Accelerating progress towards SDG2

POLICY EFFECTIVENESS ANALYSIS

FIJI

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List of Acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AMA	Agriculture Marketing Authority
AOI	Agriculture orientation index
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women
COP	Costed operational plan
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australia
EP&S	Economic Planning and Statistics Division
ESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FBO	Faith-based organizations
FBS	Food-balance sheets
FCLC	Fiji Crop and Livestock Council
FIRST	Food and Nutrition Security Impact, Resilience, Sustainability and Transformation
FJD	Fijian dollars
FNSSA	Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture
FPAN	Fiji Plan of Action for Nutrition
FPFNS	Fiji Policy on Food and Nutrition Security
FNS	Food and nutrition security (as per Fijian denomination)
HLC	High-level committee
GAP	Global Action Programme for Food and Nutrition Security for SIDS
GDP	Gross domestic product
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
ICT	Information and communication technology
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MoE	Ministry of Economy
MoEd	Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts
MoHMS	Ministry of Health and Medical Services
MoSI	Ministry of Sugar Industry

M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
NCDs	Non-communicable diseases
NDP	National Development Plan
NFNC	National Food and Nutrition Centre
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NNS	National Nutrition Survey
NSC	National Steering Committee
NZAid	New Zealand Agency for International Development
NZDFAT	New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
ODA	Official development assistance
PO	Policy officer
PoU	Prevalence of undernourishment
PSIP	Public Sector Investments Programmes
S.A.M.O.A. Pathway	SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action
SIDS	Small island development states
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SDP	Strategic Development Plan (Ministry of Agriculture)
SMART	Specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound (indicators)
SPC	(Southern) Pacific Community
SWOT	Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats analysis
TC	Tropical cyclone
TWG	Technical working group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WAF	Water Authority of Fiji
WHO	World Health Organization of the United Nations

Introduction to the country-level policy effectiveness analysis in Fiji

The country-level policy effectiveness analysis focuses on the two main policies that the Food and Nutrition Security Impact, Resilience, Sustainability and Transformation (FIRST) Programme has supported in Fiji since the programme began in 2016: the Fiji Policy on Food and Nutrition Security (FPFNS) and its Action Plan, and the five-year Strategic Development Plan (SDP) of the Ministry of Agriculture. Other related policies are also considered throughout the report, with special attention to the National Development Plan (NDP), Fiji's main development strategy, with which sectoral strategic plans are aligned.

The diagnostics exercise described in this report is based on a reviewed annotated outline with eight questions provided by the FIRST management team. The two FIRST Policy Officers in Fiji built the exercise around these questions, which were addressed through:

- research and desk reviews and analyses;
- participatory sessions with partners and colleagues from relevant organizations;
- in-depth interviews with key stakeholders for food and nutrition security in Fiji.

A detailed list of participants and interviewees is provided in Appendix 1.

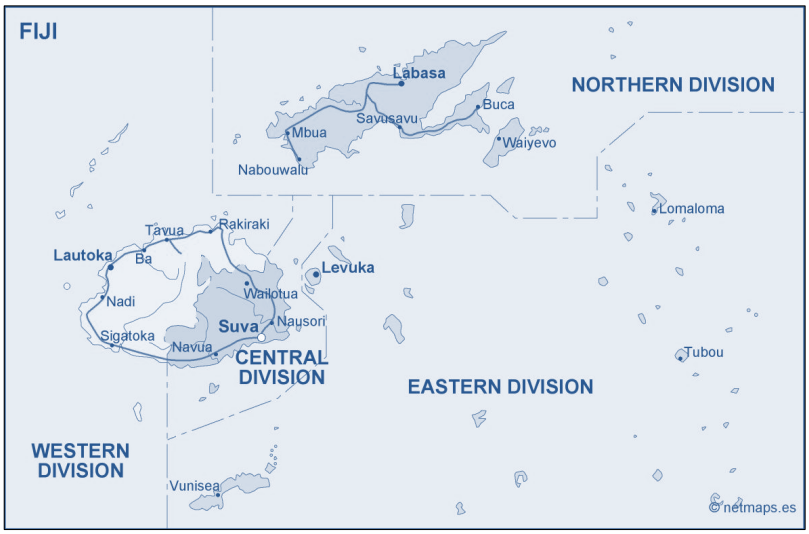
1. Food security, nutrition and poverty in Fiji: trends, patterns and prospects

What are the trends, geographical and socio-economic patterns, and prospects for eradicating food insecurity, malnutrition and poverty in the country? Key drivers of food insecurity, malnutrition and poverty.

1.1. Overview

Located in the South Pacific, Fiji has over 300 islands, just one-third of which are inhabited. The capital city, Suva, is located on Viti Levu, the largest and most developed island where 80 percent of the 884 887 inhabitants of Fiji live (2017 Population and Housing Census, Fiji Bureau of Statistics, 2018). The second largest island, Vanua Levu, is home to 15 percent of Fiji's inhabitants, while the remaining 5 percent is distributed around the small islands. Administratively, the country is split into four divisions, which are further divided into fourteen provinces. The central and western divisions are located in Viti Levu, the northern division is in Vanua Levu and the rest of the islands mostly belong to the eastern division.

FIGURE 1: MAP OF FIJI WITH DIVISIONS



The geography of Pacific countries poses a big challenge in terms of development, and Fiji is no exception. Distances between islands and both export and domestic markets are large. Low population densities impose difficulties in exploiting economies of scale. Vulnerabilities to climate change increase labour and transport costs, which narrows the gap between the cost of production and world prices in many important export markets (World Bank, 2009). These factors are even more critical in the most isolated regions, where more than 2 000 households live in the Rural and Outer Islands and the remote highland area in the interior of Viti Levu.

Fiji became a British colony in 1874 after it was ceded to Great Britain by a Fijian Chief, Ratu Seru Cakobau. In 1879, the first indentured labourers from India arrived to work on sugarcane plantations; after their term of service, many remained in Fiji. In October 1970, Fiji became independent from the British government and adopted a constitutional democratic form of

government based on the Westminster system. Democratic rule was interrupted by four military coups starting in 1987; the latest coup was in 2006. The first election of a democratic government was held in 2014 (8 years after the last coup) and the second election took place in 2018. The new nation's policymakers and planners had to confront a growth-distribution conflict with a potentially problematic ethnic dimension (Knapman, 1990)[1].

Today, Fiji is a multicultural society made up of two main ethnic groups, the iTaukei or indigenous Fijians, who make up about 57 percent of the total population, and Fijians of Indian descents who account for 37 percent. Traditionally, the iTaukei are still strongly bonded to their traditional and cultural ties, which are based on family and community. An iTaukei will belong to a village as part of a tokatoka (family unit), mataqali (clan) and yavusa (larger clan). Each village is headed by a chief who commands respect from the village members. A traditional chief directs village activities in the use of land, house building and fishing. The chief is also responsible for solving any village disputes on land or fishing ground. The village chief, with help from the village headman, will also ensure that all households plant enough root crops to meet their daily consumption needs. Households that do not respect the chief's decision will be admonished during the monthly village meetings. Fijians of Indian descents live in settlements, especially in rural areas, and have their own culture and traditions.

Faith plays a major role in Fijian lives and it has become a central aspect of their lifestyle. Sunday is a special day, reserved for worship and time spent with the family and community. The majority of the population is Christian (64 percent), followed by Hindu (28 percent), Muslim (6 percent) and other religions (2 percent). The Fijian constitution guarantees freedom of religion and there is a multifaith understanding within among members of society. People exhibit tolerance and respect for religious diversity, often celebrating the rituals and holidays of other religions. A person's religious affiliation largely correlates with their ethnicity, for example, most iTaukei are Christians, while Fijians of Indian descents are mostly Hindus or Muslims.

Issues around land are of major significance to the people of Fiji. There are three major land tenure types in Fiji: freehold land, state land and iTaukei Land. Freehold land, which can be purchased, transferred or leased, represents 6 percent of total land in Fiji. State land amounts to just 4 percent of the land in the country and is administered by the Department of Land of the Ministry of Land and Mineral Resources and made available on a leasehold basis. Finally, iTaukei Land represents almost 90 percent of total land and is held by the iTaukei according to their custom, as evidenced by usage and tradition (iTaukei Land Trust Board, 2018). Over 30 percent of this native land is classified as 'reserved' and can only be rented to iTaukei people and iTaukei entities such as churches and schools. Land is seen by indigenous Fijians as an ancestral trust that the present generation must pass over to future generations. They maintain a very strong cultural link with the land, which is their most valuable legacy.

The availability of land is a particular problem for Fijian farmers, especially when it comes to lease renewal. Most land on agriculture lease is for a period of 30 years and the vested authority is not with the Ministry of Agriculture, but with the iTaukei Land Trust Board, which controls all administration of iTaukei land in Fiji. The current government has made some

[1] In 1970, Fiji had 480 000 inhabitants and an export economy based on subsistence agriculture and a neo-traditional society (indigenous land-owning Fijians), with sugarcane as the principal export crop. Sugarcane was grown by the Indo-Fijian population on leased land; they also were prominent in small-scale commercial and service enterprises. Textile exports were also significant. (Knapman, 1990).

effort to address longstanding land issues through the establishment of the Committee on Better Utilization of Land (CBUL). The government decided to provide a subsidy to increase land rentals to landowners from 6 percent to 10 percent of the unimproved capital value (UCV) of the land, and this action seems to have paid some dividends in terms of increasing lease renewals (Shah et al., 2018).

According to Article 3 of the Inheritance (Family Provision) Act, men and women have equal rights to inherit and access land and non-land assets regardless of their marital status, nevertheless, customary forms of land tenure2 prevail and prevent equal access to men and women. Traditionally iTaukei land inheritance favours patriarchal lineage, excluding women from decision-making processes concerning iTaukei communal land in a context where freehold land is very scarce. As a result, land ownership by women is quite limited and law reform is a hugely difficult issue (Farran, 2015).

Land tenure also has an impact on women's opportunities and access to resources, because owning land facilitates the ability to register as a farmer, participate in agricultural programmes and have access to credits and other production factors. Women with land tenure are also entitled to a share of proceeds from the distribution of iTaukei land lease, however, this right is rarely recognized as it still requires permission from husbands or fathers (U.S. Department of State, 2016; CEDAW, 2015; ADB, 2015).

Over the past 20 years, the urban population in Fiji has grown rapidly and today more people reside in urban than in rural areas (where 44 percent of the population lived in 2017, in contrast with 70.3 percent in 1960). It is estimated that urban population will comprise about 60 percent of the total by 2030. Movements from rural areas to urban areas appear to be largely influenced by economic factors such as employment opportunities and the availability of improved transportation, which has also contributed to greater mobility. Table 1 shows trends in decreasing annual population growth rate, aging and urban population increase.

TABLE 1: AGE AND GEOGRAPHIC POPULATION STATISTICS FOR FIJI 1976-2017

Census Year	Population	Annual Growth Rate (%)	Median Age (years)	Urban	%	Rural	%
1976	588,068	2.1	17.8	218,495	37.2	369,573	62.8
1986	715,375	2.0	20.6	277,025	38.7	438,350	61.3
1996	775,077	0.8	21.2	359,495	46.4	415,582	53.6
2007	837,271	0.7	25.1	424,846	50.7	412,425	49.3
2017	884,887	0.6	27.5	494,252	55.9	390,635	44.1

Source: Fiji Housing and Population Census, Fiji Bureau of Statistics, 2017

Substantial progress in areas such as environment, economy and social development was negatively affected by the four coups d'état. However, in the past decade GDP has shown a positive trend (3 percent in 2010 and around 4.2 percent in 2017). The level of investment in 2015 was 26 percent of GDP, driven largely by private sector investment. This is above the average levels of 22 percent recorded in the 1970s and 25 percent in the years before 1987. An important aspect to be considered is the sustainability of these achievements, which might be jeopardized by an economic growth attained at the expense of the deployment of natural resources.

[2] Approximately 83 percent of land in Fiji is native (i-Taukei) land and belongs to *mataqali* (patrilineal clans). (ADB, 2015).

1.2. Fiji and the UN development goals

THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGS)

A 2014/15 report Making It Happen, jointly published by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB), assessed the state of progress on the MDGs, observing that Fiji had achieved a lot.

The country was considered an early achiever for MDG 1 (eradicate extreme poverty and hunger), measured as the proportion of people living on less than USD 1.25 per day (5.9 percent in 2009). Fiji was also an early achiever of MDG 2 (universal primary education) based on all indicators, and MDG 3 (promote gender equality and empower women) in terms of eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education. With regard to MDG 6 (combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases), Fiji was an early achiever in efforts to reduce TB incidence (24 per 100 000 in 2012) and prevalence (30 per 100 000 in 2012) and is on track to combat HIV prevalence (0.2 percent among ages 15-49 in 2013). Fiji was also an early achiever of several indicators related to MDG 7 (ensure environmental sustainability), especially regarding forest cover (55.5 percent land area in 2010) and proportion of terrestrial protected areas. Great progress has been also reported since 1990 on safe drinking water (from 94 to 98 percent in 2015 for urban populations and 80 to 89 percent for rural populations) and basic sanitation (from 85 to 96 percent for urban populations in 2015 and 37 to 95 percent for rural populations in 2015)3. These two indicators are particularly important, because the lack of access to these services is one of the underlying causes of malnutrition and poor health.[4]

The areas in which the country reported slow progress are: MDG 1, prevalence of underweight children under 5 (6.1 percent in 2004); MDG 4, reduce child mortality; and MDG 5, improve maternal health. The mortality rate for children under 5 was 14 per 1 000 live births in 2014, and 22.4 in 2012. The infant mortality rate was 19.1 per 1 000 live births in 2012; the maternal mortality was 59 per 1 000 live births in 2013 and 44 in 2014. Regarding the environment, the only indicator that showed no progress was the CO2 emissions per GDP as per 2010 data.

Other areas for improvement were mentioned in a previous country MDGs report (2010): reducing the prevalence of non-communicable diseases (NCDs; improving the lives of people living in informal settlements; empowering girls and women as active members of decision-making processes at all levels; and facilitating their access to professional positions. Despite the fact that, according to a country gender assessment report (Asian Development Bank, 2015), women are the majority attendees in Fijian universities (53 percent), they are still not able to attain well-paid technical professions. Another related and particularly worrisome issue is the high prevalence of gender-based violence and violence against children, which is related to cultural barriers and inaction (Green Growth Framework for Fiji, 2014).5 All these of factors

[3] WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme, 2017.
[4] This approach is based on the UNICEF conceptual framework for malnutrition, which considers three levels of malnutrition causes: immediate, underlying and basic.
[5] According to a country gender assessment conducted by the Asian Development Bank in 2015, physical and sexual violence against women (VAW) in Fiji is widespread. Based on research conducted in 2011, the cost of VAW to Fiji represented up to 7 percent of Fiji's gross domestic product (GDP) in that year. According to the same study, the situation is worse for women living in remote or island communities, since they remain unaware of their legal rights (CGA, ADB, 2015). (World Bank, 2012)

remain relevant according to the consultations made during this diagnostic.

THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS)

The 5-Year & 20-Year National Development Plan (NDP) for Fiji is a development framework with policies and strategies developed by the Ministry of Economy in 2017. It acknowledges that Inclusive socioeconomic development is essential to further improve the living standards of Fijians and that the successful implementation of the overall strategy will support the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Moreover, when defining key national development targets for the next 20 years, with intermediate measurements every five years up to 2036, there is an 82 percent alignment with SDG targets (34 out of a total of 41 national targets).

The SDGs are addressed in several strategic frameworks and sectoral policies, showing the commitment of the country to the United Nations agenda. The two main policies considered in this diagnostic are no exception. The final draft of the Fiji Policy for Food and Nutrition Security (FPFNS) recognizes that addressing food and nutrition security is essential for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 and that "nutrition contributes directly to SDG2 and SDG3 and is also an enabler for the rest of the 15 SDGs." The Strategic Development Plan of the Ministry of Agriculture 2018-2022 and its Costed Annual Operational Plan for 2018-2019 are centred on five Strategic Priorities. Each priority is aligned to the Sustainable Development Goals and the National Development Plan.

Finally, Fiji's Parliament has initiated activities to strengthen its support for the promotion, implementation and monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals. A 2017 self-assessment report, prepared with the support of UNDP, indicated that members of Parliament (MPs) have no access to reliable data and information, making their ability to monitor SDGs implementation difficult due to the absence of baselines. The report pointed out other key factors needed to improve Fijian support for the 2030 agenda, including better understanding of the SDGs in parliament; mainstreaming the SDGs within parliamentary mechanisms; strengthening institutional capacities, structures and processes; and developing new avenues of collaboration between the government and external stakeholders. To ensure the impacts of gender-related activities, Parliament should consider identifying male MP champions and systematically include men in gender-related activities (Parliament of Fiji, 2017).

1.3. Economy and the agriculture sector

The Fijian economy has been largely based on its natural resources to support agriculture, and particularly sugar cane production, tuna longline industry and forestry as key elements for its development together with the textile and tourism industry. Fiji is poised to continue expansion for the tenth consecutive year after an estimated growth of 4.2 percent in 2018 and a forecasted growth of 2.7 percent in 2019 (Reserve Bank of Fiji, 2019). The government estimates that the incidence of poverty declined from 31.0 percent in 2008–2009 to 28.1 percent in 2013–2014, with rural poverty rates coming down, from 43 to 36.7 percent but urban poverty rates rising from 18 to 20.3 percent during the same period (Fiji Bureau of Statistics, 2015). Detailed information on the evolution of urban and rural poverty rates by division is provided in Table 2 below.

TABLE 2: EVOLUTION OF URBAN AND RURAL POVERTY RATES BY DIVISION

Division	Urban	Rural

	2008-09	2013-14	2008-09	2013-14
Central	16%	16.9%	36%	36.9%
Western	17%	21.6%	43%	26.6%
Northern	38%	33.8%	51%	52.6%
Eastern	---	---	40%	42.1%

Source: Fiji Bureau of Statistics, 2015.

Income inequality in Fiji is comparable to that in some East Asian Countries, with higher inequality in rural areas than in urban areas (World Bank, 2014). The unemployment rate was at 5.5 percent in 2015-2016 (7.2 percent in urban and 3.7 percent in rural areas), while the youth unemployment rate was 18.1 percent (21.6 percent in urban, and 14.0 percent in rural areas) (Fiji Bureau of Statistics, 2016). As noted, economic growth has been the main driver of this poverty reduction, together with the contributions of labour income and remittances (World Bank, 2017).

Agriculture is the backbone of Fiji's economy and contributes around 28 percent to total employment (without including fisheries) in the formal sector, and indirectly employs many more people (Investment Fiji, 2018). Fisheries and aquaculture contribute 1.8 percent to the National GDP (unpublished data, Fiji Bureau of Statistics, 2014). The agriculture sector, which is composed of sugar and non-sugar crops and livestock, contributes 8 percent to GDP, a significant decline since the 1990's. From this number only 0.6 percent correspond to sugarcane, reverting the former sugar sector leading contribution.

The sugar sector, which played a critical role in Fiji's economic development, has contributed significantly to the declining growth in the agriculture sector over the past few years, due to challenges related to commercial viability, industry competitiveness and sustainability (Sugar Industry Stakeholder Action Group, 2012). Fiji's sugar industry has a unique structure that combines a large number of small farmers with individual plots under lease according to the Sugar Master Act, which lays out the responsibilities and duties of all industry stakeholders (World Bank, 2014). Despite the sector downturn, sugar remains very important for Fiji, both as an export commodity able to generate foreign currency returns, and as a labour-intensive operation with a huge multiplier effect (OXFAM, 2005). Not only sugar farmers, but also cutters, transporters, mill workers, etc. depend directly or indirectly on sugar for their livelihoods. According to the Fiji Sugar Corporation, the total number of active sugar farmers in 2017, most of which were Indo-Fijians, was 1 .871, 15 percent less than a decade ago (14 096 farmers in 2008). During the same period, the amount of sugar produced decreased by almost 18 percent, from 208 000 to 180 000 tonnes, and benefits before taxation decreased substantially during the same period, from FJD 40 million in 2009 to FJD 24.6 million in 2017. Changes in EU market access,6 where almost 90 percent of the production is sold, have undermined earnings from the sugar industry as well as its competitiveness in international markets, issues that are being addressed through ongoing governmental reforms. Other markets are the United States of America and, more recently, the Republic of South Korea.

The Ministry of Sugar Industry (MoSI) assists sugarcane farmers in the sugar belt area. This assistance includes funding to improve cane access roads, subsidies for fertilizers, weedicide and transport to the mill, a small grant scheme for irrigation and support for the use of machinery (Fiji Sugar Corporation, 2018). In the light of the decrease in sugarcane production, many sugar farmers have started to engage in additional income-generating activities, some of

[6] Under the sugar protocol reform, from 2017 onwards production quotas were abolished and export subsidies were set at zero. Fijian exporters receive the same treatment as European producers.

them related to crops and livestock, although there is a lack of information as to how much these contribute to total income.

Other factors affecting agriculture growth have included political instability and inconsistent public-sector support, the occurrence of disasters related to natural hazards and pest and disease outbreaks, export trade restrictions and the inability to cope with trade liberalization. For two decades after independence, the Fijian Government operated an import substitution policy focusing on support for growing local foods to replace imports. The imports were restricted by high tariffs, licenses or quotas to help local growers attain domestic food self-sufficiency. Later, during the 1990s, the government directed its policies to deregulation and initiated export-led growth.

The agriculture sector (including fisheries) continues to make a significant contribution to economic growth and remains an important source of livelihoods, income and employment in Fiji. Rural communities rely heavily on subsistence agriculture, since other economic opportunities outside the sector are limited. However, population increase, along with the rising demand for food and over-exploitation of natural resources, have been the main factors hindering the sectoral capacity to ensure food security for the population (Green Growth Framework for Fiji, 2014). In addition, the SDP 2019-2023 states that the agriculture trade balance, measured in volume, has followed a decreasing trend in contrast with the increasing trend of the value of trade.

Fiji is relatively self-sufficient in key commodities, such as chicken (20 428 tons in 2012) and pork (1 180 tons in 2012), which are generally supplied at much higher prices than their imported alternatives (Green Growth Framework for Fiji, 2014). The main food imports are wheat, rice (mainly from Thailand, Vietnam and Australia to supplement local production), vegetables, potatoes and fruits. In 2015, just 32 percent of the country's food was sourced domestically. Net trade shows negative values for all food categories (cereals, fruits and vegetables, meat and dairy products), with the exception of fish. The value of food exports was USD 148 million and food imports were USD 291 million in 2016 excluding fish. The value of fisheries imports was USD 83.9 million and value of fisheries exports 63.5 USD million (FAO FishStat, 2016). In the overall imports of the country, food import component reached to 6.9 percent of GDP in 2013 and shows an ever-increasing trend. A large portion of these imports can be attributed to Fiji's tourism sector due to increasing demands from hotels and restaurants.

Farmer associations have been supported by the Ministry of Agriculture through concrete programmes related to some commodities (e.g. by supplying vegetables to hotels through contract farming) or livestock products such as dairy or meat. In addition, national associations have been supported by the Fiji Crops and Livestock Council (FCLC), the representative body of Fiji's agriculture private sector, since 2010. Thirteen commodity associations exist for pigs, yaqona[7], grazing livestock, dairy, taro, cocoa, ginger, rice, beekeepers, fruit and vegetables, organics, spices, coconut producers/millers plus the Fiji Food Exporter Association. FCLC is a member of the Pacific Island Farmers Organisation Network (PIFON).

Women are just 3.6 percent of the agricultural holders in Fiji (National Agricultural Census,

[7] More commonly known as kava, yaqona is an indigenous plant that has been long used by Pacific Island cultures for its pleasant relaxation effect. An export market for kava exists and is expected to grow exponentially in the United States of America, New Zealand and Kiribati, partly due to the large Pacific Island communities there. Kava has become one of Fiji's largest agricultural export earners, after sugar, dalo, cassava and ginger.

2009). This figure does not reflect women's actual participation in agriculture and is related to the way in which information is collected, accounting just for the head of the household, which is traditionally the man. Likewise, there is a lack of sex-disaggregated information on the members of farmer organizations, although it seems that in many cases they are segregated by sex. This rationale has substantial implications for women in terms of having an equal and common platform for dialogue and decision-making and also in terms of their access to services and assets (land, credit, water, training etc.). From a social perspective, women have neither the opportunity to work and negotiate under the same conditions as men, nor to gain social recognition.

TABLE 3: FEMALE AND MALE FARMERS

Total farmer household heads		
Male farmers	62 463	96.4 %
Female farmers	2 326	**3.6 %**
Total agriculture workers		
Male workers	161 081	74.8 %
Female workers	54 355	**25.2 %**
Remuneration of agriculture labour		
Male Paid workers	61 640	38.3%
Male without remuneration	99 441	61.7%
Female paid workers	14 400	26.5%
Female without remuneration	39 955	73.5%

Source: MoA Agriculture Census, 2009.

Different studies highlight the diverse roles that men and women play in agriculture. In general, women are more involved in food gardens (tubers and vegetable production) and men in larger-scale plantation agriculture and cash crops. In addition, there are also differences in tasks performed. Men usually do the land clearing and fencing, while women are more involved in planting and weeding. Agricultural employment is mostly informal with 57 percent of employed men and 64 percent of women holding informal-sector jobs, such as subsistence farmers (growing vegetables, taro, coconuts, cassava etc.), sugar cane growers, and house cleaners (ADB, 2015). Paid female farm worker numbers suggest that there are inequalities regarding access to formal employment. However, no data about sex differences in salaries are available.

Inshore fisheries are key to the food and nutrition security of Fijian population as a main source of protein. Fish consumption is high, particularly in rural communities, with a national average of 35.6 kg (live weight equivalent) per capita and year (FAO FishStat, 2017). Due to tourism, there is also an increase in demand for fresh fish by hotels, restaurants and supermarkets. Sustainable management of these resources, which are at risk because of overfishing, habitat destruction and climate change, is essential.

Based on previous studies, FAO estimates that in 2014 there were 9 000 full time artisanal coastal fishers and 3 000 coastal subsistence fishers in Fiji. Men tend to be involved in full time deep-sea fishing, while women work in inshore fisheries and seafood gathering. A 2009 survey of artisanal fisheries found that women work as full-time, seasonal or casual fishers; the survey also learned that women in artisanal fisheries earned relatively low incomes (ADB, 2015). They mostly collect two types of seaweeds (Caulerpa racemosa or sea grapes and Gracilaria locally known as nama and lumi respectively) that are very popular in the Fijian diet, as well as crabs, sea urchins and other species available on a seasonal basis.

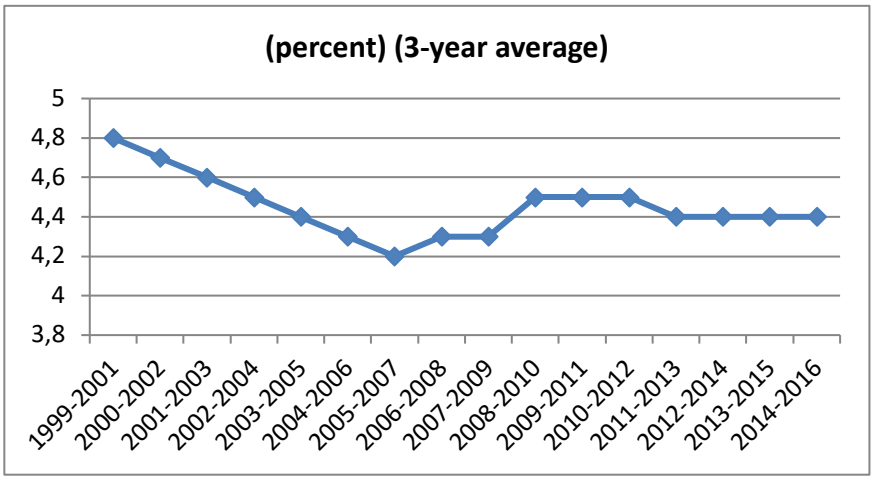
In 2014, 3 667 Fijians were employed in the tuna industry, representing 20.8 percent of regional tuna employment (Forum Fisheries Agency, 2015). While there are few recent studies about women's participation in the fish processing industry, one report found that women made up 64 percent of the total workforce in fish processing companies in 2001. The report noted that the Pacific Fishing Company in Levuka, where the main activities are loin processing and fish canning for local and overseas markets, is the only large-scale processing plant in Fiji whose employees are mostly women (P. Demmke, 2006). Nevertheless, a brief look at the organizational structure of the company on its webpage showed that 100 percent of its current managers are men.

1.4. Food and nutrition security

1.4.1. FOOD SECURITY

As seen in Figure 2, the proportion of the population whose habitual food consumption is insufficient to provide the dietary energy needed to maintain an active and healthy life seems to have stagnated over the past few years.

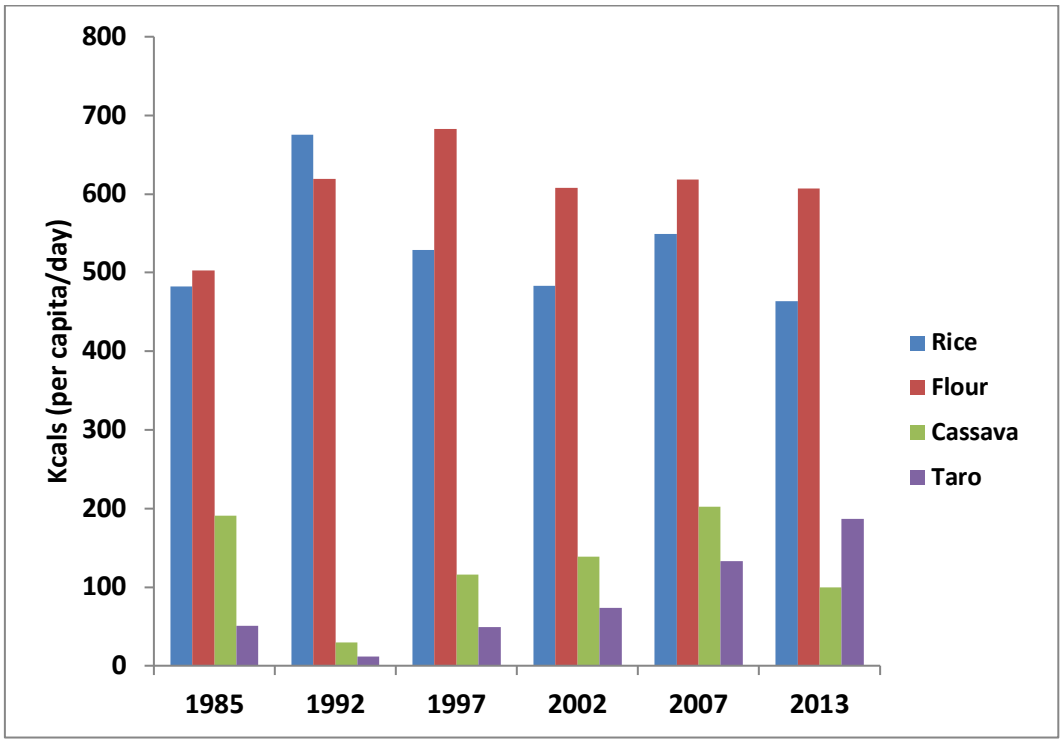
FIGURE 2. PREVALENCE OF UNDERNOURISHMENT.



