

Fiji National Policy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2025 – 2035



NCPD



Fiji National Policy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2025 – 2035



NCPD

Foreword

Minister for Women,
Children and Social Protection

Honourable Sashi Kiran



Minister's Statement

The Fiji National Policy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is the government's national framework for ensuring the rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities. One eighth of our population live with some form of disability. Simple tasks taken for granted by many can be a challenge for persons with disabilities and we need to create enabling environment for them not only to be able to manage their daily challenges but to thrive with dignity.

Our journey towards inclusion has been shaped by the principles of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), Fiji's 2013 Constitution, and the aspirations of the disability community itself. We have listened to the voices of persons with disabilities, their families, Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), service providers, civil society, government agencies, and development partners. Through consultation in every division, we have ensured that this Policy reflects the realities of both rural and urban Fiji and addresses the diverse needs and intersectional challenges faced by our people.

This Policy builds on the foundation of the 2008-2018 Policy, recognizing its successes while addressing its gaps, particularly in coordination, monitoring, resourcing, and mainstreaming.

We acknowledge that many challenges remain. Persons with disabilities continue to face barriers in accessing education, employment, healthcare, transport, justice, and public spaces. They are disproportionately affected by poverty, gender-based violence, and the impacts of climate change.

This Policy is our framework to break down these barriers through legislative reform, capacity building, inclusive service delivery, and the promotion of positive attitudes. It also highlights key areas that must be in place for real inclusion to happen — like accessible buildings and transport, assistive devices and technology, support services, social protection, and community-based inclusive development.

It sets out 13 priority areas, from education, access to justice and employment, to accessibility, health, disaster risk reduction, and climate change. Each area is accompanied by targeted actions and measurable outcomes, ensuring that implementation will be transparent, accountable, and results driven.

Central to this Policy is the principle of "Nothing About Us Without Us". Persons with disabilities are not merely beneficiaries, they are leaders, advocates, and decision-makers in shaping the future of disability rights in Fiji. This Policy affirms their role in governance structures, monitoring mechanisms, and community engagement at all levels.

The successful implementation of this Policy will require the commitment of all stakeholders through mainstreaming support for disability across all government ministries, private sector organisations, civil society groups, and training institutions

I extend my deep gratitude to the National Council for Persons with Disabilities, OPDs, our line ministries, the Pacific Community (SPC), and all who contributed to this process. Your dedication has ensured that this Policy is not just a vision, but a roadmap for real change.

Let us move forward together – Government, communities, and individuals – so that by 2035, Fiji will be a truly inclusive, equitable, and barrier-free society, where no one is left behind.

Vinaka vakalevu, thank you, and may God bless Fiji.

Hon. Sashi Kiran

Minister for Women, Children, and Social Protection.

Permanent Secretary,
Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation

Eseta Nadakuitavuki (Ms)



Chairperson's Statement

As Chairperson of the National Council for Persons with Disabilities, I am deeply honoured to present the National Disability Inclusion Policy—a powerful declaration of Fiji's unwavering belief that every person, regardless of ability, deserves the right to be seen, heard, and valued.

This Policy is more than words on paper. It is a promise, a commitment—one built on hope, courage and the unshakable belief that inclusion is not a favour, but a right. It speaks to a future where no child is left behind in the classroom, no individual is denied a job because of their disability and no voice is silenced in our communities.

This journey has been guided by the lived experiences of persons with disabilities, the love and resilience of families and the tireless efforts of advocates and allies across the nation. Your stories, your strength and your vision have shaped this Policy at every step. To each of you—thank you. You are the heart of this movement.

But our work does not end here. A policy alone will not create change—it must be brought to life through action, accountability and unity. I call on every Fijian—government leaders, civil society, businesses, service providers and communities—to take ownership of this vision. Let inclusion be a shared responsibility, not a burden. Let it be a national priority, not an afterthought.

Now is the time to stand together. To break down the barriers that divide us. To challenge prejudice with compassion and replace silence with advocacy.

Let us build a Fiji where every person is free to dream, to contribute and to thrive. A Fiji where disability is not a limitation, but a part of the rich fabric of who we are.

Together, let's create a future where no one is left behind.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Eseta Nadakuitavuki'.

Eseta Nadakuitavuki (Ms)

Permanent Secretary Ministry of
Women, Children and Poverty
Alleviation

Preface

The Fiji National Policy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2025-2035 marks a significant milestone in Fiji's ongoing journey towards a more inclusive, equitable, and just society for all persons with disabilities. This Policy reflects Fiji's unwavering commitment to upholding the rights, dignity, and full participation of persons with disabilities in every aspect of national life.

Rooted in the principles of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and aligned with the 2013 Constitution of the Republic of Fiji, this Policy builds on the achievements and lessons learned from the 2008–2018 Policy. It responds to evolving needs, emerging challenges, and the aspirations of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations.

The development of this Policy has been guided by a highly consultative and inclusive process. The voices of persons with disabilities, their families, Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), service providers, civil society groups, government agencies, statutory bodies, and development partners have played a central role in shaping the direction and priorities outlined in this document. The consultations conducted across Fiji's four divisions were vital in ensuring the Policy is responsive to both rural and urban contexts, diverse impairments, and intersectional realities.

This Policy is not just a framework for action—it is a reaffirmation of Fiji's social and moral obligation to create a society where persons with disabilities are recognized as equal citizens, empowered to live independently, and supported to reach their full potential.

We commend the collaborative efforts of all who contributed to this Policy from the grassroots to national leadership and invite all stakeholders to champion its implementation. The real measure of this Policy will lie in the positive and transformative impact it brings to the lives of persons with disabilities, their families, and communities across Fiji.

*Together, let us continue
to build a more inclusive Fiji,
where no one is left behind*



Acknowledgement

We wish to acknowledge the invaluable input received through **extensive national consultations** which were attended by DISCOM committee members, branch affiliated organizations for persons with disabilities in the districts, representative of government ministries and civil organization which was conducted in early 2024 in key locations including: Nabouwalu (Bua), Cakaudrove (Tukavesi and Savusavu), Macuata (Labasa), Nadi and Rakiraki (Western Division), Nausori (Rewa/Naitasiri/Tailvu), Suva (Central Division), and Levuka (Eastern Division).

Special thanks are extended to the Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) whose voices have remained central throughout this process. We also acknowledge the critical support and engagement of service providers, civil society organizations, non-governmental organizations, statutory bodies, our line ministry the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Protection and other relevant government agencies who participated in these dialogues.

We are **especially grateful** to the **Pacific Community (SPC)** for funding the development of this Policy and to Dr. Helen Tavola, who served as the lead consultant.

Her expertise and commitment were instrumental in shaping the final document.

We extend our sincere appreciation to all **Council members of the National Council for Persons with Disabilities** for their guidance and stewardship throughout the policy development. We also gratefully acknowledge the support of **Members of Parliament** for their endorsement of this Policy, demonstrating a strong national commitment to advancing the rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities in Fiji.

Our heartfelt thanks also go to the National Council for Persons with Disabilities (NCPD) Secretariat team, ably led by the outgoing Executive Director, Mr. Lemeki Cagialau. Their coordination, dedication, and tireless efforts ensured the successful completion of the policy process.

The perspectives, experiences, and written submissions gathered during the consultations have significantly shaped this, Policy. We are sincerely grateful to all who contributed toward creating a document that reflects a shared vision of equity, inclusion, and dignity for all persons with disabilities in Fiji.



Jone Robanakadavu (Mr)

Acting Executive Director
National Council for Persons with Disabilities



Abbreviations

| | |
|---------------|--|
| ADCOM | Advisory Committee |
| CBID | Community Base Inclusive Development |
| CBR | Community Base Relationship |
| CEDAW | Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women |
| CRA | Community Rehabilitation Assistants |
| CRC | Convention on the Rights of the Child |
| CRPD | (United Nations) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities |
| CSO | Civil Society Organisation |
| DISCOM | District Committees for Disabilities |
| DSP | Disability Service Provider |
| FAD | Fiji Association of the Deaf |
| FEMIS | Fiji Education Management Information System |
| FHO | Frank Hilton Organisation |
| FJSL | Fiji Sign Language |
| FNU | Fiji National University |
| FNCDP | Fiji National Council for Disabled Persons |
| FRA | Fiji Roads Authority |
| ILO | International Labour Organisation |
| JAWS | Job Access with Speech |
| LTA | Land Transport Authority |
| MITA | Ministry of I-Taukei Affairs |
| MOA | Memorandum of Agreement |
| MOE | Ministry of Education |
| MHMS | Ministry of Health and Medical Services |
| MWCSP | Ministry of Women, Children and Social Protection |
| NCD | Non-communicable Diseases |
| NCPD | National Council for Persons with Disabilities |
| NDRMO | National Disaster Risk Management Office |
| PDF | Pacific Disability Forum |
| PFRPD | Pacific Framework on the Right of Persons with Disabilities |
| PSEAH | Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment |
| OPD | Organisation of Persons with Disabilities |
| SDG | Sustainable Development Goals |
| SIA | Spinal Injury Association |
| SRH | Sexual and Reproductive Health |
| TTI | Teacher Training Institutions |
| TVET | Technical And Vocational Education and Training |

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Introduction



The Fiji National Policy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2025-2035 is for all stakeholders who aim to improve the lives of persons with disabilities through a human rights-based approach. This approach has replaced the medical model, which focussed on a person's impairments and the charity model, which saw persons with disabilities as objects of pity and charity. The human rights-based approach moves away from viewing persons with disabilities as objects of charity, medical treatment and social protection towards viewing persons with disabilities as subjects with rights, who are capable of claiming those rights and making decisions for their lives based on their free and informed consent as well as being active members of society.

This Policy is based on a review of the National Policy on Persons Living with Disabilities 2008-2018 that took place in late 2023. This included face-to-face consultations in Suva, Nausori, Labasa, Nadi and Lautoka. These consultations included representatives of Government, service providers and persons with disabilities and their organisations.

The key findings of the review were that:

- The 2008 Policy was ground-breaking not only as the first national disability policy in Fiji but for its explicitly human rights-based approach. It also focussed on barriers facing persons with disabilities.
- The Policy contained twelve strategic policy areas, most of which remain relevant.
- There were 89 detailed activities within the strategic policy areas.
- Due to the lack of a monitoring framework, it is not clear what activities were achieved.
- There was no dedicated budget to implement the Policy, so many areas were neglected.
- Too much responsibility was placed upon the Fiji National Council of Disabled Persons (FNCDP), which was under-resourced and under-staffed.
- Changes in government; Constitution; laws, especially the Right of Persons with Disabilities Act 2018; and the ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) all had an impact.
- Despite the above, achievements were made in each of the policy areas although not necessarily in line with the activities in the 2008 Policy.
- Significant donor funding has been received since the 2008 Policy was developed, which has boosted progress.

