Rapid Assessment of Perceptions

Supporting human rights and
social participation of women
in remote areas in Fiji

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Executive summary

Supporting human rights and social participation of women in remote areas in Fiji is a three-year project funded by the European Union.

The project seeks to build broad-based public demand for democracy and human rights by strengthening women's groups and organizations and in turn creating more effective forums through which women can voice their opinions.

The Rapid Assessment of Perceptions (RAP) is the initial phase of the project. The RAP is facilitated to ensure that the project design is drawn from 'where target groups are' and responds to the needs, values and aspirations of those groups.

The focus of this report is on social participation of women in remote communities in Fiji and draws on initial perceptions of human rights and democracy within the communities.

Key findings documented in this report relate to issues in remote communities on:

1. **The level of understanding of human rights and democracy.** The research showed that most of the respondents failed to comprehend the two concepts. Once understood, the elders saw them as challenging the traditional system whereas the younger generation welcomed them as openings which allow for young people to actively participate in village meetings and activities;

2. **The status of women.** According to the RAP, women are perceived to be at the bottom of the hierarchy of the traditional status system in the communities; it is commonly the men's voice that carries weight and is heard in final decisions;

3. **The Division of Labor between Men and Women.** According to the RAP, men's activities are centered on earning an income for the family and bringing food from the farm or the sea. Women's responsibilities, on the other hand, include caring for children and the elderly, cooking, washing, buying/collecting food, fetching water and looking after the house;

4. **The limited access to resources and basic services.** The RAP revealed that the limited access to resources and basic services burden women with extra responsibilities such as making long and frequent trips to resources (i.e. water sources) and long, expensive trips to services such as medical centres;

5. **The concerns of security for women.** Women's safety in the communities, as the report indicates, is threatened in the absence of their husbands whether it be in their own communities or outside; and

6. **The aspirations of women.** The research disclosed that the respondents aspire to an improved status within the community and a higher standard of wellbeing for their families, particularly their children.

In light of these RAP findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. The difference in respondents' perceptions of human rights and democracy, strongly suggests that human rights education is essential to improving the level of understanding of, and demand for, human rights throughout the communities;

2. The action should also consider incorporating good governance trainings and supporting actions that promote good governance. In light of this, recommendations would include leadership and life skills capacity-building for target communities;

3. When developing community-based initiatives, consideration should be given to the responsibilities and activities of both women and men;

4. The action should critically focus on encouraging and raising the status of 'powerless' women within rural communities;

5. The action should promote the protection of women and the safeguarding of their interests; and

6. The action should be carried out in collaboration with the media, particularly the radio.

Introduction

"In developing areas dominated by non-Western culture, women remain more or less subjugated and in some countries they are stripped of any human rights." [1]

In the report *The Condition of Women in Developing and Developed Countries*, the author states that, "*[e]xploitation and abuse of women, including outright violence, are acceptable in countries where women have an inferior social status by customary or formal law.*" [2]

Women and children across the globe have commonly been the target for aid and support in recognition of the vulnerable positions that they hold in society.

In the Pacific, particularly Melanesia, societies are predominately patriarchal. We see threats and signs that cripple the dignity and status of women in our societies, especially those in rural and remote communities where women play a subordinate role in community development.

Nicholl Rae (faculty at the University of the South Pacific) reported that women make up 49 percent of the total population in Fiji [3]. The same report showed that female literacy rate in Fiji is 91 percent (95 percent for men) yet women's role in decision-making at the highest level is minimal [4].

This research (of aspirations and perceptions) was conducted in remote communities in Fiji.

This report aims to:

- Highlight community understanding of the terms 'democracy' and 'human rights'.

- Identify ways of mobilizing women in rural and remote areas.

- Explore ways to strengthen the capacity of women in communities to educate and advocate for human rights and democracy.

1   Cohen, M. 2006 '*The Condition of Women in Developing and Developed Countries*', The Independent Institute. Viewed 31 August, 2011 <www.independent.org>
2   ibid.

3   Rae, N. 2006 'Electing Women to Parliament: Fiji and the alternative vote electoral system' *Pacific Journalism Review* 12 (1) p. 8
4   ibid.

Background

The *Supporting human rights and social participation for women in remote areas in Fiji* project is funded by the European Union, through the Europe Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR).

The action seeks to support human rights and social participation of women in remote and poor regions of Fiji. The overall objective is to build broad-based public demand for democracy and human rights by strengthening women's groups and organizations, in turn creating more effective forums through which women can voice their opinions.

The RAP aimed at exploring aspirations and perceptions of people within target communities. Aspirations and perceptions were sought from one hundred and one (101) women and sixty-two (62) men from the Ra, Naitasiri, Tailevu, Bua, Macuata, Rewa and Nadroga provinces.

Background of provinces and communities

Ra Province

Ra province is located on the north of Viti Levu on the main Kings highway from Sigatoka to Lautoka. The province has 19 Districts and 89 Villages. Traveling in Ra province involves access by the major road networks and, at times, the use of horses and punts.

Naria Settlement (Ra)

Naria Settlement is an Indo-Fijian settlement located on the northern side of Viti Levu and is about a 25-minute drive from Rakiraki Town. The settlement is made up of 243 households whereby the total population in the settlement is 438, of which 209 are females and 229 are males. 13 members of the settlement participated in the RAP - 12 women and 1 man.

The settlement is located within the sugarcane belt area. Sugarcane farming is the major economic activity in Naria.

Malake Village (Ra)

Malake Village is located on an island, which is about a 15-minute boat ride from the northern coast of Viti Levu. The total village population of people in Malake village is 642 of which 320 are females and 352 are males.

28 villagers from Malake village participated in the RAP, 22 of which were women and the remainder, men.

Malake village is on Malake Island off Viti Levu. The major economic activity is deep sea fishing. The remoteness of the village, has also been reason for young people dropping out of high school to remain in the village. In Malake, there is a considerable rate of young female school dropouts becoming young single-mothers. As a result, this is seen in the village as a factor that draws away opportunities for young women, lowering the status of young women in the village.

Naitasiri province

Naitasiri province occupies the Northern and Eastern fringes of Suva. The province has 16 Districts and 91 Villages. Naitasiri is inland and has only one main road – the Serea road. Villagers use the main road, horses and bilibili (bamboo rafts) or punts for transportation.

Naganivatu Village (Naitasiri)

Naganivatu Village is located on the Eastern side of Viti Levu and is a 30-minute drive via dirt road from Nausori Town. The total village population in the village is 225, where females make a total of 115 while the male population count is 110. 25 villagers participated in the RAP - 13 women and 12 men.

Tailevu province

Tailevu province is located on the Eastern side of Viti Levu. It has 22 Districts and 146 villages.

Nakalawaca Village (Tailevu)

Nakalawaca is located on the Eastern side of Viti Levu and is a 40-minute drive from Nausori Town. Total village population is 260, 145 of which are females and 115 are males.

20 participated in the RAP- 14 women and 6 men.

Veinuqa Village (Tailevu)

Veinuqa is located on the Eastern side of Viti Levu and is a 25-minute drive from Nausori Town.

Total population in the village is 349 where 150 are females and 149 males. 22 villagers participated in the RAP - 4 women and 18 men.

Bua province

Bua province occupies the Western area of Vanua Levu. The province has 9 districts and 50 villages.

Nagadoa Village (Bua)

Nagadoa is located in Vanua Levu. The village is a 4-hour drive from Savusavu Town through a gravel road. Total village population is 215, of which 111 are females and 104 are males. 30 villagers participated in the RAP sessions, of which 26 were women and 8 men.

Vuya Village (Bua):

Vuya is also located in Vanua Levu and is a 6 to 7 hour drive from Savusavu. Total village population is 291 where there are 77 females and 108 males.

34 villagers participated in the RAP - 26 women and 8 men.

Macuata province

Macuata province covers the Northeastern part of Vanua Levu. It has 12 districts and 112 villages in total.