Source: http://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#country/66.

Fiji appears to be food secure in terms of food availability. Yet in the last decade, the country has found it necessary to import more than half of the food needed to meet local demand. In 2010, only 31 percent of total food available was sourced domestically (NFNC, 2010). An analysis of trends in food availability over the past three decades show that more cereals (rice and flour) are locally available for consumption than root crops (taro and cassava).

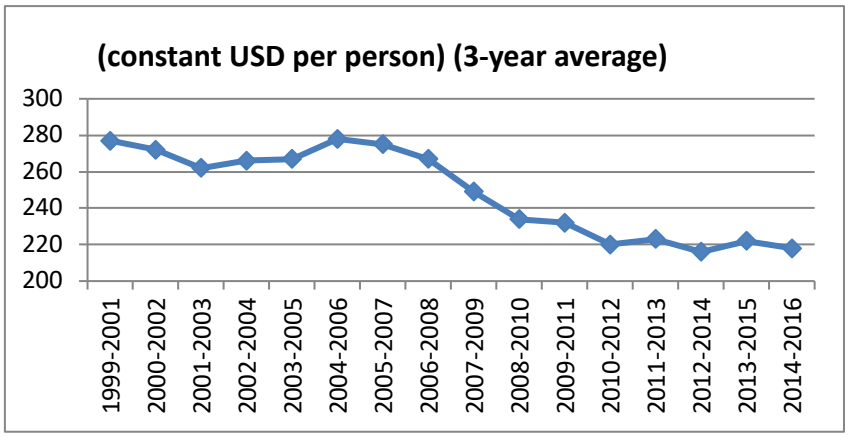
FIGURE 3. TRENDS IN FOOD AVAILABILITY



Source: FAO Food Balance Sheet, 2013; Food Balance Sheet, NFNC, 2010.

The availability of root crops declined after 1985, with an increase starting in 1997. This rise could be a result of the government's policy support for export-led growth in the 1990s, among other factors, which has meant a continuous increase in the value of goods and services produced domestically and compensation for the growing value of imports. However, as Figure 4 shows, a decreasing trend in the value of food production per person from almost USD 280 in 2001 to USD 218 in 2016, has pushed farmers to produce more high value (non-food) crops such as yaqona. Most of these producers are small-scale farmers8 working on their own and facing poor access to markets, high production costs, lack of transportation, climate change, urbanization and unsecured access to land.

FIGURE 4. AVERAGE VALUE OF FOOD PRODUCTION.



[8] Small-scale farmers in Fiji are defined as farmers whose annual income per year is below FJD 6 000. Semi-commercial farmers earn between 6 000 and 10 000 FJD a year, and commercial farmers earn more than 10 000 FJD a year. This definition was obtained through interviews and discussions with different senior management officers in the MoA but it is not recorded in any official report. This appears to be a concept under review, which could change slightly in the near future.

Source. http://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#country/66.

The consumption of roots and tubers has also fallen during the last three to four decades, mainly because urban populations have found it cheaper to buy imported cereal products, which are easier to store, last longer, are more convenient, available and accessible (NFNC, 2015). There is a clear pattern showing that more energy (kcal) is increasingly derived from imported cereals as compared to local staples (e.g. cassava and dalo).

TABLE 4. CONTRIBUTION FROM VARIOUS IMPORTED FOOD TYPES TO ENERGY INTAKE

Year	Total calories per head population per day	Percent energy contribution of imported macronutrients, vegetables and fruits				
		percent kcal	percent protein	percent fat	percent vegetables	percent fruit
1985	2819	42	52	46	40	13
2000	2968	56	59	63	57	18
2005	3663	58	59	59	55	36
2010	3548	69	68	73	62	38

Source: Food Balance Sheet, NFNC, 2010

Food affordability, especially for the poor, is threatened by rising prices, which have an enormous impact on household diets and dietary outcomes. Price inflation means that households are forced to make their purchasing decisions based mainly on economic factors.

Figure 5 shows an increase in GDP per capita from USD 6 673.8 in 2000 to USD 8 703 in 2017, a positive trend inferring that households will spend more income on food and other goods and services as they get wealthier. However, a more detailed analysis would show that the poorest households still spend a relatively large proportion of their income on food. Furthermore, the improvement in earnings and living standards over the last decade in the context of international trade liberalization seems to be the main reason for changes in dietary patterns to a more cereal-based diet and the consumption of more sugary and salty foods. Most imported products, are nutritionally poorer than local foods but are often cheaper and easier to prepare, making the promotion of healthy diets a continuous challenge.

FIGURE 5. GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT PER CAPITA.

Source. http://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#country/66.

Hygiene is a key determinant for food utilization by the body and data shows that there has been an increase since 2000 of the percentage of the population using basic sanitation services (from 71 to 95 percent in rural areas, and from 91 to 96 percent in urban areas). However, rates for basic drinking water services remained at almost the same level: 89 percent for rural and 98 for urban areas (WHO/UNICEF JMP, 2017).

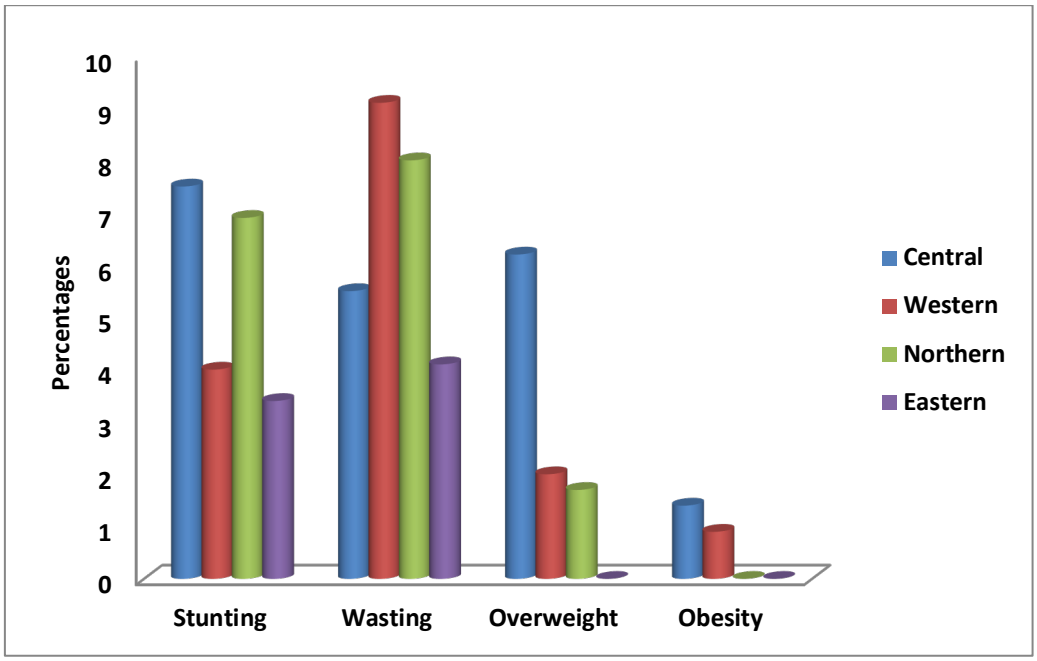
Food stability is threatened by the seasonality of fruits and vegetables throughout the year. This has a clear impact on people's diets. Fruits such as mandarins and mangoes are seasonal and, when in season, are cheap and accessible to every household, especially in rural areas where they are widely grown and freely available. The case is similar for most vegetables. The off-season prices of fruits and vegetables may increase significantly, making them unaffordable for a majority of the population.

It is important to recognize the impacts of cyclone, drought and floods, which have severely affected most cropping areas and food availability, especially in the Western and Northern divisions of Fiji. Food prices, especially for fruits, vegetables and root crops, increase rapidly after disasters, thus making it nearly impossible for low income earners to consume fresh foods daily. This was evident after Tropical Cyclone Winston, a category 5 cyclone, hit the country in 2016. The prices of local fruits and vegetables doubled, while the cost of root crops almost tripled after that event and remained at almost the same level up to twelve months following the cyclone.

1.4.2. NUTRITION

According to the National Nutrition Survey (NNS), NFNC 2015, which collected data from 45 sites around the country, malnutrition is still a major problem in Fiji. There has been little change in nutrition indicators from all the categories with respect to 2004-5 (see Appendix 2, Change in Nutrition Indicators, for more details).

FIGURE 6. NUTRITIONAL STATUS BY DIVISION FOR CHILDREN UNDER 5.



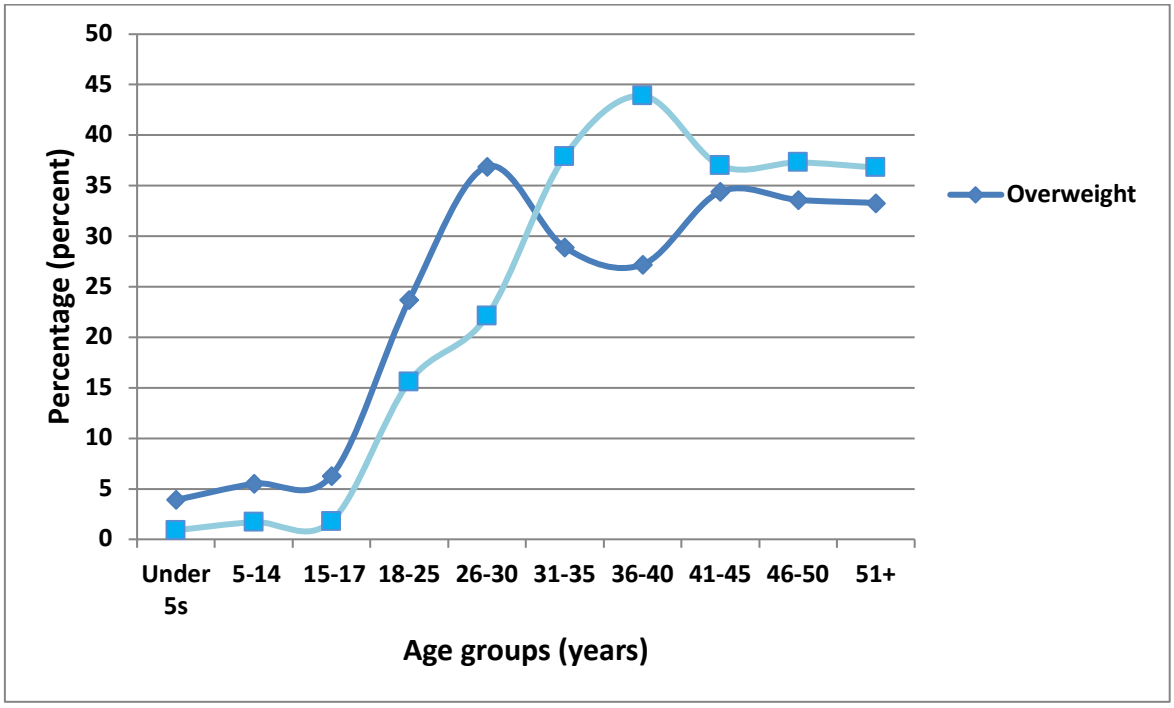
Source: NNS, NFNC 2015

Underweight, stunting and wasting among children under 5 years persist according to a recent survey: 6.1 percent of young children were underweight and 7 percent wasted (mostly boys: 7.7 percent and typically in rural areas 8.2 percent), while stunting was 6.2 percent for children of the same age group (observed mostly in boys from urban areas). The survey found 8.3 percent of children under 5 years were born underweight (< 2.5kg), while 12.7 percent were

born with high weight (≥ 4kg). The underweight children were mostly girls, while overweight was found more in boys. Both problems were more prevalent in children from rural areas. Among primary school-aged children (5-14 years), 3.6 percent were stunted (mostly girls) and 8 percent wasted (mostly boys); both problems affect children in rural areas particularly. Similarly, 3.8 percent of secondary school children (15-17 years) were stunted and 6 percent wasted. Stunting and wasting were found more in boys and in children living in rural areas.

Overweight and obesity are a major problem in Fiji, and both increase with age, from 4.8 percent in children under 5 years, 7.2 percent in 5 to 14 years and 8.1 percent in 15 to 17 years to 63 percent in adults 18 years and above. The reason for the massive jump in the adult category may be due to the wide range of ages included in this group. Obese people in the over-18 category were found to comprise mostly women (71 percent, in comparison with 59 percent of men) from urban areas (70.6 percent). In addition to biological factors, discussions with stakeholders on indicated the view that women may gain more weight due to having children, taking care of other members of the family and eating the household 'leftovers,' coupled with more sedentary habits related to their reproductive roles.

FIGURE 7: OVERWEIGHT AND OBESITY BY AGE GROUP



Micronutrient deficiency (anaemia)9 is a widespread problem affecting all age groups, and it has increased since the last survey was conducted ten years ago. Anaemia affects both men and women, especially in rural areas. Children under 5 years have the highest prevalence at 63.1 percent, with 45 percent in children aged 5-14 years, 43.5 percent for 15-17 years and 40.1 percent in adults of 18 years and older. Forty percent of pregnant women were also

[9] Although iron deficiency is probably the most common reason for anaemia, other causes include acute and chronic infections that result in inflammation and haemorrhages; deficiencies of other vitamins and minerals, especially folate, vitamin B12 and vitamin A; and genetically inherited traits, such as thalassaemia. Other conditions (malaria and other infections, genetic disorders, cancer) also play a role. The terms 'iron-deficiency anaemia' and 'anaemia' are often used interchangeably, and the prevalence of anaemia has often been used as a proxy for iron-deficiency anaemia, although the degree of overlap between the two varies considerably from one population to another according to gender and age.

found to be anaemic. The prevalence of over 40 percent in considered to be a severe public health problem by WHO standards.

The NNS report (2015) was prepared by a consultant; only the summary has been published so far. For this diagnostic, access was granted to the raw data in order to further analyse the most representative nutrition indicators (stunting, wasting, overweight, obesity and anaemia), with an emphasis on main differences by age group, ethnicity and geographically (four divisions within the two main islands and the outer islands). A detailed analysis involved a series of discussions with key stakeholders from the health, education and agriculture sectors to consider the reasons behind the key findings. It is our hope that this data will be useful in informing new policies and strategies from various sectors, particularly in terms of targeting future FNS interventions.

TABLE 5. NUTRITIONAL STATUS BY ISLANDS AND DIVISIONS– 2015 NATIONAL NUTRITION SURVEY (NFNC, 2015)

Age group	Islands	Divisions	Stunting (percent)	Wasting (percent)	Overweight (percent)		Obesity (percent)		Anaemia (percent)	
					Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Under 5s	Viti Levu	Total C&W	6.1	6.9	4.5		1.2		62	64
		Central (C)	7.5	5.5	6.2		1.4		63.8	58.3
		Western (W)	4.0	9.1	2.0		0.9		59.2	72.7
	Vanua Levu	Northern	6.9	8.0	1.7		0.0		62	72
	Outer Islands	Eastern	3.4	4.1	0.0		0.0		50	53
5-14	Viti Levu	Total C&W	2.7	-	5.7		2.1		50	38
		Central (C)	1.4	-	5.9		2.3		52.6	41.6
		Western (W)	4.4	-	5.6		1.7		46.2	32.5
	Vanua Levu	Northern	5.4	-	5.1		0.7		53	50
	Outer Islands	Eastern	9.4	-	2.9		0.0		42	52
15-17	Viti Levu	Total C&W	3.7	-	6.2		2.4		46	40
		Central (C)	3.6	-	5.7		2.5		32.5	40.1
		Western (W)	3.8	-	6.9		2.3		63.9	38.9
	Vanua Levu	Northern	3.6	-	8.5		0		39	48
	Outer Islands	Eastern	8.1	-	0		0		59	55
Adults (18+)	Viti Levu	Total C&W	-	-	29.1	34.1	43.7	24.0	47	31
		Central (C)	-		27.5	38.1	49.4	28.4	42.2	28.3
		Western (W)	-		30.9	30.2	36.9	19.8	54.2	33.0
	Vanua Levu	Northern	-	-	28.8	27.4	36.0	15.1	52	39
	Outer Islands	Eastern	-	-	21.2	44.4	52.6	15.3	37	43

There is evidence to suggest significant nutritional differences between the big islands (Vanua Levu and Viti Levu) which encompass the Central, Western and Northern divisions and the rural outer islands (found in the Eastern division).

Most of the population of Fiji lives in the Central and Western divisions in Viti Levu, where there is good infrastructure, urban areas with lots of informal settlements, limited land availability for planting, high food prices (especially for fresh foods), higher consumption of processed foods, and sedentary lifestyles. Nutritional problems, such as anaemia, overweight and obesity, are highly prevalent in these two divisions. The Northern division in Vanua Levu – with limited infrastructure and very remote and rural areas – has its fair share of nutritional problems but is still slightly better off than the island of Viti Levu.

The Eastern division consists of small scattered islands, some of which are only accessible by boat monthly or every two months; the inhabitants do not enjoy the same lifestyle as on the two main islands. They have less access to processed foods and consume more fresh foods.

Fish and seafood are a staple diet in these islands with a lot of fresh local vegetables (taro leaves and bele,10) wild fruits and root crops. However, as accessibility to the mainland has increased recently, the islanders in the Eastern division have started to introduce processed foods into their diet.

The 2015 NNS confirmed that the Eastern division performed much better in stunting (3.4 percent) and wasting (4.1 percent) indicators for under 5 children, considered as low prevalence by WHO standards, while the numbers in Viti Levu and Vanua Levu, where most of the population lives, were considerably higher, with pockets of higher wasting rates registered in the Northern and Western divisions. In most of these areas, a 5-9 percent prevalence of wasting is considered a poor public nutrition situation by WHO standards. The highest rate (9.1 percent) of wasting in children under 5 was found in the Western division, mostly in the province of Nadroga, which is prone to disasters such as droughts, floods and cyclones. Finally, overweight and obesity in children of all ages are almost non-existent in the rural outer islands, while these are big problems in the Central division.

This analysis is consistent with urban and rural differences in the consumption of imported fruits and vegetables as reflected in the 2015 NNS. Imported fruits and vegetables were consumed less frequently in rural areas due to accessibility. Local fruits, such as guava, mango and bananas, were consumed more often in the rural areas where these are grown wild, while urban dwellers have to buy these fruits. There was not much difference in the consumption patterns of most common local vegetables, such as bele and rourou (dalo or taro leaves), between urban and rural areas.

The iTaukei have big physical builds compared to Fijians of Indian descent. Differences were also observed for overweight and obesity in these two major groups. The ITaukei group were more overweight and obese at under 5 years than were their Indo-Fijians counterparts. The Indo-Fijians became more overweight and obese only at the age of 5 to 17 years, but from 18 years onward, the ITaukei were way ahead in all age groups (see Appendix 3 for more details). Fiji uses the WHO BMI assessment criteria to measure overweight and obesity since there are no local standards. Some sources have argued (NNS, 1993, WHO, 2000; Dancause et al., 2010) for the need for culturally-specific standards.

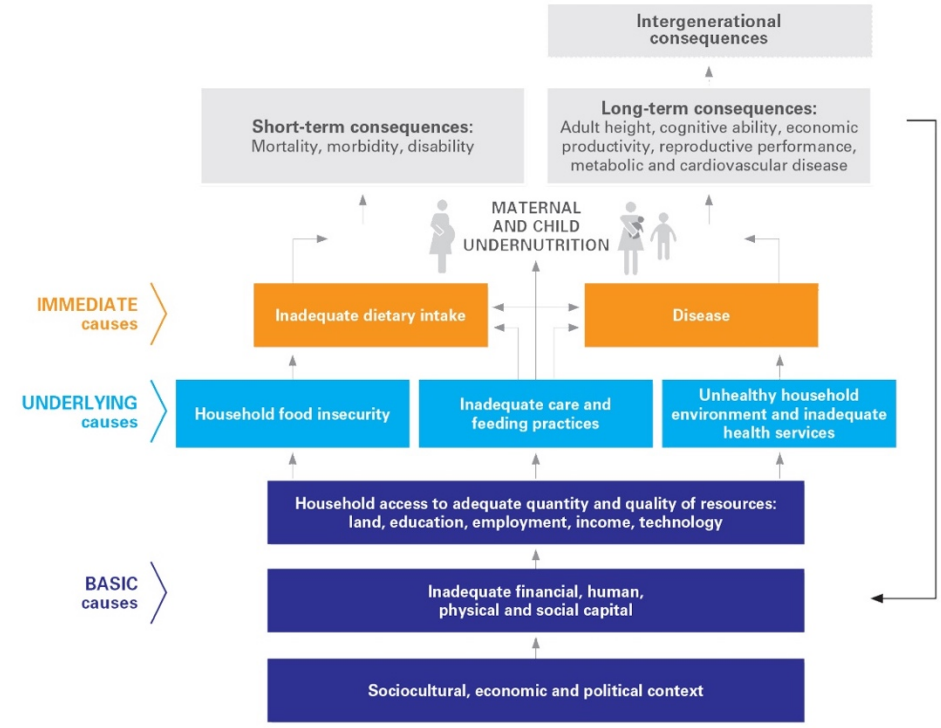
The non-communicable diseases associated with high prevalence of overweight and obesity already cause 80 percent of deaths in Fiji and those numbers are growing (MoH, 2018). Although prevalence of diabetes (13.2 percent for men and 16.4 percent for women) seems to be decreasing, there has been a 40 percent increase in mortality from cardiovascular disease (Lobstein, Baur and Uauy, 2004). Nowadays, cardiovascular diseases are the leading cause of death in Fiji. Amputation, a common complication from diabetic sepsis, is the reason for the large number of disabled people in the country. This situation disproportionately affects women, especially those living in more rural remote areas with poor health services, since they are responsible for caring for children, the elderly and disabled people. This represents a lot of extra work for women, in addition to their multiple agricultural chores.

1.5. Key drivers for food insecurity, malnutrition and poverty

This section follows the *conceptual framework* on the causes of malnutrition that was developed in 1990 as part of the UNICEF nutrition strategy. It includes linkages with food insecurity (underlying causes) and poverty drivers (basic causes).

[10] Indigenous green vegetable, also known as slippery cabbage.

FIGURE 8. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK ON THE CAUSES OF MALNUTRITION ADAPTED FROM UNICEF.



The black arrows show that the consequences of undernutrition can feed back to the underlying and basic causes of undernutrition, perpetuating the cycle of undernutrition, poverty and inequities.

Source: Adapted from UNICEF, 1990.

1.5.1. IMMEDIATE CAUSES

Trends observed between 2004 and 2010 and recorded on the Fiji Food Based Sheets (FBS) show that dietary energy has increased to more than 50 percent of the recommended standards. Data on energy intake indicates that there has been a slight shift from a vegetable-based diet to a more animal origin diet. The consumption of fruits and vegetables has deceased to the point where less than 20 percent of households now report having fruits or vegetables on a daily basis. There has been an upward trend in protein availability from animal origin foods over the years. More Fijian households are consuming rice (51 percent) as compared to traditional crops, such as cassava (22 percent), on a daily basis. The consumption of fat has almost doubled in the past two decades, and is a matter of serious concern in nutritional terms. According to the NNS 2015, iodized salt is the main source of sodium in the diet; mixed foods of fish and sea foods are the main sources of fat, and 9 out of 10 households report using added sugar daily.

These changes in the Fijian diet, coupled with increasingly sedentary lifestyles have contributed to the poor nutrition situation in the country, with rampant rates of obesity and NCDs that are among the highest in the world and affect mostly women in urban areas. These conclusions are consistent with a recent study by the University of Sydney (2017), which also links poor diets to NCDs and micronutrient deficiency: only 1 in 7 Fijians eat enough fruit and vegetables, and 60 percent of children have sugary drinks daily. Discretionary foods (e.g. confectionary, snacks and sweet beverages) are only 9 percent of daily food intake but make a higher contribution to NCD risk: 16 percent of calories, 25 percent of fat and 20 percent of salt. They tend to be inexpensive, and do not provide essential nutrition.

According to nutrition officers, Fiji's relative lack of success in combating micronutrient deficiencies, despite past fortification efforts, may be due to a lack of knowledge and information, for example concerning the correct balance of micronutrients to use when fortifying flour, and the specific malnutrition problems affecting different areas and populations. This lack of knowledge has hampered the correct targeting of nutrition programmes, which in turn has had a negative effect on their impact. Another factor hindering the efficiency of nutrition programmes has been the lack of coordination with deworming programmes, which were not always timely interventions and did not target all of the affected population. As will be explained below, inadequate feeding practices (such as, for example, drinking tea with meals, which seems to reduce iron absorption) and lack of proper water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) conditions have played a role as well.

1.5.2. UNDERLYING CAUSES

Gender inequalities, unhealthy household environments, inadequate health services, and insufficient care and feeding practices, together with the food system's inability to produce healthy and affordable diets are underlying causes of food insecurity and malnutrition in Fiji.

Gender inequalities in access to and control of resources, income flows, and opportunities hinder better nutritional results throughout the food system. Although women play a key role in nutrition due to their traditional responsibilities for the household, they will never be able to reach their full potential as long as such inequalities exits. Inequalities are rooted in the social norms that define gender roles in the country.

As previously discussed, land ownership by women is quite limited. Furthermore, iTaukei women in rural areas are often limited by Fijian traditional customs in marriage. Once married, an iTaukei women moves from her father's to her husband's village. During the wedding ceremony, her family presents a tabua (whale's tooth) to her husband's family, asking them to take good care of her. Once her husband dies, her family will present another tabua to the family, requesting her return to her father's home. This illustrates women's lifelong dependency on men, firstly, their father, then their husband, then, once they become widows, they depend on the goodwill of the male line in the father's family (CEDAW, 2015; U.S Department of State, 2016; ADB, 2015).

Violence against women and girls is widespread in Fiji; with 66 percent of women have experienced physical abuse. This is a major violation of human rights, which tends to escalate after natural disasters and military coups. Other aspects to take into account in terms of inequality are women's lack of participation in the formal labour market,11 as well as their representation in rural organizations.

According to the latest report of the WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme in 2017, Fiji's access to clean and safe drinking water in 2015 was 89 percent in rural areas compared to 98 percent in urban areas. Basic sanitation services were around 95 percent in rural and 96 percent in urban areas. While there has been a clear improvement, efforts are still required to meet basic needs of water and sanitation for all, especially of drinking water in the rural areas.

Fiji still faces challenges in health service delivery, despite some progress over the past decades. The health system urgently needs to change to address the growing burden of NCDs,

[11] Women account for around one-third of the country's labour force, but number of unemployed people is almost the same for women and men, resulting in a much higher female unemployment rate (Fiji Bureau of Statistics, 2015).

which in 2011 accounted for 40 percent of all healthcare disease costs. This number will likely continue to rise in the near future. In response, the Ministry of Health developed a five-year Strategic Plan 2016-2020 to provide strategic direction for healthcare, including cross-cutting issues such as gender, poverty and urbanization. The plan is based around two strategic pillars: the delivery of health services to the population; and systems strengthening to improve overall health sector performance. The main challenge here is to achieve multisectoral collaboration and recognition of the fact that health and wellness are a collective responsibility.

With regard to care and feeding practices, breastfeeding practices for infants have shown improvements, according to the 2015 NNS. Exclusive breastfeeding rates for children under 6 months increased from 46 percent in 2004 to 49 percent in 2015, while early initiation of breastfeeding for children under 24 months improved from 52 percent in 2004 to 85 percent in 2015. These figures improved thanks to the Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) that was introduced in Fiji since 2008, however, numbers became stagnant after all the hospitals were declared BFHI in 2009. The two main problems encountered in implementing the BFHI were that: i). hospitals failed to refresh BFHI training every two years (as per WHO recommendations); and ii). mothers were not provided with contacts of health care persons. So, users of BFHI have not taken full advantage of the promotional work undertaken by the Ministry of Health and Medical Services over the years. The NNS also found that 22 percent of children between 6-23 months met the criteria for 'minimum acceptable diet,' which are well below the expectation for adequate or appropriate nutrition for this age group and reflective of poor infant and young child feeding in Fiji.

Food systems that do not support healthy diets are increasingly recognized as an underlying cause of malnutrition (GLOPAN, 2016). In Fiji, despite the great potential of the food system to produce a wide variety of staple and traditional food crops (such as dalo, cassava and kumala), tropical fruits and vegetables, food and nutrition security indicators have barely improved during the last few decades, and many Fijians cannot afford a healthy diet. This is related to poor agricultural practices that cause poor soil fertility and erosion; as well as bad control of pests, diseases and invasive species, and limited access by small-scale subsistence farmers, who mainly produce the food crops, to modern technology, knowledge and markets. The high cost of production and labour, coupled with low productivity and inefficiency, are big disincentives to staying in the agricultural sector, which is reflected in the increasing average age of farmers. Young people prefer to look for better and more secure jobs out of the sector.

