



*Empowered lives.  
Resilient nations.*

# **Fiji Parliament Support Project Annual Report 2017**

**Funded by:**



*Empowered lives.  
Resilient nations.*

## **Table of Contents**

	<u>Page</u>
<b>1. Message from the Project Team</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. The Fiji Parliament – A Summary of the Year</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3. Intervention</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>4. Highlights of Key Achievements for 2017</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>5. Project Management and Implementation</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>6. Annex 1 – FPSP Financial Summary January- December 2016</b>	<b>23</b>

## Message from the Project Team

The Fiji Parliament Support Project Phase II (FPSP II) is pleased to present its first annual report under the new phase of the project.

The first phase of the project started in January 2014 and closed in March 2017. This new second phase project commenced at the beginning of 2017, thus ensuring that there was a seamless transition from the first phase to the second, with no break in assistance provided to the Fiji Parliament. FPSP II has therefore hit the ground running with immediate implementation of activities and support provided to the Fiji Parliament. The focus of FPSP II is slightly different to FPSP, allowing for increased support to Committees in 2017 – a crucial time in their work cycle.

FPSP II has also benefitted from a growing UNDP parliamentary development portfolio in the Pacific region, allowing UNDP to pool expertise and support, while further developing the regional Parliamentary development team. This growing portfolio has also allowed an increased emphasis on south-south exchanges and knowledge sharing within the Pacific, from which the Fiji Parliament has benefitted.

The project is grateful for the support of the Speaker of the Fiji Parliament, Hon. Dr. Jiko Luveni, the Honourable Members of the Fiji Parliament, Parliament Secretary General Viniana Namosimalua and all the Fiji Parliament secretariat staff for their willingness to partner and engage with the project and its activities. This support has contributed significantly to the impact and sustainability of the activities implemented by the project throughout the year.

The project would also like to express its sincere appreciation to the FPSP II current funding partners, the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) and the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), for their support to the project.

Finally, a number of the activities implemented by FPSP II in 2017 would not have been possible without the cooperation and support of other legislatures. In particular, thanks go to the Parliament of New Zealand, the Tonga Parliament, the Victoria Parliament, the Australian Parliament, the National Assembly of Wales, the Scottish Parliament and the Pacific Parliamentary Partnerships programme for their ongoing support to the project and their ability to mobilize experts and resource people at short notice to assist with the project's implementation.

## The Fiji Parliament – A Summary of the Year

This reporting year marked the start of the second phase of the UNDP Fiji Parliament Support Project (FPSP) II, with Phase I formally ending in March 2017. FPSP II project implementation began in Quarter 1 of 2017 in parallel with the closing quarter of FPSP I, allowing for seamless transition from FPSP to FPSP II and ensuring there was no break in support provided by UNDP to the Fiji Parliament.

The Fiji Parliament has come a long way in recent years in terms of raising public's awareness and access to information. It now uses a modern website interface and has new mobile apps that can be downloaded on mobile phones and tablets so citizens can access information about the Parliament's work.

The project continues to provide key day to day technical advice to the Fiji Parliament on a range of issues, for example, the most recent being a briefing note on the "next steps" following Parliament dissolution.

Amongst others, activities included trainings, placements, manuals, standard operating procedures, needs assessments, CSO and citizen engagement, and the inclusion of minorities and marginalised groups, including women and youth.

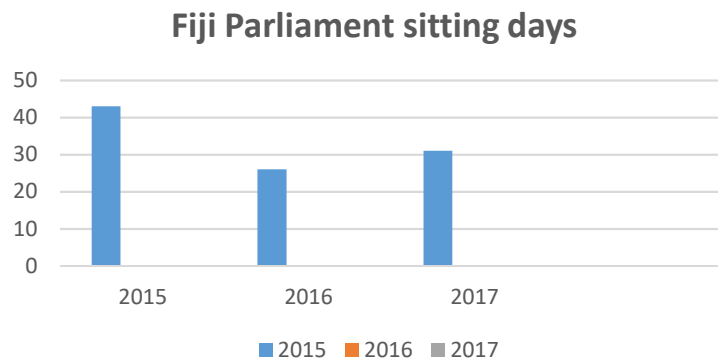
The project continued to perform strongly during this reporting period. Increasingly, the Fiji Parliament has the capacity to ensure that the day to day running of Parliament as an institution and the work of committees can proceed with minimal support from UNDP. This has allowed the project to focus on delivering key additional activities that add value to the work of the Parliament and create a more transparent and participatory legislature which plays an important oversight and legislative scrutiny role.