Nubu Village (Macuata)

Nubu is also located in Vanua Levu and is a 2 hour and 30-minute drive from Labasa Town. Total village population is 228, of which 105 are females and 123 are males.

31 villagers participated in the RAP of which 18 were women and 13 men.

Nacereyaga Village (Macuata)

Nacereyaga is located on Vanua Levu and is a 2-hour drive from Labasa. There are a total of 170 people, 82 females and 88 males in the village. 21 villagers participated in the RAP - 16 females and 5 males.

Rewa province

Rewa province is located on the central division of Viti Levu from Suva to Nausori. It has 9 Districts and 52 villages.

Nukui Village (Rewa)

Nukui is located in the eastern part of Viti Levu. Nukui is less than an hour's drive from Nausori town plus an additional 30-minute boat ride to the village. 15 villagers participated in the RAP- 10 females and 5 males.

Nukui was chosen for the RAP, because although it is fairly close to a town, the separation of the village by the Rewa river, makes getting to Nukui difficult and seemingly isolates the village. Due to the difficulties faced in reaching Nukui, there has been very little assistance in terms of economical and environmental development in Nukui.

In this village, under the leadership of the male population in the village, women are the very involved in income generation. Income generating activities include fishing, weaving.

Nadroga province

Nadroga province covers the Southwestern part of Viti Levu from Suva to Lautoka. Its major town is Sigatoka. The province has 22 districts and 121 villages.

Tubeirata Village (Nadroga)

Tubeirata is located on the Western side of Viti Levu and is a 1 and half hour drive from Sigatoka town. The village is about 97km west of Suva. Total village population is 541 where 258 are female and 283 males.

Indo-Fijian settlements

Indo-Fijian settlements are traditionally made up of nuclear-family households. Families generally consist of father, mother and children. In some cases, grandparents may be included in the households. Where the Fijian traditional communities would include families of a common ancestry, the Indo-Fijian settlements are usually made up of the grandparents, the children and their own nuclear families.
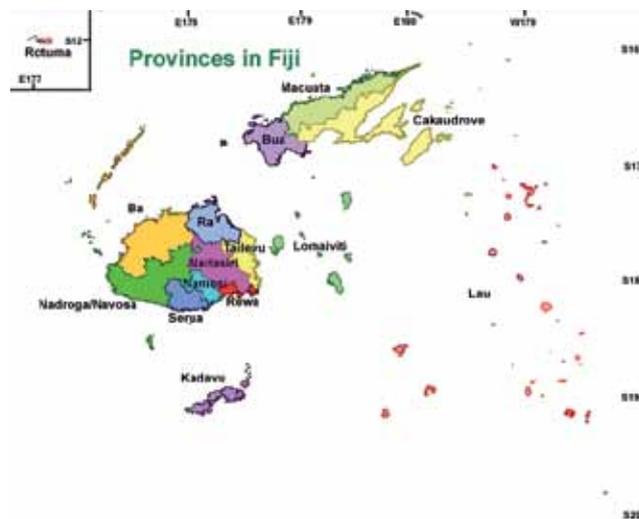
National Disaster Management Office, Ministry for Provincial Development and Disaster Management (www.fdoe.gov.fj/newndmo/index.php/gis/fijimaps)

RAP methodology

In Fiji, a total of 64% of the population living in the rural and remote areas are indigenous Fijians (iTaukei) and 32% are indo-Fijians.

The Rapid Assessment of Perceptions (RAP) was undertaken in eleven (11) remote communities (with major group ethnicities being iTaukei and Indo-Fijian). The iTaukei groups were of a majority and this correlates to the populace of the group in the remote areas.

A total of one hundred and one (101) women and sixty-two (62) men participated in the RAP.

This action targeted women (communities) in the rural, remote, and isolated areas in Fiji. The target groups in the action and the Rapid Assessment of Perceptions (RAP) are from such areas. The target groups are representative remote communities from all fourteen (14) provinces in Fiji. As the activity is a RAP, target groups chosen were those on the two major islands in Fiji – Vanua Levu and Viti Levu. Selection of communities for the RAP were based with consideration of the following:

- Geographical isolation of communities and accessibility to closest town.
- Socio-economic status of communities.
- Major economic activities in relation to national priorities eg. Sugarcane farming, agriculture and fishing.
- Weak governance structures in communities.
- Ethnicity.

Although these communities are in remote areas, the communities chosen for the RAP are those fairly easier accessible to, than the remainder of communities of this action.

To ensure triangulation of the data was met, a series of participative tools were developed and facilitated across the 11 target sites. These tools were reflective of:

1. Focus group discussions;
2. Semi-structured interviews;
3. SWOT analysis (a form of ranking of priorities);
4. Transect Walks
5. Consultations with key stakeholders at provincial and district level.

Initial data analysis was done in each community with the research team. Data collected from the field, was then coded prior to analysis.

The report writing was done in consultation with staff of Live & Learn Fiji, and critical review by the project team.

Rapid assessment of perceptions

The Rapid Assessment of Perceptions (RAP) is a participatory method of research. It emphasizes the benefits of unhurried participant observation and conversations, and the importance of attitudes, behavior and rapport[5].

The participatory approach of a RAP encourages participants to explore and share experiences, ideas and opinions.

The RAP supports a Live & Learn Environmental Education principle that appreciates the richness and validity of rural people's knowledge. Findings from the RAP also establish the approach Live & Learn adopts in any education, capacity-building or awareness programs.

The RAP sought to ascertain an understanding of what target communities perceptions were of the following:

1. What do 'human rights' and 'democracy' mean?
2. What role can women play in strengthening 'democracy' and 'human rights' in a community?
3. What would be the threats or challenges of involving women in advocating for democracy and human rights activities in communities?
4. How would women like to be supported in building their own confidence to speak out on issues of human rights?
5. What type of education resources, tools and approaches would help women advocate for improved human rights?
6. How do women perceive the role of education and learning in addressing human rights abuse?
7. Who should be involved in such education?

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5 Chambers. R, Cornwall. A, Guijt. I & Welbourn. A, 'Participatory Approaches: Some Origins' in Preety. J, 1996. '*Participatory learning and action: a trainer's guide*', Institute for Environment and Development, London.

Research findings

Responses received during the RAP conducted with a sample of remote communities in Fiji, though modest in scale, led to conclusions presented in this section. Some of the findings relate closely to other published work[1].

The communities in this research are located in remote areas of Fiji. Most of the communities are traditional Indigenous communities and some are Indo-Fijian settlements. Though similar in culture, these communities differ in their own way.

This section of the research presents all key findings from the RAP. Each finding is elaborated on in detail. Recommendations follow each finding and suggest ways of strengthening or improving social participation of women in remote areas.

This report is not intended to disrespect any individual, group or community. It merely represents the data collected from the RAP. Due to the sensitiveness around human rights and discussing participation of women in rural and remote communities, to safeguard the interest and protection of these communities, fictitious names are given in quotes and case studies used in this report.

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1   Such works include Ravuvu, A. 1995. *Vaka I Taukei: The Fijian Way of Life*. Ocenia Printers Ltd. Suva, FWRM, FWCC & ECREA, 2002. *'NGO Report on the Status of Women in the Republic of the Fiji Islands'* and Hewitt, PR & Nuthall, PL, 1999. '*Women's Employment and its Impact on Life in a Fijian Village*'.

RAP findings

Human rights

Human rights, an unfamiliar topic

From the RAP findings, 7% of respondents indicated that they were not too familiar with what human rights meant. 6% of those respondents were females and 1% males.

> "I have heard it but I do not have any understanding of it."
>
> Male respondent

Human rights, a controversial system

> "Human rights are said to serve the same purpose traditional systems serve, that is, to bring order. However, we feel that credibility of leaders in remote communities is often challenged when people start exercising their rights or even talking about human rights."
>
> Village male elder

Most of the community elders mentioned that they understood the human rights concepts. Some of the male elders felt that human rights are controversial. In remote traditional communities, traditional systems are ultimately a means by which order within the community is maintained. Human rights as a concept was perceived to challenge traditional systems and religious ideologies.

