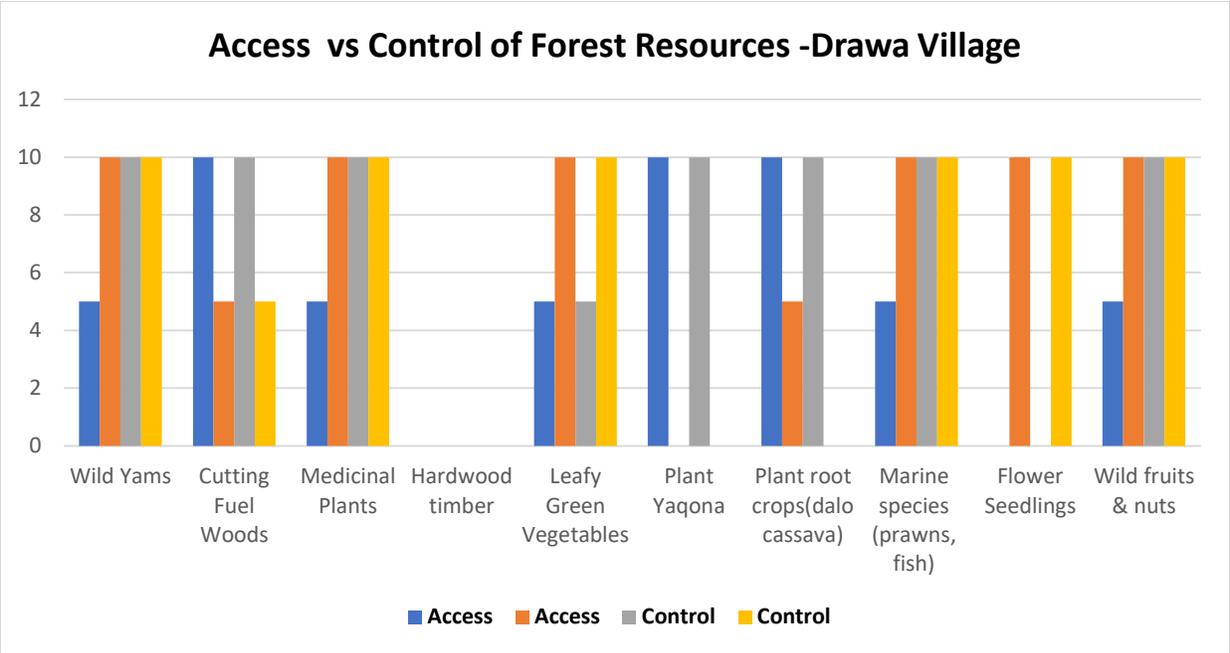
The same applies to some livestock such as cattle, horses, pigs, nanai (cicada-only appears after every 8 years). The harvesting and selling of these resources are totally under men's control.

Harvesting of marine resources is shared between men and women and both have access and control to these resources. This include fresh water prawns, ika ni vatu, vo, duna, beli, sakali and drava. Although men indulge in wild games such as hunting wild boars, fruit eating flying foxes and wild pigeons, women have control on how it is shared among relatives and within households.

Clearly, women have open access to various forest and marine resources that are closely associated to the maintenance of households and its members including bearing and caring for young ones, sickly and older people. As for household income, there is some level of discussions that takes place between men and women regarding savings and family expenses but the final decision rests with men.

Despite women’s open access to household, agricultural and some forest resources, control over these resources totally stays with men.





**5.3 Low participation and inclusiveness of women in REDD+ formulation, planning, implementation, etc.**

Men and women are equally given the opportunity to participate in village consultations meetings, trainings and other capacity building that takes place in both villages concerned( Draubuta and Drawa). Using the existing village structure in place, the *turaga ni koro* is the medium used to inform the villages of necessary actions and activities that demands collaborative approach or otherwise.

However it is noted that women may not attend in equal numbers as men due to the many roles and responsibilities they have that demands their immediate attention such as cooking meals, child caring and attending to the sick and elderly. However, it is important to note that due to largely unwritten traditional rules that govern relationships of men and women such as kinships one belongs; interactive participation of women in particular may vary compared to men. Of course, this vary depending on the different communities and cultural values in existence that govern interactions. Hence, much consideration should be given to ‘time of the day’ and venue of meeting to narrow down on gender differences and inequalities that may exist.

