

**TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COMPLETION REPORT**  
 Division: Gender, Social Development and Civil Society (RSGS)

TA No. and Name TA 3360-FIJ: Women's Plan of Action		Amount Approved: \$500,000	
Executing Agency: ADB/RSGS (SOCD/RSPR)		Revised Amount:	
Source of Funding: TASF		TA Amount Undisbursed \$2,496	TA Amount Utilized \$497,504
Date		Completion Date	
Approval	Signing	Original	Actual
22 December 1999	n/a	30 April 2002	31 July 2005
Fielding of Consultants		Account Closing Date	
October 2001- March 2003		Original	Actual
		30 April 2002	31 July 2005

**Description**

Following the 4<sup>th</sup> UN World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995, the Ministry of Women, Social Welfare and Poverty Alleviation (MOWC) demonstrated a record in placing gender issues on the Government of the Fiji Islands' (GoF) agenda through the formulation of the *National Women's Plan of Action (WPA)* in 1998. Government's support and commitment to implementing the WPA generated increased momentum within the MOWC, sectoral ministries represented in the *Inter-ministerial Committee on Women (IMC)*, various task forces and nongovernment organizations (NGOs), to accelerate the implementation of the WPA. The systematic implementation of the WPA required: (i) assisting the MOWC to realign and strengthen its capacity to advise and coordinate the implementation of the WPA, and (ii) gender capacity building (CB) in the sectoral ministries that have the primary responsibility for implementing the WPA. Implementation of the WPA also required associated policy and legislative changes and broad-based commitment and support from various stakeholders (including NGOs, employer groups, trade unions, parliamentarians and civil society). These identified needs and constraints formed the rationale for the proposed TA.

**Objectives and Scope**

The objectives of the TA were to support (i) the MOWC and the Task Force on Gender Mainstreaming to mainstream gender concerns into national policies/programs, in accordance with the WPA, by developing and strengthening Government processes to be gender-responsive; and –through the MOWC– and (ii) the *Fiji Women's Rights Movement (FWRM)*, in its effort to identify and review laws that discriminate against women and advocate for legislative changes in the area of women's employment and economic rights. The scope of the TA focused on two of the WPA's five strategic objectives: (i) mainstreaming women and gender concerns in the planning process and policy areas; and (ii) identifying and reviewing laws that are disadvantageous to women and preparing proposed amendments and/or new laws. The TA scope was divided into two distinctive components: Part A focused on mainstreaming and CB of selected line ministries [Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and Ministry of Health (MoH)] to undertake gender responsive planning, programming, and implementation; and Part B focused on law review, legislative changes, advocacy and CB of NGOs.

The TA was developed in September 1999 through iterative consultation with a broad range of Government and civil society stakeholders and beneficiaries during TA fact-finding. The TA objectives, design, executing agency arrangements and implementation were appropriate and relevant. However, commencement of TA activities was delayed by the suspension of all ADB activities in Fiji, following the military coup in 2000. After more than a year of political instability and widespread civil unrest, democracy returned to Fiji in September 2001. In this context, Part A activities started in November 2001 and were carried out until January 2003; Part B activities started in March 2002 and were carried out until June 2004. The delay in the reestablishment of the parliamentary system, the inevitable re-tabling of TA-supported policies and laws [i.e. Family Law Bill (FLB) and the Employment Relations Bill (ERB)] and some delays in the recruitment of the new FWRM Project Director contributed to delay in the conclusion of Part B activities.

**Evaluation of Inputs**

Overall, the consulting firm provided satisfactory inputs to the implementation of Part A activities, through constructive interaction with the MOWC and selected line agencies (MoA and MoH), within the agreed schedule. The allocation of 12 person-months of international and 10 person-months of domestic consultants in GAD, organizational and personnel management, HR and training proved adequate and cost-effective, considering the specialized nature of the consulting inputs needed and the strong CB focus of the activities. Overall, performance was satisfactory: all project activities were carried out in a professional and client-oriented manner, with due attention to local conditions and sensitivities. The MOWC was satisfied with the inputs provided. The technical staff within MOWC, MoA and MoH ensured ownership and commitment and provided suitable qualified staff to work with the consultants throughout TA implementation. With respect to Part B, engaging a locally-based and highly reputed (national) NGO – the FWRM– through the MOWC to lobby for the adoption of sensitive policies and legislation in critical areas of women's employment and economic rights proved adequate and cost-effective. The TA provided timely support to the FWRM at a critical stage of its engagement and advocacy efforts for gender-responsive law and policy reform. Some difficulties in replacing key project staff (October 2003), and the need to adapt to continuous shifts in Parliamentary schedule for the discussion of draft policies and legislation supported by the TA required some adjustments in the TA timing and implementation schedule, with minimal reallocation of resources among budget categories and no impact on the satisfactory quality of TA outputs. The performance of both the ADB and the EA are considered satisfactory.

**Evaluation of Outputs**

**Part A**

**Gender audits** of policies, programs, organizational structures and processes within MoA and MoH were completed and published by MOWC, with support of core staff teams from each ministry. The audits identified where senior decision-makers could implement strategic initiatives to build organizational commitment to and strengthen staff capacities for gender mainstreaming. To assist planners in MoA and MoH develop gender-sensitive corporate plans, recommendations were made for incorporating gender concerns in organizational processes as well as entry points in policies and programs under each key result area. As the gender audits were the first implemented in GoF, a tool, *Guidelines for Undertaking Gender Audits* –including sectoral checklists and guidelines– was developed and published to assist government ministries implement future audits in other ministries.