The 2025-2035 Policy also refers to data and research undertaken in Fiji during and since the life of the 2008-2018 Policy. The draft Policy was extensively consulted upon in early 2024 across Fiji including Nabouwalu (Bua), Cakaudrove (Tukavesi), Macuata (Labasa), Cakaudrove (Savusavu), Nadi (Western), Rakiraki (Western), Nausori (Rewa/Naitasiri/Tailevu), Suva (Central) and Levuka (Eastern). The inputs from those consultations as well as written feedback have been considered and taken into account.

The Government of Fiji's lead Ministry for Disability is the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Protection (MWCSP) through its Disability Unit. One of the core functions of the Disability Unit is administrating disability allowances that were introduced in 2016. The MWCSP also coordinates 18 District Committees on disability (DISCOM) that operate throughout Fiji and brings together Government Ministries and other stakeholders to discuss matters pertaining to disability. The MWCSP distributes and monitors annual grants to OPDs. The Permanent Secretary of the MWCSP is the Chair of NCPD, providing a key linkage between the Council and the Ministry.

The National Council for Persons with Disabilities (NCPD) was established under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2018 and falls under the MWCSP and its core role is coordinating organisations of persons with disabilities (OPD) and disability service providers and overseeing and ensuring the implementation of the National Disability Policy.

The NCPD also coordinates eight (8) Advisory Committees of different sectors of Government. These committees comprise of government ministries and departments, statutory bodies, CSOs and OPDs, each headed by relevant Permanent Secretaries. The engagement of persons with disabilities and their organisations is central to this Policy, both in its formulation as well as in its implementation and monitoring. The principle of 'nothing about us without us' is a central value of OPDs and indeed of this Policy.

Disability service providers are affiliates of NCPD, and they are all vital actors in the policy implementation. Other roles provided by the service providers includes early identification, awareness, provision of inclusion sports, accessible housing, special inclusive education, counselling and disability screening.

The revised Policy takes its primary guidance from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) that the Government of Fiji ratified in 2017. The Government is thus obligated to fulfil, or make progress towards fulfilling, the requirements of the Convention. The CRPD provides a comprehensive human rights-based framework to ensure the protection, promotion, respect and fulfilment of the rights of persons with disabilities.

Other relevant agreements that Fiji is a party to are also integrated into the revised policy. Relevant human rights treaties are the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) ratified by Fiji in 1993; and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), ratified by Fiji in 1997. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention 159 on Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment, ratified by Fiji in 2004 is also relevant.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also referred to as the 2030 Agenda, adopted at a world summit of leaders in September 2015, also provides a broad framework (although not legally binding) within which the human rights of persons with disabilities are addressed. The SDGs reference disability in several of its goals, targets and indicators.

The Jakarta Declaration on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities 2023-2032 followed the Incheon Strategy to 'Make the Right Real' for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific, 2013-2022. Prior to the Incheon Strategy, the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action was in place, which had a major influence on the 2008 Policy. The Jakarta Declaration instrument focusses on five areas that need particular attention in the Asia Pacific region.

As a member of the Pacific Islands Forum, Fiji is party to the Pacific Framework on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2016-2025 (PFRPD), which focusses on five priority goals in the areas of: Livelihoods; Mainstreaming; Leadership and the Enabling Environment; Disaster Risk Management; and Evidence.

On a national level, the revised policy considers the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2018 and the 2013 Constitution of Fiji. In addition, various government policies and strategies are cross-referenced throughout this Policy.

This Policy takes into account the preconditions for equity and inclusion for persons with disabilities: accessibility; assistive devices / technology; support services; community based inclusive development; social protection; non-discrimination.

The Blue Pacific 2050 Strategy, endorsed by the Pacific Islands Forum in 2023, includes the recognition and application of the six pre-conditions of disability inclusion as system outcomes under Goal 3 of People Centred Development.

The revised policy takes a twin-track approach, in that while specific actions are focussed on targeted interventions to promote equity and inclusion for persons with disability, there is an emphasis on mainstreaming disability across Government ministries, the private sector, civil society and training institutions.

The National Context

The 2017 Fiji National Census found that there were 113,595 persons above the age of five years old with some degree of disability, or 13.7% of the population. This was ascertained using the Washington Group Short Set of Questions, which are universally recognised as reliable. The census further found that persons with disabilities were more likely to live in lower wealth households. Educational opportunities are limited and challenging and only 15% of persons with disabilities access the internet compared to 45% of those without disabilities.

People with disabilities have lower rates of employment; poorer health and education outcomes; poor access to the built environment and transport; and are often marginalised in their own communities. Stigma and discrimination against persons with disabilities create a barrier to full participation in many aspects of daily life.

The incidence of disability in the population is likely to increase as Fiji has one of the highest rates of non-communicable diseases (NCD) in the world. In particular both diabetes and stroke. Fiji has a prevalence of diabetes of 16% compared to a global average of 8.5%. This condition can lead to amputations, which are frequently undertaken in Fiji as well as blindness.

There is also a high rate of accidents in Fiji, which result in injury and disability. The population of Fiji is gradually ageing, and as most disabilities occur in older age-groups, this will increase the overall prevalence of disability.

Disability, like any social factor, does not exist in a vacuum. It is influenced by the cultural, economic and political context and environment. In most cases, where there is a negative factor or vulnerability, it is exacerbated for persons with disabilities with intersecting factors, for example:

Where there is gender discrimination, women and girls with disabilities have a double burden of discrimination.

Where there are few employment and training opportunities, it is more difficult for persons with disabilities.

Where the physical environment is harsh, life is even more difficult for persons with disabilities.

When there are disasters such as tsunamis, floods, cyclones, or the effects of climate change, persons with disabilities may suffer unduly.

Where there is widespread poverty, the situation is worse for families with disabilities.

Where children are neglected and abused, children with disabilities are likely to suffer disproportionately.

Where access to health and education services is poor, it is an even greater challenge for persons with disabilities, especially on outer islands and remote areas.

When government faces an economic crisis, disability services are often the first to be cut.

- Equality of opportunity
- Accessibility
- Equality between men and women, girls and boys
- Respect for the evolving capacities of children with disabilities
- Equality for all diverse persons with disabilities including intersecting identities such as age, location, sexual orientation, gender identity etc.

Goal

Fiji advocates for and empowers persons with disabilities through the realisation of their human rights and the creation of an equal, peaceful, barrier-free and inclusive society for all.

Principles that are cross-cutting throughout the Policy

- Respect for inherent dignity, individual autonomy including the freedom to make one's own choices, and independence of persons
- Non-discrimination
- Full and effective participation and inclusion in society
- Respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity

Definition

Disability is an evolving concept in that disability results from the interaction between persons with impairments including long term and attitudinal, institutional, communication and environmental barriers that result in discrimination against persons with disabilities and further hinders their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

Purpose

To provide a comprehensive framework for disability equity and rights, improving the quality of life for persons with disabilities, recognize diversity and to increase their meaningful, full and effective participation in an inclusive society.



Priority areas



1. Coordination of the Policy and mainstreaming
2. Advocacy and awareness
3. Data and research
4. Health and well-being
5. Education and training
6. Employment and economic security
7. Promoting the rights of women, children, youth and older persons with disabilities
8. Accessibility
9. Access to justice
10. Social protection and housing
11. Assistive devices and technology
12. Sports and recreation
13. Disaster risk reduction and climate change

Priority area 1: Coordination of the policy and mainstreaming



CRPD: Article 33 Implementation and monitoring

Jakarta Declaration: Paragraph 16(a)

PFRPD: Goals 2 and 3

2018 Act: Part 2 and 3 of Act details functions of NCPD

addressed to provide a clearer and more up-to-date structure.

As disability is a cross-cutting issue that needs to be mainstreamed across Government, the private sector and civil society, coordination at the national level is important. Inclusive budgeting across all Government Ministries is needed so that disability can be effectively mainstreamed in compliance with the CRPD. Disability issues should be integrated into the National Development Plan.

The NCPD and MWCSPP through the Advisory Committees and District Committees are well positioned to ensure that disability is included throughout Government policies, practices and programs.

Outcomes

- The national disability policy is effectively resourced, implemented and monitored
- Disability is effectively coordinated at the national, divisional and district levels in Fiji
- Disability is mainstreamed across Government

The NCPD has as its core role ensuring the implementation and coordination of the national disability policy. Effective coordination will minimise the risk of duplication and should ensure that services and programs are delivered effectively.

Part of the coordination role includes ongoing monitoring and evaluation. It is essential that the implementation of the policy is monitored on an ongoing basis. The NCPD should engage a Monitoring and Evaluation staff member to undertake monitoring using a monitoring framework and to proactively pursue implementation. The progress of the policy implementation should be reported on the Council website on a regular basis.

The overall architecture of the Government of Fiji's engagement in the disability sector needs to be

Actions

- 1.1 Review the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2018 to fully comply with the CRPD. As part of this process, conduct a comprehensive review of national legislation for compliance with the CRPD and established a mechanism to strengthen compliance. The undertaking of a government structural review will clarify the respective roles of the MWCSPP and NCPD.
- 1.2 To enhance the inclusion of persons with disabilities, ensure that four (4) of the five (5) nongovernment places on the NCPD are filled by persons with disabilities as per CRPD on rotational basis. 1.3 Monitor the implementation of the national disability policy and report progress to the Council: in Annual Reports; on

the NCPD website; appoint a monitoring and evaluation staff member and appoint a technical working group (TWG) comprising largely of OPDs specifically to monitor implementation.

1.4 Commission a policy review after three years to assess progress and make any necessary changes.

1.5 NCPD update website to make it a major source of information on disability in Fiji. Non-internet-based media should also be used for greater access.

- 1.6 Ensure that disability is mainstreamed throughout Government by utilizing the mechanism of the sectoral Advisory Committees and District Committees, aligned to the National Development Plan.

- 1.7 NCPD to develop a mainstreaming toolkit for Government ministries.

- 1.8 Advisory and District Committees revise their Terms of Reference to clarify their roles and responsibilities. Each Committee should include at least one person with disability and one service provider. Tikina representative and the Advisory Councillor's to be included in District Committees to represent a community voice.