> "Human rights bring about differences among people. Take away human rights and follow the law given by the chief."
>
> Village male elder

> "Human rights and village way of life don't go together."
>
> Village male elder

Some of the women elders shared similar views about human rights, with the male elders. (Refer to Case Study: Village A.)

Human rights, the way forward

Other respondents described human rights as something that was good for all. Respondents, who welcomed Human rights, defined them as:

- rights of people
- women's rights
- right to vote
- right to be heard
- freedom

The younger women in most communities, during the undertaking of the RAP, felt that human rights were good. They proposed that introducing the principles underpinning human rights would give them more opportunities to meaningfully participate in village activities.
(Refer to Case Study A)

Democracy

Over time, the term 'democracy' has evolved and been defined from various perspectives. In the report drawn from the United Nations, Elements of Democracy, democracy is defined as, "*the process whereby people and nations exercise their right to self-determination by periodically electing their governments*"[6].

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6   "Elements of Democracy" in *Situating the Democracy Fund in the Global Arena*, viewed 25 November 2011. <www.un.org>

Another report defined democracy as, "*based on the freely expressed will of people and closely linked to the rule of law and exercised human rights and fundamental rights*"[7].

Findings from the RAP indicated that 17% (9% females, 8% males) were not familiar with the term 'democracy'. They had heard of the term (mostly through the media), however failed to grasp its concept.

The majority of the respondents, who had also heard of "democracy", indicated that they have a fair idea what the concept meant. They gained their knowledge from the media and from trainings conducted by government and non-government organizations.

Democracy was defined by the respondents as:

- elections
- good leadership
- freedom of opinion and expression
- equality, and
- fairness.

More specifically, a select group of females defined 'democracy' as:

> *"Democracy are laws that govern the village or the lives of individuals within the community."*

> *"When there is dialogue in a family, community or government."*

> *"When people acknowledge our opinions and expressions."*

> *"Leaders are elected through voting."*

> *"Leadership, where the voices of people are heard or taken into consideration."*

> *"Fair leadership. Making wise decisions that are fair and just."*

Whereas, the male responses were:

> *"Government chosen by the people."*

> *"To be equal in all the developments taking place in the community."*

> *"Good leadership."*

> *"The right to choose."*

It can be seen from the responses from the two groups that women defined the term 'democracy' within the context of their own communities. The women's responses show aspirations that reflect their desire to be valued and given space to express their opinions without being threatened. The men looked beyond the community level and related the concept to a more large-scale hierarchy.

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7 "Democracy and the United Nations", viewed 25 November, 2011 <www.unis.unvienna.org >

The findings show that in these remote communities, there are pockets of people that know what human rights and democracy mean and there are groups that do not. Despite the differences in levels of understanding and perceptions towards human rights during the RAP, the majority of the respondents addressed human rights and democracy separately and did not see any link between the two concepts. Most of the respondents understood 'democracy', yet had no clear understanding of its relationship to the concept of 'human rights'.

CASE STUDY

Village A

Village A is located off the coast of Ra (a province in Northwestern side of Viti Levu). There are three major clans in this village.

The village is predominately patriarchal. The paramount body that ultimately governs the village is the heads of each clan (mostly males). The women of the village play a subordinate role.

During the RAP, the male village elders shared their concern for maintaining order within the village. They also expressed how concepts such as human rights were very controversial and threatened the powers that traditional systems have. Discussions of 'human rights', during the RAP, portrayed how sensitive the issue was. In the presence of the male elders, the women remained silent. However, they became more vocal when separated from the men during focus group discussions.

The female elders in the village supported the men's views. The views of the young women, however, contradicted the elders, saying that human rights could be a way in which they can contribute and be heard in village meetings and village activities.

CASE STUDY

Village B

A village in Tailevu is actively involved in a human rights education program. The village members do not perceive human rights as a threat to their village structure. Human rights are seen as "laws that ensure people's security" and support sustainable community development. Village members defined human rights as:

> *"For us to be heard and considered in our province."*
>
> Female respondent

> *"Peoples' freedom."*
>
> Female respondent

> *"Our individual rights."*
>
> Male respondent

Recommendations

Human rights education in remote communities

The vast differences in understanding and the misconceptions around human rights and democracy show that there is a need for more human rights and democracy education programs for these communities.

Members in the communities are divided into three (3) groups according to their level of understanding on human rights. All groups had heard of human rights, the first group however, was not familiar with the concept. The second group saw human rights as a controversial issue, threatening the traditional system whereas the third found it beneficial in that it would help them take a more active role in the communities. Therefore, considering these three different levels of understanding, it is important that the human rights education program be designed in a way that equally address these differences and maintains learning interest.

On the concept of democracy, most of the respondents mentioned that they have heard of it, and only a handful did not fully understand the concept. From the RAP findings, it could be seen that the respondents did not link the relationship between democracy and human rights.

The following recommendations should also be considered:

1. Human rights education tools should be designed to provide and encourage free and safe space for discussions;

2. The education and capacity building programs should be mindful of the cultural and gender sensitiveness around human rights presented in this section (Key Findings 1);

3. The use of participatory learning resources would encourage active participation from groups;

4. Human rights education should include a diverse range of age groups of both males and females; and

5. Human rights tools should be designed to show the link between human rights and democracy.

Careful attention should be paid to the delivery of human rights education in remote communities. The following were quotes received during the RAP and it is important that these suggestions be seriously considered.

"Human rights and democracy may seem to threaten the village community, so the presentation needs to be good and transparent."

Female respondent

"Human rights will cause the criticism of women, where men will think that women are arrogant. This education will require the support of men."

Female respondent

Below is a list of the types of educational tools women would like to have in support of human rights and democracy capacity building:

- pamphlets,
- flyers,
- posters,
- booklets,
- videos/DVD,
- drama,
- case studies
- awareness campaigns.

Human rights through media influence

The media also plays a part in shaping the perception of respondents. The majority of respondents (75%) learnt about human rights by listening to the news and programs aired on the radio.

22% of respondents access information through television and 7% through print media (newspapers). This is an indication that the media is a vital instrument for human rights education. In remote communities, the data shows that radio is the common the form of media used.

It would therefore be ideal that media relations be implemented as support for this action.

KEY FINDING: No 2

Status of women in remote communities in Fiji

To fully understand how best to involve women and communities in remote areas, we must first understand the dynamics of these communities.

"In Fijian villages, females are in a subordinate position in any family situation, and in formal clans or tribal gatherings they expect to assume a lower position than the males. The husband has considerable authority over his wife, who is expected to respect and obey him. The man makes final decisions about family or clan activities."[8]

The traditional structure within communities in remote areas shows the level of hierarchy within a community. It allows others to see how decisions are made and how the community is organized.

This section presents a comparison between two (2) types of community structures.

By noting the position of women's representation on the decision-making hierarchy, this section will give a direct indication of women's degree of participation in community development. It also explains the extent and nature of participation of women in community based development in remote communities.

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8 Ravuvu, A 1995. *Vaka I Taukei: The Fijian Way of Life.* Ocenia Printers Ltd. Suva. p. 8

Traditional community structures

In traditional Indigenous Fijian villages, a clear structure outlines how the community activities are organized. It is a rigid structure that shows who the decision-makers are and how the decisions that affect the community are made. This traditional structure governs and ensures order within the community. It is built on the respect of, and loyalty to, ancestral kinship. The structure varies among communities from province to province and to some extent, even within districts.

Figure 1 shows the governing groups that exist within a community. This structure shows the levels of hierarchy within the village. Ultimately, the head of the village (the chief) is responsible for ensuring order within the community and has the final say in decisions made for the community.

In all indigenous Fijian communities participating in the RAP, men held the chief's position. There are areas in Fiji where women hold this position.

