



FIJI ISLANDS Country Profile

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[FINAL DRAFT]

Prepared by SPC Strategic Engagement, Policy and Planning Facility

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Fiji Islands - Country Facts¹	
Country or territory official name	Republic of the Fiji Islands
Capital	Suva
Government	Interim Administration
Head of state	Ratu Josefa Iloilovatu Uluivuda
Head of government	Interim Prime Minister, Commodore Josaia Voreqe Bainimarama
Land area	18,333 km ²
Exclusive economic zone (EEZ)	1,290,000 km ²
Population (2007 census)	835 230
Population density (mid-2004 estimate)	46
Annual intercensal population growth rate	0.6 per cent
GDP constant prices (2007)	2871.0 million
GDP per capita (2007)	3442.5
Real GDP growth (mid-2004 estimate)	18.8
CPI annual change (2007)	4.8
Exports (2007)	1,209,813
Imports (2007)	2,890,072
Trade balance (2007)	-1,680,259
Crude birth rate per 1,000	23.1
Crude death rate per 1,000	7.0
Total fertility rate	2.6 children
Infant mortality rate per 1,000	18.8
Male life expectancy at birth	63.8 years
Female life expectancy at birth	67.6 years
Urban population	32 per cent
Dependency ratio (15-64)	88
Median age	19.9 years
Youth (15-24)	20.2 per cent
Male labour force participation rate (2003)	74.6 per cent
Female labour force participation rate (2003)	52.7 per cent
Religions	Christianity, Hindu, Islam
Languages	English, Fijian, Hindi
Official currency	FJD

¹ Principal source: SPC Statistics and Demography Programme (and its Pacific Regional Information System – PRISM <http://www.spc.int/prism>)

Introduction to the Country Profile

SPC country profiles document the nature and extent of the organisation's services to individual members.

This country profile presents basic country facts and a synopsis of Fiji Islands' development background and a narrative summary of the Secretariat's assistance during the period 2006–2008. Annexes include specific country activities and human resource development activities in 2008.

Fiji Islands Development Background

Amongst the largest countries of the South Pacific region, the Republic of Fiji was a British colony until 1970, when it became an independent constitutional democracy. Fiji comprises of some 322 islands, all varying considerably in size, with only 100 being inhabited. The two largest islands are Viti Levu and Vanua Levu and are home to approximately 70 percent of the population. Both islands account for roughly 85 percent of Fiji's total land area of 18,272 square kilometers. The larger islands are mostly volcanic, while the smaller islands are mainly coral formations.

Archaeological and anthropological evidence suggests that Fiji was settled by Melanesian and Polynesian people some 3,500 years ago. These waves of migration into Fiji formed the indigenous Fijians.

In the 19th century, European missionaries and traders began to settle the Island which sparked social and political disruption leading to internal disputes and battles amongst the native Fijian confederacies. In 1874, following continuing unrest, Fiji was surrendered unconditionally to the British. Under British rule, approximately 60,000 indentured labourers were brought over from India between 1879 and 1916, mainly to work the cane plantations.

Almost all indigenous Fijians are Christian, while approximately 80 percent of Indo-Fijians are Hindi, 14 per cent Muslim and the remainder Christians.



Based on the 2006 census, Fiji's population was 835,230 in that year. Population growth is estimated at 0.6 per cent per annum, a moderate increase resulting from a relative low level of fertility combined with high emigration rates. The population is multi-ethnic, with approximately 57 per cent being indigenous Fijians and 38 per cent Indo-Fijians. The remaining 5 per cent comprise of European, Chinese and other Pacific Islanders. Approximately 51 per cent of the population reside in urban areas.

Fiji has one of the largest and the most developed economies in the Pacific region. The country is well endowed with natural resources, which accounts for a significant component of the country's gross domestic income. In addition to agriculture (primarily sugar production) and fishing, Fiji's economy also relies heavily on tourism. Industries based on agriculture and natural resources account for approximately 70 per cent of exports, and 30 percent of GDP. Sugar production alone provides roughly 30 percent of Fiji's domestic export earnings. In recent years, remittances have become a major source of foreign exchange for Fiji.