A number of the activities being implemented by the Fiji Parliament are now receiving regional and global recognition as good practice for Parliaments. Two such examples are the Speaker's Debates and Budget analysis work. The Speaker's Debates on the SDGS and key development issues are now being replicated in the Cook Islands with discussions ongoing in countries as far afield as Zimbabwe as to the possibility of replicating such activities there. The detailed budget analysis is now established as the norm in Fiji; and, for the first time, the provision by Parliament of briefings for CSOs on the content of the budget shows that Parliament as an institution can

engage pro-actively with the civil society. The Fiji Parliament is at the moment the only legislature in the Pacific to provide such information.

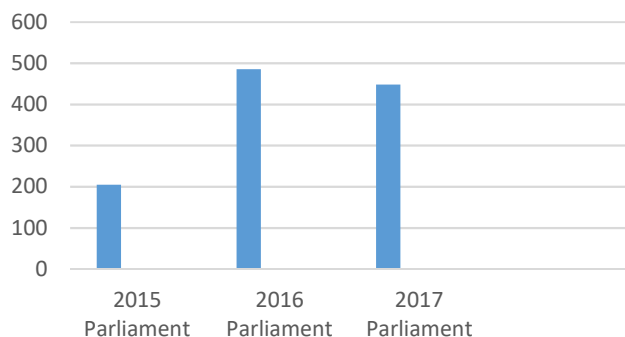
The project team has continued to invest time in resource mobilisation activities for the project and this will continue with the aim of ensuring the project is fully funded by the first quarter of 2018.

## Functions of Parliament



Compared to 2015, there was a significant decline in the number of sitting days in 2016, followed a slight increase in 2017. With the additional 10 sitting days in 2017, activities around oversight mechanisms, for example, recorded an increase, including the number of oral, supplementary and written questions tabled and the number of Opposition motions moved. However, the increase in number of sitting days cannot necessarily be used to explain all statistical trends.

### Number of Committee meetings conducted

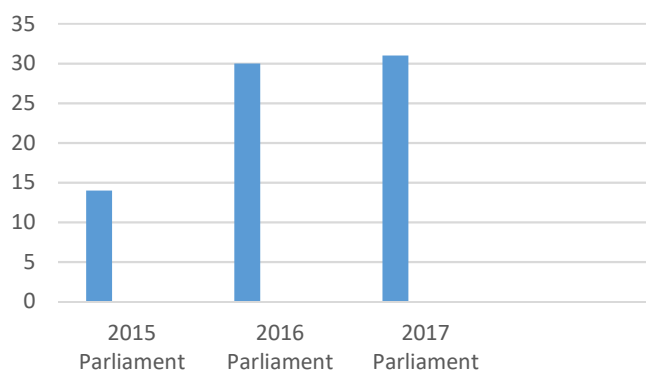


Parliamentary committees are an important part of the work of the Parliament. They investigate issues, reports, and bills in detail, so that the Parliament can be well-informed before making decisions of national significance.

Compared to 2016, the number of Committee meetings in 2017 decreased slightly. This however did not affect the

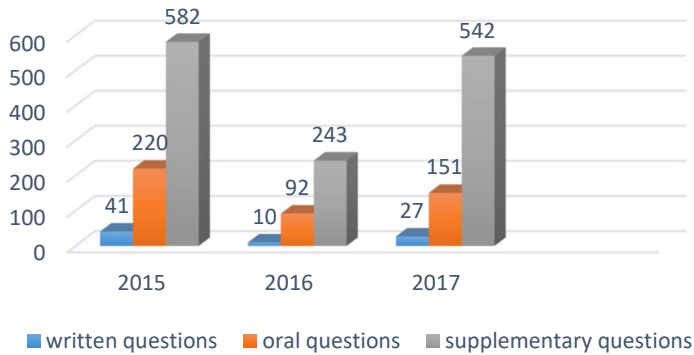
committees' efficiency – as the next table on the number of committees' tabled shows. FPSP continued to support the work of Committees through a range of activities including trainings for Committee members, technical assistance to Committees and regional level activities, where different members participated.

### Committee reports tabled



The number of reports tabled in Parliament continued to increase between 2015 – 2017 although a mere increase by one (1) from 2016 to 2017. Similar to 2015 and 2016, Committees continued to be the formal mechanism for engagement between the legislature and citizens. Several consultations on draft on bills were held with citizens, including one on Rotuma where the relevant Committee members undertook travel to the island for consultations, while two Committees undertook site visits because of issues highlighted in Ministry Annual Reports.