Community (traditional) structures derived from the target communities during the RAP, showed women were represented in groups at the lowest level (as represented by the green blocks in Figure 1 above).

The structure in Figure 1 was extracted from one of the communities that were studied. In this community, males predominantly held leading positions in all the groups. A male even led the women's group.

Indo-Fijian settlements

Unlike Indigenous traditional villages, the settlements (*where families were predominantly of Indo-Fijian ethnicity*) have an advisory councilor overseeing the wellbeing of families. Families in these settlements are more individually based, gathering only as a community for prayers and other functions like weddings or funerals.

The decision making process

Decisions made within indigenous communities are made by the chief in consultation with the heads of clan(s) (*depicted by orange and blue shaded blocks in Figure 1*). These groups form the village council. The village council is the ultimate decision-making body within a traditional Indigenous Fijian community. Male elders, predominantly, hold positions in the council.

Contributions to decision-making or concerns made by different groups at the lower levels of the structure (*mostly where women are represented*) are presented to the village headman (*Turaga ni Koro*). The village headman presents those issues to the heads of clans and reports these at the village council meetings.

The concerns and issues raised by women or groups at the lower level are dependent on the submissions made by the village headman. If the issues raised are considered insignificant, they do not reach the agenda of the village council.
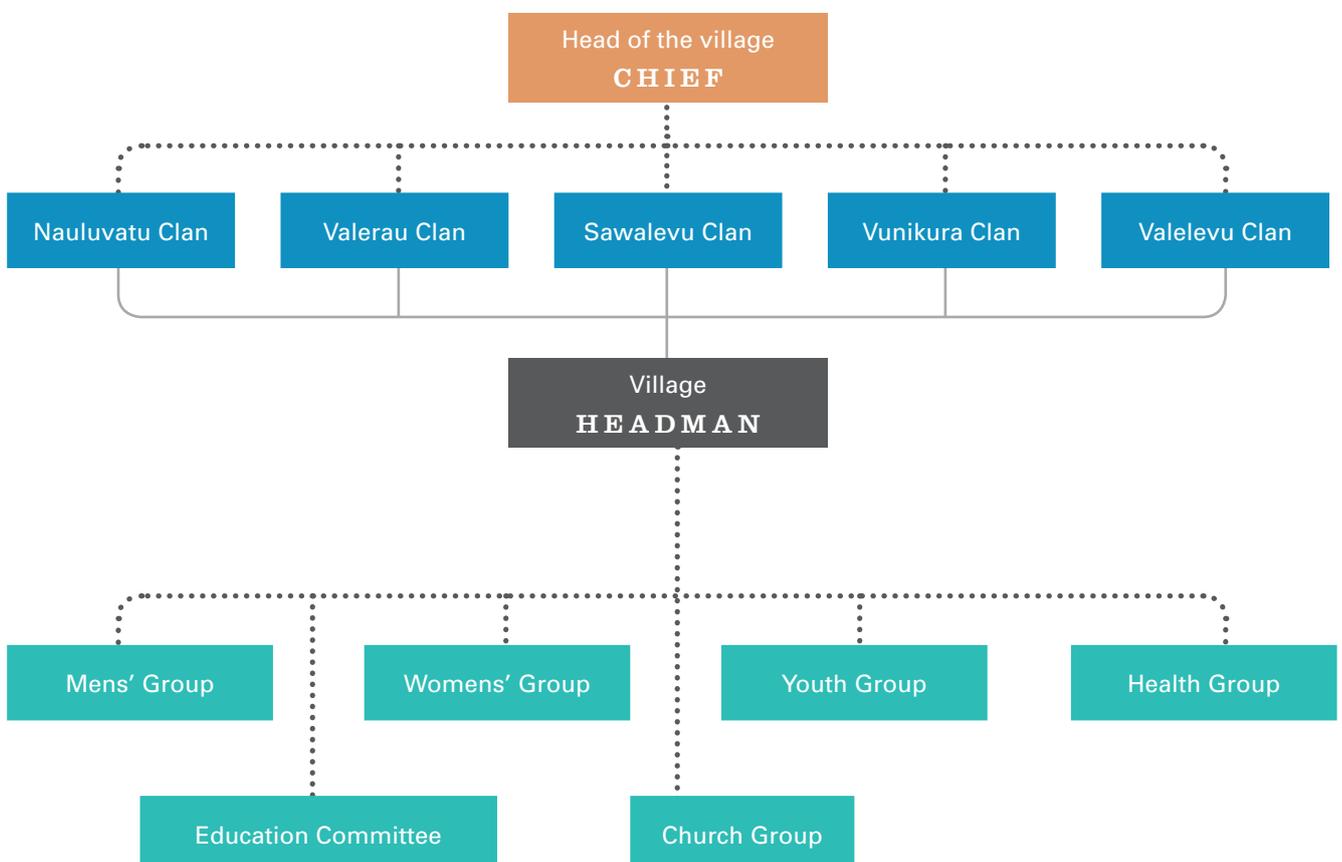

Figure 1. Community structure

Social exclusion of women

In most communities, women are socially excluded from village meetings.

In Village A, the prevalence of male domineering positions within the village influenced the women's ability to express their views openly. This was evident when women were asked what they felt about human rights. Initially, it was difficult to get responses from the women, as they were reluctant to speak in the presence of the male village elders. Later, during focus group discussions (in the absence of the male elders), women responded more freely.

In another community, respondents pointed out that:

> "Most of the time, the female member would not actively participate and most of the decisions made would only be made by the large number of males. Females would only contribute to making refreshments for the meeting."
>
> Male respondent

Women heading committees in the villages were usually of chieftain status. Young women are often members of groups that were inactive and underrepresented in village meetings or village group discussions.

In one of the communities, women married into the village (i.e. women from other villages residing in their husband's village) expressed that they were treated like "outsiders" and were never included in any community-based discussions especially at village meetings.

> "Whenever decisions are made, we are not consulted. We are not even considered to contribute to the running of activities happening within the village. We are not from this village, so our concerns do not matter."
>
> Female respondent

On the other hand, respondents in a community stated that at the household level, decisions made were collaborative and consultative between couples (male and female).

> "The role of women as family counselors is highly regarded. Men acknowledge that most decision making in the family is in consultation with the mother. This is because women carry a lot of responsibility in the family and are always considered important family decision makers."
>
> Male respondent

> "If the women are facing hardships, there will not be any development within the life of the family. Nowadays men are listening to their wives because of the roles and responsibilities they carry."
>
> Male respondent

Recommendations

Key findings 2 show that, generally, women are not part of the main decision making group. In most cases, concerns raised by women are not always presented to the decision making body within the village.

Findings also show that apart from cases where women are somewhat excluded from the decision making process, there are instances where discrimination happens among women within the same community. Such include discrimination on the grounds of age and status, within their own groups. Women belonging to the chieftain clan are given more recognition over women married into the community. In other instances, young women are not often given enough opportunity or recognition within women's groups.

Note that women are sitting at the back in both communities. The elder men take the highest position from the top ahead of the younger males.

Women recognize that there is definitely a need for support in understanding the concepts of 'human rights' and 'democracy'. They acknowledge that a better understanding of the concepts would give them more opportunity to meaningfully participate in addressing their concerns.

"Rural women are the backbone of the economy and society in many countries … but more needs to be done to harness the contribution of rural women to development"[9]

It is important that the action promote women's meaningful participation.

Careful attention should be given to the different groups of women in regards to their status and seniority within the community. In doing so, it must also be ensured that the young women are still part of this process and that all women are provided with equal opportunities to participate in community activities.

Empowering women should be done in a way that is non-threatening to traditional systems in place or for women. Women strongly recommended that the human rights education also include the community leaders. If community elders are included in the education process, there is more likely to be acceptance of and support for women's participation.

"Leaders and community members are to be good role models and set the standards"

Female respondent

The project should also consider incorporating good governance trainings and supporting actions that promote good governance. As part of this, recommendations would include leadership and life skills capacity-building for target communities.