- 1.9 All Government Ministries to have a disability budget provision as part of CRPD compliance

- 1.10 Disability to be included in the business plans of provincial administrations

- 1.11 NCPD to develop a template for its affiliates to report regular progress on Policy implementation

Priority area 2: Advocacy awareness



CRPD: Article 8 Awareness raising

SDG: Goal 10 Inequality

Jakarta Declaration: Paragraph 16(b)

PFRPD: throughout the PFRPD

2018 Act: Section 4

starting from a young age; in the media; social media; among other areas. Under the CRPD, persons with disabilities are rights-holders and they are in a position to assert their rights. The empowerment and capacity building of persons with disabilities and their organisations to be advocates and leaders is a key part of the advocacy process.

The use of appropriate language should be a priority in advocacy and awareness training as language matters. Terminology has changed over time and language in accordance with the CRPD should be used at all times, in all the languages of Fiji. Negative and stereotyping terms must be strongly condemned.

Consultations for this Policy revealed a vast need for awareness and sensitisation on disability in all parts of Fiji, in cities, towns and villages. Persons with disabilities and OPDs are well placed to undertake such training but they also need capacity building in leadership and communications.

The Government provides an annual grant to OPDs. This only applies to the head offices located in Suva, and not to branches, which lack funds. FDPF is the umbrella body for the four (4) OPDs and responsible in securing annual grants for their branches in Fiji. OPD should have capacity building training on financial management.

The NCPD has an important advocacy role as well. The NCPD advocates through the advisory committees with different Government of Fiji ministries: Sports; Women; Legislation; Health; Education; Employment; Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET); Housing; and Transport and Infrastructure including the 18 established District Committees.

Outcomes

- Dismantle negative stereotypes and portray a positive image of persons with disabilities
- Increased awareness of the needs and rights of persons with disabilities
- Enhancement of understanding and acceptance of persons with disabilities in all their diversities

Persons with disabilities should be treated with dignity and respect. The lack of awareness of disability and the lack of understanding of the rights of persons with disabilities pervades every aspect of life in Fiji. It is possibly the biggest barrier towards people with disabilities realizing their human rights. Negative attitudes, stigma and discrimination are reportedly found in every sector: health, education, government departments and the private sector. This creates an ongoing and everyday challenge for persons with disabilities.

Advocacy and awareness are the core roles of OPD and disability service providers. Awareness of disability rights needs to be raised at many levels: in education

Actions

- 2.1 FDPF, as the umbrella body for the four (4) OPDs, to make its website an accessible and inclusive source of information that is regularly updated. This information should also be available in nonelectronic formats such as television, radio and newspapers.
- 2.2 FDPF and others as appropriate develop a communication strategy for advocacy and awareness.
- 2.3 NCPD and FDPF develop and train the trainers to provide advocacy awareness and training on disability rights throughout Fiji, as required
- 2.4 NCPD, FDPF and others to conduct community level training on the rights of women and children with disabilities
- 2.5 FDPF liaise with civil society organisations that provide leadership training to have its members undertake training as a form of capacity building
- 2.6 NCPD promote media slots on living and working with persons with disabilities, for example, how to guide a visually impaired person, how to communicate with a deaf person.
- 2.7 NCPD to provide regular updates and data to OPDs to inform advocacy messaging.
- 2.8 NCPD to ensure that the Fiji National Disability Policy is translated into the official languages of Fiji.
- 2.9 NCPD to provide financial management training to FDPF as required.

Priority area 3: Data and research

Article 31: Statistics and data collection; Article 32 International Cooperation
SDG: Goal 17

Jakarta Declaration: Paragraph 16(f)

PFRPD: Goal 5

2018 Act: Section 5

Different Ministries in Fiji as well as OPDs collect data on disability. They all collect it in different ways and for different purposes. There is a need for a centralized data hub that needs to be constantly updated by relevant stakeholders. It would need to be accessible by those who require the data to base services and programs on it. The work on developing a national data repository that is supported the Australian-funded Fiji Program Support Facility should be progressed and actioned.

The collection of data disaggregated by disability is currently required for Government Ministries but there is no uniformity of practice. Sharing data with the national data hub should also be mandatory. The data contained in village profiles, collected by the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs should be standardized and should include data on persons with disabilities living in each village.

Outcomes

- Accurate data and research findings to inform policies, programs and services on disability
- Improved evidence on the lives of persons with disabilities in Fiji, so that progress can be effectively measured and assessed.

Disability data informs service planning and delivery and can highlight discrepancies and inequities in terms of access to services. Government Ministries and statutory authorities including the Land Transport Authority (LTA) and the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) need data on the number of persons with disabilities in different areas so that they can provide relevant services. The NDMO needs data to know how many persons with disabilities are in disaster-hit areas. In addition to the need for data at the national level, both the SDGs and CRPD require the collection of high-quality, accessible, timely and reliable data disaggregated by disability. The disability data-base would make such information readily accessible.





Activities

- 3.1. NCPD with Bureau of Statistics and other stakeholders to develop a standard data collection format and template for recording data on persons with disabilities
- 3.2. Develop a roadmap for establishing a national data-hub to be located at the NCPD that is budgeted for; regularly updated and accessible to stakeholders.
- 3.3. NCPD to work with the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs to assist turaga-ni-koro with data gathering on disability
- 3.4. NCPD and FDPF actively involve OPDs and persons with disabilities in research
- 3.5. NCPD and FDPF liaise with tertiary institutions in Fiji to encourage and strengthen research on disability related issues
- 3.6. NCPD, FDPF and other stakeholders such as service providers to identify areas of research to be undertaken
- 3.7. NCPD establish a database of research on disability and publish it on its website as well as noninterest-based media.

Priority area 4: Health and well-being



CRPD: Articles 25 and 26

CRC: Article 24

SDG: Goal 3

Jakarta Declaration: Paragraph 16€

PFRPD: Goal 2 (Mainstreaming)

2018 Act: Section 44

Outcome

- Persons with disabilities have access to quality, affordable and accessible health services during their life that support their health and well-being

Health is an essential service and includes early identification, early intervention, rehabilitation and access to health. Preparation for public health emergencies, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, should also be considered.

Community based inclusive development (CBID) (also referred to as community-based rehabilitation or CBR) is a primary health care initiative that assists with early identification of disabilities as well as rehabilitation. CBID is a precondition to equality and inclusion. CBID can bring basic health services to people in remote and rural areas who otherwise do not have easy access to health facilities.

Community rehabilitation assistants (CRA) used to play a key role in early intervention until the course at the Fiji National University (FNU) was stopped. The budget for CRA in the Ministry of Health and Medical Services (MHMS) gradually diminished to being non-existent.

Rehabilitation can improve health outcomes, reduce costs by shortening hospital stays, reduce disability, and improve quality of life. Ideally rehabilitation should be cross-sectoral and carried out by health professionals in conjunction with specialists in such as occupational therapists and speech therapists as well as community-based rehabilitation workers. CRA can play an important role in assisting people discharged from hospital after strokes. Rehabilitation interventions delivered in communities are an important part of the continuum of care.

Access to health facilities is important for persons with disabilities. Many persons with disabilities have chronic health conditions, including dental health conditions, in addition to their disability and they do not always have easy access to health facilities. The

FDPF conducted access audits of some health facilities in 2023 and found many in need of improvement.

Women with disabilities are often denied the right to sexual and reproductive health services as they are not seen as having the right to have children. This is a direct violation of their human rights.

Care for persons with psychosocial disabilities is a gap in health care, both at community level and in health facilities and needs to be addressed. Specialist health services such as mental health and rehabilitation are only available in Suva, which disadvantages people from other parts of Fiji. Some form of visiting specialists could be considered by the MHMS.

The COVID-19 pandemic caught persons with disabilities unprepared. The deaf community found it difficult to communicate when people were wearing masks. Social distancing was a challenge for those who needed a person to accompany them. Online learning was not practical for children with visual and other disabilities.

Actions

- 4.1 MHMS liaise with Fiji National University (FNU) to reinstate the CRA course
- 4.2 MHMS to reinstate the budget line for CRAs and to review the structure of how CRA fit into the health system
- 4.3 NCPD and MHMS liaise with the Tertiary Education Scholarships Loans Service to enable students who study the CRA course to take loans
- 4.4 MHMS to establish positions for occupational therapists and speech therapists
- 4.5 MHMS liaise with FNU to ensure that the rights of persons with disabilities is embedded and mainstreamed into nurses, doctors and physiotherapy training
- 4.6 MHMS to ensure that all health facilities are accessible and to consider a priority queue for persons with disabilities
- 4.7 MHMS to ensure that ambulances should be disability accessible, using mobile ramps as necessary
- 4.8 MHMS to implement its National Disability Inclusive Health and Rehabilitation Action

Plan 20232027. The Action Plan should be strengthened to include speech therapy, occupational therapy and psychosocial support.

- 4.9 MHMS and Ministry of Education (MOE) to strengthen referral pathways for children with disabilities between the two Ministries
- 4.10 MHMS to consider providing visiting specialist services to the East, West and North of Fiji
- 4.11 MHMS and related service providers to ensure that sexual and reproductive health (SRH) for persons with disabilities is a priority

4.12 MHMS to introduce visual signing of numbers in out-patient and emergency departments of hospitals to cater for deaf and hearing-impaired individuals

4.13 NCPD and FDPF work with MHMS to plan for public health emergencies

4.14 NCPD and FDPF to continue undertaking access audits of health facilities using the template it has developed.

Priority area 5: Education and training



CRPD: Article 24

CRC : Article 28

SDG: Goal 4

Jakarta Declaration: Paragraph 16E

PFRPD: Goals 1 and 2

2018 Act: Section 43

for the identification and verification of students with disabilities in the Fiji Education Management Information System (FEMIS); and a special and inclusive education grants mechanism targeting children with disabilities.¹

The Special and Inclusive Education Policy 2023 was developed in close consultation with a broad range of stakeholders, and it builds on previous policies and Fiji's strong special and inclusive education foundations, to strengthen opportunities for learners with disabilities so that they may achieve educational outcomes equal to those of their peers. The MOE will need strengthening to successfully implement this policy as at present it relies heavily on the Australian-funded Fiji Program Support

Outcomes

- All children and youth with disabilities have access to quality early childhood education, primary, secondary, vocational and tertiary education
- Education system is inclusive with trained staff to address the needs of children with disabilities

The 2017 Fiji national census found that persons with disabilities have more limited educational opportunities than those without disabilities, with lower enrolment rates. They are three times more likely to have never attended school than those without disabilities. There is also a gender disparity with many fewer girls with disabilities attending school than boys: around one third of children with disabilities attending school are girls and two thirds of the enrolment are boys.