## 5.4 Overburden, lower influence of women in village decision making

Highlighted here are some of the communities that exist within the two communities (Drawa & Draubuta):

<b>Draubuta</b>	<b>Type of Committee</b>	<b>Key Role</b>	<b>Members</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
1	Emalu Development Trustee	Guards the interest of land owners	10	2	8
2	Village Committee	Spearhead key areas of development in the village	11	2	9
3	Health and Well Being	Responsible for all projects to improve overall health of population in relation to water, toilets sanitation etc	7	5	2
4	Soqosoqo Vakamarama (Women's Group)	Responsible for activities to empower women and improve family lives	6	6	0 (Women only)
5	Youth	Responsible for youth program activities	5	2	3
6	Bee Keeping	Organizes and plans for future initiatives and suppliers	7	3	4
7	Kindergarten	Responsible for all operational needs.	6	0	6

8	DFBCC	Provide overall administrative and financial operation including marketing of products	10	1	9
<b>DRAWA</b>					
9.	Bee Keeping Committee	Ensure the smooth running of the business for sustainability of project	6	3	3

Out of the nine committees in place, seven have a mix of women and men representatives as members of the committee. This is not including the Women’s Group committee which are primarily women members. Apparently, men dominate all levels of decision making and such practice is seen in higher decision making settings such as parliament.

Even if encouraged to be actively involved, most women are highly likely not to accept the challenge as a result of being ‘overburden’ by domestic duties.

Training and capacity building opportunities on forest management, income generation and general REDD+ awareness made available to rural communities are often missed by women as a result of child bearing and caring responsibilities being the common challenge faced.

The unwritten social and cultural norms nurtured through socialization still disadvantages women in community decision making processes. Men are viewed to be endowed with capacity for leadership. Women are more inclined to vote for men for any top position, even if when there is a female contender. Female making it to top positions basically have to overcome more hurdles to obtain peer support, loyalty and trust from peers of same sex.

## **6.0 MAINSTREAMING GENDER INTO NATIONAL REDD+ STRATEGY EMISSION REDUCTION PHASES**

### **6.1 Division of Labor**

As we consider the apparent differences and inequalities that are exposed using basic gender analysis on the division of labor, it uncover the 'triple role' performed by low income women in these two communities. Such roles consists of 'Reproductive role' which involves the caring of children, preparing food, collecting fuel, housekeeping and family health care. Second to this is the 'Productive work' which caters for the production of goods and services and consumption and trade. Both women and men are involved in this area but their functions and responsibilities often differ. Notice that women's productive work is mostly less valued and so remain invisible to planners and implementers. Thirdly is 'Community work' which include collective organization of social events and services, celebrations and activities to improve the communities which is normally carried out in groups. Under such categories, one noticed:

- time used and the number and intensity of activities performed by women and men;
- the stark differences in accessing and controlling of resources between women and men; it highlights the underlying issues that are hidden/invisible that is often treated as insignificant during the initial stages of program and project planning and implementation.

Consider the power relations and the four categories of power (power over, power to, power with and power within). The main aim here is to achieve the power to negotiate on equal terms

### **6.2 Obtaining Sex and Age Disaggregated data (SADD)**

SADD should be used at all times to gain a more informed understanding of an issue or situation. It also allows difference between gender and inequalities to be exposed and addressed.

Asking questions such as who produces what forest resources are used by whom and who benefit or is affected from it as well.

### **6.3 Obtain inputs from women as well as men about how your plans and activities can possibly impact them.**

Women and men differ in their priorities. Avoid thinking that women and men's needs and perspectives are the same.

### **6.4 General Issues and Trends**

Gender inequality is a global issue. The same issue may manifest itself in REDD+ communities, in your local sectors in different ways. Consider the issues below and explore how it can be relevant to REDD+ program and ER phases of implementation:

- (i) Inequalities in political power at different levels of the nation and communities.

Look into the power within your formal decision making structures such as government and even community or provincial council and policy making institutions. Notice the low visibility of women perspectives. National priorities and community priorities are often defined without meaningful inputs from women.

- (ii) Inequalities within households;
- (iii) Difference in legal systems and entitlements
- (iv) Gender division of labor within the economy;
- (v) Inequalities in the domestic and unpaid sector;
- (vi) Violence against women
- (vii) Discriminatory attitudes

## **7.0 CONCLUSION**

As a first step, gender perspectives should be included in the formulation of the Fiji REDD+ Policy and not just a "add on". With the inclusion of gender perspectives, women's time burdens are exposed as an important constraint on growth and development of a family, community and a nation. While REDD+ program is well intended, gender perspectives forces planners and implementers the need to rethink structures and practices that perpetuate inequalities of all kinds. Focusing on women alone will not resolve inequality, in fact attention should be paid to relations between men and women as partners to development.

