



## **Intergenerational Convention 2024 – Outcomes Statement**

### **Women Demand Women’s Leadership**

04-06 March 2024

The Pearl Resort

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Intergenerational Convention brought together 52 diverse<sup>1</sup> women and young women across Fiji with the theme “Women Demand Women’s Leadership” from 04 March – 06 March 2024 at the Pearl Resort, Deuba. The Fiji Women’s Forum (FWF) is co-convened by Na i Soqosoqo Vakamarama iTaukei, femLINKpacific and the Fiji Women’s Rights Movement (FWRM). The intergenerational convention fostered discussions around diverse women’s and young women’s priorities and collective solutions in strengthening our Political Participation, Alleviating Poverty and contributing to the formulation of the National Development Plan.

These demands take into account the multidimensional aspects of poverty in Fiji and considers how poverty is further exacerbated by the current climate crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic and the implications of the external national debt levels<sup>2</sup> that hinder positive development.

We therefore call on the Fijian Government to:

#### **1. Improve Women’s Political Participation by:**

- Taking on Special Measures (SMs) to encourage women’s leadership in Political Parties and State owned Enterprises (SoEs).
- Incorporating and strengthening Civic Education<sup>3</sup> including elections, the constitution and development structures within the existing education curriculum at the high school level

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<sup>1</sup> Civil Society Organisations from across Fiji; including women of all ages; gender, religious backgrounds, ethnicity, socio economic backgrounds, person with disabilities (PWD)

<sup>2</sup> Around 9.9 Billion equivalent to 75.6% of the country’s GDP Fiji; Accessed: <https://fijionenews.com.fj/fijis-9-9-billion-debt-unsustainable-and-new-global-risks-will-pose-challenges-says-president/#:~:text=Fiji's%20debt%20is%20around%20249.9,says%20President%20Ratu%20Wiliame%20Katonivere>.

<sup>3</sup> Good governance, civic responsibility and rights

and at the community level through government-led initiatives<sup>4</sup> in partnership with civil society organisations (CSOs).

## **2. Alleviate Poverty**

Poverty is closely linked to all forms of gender based violence (GBV). Diverse women, young women and children are more likely to be victims /survivors of GBV due to poverty. Therefore we urge the government to:

- Introduce age appropriate curriculum on comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) in schools. This will allow for children to be better informed about their bodies and curb the issue of early sexual debut, teenage pregnancy and early marriage that can ultimately leave young mothers in poverty.
- Consider improving maritime women and young women's access to transportation, including affordable shipping and air services, and emergency services, to and from maritime areas to be reflective of the realities in these communities.
- Improve basic infrastructure for rural, maritime, peri-urban and urban communities that can affect women and young women's daily lives. This includes access to quality and sustained water supply; accessible, safe roads and bridges with reasonable accommodation (sustained maintenance); proper lighting of streets to ensure the safety and security of women and girls and the sustained/affordability of rural electrification.
- Address Food Security issues for diverse women across Fiji that is threatened by the heightened costs of living, the current climate crisis and degradation of the environment in the name of development.
- Expand government social protection mechanisms with appropriate budgetary allocations and control mechanisms to ensure sustainability and responsiveness to the needs and realities of diverse women and young women.
- Government to create accessible, sustainable, gender responsive mechanisms for income generating opportunities, tailor made for women and young women.
- All government programs and initiatives to eradicate poverty must consider Section J of the Beijing Platform for Action "Women and the Media" as information is power and women's access to accurate and timely information can empower women out of poverty.

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<sup>4</sup> Using user friendly information, communication, education (ICE) materials that is accessible and considerate of person with disabilities (PWDs)