Education is a human right for all Fijians. The Special and Inclusive Education Policy and implementation Plan 2017 – 2020 guided efforts to embed disability inclusive education approaches, building on the lessons and good practices of five Inclusive Education Demonstration Schools, as well as supporting special schools. Much change occurred under the auspices of this policy, including the introduction of a system

Facility.

There are a number of challenges with inclusive education including teacher student ratios; a lack of teacher aides; lack of training in special and inclusive education for teachers; lack of specialist teachers for visually impaired, deaf students and other impairment groups; attitudinal barriers by teachers, peers and parents; frequent absenteeism; the transition between special and mainstream schools; and the transition

from primary to secondary schools. Most teacher aides are untrained although a small number have received training from the Australia Pacific Training Coalition (APTC).

Vocational training for young persons with disabilities tends to have a narrow focus and often does not lead to employment. A more creative approach could be taken with a view to improving the scope and quality

of such training and to ensure that there are pathways towards employment or self-employment.

¹ This section is derived from the Ministry of Education, 2023, Special and Inclusive Education Policy

Actions

- 5.1 MOE implement the Special and Inclusive Education Policy 2023
- 5.2 MOE strengthen its Special and Inclusive Education section through establishing and resourcing a unit.
- 5.3 MOE work with teacher training institutions (TTI) to embed and mainstream special and inclusive education courses in all teacher training and in-service training, including early childhood education
- 5.4 MOE and service providers to review vocational training for persons with disabilities with a view to upgrading and diversifying it, leading to pathways to employment and self-employment
- 5.5 NCPD lobby tertiary providers to introduce relevant courses for caregivers, teacher aides and sign language interpreters
- 5.6 MOE and education providers to promote the enrolment of girls with disabilities to address their under-representation in schools
- 5.7 MOE to include human rights, including disability rights, in its civics and social science curriculum

Priority area 6: Employment and economic security



CRPD: Articles 27 and 28

SDG: Goals 8 and 10

ILO Convention 159 on Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment

Jakarta Declaration: Paragraph 16(b)

PFRPD: Goal 2

2018 Act: Section 45

lives and social positions of persons with disabilities. Women with disabilities are the most disadvantaged with regard to employment.

The Government of Fiji has ratified the ILO Convention 159 on the employment of persons with disabilities. This means that Fiji has taken steps to ensure that more persons with disabilities are able to have access to decent work with equal pay. The Government itself needs to lead by example, by employing more persons with disabilities.

Employment support programmes including vocational training, job services and reasonable accommodation in the workplace facilitate the inclusion of individuals with disabilities in the workforce, thus reducing dependence on social assistance.

The Employment Relations Act 2007 stipulates that there may be no discrimination on any grounds including disability. Section 84 states that: 'An employer who employs 50 or more workers may employ physically disabled persons on a ratio of at least 2% of the total number of workers employed by the employer.' This effectively leaves it up to the discretion of employers. Discrimination on the grounds of disability is difficult to challenge. There is also a tax rebate for employers who employ workers with disabilities but the threshold of annual earnings of \$30,000 is regarded as too high, as many workers do not earn that much.

Fiji has a labour shortage in many areas and persons with disability are an untapped resource. The private sector has potential to employ many persons with disabilities. Addressing labour shortages and promoting employment for persons with disabilities requires a multi-faceted approach that includes workplace accommodations, skills development, inclusive hiring practices, government incentives, and awareness campaigns. By creating an inclusive

Outcomes

- Increased and improved work and employment opportunities in both the public and private sectors for persons with disabilities
- Barriers to employment and livelihoods are removed
- Employment in the private and public sectors is promoted and increased and reasonable accommodation made as required
- Entrepreneurship opportunities are made accessible for persons with disabilities

Employment is an area where persons with disabilities experience significant discrimination and marginalisation. They are thus less likely to be employed than the general population. Employment for persons with disabilities is often limited by opportunity and people's attitudes rather than disability: they experience more barriers to accessing productive and decent work than persons without disabilities. Employment is important for many reasons as it can bring independence and a route out of poverty. Work is a vital component of social participation and has the potential to transform the

work environment and investing in the abilities of individuals with disabilities, employers and society can reap the benefits of a more diverse, productive, and equitable workforce.

Self-employment is an option for many persons with disabilities, especially women. While some grant programs exist, there needs to be a coherent and coordinated approach to micro-finance and training opportunities and finding market opportunities. Persons with disabilities looking towards self-employment need training, including in financial management.

Opportunities for decent work through either entrepreneurship or employment will help to improve the economic status and livelihoods of persons with disabilities.



Actions

- 6.1 NCPD work with the Tripartite Forum representing employers, trade unions and Government to proactively lobby the public and private sector to employ persons with disabilities to emphasize the value of employing persons with disabilities and to ensure that non-discriminatory practices are used in recruitment and employment
- 6.2 NCPD work with Fiji Commerce and Employers Federation (FCEF) to promote the employment of persons with disabilities and to provide an annual award for the employer for best practices in employment of persons with disabilities
- 6.3 NCPD, FDPF and other partners collate a database of microfinance opportunities and post on their websites and other media
- 6.4 NCPD and FDPF actively encourage self-employment
- 6.5 NCPD and FDPF collect data on persons with disabilities in employment and self-employment
- 6.6 Government to review the 300-400% tax rebate for employing persons with disabilities to a lower threshold than \$30,000



Priority area 7: Promoting the rights of women, children, youth and older persons with disabilities



CRPD: Article 6 and 7 (women and children)

CRC: Article 23

CEDAW: All

SDG: Goal 5

Jakarta Declaration: Paragraph 16(d)

PFRPD: cross-cutting

2018 Act: silent on women, youth or older persons. Section 30 on children

Outcomes

- Women and girls with disabilities enjoy their full human rights and fundamental freedoms
- Violence against women and children with disabilities is effectively addressed.
- Youth with disabilities are empowered to participate fully in society.
- The specific needs and rights of older persons with disabilities are addressed

Women

The Fiji National Gender Policy 2014 and the 2022 Fiji Country Gender Assessment recognised the intersection of discrimination which can arise from being a woman and having a disability. Abuse, violence and harassment for women with disabilities are prevalent including sexual abuse and rape. Women face the insecurity of losing their homes if they report abuse, so it often remains unreported.

The Fiji National Action Plan to Prevent Violence Against Women and Girls 2023-2028 has an inclusive approach towards women with disabilities. It notes that women with disabilities are at particular risk of experiencing physical, economic, sexual and emotional violence from family members, partners, caregivers and institutions. Women need safe spaces in their communities, supported by their community leaders.

Children

Whole families are affected by having a child with a disability. In cases where there is stigma, families face discrimination and isolation especially in cases of severe or psychosocial disabilities. Families need encouragement and support as well as knowledge of their children's rights.

Children with disabilities below the age of five years are often neglected in the discourse on disability. Even the census, using the Washington Group short set of questions, only counts persons with disability from the age of five and over. This is largely because it can be difficult to identify disabilities in young children. Early identification and intervention are of key importance. Early childhood intervention refers to a range of services and support for children with developmental disability including supports to optimize children's development, strengthen capacity of families in supporting their child and promote inclusion and participation of children with disabilities and their families in community.²

Many children with disability and their families have significant unmet support needs and are overlooked. Children who receive early childhood care and education can have improved outcomes in life compared to those who do not.

Children with disabilities sometimes suffer abuse, including emotional abuse, and neglect. This includes being sent to the streets to beg; and being forced to do manual work at home and in gardens. The failure of parents to send their children to school or to train them in basic skills is a form of abuse as it is denying them their fundamental human rights.

Youth

Youth with disabilities are more disadvantaged than able-bodied youth. Youth with disabilities are among the most marginalized and poorest of the world's youth population and are more likely to face severe social, economic, and civic disparities as compared with those without disabilities. For many young people with disabilities, exclusion, isolation, and abuse as well as lack of educational and economic opportunities are daily experiences.³

Unemployment rates for youth with disabilities are higher than for the rest of the youth population due partly to the fact that most children with disabilities do not progress beyond primary school or secondary school, thus they lack qualifications. Reasons for leaving school early include lack of family support, low socio-economic status, limited access to resources and services including transport and the fact that most special and inclusive education ends at the primary level. While there are some vocational education opportunities for youth with disabilities, they do not often lead to employment or economic independence. Young women and girls with disabilities face multiple layers of disadvantage, finding it very difficult to find employment.

Reproductive health for young people with disabilities is a taboo subject. Many people, including parents and health-workers, are in denial that teenagers are sexually active or have sexual thoughts and interests and do not ensure that they are protected from unwanted pregnancies or sexually transmitted diseases including HIV.

Older Persons

The 2017 Census showed that disability occurs more frequently in the population from the age of 55 and it increases dramatically from the age of 70. This is also the age-group where disabilities are rapidly increasing. Disability in old age lowers quality of life. Both mental and physical disability predispose to admission to hospital, need for residential care, and premature death. People in the older age-groups who acquire disabilities have many needs for assistive devices; access to health facilities; retrofitting houses and other services.⁴

² Nossal Institute for Global Health, *Early Identification and Intervention of Children with Disability in Fiji – current practices and opportunities*, 2023, 5

³ <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/youth-with-disabilities.html>

⁴ Fiji had a Fiji National Policy on Aging 2011-2015, which has apparently not been reviewed or updated

Actions

- 7.1 Fiji Police Force to work with relevant stakeholders to improve referral pathways, especially in cases of violence and in cases requiring child protection services
- 7.2 Each community, working with their Turagani-Koro, Tikina Representative, District Advisory Councillors, Disability Community Representatives to identify safe spaces for women and children in villages and settlements
- 7.3 Fiji Women's Rights Movement and other providers to train young women with disabilities in leadership, to foster leadership at all levels
- 7.4 NCPD in consultation with OPDs to continue to engage with the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre, Medical Services Pacific, Empower Pacific and other referral pathways to access counselling and legal services and address issues of gender-based violence, abuse, exploitation, and harassment.
- 7.5 Ministry of Youth and Sports and Ministry of iTaukei Affairs ensure that youth with disabilities are included in all programmes and in all parts of Fiji
- 7.6 MHMS to strengthen its early identification of children with disabilities processes and procedures, in consultation with relevant service providers including Frank Hilton Organization, Fiji Deaf Ministry, Project Heaven and the Fiji Society for the Blind
- 7.7 NCPD to develop and implement its organizational policies on protection from sexual exploitation, abuse or harassment (PSEAH) and safeguarding policies aligned to recognised standards, principles, and practices.