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## 9.0 ANNEX 1

### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MAINSTREAMING GENDER IN REDD+ INITIATIVE

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#### 1.0 ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND

1.1 Name of Organization.....

1.2 Vision.....

1.3 Mission.....

1.4 Position Held.....

#### 2.0 Legal, Regulation and Policy Frameworks

2.1 Does your organization have legislations and policies that promote gender equality and the empowerment of women?

a. Yes \_\_\_\_\_ b. No \_\_\_\_\_ c. Don't know \_\_\_\_\_

2.2 If Yes, please list and explain relevant legislations and policies on board \_\_\_\_\_

2.3 Does your organization have a feedback, grievances, report mechanism in place?

a. Yes \_\_\_\_\_ b. No \_\_\_\_\_ c. Don't know \_\_\_\_\_

#### 3.0 GENDER CONCERNS

3.1 Are you aware of the Fiji National Gender Policy?

a. Yes \_\_\_\_\_ b. No \_\_\_\_\_

3.2 Do you collect sex disaggregated data?

a) Yes \_\_\_ b. No \_\_\_ c. Don't know \_\_\_\_\_

#### Consultation

3.3 Does your organization follow a specific guideline when engaging with local community?

a. Yes \_\_\_\_\_ b. No \_\_\_\_\_ c. Don't know \_\_\_\_\_

3.4. If yes, please

explain. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3.5. What process do you follow to ensure full participation of adult men and women in all levels of decision making in local communities?

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3.6. How do you ensure young men and young women’s voices are heard at all levels of decision making in indigenous communities?

3.7 What are you doing to promote inclusivity when implementing the Fiji government’s REDD+ agenda on the effective participation of the marginalized group in local communities?

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3.8 What constraints and factors that may hinder local communities from participation in REDD+ consultation?

	Factors	Young men	Young women	Women	Disable persons
i	Illiteracy				
ii	poverty				
iii	Logistic barriers such as meeting time and locations of meeting place.				
iv	Limited access to resources and available services such as transport etc				
v	Cultural barriers (social relations and status etc)				
vi	Living in informal settlements				
vii	Not listed in the I Vola ni Kawa Bula				
viii	Any other suggestions-please list				

3.9. Are there any weaknesses/gaps that you identify with current Fiji REDD+ consultation practice that needs to be addressed immediately?

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#### 4.0 ACCESS & CONTROL

4.1 Do you think there is a transparent structure in place by Fiji REDD+ to ensure that both **women and men** have equal access to forest resources and equal shared benefits from emission and reduction mechanism?

a.Yes \_\_\_\_\_ b. No \_\_\_\_\_ c. .Do not know \_\_\_\_\_

4.2As a stakeholder, what would your organization suggest to ensure there is equitable access to forest resources by men and women?

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4.3 What would your organization suggest to ensure there is equal shared benefits in the Emission Reduction mechanism?

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4.5 Are there areas in stakeholders/ program collaborators capability where you believe staff capacity needs to be improved to better serve our indigenous communities?  
 a. Yes \_\_\_ b. No \_\_\_ c. Don't know \_\_\_

4.6 If Yes, please identify areas concerned \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**5.0 LAND TENURE**

5.1 Do you think our land tenure policies and benefit sharing mechanism is gender sensitive?  
 a. Yes \_\_\_ b. No \_\_\_ c. Do not know \_\_\_\_\_

5.2 If Yes, What do you mean by being gender sensitive?

i	Women and men are equally consulted in all land development	
ii	Women's voice on land management are heard and considered	
iii	Women and young people are given adequate space in decision making to raise their opinion	
iv	Land owners including women receive equally shared financial benefits.	
v	Only men's voice are heard and considered	
vi	Only men receive financial benefits from the land and forest resources.	
vii	Process followed by Fiji REDD+ on benefit sharing mechanism is transparent to both men and women	
viii	Only certain key individuals amongst land owners are privy to key information on emission reduction mechanism	

5.3 What are institutional barriers that exist in government that does NOT facilitate women's full access to land, forest resources? Please tick boxes provided.

(i)	Lack of consultation by key ministry concern (Min of Forestry, Min i-Taukei Affairs, Min of Agriculture) to raise awareness in relevant ministries on REDD+ initiatives	
(ii)	No specific legislations that addresses women's access and	

	utilization of forest resources	
(iii)	Absence of gender sensitive policy to manage land use and forest management	
(iv)	Lack of compliance by relevant ministries to existing legislations and policies	
(v)	Lack of capacity of senior staff to integrate gender issues into workplace hence no compliance.	
(vii)	Not listed in the <i>I Vola ni Kawa bula</i>	
(viii)	Any other issues you wish to raise?	

5.4 What are institutional barriers that exist that does NOT facilitates equal shared benefits derived from emission reduction mechanism?

i)	No specific legislations that addresses women's equal access to benefits from forest use	
ii)	No enforcement of legislation and policies that addresses women's access to benefits.	
iii)	Absence of gender sensitive policy in REDD+ initiative	
iv)	Lack of compliance to existing legislations and policies	
v)	Lack of capacity of senior staff to integrate gender issues into workplace	
vi)	Any other suggestions?	

VINAKA VAKALEVU

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