From a gender perspective, men are more likely than women to be engaged in commercial agriculture, while subsistence agriculture and fishing is an important form of employment for both women and men in the rural areas. Almost one-quarter (23 percent) of rural women are engaged in subsistence work, with i-Taukei women more likely to be involved in agriculture-related skills training than Fijian women of Indian descent (ADB, 2015). Women involved in agricultural activities are mainly smallholder farmers, who are also caretakers of children and make daily food production and consumption decisions for their families. More information is required to uncover the main disparities and gaps in access to and control over resources (e.g. land, water and inputs), access to markets and to skills training, all of which are critical for agricultural production and livelihoods.

Food handling, storage and processing limitations, together with a lack of appropriate infrastructure and transport facilities, limit the food industry in Fiji to some extent, despite the

great value-added potential for most current agriculture production.12 According to a Ministry of Agriculture survey in 2018, the number of people involved in the export of fresh/chilled and value-added crops and livestock commodities is growing fast, despite constraints such as inconsistency in supply and low supply during the off-season, poor fresh produce quality, lack of storage and cooling facilities, and poor postharvest knowledge. The value chain is driven by wholesalers, retailers, seed companies, farmers and consumers and thus solutions from the private sector will be important to increasing the nutritional value of food along the value chain from farm to plate, as well as its economic value. Currently, it is difficult to find fresh products or nutritious processed food at affordable prices outside of the main production areas of the country. This reduces the availability and affordability of diverse, safe and nutritious foods and thus the ability of consumers to choose healthy diets.

Women comprise most of the workers in agroexport facilities. They are mostly involved in the primary stages of the value chain for processing fresh agricultural commodities into frozen or preserved products as well as occupying middle-management positions with some control over resources but limited decision-making authority (ADB, 2015).

Food trade and marketing are big challenges in Fiji, mainly due to geographic distances and poor infrastructure and transport. In addition, subsistence farmers have a limited bargaining power since they do not often belong to cooperative groups and thus they are unlikely to achieve significant and sustainable throughout time volumes of products. As a result, fresh commodities are often more expensive than imported produce and have a high degree of seasonality, which makes the market very vulnerable to both oversupply and undersupply (Green Growth Strategy, 2014). Better production planning, improved market information and rural infrastructure, and access to capital are required for market improvement. Alongside this semi-subsistence sector is a fledgling commercial agriculture sector that struggles to compete both in export markets and against imports.

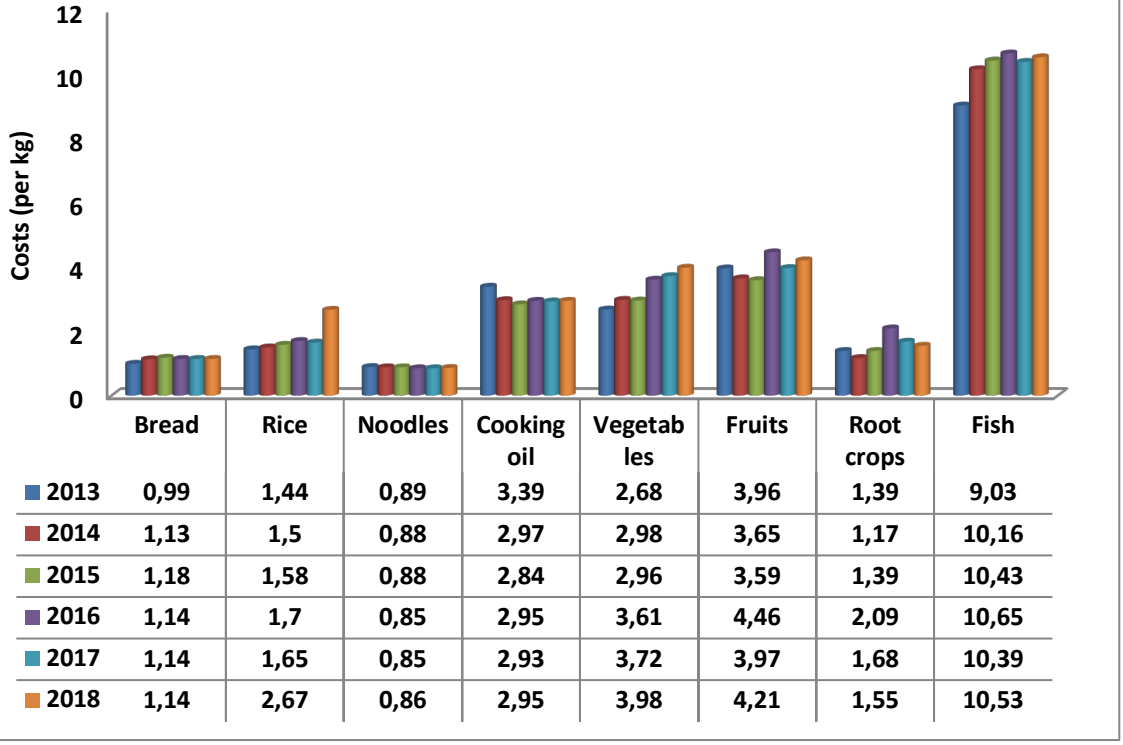
Both men and women are involved in market activities (ADB, 2015). A UN Women project has identified market places as a critical space for women to work. There is a huge diversity of female market vendors in terms of wealth and ethnic group (around 70 percent are i-taukei and 30 percent are indo-Fijian), which in turn implies many cultural differences. Despite some having a very good income, working conditions in terms of safety, security, and certainty are far from optimal. In addition, they don't have much decision-making power on what to do with their earnings. A recent paper suggests that, “in addition to numerous infrastructural and physical challenges impeding female farmers, there is scepticism amongst the communities regarding the actual benefit of engaging in the market, given the high risks involved (Singh-Peterson and Iranacolaivalu, 2018).”

Price increases have been observed across different food categories in Fiji over the years and this has an impact on what households consume. This is even more critical for urban household, which buy most of the food that they consume, and especially for the most vulnerable people. Scarce domestic production has led to higher prices for consumers, especially those with scarce resources, who increasingly rely on cheap processed and imported food with poor nutritional value, such as white bread, white rice, noodles and cooking oil. In

[12] Some examples include papaya, tomatoes, pineapple, coconut, duruka, mango, chillies, banana, cassava, taro, breadfruit, sweet potatoes, ginger, cocoa and dairy.

contrast, the price of nutritious foods, such as fresh vegetables, root crops and fish, have nearly doubled in the last two decades. Changes in household income and food prices are affecting the capacity of households to access a nutritious diet.

FIGURE 9. FOOD PRICES 2013-2018



	Bread	Rice	Noodles	Cooking oil	Vegetables	Fruits	Root crops	Fish
2013	0,99	1,44	0,89	3,39	2,68	3,96	1,39	9,03
2014	1,13	1,5	0,88	2,97	2,98	3,65	1,17	10,16
2015	1,18	1,58	0,88	2,84	2,96	3,59	1,39	10,43
2016	1,14	1,7	0,85	2,95	3,61	4,46	2,09	10,65
2017	1,14	1,65	0,85	2,93	3,72	3,97	1,68	10,39
2018	1,14	2,67	0,86	2,95	3,98	4,21	1,55	10,53

Source: Fiji Bureau of Statistics, 2018

With regard to consumer demand, food preparation and preferences, as mentioned above, the Fijian population is affected by a dietary transition from a traditional root crop-based diet towards imported cereal-based products (e.g. white rice and white bread) that are lower in essential micronutrients, such as vitamin A and iron, as well as processed foods that are high in salt, sugar and fat. These dietary changes are related to many climatic, cultural, and socio-economic factors, such as changes in agricultural practices, increasing urbanization (55.9 percent of Fiji's population reside in urban areas, an increase from 50.7 percent in 2007, and 60 percent of the population is expected to live in urban areas in the next 20 years), growing population pressures and trade liberalization, which has increased the availability and reduced the cost of imported foods relative to more nutritious local staples. These aspects have been discussed in the previous sections of this report.

Fiji's food environment, i.e. the various settings where food is available to people, is also relevant. Consumer´s choices are made within a particular food environment, which offers a specific array of options. In the case of Fiji, these include highly advertised unhealthy foods and drinks, whose popularity is reinforced by the perception that imported processed foods are better or of 'higher status and more modern than locally-grown foods. It is relevant to highlight the case of the rural outer islands and the potential reasons for their better performance in overweight and obesity, which are most likely related to lower availability, and especially lack of affordability, of ultra-processed junk food in comparison to most populated areas. Imported ultra-processed food is more expensive to distribute to these more difficult to

reach islands. Transport-related difficulties that force people to walk everywhere also reduce overweight and obesity levels.

Further research is needed to understand the local food systems that exist throughout Fiji, including food supply chains, food environments and consumer behaviour, with attention to how specific food systems influence nutrition and health outcomes in their communities. Information on what and how much food is commonly consumed outside and inside the home, and other aspects of the food environment can be used to advise the government and other food systems actors on the best areas for investment and concrete policy recommendations.

1.5.3. BASIC CAUSES

Political, economic, sociocultural and environmental factors, either in isolation or combined, influence access and control to different resources. In this subsection, we analyse the challenges these factors pose to achieving food and nutrition security in Fiji.

As already suggested, poor diets relate closely to economic factors. Food balance sheets over the years show that the typical Fijian diet has changed from mainly home-grown produce to store-bought (processed) food, even in the remote areas and among people without a regular income. Poverty in Fiji has many drivers, including a growing number of more elderly families with large numbers of children, low levels of education, and unemployed household-heads (World Bank, 2011). The increase in unemployment, especially among young people, reduces household capacity to generate income and thus to obtain food. The current National Development Plan reported that the incidence of poverty in 2015 was 28.4 percent at the national level (36.3 percent in rural areas and 20.8 percent in urban areas), compared to 35.2 percent in 2008.

Urban growth also influences food consumption and changes in dietary patterns because of factors such as access and availability. Moreover, there is also a compound of reducing labour in the rural agriculture sector as well as fuelling consumer preferences away from locally-grown food to cheaper imported and often more processed alternatives as well as fast food (Green Growth Strategy, 2014). Other sociocultural aspects reinforcing poor consumption choices are increasingly sedentary lifestyles and the lack of enforced regulations by government around the advertising and promotion of unhealthy foods and drinks. In addition, traditions related to communal obligations to families, vanua (land) and religion (best foods are reserved for church functions) and level of education also influence the dietary habits. Natural resources in Fiji are increasingly overstretched in a context of competition from different economic activities and vulnerability to disasters and natural hazards. Limited land and water resources, competing demands (small-scale versus commercial agriculture, residential, tourism, etc.) and land tenure issues also represent a bottleneck to increased production. The area of land under agriculture (23.2 percent) is declining (World Bank, 2014). The competition for prime agricultural land from other development is pushing agricultural farming onto marginal land and encroaching into forests (Green Growth Strategy, 2014).

Coastal and marine resources, which are fundamental to the diets, cultures and livelihood systems of the Pacific islands, are already insufficient to support the current population. This gap will be even greater if coastal stocks are not managed well (Secretariat of the Pacific

Community, 2014). While most offshore reefs are in sound and stable condition, with good resilience, many reefs close to inhabited shores show chronic stress and impacts from fishing, sedimentation and pollution from land-based sources (Green Growth Strategy, 2014). Population and urbanization increases will raise the demand for coastal fisheries production, which will likely contribute to overexploitation and habitat destruction (Gillet et al., 2014). Increasing demands from the tourism industry also contribute to this growing pressure.

Climate events such as cyclones, floods, droughts, storm surges and other extreme weather phenomena have an increasingly negative, direct and long-term impact on food chains. High exposure to natural hazards and low capacity for risk management result in communities that are ill-suited to adapt to climate change. Recurrent disasters are evidence of the vulnerabilities within the production, transportation and commercialization systems; but also, of the priorities in prevention and recovery processes, which are more oriented to supporting export produce that internal food production.

The impact of climate events may differ, depending on where they occur. More vulnerable people usually have difficulty in accessing training, credits, land and public services. They normally live in unsafe conditions, with limited capacity to adapt to changes in the environment, to cope with any emergency situation or to recover in a resilient manner. Women and female headed households are more prone to be affected by disasters, requiring tailored strategies to address their particular needs. To that end, the capacities of women and women's organizations should be acknowledged and enhanced in order to reduce their vulnerability but also to enhance their contribution to the community. The participation of women's organizations in land management, reforestation, early warning systems, and humanitarian assistance has been developed in pilot programmes worldwide and can be replicated in the Fijian context.

On average, Fiji experiences two tropical cyclone-related disasters and major floods per year. The Fiji Bureau of Statistics estimated a 27 percent decline in total agricultural output from 2007 to 2010. This has a direct impact on food and nutrition security, not only for people who depend directly on agriculture for their livelihoods, but for all consumers, especially the most vulnerable. Tropical Cyclone Winston (2016) was the most intense tropical cyclone in history, with significant effects on the national economy and particularly on the primary sectors; e.g. agriculture, forestry and fisheries. After two years of remarkable economic growth – 5.6 and 3.6 percent in 2014 and 2015, respectively – this rate diminished in 2016 to 2 percent. Sugarcane and timber exports were considerably affected, due to transportation difficulties in rural areas and access to the markets. The Budget Supplement 2017 also registered an increase in the inflation index from 1.6 (2015) to 3.9 (2016) particularly related to the impact of the cyclone on agricultural and kava production.

After TC Winston, the agriculture sector showed a prompt recovery – 10 percent growth by 2017. However, this mostly corresponded to the restoration of the sugarcane production and supply chain, which received a large amount of support from the government and donors. Food and nutrition security was mainly supported through the distribution of food rations and cash transfers provided by social protection networks. Although there is no comprehensive analysis of food chain recovery, the number of initiatives and investments directed towards supporting small-scale food producers were not significant.

As a result of the El-Niño Southern Oscillation phenomenon, Fiji also suffers from severe droughts, which occur on a four to five-year cycle. Prolonged drought is problematic for small islands with small and expensive water supply systems. Droughts damage water supply and food security, significantly impairing the livelihoods of affected communities (Government of Fiji, 1995). In general, small-scale farmers, who have limited knowledge around how to adapt to environmental changes, are particularly vulnerable. This vulnerability is exacerbated by poor socioeconomic development planning and by climate change (World Bank, 2013). Under such circumstances, farmers opt for diversifying their sources of income, changing to other sectors of the economy and abandoning food production. The recurrence of climate shocks that impact on national/local food production, coupled with insufficient recovery time, undermine food and nutrition security in the long term.

Tourism is the largest industry in Fiji and the main source of foreign exchange (14.4 percent of total GDP in 2017 and forecasted to rise by 1.4 percent in 2018; Travel and Tourism 2018). Tourism offers interesting opportunities for employments and income but also competes with agriculture in terms of land use, water and other resources. A 2018 study produced by the International Finance Corporation (IFC), in partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism, estimated that 51.7 percent of the demand for fresh produce in the main tourism areas of Fiji is met by imported items. This represents a big market opportunity for nationally- produced fruits and vegetables, dairy and meat products and seafood. Key aspects to address in order to enhance the potential to supply this market were seasonality, inconsistent supply, and quality and food safety standards.

Lastly, two political economy issues must be considered. The first relates to conflicting priorities between the food industry marketing practices – including the food environment – and health and nutrition outcomes. More information is needed to determine trade-offs between these aspects and ways in which they can be reconciled. It is also important to consider potential discrepancies between national priorities for securing food and nutrition for Fiji's most vulnerable people, and the promotion of more commercial food systems that can bring benefits to all Fijians. With that in mind, it is important to understand that commercial farmers in Fiji include anyone who earns more than FJD 10 000 a year from agriculture, which still would be categorized as small farmers in other countries.

1.6. Prospects for eradicating food insecurity, malnutrition and poverty in the country

According to the 2017 Asia and the Pacific SDG Progress Report, the Pacific has unfinished business with regard to all SDGs, except for SDG 3 (good health and well-being), SDG 6 (clean water and sanitation), and SDG 12 (responsible consumption and production).

Due to the general lack of data in the Pacific region, progress on SDG 2 has been assessed by using only two of its indicators, prevalence of undernourishment (PoU) and the agriculture orientation index (AOI). For Fiji, PoU has remained under 5 percent during the past decades, stagnating around 4.4 percent in the last few years. The AOI scored 0.32 in 2015, meaning that for every unit spent of the central government's total budget, agriculture got less than one third of what it should obtain if allocation was according to contribution to GDP. As previously

noted, the prevalence of overweight among children under 5 years of age has increased since 2000, while stunting and wasting in under-5s remain significant in the most populated areas; anaemia is the most widespread nutritional problem in the country.

It is very likely that climate change, by increasing the frequency and intensity of disasters and mounting pressure on land and fisheries resources, will reduce agricultural and fisheries productivity. This circumstance, together with population growth, increasingly expensive healthy food and current consumption and production patterns, is likely to increase food imports and reinforce the shift from healthy traditional diets to imported processed foods. This may further aggravate food insecurity and the burden of malnutrition in Fiji and put at risk the achievement of SDG 2 (zero hunger) and other key related goals, such as SDG 1 (no poverty) SDG 13 (climate action) SDG 14 (life below water), SDG 15 (life on land), etc.

Supply-side interventions are needed to improve the availability, affordability and convenience of healthy food throughout the whole food system. Encouraging better consumption and lifestyles and creating a demand for a healthier diet also requires education and awareness to sustainably shift consumption patterns away from cheaper unhealthy food; this includes the promotion of sports and physical activity. All these factors are associated with the achievement of SDG 2, SDG 3 and SDG 12, among others.

Building resilience and containing economic losses linked to disasters are imperative in order to combat poverty and strengthen the food security situation in Fiji. To this end, a proactive political commitment, supportive policy environment and continuous extensive support to farmers are required. It will be critical to acknowledge roles and capacities of both men and women in food production systems. Disaggregated information is required in order to clearly identify male and female vulnerabilities, capacities and needs, in terms of labour, property, access to loans, and priorities, among others. The involvement of male and female small-scale farmers in risk assessment, planning and decision-making may enhance their capacities to prevent, respond and recover from disaster situations. These interventions should be accompanied by a coherent and continuous support from the government to the private sector and farmers associations.
“The multidimensional causes of food and nutrition insecurity (hunger and malnutrition) require holistic and integrated actions across sectors to appropriately address the complex and multifaceted challenges (Belhassen, 2015).” Mobilizing the various stakeholders who influence actions for food and nutrition security in Fiji can be difficult, as some partners still prefer to work in ‘silos.’ Another issue to be considered is that nutrition is still widely perceived as a health sector issue while food production and food security are seen as the sole responsibility of the agriculture sector. Thus, a key step towards eradicating food insecurity and malnutrition will be to enhance the dialogue between various sectors, stakeholders and institutions and to mainstream objectives and concerns to be achieved through integrated approaches. There is a need to change perceptions and policies in order to mainstream nutrition within the mandates of health, agriculture, education and other key development sectors.

A good strategy for scaling up food and nutrition security initiatives with the involvement of different sectors would be to establish linkages with current opportunities in the agriculture sector, such as women and youth involvement in agriculture, options to access financial services, funding for climate resilience, private sector led initiatives, improving the quality of the extension services and others. This may ensure that food and nutrition security aspects are

mainstreamed in the agriculture agenda and implemented within the different priority areas of intervention of the Ministry of Agriculture. A more detailed analysis of how the strategies contained in the MoA SDP fit into the broader agenda envisaged in the National Development Plan can be found in in Table 7.

1.7. Summary

Fiji is a middle-income country, with major achievements around the MDG and SDGs agenda. Nevertheless, the current food and nutrition security situation still poses a big challenge for the country.

Food availability does not seem to be an issue, although the country depends on food imports to supply enough food to its population. This is compensated by an increase in the value of goods and services produced in the country, although some producers have opted to engage in the production of high value non-food crops, reducing local staple food production and forcing the (especially urban) population to buy cheaper and easily available imported products. Economic access or affordability, especially for the poor, is threatened by rising food prices, which have an enormous impact on household diets and dietary outcomes. Hygiene is a key determinant of food utilization; data shows that there has been a substantial increase in the percentage of the population using basic sanitation services (around 95 percent in both rural and urban areas), but basic drinking water rates have remained at 89 percent for rural and 98 for urban areas in the last two decades. Food stability is threatened by seasonality of fruits and vegetables throughout the year, with off-season prices tending to increase several-fold, making them unaffordable for a majority of the population.

According to the National Nutrition Survey (NNS), NFNC 2015, malnutrition in all its forms is still a major problem in Fiji, which has seen little change over the last decades. Underweight, stunting and wasting among children under 5 years persist; overweight and obesity are a major problem in the country, and both conditions increase into adulthood, especially for urban women, while anaemia is widespread in all age groups. Although differences can be noted by division or ethnic group, it can be stated that malnutrition affects a significant part of the population, overweight and obesity cause rampant NCDs rates, which are already responsible for 80 percent of deaths in Fiji.

Among the immediate causes of malnutrition are a dietary energy intake that is more than 50 percent of the recommended level, with low consumption of fruits and vegetables and high consumption of sugar, fats and salt.

The underlying causes of malnutrition include gender inequalities in access and control over resources, income flows, and opportunities that limit the productive potential of a large share of the population; unhealthy household environments and inadequate health services; and suboptimal care and feeding practices. An additional underlying cause is the inability of food systems to provide a healthy and affordable diet despite the potential of the agriculture sector to support livelihoods, income and employment. As the diet of Fijians has changed from mainly home-grown produce to store-bought food, households without adequate resources to buy food become more vulnerable to food insecurity and malnutrition.

All of these factors, together with high urbanization rates, changes in dietary patterns and increasingly sedentary lifestyles, overstretched natural resources and disasters, and competition with the growing demands of the tourism industry are major challenges for achieving food and nutrition security in Fiji.

Eradicating food insecurity and malnutrition in Fiji will require strengthening data collection and analysis capacities and generating information and practical evidence on how to enhance local food systems. Such evidence may help decision-makers choose interventions that can improve access to a healthy diet. Aspects such as resilience building or gender mainstreaming must also be taken into account. A good prospect for scaling up food and nutrition security initiatives seems to be based on a multisectoral strategy and the establishment of key linkages with current opportunities within the agriculture sector.

2. Assessment of the current policies and strategies

2.1. Current policies and strategies

This policy effectiveness analysis focuses on the Fiji Policy on Food and Nutrition Security (FPFNS) and its Action Plan and the five-year Strategic Development Plan of the Ministry of Agriculture. The emphasis is on the identification of the main bottlenecks and weaknesses standing in the way of their implementation. Previous policies on food and nutrition security will be noted as well as other relevant sectoral polices and strategies.

FIRST provided technical assistance to the Ministries of Health and Medical Services and Agriculture (MoHMS and MoA) on the review and update of the FPFNS and its Action Plan, a multisectoral initiative in which there has been close collaboration and partnership between the Agriculture and Health sectors. The FPFNS is linked to the overarching National Development Plan and aims to reduce the impact of malnutrition in all of its forms. The FPFNS is currently awaiting cabinet endorsement.

In 2017, FIRST assisted MoA to formulate its five-year Strategic Development Plan (SDP), a medium-term proposal based on available recurrent budget and planned donor support and incorporating Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture (FNSSA) principles in the new strategic priorities. The SDP aims to contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the agriculture sector for a period of five years (2019-2023) and is the main instrument for the implementation of the MoA policies. A review of the prosed SDP was conducted in 2019 in light of two emerging circumstances: the significance assigned by MoA on the need for internal governance reform; and the availability of budgetary support from the European Union for the agriculture sector. The final document was endorsed by Cabinet in July 2019.

A wide number of national and sectoral strategies link directly to food and nutrition security. National strategies include the Roadmap for Democracy and Sustainable Socio-Economic Development (RDSSED), the Green Growth Framework (GGF) and the National Development Plan (NDP) for Fiji 5years and 20 years, all from the Ministry of Economy. Sectoral documents include those from the Ministries of Agriculture, Health and Medical Services, Education and Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation. More detailed information can be found in Appendix 4.

2.2. Key actors, their roles and responsibilities

This section aims to provide a short analysis of key institutions for food and nutrition security in Fiji and their relationships; the key actors, their roles and responsibilities and how are they related.

Traditionally, food security has been under the mandate of the MoA, while nutrition has been considered under the Ministry of Health. Both ministries are thus key to achieving food and nutrition security and ensuring a healthy population. Deserving of particular mention is the National Food and Nutrition Centre (NFNC), which in 2018 was placed within the MoHMS as a food and nutrition security section under the Wellness Unit. The continued role of the NFNC is monitoring the food and nutrition situation in Fiji, providing advice to the government and

coordinating all nutrition activities in the country. In addition to the NFNC, the Wellness and Dietetics units in the MoHMS also promote nutrition to combat NCDs through their divisional officers, who visit communities to promote health and nutrition

The MoA's traditional role in food security has involved promoting rural development strategies that target subsistence farmers through different crops and livestock programmes. Particular initiatives have involved the promotion of ginger, cocoa, dalo and aquaculture. As a result, some of these crops have experienced sustained production growth over the years, as in the case of ginger, which, according to the Fiji Bureau of Statistics, increased its production by almost 30 percent from 2013 to 2017. Initiatives to better manage market arrangements and provide market access infrastructure have not been at the core of the MoA's work. Extension services have not succeeded in increasing local production efficiency for small-scale producers, and value chain development and economies of scale still needs to be achieved.

TABLE 6. KEY ACTORS, ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Key actors	**Area of food and nutrition security (FNS) responsibility**	**Key actors' roles related to FNS**
Ministry of Economy		
Strategic Planning Office	Food and nutrition security policy	Monitor the progress of FNS strategies identified in the National Development Plan and provide funds for the implementation of FNS activities in the annual Costed Operational Plan (COP)
Ministry of Health and Medical Services		
Wellness Unit Divisional	Food and nutrition security policy and Fiji Plan of Action for Food and Nutrition Security (FPAFNS)	Support the FNS policy through maternal, children health and non-communicable diseases (NCD) related activities.
	Establish a framework for multisectoral approaches to addressing agrinutrition and tackling NCDs	Develop and coordinate the framework to tackle NCDs
	Subsector food and nutrition security policy/plan	Ensure that FNS activities identified in the FPAFNS are included in the ministry's annual COP
NFNC	Food and nutrition security policy and Fiji Plan of Action for Food and Nutrition Security (FPAFNS)	Coordinate the implementation of the FNS policy and FPAFNS
	National Nutrition Survey (NNS)	Conduct NNS every 10 years to assess the nutritional status of the population
	Food Balance Sheet (FBS)	Compile FBS to assess food availability in the country
Ministry of Agriculture		
MoA	Food and nutrition security policy and FPAFNS	Support and implement activities with farmers identified for MoA in the FNS policy
	Promote food and nutrition security programmes	Create an enabling environment for the development of an agriculture sector that contributes to FNS requirements for all Fijians
	Establish a framework for multisectoral approach for addressing agrinutrition and tackling NCDs in Fiji	Support the framework by implementing activities identified for MoA
	Subsector food and nutrition security	Ensure that FNS activities identified in

	policy/plan	the FPAFNS are included in the ministry's annual COP
	Monitoring food and nutrition security	Carry out agriculture surveys on crop and livestock production.
The Fiji Crop and Livestock Council (FCLC)	Represent the needs of an estimated 60 000 farmers in the non-sugar agricultural sectors in the country.	Raise the profile of farmers involved in crops and livestock production; identify and provide key services specifically designed to respond to farmer's needs with the view to drive growth in the industry.
Ministry of Education		
MoEd	Food and nutrition security policy and FPAFNS	Support this policy by implementing activities identified for Ministry of Education in the FPAFNS.
	Subsector food and nutrition security policy/plan	Ensure that FNS activities identified in the FPAFNS are included in the ministry's annual COP
Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation		
Poverty Monitoring Unit	Food and nutrition security policy and FPAFNS	Support the enhancement of social protection programmes by including complimentary Food and Nutrition Security interventions
Private sector		
Fiji Council and Employers Federation	Food and nutrition security policy and FPAFNS	Promote investment in nutrition-sensitive value chains
Academia		
The University of the South Pacific, USP The Fiji National University, FNU	Food and nutrition security policy and FPAFNS	Scale up evidence-based actions to reduce food and nutrition insecurity

Table 6 provides evidence that food and nutrition security are being covered by several ministries and other stakeholders in the country. Food and nutrition security programmes at both national and local levels are usually planned in collaboration with all the stakeholders in government. For example, during MoA planning for the SDP 2019-2023, consultations were held with the NFNC, and the Ministries of Economy, Women and Education among others, in an effort to identify how their programmes could support and complement the SDP. The NFNC and MoA have also collaborated on food and nutrition security trainings in rural communities, although there is still room for improvement in terms of effective joint implementation.

The NFNC collaborates with NGOs, such as Save the Children, Fiji Red Cross Society and Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), in the implementation of food and nutrition programmes in communities. It should be noted that faith-based organizations (FBOs) have been part of this collaboration all along, with NFNC and MOHMS using existing structures within churches to create awareness around health and food and nutrition security issues.

2.3. Assessment of coherence/alignment with other policy initiatives

An important factor for appraising the quality of Fiji's two main food and nutrition security policies is the extent to which they are coherent/aligned with other policy priorities, including the existing international policy framework, national development plans and related policies from other sectors.

2.3.1 INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORK

Fiji has ratified key international treaties with explicit references to FNS, such as the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR); the Convention on the Rights of the Child; the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW); the Rome Declaration on Food Security; and the World Food Summit Plan of Action to eradicate hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition, showing the country's current level of awareness and political willingness to include these concerns in the national development agenda.

The Sustainable Development Goals agenda is a key reference for all strategic frameworks and sectoral policies in Fiji. The National Development Plan even takes some of the main SDG indicators as Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for monitoring the progress of national programmes in different sectors. The legislative power of Fiji is also fully committed to the SDGs, to the point that Fiji´s Parliament acknowledged in a recent report that it "have expanded its role and initiated activities to strengthen its support towards the promotion, implementation and monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals over the last few years (Parliament of the Republic of Fiji, 2017)."

In 2014, during the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS), heads of states and governments and high-level representatives, with the full support of civil society and relevant stakeholders, reaffirmed their commitment to sustainable development. The outcome of the conference, the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action or S.A.M.O.A. Pathway, articulated the sustainable development pathways and aspirations for SIDS over the next 10 years. To address the unique set of social, economic and environmental vulnerabilities of SIDS countries and accelerate action on food and nutrition security, a Global Action Programme (GAP) for Food and Nutrition Security for Small Island Developing States was prepared in 2017 with three mutually reinforcing objectives: 1) enabling environments for Food and Nutrition Security; 2) sustainable, resilient food systems that support healthy diets and nutrition and 3) empowered people and communities for improved Food and Nutrition Security, with a focus on vulnerable groups (FAO, 2017).