**Organizational Assessments and Strategic Plans.** The development of strategic plans for institutionalizing gender mainstreaming in MoH and MoA grew out of TA-supported CB activities. In addition, a survey was undertaken to assess the strengths and barriers to gender mainstreaming in the enabling environment, organizational cultures, structures and mechanisms in the pilot ministries. Strategic plans for institutionalizing gender mainstreaming in the MoA and MoH were completed. The plans set out clear strategies, objectives, rationales and steps to increase gender responsiveness in policies and programs. The plans also identified performance indicators, and risk and mitigation strategies as well as TOR for gender focal points.

**Gender Analysis Framework, Tools and Materials.** The TA developed and tested tools and materials to support the implementation of a gender perspective in policy development, program planning and implementation. During the first workshop, the TA team shared models and good practices of gender assessment processes, such as a gender analysis framework developed in Indonesia –the *Gender Analysis Pathway* (GAP)– and adapted the GAP framework to fit the Fijian context. The revised GAP framework –the *Gender Assessment Pathway*– was completed and published, and used as a learning-by-doing tool to assess the HIV/AIDS policy in MoH and the food security policy in MoA.

#### **Part B**

FWRM was engaged by the MOWC during four six-month phases to conduct advocacy and awareness campaigns on legislative changes, legal training and CB to promote the sociolegal status of women and to draft policies and legislation in collaboration with the Law Reform Commission and the Ministry of Labor and Industrial Relations. TA-supported policy/law reform activities included:

- (i) advocacy for the enactment of the *Family Law Bill* (FLB), adopted in October 2003; and the *Industrial Relations Bill* (IRB), adopted as *Employment Relations Bill* in 2004; and
- (ii) drafting of the *National Sexual Harassment Policy* and the *National Policy on Equal Employment Opportunities* (EEO).

Changes in Parliament's agenda for discussion of the draft FLB and IRB resulted in unanticipated changes in the time and sequencing of the TA outputs, as follows:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter outputs (February-September 2002): lobbying for FLB; survey on Sexual Harassment in the workplace, which formed the basis of the draft National Sexual Harassment Policy;
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter outputs (October 2002-March 2003): development of sexual harassment guidelines; selection of 10 private sector companies to adopt the sexual harassment guidelines; training of 10 sexual harassment counselors within selected private sector companies; NGO/Community Based Organization (CBO) workshop on gender issues in the IRB;
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter outputs (April-September 2003): draft National Policy on Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO); EEO Guides for Employers and Workers; training of 10 private companies on Sexual Harassment Guidelines and Grievance Handling Procedures; NGO/CBO workshop on gender issues in the IRB;
- 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter outputs (October 2003-June 2004): lobbying workshops for the FLB; lobbying workshops for the IRB; brochures and pamphlets on IR bill; IR media kit and public awareness campaigns on the IRB.

Overall, the project was characterized by cost estimate reliability and efficiency in the production of outputs, in terms of cost and process. Government satisfaction with TA outputs resulted in the publication of (Part A) TA outputs as official Government documents, and the submission of (Part B) TA-funded policies and draft bills to Parliament for consideration. With respect to Part A, inception, midterm and final reports of TA activities, progress, achievements and impacts were produced regularly and distributed to the Government and interested donors. With respect to Part B, semiannual progress and financial reports were prepared and submitted by the FWRM to the MOWC and the ADB in a timely manner. The outputs are considered satisfactory.

**Overall Assessment and Rating.** The TA achieved its stated objectives. It resulted in increased understanding and support for gender mainstreaming and gender-responsive policy and law reform within Government –from parliamentarians to district level staff in MoA and MoH– and nongovernmental agencies and the finalization of relevant gender-responsive policies and legislation in the area of women's employment and economic rights. Based on self-assessments of their learning and results of the TA, core TA participants report they are now able to articulate and apply concepts that support gender mainstreaming in their work. They have the knowledge and skills to push for sex-disaggregated data, include gender concepts and incorporate gender analysis in project proposal to funders, apply result-based frameworks, and engage in gender-responsive policy and law reform. Overall rating: SUCCESSFUL.

**Major Lessons Learned.** Part A activities were characterized by the use of participatory tools and modalities, which proved essential to seek regular feedback from technical staff and their increasingly stronger commitment to the proposed organizational changes for gender equality. However, modalities to seek senior management endorsement and assess their commitment at critical stages of the reform agenda should also be reflected in TA design. This would have provided a stronger basis to ensure senior management ownership, and the sustainability and long-term impact of TA-funded activities. Parliamentary setbacks are inevitable during the law drafting, approval and enactment processes, as it emerged during the implementation of Part B activities. Potential delays in the finalization of 'sensitive' policy/laws should be accounted for in project design and reflected in the TA implementation schedule. The provision of comprehensive packaged activities (i.e. participatory drafting of policies/bills, lobbying, advocacy and training) through local NGOs proved essential to develop the critical mass needed to move the adoption of gender-sensitive policies and legislation.

**Recommendations and Follow-Up Actions.** The sustainability of the TA outcomes depends on the GoF's ability to sustain in-house capacity to implement the gender audit recommendations and the *Strategic Plans for Institutionalizing Gender Mainstreaming* within pilot ministries, while expanding the pilot-tested approach to other key line ministries. As the gender audit process implemented by this TA was the first of the GoF, the TA team developed a tool, *Guidelines for Undertaking Gender Audits*. The guidelines will assist other ministries and agencies in assessing existing internal conditions, identifying entry points in the planning and programming cycle and determining where political will and support lie to promote gender mainstreaming in other key line agencies. ADB can continue to provide follow-up technical support aimed at increasing the skills for implementing gender mainstreaming within key line ministries, relevant to ADB operations.

Prepared by

Francesco Tornieri

Designation

Social Development Specialist