

Fiji Market Improvement Handbook



Partners to Improve Markets (PIM)

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The Foundation for Development Cooperation (FDC).

Preface

This handbook has been designed to assist Fijian local government, city councils, town councils and Market authorities who are responsible for managing marketplaces, to improve their marketplaces. This handbook has been designed to especially capture issues which pertain to the needs and wellbeing of women market vendors, who make up the bulk of vendors across Fiji. It is suggested that this handbook be used in conjunction with a consultative process between market vendors and market authorities, to ensure a more positive and conducive environment for all is achieved.

Coordinating Organisation

The Foundation for Development Cooperation

The Foundation for Development Cooperation is an independent, not-for-profit international development organisation. Established in Brisbane, Australia, in 1990, the mandate of FDC calls for it to conduct policy-oriented research, foster public awareness, mobilise broader Australian and overseas development cooperation, and support non-governmental development efforts. Through partnerships and alliances, FDC undertakes a range of initiatives which seek to improve the lives of poor people in developing countries, foster innovative approaches to development, and connect policy work to self-help efforts at the grass roots level. FDC's work includes economic development and assessment, policy analysis, grass-roots community based initiatives, strategic research, partnerships and leverage, advocacy, consulting and advisory services, project design and implementation, secretariat and network management, and training and capacity building. FDC's headquarters is in Brisbane, Australia. FDC has an Asia regional office in Singapore and a Pacific regional office in Fiji.

Improving the Marketplace – a gendered perspective

Infrastructure Issues

a) Toilet and washroom facilities

- **Cleanliness:** Toilets need to be frequently and thoroughly cleaned throughout the day. If users are unaware on how to use the facilities, provide educational material (e.g. posters with diagrams and pictures) to show them. It is vital there is a place for sanitary disposal and users know what it is for. A baby changing room and table is also recommended, to enable parents to care for their children in an hygienic environment
- **Water availability:** If facilities are open, it is essential that water is freely available.
- **Opening hours:** Washroom facilities should be open 24 hours to cater for vendors who stay in the market after hours (especially on weekends when the amount of vendors increases significantly).
- **Price:** There should be a system in place whereby vendors only need to pay once for the day or week so not to deter them from going when they need to. Toilet paper should be provided on payment.

b) Shelter

- **Types:** There should be a closed-in lockable shelter to allow for secure storage of goods, an open shelter that allows vendors to sleep at night free from vulnerability to the elements and an outdoors area that either offers temporary shelter, or poles for vendors to secure their own shelter with tarpaulins.
- **Maintenance:** Shelters should be regularly inspected (at least every month) to ensure there are no leaks or rusting. Asking vendors whether there are any issues will also help highlight areas in need of maintenance.

c) Storage

- **Availability:** Storage space should be available to all vendors, particularly those vendors that come in from rural villages and far afield. Access should be restricted to the vendor and perhaps one or two managers. Goods should be kept above ground level to avoid flooding of items.
- **Maintenance:** Storage spaces should be regularly inspected and repaired to ensure there are no holes that allow access to thieves or pests.
- For permanent vendors, consider allowing storage in a lockable cupboard under their market benches. To ensure cleanliness is maintained (i.e. no perishable left for extended periods that attract pests), hygiene standards should be widely circulated and placed on a central noticeboard.

Market management

a) Waste management

- **Number of bins:** There should be enough bins that a person does not have to search to find one. There should be enough skip bins so that they do not overflow, causing an unsightly and unhygienic environment.
- **Frequency and time of removal:** Bins should be emptied before they are overflowing. When skip bins are removed, they should be replaced with an empty one. There needs to be double the capacity and removal of bins from Friday to Saturday when the markets tend to double in size.
- **Location of bins:** There should be an allocated space for skip bins that is away from vendors and produce.
- **Education on waste:** Vendors should be encouraged (using notices and a central notice board) to help the waste collectors by minimising their waste and by piling their waste into a heap and disposing of it.

b) Locations and hours for selling

- Location: Vendors should be allowed to sell where there is the highest foot traffic and where it is pleasant for customers to shop throughout the week (not just on weekends).
- Hours: Vendors should be allowed to sell outside the official market opening hours in a designated area, provided they keep the area tidy. The official hours should be extended during peak times, for example during Easter and festivals (such as the Hibiscus festivals).

