

INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES IN **COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES**

Every person deserves
the chance to reach his
or her full potential



INCEPTION REPORT

Rohit Kumar Sharma (Mr.)

Welfare Officer I

Ministry of Social Welfare, Women & Poverty Alleviation

Republic of Fiji

- **Maternal mortality rate**-this indicates the number/ percentage of females who die during child birth or after giving birth. The rate for Fiji stands at 39.7%. In the past one of the major causes was lack of proper medical facilities. However, Fiji has come a long way now since those days. Another cause is that in some cases, the mothers who especially reside in the interiors are brought late to the health care services.
- **Literacy rate**-indicates the number or percentage of people in Fiji who have the ability to read and write. The figures are illustrated in the table below:

Literacy Rate	Percentage (%)
iTaukei	
Person/total	96.5
Male	96.9
Female	96.1
Indian	
Person/total	88.7
Male	91.6
Female	85.8

- **Population**-is the number of people who live in a particular place. Fiji's population is largely concentrated in the urban and peri-urban centers. Fiji's population consists of Chinese, European, iTaukei, Indians, Part European, Rotuman, Other Pacific Islanders and Others. The **Population Growth Rate of Fiji** is 1.4% birth rate is 22.55 births/1,000 populations and death rate is 5.65 deaths/1,000 populations. The fertility rate is 2.73 children born/woman. The Fijian is people of mixed Polynesian and Melanesian ancestry. The Indo-Fijians are descendants of the contracted labors imported to Fiji. But the Indo-Fijian people are facing an exclusionary policy.

TOTAL	Age10								
	Total	0 - 9 years	10-19 yrs.	20- 29yrs	30-39 yrs.	40- 49yrs	50-59 yrs.	60-69 yrs.	70+
Total	837271	160734	161899	153849	62900	106600	71164	40919	22006
Ba Province	231760	40646	43803	44376	34158	31083	20915	11208	5571
Bua Province	14176	3402	2524	2090	1974	1747	1172	794	473
Cakaudrove Province	49344	11836	9656	7344	6773	5925	3857	2480	1473
Kadavu Province	10167	2456	1945	1559	1241	1177	813	559	417
Lau Province	10683	2518	2003	1461	1283	1382	837	647	552
Lomaiviti Province	16253	3899	3492	2210	2098	1929	1293	840	492
Macuata Province	72441	13188	15405	11056	10521	10151	6430	3686	1977
Nadroga/Navosa Province	58387	11137	10566	10647	8561	7751	5022	3070	1633
Naitasiri Province	160760	30340	31239	33655	22968	19243	13084	6913	3318
Namosi Province	6898	1673	1353	1130	1036	756	500	312	138
Ra Province	29464	34287	5797	4619	4105	3657	2429	1687	953
Rewa Province	100995	17852	18434	21296	14763	12476	8596	4808	2770
Serua Province	18249	3702	3614	3268	2559	2223	1474	934	475
Tailevu Province	55692	11469	11615	8958	7837	6834	4542	2804	1633

Rotuma	2002	399	453	180	223	266	200	150	131
--------	------	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

Income Level- indicates the amount of money people earn in Fiji through their employment; usually the monthly or annual income is taken into consideration for the statistics.

Household Income per Adult Equivalent (\$)	
Areas	\$
Rural (Total)	2895
Central	3085
Eastern	3275
Northern	2631
Western	3876
Urban (Total)	5879
Central	6543
Eastern	3749
Northern	4385
Western	5246

Education System-the education system in Fiji consists of the schools, the school's management, students and teachers as well. As part of the school curriculum, vernacular languages are also included (Hindi, Fijian and Urdu).

Schools	Figures
Primary schools	721
Enrolment	
Male	67204
Female	62240
Secondary Schools	172
Enrolment	
Male	33726
Female	36525
Teacher Training Schools	4
Enrolment	
Male	274
Female	359
Technical/Vocational Schools	70
Enrolment	
Male	1921
Female	716
Special Schools Enrolment	17

Health System-the medical facilities in Fiji have been upgraded in the recent years. Now there is a dialysis machine in Nadi while Colonial War Memorial Hospital also has a dialysis unit set up.