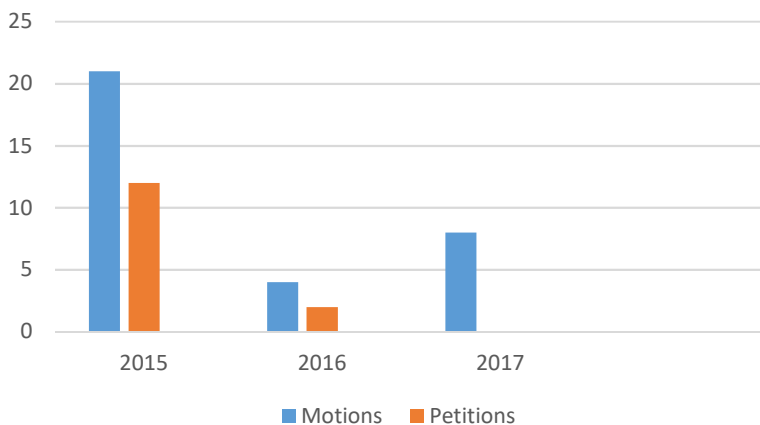
## Questions in Parliament



The number of written questions tabled by MPs increased slightly between 2016 and 2017. Interestingly, out of a total of 27 oral questions tabled in 2017, 16 of those were tabled in the first sitting of Parliament for the year while the remaining 11 were spread throughout the year. Although there was a general increase in the number of activities related to oversight mechanisms as compared to 2016, Parliament statistics show that written questions remain low, suggesting an accountability mechanism that remains underutilised by MPs.

On the national budget, statistics provided by Parliament showed that the detailed scrutiny during the line by line discussions of the budget during the Committee of Supply decreased as compared to 2016. Further, there was a decrease in the substantive amendments to the budget from 121 in 2016 to 66 in 2017.

## Motions and Petitions by Opposition



According to Parliament statistics, there was a significant decline in petitions between 2015 – 2017, from 13 to 0 respectively. The process for considering petitions has changed meaning they

are not referred directly to committees and the Speaker has noted that a number of motions have been ruled out of order by her following discussions in the business committee on their wording.

This could have dissuaded MPs from tabling petitions. From April 2017 onwards, the Opposition has claimed that Government MPs have been less keen to allow debate on petitions and motions on sensitive development issues.

## **Intervention**

The project is designed as outlined in the FPSP project document, has an overall objective, a specific objective, expected outcomes and project activities.

The project will be guided by the Corporate Plan and strategic vision and mission of Parliament. To achieve the aims of a well-functioning modern Parliament, the project will focus on capacity development of parliamentary actors, including MPs and staff. It will involve, among other activities, trainings, placements, drafting of manuals and standard operating procedures, needs assessments, CSO and citizen engagement, and the inclusion of minorities and marginalized groups, including women and youth. The proposed timeframe for the support is four years from January 2017 – December 2020. This allows for continued support to the current Parliament term, as well as just over two years of support to the next Parliament term following the next general election scheduled for 2018.

### *a. Overall Objective*

The Fiji Parliament Support Project – Phase II seeks to address limited capacities in Parliament to enable it to discharge its mandate in relation to legislation, oversight and representation.

### *b. Specific Objectives*

The project seeks to provide support to the Parliament to become more effective and efficient through strengthening the work of its committees related to legislation and oversight, building the capacities of legislators and professionalism of staff, as well as improving outreach and citizen engagement.



### *c. Outcomes linked to UNDAF*

*Outcome 5.1:* Regional, national, local and traditional governance systems are strengthened, respecting and upholding human rights, especially women's rights in line with international standards.

*Outcome 2.1:* Increased women's participation through legislation and policies that advance women's leadership at all levels.

### *d. Project Outputs*

- *Output 1:* Committees have enhanced capabilities to undertake their legislative and oversight functions, including skills to ensure that the SDGs and development issues are mainstreamed across Parliament's work, including gender mainstreaming.
- *Output 2:* MPs, including women MPs, and staff have increased capacities and improved professionalism to fulfil their obligations, benefitting from exposure to other parliaments through south-south triangular cooperation.
- *Output 3:* Parliamentary outreach and citizen engagement have expanded to include traditionally excluded groups, such as women and youth, and reach remote areas.

## **Highlights of Key Achievements for 2017**

The activities outlined below are not the exhaustive list undertaken in 2017 but rather highlights some of the key activities and achievements of the project during the year. A more comprehensive list of activities undertaken by the project throughout 2017 is available in the quarterly progress reports which can be obtained from the UNDP Fiji Parliament Support Project Team.