Both the FPFNS and the Strategic Development Plan from the MoA, present a high degree of alignment and coherence with the existing international policy framework described above. This is considered to be a strength and a means to facilitate relationships with partners and cross-sectoral coordination, and to improve efficiency and sustainability with regard to expected outcomes.

2.3.2. NATIONAL AGENDA

In terms of the legal framework, concerns around food and nutrition security are specifically addressed in the Constitution of the Republic of Fiji which explicitly guarantees the "right to every person to be free from hunger, to have adequate food of acceptable quality and to clean and safe water in adequate quantities." It also acknowledges the right of every child to basic nutrition.

At the national level, the Roadmap for Democracy and Sustainable Socio-Economic Development (RDSSED) 2010-2014 from the Ministry of Economy addressed food security through commercial agriculture development such as an export promotion programme, import substitution programme, outer island programme and northern development

programme. The plan promoted activities that impact food and nutrition security for women, young people, rural and outer island communities, as well as households in villages and settlements. The document established food security as a priority, given the global food crisis and Fiji's vulnerability to natural disasters, but neither nutrition nor climate change are addressed as policy objectives. The main agricultural goal had a clear economic focus: "Sustainable community livelihoods through food security and competitive exports."

In 2014, another planning document, the Green Growth Framework (GGF), was launched by the Ministry of Economy to support and complement the RDSSED. The document stated that "it is evident that in order to strengthen Fiji's food security, a major change (transformation) in the agricultural sector value chain with strong focus on farm efficiency and improved market linkages through timely information generation and dissemination, is necessary." The GGF focused on the production side, especially at the household level, targeting subsistence farmers in rural areas. The plan also included approaches to building resilience to natural disasters and climate change strategies to strengthen food security. The triple burden of malnutrition was also covered in the text and included in the assessment of key indicators and trends in the country. A recognition of the multisectoral nature of malnutrition was acknowledged as key to assessing Fiji's food security status effectively.

The GGF also considered the main challenges to food security, including population growth, urbanization, increasing pressure on natural resources, rising fresh food prices, consumer preferences for cheaper imported foods and processed alternatives, disorganized or thin market structures, geographic spread and low farm efficiency, all of which contribute to unaffordable healthy diets, especially for low-income families.

The National Development Plan (NDP) for Fiji 5 years and 20 years, developed by the Ministry of Economy in 2017, states that "the development of domestic agriculture and fisheries to support access to an adequate supply of healthy and nutritious food is critical as a legal and political matter as well as for food and nutrition security." The NDP addresses the underlying causes of food insecurity and malnutrition, both at national and community levels. For the first time in Fiji's history, a national plan has a chapter that is dedicated to food and nutrition security with three main goals: to develop a national food and nutrition security policy or framework; to raise more awareness on the importance of food and nutrition security and to encourage better implementation of food and nutrition security priorities in agriculture, fisheries and other sectors.

The NDP is forward-looking and its strategies address areas that were lacking in previous national documents. Emerging challenges to food insecurity and malnutrition, such as climate change, urbanization, unemployment, migration, production, international trade consumption and poverty, are considered and analysed throughout the document, which includes a set of strategies to deal with them. Increasing local production and raising farm efficiency and productivity through the adoption of new technologies, mechanization and better production practices and improvement of market linkages are suggested solutions. For enhancing adaptive capacity to climate change, the plan proposes agriculture research on crop varieties that can be more resilient to expected changes in weather patterns, and improved extension training to promote more appropriate farming practices.

Different population groups are also included in the plan, including women, children, young

people, and rural and urban communities. Gender is considered through the different thematic areas and transformational strategies in the NDP. The document identifies gender differences in access to and repayment of credit, land purchase, land titling, public amenities, extension services and technology, and recognizes the disadvantaged position of vulnerable women in rural areas in the chapter "Expanding the rural economy".
The two policy initiatives at the core of this diagnostic are coherent and fully aligned with the existing national policy framework. The FPFNS is well aligned with the National Development Plan and its strategies, such as mainstreaming nutrition into national sectoral policies and action plans, creating an enabling environment for an agriculture-nutrition nexus, promoting sustainable and resilient food systems, promoting nutrition-sensitive value chains to improve accessibility of nutritious food products, and supporting evidence based policy and planning.

The SDP is based on the same priorities than the last costed operational plan of the MoA, which also includes a legislative framework of all the legislations and regulations guiding the ministry in its daily operations. Clear linkages can be identified with the NDP's approach of inclusive socioeconomic development and transformational development.

More detailed information on the linkages between the FPFNS and the SDP and the NDP is provided in Table 7 below.

TABLE 7. ALIGNMENT OF THE FPFNS AND THE SDP WITH THE PRIORITIES IN THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN.

Food and Nutrition Security Policy: priorities	National Development Plan - Sector Plans	MoA SDP - strategies
Improve multisector leadership, ownership and coordination of national Food and Nutrition Security action	NDP 3.1.4: food and nutrition security	SP1: Fijian people improve their food and nutrition security
Enhance and promote sustainable, diversified and resilient food systems	NDP 3.1.4: food and nutrition security NDP 3.2.10: expanding the rural economy NDP 3.2.12: non-sugar agriculture	SP3: Adopt sustainable resource management and climate-smart agriculture
Promote investment in nutrition-sensitive value chains	NDP 3.1.4: food and nutrition Security NDP 3.2.12: non-sugar agriculture	SP 4: Establish and improve commercial agriculture
Improve food safety and quality standards and promote safe water	NDP 3.1.1: Water and Sanitation	None
Enhance maternal, infant, child and adolescent nutrition	NDP 3.1.6: Health and Medical Services	None
Support healthier school food environments	NDP 3.1.5: Education	SP1: Fijian people improve their food and nutrition security
Promote healthy diets and lifestyles to reduce NCDs	NDP 3.1.6: health and medical Services	SP1: Fijian people improve their food and nutrition security
Promote adequate and appropriate micronutrient intake for better nutritional health outcomes	None	None
Support the enhancement of social protection programmes through the inclusion of complementary Food and	NDP 3.1.7: social inclusion and empowerment	SP2: Increase farmer household income for sustainable livelihoods

Nutrition Security interventions		
Scale up evidence-based action to reduce food and nutrition insecurity	NDP 3.1.4: food and nutrition security NDP 3.2.12: non-sugar agriculture	SP4: Establish and improve commercial agriculture SP5: Improve quality public sector performance and service delivery

2.3.3. SECTORAL POLICIES

The Food and Nutrition Policy of 2008 was developed and coordinated by the National Food and Nutrition Centre (NFNC) to update the previous policy of 1982. The 2008 policy targeted all sectors of society, used various national nutrition survey data with nine policy statements, which focused on: advocating nutritional issues and mainstreaming nutrition into government decision-making; promoting and sustaining household food security; improving national nutritional status; protecting consumers through improved quality and safety of food and water; improving the nutritional status of the socio-economically disadvantaged and groups that are nutritionally vulnerable (including children, mothers, the aged, differently-abled and those living with HIV/AIDS); implementing and monitoring the Nutrition Policy for Schools; promoting healthy diets and lifestyles; establishment and promotion of a nutrition surveillance and monitoring system; and strengthening collaboration with development partners. The nine policy statements were developed after reviewing documents and consultations with key stakeholders for food and nutrition.

The 2008 policy addressed malnutrition mostly at the national level, a special focus on mainstreaming nutrition issues and collaboration with other development partners. The only specific groups included are school children and socio-economically disadvantaged groups such as children under five years, mothers and caregivers, the elderly and people living with HIV/AIDS.

The 2008 policy is more health and nutrition focused, even though one of its strategies is to promote and sustain household food security. For example, the food supply side is not fully addressed in the policy. It is not linked to national documents, nor is it forward-looking as it does not address nutrition-sensitive agriculture, climate change and unemployment among other nutrition challenges. The National Food and Nutrition Policy of 2008, only addressed nutrition strategies from the food supplementation and fortification perspective and hence the need arose for an overarching food and nutrition security policy (Ministry of National Planning, 2014).

The implementation document for the Food and Nutrition Policy of 2008 is the Fiji Plan of Action for Nutrition (FPAN), 2010-14, also coordinated by the NFNC. The main challenge faced in the implementation of the FPAN was the lack of commitments by different ministries, and poor coordination, monitoring and evaluation by NFNC. Like the 2008 Nutrition Policy, most of the FPAN strategies addressed the underlying causes of malnutrition and food insecurity at national level with some activities carried out at divisional and community levels. Strategies for specific groups targeted school children and socio-economically disadvantaged groups that are nutritionally vulnerable – children under five years, mothers, elderly people and people living with HIV/AIDS. The FPAN is linked to national priorities such as MDGs/SDGs, the People's Charter for Change, Peace & Prosperity, the Government Strategic Development Plan, Food

and Nutrition policy of 2008 and sectoral plans for health, agriculture and education. Nevertheless, emerging problems on the nutrition and food supply side were not fully addressed.

A review of the FPAN highlights the minimal change in nutrition indicators between 2004 and 2014, and the fact that implementation challenges limited the translation of nutrition activities into practice (Thow, 2016). The review also yielded the following recommendations; 1) integrate new priorities; 2) clearer articulation of the role of the NFNC as coordination and support body for FPAN implementation across sectors in the National Development Plan; 3) clear articulation of the implementation plan, focused on integration into strategic plans and annual corporate plans of line ministries and other stakeholder agencies; and 4) the need to strengthen the reporting on FPAN implementation and nutrition indicators. These recommendations aimed to improve the effectiveness of future policies and plans, and they were taken into account during the preparation of the FPFNS.

The Fiji 2020 Agriculture Sector Policy Agenda of 2014, was prepared by the Ministry of Agriculture with the technical support of FAO and addressed new domestic and global challenges around food and nutrition security, climate change, feedstock for renewable energy, the utilization of water resources for aquaculture, agriculture exports and the rehabilitation of traditional agricultural export industries (sugarcane and coconut industries). The policy also opened up to global innovations for 'climate smart agriculture' that generates both adaptation and mitigation benefits, and 'sustainable intensification' to increase production.

Although no official evaluations have been conducted, research on the successes and failures of the MoA's previous agricultural policies and projects recommended: 1) the review of outdated actions and policies; 2) strengthening consistency in policy direction and a concerted political will to develop and revamp the whole agriculture sector; 3) the promotion of a business-like approach to agriculture by mobilizing existing human resources and promote small and medium-sized enterprises with an orientation towards secondary processing; and 4) the upgrade of rural infrastructure in a more sustainable manner to support an agriculture commodity development approach, including roads, water supply (through main grids and localized systems), communications and electricity. Furthermore, the research concluded that the lack of monitoring and evaluation capacity, combined with overambitious production projections and weather calamities within an obsolete policy environment, have resulted in poor outcomes of numerous agricultural projects (Kumar and Kumar, 2015).

The Food and Health Guideline were developed by the National Food and Nutrition Centre. There are 10 guidelines for Fiji with the aim of food and nutrition security. The guideline is for the general population but with two specifically addressing children on breastfeeding and healthy meals and snacks. It does not address emerging food and nutrition security problems.

The Strategic Plan 2016-2020 from the Ministry of Health and Medical Services (MoHMS), consider non-communicable diseases (NCDs) as its first priority, including Nutrition, under a multi-sectoral approach. Cross-cutting issues, such as climate change, gender, poverty and urbanization, were considered in developing this document. Furthermore, the problem of non-communicable diseases is considered a tsunami in Fiji and a NCD strategic plan was developed for the MoHMS by a consultancy team from Fiji National University, after consultations with

individuals and groups from across the government and civil society. The strategy addresses all sectors of the community since NCDs affect all groups and subgroups of the population, but it does not include the emerging problems of food and nutrition security. Instead, the strategy focuses on the prevention and treatment of NCDs and includes diet as a key area. Proposed actions include backyard gardening, primary school gardening, enforced school canteen guidelines, restrictions on hawker's licences around schools, catering policy for government offices, promoting the consumption of local foods and support for healthier eating by targeting taxation, price control changes and subsidies.

The final draft of the Fiji National Fisheries Policy 2017-2027 (not yet approved) includes "innovative and sustainable management, increasing the contribution from fisheries to national food security, food safety, poverty alleviation, import substitution and employment creation" as one of its policy goals. Nutrition is not included in the document. Establishing linkages between the implementation of this policy and other FNS strategic documents will most likely have a positive impact, considering the importance of fisheries in Fiji diets and the need to take a cross-sectoral approach to FNS.

Land title ownership in Fiji is regulated by the Land Transfer Act, which follows the Torrens title system13 and classifies land in Fiji as freehold land, state land and iTaukei land. The iTaukei land (almost 90% of the total) is held in trust by the iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB) and can only be leased/registered with the consent of the TLTB, which must obtain the consent of the Mataqali. There are no references to specific land uses or connections to food and nutrition security in the Land Transfer Act.

The Fijian Government has put in place a Trade Policy Framework, which was developed with the assistance of the European Union and outlines policy measures and strategies that will drive the Fijian economy for the period 2015 to 2025. This framework aims to maximize development gains by enhancing growth in the industrial base, investment, exports of goods and services addressing supply-side capacity constraints as well as facilitate the smooth integration of Fiji within the international trading environment. There are several references to food security in this framework, including its consideration as a national priority and the recognition of Fiji as a net importer of food products. References to agriculture relate to the need to improve production and productivity. Nutrition is not considered.

In relation to trade, taxes are powerful mechanisms for encouraging/discouraging the consumption of certain types of food. In 2017, FAO carried out a study to establish an evidence base for the application of food and beverage taxes and complementary measures to encourage the consumption of healthier, local food products (Thow, 2017). Recommendations from the study included the following: 1) apply excise taxes (20-50 percent) on discretionary foods not meeting nutrient profiling criteria, e.g. confectionary and sugars; beverages (sweetened drinks, juice, milks); edible ices; cakes, sweet bakery and biscuits; savoury snacks, including instant noodles; 2) review price controls to ensure that fiscal policy changes can be passed on to consumers; 3) use the revenue generated by taxation to support the implementation of complementary measures recommended in the draft Food and Nutrition Security Policy and Action Plan. These measures in turn included: i) additional incentives for

[13] This is a system of land registration in which clear title is established by a governmental authority that issues title certificates to owners.

food reformulation, such as nutrient targets for salt, fat and sugar in processed foods, based on nutrient profiling; ii) complementary social marketing, or school-based campaigns to denormalize the consumption of discretionary foods, and to promote public awareness and support for healthy diets; iii) restrictions on the marketing of discretionary foods, to enhance the draft regulation on marketing of foods and beverages to children; and iv) financial support for measures that target healthy food affordability and availability, such as healthy food subsidies.

The Women's Plan of Action 2010-2019, developed by the Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Monitoring, was formulated with assistance from partners and community-based organizations. The overall aim of this plan is to provide directions for actions by the government and other stakeholders to promote gender equality and reduce inequality and discrimination of women in all sectors. The strategies identified in the plan have some impact on food and nutrition security such as "reducing poverty through empowerment of women and mainstreaming of women and gender issues." This is carried out at national and community levels in both urban and rural areas. The policy does not address climate change and other emerging problems of food and nutrition security, although it addressed the need for the increased economic participation of women through employment, marketing, partnership with the private sector, financial independence and learning mechanisms for rural and disadvantage women. The Gender Assessment report for Fiji (ADB, 2015) suggested that the "relative marginalization of the Department of Women in the government hierarchy, lack of gender analysis capacity across all government ministries, lack of integrated planning across sectors, and limited availability of sex-disaggregated data in sector ministries' programs" hinder women's engagement in decision-making and leadership for development in the country.

The document lacked a nutrition-sensitive approach to agriculture and did not target specific groups. A Gender approach, able to address the underlying causes of inequality, and youth perspective are not addressed in this policy. It cannot be considered forward-looking since it does not look at the food and nutrition security impacts of emerging issues such as migration, youth unemployment, population growth or urbanization.

The two policy initiatives at the core of this diagnostic show different level of alignment with the above-mentioned documents and, in some cases have tried to fill some gaps identified in this section.

2.4. Policy assessment in terms of focus, design and being sufficiently forward looking

2.4.1. CRITERIA FOR THE ASSESSMENT

This section considers the two main policies covered in this report in terms of focus and design. Key aspects/criteria for the analysis include: level and quality of participation in the policy preparation process; attention to immediate and underlying causes of food insecurity and malnutrition; examination of specific socio-economic groups (most vulnerable); sufficient consideration of gender issues; degree to which the policy is forward-looking and able to estimate actual or anticipated impacts of emerging issues; basis in evidence; the existence and quality of a monitoring framework with disaggregated SMART indicators; and the inclusion of provisions for implementation and multi-sectoral coordination.

In addition, the assessment considers any political economy issues that may have an impact on the policy, and a short reference is made to main gaps and issues that are not sufficiently considered in the proposals, and will be further developed in Chapter 7 of this report.

2.4.2. THE FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY POLICY

The FIRST Inception Report in 2016 stated that "The new National Development Plan (2017-2022) is currently under preparation, and includes a demand for the development and adoption of a National Food and Nutritional Security Policy. FIRST will assist to develop this Policy and integrate with the National Plan of Action on Nutrition." The FIRST programme, in close collaboration and partnership with MoA and MoHMS, produced a final draft of the Food and Nutrition Security Policy14, a multisectoral initiative that identifies various strategies to address food insecurity, malnutrition and poverty. For the first time, the actions contained in the policy and its Plan of Action are aligned to existing actions planned by each partner ministry in an attempt to create a mechanism for improved multisector coordination of existing national commitments. In the promotion of healthy eating and dietary practices, it gives a prominent role to the Food and Health Guidelines for Fiji in all nutrition and health programmes.

The final draft of the FPFNS involved several multisectoral consultations, including officers from the six key ministries involved in its implementation (Health and Medical Services, Agriculture, Education, Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation, Industry, Trade and Tourism and Youth and Sports). Additional inputs were gathered after meeting with key stakeholders from other ministries, academia, the private sector, and other international and regional development partners.. The last of these sessions, a Multisector Dialogue on Food and Nutrition Security, was held at the end of January 2019.

Until now, nutrition has been seen as part of the health agenda, with a low-level engagement from agricultural sector stakeholders (public and private). Agriculture policies and programmes have not been sensitive to nutrition in the past, nor have they addressed the underlying causes of malnutrition. This in turn has led to the neglect of supply-side interventions critical to facilitating dietary 'behavioural change' (FIRST inception report, 2016). The current FPFNS

[14] A second round of comments received from the SG's office was incorporated by the National Food and Nutrition Centre. A new request was made for a signed letter of support from each of the concerned ministries, and all documents are ready to be officially sent to the cabinet for formal approval of the policy in July 2019.

addresses the underlying causes of malnutrition, with separate strategies for the promotion of nutrition-sensitive agricultural production; the improvement of food safety; the promotion of safe water; and the creation of safe and supportive environments for nutrition at all ages. The FPFNS also addresses inadequate dietary intake as an immediate cause of malnutrition. The promotion of healthy diets and lifestyles to reduce non-communicable diseases, and adequate and appropriate micronutrient intake for better health outcomes (e.g. increased consumption of iron rich foods, fortification of other foods such as rice, oil, milk with micronutrients etc.) are also part of the proposed strategy.

The FPFNS targets all sectors and communities in both urban and rural areas. However, rural and urban communities identified as vulnerable and facing ongoing nutrition challenges, are specifically targeted in some of the strategies as are low-income households, included as beneficiaries of social protection programmes aiming at satisfying the Food and Health Guidelines for Fiji families. Women and youth are also mentioned within the different strategies of the policy. Both are acknowledged as potential recipients of training, technology scholarships and other services through their farmer´s associations.

The policy acknowledges the key role that women play in procuring food for the household and the need to support them in order to improve their access to nutritious crops. It also recognizes the positive impacts on nutrition from improved access to and control of resources and income flows by women. However, this analysis is not reflected in the proposed work plan. Support to women is still related to "simple farming techniques and skills" to establish gardens for home consumption and sale, and does not consider the need to improve women's access to knowledge, skills, credit and other resources or opportunities to maximize their productive contribution and reach their full economic potential.

The FPFNS is based on evidence. First, the proposal is consistent with the review of the FPAN 2010-2014, which stated that "there is a need to advocate multisectoral policy options, including nutrition-sensitive agriculture to be mainstreamed in the government ministries' policy frameworks, to strengthen multisectoral action on nutrition and increase innovation in action on nutrition, for reducing and preventing the incidence of NCDs amongst at risk groups." In addition, the FPFNS provides good justification as to why food and nutrition security should be prioritized, including numerous references to recent studies and papers and key qualitative and quantitative information sources about the FNS situation in Fiji. So, the policy is well supported by evidence and scientific arguments, although national nutrition surveys are only conducted every ten years and data analysis is not always complete. Finally, the importance of evidence is also recognized in one of the strategies, which aims to "*Improve systems for monitoring food and nutrition trends including food availability and access, consumption patterns, nutrition and food-related health risk through establishing a nutrition surveillance system for Fiji*."

Some emerging problems related to climate change, population and dietary transition among others are mentioned in the policy, however few concrete strategies are proposed to address them. In the case of climate change and disaster risk reduction, proposed actions include the establishment of disaster early warning systems and managing food safety risk during emergencies, but not much is proposed in terms of addressing the underlying causes of these disasters. More forward-looking strategies involving the analysis of expected changes in weather patterns or sustainable resource management, such as land use changes and urbanization or deforestation processes, are not considered. The reason for that is probably a combination of lack of awareness and technical knowledge, with the implications that that

would have for the work of these ministries to undertake more structural measures and higher investments in an area that may not necessarily be perceived under their mandates.

There is a clear reference to the potential of the FPFNS to contribute to the country's ability to achieve the SDG2 targets. However, some bottlenecks exist, such as potential conflicts between nutrition objectives and others (e.g. related to employment or the market), are not sufficiently considered. For example, although private sector participation and leadership on solutions to food and nutritional insecurity is acknowledged as critical, there is no mention of the potential negative impacts on food companies due to the implementation of best practices on fat, sugar and salt reduction.

Every strategic area in the Action Plan has been clearly assigned to one or more ministries. A general monitoring and evaluation framework is included in the Action Plan. However, it will have to be perfected including the development of SMART indicators in collaboration with each of the sectoral ministries in order to establish expected outcomes for each year and demarcate clear responsibilities. Ideally the SMART indicators should be consistent with those in the NDP (so called Key Performance Indicators, KPIs) as well as with those in each of the sectoral plans. The role of the FPFNS and its Plan of Action in terms of M&E is a crucial one, having acknowledged that both will "effectively monitor implementation of activities by different sectors, identify what is working most effectively, and scale up efforts focusing on these best practices."

A substantial difference to previous sectoral documents is the prioritization of multisector leadership, ownership and coordination for creating an effective institutional and legal framework for management and mobilization of sufficient resources and actions to achieve improved FNS. Provisions for implementation of the FPFNS envisage a national multi-stakeholder high-level committee (HLC) with representation from ministries and the private sector to provide political leadership, review progress, provide recommendations on new ways forward, and report to the cabinet. A multistakeholder national steering committee (NSC), with representation from partner ministries, NGOs, the private sector and academia, will facilitate updates on progress by each partner, assist the mainstreaming of the FPFNS into action plans and budgets; and provide a forum for identifying issues that will require guidance from the HLC. A technical working group (TWG) will coordinate, implement, monitor, and evaluate progress by each ministry. The NFNC will oversee implementation, monitoring and reporting as well as being responsible for calling meetings and liaising with NSC and TWG members, preparing briefs on implementation, undertaking monitoring and evaluation of the impact of implementation activities, and preparing reports for the HLC.

The FPFNS does not specifically include the fisheries sector and interventions regarding youth employment and participation in the agriculture sector are absent. There are additional gaps around the need for more investment to increase employment in rural areas and reduce urban migration. Investing in the education and training of young rural people is becoming more important as the challenges associated with adopting sustainable, climate-smart production methods and links to modern value chains grow.

The development process received high-level political support from the Agriculture and Health Ministries, with both Ministers attending consultations and the policy included in their parliamentary speeches on food and nutrition security. Nevertheless, the approval process is taking a long time. This may be partly due to the fact that the government has a new requirement for all policies, memoranda of understanding and others to be submitted to solicitor general's (SGs) office before going to the cabinet for endorsement. Because the FPFNS

involves six ministries, the SG's office required a signed letter of support from each before it could be officially sent to the cabinet. All documents are now ready and the policy is expected to be endorsed in July 2019.
The delay is also due to controversy around the best location and reporting lines for the NFNC. Although currently assigned to the Ministry of Health, its multisectoral role poses many new questions in terms of operationalization and implementation, funding, decision-making, partnerships and roles of the main stakeholders. These questions will need to be answered in the light of the reform and restructuring process of the MoA and its extension division.
Finally, the actual level of commitment from the government ministries and other partners in the implementation of this policy is unclear. Nutrition is still understood by many as a health concern, and not all stakeholders have a clear vision as to how to contribute to FNS. Additionally, practical difficulties in terms of lack of experience and procedures for cross-sectoral implementation, and communication mechanisms may add new challenges to the policy implementation process.

2.4.3. THE STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN SDP 2019-2023 OF THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

The Strategic Development Plan (SDP), 2019-2023 from the Ministry of Agriculture was endorsed by the cabinet in July 2019. Improve food and nutrition security for all Fijians is the first of its five strategic priorities15. Both Food and Nutrition security concepts are explicit, and the local production is enhanced through several strategies that facilitate the access to healthy and affordable food for all Fijians. The SDP prioritizes improved access to local, safe and nutritious food for rural communities; school-focused activities to promote uptake of diverse, nutritious and safe food, and enhanced production of resilient, safe and nutritious foods in rural, peri-urban and urban communities. It also envisages the strengthening of MoA planning, monitoring, leadership and coordination with other partner capacities for the promotion and implementation of cross-sectoral FNS actions. Although some entry points for promoting a more comprehensive nutrition -sensitive agriculture and food system approach can be identified, the underlying causes of malnutrition are not specifically acknowledged.

It is also necessary to mention the Ministry of Agriculture Costed Annual Operational Plan (COP), 2018/2019, which is based on the same five strategic priorities as included in the SDP, including food and nutrition security. The COP addresses agriculture in rural and urban areas and schools, as well as some emerging challenges for the sector, for example, climate change. The participation of women and youth in the agriculture sector was identified as a gap, but a gendered approach to agriculture development remains outstanding.

The preparation process followed a participatory approach involving consultations with senior management officers of the MoA, including deputy secretaries, the permanent secretary and the minister; and technical sessions with all the MoA divisional directors and their teams, under the supervision of the chief economist of the ministry and with the support of the economics and planning unit. The degree of ownership regarding the document is very high, with officers stating that they clearly see their work reflected in it.

Rural and outer islands smallholders are particularly recognized as hosting vulnerable farmers

[15] The other strategic priorities (SP) are: SP2: Increased farmer household income for sustainable livelihoods; SP3: Improve the adoption of sustainable resource management and climate-smart agriculture; SP4: Establish and improve commercial agriculture and SP5: Improve quality public sector performance and service delivery.

in need of special services because of their geographical limitations. The significant challenges to food and nutritional security that remote rural areas face receives special attention. Also acknowledged are the home-gardeners from rural, peri-urban and urban areas, who will have an opportunity to be guided and supported by the MoA in producing their own healthy food.

There are no agreed mechanisms for selecting the vulnerable populations that will be assisted by the MoA. For programmes developed in vulnerable areas, including rural and outer islands and remote highland areas in the interior of Viti Levu, all of the population is considered (for example for support to the marketing of their production through the Agriculture Marketing Authority). Programmes for disadvantaged urban, peri-urban and urban areas create their own ad-hoc lists of beneficiaries based on actual demands for participating. All the applicants are attended until the budget is finished and if allocated budget does not cover all requests, additional beneficiaries are included in the following financial year.

Targeting the most vulnerable people and including a wide range of stakeholders faces many challenges in the MoA. Some argue that most of the projects intended to enhance food security in Fiji have failed because they do not recognize the fact, that food systems need to be aligned with the traditions and culture of the Fijian people and the island way of life (Kumar, 2013). Fijian farmers still use some of their traditional methods to address problems like soil erosion, droughts, floods, insect and pest attacks on their farms (Harrison and Karim, 2016), but previous policies have advocated the transformation of agriculture from subsistence and semi-commercial to commercial farming without acknowledging the significance of this indigenous knowledge in food production systems. Traditional farmers are often underrepresented, excluded from agricultural policies and support schemes, with most of the government policies focusing on agrarian sectors that are strong revenue earners.

The SDP recognizes the need to improve the quality of services provided to agriculture stakeholders. This is especially evident in terms of community extension services that include research (plant and animal genetics), financial (facilitating access to credit through technical assistance and provision of equity as collateral), marketing and information services. As MoA resources are limited, the SDP considers that part of these services can easily be delivered by external partners and it aims to build robust private-public partnerships based on clear results and shared investment. Public and private sector partnerships for commercial agriculture to facilitate market access that could also encourage agroprocessing.

The SDP follows a women in development approach,16 actively seeking to increase the low rates of female farmers registered in the country. Despite gender aspects not being mainstreamed as (an integral) part of the SDP, differences in roles are acknowledged and aspects related to improving access to markets, technology or training are included. During discussions with MoA officers around the SDP, they also mentioned the role that religion plays in terms of reinforcing traditional roles for men and women, especially at the community level.

The SDP is based on evidence. In addition to information and data included in the first version of the plan in 2017, a complete situational analysis was conducted by the MoA with complementary data from the last Housing and Population Census (Fiji Bureau of Statistics, 2017); the Employment and Unemployment survey (Fiji Bureau of Statistics, 2015-16) and the Financial Service Demand Side Survey (Reserve bank of Fiji, 2015). A short summary of this report – focused on most relevant information for ministry planning – is included in the SDP,

[16]Such an approach tends to promote women's participation and specific women´s activities without understanding and/or addressing the underlying causes of inequity.