c) Transport management

- Location: Produce unloading areas for vendors and wholesalers should be separate from car parking areas to ease congestion. There should be a separate setting down area for public transport.
- Traffic management: Councils should ensure pedestrians are kept away from vehicles while they are perusing the markets. Traffic congestion should be reduced by creating suitable areas for a car park and a 'no-stopping' zone created in front of the market for drop-offs in taxis or other cars.

d) Hygienic food selling

- Provision of tables: tables should be provided to keep the food off the ground, in order to ensure hygiene and reduce contamination risks.
- Training: Market vendors may need to be trained in hygienic food preparation to protect against cases of food poisoning.
- Clean hand washing facilities should be available for market vendors, a lot of diseases are passed on due to unclean hands.
- Regular pest control of the premises should be conducted to ensure there are no infestations.

e) General Occupational Health and Safety Issues

- Monitoring: The marketplace should be consistently scanned for health and safety issues – asking women market vendors for their opinions can serve as an effective way to reveal the most important issues.

- Any notifications made to market management authorities by marketplace vendors or customers should be attended to immediately.
- Refer to Market Bylaw templates contained in this handbook for occupational health and safety standards recommendations.

Services

a) Information on the market

- **Accessibility:** A copy of the market bylaws, and any amendments to the bylaws should be accessible to all vendors. The text should be in English, Fijian and Hindi. Additionally, any changes to the marketplace and the reasons behind these changes should be available in writing to market vendors. This could be achieved through displaying bylaws and any changes on a centrally located notice board.
- **Information sessions:** In a time that is convenient to most market vendors (including rural market vendors), market information should be delivered in the form of an information session where council workers can explain to vendors any changes in rules and rationale behind the changes.

b) Business training

- **Content:** The business training should cover topics such as household budgeting, business planning, investment advice, and value adding techniques.
- **Accessibility:** In offering business training to vendors, it should be at a time and location convenient to the vendors (particularly rural vendors), at a price that is affordable to them.

c) Women's Information Booth

- Market authorities should encourage the setting up of a market women's information booth, perhaps led by the women market vendors associations or a local NGO. This booth could serve to incorporate the previously mentioned training, as well as provide awareness on reproductive health, counseling services, and child health/immunisation services. The booth would serve as a central

location point for useful training and information dissemination to women market vendors.

Gender budgeting considerations

Gender sensitive budgeting does not require a separate budget for women, but involves focusing upon the strategic needs of women. These needs can range from including women in decision making (for example, seeking the viewpoints of women market vendors for improvements to markets), budgeting for training to be specifically available to women to improve skills, and ensuring that women have equal access to resources and benefits that the budget in question is dealing with. The overall aim of taking this approach is to take the position of women in society from powerlessness to empowered and equal to the position of men.

Practical needs of women are not farfetched, most are simple and basic human needs such as access to food, water, and an earning ability to provide money for their families and help their communities. Council policies and budgets should be examined to see if there are any current laws or acts which inhibit women from reaching their full potential, or if laws can be changed to help women in any way.

A budget which is gender responsive examines each budget line item for how it would impact women/girls compared with how it would impact men/boys. Questions that should be asked include:

- Does this budget item negatively impact women/girls in any way?
- Does the budget item have any impact on improving gender equality?
- Do budget allocations respond to and reflect the reality of situations faced by women in Fiji, and more specifically, the marketplace?

Some examples of gender responsive expenditures in a budget include: women specific council activities, reproductive health education, paid maternity leave, childcare facilities, provision of public baby changing rooms, and special education programs for girls.

Councils must also analyse where their revenue is coming from (for example, market vendor fees – remembering that most of them are women) and whether those taxes/fees are being used to enhance their situation, and improve levels of equality – or is it hindering it?

A good way to ensure a gender sensitive approach is taken when drafting your budget is to ensure that the process of decision making includes women as well as men, and that the consultation process takes in to account the views of both.

Taking a gender responsive perspective in budgeting should aim to close the gaps between women and men.

Improvements to Bylaws of Markets

1 Gender neutral drafting

The Market By-Laws are drafted to include references to the 'Market Master' and use the words 'he' and 'his' when referring to the Market Master's actions.

In order to make them more gender sensitive the following amendments could be suggested:

- (a) Replacement of the term "Market Master" with a more gender neutral term such as "Market Manager".
- (b) Insertion of a clause in the Interpretation part of the by-laws at Section 2 with words to the following effect:

"In these by-laws, words denoting any gender include all genders."

- (c) All references of 'he' be replaced with 'he or she'.
- (d) All references of 'his' be replaced with 'his or her'.

2 Workplace health and safety issues

The by-laws are not effective in setting standards for hygiene and cleanliness in the stalls and the markets. There is room to suggest more stringent standards that must be complied with.