**Activity 1: Support the establishment and capacity building of the Parliament of Fiji to effectively scrutinise legislation, oversee the executive and represent citizens.**

### **Output 1 - Committees Strengthened to undertake their legislative and oversight functions**

#### **Code of Conduct Expert to assist the Law, Justice and Human Rights Committee with their legislative scrutiny (26<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> March)**

A major focus of the project is on the technical support that can be provided through FPSP to allow committees to better analyze draft legislation and make any necessary changes during the

committee stage of the process before reporting back to Parliament. UNDP received a request from the Parliament Standing Committee on Law, Justice and Human Rights to provide such assistance with regards to the Code of Conduct Bill that is with the Committee for scrutiny.

FPSP facilitated that the Chief Executive of GOPAC (Global Parliamentarians Against Corruption), Akaash Maharj, provide assistance to the committee with regards to undertaking a review of the scope of Bill and providing analytical and summary notes on the content for consideration by the Committee, undertaking research on the subject matter for the Committee, providing



comparative analysis of other Code of Conduct legislation in other jurisdictions, providing advice, assistance and briefings to the Law, Justice and Human Rights Chair, members and support staff to enhance the capacity of the Committee to scrutinise the Bill effectively, reviewing and analyzing the written submissions on the Bill and providing summary notes for consideration by the Committee and providing input and advice to the Committee in supporting the development and finalisation of the committee reports.

The expert provided some of this work from distance and was in-country from the 26<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> March to work directly with the Committee. A full report from the expert is available from the project team.

### **PAC expert to assist the Public Accounts Committee in their scrutiny of reports (31<sup>st</sup> March)**

As part of the ongoing support to the Parliament Public Accounts Committee, the project provided an expert to assist the committee during the month of March. Some of this work was undertaken from distance and Rob Oakeshott also spent one working week in Fiji working directly with the Committee.



The key issues covered through this TA to the Committee were resolving why reports had not been tabled in the previous Parliament, as agreed and expected (Volume Two and Three of Commercial Entities 2009-2013), progressing on draft reports that were currently before the

committee but had stalled (Consolidated Audit Oversight Report 2010-2013), and progressing on public hearings in relation to current audit oversight (2014 Audit Report).

### **Working Session with Committee Chairs, Deputy Chairs and Whips (31<sup>st</sup> March)**

On 31<sup>st</sup> March, the project held a one-day working session with the Committee Chairs and Deputy Chairs. As all of these positions except one are now filled only by Government MPs, it was also decided to invite the Opposition Whips to ensure that discussions were cross-party.

Some of the issues covered in this working session included:

- Planning committee work;
- Step by step guide and timelines for dealing with Bills;
- Step by step guide and timelines for dealing with annual reports / papers referred to the committee;
- Preparing for evidence sessions – how to advertise who to invite, how much time, the format, preparing questions, preparing briefings / analysis;
- What does the chair do and what does the committee Clerk do;
- What is done in meetings and what is done between meetings;
- When do committees need to travel outside Suva and how to complete the travel form; and
- The remit of committees – dealing with individuals who contact committees / individual complaints or issues.

Members were keen to ensure that this was a working session rather than workshop and therefore the number of resource persons were limited. Committee Clerk David Meek from the New Zealand House of Representatives did participate, but all other sessions were facilitated just by the UNDP project staff and the Members. The project has previously interviewed Committee Chairs and / or Committee Clerks from the Parliaments of Victoria, Wales, Scotland and UK and therefore these videos were played to the members during the sessions.

**Seminar attended by Fiji MPs on Parliament Committees (10-12 April)**

UNDP brought together Members and staff from 8 Pacific Parliaments to discuss the challenges and opportunities for Pacific Parliaments in terms of ensuring that there are effective committee systems operating and playing a key role in the legislative and oversight process. The event was held in Suva and numerous members of Parliament from the Fiji Parliament attended the event. The former Speaker of the Trinidad and Tobago Parliament attended the event as a resource person allowing MPs from Fiji to interact and discuss issues of importance with another SIDS Parliament.



*Participants at the regional seminar with UNDP Resident representative, Osnat Lubrani, and the Honourable Speaker of the Fiji Parliament*

In addition, as part of the programme, the MPs from the Pacific visited the Fiji Parliament to see the work of the Fiji Parliament Committees.

**Public Consultations by the Standing Committee on Social Affairs (1-8 May)**

The FPSP II project continued to provide support to a number of the Standing Committees. One specific request was from the Standing Committee for Social Affairs with regards to further public consultations in Rotuma on the two bills related to Rotuma that are currently before the Committee. The project facilitated that the Committee members and support staff visited the island by boat. Unfortunately, due to adverse weather, the proposed 3 days in Rotuma turned into 10 days as the boat was unable to return to Suva due to a cyclone warning.

**Training for Committee staff on scrutinising legislation from a gender perspective (8 May)**

At the beginning of 2017, UNDP launched the Toolkit on Scrutinising Legislation from a Gender Perspective. This toolkit is to be used by Parliament Committees when undertaking their scrutiny of legislation.