Priority area 8: Accessibility



CRPD: Article 9

SDG: Goal 11

Jakarta Declaration: Paragraph 16(b) and (e)

PFRPD: Goal 2 indirectly

2018 Act: Section 29

Outcome

- Access to a range of facilities and services in Fiji is improved

Accessibility is one of the preconditions to equity and inclusion. This includes access to the built environment; transport; communications technology; information; and access to justice. The Office of the Auditor General undertook a detailed performance audit on access to public buildings and transport in Fiji in 2020.⁵ It found that while there are legislation and regulations pertaining to access, implementation and enforcement are weak. Community facilities including churches and community halls are not always accessible, which prevents persons with disabilities from participation.

Barriers exist in land, sea and air transport. Research conducted by the NCPD and OPDs in 2023 into accessibility in transport in Fiji found that there were

low levels of accessibility overall with only 23% of transport facilities being accessible.

Roads and footpaths should be disability friendly so that people who use mobility devices, including wheelchairs, and those with visual impairments can move on them without danger. The Fiji Roads Authority (FRA) acknowledges its lack of consultation with persons with disabilities and OPDs. Footpaths would be a low-cost intervention to improve mobility within villages and settlements. These should be covered where practicable. Bus stops should all be on the same level.

Many government offices in different towns and cities are inaccessible, which should be rectified by placing offices that provide public services on the ground floor.

The 2023 National Building Code has several provisions for new buildings regarding disability access and these need to be enforced. The Building Code needs to come down to community level to gain a wider understanding and compliance.

Accessibility for the deaf community is broad: sign language interpreters and other forms of sign language support should be made available in various settings such as education, healthcare, legal proceedings and public services to ensure accessibility for deaf individuals.

⁵ Office of the Auditor General, 2020, *Access for Persons with Disabilities to Public Transport and Public Offices*

Actions

- 8.1 NCPD, FDPF and relevant Ministries to ensure that the National Building Code provisions are enforced
- 8.2 NCPD, FDPF and relevant Ministries to ensure that all public buildings including shopping areas have parking spaces for persons with disabilities; accessible toilets with railings; tactile signage and good lighting
- 8.3 NCPD in consultation with OPDs to develop a standardized access audit toolkit and certification process with support from all government ministries including provision of budget to support OPD-led compliance checks
- 8.4 The Land Transport Authority (LTA) to enforce its regulations on transporting persons with disabilities in buses and taxis
- 8.5 LTA to consider encouraging buses to use mobile ramps
- 8.6 LTA, FRA and local councils to have audible pedestrian signals for pedestrian crossings with traffic lights
- 8.7 NCPD to work with the MWCSP and MOE, in consultation with Fiji Association of the Deaf (FAD), to roll out sign language training at a national level including schools and the media
- 8.8 Fiji Sign language (FJSL) to become an official language of Fiji
- 8.9 NCPD and FDPF lobby FRA to make footpaths disability friendly
- 8.10 NCPD to work with the Ministry of Rural and Maritime Development and the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs for footpaths to be constructed in villages to assist with mobility
- 8.11 Government offices to locate services that the public regularly accesses on the ground floor



Priority area 9: Access to justice



CRPD: Articles 12 and 13

SDG: Goal 16

Jakarta Declaration: cross-cutting

PFRPD: Goal 2

2018 Act: Article 33

Outcome

- Effective access to justice for persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others
- Persons with disabilities have the right to participate in the administration of justice on an equal basis with others. All persons with disabilities have legal capacity and, therefore, no one should be denied access to justice on the basis of disability.

Police officers are in a critical role as first responders but many persons with disabilities in Fiji report having had negative experiences with the police. This includes communication difficulties with deaf and hearing-impaired persons and a perceived lack of credibility of persons with psychosocial disabilities. Visually impaired persons also have difficulties with the justice

6 Interview for policy development

system. Police officers themselves told of fellow officers who did not treat persons with disabilities as equals, making them victims of stigma and discrimination. Such negative attitudes were largely due to a lack of awareness. The Fiji Women's Crisis Centre reported an increase in cases of abuse of women and children with disabilities in the fifty years of its existence.⁶

The deaf community feels very marginalized by the justice system. Telephone hotlines and emergency services are difficult to use unless there is an interpreter able and willing to translate. There are few referral pathways open that cater for deaf people.

The 2013 Constitution discriminates against persons with psychosocial disabilities, using the term of 'unsound mind.' This gives police an excuse not to believe them or take them seriously and it takes away their legal capacity. People of 'unsound mind' cannot vote, thus their human rights are further violated. This is contrary to Article 12 of the CRPD that calls for equal recognition under the law. It also contravenes Article 33 of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2018 that states all 'All persons with disabilities have the right to access to justice.' The Act calls for the provision of procedural and age-appropriate accommodations and special measures in court proceedings.

As per the CRPD, the Government must make appropriate accommodations to ensure that persons with disabilities have the same opportunities as others to participate in all legal proceedings. Training for those working in the administration of justice, such as police and prison staff and promoting the rule of law and human rights are key to this process.

Actions

9.1 Legal aid commission to ensure its services are accessible and its staff are trained in assisting persons with disabilities with due sensitivity and respect, providing reasonable accommodation as required

9.2 The processes of the Human Rights Commission in regard to disability to be reviewed so that its services can be better used by persons with disabilities

9.3 Fiji Police Academy to include training and sensitization for new and serving police officers on the rights of persons with disabilities and how to engage with persons with disabilities in initial training and in-service training. Training should include basic sign language.

Priority area 10: Assistive devices and technology



CRPD: Articles 9 and 20

Jakarta Declaration: Paragraph 16(c)

2018 Act: Section 39 on personal mobility

Maintenance of devices such as wheelchairs is currently only done in Suva. There is a need for more technicians to be trained in repairs and based in the West and North of Fiji.

Technology has opened the door to information and means of communicating that should be made affordable and accessible. It has the capacity to reach the unreached in remote and rural areas and bring services via that medium. For example, persons who are visually impaired can use computer operating systems and software applications via assistive technology such as a screen reader or magnifier. The use of technology programmes such as screen readers and screen reading software such as NVDA⁸ and Job Access with Speech (JAWS) can enable opportunities in study and employment.

Objectives:

- Improved supply, distribution and maintenance of assistive devices
- Accessible, affordable and appropriate technology available to all who need it

The provision of assistive devices is a precondition for equality. The obligations of States are set out in Articles 9 and 20 of the CRPD in regard to assistive devices and technology. An assistive technology device can be defined as any item, piece of equipment, or product, whether it is acquired commercially, modified, or customised, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities.⁷ Overall, assistive devices can improve independent living and participation in daily life.

Various OPDs and service providers distribute purchased and donated assistive devices; fitting for appropriate devices; and repairing devices. Article 20 of the CRPD makes it clear that States should facilitate access to assistive devices, implying that Government should provide more direct assistance to the providers of devices. While some imported items are exempt from duty, there needs to be exemption on all customs duties on assistive devices and technology.



⁷ WHO and the World Bank, 2011, World Report on Disability, 101

⁸ NVDA is Non-visual Desk Access, a free software package for visually impaired. It has, however, got limitations

There is currently relatively low access to affordable hearing devices in Fiji. Hearing devices should be made more accessible and affordable for hearing impaired people who would benefit from them. There should be access to communications technology and sign language support such as video relay services and captioning.

Actions

10.1 NCPD in consultation with OPDs and SIA and other service providers to lobby for exemption of all duties and taxes on assistive devices, technologies, medical consumables including adult diapers
 10.2 NCPD, FDPF and disability service providers develop a long list of national priorities for assistive devices

10.3 FNU in partnership with relevant stakeholders to provide training in wheelchair maintenance and repairs

10.4 Spinal Injuries Association (SIA) to finalise Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the MHMS to repair assistive devices

10.5 Government grants to cover or subsidise the cost of JAWS software and devices for deaf persons
 10.6 Providers of assistive technology and devices to endeavour to serve all areas of Fiji and to provide training in repair of devices in all parts of Fiji

Priority area 11: Social protection and housing



CRPD: Article 28

SDG: Goal 11

Jakarta Declaration: Paragraph 16(e)

PFRPD: Goal 2

2018 Act: Section 46



The allowance for caregivers should be re-introduced as stated in the CRPD as a precondition for support services.

Outcomes

- Social protection measures are used effectively in a move towards equity for persons with disabilities
- Appropriate and affordable housing is available for persons with disability

Social protection plays a key role in realizing the rights of persons with disabilities of all ages and it is a precondition to equity and inclusion: providing an adequate standard of living, a basic level of income security; thus, reducing levels of poverty and vulnerability. Since 2016, the Government of Fiji has paid a monthly allowance and bus-fare allowance to persons with disabilities, who are verified through assessing levels of functional independence. The disability allowance is intended to cover the extra expenses that their disabilities incur.

There was previously a caregivers' allowance, but this has been abolished. This has disadvantaged family members who care full-time for a family member with disability, as they cannot gain employment elsewhere.

Article 28 of the CRPD, includes shelter with social protection. Housing is a basic human need and the provision of subsidized housing and retrofitting houses can raise the living standards and independence of persons with disabilities.

Key housing providers including the Ministry of Housing, the Ministry of Rural Development, the Housing Authority, the Housing Assistance and Relief Trust (HART), the Public Rental Board, Koroipita, Habitat for Humanity, have made some provision for persons with disabilities through housing allocations and retrofitting. The allowance for retrofitting is limited to persons homeowners in the greater Suva area, which disadvantages people living in informal settlements and out of Suva.

Separate or segregated housing or accommodation for persons with disabilities should not generally be encouraged as it is contrary to the CRPD's emphasis on inclusion. Family and community care remains the most common situation in Fiji but families that provide caregiving need training and support, which is not widely available.

Actions

- 11.1 Government to gradually increase the disability allowance, to cover the extra costs of having a disability, as intended
- 11.2 The bus-fare allowance to be converted to a cash transport allowance to be used for any mode of transport
- 11.3 Government to restore the allowance for nominated caregivers for persons with disabilities who require full-time care

- 11.4 Housing providers continue to make special provision for persons with disabilities by setting aside a quota of at least 2% of housing stock and by providing grants for retrofitting houses
- 11.5 Housing providers to advocate against separate or segregated housing for persons with disabilities as it is contrary to the CRPD

Priority area 12: Sports and recreation



CRPD: Article 30

SDG: Goal 11 (indirectly) Jakarta

Declaration: PFRPD: Goal 2 (indirectly)

2018 Act: Section 48

and administration, as well as participation. There is a need for training for classifiers to select sports players for regional and international competition.