Programs should recognize that levels of participation of women differ at the family and community levels.

KEY FINDING: No 3

Division of labor – men and women

When designing initiatives for women in remote communities, it is necessary to first understand how men and women work in communities.

This section presents further insight into the way division of labor is administered in these communities.

From a very young age, members of the communities are assigned to very gender-specific roles; the work they do is determined by these roles, and how society sees fit.

9   H,E Mr Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser (President of the General Assembly) Speech for International Day of Rural Women on October 16, 2011. Viewed 27 December 2011. <www.globalroomforwomen.com>

Women in remote communities

"Women's work includes cooking, baby-sitting, household chores, washing clothes, fishing with nets, collecting shell-fish and in some localities weeding gardens and gathering food and firewood"[10].

A good number of women respondents' said that their activities are centered in the home.

This research, although modest in scale, presents similar findings to past research focusing on women.

Graph 1: Daily activities of females in remote areas
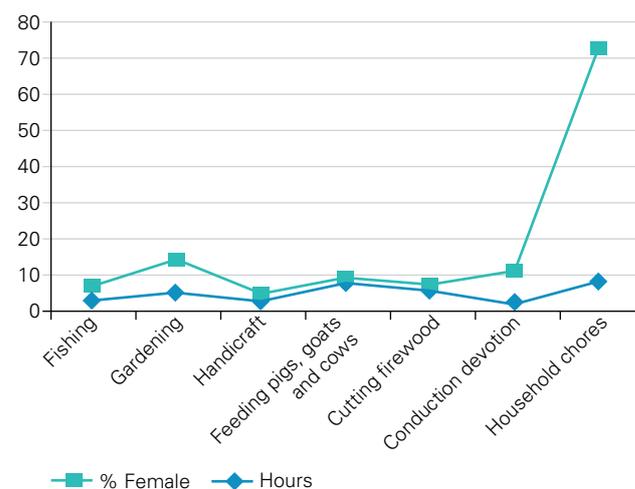
65% of female respondents spend on average a total of eight (8) hours each day on household chores.

Household chores include preparing meals, attending to children (preparing them for school), sweeping and tidying the house as well as washing dishes and clothes. Duties also included cleaning the immediate surroundings.

Men in remote communities

The nature of the work most males were involved in required special skills or qualifications.

Graph 2: Daily activities of males in remote areas
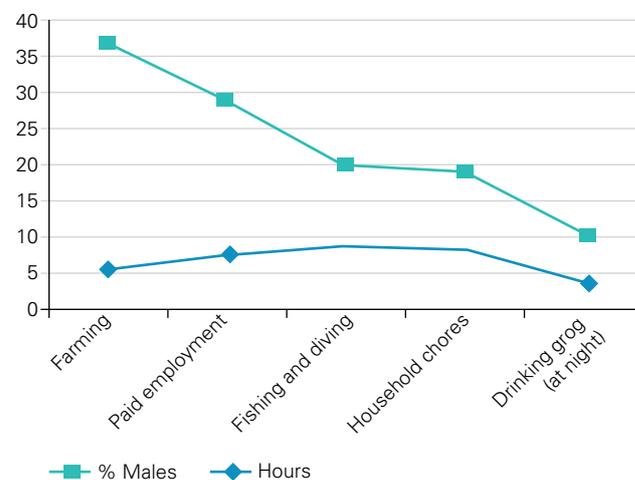
10 Ravavu, loc. cit.

Male respondents from some of the communities receive an income through diving and fishing, usually carried out at night. These men would spend most of the day sleeping and in the early evening would prepare for another night of diving or fishing. Members of one of the communities noted that although this activity kept the menfolk and head of the household away most of the nights, it brought good earnings to support the family.

Close to half (36%) of male respondents spend most of the time during the day in the farms, which are usually quite a distance from their home.

29% of male respondents were paid employees, traveling daily to work.

Findings also show that 6% of male respondents spend an average of 3.5 hours in the evenings (after dinner) drinking kava[11] with other males from the community.

A general comparison of the nature of activities that females and males carry out on a daily basis show that on average women are at home attending to the family while the men's activities take them away from the home.

The findings show that more women in remote communities stay home. It can be assumed that this is due to them either not having attained sufficient formal education that would qualify them for paid employment or that they are restricted from seeking paid employment. Hence, it would be safe to assume that women play only a small part of the development actions and events happening within their own communities.

"Some women are not allowed to work (paid employment), but to only look after kids."

Female respondent

11 Beverage made from *Piper methysticum* extracts.

The nature of the work that both men and women do and the amount of time spent apart, was also highlighted in the RAP. Women felt that there was less time spent with the whole family, especially during weekdays.

Recommendations

When developing community based initiatives, consideration should be given to the responsibilities and activities of both women and men.

Women are a largely untapped resource in Fiji's economy[12] and have an economic potential that remains under-used[13]. Women's activities within the home could potentially be developed into initiatives that open windows of opportunities for them.

A research study by AusAID in 2007 found that with housework included, women on average work 31% more hours per week than men[14]. It is important that consideration is given to the time women spend doing work so that initiatives are not added to women's labor.

It is equally important that these initiatives empower women and considerably build their capacity and status. The initiatives should supplement income generated through current activities and maximize time spent within the home. They should be developed in a way that supports both men and women and equally benefits the family.

A values education program should be designed to create awareness on the important roles women play in the family and community, and the rights that they possess.

12 'Women in business in Fiji' in *Summary of Key Gender and PSD Issues in the Pacific*. Viewed 14 November, 2011. <www.ausaid.gov.au>
13 Al-Nasser, loc. cit.
14 ibid.

Women acknowledge that a better understanding of human rights would give them the opportunity to meaningfully participate in addressing their concerns.

Accessing resources such as water and electricity and accessing essential services such as medical centers and transport services in far remote communities are very limited. This issue poses a great threat and creates vulnerable communities where women and children are especially affected.

Access to health services

Health services were commonly identified as essential services that were important to the respondents. Communities in far remote areas rely on the services provided by the community health workers. However, these community health workers are trained only to provide basic treatment or remedies.

Access to transport services and its high costs

Transportation to remote communities is very costly and quite unreliable. These expenses and inconveniences limit visits to acquiring good medical care and other services.

CASE STUDY

Village C

Challenges faced in remote communities

This case study is based on a remote village in the province of Rewa. The province of Rewa is the smallest of all provinces in Fiji.

The village is far remote and can only be reached by boat. Hiring a boat costs FJ$30 for a one-way trip. To reach the nearest town centre, villagers must first get off at the main jetty, which is located far from the town. From the jetty, it costs an additional FJ$10–15 to reach the town center where medical and other services are provided.

In another community, buses are the only public transportation servicing the area. This service is, however, very irregular. According to community members, buses would come at different times of the morning and would be the only trip made in a day. The bus schedule is worse if there are unfavorable weather conditions.

When approached, villagers had indicated that local authorities seldom visit them. The remoteness of the communities also limits the interaction of communities

with government and non-government agencies. There is usually very little assistance provided to such communities.

However, RAP findings showed that remote communities, which have resources that are an economic potential for the government, are well developed with the implementation of new infrastructures. Such a case would be that of a settlement in the western part of Viti Levu where respondents had benefited from government's assistance for the development of roads. The road development was carried out to ease transportation of sugarcane from the farms to the mills.

"The road has helped my community move about a lot easier now and has helped in the development of the area as a whole."

Male respondent

Supply of electricity

Members of one community raised the issue of not having electricity supplied to their community.

"Electricity is not reaching all households"

Female respondent

Electricity is needed to help women lessen their workloads. An electricity supply will allow them to purchase electrical appliances such as washing machines, electric kettles and electric irons, which will provide women opportunities to spend the time saved on other roles.

Electricity is a resource that will also provide better security at night, as it will supply better and stronger lighting in the dark.

Electricity will also benefit schoolchildren, as it will provide better lighting at night for studying.

