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Resilient nations.*

Fiji Parliament Support Project

Phase II

Quarter 3 Report

1 July – 30 September 2017

Prepared for the Project Board

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Executive Summary

This report provides an overview of activities undertaken by the Fiji Parliament Support Project (FPSP) II in the period July- September 2017. Since the beginning of the implementation of FPSP II, the project has continued to provide invaluable support to the Fiji Parliament in the three focus areas: 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.

A summary of activities implemented during this quarter is listed below:

27 June – 8 July	Budget Analysis support – 6 researchers on secondment from other Parliaments	Fiji	Delivered
3 July	Half-day briefing for MPs – Budget overview	Parliament	Delivered
7 July	Full day briefing for MPs – Budget Sector Briefs	Holiday Inn, Suva	Delivered
10 July	Full day briefing for CSOs on the budget process & budget	Holiday Inn, Suva	Delivered
17 July	Training for Committee Chairs on Gender Toolkit	Parliament	Delivered
24 July	Parliament media roundtable	Suva	Delivered
24 July	Speaker's debate (Topic Tourism)	Suva	Delivered
24 -27 July	Training for staff on inter-parliamentary relations (Charlotte - NZ parliament trainer)	Fiji	Delivered
24 – 28 July	IT Advisor from Victoria Parliament seconded to Parliament to review Tender notices and documents and undertake assessment of ITC requirement for broadcasting installation.	Suva	Delivered
27-28 July	Support Committee Chairs - Regional Workshop for the Pacific Region—Universalisation of the Biological Weapons Convention. Hon. Rika attended from Parliament	Nadi, Fiji	Delivered
Ongoing	Provision of support for Parliament in developing briefings for senior civil servants on how Parliament works **pocket meetings – parliament	Fiji	Ongoing
10-11 August	Script writing training	Fiji	Completed
14-18 August	IT Advisor from New Zealand to work with Fiji Parliament and Govt ITC Board to review Parliament's Broadcasting requirement.	Fiji	Completed
14-17 August	Retreat for MPs – topic COP23, WTO, Low Value Minerals	Fiji	Completed
22 -25 August	Training for selected staff on how to write proposal	Fiji	Completed
24-25 August	1 MP / 1 Parliament staff to the Global WHO Health Conference	Japan	Completed
27 August – 2 Sept	Attachment from NZ Parliament to assist the Table Unit in compiling journals	Fiji	Delivered
28-31 August	Speech writing Training for Civic Education and Media Unit	Fiji	Delivered
1 September	Parliamentary Practitioners meeting and meetings by FPSP project team to discuss ongoing twinning work with Fiji	Melbourne	Delivered.
4 September	State opening of Parliament		
5-6 Sept	Fiji to host network of Pacific Women Clerks and Deputies	Suva	Delivered
6-7 Sept	Fiji MPs to attend World Parliamentary Forum on Sustainable Development	Bali	Delivered

An important event for Parliament at the end of the last quarter was the tabling of the national budget. The project provided significant support to the Fiji Parliament's preparations to ensure Members of Parliament (MPs) were adequately assisted in terms of budget information and analysis.

With regards to project funding, in addition to the additional AUD\$300,000 mobilised in Quarter 2 from the Government of Australia, resource mobilisation with other partners and donors continues. A budget deficit remains and the project team has been in discussions with the Government of Japan has indicated that a decision on funding for the FPSP II should be expected in Quarter 1 of 2018.

At this point, the project remains on track to deliver activities outlined in the 2017 annual work plan (AWP), as agreed by the project board with the exception of establishment of Parliament Satellite offices. Funding for this activity was not included in the Parliaments budget for 2017-28 and therefore the FPSP II project will need to re-consider originally envisaged activities in this area.

Project Summary

Fiji Parliament Support Project Phase II

The Fiji Parliament Support Project Phase II (FPSP Phase II) is the second phase of UNDP support to the Fiji Parliament that began in 2014. 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. The project is 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 others, 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 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.

The project is currently funded by the Governments of Australia and New Zealand. Despite this generous ongoing financial support to the project, a funding shortfall remains and the Project is actively working towards further resource mobilization.