Actions

Outcomes

- Increased participation in sports at all levels by persons with disabilities
- Improved accessibility to sports facilities

The 2018 Act specifies that 'All persons with disabilities are to have the opportunity to ensure access to sporting, recreational and tourism venues.⁹ This implies that all sports facilities should be accessible.

Sports at all levels should be promoted especially for women and youth with disabilities. Participation in sports enhances health and wellness and can be an enabling platform, improving confidence and self-esteem.

Sports for children with disabilities should be compulsory in all schools, including special and inclusive schools. Children with disabilities, both boys and girls, should not be left on the side-line due to their disabilities.

Sports for persons with disability have typically been limited to athletics, badminton and table-tennis. Deaf youths have been successfully playing rugby for some years. There are many other sports that persons with disabilities could participate in such as football, surfing, volleyball, hockey, basketball, lawn bowls, goal ball and boccia games.

Persons with disabilities should be encouraged to be involved in all levels of sports: coaching, management

- 12.1 MOE to ensure that all children with disabilities are included in physical education and sports and that schools promote inclusive and modified sports for all students
- 12.2 Physical education teachers to be trained in teaching children with disabilities
- 12.3 NCPD and FDPF and other relevant stakeholders to conduct access audits of sports facilities 12.4 Stakeholders to lobby sports facility operators for increased accessibility for persons with disabilities as per the 2018 Act
- 12.5 Government to adequately resource the existing disability sporting bodies for their various local, regional, and international competitions
- 12.6 Ministry of Youth and Sports and Ministry of Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations, in consultation with Disability Sports Providers like Fiji Paralympic Committee, Special Olympic and Deaf Sports to adequately resource training opportunities to become disability sports classifiers with a view towards employment.
- 12.7 Ministry of Youth and Sports to provide financial support and resourcing to enable the full participation of persons with disabilities at all levels of sports and recreational activities
- 12.8 Disability sports stakeholders to develop a safeguarding policy that can be used by affiliated bodies

9 Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2018, 48(c)

Priority area 13: Disaster risk reduction and climate change



CRPD: Article 11

SDG: 8 and 13

Jakarta Declaration: Paragraph 16(f)

PFRPD: Goal 4

2018 Act: Section 31 on disaster and humanitarian

Outcomes

- All disaster risk reduction and national climate change adaptation strategies specifically address the needs of persons with disabilities, especially women, children and older persons
- Persons with disabilities are fully involved in planning and preparation for disasters and climate change adaptation.
- Capacity is strengthened for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in climate change adaptation measures and disaster risk management
- Post-disaster needs and sectoral assessments are inclusive of persons with disabilities

Disasters and climate change increase the vulnerability of persons with disabilities. They need to participate in an effective and meaningful way to build their resilience in the disaster management and climate change adaptation processes. It will also assist partners to have an increased understanding of the appropriate support required for persons with disabilities in disasters and adapting to climate change.

Each village and settlement should have a record of persons with disabilities in their area. The turaganikoro and District Advisory Councilors should be the contact point in times of disasters.

The Fiji Disability Inclusive Community Based Disaster Risk Management Toolkit will provide the Government and key stakeholders the means to identify and establish pathways for bolstering the inclusion and active involvement of people living with disabilities in disaster risk management.

Work is required across the disaster risk management cycle for persons with disabilities with specific targeted work on accessibility to early warning information. Disaster alerts should align to specific needs such as having flags for the deaf: red for emergency or

risks; white, no danger. Warnings should be in all the languages of Fiji and Fiji sign languages where possible.

First responders need training on how to evacuate persons with disabilities to evacuation centres.

Some people opt to stay in their homes, despite risks, to avoid being roughly handled and taken to unsuitable places.

Climate change is impacting persons with disabilities by increasing the impacts of pre-existing exclusion for persons with disabilities and by creating new risks and negative impacts for them. Persons with disabilities should be fully consulted on issues regarding climate change adaptation, especially on relocating houses and gardens.

Actions

- 13.1 NDMO ensure that persons with disabilities are included in consultations, training and drills and that they contribute to the development and monitoring of disaster risk reduction and climate change policies and plans
- 13.2 NDMO design, implement and monitor inclusive disaster warning systems in consultation with NCPD and OPDs
- 13.3 FDPF to be supported by NCPD and NDMO to conduct access audits on evacuation centres. The use of mobile ramps should be considered where appropriate
- 13.4 FDPF in collaboration with NCPD to ensure that the Fiji Disability Inclusive Community-Based Disaster Risk Management Toolkit is well understood by members and is implemented
- 13.5 FDPF and NCPD to seek partnerships with development partners for capacity building in lobbying for disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation
- 13.6 FDPF to be supported by NCPD and NDMO to train first responders on how to engage with persons of diverse disabilities in times of disasters
- 13.7 NCPD with NDMO to ensure that post-disaster rapid needs assessments to include the needs of persons with disabilities

Plan for implementation of the fiji national policy on the rights of persons with disabilities policy 2025-2035

| Goal | | | |
|--|--|---|-------------------------|
| Fiji advocates for and empowers persons with disabilities through the realisation of their human rights and the creation of an equal, peaceful, barrier-free and inclusive society for all | | | |
| Priority Area 1: Coordination of the policy and mainstreaming Outcomes: | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The national disability policy is effectively resourced, implemented and monitored • Disability is effectively coordinated at the national, divisional and district levels in Fiji • Disability is mainstreamed across Government | | | |
| Actions | Main implementing agencies | Indicators | Source of budget |
| 1.1 Review the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2018 to fully comply with the CRPD. As part of this process, conduct a comprehensive review of national legislation for compliance with the CRPD and established a mechanism to strengthen compliance. The undertaking of a government structural review will clarify the respective roles of the MWCSP and NCPD. | NCPD MWCSP | Terms of Reference (TOR) with clear deliverables. Agreement with donor to fund review. Completed review Cabinet paper drafted | |
| 1.2 To enhance the inclusion of persons with disabilities, ensure that four (4) of the five (5) non-government places on the NCPD are filled by persons with disabilities as per CRPD on rotational basis. | NCPD FDPF affiliates | Names of four (4) persons with disabilities to be members of the NCPD | |
| 1.3 Monitor the implementation of the national disability policy and report progress to the Council: in Annual Reports; on the NCPD website; appoint a monitoring and evaluation staff member and appoint a technical working group (TWG) comprising largely of OPDs specifically to monitor implementation. | NCPD FDPF OPDs and service providers | Reports to Council Annual Reports NCPD website Appointment letter for M&E staff member. TOR for Technical Working Group (TWG) List of members of TWG Records of meetings and correspondence | |
| 1.4 Commission a policy review after three years to assess progress and make any necessary changes. | NCPD | TOR for policy review Contract for consultant to undertake review Completed review | |
| 1.5 NCPD update website to make it a major source of information on disability in Fiji. Non-internet-based media should also be used for greater access. | NCPD | NCPD website other media | |

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| 1.6 | Ensure that disability is mainstreamed throughout Government by utilizing the mechanism of the sectoral Advisory Committees and District Committees, aligned to the National Development Plan. | NCPD | Records of Advisory Committee meetings and procedures | |
| 1.7 | NCPD to develop a mainstreaming toolkit for Government ministries. | NCPD | TOR for consultant to develop toolkit. Appointment of consultant Completed mainstreaming toolkit. | |
| 1.8 | Advisory and District Committees revise their Terms of Reference to clarify their roles and responsibilities. Each Committee should include at least one person with disability and one service provider. Tikina representative and District Advisory Councillors to be include in District Committees to represent a community voice. | NCPD MWCSP DISCOM ADCOM | TOR for Advisory Committees TOR for District Committees | |
| 1.9 | All Government Ministries to have a disability budget provision as part of CRPD compliance. | NCPD Ministry of Finance | Ministry budgets | |
| 1.10 | Disability to be included in the business plans of provincial administrations. | NCPD Ministry of i-Taukei Affairs | Provincial business plans | |
| 1.11 | NCPD to develop a template for its affiliates to report regular progress on Policy implementation. | | Completed template | |

Priority area 2: Advocacy and awareness

Outcomes

- Dismantle negative stereotypes and portray a positive image of persons with disabilities
- Increased awareness of the needs and rights of persons with disabilities
- Enhancement of understanding and acceptance of persons with disabilities in all their diversities

| Actions | Main implementing agencies | Indicators | Source of budget |
|---|----------------------------|---|------------------|
| 2.1 FDPF as the umbrella body for the four (4) Organizations for Persons with Disabilities to make its website an accessible and inclusive source of information that is regularly updated. This information should also be available in non-electronic formats such as television, radio and newspapers. | FDPF | Website Records of other media with relevant information | |
| 2.2 FDPF and others as appropriate develop a communication strategy for advocacy and awareness. | FDPF | Draft communication strategy | |
| 2.3 NCPD and FDPF develop and train the trainers to provide advocacy awareness and training on disability rights throughout Fiji, as required. | FDPF NCPD | Training materials Record of training sessions | |

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| 2.3 | NCPD and FDPF develop and train the trainers to provide advocacy awareness and training on disability rights throughout Fiji, as required. | FDPF NCPD | Training materials Record of training sessions | |
| 2.4 | NCPD, FDPF and others to conduct community level training on the rights of women and children with disabilities. | NCPD FDPF | Training materials Record of training sessions | |
| 2.5 | FDPF liaise with civil society organisations that provide leadership training to have its members undertake training as capacity building. | FDPF | Correspondence and agreements with relevant organisations | |
| 2.6 | NCPD promote media slots on living and working with persons with disabilities, for example, how to guide a visually impaired person, how to communicate with a deaf person. | NCPD | Media slots / advertisements from different media | |
| 2.7 | NCPD to provide regular updates and data to OPDs to inform advocacy messaging. | NCPD | Records of updates and data provided | |
| 2.8 | NCPD to ensure that the Fiji National Disability Policy is translated into the official languages of Fiji. | NCPD | Translated policy documents | |
| 2.9 | NCPD to provide financial management training to FDPF as required. | NCPD | Training materials Record of training sessions | |

Priority area 3: Data and research

Outcomes

- Accurate data and research findings to inform policies, programs and services on disability
- Improved evidence on the lives of persons with disabilities in Fiji, so that progress can be effectively measured and assessed.