Services	Figures
----------	---------

Medical Personnel and Facilities	
Hospitals [No]	26
Hospital Beds [no]	1749
Health Centers [no]	78
Health Personnel	
Medical Practitioners [no]	432
Dentists [no]	201
Nurses [no]	2048

Major Industry- these are industries that continues to make a significant contribution to the economy. The industries with the number of people employed by them are tabulated below.

Industry	Number
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	317
Mining and Quarrying	334
Manufacturing	2891
Electricity and Water	561
Construction	640
Wholesale and Retail Trades	4833
Transport and Communication	5707
Financial and Business Services	5917
Community, Social and Pension Services	30343

Employment rate- Employment Rate in Fiji is 50.2 %.

2. INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

i. Laws concerned with persons with **Intellectual Disabilities**.

LEGISLATION

- a) The inclusion of the Bill of Rights under the 1997 Constitution of the Republic of the Fiji Island. [Chapter 4, section 38] [Currently under Review. Draft Constitution has been drafted.
- b) Affirmative Action for the Disabled under the Social Justice Act 2001. [currently under review]
- c) PSC Policy on Equal Employment Opportunity 2000.
- d) Public Health (National Building Code) pg. ND 18 [access for persons with disabilities].
- e) FNCDP Act of 1994 – [in the process for review]
- f) Cabinet approved the ratification of ILO Convention 159: Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment [Disabled Persons] .
- g) Employment Relations Promulgation – An employer who employs 50 or more workers may employ physically disabled workers on a ratio of at least 2% of the total number of workers employed by the employer.
- h) Section 17 of the Fiji Human Rights Commission Act 1999, disability is a prohibited ground for discrimination particularly in the fields of employment, applying for work, providing approval for licenses or trade, calling or profession, the provision of housing, land or other accommodation and access to and participation in education.

- i) Formulation of the National Disability Policy endorsed on 4th November 2008
- j) Fiji signed the United Nation Convention on rights of persons with disabilities on the 2nd June 2010.

Constitutional provisions- The 1997 Constitution of the Republic of the Fiji Islands (Fiji 1988, chap. 4, sect. 38, subsect. 2); (Fiji 1988, chap. 4, sect. 38, subsect. 4); (Fiji 1988, chap. 4, sect. 38, subsect. 5). **The 1997 constitution is not in use currently. However, the draft constitution 2013 section 39 has the following:**

Rights of persons with disabilities

39.—(1) A person with any disability has the right—

- (a) to reasonable access to all places, public transport and information;
- (b) to use sign language, Braille or other appropriate means of communication; and
- (c) to reasonable access to necessary materials, substances and devices relating to the person's disability.

(2) A person with any disability has the right to reasonable adaptation of buildings, infrastructure, vehicles, working arrangements, rules, practices or procedures, to enable their full participation in society and the effective realization of their rights.

Limitation of rights under states of emergency

ii. Financial Assistance for persons with Intellectual Disabilities

- Poverty Benefit Scheme- financial assistance for people with disabilities. It is a replacement of the Family Assistance Scheme. This program was initiated after the recent World Bank Survey that was done on Household Income and Expenditure. The Department of Social Welfare is responsible for this program. The Applicants only need a copy of their birth certificate and passport photo to lodge their application.
- Annual budget from government to NGO's and DPO's through the NGO grant.
- Ministry of Education allocation of education grant to 17 special schools.
- Free pass for people with disabilities-this is a program under the banner of Department of Social Welfare whereby the people with disabilities have a red card and this enables them to travel free of charge in public transports.
- Food vouchers- is part of the Poverty Benefit Scheme program. It supplements the cash allowance that is given to the people. \$30 is given a month.

iii. Services Including CBR available for persons with Intellectual Disabilities.

Community based rehabilitation program and the community rehabilitation assistance together with the zone nurses in conjunction with the Ministry Of Health do outreach programs. They create awareness about disabilities and how to take care of such people in or societies. If upon their home assessment they discover that a family housing people with Intellectual Disabilities needs financial assistance then they make referrals to the Department of Social Welfare so that the family can be assisted. In very needy cases, they also approach NGO's who can provide immediate relief to the family.

IV. D. Number of services provided including education, welfare, employment promotion and so on and those beneficiaries in each district (province).