2019-2023.

Climate change is included as a strategic priority, and several expected outcomes are clearly related to this challenge. Key aspects, such as management of climate risks in agriculture; access to resilient crop varieties and livestock breeds; and the adoption of sustainable resource management and climate-smart agricultural practices appear in the SDP 2019-2023.

In addition, to improve services for the rural sectors, the SDP 2019-2023 identifies the need for infrastructure such as storage facilities for better market linkages. Improved communications connectivity has also been proposed to help farmers find better prices for their produce. The proposal also includes improvements in mobile technology and internet connectivity for farmers. However, farmers will need to be trained in order to be able to effectively use these resources. Other emerging issues that were not so successfully addressed before are now included in the SDP, including rural migration and youth unemployment.

A Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis and risk assessment is included in the SDP. Among the main risks identified are the higher prices of healthy food; the fluctuating prices of agriculture products; the aging of the rural population; the migration of rural young people and women to urban areas; the increasingly recurrent and extreme climate-related events; the involvement and commitment of main agricultural partners; and the timely availability of enough financial resources to address all the identified issues. Strategic priorities have been linked to these identified risks as part of the mitigation actions that MoA will be implementing during the next five years.

The MoA expressed a strong interest in a monitoring framework that can provide timely information for decision-making. They recognize that at the moment there is a lack of institutional monitoring culture, technical skills and even practical tools in which ministry officers can be trained to perform these tasks on a regular basis. The SDP includes a monitoring framework that has been built with a high degree of participation by sectoral stakeholders. The process for preparing the monitoring framework included consultation with all divisional directors and their technical teams to determine outcomes, strategic priorities and an overarching theory of change. Outcome indicators, means of verification and targets were defined for each outcome. The budget was adjusted accordingly for the next five years.

There are gaps, for example in the means to most equitably determine participation in the MoA programmes, including by women .The process to decentralize implementation of the SDP to regional offices – critical for the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery – is still in its design phase with no clear understanding of when it will be finalized and ready for implementation. The implications of potential delays have not been addressed in the SDP.

The MoA is giving increasing importance to commercial agriculture, in the hope that available resources would be allocated in a more efficient way if they focus on commercial instead than on family farmers. FNS interventions are still considered a priority for the sector, but according to MoA assessment, past results did not reach their expectations. Although some authors have mentioned poor planning and management of projects, lack of commitment from government, overambitious projections of project outcomes, conflicting views from management and lack of capacity as key weaknesses of past agricultural policies (Kumar and Kumar, 2015), more systematic evidence is needed to ensure that the outcomes of such analyses are not biased.

2.5. Summary

This Policy Effectiveness Analysis focuses on two main national policies for which FIRST has provided technical assistance since 2017. The Fiji Policy on Food and Nutrition Security (FPFNS) and its Action Plan, a multisectoral initiative prepared by the Agriculture and Health Ministries in close collaboration and partnership with the Ministries of Education, Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation, Industry, Trade and Tourism and Youth and Sports; and the five-year Strategic Development Plan under the Ministry of Agriculture (SDP).

The assessment of the focus and design of these policies considered the quality of the policy preparation process; the consideration of immediate and underlying causes of food insecurity and malnutrition; the inclusion of a gender approach; whether or not the most vulnerable people were considered; whether the policies were based on evidence; the existence and quality of a monitoring framework; and the existence of mechanisms for their implementation and multisectoral coordination.

Additionally, the assessment provides an analysis of international, national and sectoral strategies connected to food and nutrition security, their specific linkages to the FPFNS and the SDP, and a quick mapping of key institutions and actors for food and nutrition security in Fiji, including responsibilities and strategic linkages.

Finally, the assessment attempts to identify main gaps and issues not (sufficiently) considered within the two policies. The FPFNS does not include the fisheries sector, which has a prominent role for food and nutrition security in the region. Also absent are specific aspects regarding youth employment and participation in the agriculture sector and the need for more investment to increase employment in rural areas and reduce urban migration. Under political economy issues, the best location and reporting lines of the NFNC are discussed, as well as its potential and challenges for playing the multisectoral role that is envisaged in the new policy and the room for improvement in terms of analysing the underlying causes of food insecurity and malnutrition and offering forward-looking strategies to address them.

Among the main gaps and issues not considered in the SDP, are the challenges of ensuring equitable registration for MoA programmes. The ongoing decentralization process and its multiple challenges are also discussed. Finally, the shift of emphasis towards commercial agriculture and commercial farmers with new expectations for the sector has to be taken into account.

3. Implementation mechanisms and capacities to address food insecurity and malnutrition

3.1. Implementation mechanisms and capacities

This chapter will analyse implementation mechanisms and capacities in relation to the implementation of the Fiji Policy for Food and Nutrition Security (FPFNS) and Action Plan, and the five-year Strategic Development Plan of the MoA.

Regarding the FPFNS the analysis will focus on the National Food and Nutrition Centre as the multisector institution, currently funded through the Ministry of Health (NFNC/MOH), envisaged to be the Secretariat overseeing the implementation, monitoring and reporting on this policy and its Action Plan. Appendix 5 includes a SWOT matrix and a brief report prepared with the NFNC on this question. In addition, capacities for implementation of the policy from the main ministries involved have been discussed in a Multisector Dialogue on Food and Nutrition Security in Fiji, which was held in January 2019 in Suva. A summary of the report can be found in Appendix 6.

In the case of the SDP, a capacity needs assessment and capacity development plan for the Ministry of Agriculture, with an emphasis on the Economic, Planning and Statistics Division, was conducted through a Letter of Agreement between FAO and the Overseas Development Institute (ODI). An executive summary of this process can be found in Appendix 7 and some of its contents are summarised in Section 3.4.

In both cases, capacities were analysed at three interlinked levels: the enabling environment, the organization and individuals. Both technical and functional capacities (policy and normative, knowledge, partnership and implementation) were analysed.

3.2. Analysis of the NFNC capacities in connection with FPFNS

This section focuses on the capacities that are necessary to implement the policy, and particularly the two objectives falling under the direct responsibility of the NFNC:

1) Improve multi-sector leadership, ownership and coordination of national Food and Nutrition Security action: to create an effective institutional and legal framework for management and mobilization of sufficient resources and actions to achieve improved national food and nutrition security.
2) Scale up evidence-based action to reduce food and nutrition insecurity: to identify and scale up investment in best practices for reducing food and nutrition insecurity in communities and evaluate their effectiveness.

3.2.1. ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

The enabling environment is the context in which individuals and organizations put their capabilities into action and where capacity development processes take place (FIRST Capacity Development Strategy, 2018). This analysis considered the context in which the NFNC operates.

Capacity to propose/review regulatory and policy frameworks. The Green Growth Framework (Ministry of Economy, 2014) acknowledged that “weak and outdated laws and regulations

restrict opportunities for consumers to exercise their rights … and this has contributed to increased consumer trends toward unhealthy food." The document also highlights the need for better legal protection to mitigate unfair trade practices. Although the NFNC does not have specialized capacities for legislative drafting, it has demonstrated capacity to include food and nutrition security concerns in the national legal agenda.

As discussed previously, there are a number of existing legislations and policies that are directly related to the FPFNS, and specifically linked to the education, health, and food safety sector, among others. Stronger capacities could guarantee that regulations are reviewed and adjusted to current and new tendencies affecting FNS; reinforce political consensus across the sectors and bridge sector-specific regulatory agendas. In terms of policy, although the current cross-sectoral proposal has been prepared with the support of many sectors, there is room for improving the capacity of the NFNC to explicitly incorporate FNSSA objectives and considerations into cross-sectoral policies and policies from other sectors.

The NFNC and the sectors involved in the FPFNS could benefit from an improvement in their negotiation skills. A good example was the lengthy and cumbersome process needed to get the endorsement of the solicitor general's office, where it appeared that the ministries did not have much knowledge or practise. In addition, ministry staff lack the skills they need to deal with sensitive institutional issues and to promote decision-making.

Governance and leadership. In the final proposal of the FPFNS, the NFNC is called on to play a key role in terms of "multi-sector leadership, ownership and co-ordination of national Food and Nutrition Security action." This is a clear improvement from previous nutrition plans, where there was lack of clarity as to the NFNC role. Food and nutrition security governance lies mainly with the NFNC, which has the necessary convening power; it is committed to play this role and is well-known and respected across the sectors. However, there are a number of issues that may be hindering its potential for supporting policy implementation. This includes its location in the Ministry of Health, which does not facilitate the cross-sectoral vision and the promotion of nutrition-sensitive interventions from a broader perspective. Institutional dependency also hinders the ability of the NFNC to communicate and directly interact with the different sectors and other stakeholders (including development partners and civil society). Long and bureaucratic processes to obtain financial and human resources and hire technical services and the limited resources allocated for action implementation, are among the current limitations. These reasons, and related political discussions as to where the NFNC should be located in the government structure, and to whom it should report and be accountable, additional reasons why the policy has not yet been approved.

Although mechanisms for implementation are described in the final proposal of the FPFNS (a national multi-stakeholder high-level committee for FNS, a national steering committee and a multi-stakeholder technical group)17, these still need to be put into practice, with a clear

[17] Fiji's Policy on food and nutrition proposes a three-tiered governance structure, coordinated and supported by an independent secretariat that oversee implementation, monitoring and reporting:

1. A national multi-stakeholder high-level committee for FNS (HLC), with representatives from partner ministries (MoA, MoHMS, MoEHA, MoYS, MWCPA, MITT, MoE) at the permanent secretary and deputy permanent secretary level, as well as participation from the private sector, as the mechanism for providing political leadership, reviewing progress, providing recommendations on new ways forward, and reporting to the cabinet.
2. A food and nutrition security steering committee (NSC) will provide operational oversight over the Fiji Policy and Plan of Action on Food and Nutrition Security, and report implementation progress and resolution problems to the HLC. Each party to the policy and plan of action (MoA, MoEHA, MoHMS, MoYS, MWFPA, MITT) shall appoint two members to the NSC. Members shall submit updates to the NSC on implementation of planned actions for which they are the lead agency, identify issues and challenges to planned implementation activities, and collaborate on improving multisector coordination and complementary action.

understanding and definition of each stakeholder´s roles and responsibilities. There is a need for more human and financial resources for effective coordination and implementation. Government processes need to become more efficient in order to be able to obtain the necessary budget, recruit additional people and outsource functions that require external assistance. Communication channels through the MoH are slow and may delay direct interactions with potential partners and donors.

The ADVOCACY AND PARTNERSHIPS CAPACITIES of the NFNC are key for scaling up evidence-based action to reduce food and nutrition insecurity. As nutrition has been traditionally included in the health agenda, there a risk that other sectors will not feel responsible. However, once the FPFNS and action plan are officially endorsed, there will be a good opportunity to align all sector priorities and ensure the achievement of more FNS impact. Key partner ministries must include the actions within their plan of actions and guarantee that these actions trickle down to the divisional and community level. In addition, there is a formal follow-up from the Ministry of Economy, which is also a good way of supporting the implementation of actions.

The involvement of other key stakeholders, such as civil society organizations, faith-based organizations (FBOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), is seen as an opportunity because of their deep roots in the community, although in most of the cases they do not have a plan for implementing FNS actions. With regard to the private sector, there are also opportunities, not only for getting additional funding, but also for promoting healthy foods. However, there is also a risk of conflicting interests, especially with some producers of unhealthy food (with lots of added sugar/salt and/or highly processed), whose products are replacing the traditional diet.

3.2.2. INSTITUTIONAL DIMENSION

The institutional dimension is mostly related to issues like strategic management functions, structures and relationships, operational capacity (processes, systems, procedures, sanctions, incentives and values), human and financial resources (policies, deployment and performance), knowledge and information resources, and infrastructure (FIRST Capacity Development Strategy, 2018).

In order to efficiently translate the Food and Nutrition Security Policy into action the capacities of the NFNC will need to be strengthened or restructured. The Centre has an annual budget and human resources structure in place, although some positions are still vacant. The MoHMS, which houses the NFNC, is committed to the FPFNS and provides annual budget for salaries and wages, utilities, transport and fuel, and other administrative costs, although sometimes the approval processes can be tedious and cumbersome. Transport is a major limitation. The Centre has submitted the request for a new vehicle, but still there's no confirmation that it will be provided next year, making it difficult for the Centre to interact with local communities. The NFNC seems more able to play a strategic role at national and even regional levels, which should be combined with the work of other divisions of the MoHMS better suited and

3. A national multi-stakeholder technical working group (TWG), with representation from each partner ministry as well as NGOs and the private sector, to facilitate the provision of updates on implementation progress by each partner, assist with ongoing mainstreaming of the policy and plan into their annual corporate plans and budgets; and provide a forum for highlighting emerging issues that require guidance from the HLC.

equipped for work at local level.

Field work is mainly conducted by dietitians with substantial knowledge of what is happening at the household level and who have obtained good results in the past, for example in increasing breastfeeding rates. The NFNC officers highlighted the need to increase the budget to support and reinforce these field teams and enhance their technical capacities to address malnutrition and its different causes. Moreover, if an effort is going to be made to shift nutrition-specific programmes towards the most vulnerable people, the targeting capacities of these dietitians need also to improve. This would require better access to updated information and better tools to reach the most vulnerable groups of people, instead of targeting broad groups, such as breast feeding women, children and women of a certain age, children attending primary school, etc. to determine programme's participants. Until now, media campaigns, including radio programmes and visits of dietitians to households in rural areas with different promotion materials (calendars, brochures etc.), have been used but their effectiveness remain to be assessed.

To ensure that the FPFNS translates into effective action, NFNC BUDGETING CAPACITIES should be enhanced. In addition to the current budget allocation from the Ministry of Health (which has not increased in the last ten years), a budget increase is included in the Fiji Plan of Action for Nutrition for the coordination and implementation of food and nutrition security programmes. The MoA has also declared its intention to support the NFNC in the future. If the policy and its budget are approved as written, the resources will be adequate, but capacity is still needed to ensure that budget allocations are requested and approved according to the Action Plan and that proper implementation and tracking of expenses are carried out later. Unfortunately, experience shows that budget requests are not always endorsed since resources are not always available in the national accounts. In addition, as noted previously, the decision as to where the NFNC is located within the government structure may affect willingness to increase its budget. The MoA is interested in strengthening its FNS capacities and may see the NFNC as a convenient partner.
There is a system in place for regularly MONITORING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FPFNSPOLICY and evaluating its impact, including quarterly reports from all heads of departments in MoHMS and MoA with details on results and expenditures. The NFNC receives the information and prepares the monitoring report. There is a M&E officer allocated for these tasks, including the measurement of progress based on the established indicators and its connection with budget disbursement. To be sustainable, the system requires trained and stable staffing and an effective information programme for monitoring updates. Free tools such as google drive cannot be used because of data protection issues. Both human and financial resources must be increased.
There is a need to generate and disseminate nutrition surveillance data in a much more systematic and regular way. NNS are conducted every ten years, but the collected data are not properly/timely/completely analysed or disseminated, showing that there is substantial room for improvement. Raising and maintaining awareness of the nutritional situation in the different areas of the country, including differences among different populations groups, is key in order to informing new policies and promoting shared responsibility and actions among all sectors.

3.2.3. INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

Officers of the NFNC were asked about the capacities needed to perform their tasks according to their job descriptions. In general, they were quite confident as to their technical capacities

regarding policy development, nutrition, dietetics, food science and agriculture. They considered themselves also to be well trained on advocacy and campaign development. However, there was a general recognition that the current lack of human resources constrains all of the above capacities.

Areas in which technical expertise could be improved are: planning, monitoring and evaluation, project management, and research and analysis. Another possible gap is the limited information on systemic bottlenecks in the enabling environment for FNS, and their role in the stagnation of some of the key indicators, for example anaemia.

A key to achieving better food and nutrition security impacts is adopting a gender approach that empowers women and enables the development of their potential as producers and economic actors. Among the necessary skills and capacities needed by NFNC staff are a better understanding of basic gender concepts and specific gender issues emerging in the agriculture and rural sector in the country; awareness about the importance of considering a gender approach in sector planning and policy development; knowledge of how to conduct a basic gender analysis and to integrate gender issues into the FPFNSP; use of practical tools to integrate the gender approach into their current work (e.g. through analysis of gender roles and dynamics in the country context, identification of gender gaps with regard to FNS, integration of gender in planning, budgeting and programme/policy development, etc.).

Different options for individual training include post-grade courses in Fiji and abroad, short courses both online and in person and even meetings for experience exchanges in the Oceania region.

The NFNC staff members consider themselves to be motivated and even passionate about their work in food and nutrition security, although the current uncertainty in terms of the extension of their contracts and the status of the Centre does not help them to remain focused on their job's priorities.

3.3. Analysis of sectoral ministry capacities in connection with FPFNS

This section will look at the implementation capacities of the main ministries involved in the FPFNS. Information was obtained during the Multisector Dialogue on Food and Nutrition Security in Fiji, earlier this year; a summary of the report can be found in Appendix 6. The current version of the FPFNS contains ten actions areas whose implementation is assigned to the MoA, MoHMS, MWCPA, and MoEd. A special role is envisaged for the NFNC as described above.

With regard to the MoWCPA, discussions have been held to guarantee that what is proposed by MoA for the next five years in terms of gender-related action is coherent with MoWCA sectoral policies. However, there is a need to strengthen the linkages between both institutions in practice, enhancing the dialogue and making sure that there is a widespread and good understanding of the interrelations between gender inequalities and FNS outcomes, as the basis to effectively operationalize a gender approach to FNS in the country.

In this context, stakeholders identified the following opportunities and recommendations to support action on FNS across sectors: 1) increasing awareness of FNS among key sectoral actors; 2) supporting FNS activities across sectors; and 3) strengthening governance of FNS. One of the main conclusions of this dialogue concerned the need to strengthen ongoing sectoral action and coordination on FNS, particularly once the draft Fiji Policy on FNS has been endorsed by Cabinet (but recognizing that FNS activities have been integrated into long term

government planning in Fiji for decades).

Participants identified specific capacities needed to support these recommendations, at three main levels.

3.3.1. ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

With regard to the enabling environment, the main capacities identified were related to existing mechanisms for coordination of multisectoral activity; mechanisms to promote reporting and accountability on FNS activities; and mechanisms to foster partnerships with academic institutions for research and protocols to guide culturally relevant FNS messaging to targeted population groups. Several participants stated that FNS messages in campaigns and information materials may not have been adjusted enough to specific local contexts and were difficult to understand by the local population.

All these contributions relate closely to what was already identified by NFNC stakeholders and partners. New additions included strengthening linkages with research institutions and improving communication with the general population. The roles and responsibilities of FNS officers in charge of sectoral strategies and programmes need to be recognized in order to ensure that adequate time, resources and technical support are allocated to perform all related actions, from awareness raising to effective coordination and data collection.

3.3.2. INSTITUTIONAL DIMENSION

Stakeholders from different sectors identified the key institutional capacities related to the FPFNS, including the adoption of healthy practices (e.g. government catering etc.); adequate budget allocations for activities identified by each ministry; expertise to support regulatory intervention (e.g. strategies to support food industry reformulation); and improved data management and data sharing. Again, there is a high degree of coincidence with the capacities identified in the former section, and also a few fresh insights and ideas, especially with regard to opportunities for regulatory intervention.

3.3.3. INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

The main individual capacities needed to put the policy in action related to advocacy for nutrition policy action; accountability and reporting of activities; and skills needed to incentivize further action and improve evidence base and evaluation, through improving data management, analysis and evaluation. As in the previous section, there is a high degree of unanimity on the main capacities needed.

3.4 Analysis of the Ministry of Agriculture's capacities in connection with the SDP

This section focuses on the capacities needed in the MoA to implement its five-year Strategic Development Plan, with an emphasis on the Economic Planning and Statistics (EP&S) Division as the entity responsible for providing "sound economic planning and policy advice for the development of Fiji's agriculture sector (Ministry of Agriculture, 2018)." Part of this section has been completed with information from the ODI 2019 report Capacity building plan for the Fiji Ministry of Agriculture's economic analysis and reporting capacity, which was funded by FIRST in 2018 and whose executive summary is included in Appendix 7. Valuable information was gathered during the process of preparation of the SDP, which involved consultation with a wide array of ministry officers during January and March 2019.

In terms of improving FNS for the population, MoA's first strategic priority is to ensure access to adequate food of acceptable quality and nutritional value or all Fijians. The Ministry has embarked on a number of initiatives to improve production and access to local, safe and nutritious food for rural, peri-urban and urban communities. These include the development of an overarching, holistic framework that provides a concerted, multisector approach for FNS; the alignment of MoA programmes with national food safety regulations and policies; and the strengthening of germplasm capacity, seed-banks and technology to encourage the longevity of local foods. Improving FNS as a strategic priority will be complemented by efforts to improve service delivery; core research programs promoting climate resilience in traditional crops, vegetables, fruits and livestock; the promotion of value-addition and improvement of market conditions and the streamlining of operating and financial processes and systems. Capacities below are analysed in this context.

3.4.1. ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

Planning and external reporting capacities needed to abide by the rules under the current national regulatory and policy framework mainly relate to the requirement to align strategic and operational planning activities to the national priorities in the National Development Plan (NDP) and the legislative requirement to develop an annual report for Parliament and the public. To meet the first requirement, the ministries need to follow the Guidelines on strategic and operational planning prepared by the Ministry of Economy and Planning (MoE) in 2018. An effort has been made to follow these guidelines in the current SDP 2019-2023, and to strengthen MoA's contact with the Economic Planning Unit of the MoE. The Annual Reports for 2016, 2017 and 2018 still need to be drafted and/or submitted to Cabinet. The responsibility for this task is unclear; it has been performed by the statistics unit in previous years.

In terms of regulations, the MoA is currently responsible for 28 pieces of legislations. It is envisaged that all the Acts specified under the Ministerial Assignment will be reviewed and updated to ensure there is no conflict between policy interpretations of existing Acts (Costed Operational Plan, MoA 2018). The update of these legislations has been pointed out as a current need for the MoA, whose EP&S division has to conduct the final review and pass the revised legislation on to the Secretary General's office. Coordination with this office needs also to improve in order to fast-track the review process. The MoA already been working on some of the most urgent and key pieces of legislation, such as the Agricultural Land Act, which addresses one of main bottlenecks for the sector, the availability of agricultural land.

The MoA works closely with other ministries, government entities, the private sector, academic institutions, non-government organizations and international development partners. However, the point was made during the different meetings with MoA officers that coordination and communication with development partners at the strategic level are still quite limited. It was felt that policy dialogues should be conducted on a regular basis to ensure that these partners are responsive to the MoA needs, also that opportunities for more focused and effective collaboration are not hindered and that ownership of donor-funded programmes is guaranteed (ODI, 2019).

Two areas in which the MoA has identified that its leadership and coordination with other partner's capacities have to be strengthened are food and nutrition security and disaster risk reduction. Both present multifaceted challenges and require a concerted multisectoral approach and the establishment of two new dedicated units, has been proposed in the SDP 2019 for this purpose.

Partnerships have also been identified as a suitable and sustainable approach in several work areas in the Strategic Development Plan 2019. Defining and implementing partnerships, identifying common goals and determining the responsibilities and commitments of the different actors will require enhancing the current capacities of the MoA. Some concrete partnership examples proposed in the SDP are the promotion of private-public partnerships to boost agriculture exports; partnerships with academic and technical training institutions to provide technical services to farmer's associations (e.g. value chain development and preparation of business plans);[18] and partnerships with national retailers and hotels for improving market access for local producers. Other areas with partnership potential include agriculture research, where the private sector and academia play a major role, especially regarding resilient crop varieties and livestock breeds, sustainable resource management and market information.

3.4.2. INSTITUTIONAL DIMENSION

According to the interviews conducted in the preparation of this report, there is a need to reinforce planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting capacities. The skills and tools of responsible officers should be upgraded and the overall institutional culture must change to include such skills as staff key performance indicators (i.e. part of the staff's core functions). It seems that as performance staff indicators are not well translate from Operational Plans down to Unit Work plans, corrective actions to ensure high performance cannot be implemented on time (ODI, 2019). With regard to the SDP, outcomes for each strategic priority and SMART indicators have been built through a participatory process, based on the available data and actual potential for improvement.

In terms of implementation capacities, the fact that the SDP has gained a high degree of ownership by MoA officers from all divisions at different levels during its preparation, and that much of the work that they are either currently doing or envisaging is reflected in the plan, ensures that the mechanisms for implementation are already/partially in place. As noted, the installation of new units to reinforce the work in food and nutrition security and disaster risk management and to specifically support the SDP monitoring and implementation processes are also part of the final proposal.

The Ministry has begun to review its key operative and financial processes, systems and infrastructure to increase their efficiency and user-friendliness. This been voiced as a crucial issue to be addressed within the next few years.

Extension services related to diverse areas (FNS, Climate change and resilience, market access, financial aspects, etc.) remain a significant part of the MoA's activities. In recent years, the quality and the intensity of these services has deteriorated as a result of a general neglect of agriculture as a valuable opportunity for sustainable income generation; lower budget allocations from the government and decreasing access to financial resources;19 lack of access to updated technical, economic and market information; and the gradual aging of farmers as youth have been lured to urban areas, which appear to offer better opportunities. Many of

[18] With increased exports and the expansion of commercial farming initiatives for urban and tourism industry markets, several industries have reached the stage where they are taking a major role in the further development of their value chains. Several other industries have well-organized producers' associations that have received considerable support from government in the past, and are now reaching the stage where they can impose greater management control over their industries.

[19] While the government-allocated budget for MoA's capital programmes has steadily increased, with an average annual growth rate of 17 percent over the past five years, the number of staff in MoA has been decreasing with an average annual growth rate of minus 3 percent.

these aspects are addressed in the SDP, which envisages capacity building and budget increases to improve the performance of extension services, including in rural and remote areas where these services are most needed.

A key role of extension services is to provide relevant agriculture data and information in a regular, reliable and timely way, in order to enable farmers to make better decisions with regard to their production activities. Although surveys are conducted regularly, they may not occur frequently enough to reflect substantial changes around sectoral trends that need to be considered in order to make sound decisions.

There is room for improvement in terms of the current capacity of the MoA to collect, analyse and disseminate reliable, accurate and regular statistical information related to Fiji's rural and agriculture sector, and receive feedback from agriculture stakeholders. The task of economic analysis and reporting falls under the responsibility of the EP&S division, whose vision is "to excel in the provision of sound economic planning and policy advice for the development of Fiji's agriculture sector." Regular economic analysis and evidence-based policy-making based on sound data analysis on general sector trends, trade and markets is needed to support stakeholders in their decision-making processes and the management of agricultural risks. This is a key function that could become particularly important in terms of services provided by the MoA in the most vulnerable regions and communities. At the moment, it seems that different ministry units undertake their own quantitative surveys with little coordination among them, which makes difficult for the Ministry to efficiently perform this strategic task and fulfil its mandate. Moreover, some stakeholders have observed that obtaining such information was rather cumbersome so efforts to improve the availability of information on the Ministry's website should be encouraged.

The preparation of realistic, technically sounded and well justified budget proposals is crucial. MoA intends to step up its efforts in leveraging technical and financial resources on the various global, regional mechanisms related to climate change resilience. At the moment, officers in the Ministry have describe their capacity as reactive, when proactive would be desirable. Moreover, they stated that the lack of information on assets and human resources available/needed in the field, contributes to make resource allocation slow and inefficient. Ideally, the strengthening of M&E capacities should support a more efficient budget allocation, based on the results-based performance of the different programmes. The skills needed to include gender aspects in the budget process in a way that guarantees that public resources contribute to advancing gender equality and women's empowerment, would be highly advisable.

During the sessions held for the preparation of the SDP, the streamlining of communication and information flows was identified an urgent need. The improvement of technical equipment and human capacities is vital to guaranteeing more efficient internal procedures, including financial transactions and the receipt of regular reports. In turn, the availability of information will enable a more timely and efficient resource allocation. In terms of information related to technical performance, establishing clear processes and responsibilities for collecting the required monitoring and evaluation data, while making sure that the analysis covers key issues and produces reliable results, is crucial. In that sense, improving the communications network and training MoA staff is a must, and should be carried out as soon as possible.

In order to improve the adoption of sustainable resource management and climate change adaptation practices in agriculture by farmers, the research capacities of the MoA need to be

strengthened to respond to demands of the different stakeholders and adapt to new challenges. This includes the capacity to forecast upcoming needs in relation to climate change (resilient varieties and livestock breeds, pest and disease control, risk tools, etc.) but the use of e-agriculture in order to convey relevant information to the concerned stakeholders. In addition, MoA staff must be supported with the appropriate infrastructure and facilities to deliver the best results. The SDP therefore provides for the construction of modern facilities to provide agricultural research and veterinary services, as well as the upgrading and maintenance of rural extension offices and staff quarters.

A cross-cutting issue that came up during the different meetings is that the present capacities of the MoA are seriously affected by the significant numbers of vacancies and positions that are effectively vacant. The MoA is currently undertaking an organizational reform that will aim to solve these problems, but the results of this process are not expected before the end of the year. A key feature of the new organizational structure is the decentralization of authority to regional managers, which is expected to facilitate decision-making at the local level and bring about greater efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery (Situational Analysis, MoA 2019).

3.4.3. INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

The MoA is well aware of the importance of maintaining a healthy and happy working environment and has included within the SDP 2019-2013 a process to improve the working conditions provided in order to retain its current staff and attract new well-qualified candidates. Among the incentives envisaged will be the improvement of the administrative procedures that directly affect employees (as payments, leave request and others), salary adjustments based on ongoing performance assessments and training and capacity building opportunities for staff members to add value to their current jobs.

There were recurrent calls for MoA staff training on FNS, e-agriculture and climate change. E-agriculture training includes the management of e-tools for efficient information flows and the use of agricultural platforms, including those related to climate change adaption, as early warning systems. Strengthening technical capacities in these areas should prepare the MoA staff for supporting the sectoral stakeholders to build resilience and manage agriculture risks.