| Actions | Main implementing agencies | Indicators | Source of budget |
|--|--|--|------------------|
| 3.1 NCPD with Bureau of Statistics and other stakeholders to develop a standard data collection format and template for recording data on persons with disabilities. | NCPD, MWCPA, Bureau of Statistics MOE, MHMS OPDs | Agreement on standard reporting format Template for recording data | |
| 3.2 Develop a roadmap for establishing a national data-hub to be located at the NCPD that is budgeted for; regularly updated and accessible to stakeholders. | NCPD NCPD, MWCPA, Bureau of Statistics MOE, MHMS, MTA. Min of I-Taukei Affairs, OPDs Fiji Program Support Facility | Meeting records Draft roadmap Finalised roadmap | |
| 3.3 NCPD to work with the Ministry of i-Taukei Affairs (MTA) to assist Turaga-ni-koro with data gathering on disability. | NCPD FDPF MTA | Draft template for gathering data Records of training sessions on use of template | |

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| 3.4 | NCPD and FDPF actively involve OPDs and persons with disabilities in research. | NCPD FDPF | Record of discussions regarding research | |
| 3.5 | NCPD and FDPF liaise with tertiary institutions in Fiji to encourage and strengthen research on disability related issues. | NCPD, FDPF USP FNU PDF . | Records of discussion, correspondence regarding research | |
| 3.6 | NCPD, FDPF and other stakeholders such as service providers to identify areas of research to be undertaken. | NCPD, FDPF | List of areas of research to be undertaken | |
| 3.7 | NCPD establish a database of research on disability in Fiji and publish it on its website as well as non-internet-based media. | NCPD | NCPD website and other media | |

Priority area 4: Health and well-being

Outcome

- Persons with disabilities have access to quality, affordable and accessible health services during their life that support their health and well-being

| Actions | Main implementing agencies | Indicators | Source of budget |
|--|-------------------------------------|---|------------------|
| 4.1 MHMS liaise with Fiji National University (FNU) to reinstate the Community Based Assistant (CRA) course. | MHMS FNU NCPD | Record of discussions / correspondence between FNU and MHMS | |
| 4.2 MHMS to reinstate the budget line for CRA and to review the structure of how CRA fit into the health system. | MHMS Ministry of Finance NCPD | Budget line for CRA included in annual budget | |
| 4.3 NCPD and MHMS liaise with the Tertiary Education Scholarships Loans Service to enable students who study the CRA course to take loans. | NCPD MHMS TELLS | TELLS announcement on loans | |
| 4.4 MHMS to establish positions for occupational therapists and speech therapists. | MHMS | Advertisement for positions | |
| 4.5 MHMS liaise with Fiji National University to ensure that the rights of persons with disabilities is embedded and mainstreamed into nurses, doctors and physiotherapy training. | MHMS FNU FDPF NCPD | Curriculum documents | |
| 4.6 MHMS to ensure that all health facilities are accessible and to consider a priority queue for persons with disabilities. | MHMS FDPF NCPD | Audit reports | |
| 4.7 MHMS to ensure that ambulances should be disability accessible, using mobile ramps as necessary. | MHMS | Photos of accessible ambulances | |

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| 4.8 | MHMS to implement its National Disability Inclusive Health and Rehabilitation Action Plan 2023-2027. The Action Plan should be strengthened to include speech therapy, occupational therapy and psychosocial support. | MHMS | Implementation reports MHMS Annual Reports Reviewed Action Plan that includes speech therapy, occupational therapy and psychosocial support | |
| 4.9 | MHMS and Ministry of Education (MOE) to strengthen referral pathways for children with disabilities between the two Ministries. | MHMS MOE | Evidence of revised referral process between the two Ministries | |
| 4.10 | MHMS to consider providing visiting specialist services to the East, West and North of Fiji . | MHMS NCPD | Correspondence on this issue. | |
| 4.11 | MHMS and related service providers to ensure that sexual and reproductive health (SRH) for persons with disabilities is a priority. | MHMS Medical Services Pacific Other service providers | Evidence of number of persons with disabilities provided with SRH services | |
| 4.12 | MHMS to introduce visual signing of numbers in out-patient and emergency departments of hospitals to cater for deaf and hearing-impaired individuals. | MHMS | Visual signs in place in health centres and hospitals | |
| 4.13 | NCPD and FDPF work with MHMS to plan for public health emergencies | MHMS NCPD FDPF | Completed plan for public health emergencies | |
| 4.14 | NCPD and FDPF to continue undertaking access audits of health facilities using the template it has developed | FDPF NCPD | Audit reports | |

Priority area 5: Education and training

Outcomes

- All children and youth with disabilities have access to quality early childhood education, primary, secondary, vocational and tertiary education
- Education system is inclusive with trained staff to address the needs of children with disabilities

| Actions | Main implementing agencies | Indicators | Source of budget |
|---|----------------------------|---|------------------|
| 5.1 MOE implement the Special and Inclusive Education Policy 2023. | MOE | Annual reports Implementation reports | |
| 5.2 MOE strengthen its Special and Inclusive Education (SIE) section through establishing and resourcing a unit. | MOE | Record of staff employed in SIE section | |
| 5.3 MOE work with teacher training institutions (TTI) to embed and mainstream special and inclusive education courses in all teacher training and in-service training, including early childhood education. | MOE TTI | Evidence of SIE courses inclusion in curricula in TTI | |

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| 5.4 | MOE and service providers to review vocational training for persons with disabilities with a view to upgrading and diversifying it, leading to pathways to employment and self-employment. | NCPD MOE | Evidence of improvements to training procedures and outcomes | |
| 5.5 | NCPD lobby tertiary providers to introduce relevant courses for caregivers, teacher aides and sign language interpreters. | NCPD USP FNU APTC | Correspondence with tertiary providers on relevant courses Course materials on courses | |
| 5.6 | MOE and education providers to promote the enrolment of girls with disabilities to address their under-representation in schools. | MOE Special schools FDPF | Evidence of actions to promote enrolment of girls Improved enrolments of girls | |
| 5.7 | MOE to include human rights, including disability rights, in its civics and social science curriculum. | MOE NCPD FDPF | Curriculum including human rights and disability rights | |

Priority area 6: Employment and economic security

Outcomes

- Increased and improved work and employment opportunities in both the public and private sectors for persons with disabilities
- Barriers to employment and livelihoods are removed
- Employment in the private and public sectors is promoted and increased and reasonable accommodation made as required
- Entrepreneurship opportunities are made accessible for persons with disabilities

| Actions | Main implementing agencies | Indicators | Source of budget |
|---|--|--|------------------|
| 6.1 NCPD to work with the Tripartite Forum representing employers, trade unions and Government to proactively lobby the public and private sector to employ persons with disabilities to emphasize the value of employing persons with disabilities and to ensure that non-discriminatory practices are used in recruitment and employment. | Tripartite Forum representatives NCPD | Meeting minutes Materials promoting value of employing persons with disabilities. | |
| 6.2 NCPD work with Fiji Commerce and Employers Federation (FCEF) to promote the employment of persons with disabilities and to provide an annual award for the employer for best practices in employment of persons with disabilities. | FCEF NCPD | Meeting records Evidence of process to establish annual award | |
| 6.3 NCPD, FDPF and other partners to collate a database of microfinance opportunities and post on their websites and other media | NCPD FDPF OPDs | Database created, populated and published on websites and other media. | |
| 6.4 NCPD and FDPF actively encourage self-employment. | NCPD MWCPA FDPF | Opportunities for self-employment identified and publicized on websites and other media. | |

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| 6.5 | NCPD and FDPF collect data on persons with disabilities in employment and self-employment. | NCPD FDPF | Case studies of successful entrepreneurs presented on websites and other media | |
| 6.6 | Government to review the 300-400% tax rebate for employing persons with disabilities to a lower threshold than \$30,000. | NCPD Ministry of Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations Ministry of Finance | Meeting records between parties. Draft agreement Draft Cabinet paper | |

Priority area 7: Promoting the rights of women, children, youth and older persons with disabilities

- Women and girls with disabilities enjoy their full all human rights and fundamental freedoms.
- Violence against women and children with disabilities is effectively addressed.
- Youth with disabilities are empowered to participate fully in society.
- The specific needs and rights of older persons with disabilities are addressed

| Actions | Main implementing agencies | Indicators | Source of budget |
|--|---|--|------------------|
| 7.1 Fiji Police Force to work with relevant stakeholders to improve referral pathways, especially in cases of violence and in cases requiring child protection services. | FDPF Fiji Police Force Fiji Women's Crisis Centre Empower Pacific Save the Children Fiji | Meeting records Draft of revised referral pathways | |
| 7.2 Each community, working with their Turaga-ni-Koro, Tikina Representatives, District Advisory Councillors and Disability Community Representatives to identify safe spaces for women and children in villages and settlements. | Ministry of i-Taukei Affairs, NCPD and other partners | Meeting records Evidence of establishment of safe spaces | |
| 7.3 Fiji Women's Rights Movement and other providers to train young women with disabilities in leadership, to foster leadership at all levels. | FWRM Leadership Fiji FDPF OPDs | Reports from training sessions | |
| 7.4 NCPD in consultation with OPDs to continue to engage with the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre, Medical Services Pacific, Empower Pacific and other referral pathways to access counselling and legal services and address issues of gender-based violence, abuse, exploitation, and harassment. | NCPD FDPF Fiji Police Force FWCC Medical Services Pacific Empower Pacific Legal Aid Others as seen fit | Meeting records Draft of referral pathways document Finalised document agreed by all parties | |
| 7.5 Ministry of Youth and Sports and Ministry of i-Taukei Affairs ensure that youth with disabilities are included in all programmes and in all parts of Fiji. | Ministry of Youth MTA NCPD | Evidence of inclusion of youth with disabilities in programmes | |

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| 7.6 | MHMS to strengthen its early identification of children with disabilities processes and procedures, in consultation with relevant service providers including Frank Hilton Organisation, Fiji Deaf Ministry, Project Heaven, Albinism Fiji and the Fiji Society for the Blind | MHMS MOE Frank Hilton Organisation Fiji Society for the Blind Fiji Deaf Ministry Albinism Fiji Project Heaven | Evidence that early identification integrated into nursing training Documentary evidence that processes and procedures are clearly articulate and agreed upon by all parties | |
| 7.7 | NCPD to develop and implement its organizational policies on protection from sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (PSEAH) and safeguarding policies aligned to recognized standards, principles and practices. | NCPD FDPF | Develop TOR for consultant to develop PSEAH policy in consultation with all stakeholders. Draft policy Final policy | |