- a) Special schools in Fiji have intellectual handicap schools in Suva, western and northern division. Each district also has access to Department of Social Welfare

where such people or their families can go to seek for financial assistance. The Employment Relations Promulgation states that an employer who employs 50 or more workers may employ physically disabled workers on a ratio of at least 2% of the total number of workers employed by the employer. However, the change in this field is very minimal. Hence, the FNCDP Act 1994 is currently under review to cater for this.

3. Outline of your Organization

i. Background, vision and strategy

Background –The Department of Social Welfare falls under the Ministry of Social Welfare, Women and Poverty Alleviation. Our Ministry has a Minister, Permanent Secretary and Directors for each Department to ensure that the core functions of the Ministry is achieved. The roles and responsibilities of the Ministry include:

- a) Care and protection of children
- b) Provision of income support to families to address poverty
- c) Provide policy intervention for older persons
- d) Provide policy intervention for persons with disabilities
- e) Address gender equality and the empowerment of women.

The Local Statutory Obligations are:

- a) Adoption of Infants Act (Cap.58), 1978
- b) Community Work Act 1994
- c) Family Law Act 2003
- d) Fiji National Council for Disabled Persons Act 21, 1994 (currently under review)
- e) Juvenile Act (Cap 56)1973
- f) Probation Act (Cap 22)1978
- g) Domestic Violence Decree 2009
- h) Child Welfare Decree 2010
- i) Crimes Decree 2010
- j) Social Justice Act 2001
- k) National Council for Older Persons Decree 2012

International Commitments:

- CRC-Convention on the Rights of the Child
- HAGUE- The HAGUE Convention on the protection of children and cooperation in respect to Inter-Country Adoption.
- CEDAW- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.
- CRPD- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Vision –empowering the disadvantaged and women.

Ministry of Social Welfare, Women & Poverty Alleviation 2013 – 2017 Strategies

The Ministry through the implementation of its Strategic Plan has aligned itself to the outcomes of the People’s Charter for Change, Peace and Progress to:

- ☀ Pillar 1: Ensuring Sustainable Democracy and Good and Just Governance
- ☀ Pillar 4: Enhance Public Sector Efficiency, Performance Effectiveness and Service Delivery
- ☀ Pillar 7: Developing an Integrated Development Structure at the Divisional Level
- ☀ Pillar 8: Reducing Poverty to a Negligible Level by 2015

The long term strategies for the achievement of the above outcomes are as follows:

P I L L A R 1	P I L L A R 4	P i l l a r 7	P I L L A R 8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender Equality and Women in Development • Children and Youth • Social Justice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Sector Reform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing an Integrated Development Structure at the Divisional Level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing Poverty to a Negligible Level

ii) Major programs, covered areas, covered population, number of beneficiaries.

The Department of Social Welfare has the following programs to assist the people and the community as a whole.

- a) Family Assistance Program (Poverty Benefit Scheme) - to help the disadvantaged families.
- b) Care & Protection Allowance- to assist the children with their education; especially for single mothers, deserted spouse and widows who have children in school.

- c) Bus fare concession- two major categories; the disabled and the senior citizens (sixty plus).
- d) Poverty Alleviation Projects (Fire Victims)- to assist the disadvantaged with housing. Those who do not have proper housing facilities and those who have lost their belongings in the event of fire.
- e) Income Generating Projects- this is whereby training is provided and then the interested recipients are guided so that they can commence small businesses of their own and have a sustainable source of income.
- f) Child Services- in conjunction with the Child Welfare Decree 2010, child welfare cases are dealt with. The Permanent Secretary is notified of cases of harm or likely harm to the child and where need arises, referrals are done either to the Police Department or Other counterparts (counselling services). Court reports are compiled and submitted upon requests received from Court in regards to Residence of Adoption cases.
- g) Probation and Juvenile Justice-welfare officers are also gazetted as probation officers whereby we provide supervision to the first time offenders of a crime. The Department works in sync with the Judicial Department on such cases.

In terms of areas covered, the Department of Social Welfare has offices available in every District so Fiji's entire geographical region is covered. Even the outer islands are served at their nearest centre. For example, the people of Moala Island are served at Nadi District Office.