Pictured is the road to one of the villages in the Naitasiri Province. This is the only way of access to the village.

Water

A good number of respondents also indicated that accessing safe drinking water was another challenge.

Women in all the communities targeted for this study were responsible for fetching water for their families. A publication titled, *Women and Water Issues*[15], notes that this is a common practice in developing countries, stating that '*[w]omen in developing countries predominately play the role of water collectors*[16]'.

> *"We work very hard to collect water from about 30 minutes away. Washing is easy, but getting water is hard."*
>
> Female respondent

To ensure that there was enough water for the families, women would carry heavy containers full of water back to their homes and make several trips down to the nearest reliable water source. Women feel severe pain in their shoulder joints, upper back and lower arms as well as the neck, upper arm and calf muscles[17]. A study has shown that increased physical activities such as farm work or gathering water was associated with infants of low birth weight, smaller head circumference and lower placental weight[18].

> *"Women who fetch water from distant water sources are exposed to injuries sustained from carrying heavy buckets of water."*
>
> Female respondent

Limited water supply creates hygiene issues

Residents in a community further indicated that due to poor supply of water, the nearby river was also used as a sanitary facility.

> *"At times, our community would fetch water, bathe and also use the river as a toilet. This is because there is poor supply of water to our community."*
>
> Female respondent

Recommendations

Key findings 4 express how women and children are the most vulnerable groups in remote communities when access and supply of resources and essential services are limited. The findings reflect how accessing water can be a

15 'Women's Issues', *Water Aid*, 2009, viewed 12 August, 2011. <www.wateraid.org)
16 ibid.
17 ibid.
18 Rao, S., Kanade, A., Margetts, B. M., Yajnik, C. S., Lubree, H., Regee, S., Desai, B., Jackson, A. & Fall, C. H. D. *Maternal activity in relation to birth size in rural India: The Pune Maternal Nutrition Study.* Br. J. Nutr., in press in <www.uniteforsight. org> viewed 5 December, 2011

The pond pictured below is the water source for one of the communities in Tailevu. It is approximately 30-meters downhill from the nearest house.
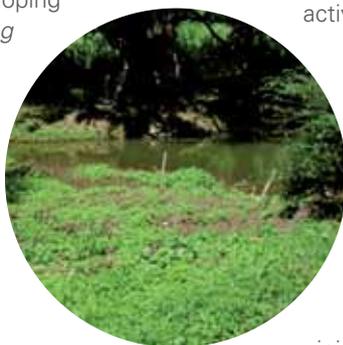
burden on women and how poor lighting can be a security issue at night for women in remote communities.

Consideration should be given to initiatives supporting improvements to water supply and rural electrification to benefit women, children and the whole community. Careful planning is important when designing such initiatives and it is recommended that women be actively involved in it.

Such initiatives (improvements to rural water supply and electrification) should also give women the opportunity to set up income generating activities around them. This would not only ease women's labor but also support their ability to access and exercise their social and economic rights.

To achieve this, it is important that women are actively engaged in the development of the initiative.

KEY FINDING: No 5

Security of women in remote areas

Both men and women respondents, were concerned about the safety of women in these remote areas.

Husband's absence

Houses in a settlement are distant from each other. Women from the settlement expressed how they feared for their safety, especially when their husbands and other males of their households were out working in the cane fields for most of the day. When the menfolk leave to cut cane, security lessens, as only the women, children and the elderly remain.

Rape cases

In the past women would also work in the cane fields but increased cases of women being raped or sexually assaulted in these fields have drawn women away.

> *"Women also used to help in harvesting sugar cane, until cases of sexual harassment and women being raped became an issue in the community. Women have now stopped working in the cane fields as a result."*
>
> Female respondent

These sexual related offenses were not often reported because the victims or their families lacked confidence to do so and feared being ridiculed by the community.

Respondents also expressed that in some instances, cases were not reported due to lack of evidence and lack of knowledge on the criminal procedures. This is usually because there is less contact with the local authorities.

Rowdy youths

These communities are remote. The isolation also allows for "*more illegal activities, alcohol abuse, and violence to take place*"[19].

One community reported that:

> "*The bus shelter is often used by youth as a drinking spot at night. The advisory councilor raised this issue in saying that these young men pose a threat to the community's safety.*"

Such activities are illegal as provisioned in Section 376(1)(b) of the *Crimes Decree* 2009 of Fiji which states that it is an offence when a person commits an act that causes any danger or annoyance to the public's common rights[20].

Additionally, the *Fiji Liquor Act* of Fiji states in Section 87 that the minister may prohibit drinking in public places outside the boundaries of a city or town if he is satisfied that such conduct is a public annoyance[21].

In the same community, the advisory councilor expressed the need to support the police and provincial office to monitor these illegal activities happening in their community.

These incidents threaten women psychologically, worrying that the mens' violent behavior would threaten their own and the family's security.

Travelling

Women have also mentioned that the limited access of resources and essential services pose a security issue. Travelling far and alone in these remote communities is not safe. In some cases, women take their children with them. Sometimes, children would be left on their own or with an elderly member of the family. In remote communities, an activity as such is a potential risk to the security and wellbeing of both women and children.

Dealing with social issues that affect women

(Traditional system and civil court)

> "*In the past, cases of domestic violence would be resolved in the traditional way. A presentation and formal traditional apology would be given to the victim (usually the woman) and family of the victim. When this was done, everyone would then accept it and continue as normal. Now, with the introduction of human rights, such cases are resolved in the courts. This is changing the way we used to do things.*"
> Male elder

Domestic violence and abuse were also issues raised by women of two communities involved in the RAP. The advisory councilor[22] of one community said:

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19 Comment by a male elder in one of the settlements.
20 Crimes Decree 2009 (Fiji Islands) viewed 30 November, 2011. <www.paclii.org>
21 Liquor Act 2006 (Fiji Islands) viewed 10 November, 2011. <www.paclii.org>
22 Person who oversees the development taking place in established and informal settlements

> "*There are also reported cases of family conflicts within the community, most of which are between mothers and their daughter(s) in-law. In most circumstances I would intervene, if the cases were very serious.*"

> "*Cases which aren't able to be resolved within the community are referred to the police.*"

An elder in one community, spoke strongly against human rights. He blamed human rights for changing the way issues were solved in the community.

> "*Human rights do not go together with the village laws.*"
> Male respondent

Recommendations

Key Findings 5 show risks that women (and children) living in isolated communities are faced with. The findings also reveal that in reporting cases of abuse, there is no clear understanding on the procedures to follow and whom to refer cases to. These communities rely on governance systems to deal with cases of abuse.

In communities where traditional means of conflict resolution are prevalent, careful consideration should be given to the way in which human rights education is delivered. The human rights education must not threaten the existence of traditional systems. It should be presented in a way that is culturally appropriate.

It is important that the whole community is involved in understanding what 'human rights' mean and value the roles and responsibilities of each member of the community. Additionally, community members should be aware of their roles and responsibilities as rights holders. They should also be able to identify who the duty-bearers are and understand their responsibilities.

Restricted access to justice means that women's grievances are less likely to be heard or addressed[23]. It is therefore important that the human rights education provides the community and individuals with a clear understanding of how to access services provided.

KEY FINDING: No 6

....

Aspirations

An assessment of women's' responses showed that generally women in remote areas aspire to improve the status and wellbeing of their families (especially children).

> "*I want my children to become well educated.*"

> "*Need a market to sell produce, to support my family.*"

A number of women also commented that they would like to see more women being part of village committees.

> "*Strengthened leadership in my community.*"

> "*I would like my community to be a safe place – no crimes.*"

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23 Al-Nasser, loc. cit.

