



INCREASING WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

In 2018, the Pacific remains the region of the world with the lowest percentage of women MPs. The project will build on its work with Parliaments to encourage women to run for election, increase the capacity of potential women candidates and provide information to potential women candidates on the role and work of Parliament.

“Practice parliaments for women” will be organized, allowing potential women candidates to practice public debate and parliamentary work, as well as contribute to the public’s sensitization of women’s political leadership.

PARTNERSHIPS

During project implementation, UNDP will closely collaborate with partners and the community of practitioners working on parliamentary development in the Pacific, including the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the Pacific Parliamentary Partnerships (PPP) programme and the parliamentary twinning arrangements. A specific project focus will be development of South-South and triangular cooperation, in order to contribute to the development of regional parliamentary capacities in Pacific countries.



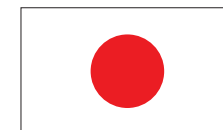
Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.



UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

- Level 8, Kadavu House, 414 Victoria Parade
- Private Mail Bag, Suva, Fiji
- 679 331 2500
- 679 330 1718
- registry.fj@undp.org
- www.pacific.undp.org
- UNDP in the Pacific and PNG
- @UNDP_Pacific
- UNDP in Asia and the Pacific

STRENGTHENING LEGISLATURES' CAPACITY IN PACIFIC ISLAND COUNTRIES PROJECT



From
the People of Japan



Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

STRENGTHENING LEGISLATURES' CAPACITY IN PACIFIC ISLAND COUNTRIES

The project “**Strengthening Legislatures' Capacity in Pacific Island Countries**” (SLIP) is a three-year project (2018 – 2020) that focuses on strengthening the parliaments of six Pacific Island Countries to become more effective, efficient, inclusive and transparent. The project contributes to strengthening the capacity of legislatures to undertake their legislative, oversight and representation mandates, with a special focus on engaging with key development issues. It aims to build capacities of Members of Parliament and the professional skills of parliamentary staff, as well as parliaments and the budget process.

The project is implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Pacific Office in Fiji, through funding of JPY 565 million [USD\$5.2million] provided by the Government of Japan.

While the level of development of each legislature, and the general cultural, political and historical context may differ, a number of common key challenges can be seen across all six countries. There is room for Parliaments to operate more effectively in order to ensure that governance systems are effective, transparent and participatory, and to ensure that the voice of citizens is heard during the legislative process and when holding governments to account.





INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING APPROACH

In order to sustainably strengthen parliaments as institutions, the project will work through parliamentary committees as a forum where legislation is often discussed, oversight of government action takes place, and where stakeholders and citizens can interact with the legislature.

Parliamentary committees will be supported through targeted assistance to the committee secretariats and parliament research and library services.

Furthermore, committee leadership and support staff will benefit from tailored training to become more knowledgeable of the specific role, processes and working methods of parliamentary committees.



IMPROVING FINANCIAL OVERSIGHT BY THE LEGISLATURE

With the focus on providing support to Parliaments, the project will work through their Public Accounts Committees or equivalents, to improve the role of Parliament in the overall Public Financial Management cycle through increased oversight of public expenditure, as well as through improved coordination and liaison with Supreme Audit Institutions (SAIs).

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- Parliaments have enhanced capabilities to undertake their legislative, oversight and representative mandates, through the development of efficient processes and working methods ensuring that the SDGs and development issues, including gender, are mainstreamed across the Parliaments' work;
- Members of Parliament (MPs) and staff benefit from increased capacities, knowledge and skills and improved professional skills in fulfilling their role; they are exposed to good parliamentary practices, especially through south-south and triangular cooperation;
- Parliamentary financial oversight is improved, and contributes to strengthened participatory and transparent Public Financial Management (PFM);
- Increased number of potential women candidates are aware of the work of Parliament and increased number of citizens recognize women as potential future members of parliament.



MAINSTREAMING DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

Mainstreaming development issues in the work of parliaments is essential to effectively address poverty reduction, inequality and exclusion. Some Pacific countries, such as Fiji and Samoa, have already successfully managed to ensure that Parliament engages with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and key development issues.

The project will be working towards ensuring that the SDGs and key development issues are mainstreamed across the work of the six parliaments. This will include working with committees on issues including gender mainstreaming, reducing inequality, and inclusive and equitable quality education, while at the same time promoting inclusive economic growth and action to combat climate change and its impacts.

As a result of the support, it is expected that parliamentary work, including new legislation will better reflect the needs of communities and global development considerations.

ENGAGING IN THE BUDGET PROCESS

In all six parliaments, the project will work to strengthen the MPs' and staff's understanding of parliament's role during the budget process.

The project will provide training and technical assistance to parliaments in order to ensure that MPs are provided with appropriate information before they debate and vote on the annual budget.

Furthermore, support will be provided to Parliaments to review their internal procedures in order to investigate options to make the budget process more transparent and participatory, and allow for public input from Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), the private sector and citizens.



IMPROVING HUMAN RESOURCE AND ADDRESSING CAPACITY CHALLENGES

Human Resource capacity is a major challenge in small legislatures. The specific role and skillset required of parliament staff, in comparison to Government civil servants, often means that parliament staff do not receive adequate and tailored training and professional development to allow them to effectively provide support to the work of MPs.

The project will work with each Parliament to develop a secretariat professional development programme with the aim of increasing key skills through training, attendance at relevant conferences, and exposure to other parliamentary practices in the Pacific region and beyond, in order to build their capacity to provide high level support to Members.

WHERE WE WORK

The project will be implemented in Fiji, the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), the Republic of Marshall Islands (RMI), Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.