Despite the country's strong potential, Fiji's economic growth performance has been volatile over the past decades. Political instability including coups has had a negative impact. A major economic setback for Fiji is the decline in sugar and textile export as a result of gradual reduction in preferential prices and access to main markets (European Union).

Faced with the challenges in the primary and manufacturing sectors, the Government of Fiji is committed to generate economic growth through developing its pristine environment and natural beauty. Government recognises that tourism plays a vital role in the areas of foreign earnings, investment, associated with infrastructural development, but more significantly in its role in employment creation.

Compared to many of the Pacific island countries, Fiji has made good progress towards the MDGs. In the 2007/08 UN Human Development Report , Fiji's Human Development Index is amongst the highest in the Pacific region, reflecting a high literacy rate, high longevity, low infant mortality rate, and a relatively high GDP per capita income. On the other hand, only 50 per cent of the population has access to safe water and proper sanitation (12 per cent only in the rural areas). The Government is committed to improving access to basic services such as water, sanitation, electricity and telecommunication to the rural communities (2007-2011 Strategic Development Plan).

Life expectancy is relatively high for both men (66.5) and women (70.7). Infant, child and maternal mortality rates are in line with the MDG targets. Educational achievement is notable with almost universal primary school enrolment, high level of adult literacy, and approximately 40 percent of adolescents remain at school to the age of 18 years.

While progress towards the MDG is generally impressive, poverty and hardship is evident throughout Fiji. While data on poverty and hardship differ, it is estimated that over 25 per cent of Fiji's population have an income below the basic needs poverty line. Poverty and hardship are serious issues in rural areas and in urban squatter settlements.

The Government of Fiji recognizes that limited employment and income generating opportunities are the major cause of hardship and poverty. In its 2007-2011 Strategic Development Plan, the government's poverty alleviation programme is guided by the Social Justice and Affirmative Action framework prescribed by the Social Justice Act of 2001. The framework specifies 29 affirmative action programmes aimed to address disadvantage people throughout the communities. The notion of disadvantage is defined as those with limited access to education, training, land, housing and commerce.

Summary of SPC Assistance to Fiji Islands 2006 - 2008

This section provides an overview of SPC assistance to Fiji by division and programme for the period 2006-2008. A more detailed listing of activities can be found in Annex 1.

Land Resources

In the last three years, the Land Resources' Programme has played an important role in enhancing Fiji's income generation activities, through sustainable agricultural development. Most notable include the DSAP Initiatives in the area sustainable farming practices such as the successful introduction of the bucket irrigation system in the *Drawa* area.

The Programme has also assisted to enhance Fiji policy development capacity. Support was provided to revise the forest policy and to strengthen their capacity to engage in the international forest policy dialogue through UNFF. Amongst the significant policy support provided by the Programme included advice on the implementation of the Fiji National Rural Land Use Policy.

Capacity strengthening also through a number of in-country training, attachments, national and regional workshops in sheep husbandry practices, diagnosis of pest, diseases, and soil nutrition disorders. The Genetic Resource Centre of LRD, provided attachments in the area of tissue culture plants. This is in addition for formal training through the University of the South Pacific.

To enhance Fiji's capacity to participate more effectively in international trade, training was provided in quarantine border control operations and surveillance. The Programme also provided assistance with the training of farmers, purchasers, packers and exporters involved in the export trade of commodities under the BQA with Australia and New Zealand.

Marine Resources

SPC's Coastal Fisheries Programme (CFP) has in the past three years assisted Fiji in improving its capacity in fisheries science, fisheries statistics and stock assessment. The Programme also assisted in developing Fiji's specific reef fishery species management plan and community based fisheries management programme. Amongst the Programme's notable activities to Fiji included the development of coastal fisheries legislation, fisheries management bill and the review of the Qoliqoli Act and the draft Fisheries Management Bill.

To strengthen policy capacity, the Programme support included updating the Tuna Fisheries Data Management System (TUFMAN), and assisted Fiji Fisheries Department set up Live Reef Fisheries database.