Summary of recommendations

1. **The difference in perceptions of human rights, strongly suggests that human rights education is essential in enabling better understanding of and demand for human rights within the communities.**

   The approach to human rights education should be meaningful to men, women, boys and girls within each target community, bearing in mind the sensitiveness of the subject within remote communities. We recommend that the approach to human rights education be centered on the principles that found human rights ie. dignity and freedom. From this perspective, activities could focus on exploring strengths and skills that exist within target communities, allowing community members to recognize that the community is a culmination of valuable skills and resources.

   The findings show the need for more appreciation of the different roles and responsibilities that exist within target communities, recognizing as well that women contribute enormous amounts of time and energy toward the development of the community. The RAP findings reflect the rigidity of traditional structures and show clearly the position of women, in the most remote communities in Fiji. This approach is a subtle (not threatening the traditional structures that exist), yet very effective way of facilitating a human rights program and supporting especially the participation of women in these remote communities, ensuring more acceptance than resistance to the subject (human rights).

   However, this should be contextualized and should draw on local and real situations. Human rights education tools should be designed to encourage open and safe space for discussions. The education and capacity-building programs should be mindful of cultural and gender sensitiveness.

   It is important that the whole community is involved in understanding what human rights mean. It is important that through human rights education, community members become better aware of their roles and responsibilities as rights-holders and are able to identify who the duty-bearers are.

   The human rights education should provide and encourage the rights-holders a better understanding of ways to access support of duty-bearers.

   The media should be embraced as a tool for human rights education.

2. **The action should also consider incorporating good governance trainings and supporting actions that promote good governance. In light of this, recommendations would include leadership and life skills capacity-building for target communities**.

   To ensure that the project maintains its objectives, we recommend that good governance trainings and actions promoting good governance be implemented.

   Findings from the RAP strongly recommended that all members of the community be encouraged to participate in the action. Although women are the primary concern of this action, it is important to keep in mind that they are in the lower position in the status hierarchy of communities. The men play the dominant role in decision-making for the family and community. The findings show that there is support from the men and other members of the communities for the enhancement of women's rights in society. Active participation by men, women and young people will keep them informed, organized and the actions transparent.

Leadership workshops should also be implemented as part of the education programme so that community members understand that practicing their rights comes with the responsibility of respecting other people's rights. Life capacity skills workshops is also recommended to teach and allow community members to be independent.

Actions must encourage members to recognize the skills, strengths and important roles women play in their communities and family. Given the traditional hierarchy structure in traditional communities, actions must be subtly implemented for community members to recognize, have a clear understanding of and value the roles and responsibilities they play.

Good governance values and trainings can be based on past successful project modules carried out by Live & Learn.

3. When developing community-based initiatives, consideration should be given to the responsibilities and activities of both women and men.

   Members in all communities have their own daily routine. Findings from the RAP showed that in most communities, men might be away during the day working or farming, and/or diving at night to earn an income for the family. Since the support from the men and village elders are very important in the successful implementation of this action, it is essential to research and construct a time plan before heading out into communities. This which ensures that men and village elders as well as other members of the communities will be present.

   The findings indicate that to be able to empower women, the men have to recognize and value the important roles women play. The men, as well as other community members, should understand that women's roles and contributions benefit the whole family and community.

Activities conducted in this action must allow equal participation to enable equal opportunities for all participants. This will allow women to begin practicing their rights with dignity and freedom. It must be reiterated through all workshops that rights-holders also have responsibilities to perform to ensure that there is no overstepping of boundaries.

4. The action should critically focus on encouraging and raising the status of 'powerless' women in rural communities.

   Actions must be focused on empowering women.

   A values education program should be designed to raise awareness of the important roles women play in their communities. Community members should understand that women contribute greatly to the wellbeing of their families and community, yet often the community fails to place much recognition, value and consideration to these contributions. Educating women and community members will widen their knowledge and allow for a better understanding of issues that concern them. A deeper understanding of their rights and the issues that concern them will enable women to meaningfully participate in their communities.

   The RAP findings show that women either are restricted within their communities because they have not attained sufficient education to move out and find work or are simply restricted to do so. For women's empowerment, one recommendation is for the action to implement activities and workshops that will encourage and teach women to have income generating supplements. Keeping in mind that women are usually restricted to their own communities, such revenue generating initiatives should be generated through current activities conducted at home. The initiatives must benefit the family to allow its continuation. As women have many responsibilities, such initiatives must not add on or interfere with women's current labor.

The RAP findings show that communities in the remote areas lack access to some of their social and economic rights such as proper clean water supply, electricity, transportation and medical services. The impacts of these issues affect women and children the most. Women are the ones burdened with ensuring that resources such as water supply are maintained.

Findings from the RAP show that women have to travel far to get food, collect water or reach medical services for their families. At times, transportation service is very bad and unreliable. Sometimes issues such as these are brought up but are considered by male elders or village committees not to be pressing issues.

The RAP findings indicate that activities in the action need to address the importance of the social and economic rights. Community members need to understand that those rights are very important, as they will enable better sanitation and healthy living for the communities. The activities should also focus on the vital role women play in accessing those rights or resources. Recognizing and realizing the burden women face in accessing those resources will enable more support and respect towards women. Once community members, particularly males, understand the important roles women play in their communities, women will be given space and freedom to be consulted and to participate actively in community activities and decisions. There will be more acceptance once social and economic rights are seen as a common need that will benefit all. With a greater understanding of these issues within the communities, women will be able to exercise their human rights and be involved in more social participation within the communities. This approach avoids the confrontational and controversial views of human rights and is the appropriate non-threatening and sensitive approach to addressing human rights for women.

5. **The action should promote the protection of women and the safeguarding of their interests.**

   RAP findings indicate that women in remote areas fear mostly for their security. Cases of insecurity arise in instances of the absence of their husbands, rape cases and domestic violence within their own families. Women's safety is not an issue to take lightly.

   Activities in the Action should promote the protection of women. To ensure that women continue playing an active role in society, community members must reinforce security measures and be more responsible in protecting the women of their communities. Workshops should be conducted to educate community members particularly women on their status as rights-bearers. The workshop should include identifying who the duty-bearers are, their roles and responsibilities and how to access their services.

6. **The Action should work together with the media, particularly the radio.**

   Findings from the RAP show that radio is the common form of media used in the remote areas. Most of the respondents in the RAP workshops stated that they had heard of human rights from the news and programs aired on the radio.

   It is recommended that the action be carried out in collaboration with radio stations to ensure that remote communities are reached. It is ideal to cooperate with radio stations that travel out to communities and promote women's empowerment by using success stories of women from grassroots level.

   Live & Learn can work together with such radio stations to advocate and promote interests of the action by using stories from the past programs.

Conclusion

Fiji has patriarchal societies in which women assume a subordinate role within the society. The traditional system's main characteristic is that the male (husbands and male elders) placed at the highest level of society's hierarchical status, is dominant and makes final decisions.

The RAP findings showed that human rights and democracy is commonly perceived by many to be limited to *Rights of Equal Treatment* (UNDHR Article 1) *and Rights to Freedom of Speech*, *Expression and Opinion* (Article 19). The concepts are seen by elders and male members of society to be very controversial, and threats that challenge the traditional systems.

Societies should understand that human rights is a broad concept which includes other principles such as the *Right to Security* (Article 3), the *Right to Freedom of Movement* (Article 13), the *Right to Access to Public Services* (Article 12) and the *Right to Adequate Standard of Living* (Article 25).

To address, encourage and promote remote women's human rights, the RAP findings show that actions taken need to be subtle, non-threatening, sensitive to the traditional system and most importantly have the support of the elders, the males and other members of society.

In addressing the issues from ground-level by focusing on the improving social and economic rights in society, community members will be able to recognize and value the vital role women play in fulfilling such rights. The recognition of such will enhance more respect towards women, allowing them to better exercise their human rights and actively participate in their communities. Such actions will also make the community understand the concepts of 'democracy' and 'human rights' better and encourage community members, particularly women, to move out of their comfort zones and mobilize themselves more.

Limitations of the research

Data for this report was collected through the RAP process.