A cross-cutting topic relates to the capacity to address gender issues. Extension officers have not received training to ensure that programmes address men's and women's different agricultural responsibilities, roles and needs. Although not many programmes have specifically targeted female farmers so far, the new SDP envisages support services to enhance the women´ role in the sector through skills development, provision of services and the promotion of female farmer´s associations. This could open an opportunity to improve the services provided with a gender perspective and the capacities needed to conduct a basic gender analysis and to integrate gender issues in the SDP, including planning, budgeting and monitoring different strategic priorities.

Finally, it is necessary to mention that most of the information about individual capacities has been provided by headquarters' staff and a limited number of officers from the decentralized offices. Further analysis is needed to obtain a more comprehensive picture of other capacities that may be more relevant for the staff working in different rural stations and divisional offices. Moreover, now that the SDP has been endorsed by the Cabinet, the MoA must ensure that there is a good level of understanding of its five strategic priority areas by all employees and awareness of the new directions.

3. 5. Summary

This chapter analysed mechanisms and capacities for the implementation of the Fiji Policy for Food and Nutrition Security and Action Plan, and five-year Strategic Development Plan of the MoA. For the FPFNS, the analysis focused on the National Food and Nutrition Centre as the multisector institution that will serve as the Secretariat to oversee the implementation, monitoring and reporting on this policy. With regard to the SDP, the analysis considered the Ministry of Agriculture, with an emphasis on the Economic, Planning and Statistics Division. In both cases, capacities were analysed at three interlinked levels: the enabling environment, the organization and the individual. Both technical and functional capacities (policy and normative, knowledge, partnership and implementation) were analysed.

Examples and data were provided to justify the key capacities that need to be strengthened to support the FPFNS and SDP. In general, regulatory and policy development capacities, governance and leadership capacities, and ADVOCACY AND PARTNERSHIP CAPACITIES the most important needs at the enabling environment level. Implementation, monitoring and budgeting capacities, targeting and capacity for generating evidence are most relevant at the institutional level. Finally, an array of technical capacities, including skills necessary to incorporate a gender approach in the implementation of actions and strategies, are needed at the individual level.

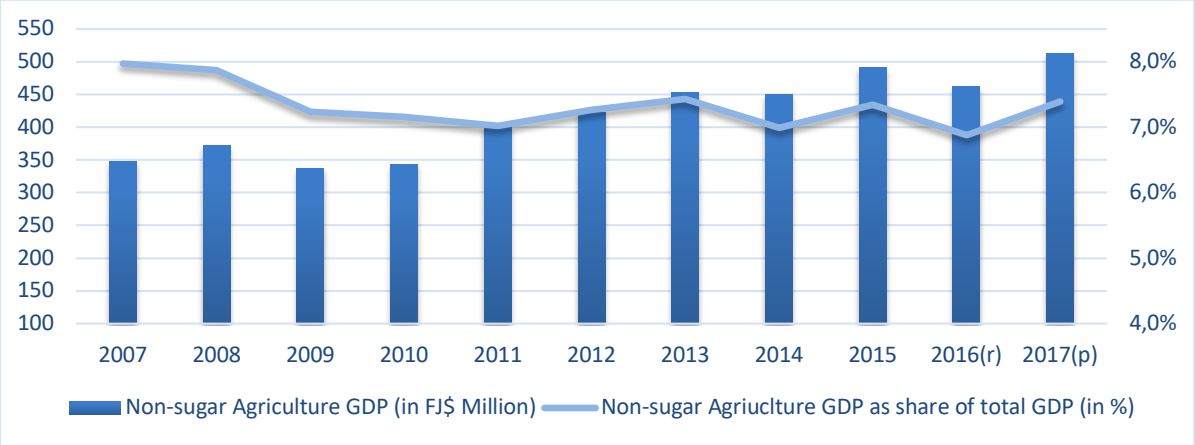
In addition, there are two fundamental set of capacities that apply to the MoA with regard to the services they provide to support agriculture stakeholders in their production activities. The first is the collection, analysis and dissemination of relevant agriculture data and information in a regular, reliable and timely way, which is also useful for internal decision-making processes. The second is the capacity to respond to demands of the different stakeholders and adapt to new challenges, including, for example, climate change and the utilization of e-agriculture.

4. Funding existing policies and strategies

4.1. Contribution of agriculture to Fiji's economy

In Fiji, the agriculture subsectors (crops, livestock, fisheries and forestry) are overseen by various line-ministries. The Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) is tasked with overseeing the non-sugar crops and livestock sector. The sector includes traditional food crops (dalo, cassava and yaqona), tropical fruits (pineapple, pawpaw and mango), vegetables, spices, cocoa, coconut products, beef, dairy, pork, poultry, and goat and bee stocks. The sector generates close to 5 percent of domestic exports and accounts for 19.6 percent of total food imports. The contribution of the agriculture sector as a share of GDP to the total economy has declined from above 20 percent in the late 1980s to 8 percent in 2017 (see Figure 10 below).

FIGURE 10. NON-SUGAR CROPS AND LIVESTOCK GDP



Source: Fiji Bureau of Statistics; (p) provisional. Note: At constant basic prices as of 2011.

After dedicating substantial support and attention to the sugar sector for decades, the government has shifted its focus towards non-sugar crops in the last few years after a continuous decline in sugar cane production. However, total non-sugar crops and livestock GDP has increased greatly over the last decade. In the past five years alone, it increased from FJD 452.9 million in 2013 to FJD 512.6 million in 2017, an increase of 13.2 percent. A major increase took place in 2017, which is exemplary given the widespread devastation of caused by cyclone Winston in 2016 (Situational Analysis, MoA 2019). While non-sugar agriculture has remained relatively stable, the growing of sugarcane, which used to be Fiji's dominant commodity, has greatly decreased. This is in line with the normal trajectory of a developing economy where the contribution of agriculture as share of total GDP declines as contributions from other sectors such as manufacturing and tourism sector increase.

Agriculture also plays a significant role in Fiji's economy by earning foreign exchange through exports. In 2017, Fiji earned FJD 208 million from the export of non-sugar crops and livestock products but imported FJD 691 million worth of crop and livestock commodities, resulting in a negative agriculture trade balance of FJD 483 million. In a competitive market, prices are outside of government control. Over the past five years (2013-2017), Fiji has on average had a negative trade balance of 238 843 metric tonnes. Given population growth projections, consumption and production patterns and the impact of climate change, it is estimated that Fiji's food imports will further increase, which has negative implications for food and nutrition

security (Situational Analysis, MoA 2019).

4.2. Budgeting approaches on food and nutrition security

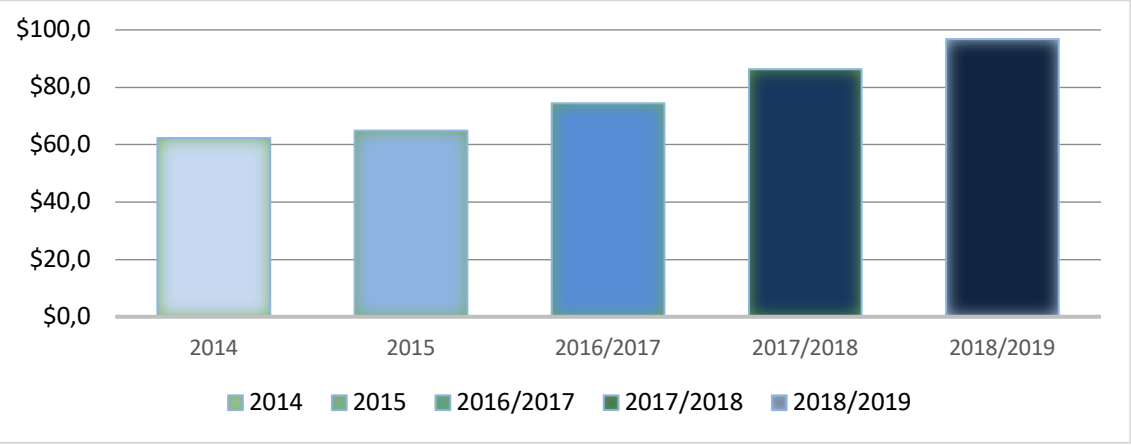
The government has prioritized food and nutrition security in its latest 5-year and 20-year NDP. The food and nutrition security section of the NDP, together with sections on non-sugar agriculture, fisheries and aquaculture and expanding the rural economy, describe programme and projects of sectoral ministries with annual outputs from each ministry. At the sectoral level, the government allocates funds every year to the MoA and the NFNC through the MoHMS specifically for food and nutrition activities. It is through these priorities in the NDP that government will allocate annual budgets for food and nutrition activities as submitted by ministries, but unfortunately no more information is available since no forecast budget is provided in the NDP.

4.2.1 MOA ANNUAL BUDGET (COSTED OPERATIONAL PLAN)

In the financial year 2018/19, the MoA's allocated budget was FJD 96.8 million (the highest in the past 6 years), comprising FJD 37.8 million for operating expenditure (OPEX), FJD 55.1 million for capital expenditure (CAPEX, which includes donor-funding), and FJD 4 million in VAT.

The MoA budget has been increasing since 2014 on an average rate of 11.7 percent in absolute value, but in terms of percentage of the total national budget for Fiji, it has remained at around the same level of 2 percent. However, it is assumed that MoA's budget will decrease from FJD Million 96.8 in 2018/19 financial year to FJD Million 75.5 (MoA Budget Consultation for 2019/20) due to general budget restrictions, particularly in capital expenditures.

FIGURE 11: TOTAL BUDGET (MOA) IN FJD MILLION (2014 -2018/19)



Source: Ministry of Agriculture, Finance and Accounting Unit

Budget design

At the beginning of each financial year, MoA divisions are requested to submit a work plan, cash flow and procurement plans to EP&S, which is responsible for coordinating the Ministry's annual budget. The MoA budget is usually prepared in consultation with divisional heads before the MoE is consulted. Each division of the ministry has to fill out a public sector investment programme (PSIP) form for their budget submission for the next financial year. The PSIP is submitted to the Project and Budget Unit of the EP&S, which analyses the submissions

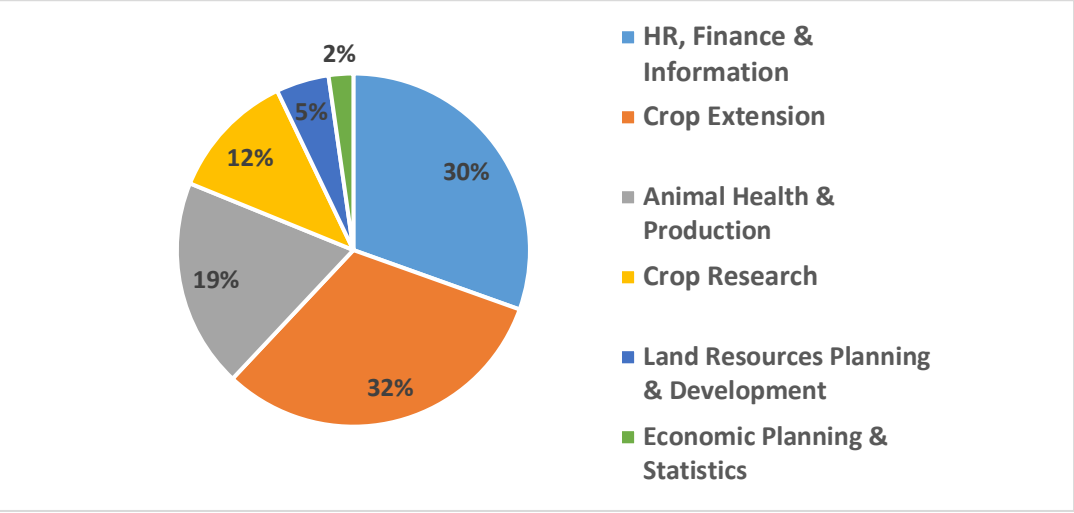
according to the duration of the programme, programme budget performance over the past years, programme utilization rate over the past years, aligning of objectives and targets to the SDP and NDP, targeted commodities and areas, achievements and performance, and number of beneficiaries. This will determine the justification of the budget submission to be included in the MoA budget and approved by the permanent secretary.

Requests for annual budgets by division are based on previous PSIPs budgets and general guidance provided by the budget unit. Since no result-based assessment of previous programmes is conducted regularly, there is no connection between the allocated budget and the effectiveness of the funded programme. When divisions need a budget increase, a thorough justification must be included in the budget request. This increase has to be approved by the permanent secretary of the MoA before its submission to the Ministry of Economy.

Funds will then be dispatched on a quarterly basis to the relevant divisions. The divisional request has to be cleared by the monitoring and evaluation team to ensure that the programme is aligned to the MoA plans before recommendations are made to facilitate transfer of funds from the MoE. The monitoring and evaluation team will also follow up on the progress of the funded programme.

The MoA's annual budget are usually allocated by division as shown in Figure 12.

FIGURE 12: TOTAL MOA BUDGET BY INTERNAL DIVISION (2018/19)



Source: MoA, Costed Operational Plan, 2018/19

The MoA budget is implemented once it is approved. However, the utilization rate for MoA budget, including both operational and capital expenses, is around 70 to 75 percent on average per annum. The unutilized funds (25 to 30 percent) are provided for other emergency needs of the government such as "Farm Care", an emergency programme that was implemented in 2017/2018 after TC Winston, or else they are returned to the MoE. In special cases, where requested programmes are not really included in any plan or policy of the ministry, approval has to be given by the permanent secretary, who is also the chief accountant of the ministry. This is quite a common political economy issue.

Budget priorities

Operating programmes including administrative costs (salaries, phone bills and others) are supported by the MoA through an annual budget managed by the finance unit.

Capital programmes are managed by the budget unit of the EP&S, which facilitates and clears requests for funds from different divisions of the MoA. Some examples are capital programmes based on commodities (ginger, dalo etc.) or the demand-driven approach programme, which contains five different capital programmes: 1) export promotion; 2) food security; 3) rural outer Islands; 4) dairy industry support; and 5) Sigatoka valley development. For demand-driven programmes, farmers have to submit a request to the MoA, which decides how funds are allocated. The last four annual budgets for this programme are provided in Table 8 below.

TABLE 8: BUDGET FOR THE DEMAND-DRIVEN APPROACH PROGRAMME

Capital programmes	Budget FJD ($'000)			
	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Export	1000	1000	1000	1000
Food security	1000	1000	1000	1000
Rural outer islands	1000	1000	1500	1500
Dairy	850	850	850	1000
Sigatoka valley	200	200	200	300
Total	**4050**	**4050**	**4550**	**4800**

Source: MOA Project and Budget Unit

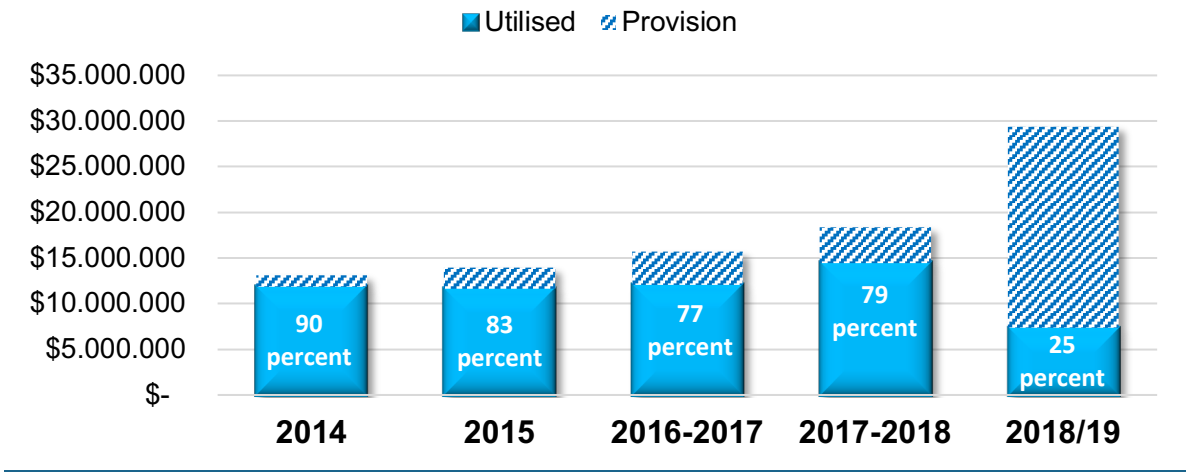
In the annual budget for the MoA, major crops such as ginger, dalo, yaqona, cocoa, coconut, vanilla and rice have specific budget allocations. Other crops, such as local leafy vegetables and sweet potatoes, are included in the extension service budget. The difference between commodity and food security programmes is not always clear-cut. Some programmes related to commodities such as taro, a staple food of the country, could also be considered as related to food security. Likewise, some commodities produce an income that enables families to purchase food. Moreover, in terms of the qualitative analysis of the MoA COP 2018/19 budget, many activities included within the FNS priority do not have a clear impact on FNS as such or their relation with the subject is not straightforward. The nutrition component of the food system is lacking in the COP, since the MoA's approach is more centred on production. Both circumstances can be partly explained by the lack of understanding of how nutrition can be enhanced by the agriculture sector.

In terms of gender, there is no information available about how the allocation of public resources contributes to advancing gender equality and women's empowerment. Ensuring a gender-sensitive budget is key to achieve progress in proposed gender objectives and is found to be a gap in the current MoA budget.

Budget performance by sub-sector

As will be detailed in this section, utilization rates by division are calculated only for capital budgets as shown in the graphs below, so they are higher than the overall MoA utilisation rate, which reports on both capital and operational budgets. Most of the MoA funds (FJD 29 million) in 2018/2019 were allocated to the Extension Division. Figure 13 shows that the budget utilization rate for the Extension Division has been declining over recent years.

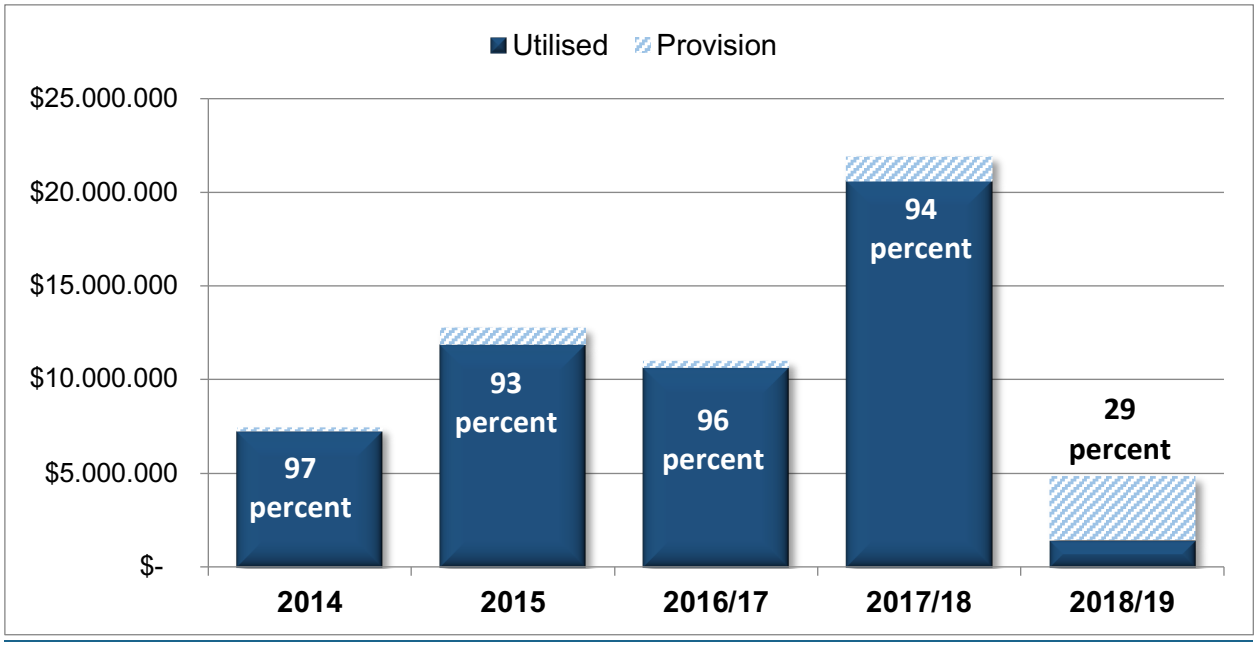
FIGURE 13: EXTENSION DIVISION BUDGET PERFORMANCE (FJD)



Source: MOA Accounts

The EP&S Division was allocated FJD 4.8 Million in the 2018/2019 financial year. The utilization rate has been 95 percent on average per annum. This shows that most of the activities have been implemented and should make the case for a future budget increase.

FIGURE 14: ECONOMIC PLANNING AND STATISTICS DIVISION BUDGET PERFORMANCE (FJD)



Source: MOA Accounts

The other three divisions of MOA have budget utilization rates of 81 percent (AH&P), 82 percent (HRFI) and 87 percent (research) on average per annum.

The budget utilization rates for MoA have remained around the same level annually, never reaching 100 percent of the funds requested. The Ministry's staffing has remained relatively constant over the past five years, while MoA has been faced with a large number of vacant positions. The Ministry is currently undergoing an organizational restructuring, a key feature of which is the decentralization of authority to divisional levels to create greater efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery and more visibility on the ground.

4.2.2 SDP BUDGET

In the 2018/2019 COP, MoA identified five strategic priorities20 where the Ministry planned to base its output and target indicators. These are the strategic priorities included in the SDP for 2019-2023. For the next five years, the SDP for MoA has proposed a budget of FJD 298 million for its five strategic priorities (SP), including different outcomes under the SP 1 "improve food and nutrition security for all Fijians". This amount reflects capital expenses only, and is complemented with another FJD 141 million for operational expenses, adding to a total budget of FJD 439 million for the next five financial years.

The link between MoA budget by division and the SDP budget priorities has been recently strengthened through an instruction from the senior management to all the MoA divisions to align all budgets to the strategic priorities in the SDP.

4.2.3 NFNC BUDGET

The NFNC receives its annual funding from the Ministry of Economy as a grant that is part of the overall budget for MoHMS. The current health expenditure is about 3.46 percent of the GDP and per capita health expenditure around USD 179.91 (World Bank, 2016). A total annual amount of FJD 430 000 is distributed to support the Fiji Plan of Action for Nutrition FPAN (FJD 200 000), and its administrative expenses (FJD 230 000). Even though FJD 200 000 of FPAN funds is allocated annually, the NFNC is only able to access a maximum of FJD 50 000 per quarter for its food and nutrition activities.

This level of funding and quarterly restrictions are not considered adequate to fund the NFNC, which coordinates and monitors all food and nutrition activities in the country, including activities at national and divisional levels. Moreover, this level of funding is not sufficient for targeted programmes to improve the nutritional status of the population. The NFNC has been getting the same amount of budget since 2010 from the public health programmes line of the MoHMS budget, which has remained below 4 percent of the total ministry budget over time.

The main reason behind this budget stagnation may be the fact that the MoHMS has not fully utilized the funds allocated to it within the financial year, therefore it keeps receiving a similar amount of resources every year. This means that most of the Ministry's units cannot increase their budget and that the NFNC has to compete with other public health programmes to get a larger share of an already small budget. This may partly explain why, despite justification for an increase submitted over the years, the NFNC budget has remained unchanged.

The funds allocated for the FPAN support all of the nutrition activities carried out by NFNC during the year. However, for activities requiring major funding, such as National Nutrition Surveys (once in 10 years), donors such as UNICEF, WHO, the Fiji Health Sector Programme and the New Zealand Agency for International Development (NZAid), have come forward in the past to provide extra support. These donor funding opportunities require an additional effort in terms justifying technical proposals that in competitive processes that do not necessarily have nutrition among their priorities.

Much like the MoA, the NFNC has to submit its budget proposal to the finance and budget section of MoHMS, which will check that the request is aligned to the NDP and strategic plan

[20] COP strategic priorities: food and nutrition security; sustainable agriculture livelihoods and poverty alleviation; climate risk, resilience and sustainable land management; commercial agriculture development; and quality public sector performance and service delivery

of the ministry. The NFNC will need to justify the proposal during consultations within MoHMS units. The Permanent Secretary for MoHMS will finally approve the amount requested and this will be part of MoHMS' budget submission to the MoE.

After the budget announcement has been made, the budget of FJD 430 000 earmarked for NFNC will be channelled to MoHMS, handles all the funds disbursed to NFNC, including the operational and final approval of FPAN budgets.

FPAN funds are used both at national and divisional levels for food and nutrition activities, such as community training on home gardening, food preparation and food safety, carried out with MoA and MoHMS. Other activities where the FPAN budget could be used include World Food Day celebrations, nutrition month in August (e.g. preparation of posters and media campaign for anaemia in pregnant mothers and breast-feeding messages and nutrition workshops).

The process of acquiring FPAN funds at the divisional level needs to be approved first by the Divisional Medical Officer before an FPAN request form template is filled and submitted to the NFNC for approval. The NFNC will check if everything requested is aligned to the FPAN budget before submitting the request to MOHMS for further processing and release of funds.

4.2.4. FPFNS BUDGET

The draft FPFNS identified a five-year total budget of FJD 53 million for the ten strategic areas in the policy. Securing budgetary resources and implementing the planned actions in the FNSP is the responsibility of the identified lead agency, while the NFNC Secretariat will provide support for monitoring and evaluating progress against planned actions. The MoA will support NFNC by allocating budget the the FPFNS as it sees the need to strengthen food and nutrition security in the country. This has led the MoA to set up a food and nutrition security unit to work closely with NFNC on food and nutrition security issues.

It may be that the financial implications are deterring the policy approval. The Solicitor General's office, acknowledging that several ministries are responsible for funding the initiatives under the FPFNS, has required their written position on these funding obligations.

4.2.5 FNS BUDGET SUPPORT FROM OTHER MINISTRIES

The government allocates funds to ministries each financial year to implement activities linked to the NDP. As explained at the beginning of this section, the NDP has identified priorities in other sectors that could also impact food and nutrition security. Some of these priorities include expanding the rural economy through the Ministry of Rural and Maritime, social inclusion and empowerment through the MoWCPA, and quality education through the MoEd.

A quick analysis of MoE sectoral budget activities from 2016-2019 showed that four (MoA, MoEd, MoWCPA & MoHMS) out of the six stakeholders identified in the food and nutrition security policy have some budget linkage to food and nutrition security. Respectively, these ministries obtained 2 percent, 11 percent, 3 percent and 7 percent (of which 70 percent was allocated to health services) of the total national budget 2018-19. However, nutrition is not a priority when it comes to budget allocation in the government and within ministries. The MoHMS allocated the same amount of funds to nutrition activities for the past eight years. In addition, there has yet to be an assessment of FNS needs in Fiji, therefore evidence for the adequacy of government's contribution to the food and nutrition security agenda is still to be documented.

The MoEd embarked on an FJD 3.5 million free milk programme for first-year schoolchildren starting in 2015. The government provided 250 ml milk daily to students in 730 primary schools. An agreement is in place between the government and Fiji Dairy Limited to supply milk to all primary schools in Fiji, while milk distribution to urban and rural schools is carried out by another local company. This initiative is still ongoing and will continue as long as the ruling government is in power.

The MoWCPA has been allocated close to FJD40 million in this financial year for poverty benefit schemes and food voucher programmes, welfare graduation programmes and social pension schemes that will benefit 60 000 recipients annually.

4.2.6 DONOR FUNDING

The Aid Unit of the Ministry of Economy is responsible for the coordination and administration of all aid funding sent to the government from all sources. It works directly with donor agencies to identify potential needs that could be supported through donor funding.

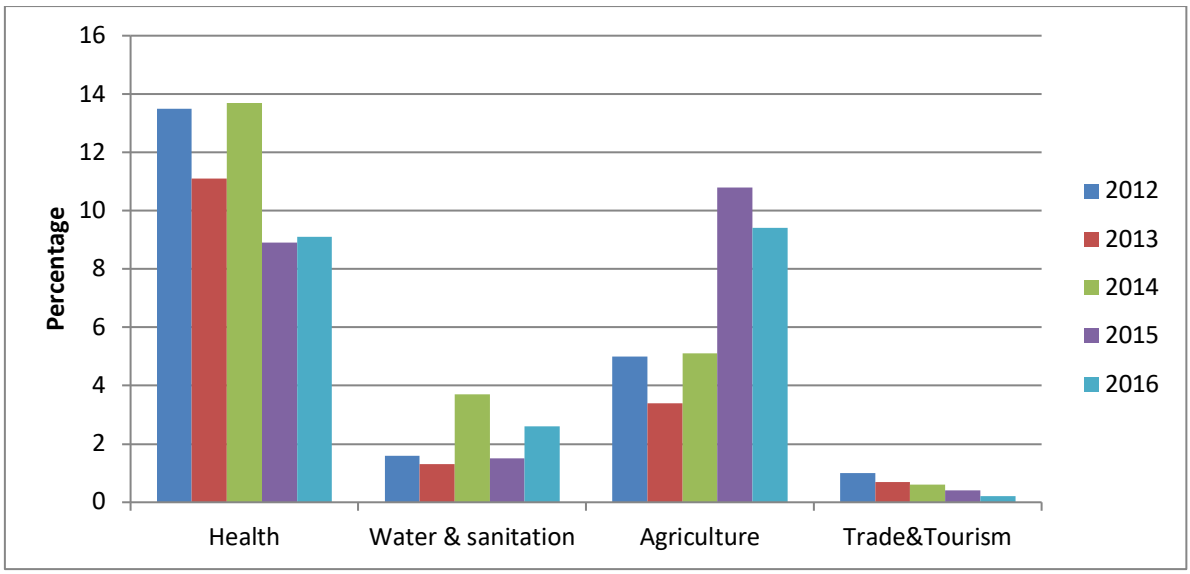
Most of the funding support for health activities, such as health-promoting schools, water and sanitation, nutrition and NCDs, comes from WHO, UNICEF, JICA and KOICA. In the agriculture sector, funding for market access, mushroom, rice, dairy, vegetable production and pro-resilience projects comes from the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade *(*DFAT), China, Taiwan, the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (NZDFAT), FAO and the EU (see Table 8 below).