Social Resources

In the last three years or so, some of the major activities the Public Health Programme has delivered, has been the effort to improve Fiji's ability to immediately respond to an outbreak of avian flu. The Programme provided immune-fluorescence testing for influenza, established avian and pandemic influenza surveillance, and introduced the Antiviral Rapid test kits for diagnosis of avian influenza in bird stocks. In other health areas, the Programme over the period also assisted Fiji in the area of HIV/STI prevention, adolescent health through clinic based schools. In addition, the Programme supported the review of legislative frameworks to ensure compliance with International Health Regulations (IHR) and APSED requirements.

To enhance capacity development, the Human Development Programme provided assistance Fiji's youth through the *Kurabui* youth development scheme to support income generation for disadvantaged youth. In the TVET sector, the Programme facilitated the review of the Tutu Training Centre to identify good practice in non-formal education approaches. Recently, assistance was provided to the

media industry in their preparation for the 10th Festival of Pacific Arts.

Through the Regional Media Centre, SPC produced for the Citizens Constitutional Forum, the documentary 'Struggling for A Better Living: Squatters in Fiji', which was produced for the Citizens Constitutional Forum.

In the past three years, the Regional Maritime Programme (RMP) has assisted Fiji continue to comply with international maritime requirements. It has assisted the country establish effective policy, regulatory frameworks and strong maritime institutions to allow Fiji to maximise its benefits from international trade. The Programme has undertaken audit and follow up audits in the maritime sector, provided capacity building through workshops, attachments, secondment and on-the-job training for officers in maritime related agencies, in areas such as maritime administration, port authorities, shipping operations, safety of seafarers, small island states commercial ship management and vessel movement.

The Programme has also provided policy advice to Fiji on port and maritime administration personnel on national security regimes.

To assist Fiji make more informed policy decisions and improve planning capacity, the Statistics and Demography Programme (SDP) provided technical support to undertake a poverty analysis of Fiji, and review Fiji 2007 census questionnaire. To improve data and information management through enhanced accessibility, the Programme continues to improve the PRISM website.

Other Assistance, human resources development and financial highlights

In 2008, 203 Fiji Islanders participated in SPC training activities, organised by SPC's Land Resources Division in the area of sustainable agricultural practices, paravetenary, avaiian flu, plant propagation and nursery operations and in training activities organised by Marine Resources (Fisheries) and Social Resources (Statistics and Demography; Public Health and Human Development Programme) Divisions. Annex 2 provides further details.

ANNEX 1: 2008 Notable Activities in Fiji by SPC Programmes

Land Resources Division
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The DSAP bucket irrigation system has been successfully adopted in the Drawa area with resulting increased yields of vegetable crops. • The DSAP School garden for the Nasinu Secondary School linked to FSM's Nutrition Department's AusAid project promotes fresh vegetables and fruits to secondary school students and also used to promote agriculture to youths. • DSAP has established resource centres to ensure the rural communities have access to farming information. • Fiji assisted with advice on implementation of the Fiji National Rural Land Use Policy. • Fiji assisted with advice on implementation of the LDC/SIDS/GEF Medium Sized Project for Sustainable Land Management mainstreaming and capacity building. • Supporting work on the national standards on forest certification now being finalised for government endorsement. • Support formulation of new forest legislation to replace existing Forest Decree. • Supporting for the small-scale rural-based bamboo enterprise. • Four participants attended a study tour in Tasmania to look at forestry code implementation. • Three participants attended Pacific Regional CDM Forestry Awareness Workshop. • Review of the Fiji Land Conservation and Improvement Act – currently undergoing legal reviewing. • Supporting the Fiji Forestry Department in the manipulation and presentation of national Forest Inventory Data and Information – Fiji NFI report to be printed in September 2008. • Working with the Fiji Ministry of Agriculture to develop a national guideline on participatory land use planning. • Increased awareness of the importance of diversity; Strengthening of genebank-to-farmer linkages; development of Taveuni genebank with the distribution of suckers of traditional varieties to farmers. • Revised and published the 10 module training manual of the systems approach to fresh produce production for exports. • Assistance with submission for papaya market access to USA and helped with market access for fresh ginger to Australia. • Completed preliminary evaluation of the efficacy of hot water immersion as a quarantine treatment for exported taro. • Facilitated discussions between Tuvalu and Fiji for fresh produce exports from Rotuma to Tuvalu. • Assisted with the national consultation on biosecurity bill • Finalisation and submission of the biosecurity bill for promulgation • Development of the Fiji Biosecurity Information Facility (BIF) continues; computers and accessories were provided to run the BIF. • Participation in refresher training on the International Phytosanitary Portal and BIF. • Seven officers participated in the regional workshop on draft ISPMs held in August 2009. • Completed PCE evaluations. • Three officers attended the regional training workshop on the use of the PCE. • 100 plus farmers, extension officers and private sector representatives trained on the commodity pathway approach for production of fresh produce for exports. • Farmer training on the commodity pathway conducted in Sigatoka, Ba, Tailevu and Nadi/Lautoka. • Audit of seaport facilities linked to the PEST project.
Marine Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helped Fiji fisheries set up Live Reef Fisheries database • Reviewed Fiji Tuna Statistical and Data Systems • Assistance with study of toothed whale depredation on longlines