In May, UNDP organised a half-day training session for all Committee staff on the Toolkit in order for them to be capacitated on how to provide advice and guidance to the Committee on the toolkit, and how to ensure that consideration of gender issues is included in Committee reports.

### **Technical Assistance to the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence (30 May)**

The Fiji Parliament Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs is mandated to scrutinise International



*UNDP Climate Change expert, Kevin Petrini, and UNDP Energy expert Thomas Jensen, briefing the Committee*

Treaties and Conventions before they are debated and voted upon in the Parliament itself. Two of the international treaties referred to the Committee were on (i) The Doha Amendment to the Kyoto Protocol (ii) Review of the Framework agreement on the Establishment of the International Solar Alliance.

The FPSP II project facilitated the attendance of 2 UNDP energy and climate change experts to provide information and briefings to the Committee during their scrutiny of these International treaties.

### **Training on Gender Toolkit (17 July)**

FPSP II organized a one-day training for Standing Committee Chairs, Whips and Deputy Whips on the Gender Toolkit. The training was tailored to build and enhance the capacity of Committee Chairs to consider adequately gender issues when discussing draft laws and reports in their respective Committees. Participants were also provided background information on the government's national and international gender commitments, and to explore ideas for practical application of the principles of gender equality in parliamentary scrutiny. It should be noted that this toolkit has now gained international recognition as an important resource for Parliaments. The Inter-Parliamentary Union has utilized the toolkit in training with selected Parliaments in Africa and UNDP in Ukraine is now developing its own toolkit based on the Fiji version.

### **Training for Pacific Public Accounts Committee (12-14 December)**

As part of UNDP's support to Pacific parliaments to strengthen their capacities in law-making, oversight and representative functions as well as strengthening the general capacity of Parliament Secretariats, FPSP II supported the participation of a Fiji delegation at the Pacific Public Accounts Committee seminar held in Wellington from 12 to 14 December. The broad objectives of the two-day seminar were to support the work of Public Account Committees through the capacity building of their leadership (chair and deputy chair) and support staff (committee clerk). Fiji's delegation comprised of two Government and one Opposition PAC members as well as the PAC secretary.



*Output 2 - MPs, including women MPs, and staff have increased capacities and improved professionalism to fulfil their obligations*

**Induction training for a new MP (7<sup>th</sup> March)**

Following the resignation of NFP MP Tupou Draunidalo, a new MP was selected to be sworn in from the National Federation Party. Hon Parmod Chand of NFP was sworn in to Parliament at the March sitting. Prior to this, on 7<sup>th</sup> March, the FPSP Phase II project provided induction training for Hon. Chand. This induction training covered the main procedural aspects of the Parliament's work. The format was through presentation, discussion and mock sessions in the chamber itself.



**Workshop for MPs and selected Parliament staff on Non-Communicable Diseases (27<sup>th</sup> March)**

A one-day briefing for the Fiji Members of Parliament was organized by the project and held on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2017 at the Grand Pacific Hotel, Suva from 9am to 4pm. The briefing follows a series of briefings for Members of Parliament on important development issues organized by Phase I of the FPSP project.

The briefing was organized by UNDP but was a collaborative effort by the following organisations – UNDP Pacific Office in Fiji, Fiji Ministry of Health and Medical Services, Fiji National University- Centre for Obesity and NCD prevention (C-POND), McCabe Centre for Law and Cancer, World Health Organisation – Pacific office and Pacific Community Public Health Division.

The training sessions were delivered by specialists in relevant fields, including:

- Elisiva Na'ati (Pacific Community Public Health Division's Nutrition Officer);
- Dr. Isimeli Tukana (National Adviser – NCD – Ministry of Health Fiji);
- Dr. Wendy Snowdon (NCD Coordinator, WHO 's Division of Pacific Technical Support)
- Nafiz Ali (Tobacco Control Unit Ministry of Health Fiji);
- Prof. Marj Moddie (Deakin Economics – Australia);
- Dr. Iliapeci Kubuabola (C-POND –FNU);
- Ferdinand Strobel (Health & Development Policy Specialist– UNDP Pacific Office in Fiji); and
- Ayodele Akinremi (FNU).

### **Preparation for Budget Analysis support to MPs (27 June – 8 July)**

The national budget was tabled in Parliament on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2017. In preparation for the tabling of the budget, the FPSP II project mobilised 6 international researchers to come to Fiji to work with the Parliament Library and Research Services team to undertake an analysis of the Budget and to hold workshops and briefs for MPs and civil society on the budget.