TABLE 9. INTERNATIONAL DONOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO FNS ACTIVITIES (1 USD = FJD 2.13)

Organization	2016-2017 (FJD)	2017-2018 (FJD)	2018-2019 (FJD)	Comments
UNICEF (MoHMS)	-	1.8M	83 386	Health, nutrition and HIV/AIDS
UNICEF (MoHMS)	-	146 360	114 393	Water, sanitation and Hygiene Programme
JICA (MoHMS)	388 462	-	1.0M	Prevention and control of NCDs
KOICA-WHO	2.4M	-	-	Health-promoting schools project
DFAT (MoA)	159 286	418 047	145 791	Pacific horticultural and agriculture market access
China (MoA)	1.2	2.6M	2.8M	Juncao mushroom technical cooperation project
	4.4M	-	-	Mushroom technology demonstration centre
	4.0M	-	-	Rice technical cooperation project
Taiwan (MoA)	-	1.1M	-	Vegetable production and capacity building project
NZMFAT (MoA)	224 753	1.5M	2.9M	Fiji dairy industry development initiative
FAO and EU (MOA)	-	-	12.6M	Pro-resilience project
FAO FIRST	100 000	100 000	100 000	FIRST policy assistance

Source: Ministry of Economy budget reports

Figure 15 below gives a brief picture of how the donor funding has been allocated to different sectors in Fiji. There seems to be a tendency to prioritize capital over operational expenses/programmes, which may be related to the desire to achieve more tangible and ref



Source: OECD, 2018

4.2.7. PRIVATE SECTOR FUNDING

Private sector partnership in FNS programmes is still lacking and could be a potential opportunity for additional fundraising to develop the agriculture sector. The Ministry of Agriculture is full aware of this and encourages public and private sector partnership through some of the programmes identified in the SDP, especially for commercial farming. Contributions are expected in terms of increased access to technologies, crop varieties and farmer support services, such as marketing and extension.

It will be worthwhile to explore possibilities of partnerships with both the food and the tourism industries (hotels and their suppliers) that are major players in the national economy. The SDP already identifies contract farming as a way to improve farmer's market conditions, and also mentions the need to update current related regulatory frameworks as critical to facilitate the establishment of transparent and efficient market relationships and guarantee that the benefits of these agreements can be extended to small-scale farmers.

However, as this is a new area for the MoA more information needs is needed regarding potential partners and practical mechanisms for public-private engagement.

4.3. Summary

This chapter provides an analysis of the agriculture contribution to the GDP, which has increased greatly over the last decade, although its share in total GDP declines as contributions from other sectors such as manufacturing and tourism sector increase. In addition to its contribution to income and employment, agriculture also plays a significant role in Fiji's economy by earning foreign exchange through exports.

In regard to funding the existing strategies for food and nutrition security, information is provided around MoA annual budget, including how it is designed and allocated to the different divisions; how priorities are defined; and what have been the budget utilization rates by division so far. An important recent qualitative achievement is the establishment of a direct linkage between the SDP budget priorities and the MoA budget by division. For the first time, the annual budget has been aligned to the strategic priorities contained in Five-year Strategic Development Plan of the MoA.

The NFNC has not received a budget increase in the past ten years, perhaps due to political issues regarding its allocation within the MoHMS. The current level of funding and quarterly restrictions are not adequate for the funding of the NFNC. Sector ministries will liaise with the MoE to secure the funding for actions within their responsibility.

Development partner contributions to the budget, as well as private sector partners, are analysed as well.

5. Political economy factors

Political economy factors may prevent the adoption and/or implementation of FNS policies in Fiji. Some ideas in this chapter have been raised before but it may be worthwhile to address a few issues that have a more cross-cutting nature and widespread impact.

In terms of the multisectoral approach to FNS and the implementation of the FPFNS, the extent to which government ministries and other partners have truly committed to prioritize the implementation of policies to eradicate hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition has yet to be determined. Two different aspect may be considered. On the one hand is the political will of key stakeholders, which also relates to how they see their role in FNS issues. For example, the focus of the MoA has shifted towards demand-driven commercial agriculture, understanding that food security programmes have not produced the desired impacts. Nutrition is still understood as 'health business.' Other line ministries may not have a clear vision on how they can contribute to FNS. The second aspect is more practical in nature and refers to the lack of experience and procedures for cross-sectoral implementation. A silo approach prevails even between different divisions within the same ministry, with some serious concerns in terms of communication and exchange of information and clear difficulties when it comes to shared implementation of actions. Working among ministries will certainly be a major challenge.

It is also necessary to highlight that although achieving food and nutrition security is a clear objective in national and sectoral agendas, many other objectives are also included in these agendas and eventually all will have to be reconciled. This is an issue that was discussed during the Multisector Dialogue on Food and Nutrition Security. In order to envisage 'politically feasible' policy options, a number of trade-offs must be considered, such as, for example, commercial commodity interests versus household interests in food security; or balanced investments between increasing urbanization areas and rural areas that are being left behind, etc. Another issue is that actions that are best for nutrition could have a negative impact in terms of employment when companies that produce unhealthy food want to be better established or grow business. This poses a dilemma since if people do not have a good income, they won´t be able to afford nutritious food anyway. Thus, it is important that FNS interventions shall include measures to minimize potential negative impacts on economic sectors and, when possible, include synergies and connections with other policies that can mitigate those impacts (Mousey, 2019). Further research and analysis is needed to identify the key actors and interest groups, their roles and relationships, and possible initiatives (incentives, existent/new governance mechanisms etc.) could be proposed to minimize negative impacts, etc.

The role of the National Food and Nutrition Centre (NFNC) was raised as a major issue by representatives from both the health and agriculture sectors. The NFNC oversees the coordination, consultation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation and reporting on the FPFNS, including reporting within the framework of the National Development Plan 2017-2021 and maintaining cross-sectoral collaboration with all partners to improve policy implementation and adherence.

Currently the NFNC belongs and reports to the Wellness Division of the MoH, and it seems that the ministry is keen to retain control. This being the case, it is unclear how the NFNC will be able to play the role of an independent agency with cross-sectoral duties. Different options have been discussed, including the potential merger of the NFNC with other units, such as

Environmental Health, in the context of the structural reform of the Ministry of Health or its inclusion as part of the MoA, but during the last high-level meeting between the ministries of health and agriculture, it was decided to do nothing for the time being. This uncertainty affects the current functioning of the NFNC and its staff motivation, and is definitely related to the delay in approval of the FNSP, despite multiple efforts made by the different stakeholders during the past months.

Another sensitive issue that has affected policy approval is linked to the financial implications in the policy, with a total proposed budget for the period of 2018 to 2022 of FJD 53.4 million. The solicitor general's office, acknowledging that several ministries should be responsible for funding the initiatives under the FPFNS, has required their written position on these funding obligations. The final endorsement letters have delayed the process a few months more.

As mentioned above, the actions contained in the SDP aim to make a difference with the former sectoral policies and shift the focus of the ministry to commercial farmers above semi-commercial and small-scale farmers. Although Fiji defines commercial as businesses earning more than FJD 10 000 (about 5 000 USD) a year, which still would be categorized as small farmers in other countries, there is a risk to leave the most vulnerable populations behind or at least to limit support to the extent that they will not be able to move up within the farmer classification. Small farmers are not considered as major players for the sector under the supposition that the revenues that they get from agriculture are so small that they cultivate crops or rear livestock just occasionally and as a secondary income generation strategy, while their main source of income mostly comes from other non-agriculture activities.

There is also a feeling that resources invested in vulnerable farmers have not render the expected results in terms of FNS and poverty alleviation, and that these should be invested in bigger farmers able to make an impact for the sector in terms of employment and economic revenues. In this sense, some of the current initiatives target farmers that already have land and have achieved a certain level of 'professionalism' in their economic activity. Since this approach may have sense from the impact perspective, it is important to keep a balance that ensures that existing inequalities are not reinforced. The fact that the MoA is still struggling for updated and clear information on the farming population,21 including the definition of each category (small scale, semi-commercial and commercial), makes it difficult to properly inform sound decisions. In this sense, the upcoming agriculture census will be able to shed some light, although the results won't be ready until next year.

Land tenure issues and land availability are critical for agriculture development in Fiji. However, since land competencies are under different departments and units outside of the Ministry of Agriculture, innovative interventions have to be designed in order to overcome related difficulties. Potential alliances with both the private sector and public administrators (as the iTaukei Land Trust Board and the Department of Land) that can facilitate access to land, under equal conditions for female and male farmers, should be explored.

In terms of gender, the approach adopted in the FNS policies is 'women in development,' which promotes women's participation and specific women´s activities without addressing the causes of inequality. In principle, this approach seems to be based in a lack of understanding rather than a lack of will. However, the possibility exists that once concrete gender measures are proposed, some more traditional sectors will disagree. For the time being, technical officers in the MoA (for example, from the animal health division) are promoting different

[21] Fiji will conduct the next agriculture census in 2020. The most recent data were collected in 2009.

actions aiming to empower women and improve their access to key production factors, such as training, technology and even credit. However, other structural and political issues, such as land tenure, which in practice limits women's access to credit, are not on the MoA agenda at the moment. The reason for that may be a lack of gender understanding/sensitivity coupled with the fact that these are complex issues that cannot be addressed by the Ministry of Agriculture alone. For the SDP discussions with the MoWCA have been held to guarantee that what is proposed by MoA for the next 5 years is coherent and complementary with the MoWCA sectoral policies, especially in those aspects regarding rural women.

5.1. Summary

Key political economy issues that may prevent the adoption and/or implementation of food and nutrition security policies are described in this section and mentioned in previous sections of this report. With regard to the multisectoral approach to FNS envisaged in the FPFNS, the lack of political will, experience and procedures to operationalise a cross-sectoral implementation mechanism are among the limiting factors. It is also important to consider existing trade-offs between achieving food and nutrition security and other objectives included in national and sectoral agendas. There are potential conflicts with regard to the role and reporting lines of the NFNC and the financial commitments that the policy anticipates for the sectoral ministries. In the case of the SDP, new vision and expectations for the sector have to be considered, recognizing the risk of reinforcing existing inequalities. The absence of a gender approach is an aspect that should be addressed as a way to better assure the desired impact of both policies.

6. Realism and credibility of current policies and strategies

6.1. The National Development Plan

The National Development Plan is Fiji's main development strategy, containing two sets of key targets for the next five years and for the next 20 years. The plan was built on a massive consultation process that involved the private sector, civil society, community groups, government and the general public. The NDP includes annual sectoral targets with key performance indicators, which are highly aligned to the SDG agenda on which the country will have to report. In fact, thirty-four out of forty-one key national development targets align with SDG targets.

A key information gap of the NDP is that it does not include a budget estimation, although several budgetary sources are mentioned, including not only national but also other innovative funding sources, such as partnerships with the private sector and climate finance.

6.2. The FPFNS

The Fijian Policy for Food and Nutrition Security was prepared with the support of many sectoral ministries, civil society and academia and other development partners. They all agreed that the strategies and actions considered in the policy will ensure the availability, accessibility and affordability of safe and nutritious food for every Fijian, sufficient to meet their dietary needs and, cultural and food preferences for an active and healthy life.

The actions assigned to each responsible ministry appear achievable and realistic, but probably the biggest challenge relates to implementation. Although its description is quite detailed, experience shows that despite the clear need to undertake a multisectoral approach to improve food and nutritional security, "implementation across sectors faced challenges, which has limited the translation of nutrition activities into practice (Thow, 2016)." These aspects and their political economy implications have been discussed in the previous chapter.

If real progress is to be obtained on decreasing NCDs, the role of advocacy and awareness campaigns that are able to highlight the importance of the multisectoral approach to nutrition is key.

Two other challenges that may test the credibility of the proposal have been already mentioned. First is the need to achieve high-level political support, which is essential for the success of complex multisector policy processes. Despite several discussions at the highest level between the permanent secretaries of the ministries of health and agriculture, the policy is yet to be approved. Second is the fact that medium and long-term commitments will be required from different sectors at all levels. This in turn will entail adequate financial and human resources that can guarantee the policy's implementation, which, as has been explained in the previous section, is far from being guaranteed.

The information gaps around this policy have been already raised in previous sections; they relate to the need to include a gender approach to FNS; the need to complete, update and further analyse nutrition data and undertake better targeting as a condition for improving performance; the consideration of underlying causes when proposing climate change adaptation actions; and the inclusion of strategies with forward-looking options able to deal with challenges such as land use changes, rural youth unemployment and urbanization or

deforestation processes. Finally, the inclusion of fisheries as a key sector for FNS in the Pacific should be considered in future stages of assessment, review and/or evaluation of the FPFNS.

6.3. The SDP

Several elements contribute to the credibility of the SDP. First is the alignment with the National Development Plan, as the sectoral plan to be implemented over the next five years, according to the new Guide to Strategic and Operational Planning of the Ministry of Economy. This alignment is supposed to guarantee a few key elements on terms of results-based management and planning, and to help sectoral ministries to work towards the same goals and to more easily access the national budget through their different proposals (since they are already coherent and contributing to established national goals and indicators).

The participatory process undertaken earlier this year in the last phase of preparing the SDP included a wide array of stakeholders, including officers from other ministries, academia and development partners, some UN agencies and the EU Delegation in Fiji. Internally, the process included a diverse group of ministry officers from all units, receiving a direct endorsement from the minister and senior management team. During the discussions, the officers involved praised the consultation experience, where many of them felt they had a real opportunity to include their priorities and realistically reflect their current and envisaged lines of work. The degree of ownership achieved has been high, despite the logical limitations for a full participation of staff. In addition, involving the whole budget team has provided realistic figures for the different outcomes envisaged in the SDP, ensuring that the proposed actions are likely to be funded under the foreseen gradual budget increase over the next five years. The cabinet has already endorsed this five year budget forecast.

Initially a budget-related risk was identified because the budget was not aligned with the SDP. Divisions sent their budget proposals based on their Public Sector Investments Programmes (PSIP) and those were submitted by the MoA to the MoE to get the funding allocation. This could result in a mismatch between the planned actions under the SDP, which were expressed in terms of Strategic Priorities, outcomes and indicators, and the allocated budget lines structured by PSIP. However, an instruction early this year to all divisions to align any budgeted action to the strategic priorities in the SDP eliminated this risk completely. PSIPs and related budget are now clearly connected to the SDP outcomes guaranteeing full alignment between SDP and the budget.

The process was also useful in terms of clearly defining which divisions are responsible for which actions, which is positive in principle but has the disadvantage of potentially working in favour of maintaining a silo approach to implementation. However, the fact that different MoA divisions are involved in at least three out of five strategic priorities represents an opportunity for better coordination.

The collectively built SMART indicators also support the credibility of the SDP. A reasonable number of the indicators have been included under the five strategies, based on the monitoring existent capacities and processes, and recognizing that they will need to improve in the next five years in coherence with available human and economic resources.

The SDP identifies a few areas in which further skills and knowledge are needed in order to be able to achieve the expected results, including enhancement of public services provided. Improving the working environment can help to retain quality officers and attract young professionals to the Ministry. Ensuring that all staff, especially in the decentralized offices, are

aware of the new directions will build credibility around the proposal.

The ongoing preparation of a budget support proposal for the European Union also supports the effective implementation of the SDP, since it will be the sectoral policy on which this intervention will be based.

Finally, key gaps to be addressed in the implementation of the SDP are the need to effectively target the most vulnerable farmers in remote areas; improving the quality of the services provided to farmers and other agriculture stakeholders, including the delivery of reliable, timely and updated information; the adoption of an effective gender approach to the proposed agricultural initiatives; the management of risks already identified and the effective operationalization of the decentralization process.

6.4. Summary

This chapter analyses the realism and credibility of three key policies: the NDP, the FPFNS and the SDP. The NDP is considered to be both realistic and credible due to the massive consultation process involved in its preparation with different key stakeholders and its strong alignment with the SDGs. The fact that it doesn't include a budget estimation is seen as a clear weakness.

The FPFNS appears to be a broadly supported, achievable and realistic proposal with distinct challenges in terms of multisectoral implementation. The need to gather high-level political support, and maintain medium and long-term commitments from the different sectors may test the credibility to the proposal.

The SDP is seen as credible and realistic because of its strong alignment with the NDP, the participatory process involved in its preparation, and the high degree of ownership achieved with MoA officers at different levels. The existence of a monitoring framework with collectively built SMART indicators, and the fact that the budget requests now match the strategic priorities and outcomes detailed in the NDP also add value to the proposal. The endorsement of the SDP by the cabinet, including the budget forecast for the next five years, was decisive. Finally, the direct connection between the SDP and the budget support proposal for the European Union is another element that works in favour of its actual implementation.

7. Capacity gaps and areas suggested for future resource allocation

General gaps identified for potential resource allocation have been classified as immediate/short-term vs. medium / long-term priorities for investment. The first group of recommended investments relates to what the FIRST Programme has supported and thus focuses on what FIRST partners will be able to address until the end of 2020. The second group of suggested investments aims to propose potential areas of resource allocation in need of additional support from the MoA and other (development) partners, including the FAO and EU.

7.1. Areas for immediate/short-term resource allocation

7.1.1. NFNC CAPACITY BUILDING ON IDENTIFIED CAPACITY GAPS

In order to effectively implement the FPFNS, the NFNC needs to develop expertise in multi-sectoral coordination and leadership. There is a need to shift policies and mainstream nutrition within the mandates of the different sectors. This implies changing the perceptions and increasing the technical knowledge of the officers concerned, but also working on practical implementation aspects. For example, a review of the FPFNS Action Plan will be required in order to validate and prioritize the different actions over the next five years, in the light of changing priorities among the six ministries involved. Other examples of limited practical experience with procedures for joint action and communication mechanisms have been mentioned in previous sections. Learning more about how other countries, ideally in the Pacific and other SIDS subregions, have coped with these challenges may certainly help.

Enhancing the policy dialogue between the health and agriculture sectors and creating permanent channels of communication, according to the mechanisms envisaged in the FPFNS proposal, will be key for successful implementation. The NFNC needs to ensure that food and nutrition security are addressed by both ministries; that their initiatives are coherent and that innovative ways of collaborating at all levels are explored. For example, there could be opportunities to harmonize messaging and undertake an integrated approach at the field level in terms of the technical work that MoHMS dietitians and MoA extension workers are currently undertaking.

7.1.2. MOA CAPACITY-BUILDING ON IDENTIFIED CAPACITY GAPS

Regulatory capacity. The MoA has prioritized the review and update of the 28 pieces of legislation under its responsibility. These laws and acts are quite heterogeneous in nature, scope and degree of importance and interviews with staff and stakeholders revealed the need for external legal support in this review. As a starting point, a general overview of what is needed and an assessment of laws need to be either slightly/heavily reviewed would help to scope the work ahead and consider the kind of external support may be required.

Data collection and analysis capacity. In the Pacific there is a widespread lack of information and data, particularly as refers to agriculture and fisheries. "*The delivery of effective government programmes is hampered by insufficient accessible and reliable data"*(The Pacific Community, 2017). The MoA needs support for a number of upcoming surveys, including sample and template design, analysis and general management. In addition, there is a need to

develop technical capacities to manage appropriate data software that facilitates processing and analysis of sector information. The Agriculture Census, which will be conducted next year, would be a good opportunity to support the MoA in coordination with all the stakeholders involved.

Monitoring capacities. As the SDP will start its implementation shortly, it is essential to establish a monitoring system to measure progress using a results-based approach. This will require training, use of data processing software, establishing templates for information collection according to key performance indicators (KPI) defined in the SDP, determining information flows and reporting structures, etc. All of these actions need to be defined and planned with the responsible officers at all levels, including divisions and districts, where most of the information is collected.

7.1.3. REPLACEMENT OF THE PREVALENT WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT APPROACH

A broader acknowledgement and analysis of inequity and its causes is needed as well as a better understanding of the desired and required changes in terms of political will, strategies, financial resources and human capacities to effectively ensure equal rights and opportunities for rural women and men. It is essential to start producing evidence on the main disparities and gaps in access to and control over key agricultural resources (including land, markets, training, etc.) and practical ways of implementing interventions that boost women's potential as producers and economic actors.

It is also necessary to raise awareness on the importance of achieving gender equity, and support for women's diverse role in agriculture for improved Food and Nutrition Security. Capacities to conduct a basic gender analysis and to integrate gender issues into the planning, budgeting and monitoring actions of the different programmes need to be built. The implementation of gender-sensitive budgets to guarantee that public resources contribute to women's empowerment may contribute to advancing gender equality.

Linkages and synergies with the MWCPA in this regard would be very helpful, including advocating for the establishment of a gender unit in the MoA to address not only technical, but also strategic aspects, such as equal access to resources and identification of needs for updating laws and regulations; recognition of female farmers, including the promotion of equal participation in farmer's associations. Alliances with stakeholders from the civil society and FBOs will be sought as well.

7.1.4. NUTRITION-SENSITIVE AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS APPROACH

There seems to be a limited understanding of how this approach, which considers not only agricultural production but also post-production, including processing, storage, trade, marketing and consumption, can significantly contribute to the eradication of hunger and malnutrition. As acknowledged by the High Level Panel of Experts on Food and Nutrition Security, "Food systems impact consumers' capacity to adopt sustainable diets that are protective and respectful of biodiversity and ecosystems; culturally acceptable; accessible; economically fair and affordable; and nutritionally adequate, safe and healthy (HLPE, 2017)." Further research is needed on the typologies of food systems in Fiji to ensure that policies consider differences among them and propose tailor-made interventions adapted to the diversity of contexts, implementation mechanisms and capacities to achieve better results.

7.2. Areas for resource allocation in the medium and long term

NFNC capacity-building on better targeting, based on improved nutrition surveillance, an area closely linked with improved data collection and analysis, will require specific attention. In the case of the national nutrition surveys under NFNC responsibility, these are only conducted every ten years and data analysis is not always complete. This is mainly due to the lack of technical staff, lack of technical tools and information and communication technology (ICT), improvable technical skills for data interpretation and writing reports, and the existence of other competing emerging priorities. This could give rise to nutrition interventions that are unable to address the different forms of malnutrition and their causes or to target specific populations and areas. A deeper analysis of recent NNS data showed significant differences in terms of nutrition between rural outer islands, and the two main islands in Fiji. This may support the thesis that 'blanket interventions' may overlook the most vulnerable populations and thus not achieve the expected level of success throughout the country.

An important information gap is related to the ongoing organizational restructuring and decentralization process in the MoA. This process, which has started already and has been included in the work plan for this year, is designed to address several 'bottlenecks' to implementing policy, such as mobilizing and incentivizing subnational staff members, improving budgeting and resources and improved local decision-making. Substantial changes are envisaged in the current structure and positions (new job descriptions, better alignment between current responsibilities and required profiles, renewed organigram, proposal for more efficient procedures and lines of reporting, etc.). As these are crucial aspects in terms of the SDP, related implementation capacities will have to be carefully evaluated. The existence of a significant number of vacancies is also being addressed through this reform. Important aspects for staff, include providing appropriate infrastructure and facilities to deliver the best results; training and capacity building opportunities and salary adjustments based on performance management results, are already being discussed in an attempt to retain quality staff while attracting new professionals seeking career opportunities in the sector.

There is need for greater investment in nutrition-sensitive agricultural interventions that can be scaled up once their effectiveness and efficiency (including cost analysis) are proven. Due to lack of experience of practical interventions that address nutrition from the agriculture sector, there is much to learn about what is needed and why. There are already some postharvest and food processing initiatives included in the MoA's current costed operational plan. These include grants to support the construction of agroprocessing facilities and the development of new processed agricultural products with technical assistance for promotion and marketing, and there are opportunities to mainstream nutrition throughout the process. Prospects to engage more strongly with the private sector and farmers through the Fiji Crop and Livestock Council (FCLC) should also be explored.

It will also be necessary to invest in increasing employment in rural areas and reducing urban migration. Adding value to agriculture products seems a good way to generate more benefits for the sector and its stakeholders, including young people.

At a later stage, these evidence-based interventions should be able to inform policies and especially regulations that aim to improve the availability, affordability and convenience of healthy food, and to shift consumption patterns away from cheaper, less nutritious options.

Amassing more information about Fiji's food systems will help to identify systemic bottlenecks in the enabling environment for FNS, as for example in the quality of public services (including a better definition of the services expected from the MoA to improve FNS), the challenges envisaged, the targeting of FNS interventions, political economy aspects, etc. According to different actors, such bottlenecks may explain the stagnation of some key nutrition indicators, such as increasing and widespread anaemia rates; little change in markers of undernutrition in children under five, rampant rates of overweight and obesity among adults, etc.

Promoting public private partnerships for improving Food and Nutrition Security seems to be an area in which investments may provide good results. However, as this is a fairly new area for the MoA, more information is needed regarding potential partners and practical mechanisms for such engagement. In particular, it would be worthwhile to explore opportunities to leverage private sector investment in agriculture for improved FNS, especially support for diverse diets, and to decrease the negative impacts of private sector investment, including their promotion of highly-processed foods, etc. In order to do so, potential conflicts between nutrition and other objectives must be considered. More information is needed to learn about the trade-offs involved and ways in which they can be reconciled in favour of FNS.

A final gap that would not necessarily entail major economic investments but definitely would require improved coordination efforts, would be strengthening relationships with donors and development partners. While diverse individual examples exist, this strategy could benefit from a more systematic and better planned approach with greater alignment between government and donor programming. Having more demarcated responsibilities within the new MoA structure will contribute to more fruitful relationships and networking efforts.

7.3. Summary

General gaps identified for potential resources allocation in food and nutrition security have been classified as immediate/short-term vs. medium/long-term priorities for investment. Short-term priorities include capacity-building in the NFNC for multisectoral coordination and leadership, and to enhance the policy dialogue between the health and agriculture sectors. With regard to capacity-building with the MoA, regulatory, data collection and analysis and monitoring capacities are priorities. Finally, this group also comprises the promotion of a gender approach and nutrition sensitive agriculture and food systems approaches.

Long-term priorities include capacity-building in the NFNC for better targeting, based on nutrition surveillance; capacity-building with the MoA with regard to the reform and decentralization process; investment for nutrition-sensitive agricultural interventions; generation of knowledge with regard to systemic bottlenecks in the enabling environment for food and nutrition security; the promotion of public-private partnerships for improving the Food and Nutrition Security impact, and strengthening relationships with other donors and development partners for a more structured and effective policy dialogues.