- Provided tuna fisheries statistics, database and data management attachment training at SPC for 1 Fiji counterpart
- Ran workshop for Fiji fisheries staff on training small-scale fishermen in appropriate nearshore FAD fishing methods
- Developed Fish posters (2) for Fiji Fisheries Division
- Ran small-craft safety workshop for Fiji small-scale fishermen
- Provided GIS-based advice on sea-cucumber ranching in Savusavu
- RMP assisted Consort Shipping company with their ship security plan
- Ran Fiji refresher tuna fishing observer training course (August 2008)
- RMP staff delivered guest lectures at The University of the South Pacific
- Maritime academic degree/diploma progressed with USP's faculty of Business and Economics
- Fiji School of Maritime and Fisheries was contracted by SPC RMP for the first time to be the sole training provider for the Class 4 and 5 Deck and Engine upgrade course in Marshall Islands in May 2008
- Organised a special ACIAR project leaders meeting to identify mini-projects and USP post-graduate student research support
- Ran a GIS aquaculture training workshop in Suva with SOPAC
- Began an ACIAR sea cucumber ranching project in Savusavu
- Assisted with French Pacific Fund project for prawn sea cage culture in Fiji
- Fiji Head of maritime training institute mentored at PNG Maritime College
- Provided two computers for tuna statistics data entry and reporting
- Fiji maritime industry meeting was organised to facilitate Germans consultation on funding for the proposed maritime academic degree/diploma
- Provided training to tuna fishery observers in biological sampling
- Ran Maritime compliance audit on Fiji Islands Maritime Safety Administration: initial Designated Authority (check audit) and STCW follow-up
- Carried out GIS-based freshwater aquaculture pond planning project
- 1 participant to the regional finfish mariculture meeting in Noumea
- 3 participants to the Ecosystems Approach (EACFA) and Aquatic Biosecurity meeting in Noumea
- 1 participant to present at the Australasian Aquaculture Conference in Brisbane
- 1 participant to the aquaculture economics workshop in Brisbane
- Two participants in practical training course on finfish underwater visual census methodologies in Noumea
- A total of 68 people participated/trained in various maritime areas:
 - Substandard shipping seminar
 - Fiji Maritime Industry meeting 4
 - PCPA Training Committee meeting
 - Basic maritime auditors course
 - Head of School mentoring
 - PacMA subcommittee and Executive Committee meetings
 - Search and rescue conference
 - Security drills and exercises workshop
 - Port management and engineering seminar
 - Sub-regional surveyors course
 - 2008 RMP planning meeting
 - PacMA 12 conference
 - Pacific maritime security conference
 - Senior auditors practicum
 - IMO Long Range Identification and Tracking Conference
 - Basic security auditors training course
 - Australian Certificate IV in workplace assessment and training
 - Maritime policy and legislative drafting workshop