Researchers were mobilised from the Parliaments of Tonga, Australia, Victoria, Wales, Scotland and New Zealand.

### **Seminar for MPs on Sharing Knowledge from International Conferences (29 May)**

One of the issues previously raised by the Honourable Speaker and other stakeholders in Parliament was a mechanism to share information between all MPs from international conferences and events attended by the Fiji MPs. At the end of May, the FPSP II project arranged a one-day knowledge sharing workshop for MPs to share their experiences, lessons learned and the new issues highlighted at these conferences attended. The MPs themselves were the resource people and presented to their peers on the conferences and activities attended on behalf of the Fiji Parliament. Unfortunately, SODELPA MPs did not attend the event as they were unhappy that they have not recently been selected as part of the official Parliament delegations. However, MPs from Fiji First and NFP did attend and participated.

### **Capacity Development Retreat for MPs (14 – 17 August)**



A total of 30 MPs participated at the two and half day retreat which was jointly organized by FPSP II and the Fiji Parliament Secretariat. The objective was to share information on three subject areas that were determined by the MPs themselves in feedback from earlier programmes: 23rd Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,

otherwise known as COP23; Trade, Investment and Tourism; and Development Minerals. This Retreat is tied to FPSP Output 2 (MPs' capacity building). Resource people included government ministries and agencies who work on the above issues, regional organizations and statutory bodies.

The sessions were tailored to ensure maximum time for discussions and interactions between MPs and the resource people. The sessions also provided the opportunity for MPs to be well informed on these important issues and have the capacity to fully engage in their roles as lawmakers, in providing oversight and representing citizen's interests on matters linked to these subject areas.

### **Improving document archiving and journals (27 – 31 August)**

During this quarter, a senior Tables Officer from the New Zealand Parliament staff was attached to the Fiji Parliament Tables Office to assist them in the compilation of journals and indexing. This important function to ensure that formal and accurate records of Parliament are kept in good order to crucial to governance systems in Fiji. During this time, the Officer worked with the Tables Office to compile a detailed excel checks and balance system platform for index referencing of journals.

### **Workshop for Members of Fiji Parliament on Parliamentary Engagement with the 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals (2 October)**

The Fiji Parliament Secretariat, in partnership with UNDP and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), organized a one-day refresher training on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aimed at refreshing and enhancing MPs knowledge around the SDGs. The sessions were designed to inspire discussions amongst MPs on their engagement with the SDGs in Fiji, as well as what has been and what could be the role of Parliament in attaining them. Importantly, the workshop also provided options on how MPs could engage in their capacity as lawmakers, in providing oversight and representing citizen's interests, learning from the experiences of how this work has progressed in other parliaments.



*Members of Parliament and Fiji Parliament staff at the one day SDGs workshop.*

### **Fiji Parliament Sustainable Development Goals Self-Assessment Exercise (3 – 6 October)**

The SDG self-assessment exercise was conducted from 3 to 6 October. The self-assessment was an opportunity for Parliament to self-reflect on their capacity to engage in SDG implementation. The Fijian Parliament made history by being the first in the world to carry out a self-assessment



exercise on SDGs. Led by the Research & Library Services Unit of the Parliament secretariat, the team used focus-group discussions and existing information such as information papers and presentations covering the Fiji Parliament's work on the SDGs. Support was provided by a team consisting of resource persons from UNDP, IPU and GOPAC. A report for the exercise is currently being finalised by Parliament and the Speaker noted her wish to have the report tabled and discussed in Parliament.

### **Dialogue for Pacific Women Clerks and Deputies (5 -6 September)**

FPSP II supported the office of the Secretary General of the Fiji Parliament to host a two-day



Dialogue for eight (8) Pacific Women Clerks and Deputies to discuss key issues related to their roles as Clerks and Deputies. Amongst others, some topics included: having an effective Parliament Secretariat, staffing structures to effectively serve Parliament and an effective Secretariat in a highly political environment. In addition, there were discussions on gender elements of the work including the dynamics for senior women staff working in highly male dominated

institutions. Participating countries included: Fiji, Samoa, Federated States of Micronesia, Tonga, Nauru and Cook Islands.

### **Fiji Parliament delegation to COP23 (12 November)**

FPSP II supported the participation of a cross-party Fiji Parliament delegation at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP 23) in Bonn, Germany, in November. The Speaker of the Fiji Parliament, Hon. Jiko Luveni, was a panelist at the IPU Parliamentary meeting on 12 November where she highlighted the leading role MPs should play as climate change advocates in their respective countries, especially in the Pacific where the effects are clearly visible. She also emphasized the importance of IPU organized forums which strengthen links and cooperation on global issues like climate change between parliaments of developed countries and those in the developing or least developed part of the world.