Key Achievements

The following are the key achievements by FPSP II during the reporting period:

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

FPSP II has continued to place emphasis on strengthening the work of Committees in Parliament during this reporting period. This output area will feature prominently in FPSP II support although is likely to be less prominent in 2018 with an election due to be held which will mean Parliament and committees are dissolved for a period of time.

Specific activities undertaken in this quarter by FPSP II included:

Training on Gender Toolkit

In 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.

Support for Committee Chairs

In July, FPSP II supported the participation of the Chair of the Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee at the Regional Workshop for the Pacific Region Universalization of the Biological Weapons Convention that was held from the 27-28th July in Nadi. The Chair's participation at the Convention was consistent with his Committee's area of focus and is linked to previous work undertaken with Global Parliamentarians for Action.

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

UNDP has continued to provide professional development opportunities for both Members of Parliament (MPs) and Parliament staff to enable them to undertake their roles more effectively. With the Fiji general elections scheduled for 2018, the project's support to Honourable Members will likely decrease in future reporting quarters but will then significantly increase again following the election scheduled at some point during the period April – September 2018.

The activities carried out under this component in the third quarter of 2017 included:

Briefing for Members of Parliament on Budget review

For the second year running, UNDP through FPSP organized a full budget analysis and provided briefings for Members of Parliament (MPs) on the government budget for the year 2017 – 2018. FPSP II had mobilized six (6) international researchers from the Parliaments of Australia, Victoria, New Zealand, Scotland, Wales and Tonga to work under the leadership of the Fiji Parliament Library and Research Services to conduct analysis of the government budget. Due to the budget timetable, this intense work was carried out over a period of only 8 days. The analysis was then presented to MPs in two sessions: a half-day session only three days after the budget was tabled where an overview of the budget was presented, and then a full-day of sectoral briefings provided a week after the budget was tabled, and three days before the budget as debated at second reading in the Fiji Parliament.

The overall objective was to enhance MPs' understanding of national budget and capacity to allow them to better perform their oversight functions.

Staff Training on Inter-Parliamentary Relations

In August, a senior staff member of the New Zealand Parliaments' Inter parliamentary relations unit facilitated a four-day training for the Fiji Parliament Inter Parliamentary Relations and Protocol Unit staff members. The training focussed on procedures, work programmes, managing the Speaker's diplomatic engagement, events and visits planning, and diplomacy actions. A



number of document based templates and platforms were developed by the team. Since the re-

establishment of the Parliament in 2014, Fiji has played an increasingly prominent international role in parliamentary circles, within the Pacific and beyond.

Capacity building on Parliament's engagement with Health issues

In August, the Minister for Health, accompanied by a Fiji Parliament staff member attended the Global World Health Organization (WHO) Health Conference for Parliamentarians in Tokyo, Japan. The meeting was organised to build on the progress of participating countries, Fiji included, towards achieving the health targets of the Sustainable Development Goals with the aim to accelerating action on priority issues, including non-communicable diseases and health ageing.

Improving document archiving and journals

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.

Capacity Development Retreat for MPs



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 the these subject areas.

Specialized Training for Secretariat Staff

Under Activity 2.2, FPSP II supported three trainings for Parliament staff in this quarter:

- Script writing for staff from the Media Unit to allow them to develop their capacity to be able to develop videos on parliament's work to be uploaded to the website to ensure that a wider range of citizens understand the work of Parliament;



Amerika Grewal giving a background script writing to Parliament staff

- Training for senior selected staff on proposal writing to allow for the Parliament to be better capacitated to resource mobilise with organisations such as CPA; and
- Speech writing training for the Civil Education and Media Unit to improve their skills in providing support to the Speaker when she represents the Parliament at national and international events.

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Participation at the World Parliamentary Forum

A delegation from the Fiji Parliament participated at the World Parliamentary Forum on Sustainable Development Forum in Bali, Indonesia in September. This is part of continuous efforts to expose MPs to regional and international parliamentary forums on development issues that will broaden their understanding and help them fulfil their obligations. Fiji is leading the world on issues relating to parliamentary engagement with the SDGs and the Fiji delegation shared with other parliaments their insights into the way the Fiji Parliament has managed to engage with the SDGs through a number of different work streams.