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APPENDIX 1: List of participants and interviewees

Date	Name	Organization	Position
October 2018	Simon Hoella	WFP	Technical advisor
November 2018	Ateca, Alvina	National Food and Nutrition Center, Fiji	Technical advisor
November 2018	Wendy Snowdon	WHO	Technical officer
November 2018	Ateca Kama	National Food and Nutrition Center, Fiji	Manager
November 2018	Maria Ledua	Budget team MoA	Principal Economic Planning Officer
November 2018	Team	NFNC	Nutritionist
November 2018	Sandra Bernklau	UN Women	Technical specialist
November 2018	Avishek Narayan, Alejandro	EUD	EUD financial officers
November 2018	Philippe Martins	FAO Resilient Fiji Team	Team leader
November 2018	Eriko Hibi	FAO SAP	Subregional Coordinator for the Pacific Islands
November 2018	Joseph Nyemah	FAO SAP	Nutrition and Food Systems Officer
November 2018	Fiasili Lam	FAO SAP	Policy officer
November 2018	Rasmiyya Aliyeva	FAO SAP	Statistics Officer
November 2018	Anna Tiraa	FAO SAP	Climate Change Officer
November 2018	Shukrullah Sherzad	FAO SAP	International Agribusiness Consultant
November 2018	Louison Dumaine	FAO SAP	M&E officer
December 2018	Several, 11 people	NFNC , Academia, dietitians	Various
January 2019	Philip Martins	FAO Pro-resilient Fiji project	Team leader
January 2019	45 people	Multisector Policy Dialogue	Various
January 2019	Manuela Gunther	ODI	ODI fellow
January 2019	Uma Palaniappan	UNICEF	Programme Officer
January 2019	Several	IFAD	Officers
January 2019	Karen Fukofuka	SPC	Nutrition Officer
January 2019	Louise	Min Economy	Technical advisor
February 2019	Sera Bose	MOA	CE and team
February 2019	Litiana Mua	HR and team	
February 2019	Paula Tuione	MOA Extension	Director and team
February 2019	Patrick	UNDP	Programme Officer
February 2019	Varanisese Tawake	RC	Liaison Officer
July 2019	Jessica Sanders	FAO SAP	Fisheries Officer
November 2019	Apaitia Macanawai	MOA Research	Director and team
December 2019	Avinesh Dayal	MOA Animal Health	Director and team

APPENDIX 2: Change in Nutrition Indicators: 2004 and 2015 National Nutrition Surveys

Nutrition Variables	2014-15 (%)	2004 (%)
Normal birth weight Children (< 5yrs)%	79.0	75.3
High birth weight	12.7	14.0
Low birth weight	8.3	10.7
Underweight (weight for age)	5.9	4.9
Wasting (low weight for height)	7.0	6.1
Stunting	6.2	7.6
Underweight by BMI	6.1	5.9
Overweight by BMI	4.8	6.6
Anaemia	63.1	48.9
School Children (5 –14 years)		
Stunting(BMI for age)	3.6	4.1
Wasting (underweight by BMI)	8.0	7.2
Overweight (BMI)p	7.2	4.7
Anaemia	45.0	28.5
School Children (15-17yrs)		
Stunting	3.8	6.0
Wasting (underweight by BMI)	6.0	7.0
Overweight (BMI)	8.1	6.2
Anaemia	43.5	32.5
Child Bearing Age Women (15-17yrs)		
Iron deficiency	30.5	20.9
Folate deficiency	6.9	0.0
Vitamin A deficiency	12.4	2.3
Zinc deficiency	20.8	34.1
Adult (18years+)		
Healthy weight	32.6	36.0
Overweight	31.4	32.8
Obese	31.7	25.9
Underweight	4.31	5.35
Anaemia (male and female)	40.1	28.2
Anaemia pregnant women	40.0	35.8
Adult CBA women (18years + (non-pregnant)		
Iron deficiency	19.7	21.2
Folate deficiency	8.5	4.3
Vitamin A deficiency	18.3	11.5
Zinc deficiency	19.0	41.3*

*There were some uncertainties about the Zinc data in 2004, issues regarding blood sample storage after data collection

APPENDIX 3: Additional Nutrition Indicators –National Nutrition Survey 2015

Age group (years)	Divisions	Overall		Ethnicity						Area Type				Gender			
		Overweight	Obesity	Overweight			Obesity			Overweight		Obesity		Overweight		Obesity	
				Itaukei	FID	FOD	Itaukei	FID	FOD	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Male	Female	Male	Female
Under 5s	**Central**	6.2	1.4	5.5	2.3	12.3	1.0	0.3	4.2	7.7	2.3	1.4	0.5	6.3	3.4	0.9	1.0
	Western	2.0	0.9														
	Northern	1.7	0.0														
	Eastern	0.0	0.0														
	Total	3.9	0.9														
5-14	**Central**	5.9	2.3	6.1	9.1	9.9	1.4	2.1	2.7	9.6	5.0	2.4	1.1	7.6	6.6	2.5	0.8
	Western	5.6	1.7														
	Northern	5.1	0.7														
	Eastern	2.9	0.0														
	Total	5.5	1.7														
15-17	**Central**	5.7	2.5	6.0	9.3	17.0	0.4	4.2	0.0	11.3	5.2	1.2	2.4	4.9	11.2	0.9	2.7
	Western	6.9	2.3														
	Northern	8.5	0														
	Eastern	0.0	0														
	Total	6.3	1.8														
Adults 18-25	**Central**	26.7	18.8	32.1	14.0	23.8	19.2	17.4	21.6	26.3	28.1	19.9	14.8	26.4	27.0	13.8	23.8
	Western	19.7	15.6	24.3	17.1	59.1	21.1	12.9	0.0	17.6	20.0	10.7	16.1	18.1	21.9	12.9	19.1
	Northern	23.5	3.8	38.2	7.5	0.0	7.1	0.0	0.0	31.9	16.9	5.2	2.6	20.8	27.5	0.0	9.4
	Eastern	29.9	7.1	29.9	-	-	7.1	-	-	-	29.9	-	7.1	25.0	32.6	0.0	10.9
	Total	***23.7***	***15.6***	***30.7***	***15.1***	***23.6***	***17.8***	***12.8***	***16.5***	***26.2***	***21.5***	***17.5***	***13.9***	***22.2***	***25.4***	***11.5***	***20.3***
26-30	**Central**	43.1	22.8	48.8	31.0	41.4	22.2	23.7	24.5	48.2	29.1	22.3	24.0	45.9	40.7	15.4	29.4
	Western	30.0	23.5	30.4	29.9	0	32.5	17.7	100.0	15.9	31.6	21.0	23.8	31.6	27.9	16.1	32.6
	Northern	29.4	17.1	29.0	34.2	0	23.2	5.5	0.0	39.6	25.9	9.8	19.6	23.8	34.4	2.8	29.7
	Eastern	55.5	25.2	55.5	-	-	25.2	-	-	-	55.5	-	25.2	59.4	50.9	20.3	30.9
	Total	***36.9***	***22.1***	***41.3***	***30.9***	***35.3***	***24.7***	***18.2***	***23.6***	***45.0***	***30.7***	***21.0***	***22.9***	***37.6***	***36.1***	***13.7***	***30.4***
31-35	**Central**	30.4	47.9	29.8	36.7	-	56.7	23.0	100.0	27.5	41.8	50.5	38.0	38.9	22.7	36.7	58.2
	Western	30.3	30.9	17.5	37.0	-	49.1	20.6	92.5	38.6	29.4	25.1	31.6	28.1	32.2	22.0	38.3
	Northern	18.9	32.1	24.3	11.3	-	39.9	19.1	44.4	22.4	17.4	53.9	22.3	9.7	25.7	12.8	46.3
	Eastern	41.9	36.5	41.9	-	-	36.5	-	-	-	41.9	-	36.5	64.1	13.9	8.7	72.2

Age group (years)	Divisions	Overall		Ethnicity						Area Type				Gender			
		Overweight	Obesity	Overweight			Obesity			Overweight		Obesity		Overweight		Obesity	
				Itaukei	FID	FOD	Itaukei	FID	FOD	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Male	Female	Male	Female
	Total	***28.9***	***37.9***	***26.3***	***33.7***	***-***	***50.3***	***21.1***	***93.1***	***28.1***	***29.4***	***48.2***	***31.0***	***30.9***	***27.1***	***26.1***	***47.8***
36-40	**Central**	29.7	54.4	31.7	22.1	33.8	56.5	44.0	66.2	28.9	33.3	57.2	41.9	49.7	17.0	25.4	73.0
	Western	22.2	37.1	20.0	24.1	0.0	52.5	28.4	30.0	25.3	21.8	32.0	37.8	30.1	14.4	22.8	51.5
	Northern	32.1	38.4	36.2	26.0	50.0	49.4	23.5	50.0	35.4	28.8	45.4	31.3	23.4	39.5	27.0	47.9
	Eastern	21.7	25.5	21.7	-	-	25.5	-	-	-	21.7	-	25.5	35.1	0.0	8.2	52.5
	Total	***27.2***	***43.9***	***29.3***	***24.1***	***30.3***	***52.4***	***30.8***	***59.2***	***30.0***	***24.7***	***52.2***	***36.4***	***35.7***	***20.3***	***23.9***	***60.3***
41-45	**Central**	33.2	47.7	31.2	37.2	40.3	58.0	23.3	41.6	34.4	29.4	50.6	38.6	47.1	22.0	26.1	65.4
	Western	34.5	35.8	27.1	39.1	15.6	57.5	22.8	84.4	38.6	33.7	26.4	37.7	31.6	37.8	23.9	49.3
	Northern	35.8	23.1	40.3	31.7	100.0	41.5	9.6	0.0	45.4	30.8	36.8	16.0	43.0	27.7	18.0	28.8
	Eastern	35.8	33.8	35.8	-	-	33.8	-	-	-	35.8	-	33.8	31.3	38.8	11.9	52.5
	Total	***34.4***	***37.0***	***32.0***	***36.8***	***35.4***	***53.3***	***19.5***	***53.8***	***37.2***	***32.5***	***44.0***	***32.4***	***39.0***	***29.8***	***22.9***	***51.1***
46-50	**Central**	34.7	47.0	30.2	48.4	8.5	53.6	33.4	48.1	35.4	32.0	50.4	31.7	40.6	29.1	39.4	54.4
	Western	37.4	31.0	37.6	36.8	100.0	44.3	24.3	0.0	55.9	35.3	12.4	33.2	40.9	33.3	24.2	39.0
	Northern	23.1	22.6	25.2	22.8	0.0	28.8	14.2	100.0	29.4	20.6	29.4	20.0	17.2	31.2	16.2	31.5
	Eastern	30.4	38.7	30.4	-	-	38.7	-	-	-	30.4	-	38.7	63.0	0.0	16.0	59.8
	Total	***33.6***	***37.3***	***31.3***	***37.6***	***12.2***	***47.3***	***25.1***	***53.7***	***36.4***	***31.3***	***45.4***	***30.4***	***37.2***	***29.7***	***29.2***	***46.2***
51+	**Central**	32.5	47.5	29.4	38.0	42.3	55.2	28.9	53.1	29.5	39.5	52.8	35.4	36.4	29.1	38.3	55.8
	Western	36.0	28.9	37.3	36.2	6.6	47.9	22.2	54.7	38.2	35.7	26.7	29.1	34.5	37.5	20.9	37.2
	Northern	29.3	30.2	26.6	28.2	54.1	41.1	18.0	19.8	27.2	30.0	33.9	28.9	34.3	23.9	20.2	40.8
	Eastern	30.5	43.3	30.5	-	-	43.3	-	-	-	30.5	-	43.3	40.9	17.9	21.8	69.2
	Total	***33.3***	***36.8***	***30.5***	***35.5***	***40.1***	***50.1***	***23.1***	***42.2***	***30.2***	***34.9***	***47.4***	***31.0***	***35.4***	***31.1***	***27.1***	***46.4***

APPENDIX 4: Policies and strategies linked to Food and Nutrition Security

Policy/Strategy	Year	Scope	Address Immediate/ underlying causes	Linkage to FNS
Roadmap for Democracy and Sustainable Socio-Economic Development (RDSSED), Ministry of Economy	2010-14	National	No	Emphasis on economic growth and development, poverty reduction, gender equity and women in development and health.
Green Growth Framework (GGF), the Ministry of Economy	2014	National	Yes	Food security section included under the social pillar
National Development Plan (NDP) for Fiji 5years and 20 years, the Ministry of Economy	2017	National	Yes	Food and nutrition security have been included in the document with links to the draft food and nutrition policy
Food and Nutrition Policy by the National Food and Nutrition Centre (NFNC)	2008	National	Partially	Focus on health, nutrition and food security, not linked to national documents
Fiji Plan of Action for Nutrition (FPAN) by the National Food and Nutrition Centre (NFNC)	2010 – 14	National	Yes	Linked to Policy Objectives 3.3.10 (Non-sugar agriculture and Livestock) and 4.2.6 (Health) of RDSSED
Food and Health guideline by the National Food and Nutrition Centre (NFNC)	2013	National	Partially	Guidelines for Fiji for a food and nutrition secured Fiji
Fiji School Health Policy by the Ministries of Education and Health and Medical Services	2016	National	Partially	Enabling environment and multi-sectorial partnership to ensure that children achieve their optimal growth and development
National Wellness Policy by the Ministry of Health and Medical Services	2015	National	Partially	Promotes certain settings (social, spiritual, environmental, occupational, psychological, physical and financial wellness) as more effective and efficient in combating issues holistically, at the population level
Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD) policy, by the Ministry of Health and Medical Services	2015-2019	National	Partially	Strategy of prevention and treatment of NCDs including mental health, violence and injuries. Linked to the overall goal of a healthier Fiji
FPFNS and Action Plan, cross-sectoral, led by the NFNC, Ministry of Health	**2019**	**National**	**Yes**	**Supported by FIRST programme, awaiting endorsement from Cabinet. Linked to NDP, MOA SDP and sectoral plans**
Fiji National Fisheries Policy	2016	National	Partially	Supported by FAO, the Pacific

Policy/Strategy	Year	Scope	Address Immediate/ underlying causes	Linkage to FNS
2017-2037, Ministry of Fisheries				Community, and the Forum Fisheries Agency. Linked to NDP
School Food and Canteen Policy	2017	Sectoral	Partially	Promote healthy eating approach. Linked to Food safety act 2003 and Food safety regulation 2009
Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Monitoring	2010-2019	National	Partially	Promote gender equality and reduce inequality and discrimination against women in all sectors. Aligned to RDSSED.
Fiji 2020 Agriculture Sector Policy Agenda	2014	National	Yes	Establishes a diversified and economically and environmentally sustainable agriculture economy in Fiji. Aligned to the RDSSED and 2014 Green Growth Framework
Ministry of Agriculture Costed Annual Operational Plan (COP)	2018/2019	Sectoral	Partially	Food and nutrition security is the first strategic area in the document but does not fully address the underlying cause of malnutrition. Aligned to the NDP
Strategic Development Plan for the Ministry of Agriculture	**2019**	**Sectoral**	**Yes**	**Supported by FIRST programme in 2017. Aligned to the NDP, and the Food and nutrition security policy**
National Humanitarian Policy, Ministry of Agriculture	2017			Indirectly related to FS under the National and local capacity building is to *prioritize local capacity building and national leadership in implementation of all disaster risk management and humanitarian actions, and promote sustainable traditional farming practices*

APPENDIX 5: SWOT Matrix and NFNC Capacity Needs Assessment Report

	Policy & Normative, Knowledge, Partnership, Implementation Capacity, implementation FPFNS, Most vulnerable people in mind	SWOT ANALYSIS				
		STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS	COMMENTS
Environment						
Ex. Regulatory framework	Please outline some of the elements that you could foresee for the implementation of the policy at national, divisional and community level	Inclusion on the NDP Inclusion on SP Health and Agriculture + COP + AOP; it goes divisional level Action Plan for the policy ready	Non inclusion on SP and AOP (Annual Operational Plan) Policy is not endorsed yet. NGOs and FBOs do not have a plan	Active involvement / partnership with civil society organizations, Faith based organizations FBO, NGOs	Changing government priorities Policy is broad, actions can be completed within the year and carried forward for the next year	
	Is there a system in place for regular monitoring the implementation of the policy/programme and evaluating its impact?	Mechanisms for quarterly reporting; all heads of departments for MoH and MoA NDP responsible to monitor every end of the quarter; progress on results and expenditure	Changing officers that do not have all the information and do not follow up properly	Having a separate M&E system with the new policy	New system needs to be developed and implemented Training on M&E for NFNC and other partners Budget allocation would not happen completely	
	To effectively coordinate the policy, is the current budget allocation by government adequate to carry out this role?	The one in the policy is adequate	The current prevision is not adequate	Donor funding, ex. technical support from FAO and other development partners; NGOS	The prevision is not endorsed, or not available	
	Other reasons why the ministries		Other ministries don't	Nutrition as a national		Independence is

	Policy & Normative, Knowledge, Partnership, Implementation Capacity, implementation FPFNS, Most vulnerable people in mind	SWOT ANALYSIS				
		STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS	COMMENTS
	prefer silo operations?		own the policy Being under MoH it is seen as a health issue Separate budget set aside for FNS	agenda, as in the case of CC / relating both can be a funding opportunity		critical in order to work along the ministries; also not being restricted as government mechanisms CC impacts on agriculture production and health
	Benefits and drawbacks of collaborating with private sector contribution to FNS	Sharing information	Conflict of interest	Funding and partnership opportunitiesNGOS and FBOs closer to the fieldOptions to promote healthy foods	Unhealthy food more sugar/salt/high processedSome new food can replace the traditional ones	Not only food companies, ex. Phone companies
	What power/difficulties do you have to influence the implementation process across other sectors, divisional level and community level?	They're part of the government Allocated annual budget, operational and programme Advantages from government funding and processes	Not enough resources (human, financial…) for effective coordination and implementation Long government process to obtain budget, recruit people, outsourcing… Channels of		Status of the Centre in terms of the necessary independence for overall coordination	

	Policy & Normative, Knowledge, Partnership, Implementation Capacity, implementation FPFNS, Most vulnerable people in mind	SWOT ANALYSIS				
		STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS	COMMENTS
			communication through MoH take time No direct access to donor funding			
	Improve coordination between gender equality/women's empowerment and FNS	Inclusion in the policy and plan of actions (ministries have to include them within their budgets)		Poverty alleviation unit within MW deals with FNS		Other sectors can also include the gender approach in their programs
Organization						
Ex. Procedures	Identify some of your strengths and weaknesses to efficiently implement the policy? Does NFNC have the capacity to ensure the policy is translated into action? Think about the organisation, teams, coordination platform, M&E system, information system etc	We have the centre and the people, organigram and defined positions (structure in place but they need cover some positions) Fluid communication Convening power Ministry is committed (budget) capacity to initiate and sustain partnerships for	M&E capacities Information system, capacities for reporting; having a system on line (google drive, safety issues); HR and financial resources (they need more)	Capacity building	To ne merged with another similar unit in the context of the structural reform of MoH	

	Policy & Normative, Knowledge, Partnership, Implementation Capacity, implementation FPFNS, Most vulnerable people in mind	SWOT ANALYSIS				
		STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS	COMMENTS
		the policy				
	How committed is your ministry on this policy? Please explain.				Government processes for approval are tedious, cumbersome…	
	Does NFNC have the capacity to initiate and sustain partnerships for the policy			Establish new partnerships; FBOs; Academic institutions; NGOs with no FNS expertise can be assisted by the NFNC		
	Advantages/ constraints in terms of positioning and mandate?					
Individual						

	Policy & Normative, Knowledge, Partnership, Implementation Capacity, implementation FPFNS, Most vulnerable people in mind	SWOT ANALYSIS				
		STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS	COMMENTS
Ex. Technical	Which skills or competencies are available / not adequately provided for? *Consider: skills required for delivering FNS and services, nutrition officers*	They have the skills Policy development Nutrition, dietetics, food science and agriculture, food science Advocacy, campaigns	Not enough human resources M&E, policy development and planning, project management Research and analysis	Post grades in Fiji and abroad Short courses Exchanges of experiences in Oceania	Not formal qualification on specific fields They have learnt by doing	
	Are sufficient staff and expert resources assigned to FNS tasks? Where are the critical gaps? *Consider: human resources for planning, information management, M&E, service delivery, etc.; open vacancies and staff turnover*					
	Are you motivated to perform for FNS objectives? Who is not? Why? *Consider: incentive systems, organisational culture*	Great motivation and passion for FNS	Uncertainty of the status of the centre Extension of the contracts			

In order to answer the fourth question of the diagnostic, trying to find out if the *implementation mechanisms and capacities that are in place are adequate to reach specifically those people and areas most affected by food insecurity and malnutrition*, we conducted a participatory exercise with the colleagues from the National Centre for Food and Nutrition.

This is a multi-sector institution, currently funded through the Ministry of Health (NFNC/MOH), which has been decided by both Permanent Secretaries of MoH and MoA that will be the independent Secretariat to oversee the implementation, monitoring and reporting on Food and Nutrition Security Policy (FNSP) and its Action Plan.

First of all we have tried to focus the capacity needs assessment on those capacities that are necessary for the implementation of the policy and particularly for the two objectives they are directly responsible of:

- Improve multi-sector leadership, ownership and co-ordination of national Food and Nutrition Security action: to create an effective institutional and legal framework for management and mobilization of sufficient resources and actions to achieve improved national food and nutrition security.
- Scale up evidence-based action to reduce food and nutrition insecurity: identify and scale up investment in best practices for reducing food and nutrition insecurity in communities and evaluate for effectiveness.

We tried to look at the technical capacities that we already have and go away of an approach that just focus on the "lack of. The idea is to tap on the existent capacities and see how they can be leveraged.

The first part of the analysis was focused on the policy enabling environment, and the legislative and regulatory context in which the NFNC develops its activity.

In this sense, some of the strengths that the NFNC foresees for the implementation of this multi-sectoral policy at national, divisional and community level are related to the inclusion of the FNS concerns in the National Development Plan. As Nutrition has been traditionally within the Health agenda, there is indeed a risk of other sectors not feeling responsible of it. However, once the policy and action plan are officially endorsed, they are referred to the sector (Agriculture and Health) and they have to include the actions within their plan of actions, and guarantee that these actions trickle down to the divisional and community level. There is a formal follow-up from the Ministry of Economy, which is also a good way of supporting the implementation of actions.

The coordination between the Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation to contribute to gender equality/women's empowerment for Food and Nutrition Security, shall be made through the Poverty alleviation unit.

As part of the capacity building process, there is a need for more human and financial resources that have to be available for effective coordination and implementation. In terms of government processes, there is a need of making them more efficient in order to be able to obtain the necessary budget, recruit additional people and outsource other functions that require external

assistance. Communication channels through the MoH take a long time and may delay direct interactions with potential partners and donors.

Advocacy capacities of the NFNC and other partners could be supported in order to be able to see the inclusion of Nutrition in sectoral agendas as an opportunity to get additional funding for their action plans.

The involvement of other key stakeholders as civil society organizations, (Faith Based Organizations FBO and NGOs), is seen as an opportunity because of their deep roots in the community, although they do not have a plan for implementing FNS actions. With regard to the private sector, there are also opportunities not only for getting additional funding but also for promoting healthy foods. However, there is also a risk of conflicting interests, especially with some producers of unhealthy food (with lots of added sugar/salt and/or highly processed) that is replacing the ingredients of the traditional diet.

So, partnerships and negotiating capacities of the NFNC could be strengthened in this context. It will allow to reach to the local levels and promote efficiencies in delivering Food and Nutrition Security services.

The upcoming elections could put these current government priorities at risk, and make actions that were expected to be completed within this year be carried forward for later next year.

There is a system in place for regular monitoring the implementation of the policy and evaluating its impact, with quarterly reporting mechanisms from all heads of departments for MoH and MoA with details on progress on results and expenditure. They do it on their sectoral plans which are also included on the National Development Plan (NDP), and send the reports to the Ministry of Agriculture. For the particular case of the policy the NFNC will get the information and prepare the monitoring report. The system will not work if these responsible officers from the sectors keep changing and have not been updated, do not have all the information and cannot follow up properly. So, in order to fully develop and implement it, it is necessary to train the NFNC and other partners on M&E. Also need to develop capacities related to Budget allocation to be sure that this is done according to the plan.

With regard to the institutional dimension of this capacity needs assessment, mostly related to motivation, strategic, organizational and management functions; human and financial resources; Knowledge and information resources and infrastructure.

When it comes to the capacities to efficiently translate the Food and Nutrition Security Policy into action, the NFNC have trained people, and an organigram with defined positions. They also have an annual budget and the structure in place although not completely because some positions still need to be covered. The Ministry of Health is committed with this policy and provides annual budget for salaries and wages, utilities, transport and fuel, and other administrative costs, but sometimes approval processes can be tedious and cumbersome.

The Center have good communication and convening power to call the sectors for a meeting, and capacities to initiate and sustain partnerships for the policy implementation. However, the information system and reporting capacities will have to be improved to monitor the policy properly. When the policy is in place they would need a system on line through which receiving the information to keep the monitoring reports updates. Free tools as google drive cannot be used because of data protection issues. Both human and financial resources will have to be increased.

In terms of the coverage of areas, transport is a major limitation. The Centre has submitted the request for a new vehicle, but still there's no confirmation if it will be provided next year.

In addition to the current Budget allocation from the Ministry of Health, there is an additional annual budget in the Fiji Plan of Action for Nutrition for the coordination and implementation of food and nutrition security programs. Moreover, the Operational Plan of the MoH and the FNSP foresee a budget increase. The MoA has also declare its will of supporting the NFNC. If the policy and its budget are approved as they are submitted, the resources will be adequate, but it could happen that this prevision is not endorsed, or not available in the national accounts.

A potential risk at the institutional level is that the NCFN could be merged with other similar unit in the context of the structural reform of the Ministry of Health. A discussion at the level of the Permanent Secretaries of Health and Agriculture was held to decide if the Center should be placed in the Ministry of Agriculture, but finally decided to leave it in the Ministry of Health and its status in the mid-term review of the Policy.

At the individual level, the officers of the NFNC were asked about the capacities they will identified as necessary to perform their tasks according with their job's descriptions, all related to the delivering of FNS services.

In general they were quite confident on their technical capacities with regard to policy development, nutrition, dietetics, food science and agriculture. They consider themselves also train on advocacy and campaign development. However, the Centre has not enough human resources and this constrains all of the above capacities. Areas in which technical expertise could be improved are planning, monitoring and evaluation, project management and research and analysis. There are different options for this individual training including Post grades courses in Fiji and abroad, short courses both online and in person and even meetings for experiences exchanges in the Oceania region.

The NFNC staff consider that they are motivated and even feel passion for their work in Food and Nutrition Security, although the current uncertainty in terms of the extension of their contracts and the status of the Centre does not help them to remain focused on their job's priorities.

APPENDIX 6: Summary Report on Multisector Dialogue on Food and Nutrition Security in Fiji January 2019

This report summarises the issues raised and recommendations from the Multisector Dialogue on Food and Nutrition Security in Fiji, which was held 23-24 January 2019 at the Holiday Inn, Suva. The

meeting agenda and detailed meeting report are included as Appendix 1 and 2. Other consultancy deliverables prepared in the lead up to the Dialogue are also appended, including the initial review of the draft Fiji Policy on Food and Nutrition Security (Appendix 3), a briefing note on managing conflicts of interest in nutrition policy (Appendix 4) and a briefing note on recommendations related to the use of pricing policy to improve diets and health in Fiji (Appendix 5).

Dietary patterns in Fiji have shifted away from traditional staples such as root crops and local fruits and vegetables, to consumption of higher quantities of processed and imported foods, which has contributed to the coexistence of multiple forms of malnutrition. Data from the 2004 and 2015 National Nutrition Surveys, show little change in markers of undernutrition in children (under 5 years and those of school age), while rates of overweight and obesity among school age children and adults are increasing. Across all populations, micronutrient deficiencies such as anaemia remain high.

Food and Nutrition Security (FNS) is a policy priority for the Government of Fiji, specified in the National Development Plan (2017) as one of the pillars of Inclusive Socio-economic

Development for Fiji. The National Development Plan specifies the need for multisectoral action on FNS, and the development of a multisectoral policy, which is currently in draft form.

This Multisector Dialogue, designed to strengthen multisectoral action on nutrition in Fiji, was hosted by the National Food and Nutrition Centre (NFNC), Ministry of Health and Medical Services, and supported by the FAO, FIRST (FAO and European Union Partnership Programme and Policy Assistance Facility), and the University of Sydney. It had the following objectives:

- To increase awareness of food and nutrition security as core government objectives
- To identify sectoral roles and responsibilities regarding food and nutrition security, and
- To facilitate collaboration and alignment across sectors for food and nutrition security

The participants in the Dialogue addressed issues of multisectoral policy, implementation partnership, evidence (research) and stakeholder engagement. The scope of the dialogue, particularly the participatory workshop component, were designed to be relevant to the FAO FIRST diagnostic, which has been used to structure the following report on Dialogue outcomes. The strength of this approach is that it allows the facilitators to synthesise the discussions (presented in detail in Appendix 2) to focus on the key strengths and opportunities of the existing food and nutrition security policy context in Fiji, with a focus on taking action to improve outcomes.

The key opportunities and recommendations identified by the consultations and dialogues are detailed in the short report that follows, and include:

- Increasing awareness of FNS among key sectoral actors through raising individual and institutional awareness of the importance of FNS to wellbeing and development in Fiji (in line with the National Development Plan);
- Supporting FNS activities across sectors through mechanisms for collaboration and resourcing; and
- Strengthening governance for FNS through providing clear mandates for the planned Technical Working Group (TWG), National Steering Committee (NSC) and the Secretariat, and learning from past experience in Fiji.

APPENDIX 7: Capacity Development Plan for the Ministry of Agriculture's Economic Analysis and Reporting Capacity

Executive Summary

This Capacity Development Plan is part of the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)'s efforts for capacity development within the Fiji Ministry of Agriculture (MoA). The following document presents a Capacity Development Plan for MOA's Economic Analysis and Reporting Capacity', which is of utmost importance for sound evidence-based policy making around Food and Nutrition security and in support of strategic and operational planning. Within MoA, the task of 'economic analysis and reporting' falls under the responsibility of the Economic Planning and Statistics (EP&S) division, whose vision is 'to excel in the provision of sound economic planning and policy advice for the development of Fiji's agriculture sector'.

To gain a better understanding of the capacity needs and available interventions interviews were held with MoA's staff, in particular from the EP&S division, and selected stakeholders. Furthermore, secondary data and reports were consulted to assess EP&S mandate, structure, and performance.

As a caveat, some necessary information to undertake a comprehensive capacity needs assessment were not available. For instance, job descriptions and CVs of Staff could not be obtained, which are necessary for a skills gap analysis. As a further drawback, MoA is currently undergoing an organisational restructure. This will largely affect this capacity plan, as an organisational structure is a key element of capacity. The structure of the EP&S Division will be reviewed by April 2019, after the completion of this plan. It is therefore strongly recommended that this Capacity Plan will be reviewed after the finalisation of MoA's Organisation Structure, using the complete set of information needed. MoA will need to start its capacity development efforts in parallel with these ongoing activities.

In accordance with the standard approach to capacity development along the lines of (1) enabling environment; (2) organisational dimension; and (3) individual dimensions, the Capacity Needs Assessment for Economic Analysis and Reporting revealed the following:

1) Enabling Environment

- For improved compliance with legal frameworks, it is necessary for MoA to acquire legal support to review outdated legislations and to fastrack coordination with the Solicitor General's office, which currently slows down operations
- To comply with national accountability frameworks, it is necessary for MoA to assign the task of drafting Annual reports to an EP&S Unit (e.g. Monitoring and Evaluation Unit (M&E)) and produce retrospective Annual Reports since 2016
- To comply with the national policy framework, it is necessary to ensure that national targets are translated into MoA's policies, and to ensure that they link with Civil Service Reform guidelines. For this it is necessary to do refresher trainings on operational planning, and strengthen staff's knowledge on MoA's five strategic priorities and how they link in with national targets
- To ensure a consistent increase in national budget allocation in accordance with strategic

priorities, it is necessary to improve EP&S's Monitoring and Evaluation capacity and performance assessment reporting skills through refresher trainings on logical framework reporting

- It is necessary to improve stakeholder activity coordination (e.g. through donor coordination workshops) to ensure that policies are implemented with strong commitment of stakeholders and adequate donor funding.
- It is further necessary to update and improve of MoA's website for improved communication and coordination with stakeholders to ensure their continuous support

2) Organisational Dimension

- To ensure that EP&S carries out its full mandate, that its activities do not deviate from its core functions, and that its work is reactive rather than proactive;
- It is necessary to redesign the structure and review the mandate of EP&S to avoid an overlap and duplication of tasks within EP&S units
- It is necessary to recruit an estimated 15 additional staff after finalisation of organisation re-structure, and after all vacancies are filled
- It requires hiring/relocating of staff for setting up an executive unit that takes over tasks that deviate from EP&S mandate
- It is necessary establish Standard Operational Procedures (SOP) and Guidelines on the Open Merit Recruitment System to ensure timely processing of interviews, and set and communicate time-schedules to panel interview members in advance to ensure that vacancies are filled in time
- It is necessary to better link EP&S job descriptions to business plans and unit work plans
- It is also necessary to hold regular performance assessment meetings with staff to take corrective actions where needed
- It is necessary to establish of an annual work plan that includes fixed annual EP&S meetings for proactive economic analysis on trade, production and other trends
- It is necessary increase coordination and flow of information between EP&S units, which calls for a) more internal EP&S meetings (i.e. at least monthly), and b) the establishment of a central platform for storing and sharing documents and data (i.e. an internal server or shared folders)
- It is necessary to acquire a data analysis software that can process large survey data sets (e.g. the Agriculture Census) and to acquire M&E information system and train staff accordingly

3) Individual Dimension

- It is necessary to do regular refresher trainings with all staff on operational planning and logical framework reporting
- It is necessary to train staff on planning and time-management skills
- It is necessary to improved individual staff capacity to better link policy needs with data collection, which calls for at least basic data analysis and interpretation skills, good policy writing skills, and good project management and appraisal skills, which should be acquired through trainings
- In the medium-term, it is necessary to train staff on advanced data analysis (econometrics incl. forecasting)

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