### **Output 3 - Parliamentary outreach and citizen engagement have expanded to include traditionally excluded groups, such as women and youth, and reach remote areas**

#### **Launch of new Parliament website and Parliament app (22 May)**

During the first phase of the FPSP project, work was undertaken to develop a new interactive website for Parliament to develop apps that could be downloaded to mobile phones and tablets to allow for easy access to Parliament documents and information on Parliament.

On 22<sup>nd</sup> May, the website and apps were formally launched at an event organised by FPSP II in Parliament.



*Honorable Speaker launching the new Parliament Website and apps*

#### **Speaker's Debate – Youth (29 May)**

The FPSP project is continuing to support the hugely popular public Speaker's debates on the SDGs and key development issues. On 29<sup>th</sup> May, the seventh debate was organised on the topic – “Do communities in Fiji value the voices of our youth?”. The panel consisted of the Minister for Youth, the Leader of the Opposition, General Secretary of the National Youth Council of Fiji, National President of Sanatan Youth, President of the Fiji Muslim Youth Movement and an Associate Dean (Pacific) of University of Otago. Over 250 people were in attendance, with the event being livestreamed. This was the first time that the project involved the Fiji Deaf Association to provide sign language services during the Debate.

#### **Visit by Women from the Eastern Division (12 June)**

The FPSP II project worked in close collaboration with the UNDP REACH project to facilitate the visit of 100 women from the Eastern Division to the Fiji Parliament in June. The women from the maritime communities of Lau, Kadavu, Lomaiviti and Rotuma were provided with information on the way the Parliament functions and were given a tour of the Parliament building.



*Women from the Eastern Division in the Parliament Chamber*

### **Budget briefing for Civil Society Organizations (12 June)**

During this quarter, FPSP II organized a briefing for members of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) on the government budget process and budget using information on the budget compiled by the international researchers from the Parliaments of Victoria (Australia), New Zealand, Scotland, Wales and Tonga. A total of 44 representatives from 27 civil society organisations participated in the one-day workshop and this activity was in line with Activity 3.2 objective of providing assistance to citizen groups to engage with parliament.



### **Briefings for senior Civil Servants on Parliament (19 June)**

Under Activity 3.3 of the project a key activity related to Parliament outreach is to organise information sharing sessions with senior civil servants so there is a better understanding by Ministries of the way in which Parliament works and that there can be smoother information flow between the Legislature and the Executive.

The first of these small meetings was organised by Parliament with the Permanent Secretary and senior staff from the Ministry of Youth and Sports. The FPSP II project attended and provided assistance to the secretariat in preparing for the meeting. The Parliament intends to roll out these meetings with other Ministries over the course of the year.

### **Sign Language Interpretation for Parliament sittings**

In line with the project's aims of taking Parliament to the people and especially marginalised groups that are often not engaged with the work of Parliament, FPSP II provided financial support to the Parliament to allow sign language interpretation on television for all Parliament sittings. This initiative was launched by the Parliament in the April sitting.



*All sittings of Parliament are broadcast on television with sign language interpretation.*

### **Parliament Media Roundtable (17 – 18 March)**

The first-round table was organized by UNDP and PACMAS in March of this year between the media, MPs and Parliament Secretariat to discuss issues of mutual interest. This quarter saw the implementation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Media Round table discussion, this time hosted by the Fiji Media Association (FMA). It was an opportunity to discuss issues that were raised at the first-round table and to allow for all parties to raise issues they felt were important. Participants from the Parliament side included the Secretary General, Deputy Secretary General to Parliament, Director Legislature, Parliament Media Officer and the Party Whips and their Deputies. From the media side, all major media outlets were present.

### **Technical Assistance - Broadcasting Needs (October)**

Two NZ based firms were contracted, based on their expertise in the area and experience working with the NZ Parliament, to carry out technical assistance to the Fiji parliament in the planning and management of the process of procurement for remote control broadcast cameras and connectivity equipment. They worked in close coordination with the Fiji Parliament IT team as well as the Fiji Governments IT unit. The setting up of the broadcasting unit would enhance the work of the committees during hearings and provide for a much wider scope of outreach to the communities, not only during hearings but parliament sittings as well. The procurement of the relevant equipment, serviced by Parliament staff) will enable the Fiji Parliament to produce and record coverage of parliamentary proceedings held in the debating chamber and Parliament's two main committee rooms, for television and online broadcast and for provision to the media. The equipment will give the Fiji Parliament autonomy and independence in its broadcasting of the sittings and hearings. This work is ongoing and should be completed in Quarter 2 of 2018.