Currently there are 13,000 beneficiaries under the Department of Social Welfare Family Assistance Scheme and 4,000 recipients of Care & Protection Allowance.

iii) Your Position and Duty-

Position Description – Welfare Officer Class 1

Position Title:	Welfare Officer Class 1
Location:	Tavua Office/North West Division
Department:	Department of Social Welfare
Approved by:	Director of Social Welfare
Date:	01/01/2013

Purpose of the Position:

- The primary purpose of this position is to provide front line contact with members of the public so they can access welfare services and provide supervision to Welfare Officer Class 2 staff. Cases allocated to WO1 will often be the most serious or complicated cases. The position also works in the field to interact with the community and other stakeholders, to conduct assessments, provide supervision for offenders and children under care. Act in Senior Welfare Officer Position when required.

Principle Accountabilities

- Agree with Senior Welfare Officer the individual work plan each year.
- Provide supervision to Welfare Officer Class 2 staff.
- Assists the Senior Welfare Officer to run the office.

- Provide secretariat support to Fiji National Council for Disabled Persons
- Organise case conferences as part of staff development.
- Attend Tikina Council meetings and Advisory Council meetings.
- Monitor and support volunteer community work supervisors.
- Conduct assessments for family assistance applicants.
- Investigations and assessments for poverty alleviation projects.
- Provision of court advice and preparation of court reports.
- Attend court to provide probation advice, adoption advice and advice regarding children in need of care.
- Conduct assessments on children at risk.
- Prepare and submit monthly statistics.
- Supervision of offenders on probation and community work orders.
- Provision advice on marital issues and refer cases to court house.
- Conduct assessments for families eligible for care and protection allowance.
- Conduct assessments for identifying suitable foster and adoptive parents.
- Monitor children placed in care (foster, adoption, residential care homes) and provide regular reports to Director of Social Welfare.
- Provide advice and referrals to families so they can access other welfare services.
- Assisting government teams in special situations (ie. natural disasters, census, elections, etc).
- Monitor and review Family Assistance/ Poverty Benefit Scheme and Care and Protection allowance and make recommendations to the Senior Welfare Officer for decision.

4. Community Development program which includes Intellectual Disability issue as one of the activities (If you know any).

As part of their community outreach, the Community Rehabilitation Assistants go to communities to assess how the people with intellectual disabilities are being treated and if any of their needs are being neglected. As part of their program, they teach the families and communities how to deal with such persons with disabilities and also encourage the young ones to be sent to the nearest Special School.

5. Situation of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities

- i) Diagnosis (professional responsible for diagnosis) - PROFESSIONAL DOCTORS.
- ii) Education (Special Education and/or Integrated Education) Fiji has 17 special schools where children with Intellectual Disabilities are enrolled.
- iii) Vocational Training and Job Opportunity - Fiji Vocational and technical training center for disabled persons in Suva is managed by Fiji National Council for Disabled Persons and in Labasa as well.
- iv) Support Organizations
 - a) Governmental agencies- Department of Social Welfare, Fiji National Council for Disabled Persons and Ministry of Education.
 - b) Number of NGO's concerned with Persons with Intellectual Disabilities; **FNCDP AFFILIATED ORGANISATION (29).**

6. Based on the Information above, what are the issues to solve to conduct effective supports for persons with Intellectual Disabilities.

For Fiji we need to learn from our overseas counterparts on methods used by them in relations to the supports provided and how best we can implements these ideas in Fiji.

In Fiji we have Special Schools, Non-Government Organizations and Disabled peoples organizations which consist of members with cross disability and the area of Intellectual disabilities is a big challenge as we need to develop plans to implement more efficient workable support services to persons with Intellectual disabilities when they complete their education.

In Fiji, Ministry of Social Welfare, Women and Poverty Alleviation work very closely with Fiji National Council for Disabled Persons. The Welfare Officers act as Secretariats of their District Disable Committee for persons with disabilities. This way we work together to assist people with Intellectual disabilities in terms of financial assistance, awareness programmes and educational needs.

Rohit Kumar Sharma (Mr.)

Welfare Officer I (Ministry of Social Welfare, Women & Poverty Alleviation)

Republic of Fiji

Dated: 07/05/2013