The first limitation was communicating with the remote communities intended for the RAP. The remoteness of the communities made communication via telephone very difficult before and after the RAP. Reaching these isolated communities involved hours of travel and for some included changing transport from motor vehicle to boat.

The RAP showed that the topic of human rights was a very sensitive issue. This created another limitation. As a result, the research team took a more subtle and cautious approach in posing questions, so as to avoid being misunderstood or causing tension.

The level of hierarchy in the communities lead to another limitation. Respondents (mostly women) were at times reluctant to speak in the presence of men. Even when alone, younger women could not openly express their views in the presence of the women elders.

Another limitation to the research was with regard to respondents expressing views in written form. Interpreting the vernacular views of the respondents to their closest English translation, may have devalued the strong emotional expression in the respondent's statements. The quoted statements of the respondents were then translated in a context that closely relates to the initial emotional expression.

Resources

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Annex: RAP tools and methodology

Community structures

Purpose:

At the end of the activity participants will be able to:

- Identify practices perceptions on women participating in community

- Assess capacity and strength of women's in community.

Time:

60 minutes

What to do:

1. Divide participants into groups, men, women, youth

2. Give them newsprint and markers, ask them to choose a writer and a presenter

3. Ask each group to draw structures in their groups and answer to the provided questions

   Men's group – Village Council Structure

   Women's group – Church/Religious Structure
   Youth Group – Youth Structure

Questions for each group:

- What are roles of each group's in each structures?

- What are the key roles of women in these structures?

- How would women like to be supported in building their own confidence to speak out on issues of human rights within these structures?

- What type of education resources, tools and approaches would be helpful for women in enhancing human rights issues?

- How do women perceive the role of education and learning in addressing human rights abuse in communities?

- Who should be involved in such education?

- How is the capacity and strength of women's groups in your community?

- What support should be provided for peer educators?

Documentation process:

- Group findings and presentations on each structures

- Roles and responsibilities of each group

- Roles of women in these current structures

- Answers or response to listed questions

- Observation notes and discussions

Aspiration tree

Purpose:

To provide space for community members to express their vision for their community in 3 to 5 years time.

Time:

50 minutes

Materials:

- cut out leaves
- fruits and roots
- an outline of a tree
- glue

What to do:

1. Ask participants to look back all the activities taken during the day and identify ways in which they can move forward.

2. Give out all the materials to all the groups. (three leaves, three fruits and three or four roots).

3. Ask the participants that in this activity, they have to work on issue raised from the first few activities and discuss a few things that they would like to in bring about changes in the 3–5 years time. These are to be written on the leaves.

4. After they have written on the leaves, they are to read it out and paste them on the drawn tree.

5. Then they have to discuss the benefits of those dreams in their community and individuals. These are to be written on the fruits. They are to be pasted on the drawn tree too.

6. The group will then discuss ways or practical actions in which their dreams will be achieved. These are to be written on the roots and pasted up too. This needs a good explanation. Participants need to note down practical ways, not just working together (how to work together need to be specific). The following questions could provide some guide for practical actions that could bring about changes in future.

Questions:

What activities or actions would women like to be supported in building their own confidence to speak out issues of human rights?

What type of education resources, tools and approaches would be helpful for women in enhancing human rights?

How do women perceive the role of education and learning in addressing human rights abuse? Who should be involved in such education?

Documentation process:

- Collect all groups findings and response
- Response and answers to all questions
- Individual notes observations etc.

Individual questionnaire:

Name: ....

Age: .... Gender: ....

Village: .... Role in community: ....

Contact: ....

Have you heard the words **democracy** and **human rights**?　　Yes ☐　No ☐

If Yes, where and by whom? ....

....

Democracy

Questions	Answers
1. What is your understanding or meaning of the word democracy?	
2. What are some issues related to democracy in your community?	
3. How do these issues can be improved?	
4. What are some of past practices to address such issues?	
5. What role do women play with these issues?	
6. Do women need support dealing with these issues? How it can be strengthened?	
7. How can we measure changes on these issues?	

Human rights

Questions	Answers
1. What is your understanding or meaning of the word human rights?	
2. What are some issues related to human rights in your community?	
3. How do these issues can be improved?	
4. What are some of past practices to address such issues?	
5. What role do women play with these issues?	
6. Do women need support dealing with these issues? How it can be strengthened?	
7. How can we measure changes in these issues?	

1. If women involved in addressing of human rights and Democratic issues what will be the advantages, disadvantages and opportunities?

2. How would you like to support women in building their own confidence to speak out these issues?

3. What type of education resources, tools and approaches would be helpful for women in enhancing human rights and democracy?

4. How do women perceive the role of education and learning in addressing human rights abuse? Who should be involved in such education?

5. If we have peer educators on human rights and democracy will it be effective?

6. What support should be provided for peer educators?

7. What are your response in the capacity and strength of women's groups in the community?

Role of men, women, boys and girls

Tools:

Diagrams and Visuals

Objective:

To collect perceptions of men, women and youth about roles that women can play in strengthening democracy and human rights.

To determine role of men, women and youth in community and how this can be used in strengthening democracy and human rights.

Materials:

- newsprints
- colored paper
- pens
- cello tape
- 24 hour clock sheets per participant

Instructions:

1. Draw separate outlines of a man/woman/male youth/female youth on newsprints and paste these on four different sides of the wall.

2. Inform participants that in this session they will be focusing on the roles that they play in the community… Distribute the 24 hour clock sheets per participant and ask them to study the paper and fill in the time slots the different activities they facilitate in a normal day. They must clearly explain the different activities for example if they collect water at 9am: where do they go to collect the water. If they attend to food gardens – where are the gardens located? These information must be identified in the time slots

3. As soon as they complete the forms the co facilitator must walk around and collect them.

4. Distribute the colored paper – different colors for the four different groups. Instruct your participants to write down features that make them different from the other three groups in the room – what roles and responsibility distinguishes the men from the women or the youths? They should walk up to the drawings on the wall and paste their response to the correct picture.

5. Get your participants to stand around their picture and look at the different responses posted – do they agree or should more be added? Add them – and ask them to sort the features – Which items identified are challenging for them? Which items do they have strengths in? Ask them to move all the challenges to the lower half of the picture and the strengths to the upper half of the picture…Now get them to observe the picture again – do they all agree to this new change?… If they feel that some stands in between than they must show this. Get them to swap with other groups and while doing so they should try and make changes to areas they feel is relevant … when you see that they have moved around the four pictures get everyone to focus on the women and what roles can women, men, boys and girls play in strengthening democracy and human rights in their community

Recording method:

- Document individual reflections on activity.
- Document observations about reactions and body language during group presentations
- Collect newsprints

Expected outcomes:

- Individual perceptions and aspirations of their role
- Group perceptions role women can play in strengthening democracy and human rights in community
- Observations of body language and reactions during

SWOT analysis on women advocating for democracy and human rights Issues

Purpose:

Identify strengths, opportunities, threats or challenges of involving women in advocating for democracy and human rights activities in communities?

Time:

45 minutes

What to do:

1. Divide participants into groups men, women and youth

2. Give them markers and prepared newsprint on SWOT

3. Ask the groups to discuss and list down their own analysis – if women advocate or involved in speaking about democracy and human rights issues – what will the strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats

4. Ask them to consider all key aspects of life – social/cultural, environmental, economic aspects

5. Give them enough time and ask them to present to the whole group when completed

Questions:

- What are some of the common findings in all the four groups?

- Are there more strength and opportunities or more weakness and threats?

- If we minimize weakness and threats will it is effective for women to advocate to democracy and human rights issues?

- What will be best way for women to advocate human rights and democratic issues in communities

- How would women like to be supported in building their own confidence to speak out on issues of human rights within these structures?

- What type of education resources, tools and approaches would be helpful for women in enhancing human rights issues?

Documentation Process:

- Collect all groups findings and notes

- Collect and document answers to extra questions from each group

- Observations notes on responses and body languages of groups and individual

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