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ PacWIMA Executive Committee meeting 4 ○ Third Annual General meeting of PIMLA ● 2 participants in short course on fisheries statistics and stock assessment ● 2 participants in high level fisheries Policy and Planning Workshop ● 2 participants in special Heads of Fisheries Meeting to develop the Regional Coastal Fisheries Management Strategies ● 1 participant in subregional practical workshop on implementation and analysis of socioeconomic fisheries surveys ● 1 participant in 2008 Tuna Fisheries Stock Assessment Workshops in Noumea ● 1 participant to the second Tuna Data Workshop ● 1 participant in 2008 (Fisheries) Ecological Risk Assessment workshop
<p>Social Resources</p>
<p>Public Health Programme</p> <p>HIV/STI</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● BCC and Stepping Stone Training <p>AHD</p> <p>Information and Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Family life education ● Life skills based Peer Education ● Community outreach education <p>Youth Friendly Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Youth Clinics Centres ● Integrated Primary Health Care (Youth Friendly Services) ● School based Clinics (Youth Friendly Services) <p>Innovative Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Baseline KAP study for pre-FLE intervention <p>PHS & CDC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support for in country surveillance activities for influenza with immune – fluorescence testing, with sentinel surveillance activities ● Diagnostic lab tests for dengue and/or leptospirosis PRIPPP – Procurement of antiviral and supplies for Rapid Containment ● PRIPPP – Procurement of antiviral and supplies for Rapid Containment ● PRIPPP – Procurement of antiviral and supplies for Rapid Containment ● Orientation to planning process and planned testing exercises processes ● Support of review of legal frameworks and policy implications for compliance (PRIPPP) with International Health Regulations (IHR) and APSED requirements <p>GFATM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Undertook grant preparation and successfully concluded grant negotiations for two round seven HIV and TB proposals submitted to the global Fund with phase 1, 2 year combined value of \$16.34 Million. Grants commenced 1st July 2008 ● Technical, logistical and financial support to conduct the repeat second generation behavior, STI and HIV prevalence surveys
<p>Statistics & Demography Programme</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Household Income and Expenditure Survey, HIES sample design (CR: 1 week)
<p>Human Development Programme</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Assistance with FIJI TVET expo and reviving Fiji TVET national association ● Joint hosting of TVET National summit with the Australian Pacific Technical College (APTC) in October for Fiji TVET policy makers/stakeholders at CETC

ANNEX 2: 2008 SPC Human Resources Development Activities for Fiji Islands

SPC Programme/ Section	Training subject area (or course title)	Month	Year	Duration	Type:	Location (city/town, country)	Number of Fiji Participants	Male	Female	Number person days
LRD - Forests and Trees	Regional Awareness Workshop on CDM Forestry	January	2008	4 days	Workshop	Nadi, Fiji	8	6	2	32
LRD- Forestry & Agriculture	DSAP Strategies	April	2008	5 days	Workshop	Nadi, Fiji	1	0	1	5
LRD - Forests and Trees	Implementation of the Code of Harvesting Practice	April	2008	6 days	Study Tour	Tasmania, Australia	5	5	0	30
LRD - Forests and Trees	Nursery Operations and Plant Propagation	July	2008	2 days	Training Workshop (On-the-Job; In Country)	Nauru	1	1	0	2
LRD-Animal Health Programme	PRIPPP Workshop	March	2008	5 days	Workshop course	Nadi, Fiji	26	24	2	130
LRD-Animal Health Programme	Paravet Trainers Training	April	2008	2 days	Workshop course	Nadi, Fiji	24	18	6	48
LRD-Animal Health Programme	Serology Training	February	2008	7 days	Attachment	Townsville, Australia	7	2	5	79
LRD-Animal Health Programme	IATA Training	June	2008	3 days	Workshop course	Nadi, Fiji	7	3	4	21
LRD-Animal Health Programme	Avian Influenza Workshop	August	2008	3 days	Workshop course	Nadi, Fiji	22	13	9	39
SRD – Regional Rights Resource Team	Bill of Rights (BOR) Training for Police Academy Criminal Investigation Department (CID) Course No. 7	September	2008	1 day	Workshop	Suva, Fiji	19	17	2	19
SRD – Regional Media Centre	Radio Broadcast production	June	2008	2 days	Workshop	Suva, Fiji	17	1	16	34
SRD – Regional Media Centre	Communication	September	2008	1 day	Workshop	Suva Fiji	11	5	6	11
SRD – Regional Media Centre	Graphics and Design	March/April	2008	1 week	Workshop	Suva, Fiji	4	0	4	20
SRD – Regional Media Centre	Radio Broadcasting	March-Sept	2008	1 classXwk X7months	Workshop	Suva, Fiji	4	0	4	
SRD – Regional Media Centre	Digital Video Production	February	2008	10 days	Workshop	Suva, Fiji	11	7	4	110
SRD – Regional Media Centre	Graphics and Design	February-April	2008	3 months	Training Attachment	Suva, Fiji	1	1	0	60
SRD – Regional Media Centre	Media and Communications	April	2008	1 day	Workshop	Suva, Fiji	2	2	0	2
SRD – Regional Media Centre	Digital Camera/Editing	May	2008	2 weeks	Workshop	Rarotonga, Cook Is	1	1	0	10
SRD – Regional Media Centre RMC	Graphics and Design	August	2008	1 day	Workshop	Suva Fiji	4	3	1	4
SRD – HIV & STI	Core HIV Care Team Training	Jan-Feb	2008	3 days	Training	Palau	1	1	0	3
SRD – HIV & STI	Behaviour Change Communication Training	September	2008	5 days	Training	Suva, Fiji	11	4	7	55
SRD – Pacific Healthy Lifestyle	Workshop on Nutrition, Diet and Lifestyle: Upscaling Action in the	February	2008	5 days	Workshop	Nadi, Fiji	3	1	2	15