Dialogue for Pacific Women Clerks and Deputies

In 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.

Preparations towards SDGs workshop and Self -Assessment

FPSP II and the Fiji Parliament Secretariat worked towards finalizing the agendas and arrangements for the MPs SDGs Refresher Workshop and the Parliament Self-Assessment Exercise that took place on the first week of October. Details of both these activities will be highlighted in the Quarter 4 report.

IT support to Fiji Parliament

Under Activity 2.2, an IT Advisor from the Victoria Parliament was seconded to Fiji Parliament to review tender notices and documents. Further, the Advisor undertook assessment of Parliament's ITC requirements for broadcasting installation.

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

Under this output, the project continues to support the Parliament Outreach and Civic Engagement Unit to conduct public outreach activities to reach communities that might not otherwise have access to information about the Parliament's activities, or be able to utilise opportunities for citizen engagement.

A key target for these activities are the traditionally excluded groups, such as women and youth, including school visits and mock parliament sessions. This output also includes key stakeholders such as senior civil servants, the CSOs and private sectors.

Some of the activities carried out in this area in the first quarter of 2017 included:

Budget briefing for Civil Society Organizations

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.



Speaker's Debate – Tourism:

In a bid to create awareness on global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and give Fijians an opportunity to engage with MPs and other panellists, the FPSP project is continuing to support the hugely popular public Speaker's debates. The eighth Speaker's Debate was held on 24 July on the topic – “Will Fiji's tourism



industry lead to greater economic prosperity for the country?”. The five panellists were from Government, the Opposition, Fiji Hotel & Tourism Association (FHTA), the Union and academia. Over 250 people were in attendance, with the event being livestreamed. To allow Fijians from outside Fiji to engage with the activity, the debate was livestreamed. The Fiji Deaf Association also provided sign language services during the Debate.

Parliament Media Roundtable

In 2016, UNDP FPSP provided input into training sessions for Fiji journalists organised by the Pacific Media Assistance Scheme (PACMAS) in association with the Fiji Media Development Authority (MIDA), on the topic of parliamentary reporting.



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 2nd 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.

Conclusions

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 best 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 CSOs. The Fiji Parliament is the only legislature in the Pacific to provide such information.

Quarter 4 of 2017 will see the project team collating statistics on the work of the project and the parliament's performance for 2017 which will be presented at the FPSP II Board meeting which will be held towards the end of Quarter 4. The project annual workplans for 2018 will also be discussed and approved at this meeting.

The project team has continued to invest time into resource mobilisation activities for the project and this will continue during Quarter 4 of 2017 with the aim of ensuring that by early 2018 the project is fully funded.

Annex 1:

Financial Summary for the period: 01 July – 30 September 2017¹

Activity Details	Activity ID	Expenditure in USD\$
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.		
Support provided to Committee Chairs and MPs	ACTIVITY 1.1	\$30,926.36
Assistance provided to committee staff and committee services	ACTIVITY 1.2	\$351.40
Support provided to the work of committees	ACTIVITY 1.3	\$33,935.72
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.		
Skills development provided to MPs	ACTIVITY 2.1	\$12,515.51
Assistance provided to staff of the Parliament Secretariat	ACTIVITY 2.2	\$24,352.16
Support to the organisation and management of Parliament and parliamentary bodies	ACTIVITY 2.3	0
Output 3: Parliamentary outreach and citizen engagement have expanded to include traditionally excluded groups, such as women and youth, and reach remote areas.		
Support provided to parliamentary outreach	ACTIVITY 3.1	\$63,418.17
Assistance provided to citizen groups to engage with parliament	ACTIVITY 3.2	\$35,843.15
Support to MPs and civil servants to better understand the representation function of parliament	ACTIVITY 3.3	\$2,275.47
Effective technical advisory services and project implementation & Direct Project Costs	ACTIVITY 4.0	\$35,247.66
TOTAL EXPENDITURE (USD)		\$351,775.27

¹ Note that these figures provide only an overview of financial expenditure during the reporting period. These figures are pulled from the UNDP ATLAS financial system.