Priority area 8: Accessibility

Outcome

- Access to a range of facilities and services in Fiji is improved

| Actions | Main implementing agencies | Indicators | Source of budget |
|---|--|--|------------------|
| 8.1 NCPD, FDPF and relevant Ministries to ensure that the National Building Code provisions are enforced. | NCPD FDPF Min Infrastructure | Agreed upon process for auditing building code Audit guide completed | |
| 8.2 NCPD, FDPF and relevant Ministries to ensure that all public buildings including shopping areas have parking spaces for persons with disabilities; accessible toilets with railings; tactile signage and good lighting. | NCPD FDPF Min Infrastructure Town and city councils | Completed audits Number of orders to comply and prosecutions for infringements | |
| 8.3 NCPD in consultation with OPDs to develop a standardized access audit toolkit and certification process with support from all government ministries including provision of budget to support OPD-led compliance checks. | NCPD FDPF Min Infrastructure Town and city councils | Audit toolkit finalized and agreed upon Evidence of budget to support process | |
| 8.4 LTA to enforce its regulations on transporting persons with disabilities in buses and taxis. | NCPD LTA | LTA have clear process in place for enforcing regulations Number of orders to comply and prosecutions | |
| 8.5 LTA to consider encouraging buses to use mobile ramps | NCPD | Feasibility study on use of mobile ramps | |
| 8.6 LTA, FRA and local councils to have audible pedestrian signals for pedestrian crossings with traffic lights | NCPD FRA Town and city councils | Number of crossings with audible pedestrian signals in place | |

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| 8.7 | NCPD to work with the MWCSP and MOE, in consultation with Fiji Association of the Deaf (FAD), to roll out sign language training at a national level including schools and the media. | NCPD MWCSP MOE FAD | Plan for sign language training completed Curricula for sign language training at different levels completed | |
| 8.8 | Fiji Sign language (FJSL) to become an official language of Fiji | NCPD MWCP FAD | Cabinet paper drafted that clearly outlines the need for FJSL to become an official language of Fiji | |
| 8.9 | NCPD and FDPF lobby FRA to make footpaths disability friendly | NCPD FDPF FRA Town and City Councils | Agreed upon process between parties completed. | |
| 8.10 | NCPD to work with the Ministry of Rural, Maritime Development and the Ministry of i-Taukei Affairs for footpaths to be constructed in villages to assist with mobility. | NCPD FDPF Min Rural & Maritime Development Min -Taukei Affairs | Meeting minutes, correspondence Plans and processes agreed upon and documented | |
| 8.11 | Government offices to locate services that the public regularly accesses on the ground floor | NCPD Public Service Commission Min Infrastructure | Government policy documented and agreed upon | |

Priority area 9: Access to justice Outcome:

- Effective access to justice for persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others

| Actions | Main implementing agencies | Indicators | Source of budget |
|---|--|--|------------------|
| 9.1 Legal aid commission to ensure its services are accessible and its staff are trained in assisting persons with disabilities with due sensitivity and respect, providing reasonable accommodation as required. | NCPD FDPF Legal Aid Commission | Agreement between all parties for training to take place Record that training has taken place | |
| 9.2 The processes of the Human Rights Commission in regard to disability to be reviewed so that its services can be better used by persons with disabilities. | NCPD Human Rights Commission | Agreement with Human Rights Commission on review of processes Completed report | |
| 9.3 Fiji Police Academy to include training and sensitization for new and serving police officers on the rights of persons with disabilities and how to engage with persons with disabilities in initial training and in-service training. Training should include basic sign language. | Fiji Police Force NCPD FDPF FAD | Agreement on training Training modules developed Record that training has taken place | |

Priority area 10: Assistive devices and technology

Objectives:

- Improved supply, distribution and maintenance of assistive devices
- Accessible, affordable and appropriate technology available to all who need it

| Actions | Main implementing agencies | Indicators | Source of budget |
|---|---|---|------------------|
| 10.1 NCPD in consultation with OPDs and other service providers to lobby for exemption of all duties and taxes on assistive devices, technologies, medical consumables including adult diapers. | NCPD OPDs Service providers SIA | Record of meetings and correspondence Agreement document | |
| 10.2 NCPD, FDPF and disability service providers develop a long list of national priorities for assistive devices. | NCPD FDPF Service providers | Completed and agreed long list | |
| 10.3 FNU in partnership with relevant stakeholders to provide training in wheelchair maintenance and repairs. | FNU SIA Frank Hilton Organisation (FHO) | Agreement for training Curriculum for training Record of training taken place | |
| 10.4 Spinal Injuries Association (SIA) to finalise Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the MHMS to repair assistive devices | SIA MHMS | MOA between SIA and MHMS | |
| 10.5 Government grants to cover or subsidize the cost of JAWS software and devices for deaf persons. | NCPD MWCSP United Blind Persons of Fiji FAD CBM Others | Record of meetings and correspondence Agreement document | |
| 10.6 Providers of assistive technology and devices to endeavour to serve all areas of Fiji and to provide training in repair of devices in all parts of Fiji. | MWCSP NCPD MHMS FDPF and branches SIA FHO CBM Others | Records of outreach by providers of devices and technology | |

Priority area 11: Social protection and housing

Outcomes

- Social protection measures are used effectively in a move towards equity for persons with disabilities
- Appropriate and affordable housing is available for persons with disability

| Actions | Main implementing agencies | Indicators | Source of budget |
|---|--|--|------------------|
| 11.1 Government to gradually increase the disability allowance, to cover the extra costs of having a disability, as intended. | MWCSP Min of Finance | Proposal to Ministry of Finance to increase disability allowance | |
| 11.2 The bus-fare allowance to be converted to a cash transport allowance to be used for any mode of transport. | MWCSP Min of Finance FDPF | Agreement within MWCSP | |
| 11.3 Government to restore the allowance for nominated caregivers for persons with disabilities who require full-time care. | MWCSP FDPF Min of Finance | Policy paper to Ministry of Finance prepared MWCSP budget | |
| 11.4 Housing providers continue to make special provision for persons with disabilities by setting aside a quota of at least 2% of housing stock and by providing grants for retrofitting houses. | Ministry of Housing Ministry of Rural Development NCPD Housing Authority Public Rental Board HART Koroipita Habitat for Humanity Others as appropriate | Evidence of housing provision for persons with disabilities | |
| 11.5 Housing providers to advocate against separate or segregated housing for persons with disabilities as it is contrary to the CRPD. | Ministry of Housing Ministry of Rural Development NCPD FDPF Housing Authority Public Rental Board HART Koroipita Habitat for Humanity | | |

Priority area 12: Sports and recreation

Outcomes

- Increased participation in sports at all levels by persons with disabilities
- Improved accessibility to sports facilities

| Actions | Main implementing agencies | Indicators | Source of budget |
|---|---|---|------------------|
| 12.1 MOE to ensure that all children with disabilities are included in physical education and sports and that schools promote inclusive and modified sports for all students. | MOE | Circular to schools Curriculum for modified sports distributed | |
| 12.2 Physical education teachers to be trained in teaching children with disabilities | Teacher training institutions (TTI) | TTI timetable TTI curricula | |
| 12.3 NCPD, FDPF and other relevant stakeholders to conduct access audits of sports facilities. | FDPF NCPD Disability sports organisations | Completed audit tool developed and agreed upon Record of audits undertaken | |
| 12.4 Stakeholders to lobby sports facility operators for increased accessibility for persons with disabilities as per the 2018 Act. | FDPF Fiji National Sports Commission Disability sports organisations | Records of meetings and correspondence Evidence of improved access to sports facilities | |
| 12.5 Government to adequately resource the existing disability sporting bodies for their various local, regional, and international competitions. | Min Youth and Sports Disability sports organisations | Records of meetings and correspondence Evidence of funding provided | |
| 12.6 Ministry of Youth and Sports and Ministry of Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations, in consultation with Disability Sports Providers like Fiji Paralympic Committee, Special Olympic and Deaf Sports to adequately resource training opportunities to become disability sports classifiers with a view towards employment. | Min Youth and Sports Ministry of Employment, Productivity and IR Training providers FPC, SOs and Deaf sports | Records of meetings and correspondence Training opportunities identified and resourced | |
| 12.7 Ministry of Youth and Sports to provide financial support and resourcing to enable the full participation of persons with disabilities at all levels of sports and recreational activities. | Ministry of Youth and Sports Fiji Sports Commission | Evidence of support to persons with disabilities in sports | |
| 12.8 Disability sports stakeholders to develop a safeguarding policy that can be used by affiliated bodies. | NCPD FASANOC Special Olympics Fiji Paralympics Association Deaf Sports | Policy drafted, consulted upon and finalized | |

Priority area 13: Disaster risk reduction and climate change

Outcomes

- All disaster risk reduction and national climate change adaptation strategies specifically address the needs of persons with disabilities, especially women, children and older persons
- Persons with disabilities are fully involved in planning and preparation for disasters and climate change adaptation.
- Capacity is strengthened for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in climate change adaptation measures and disaster risk management
- Post-disaster needs and sectoral assessments are inclusive of persons with disabilities

| Actions | Main implementing agencies | Indicators | Source of budget |
|--|---|--|------------------|
| 13.1 NDMO ensure that persons with disabilities are included in consultations, training and drills and that they contribute to the development and monitoring of disaster risk reduction and climate change polices and plans. | NDMO MWCSP NCPD FDPF CBM | Evidence of participation of persons with disabilities in all processes to do with disaster risk reduction and climate change | |
| 13.2 NDMO design, implement and monitor inclusive disaster warning systems in consultation with NCPD and OPDs. | NDMO NCPD FDPF NDRMO FDPF | Inclusive disaster warning systems developed, trialed and implemented. Evidence of engagement with persons with disabilities Minimum standards for evacuation centres developed and agreed upon by all stakeholders. Access audits on evacuation centres completed | |
| 13.3 FDPF to be supported by NCPD and NDMO to conduct access audits on evacuation centres. The use of mobile ramps should be considered where appropriate. | NDMO FDPF | Minimum standards for evacuation centres developed and agreed upon by all stakeholders. | |
| 13.4 FDPF in collaboration with NCPD to ensure that the Fiji Disability Inclusive Community-Based Disaster Risk Management Toolkit is well understood by members and is implemented. | NDRMO FDPF NCPD Other stakeholders | Evidence of implementation of toolkit | |
| 13.5 FDPF and NCPD to seek partnerships with development partners for capacity building in lobbying for disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation | FDPF NCPD Development partners | Record of agreements Record of capacity building taking place | |
| 13.6 FDPF to be supported by NCPD and NDRMO to train first responders on how to engage with persons of diverse disabilities in times of disasters. | NDRMO FDPF NCPD | Evidence of agreement on training Evidence of training taking place | |
| 13.7 NCPD with NDRMO to ensure that post-disaster rapid needs assessments to include the needs of persons with disabilities. | NDRMO NCPD OPD | | |