	Pacific									
SRD – HIV & STI	Serology Training	February	2008	10 days	Training	Townsville, Australia	1	0	1	10
SRD - PHS CDC	Global Salmonella Surveillance Workshop	June	2008		Workshop	Alofi, Niue	1	0	1	
SRD – Public Health Surveillance Communicable Disease Control	NRL Workshop	June	2008	5 days	Training	Melbourne, Australia	1	0	1	5
SRD – Statistics & Demography Programme	UNSD-SPC Census 2010 Technical Workshop	February	2008	5 days	Workshop	Noumea, New Caledonia	1	1	0	5
SRD – Human Development Programme	Community Development	March - Oct	2008	7 Months	Training - Cert in CD	Suva, Fiji	4	0	4	560
MRD – Regional Maritime Programme	IMO LRIT	June	2008	2 days	Training	Suva, Fiji	2	2	0	4
MRD – Regional Maritime Programme	Advance Auditor Refresher Course	September	2008	5 days	Training	Suva, Fiji	3	2	1	15
MRD – Regional Maritime Programme	Port Management Training Course	September	2008	4 days	Training	Suva, Fiji	2	2	0	8
MRD – Regional Maritime Programme	ESCAP KMI SPC Workshop on Shipping Information	September	2008	1 day	Workshop	Suva, Fiji	2	2	0	2
MRD – Regional Maritime Programme	Ship Security Plan Consort Shipping	February	2008	1 day	TA	Suva, Fiji	1	1	0	1
MRD – Regional Maritime Programme	Senior Auditors Practicum	May	2008	2 days	Training	Suva, Fiji	2	2	0	4
MRD – Regional Maritime Programme	Class 4 & 5 Deck and Engine Upgrade Training	May	2008	10 days	Training	Majuro, RMI	2	2	0	20
MRD – Regional Maritime Programme	Pacific Maritime Security Conference	May	2008	3 days	Training	Nadi, Fiji	5	5	0	15
MRD – Nearshore Fisheries	Tutor Training Attachment	May/June	2008	4-weeks	Training	Nelson, NZ	1	1	0	20
MRD - PROCFISH	UVC1 - Sub-Regional Training Workshop on Underwater Visual Census (Uvc) Methodologies for the Assessment of Reef Fish Resources	June	2008	1 week	Training	Noumea, New Caledonia	2	2	0	10
MRD – Oceanic Fisheries	Observer Refresher Course	August	2008	4 days	Training	Suva, Nadi	6	6	0	24
MRD – Nearshore Fisheries	Competent Authority Inspectors (CA Training)	April	2008	2-weeks	Training	Nelson, NZ	3	3	0	30
						Totals	232	147	85	1477