## Project Management and Implementation

*Effective technical advisory services, project management and implementation.*

The Project Board is the group responsible for making by consensus, management decisions for a project when guidance is required by the Project Manager, including recommendation for approval of project plans and revisions. The Project Board plays a critical role in UNDP-commissioned project evaluations by quality assuring the evaluation process and products, and using evaluations for performance improvement, accountability and learning.

The FPSP Project Board is comprised of the following:

- UNDP Country Director & Head of Pacific Regional Programme and Policy, UNDP Pacific Office in Fiji;
- The Speaker of Parliament;
- The Secretary General of Parliament;
- Representatives of New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade and the Australia Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT);
- UNDP Integrated Results Management Unit Team Leader; and
- UNDP Project Team.

As of 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017, **the financial delivery of the project for the year was 100%**

The FPSP Project Board meeting was held on 28 November 2017, and attended by UNDP management and project staff, Fiji Parliament Secretary General and Deputy Secretary General, as well as representatives of the project donors from the Australia and New Zealand High Commissions in Suva.

The Fiji Parliament Secretary General expressed her deep appreciation to UNDP and the project donors for the support rendered to the Fiji Parliament team during the first year of FPSP II year and said they looked forward to further cooperation in 2018, especially at a critical time when Fiji is due to hold elections.



Phase 2 of the project has the following focus:

- *Output 1:* Strengthening the work of the Parliamentary Committees. The Project envisages that the Committees will be the central focus of the work of the Parliament due to the reduction in the number of Parliament sitting days. The Committees are also an avenue where the general public, civil society organisations, other stakeholders and MPs can interact. The focus of this Output is different from Phase 1, which emphasized more the development of procedures and processes for Committees.
- *Output 2:* UNDP Pacific Office in Fiji Capacity development of the MPs and the Secretariat Staff. The design of the Output assumes that there will be General Elections in 2018 and that there will be some new MPs elected. Therefore, the focus of the first one and half years in terms of capacity development is the Secretariat Staff with only a few limited capacity building activities for the current MPs. Following the General Elections in 2018 there will be an increased focus on capacity building of newly elected and returning MPs. These trainings include an induction program for newly elected MPs and an on-going professional development for returning MPs. Under this Output, the project will expand its south-south and triangular cooperation with other Parliaments in the Asia-Pacific Region with similar parliamentary systems or with similar parliamentary development challenges, in order to create a two-way learning process.
- *Output 3:* The focus of this Output is on Parliamentary Outreach and Citizens Engagement. While this Output was a prominent feature in Phase 1 of the Project, there still is a need to focus on this area in terms of Civic Education, to understand the work and the role of Parliament, and ensuring that Parliament remains accessible and is inclusive of traditionally excluded groups, such as women and youth, and reaching out to remote areas. This Output is also closely linked to Output 1 by enhancing the meaningful participation in the work of the Committees through the provision of trainings for CSOs to productively engage in the work of the Parliament. An additional aspect that has been added under this Output is the establishment of the Parliamentary Satellite Offices aimed at providing more information on the work of Parliament to citizens outside Suva and strengthening parliamentarians' accountability to citizens. To ensure sustainability, these Satellite Offices will be run by the Parliament with support from the project

## Annex 1: Financial Summary for Fiji Parliament Support Project for the period: 01 January – 31 December 2017

<b>Output 1 - Committees have enhanced capabilities to undertake their legislative and oversight functions, including skills to ensure that the SDGs and development issues are mainstreamed across Parliament's work, including gender mainstreaming.</b>		
Activity 1.1	Support Committee Chairs & MPs	\$114,650.04
Activity 1.2	Assistance provided to committee staff and committee services	\$21,132.83
Activity 1.3	Support provided to the work of committees	\$77,981
<b>Output 2 - MPs, including women MPs, and staff have increased capacities and improved professionalism to fulfil their obligations, benefitting from exposure to other parliaments through south-south triangular cooperation.</b>		
Activity 2.1	Skills development provided to MPs	\$140,271.98
Activity 2.2	Assistance provided to staff of the Parliament Secretariat	\$41,927
Activity 2.3	Support to the organisation and management of Parliament and parliamentary bodies	\$27,541
<b>Output 3 - Parliamentary outreach and citizen engagement have expanded to include traditionally excluded groups, such as women and youth, and reach remote areas</b>		
Activity 3.1	Support provided to parliamentary outreach	\$170,616
Activity 3.2	Assistance provided to citizen groups to engage with parliament	\$36,687
Activity 3.3	Support to MPs and civil servants to better understand the representation function of parliament	\$13,891
Activity 4.0	Effective technical advisory services and project implementation.	\$208,218.88
<b>TOTAL Expenses January - December 2017</b>		<b>\$852,918.14</b>