During redrafting of bylaws, information such as the following should be considered:

- (a) What will be considered the benchmark or definition for the standard of cleanliness?
- (b) How often must a stall holder wash their stall and what must this entail?
- (c) How often must rubbish be disposed of and by what method?
- (d) How frequently should the Market Master/Manager be required to wash the markets and in what way? For example, is water sufficient or should a cleaning agent be used?
- (e) What mechanism can be put in place to rectify bad odours?
- (f) What will be considered an acceptable standard at which to maintain the toilet facilities? ie. Is toilet paper to be provided and, if so, how often should it be re-filled? How often should the floors and facilities be washed?

The provisions will need to impose more onerous obligations on the Market Master/Manager. Currently, all provisions regarding health, hygiene and cleanliness relate to duties of the stall holders. There are no provisions under which the Market Master/Manager has a duty to keep the market in good repair, save for section 42(2) which states that the markets will be washed twice a year. This is clearly inadequate.

3 Notification process

To ensure accountability and offer the stall holders an established avenue for having their concerns heard, there needs to be a mechanism introduced into the by-laws providing for how issues are to be raised and addressed.

A notice provision could be inserted whereby stall holders who have complaints or are aware of repairs that need to be made in the markets can notify the Market Master/manager through a specified process. The Market Master/Manager would then be required to respond to the notice and take steps to rectify the issue, or provide reasons for why no action will be taken, within a stated period of time.

Thought should be given to who notices will be addressed to, how much time should be allowed for a response and for action to be taken, and possible penalties and further processes to be triggered by non-compliance.

4 Awareness of by-laws

A provision should be inserted providing that the by-laws must be on display in the markets or at least easily accessible for the stall holders. A notice board or office facility in the market where a set of the by-laws can be displayed and available at all times would serve this purpose.

Further, the suggestion could be made that every stall holder at a certain point in time (such as upon payment of their fee) must be provided with either a set of the by-laws or a summary detailing the relevant rights and obligations of all parties in the marketplace.

Asset Management Framework – Fiji Markets

The development of Asset Management policies in existing and new markets in the Pacific can have a great spin off for local women and youth groups or enterprising groups and individuals if it is formulated to target this approach.

Asset management plans are prepared for the systematic development of the asset in the long term. These are formulated so that the assets of markets perform well to the optimum conditions and for the optimum length.

A collaborative approach to the provision of long term management and maintenance systems for essential assets based on the problems and possibilities identified in Phase One: initial scan of 50 markets in the Pacific identified that OHS, decent workplace and Human security standards to be addresses and a strong gender framework to be adopted i.e. acknowledging and addressing gender specific needs of women market vendors.

This asset management framework provides a guideline to local councils in Fiji to adopt to ensure that many options can be incorporated into an Asset Management Plan of a market addresses these key issues.

What is Asset Management?

Asset management is a process in business that looks at a decision making framework and looks at time horizons in the use, life expectancy and financial aspects and considers a broad range of assets managed by the council.

Asset management traditionally looks at an engineering and economic approach. However it incorporates the economic assessment of trade-offs among alternative investment options and uses this information to help make cost-effective investment decisions for the betterment of the council.

Asset Management has come of age because of:

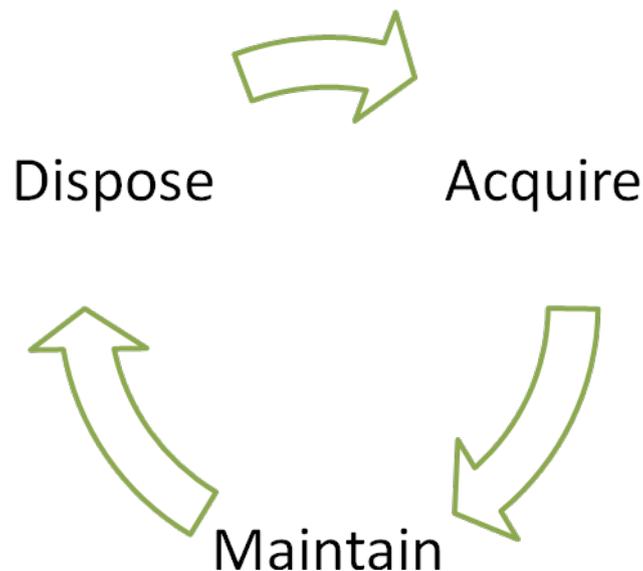
- changes in the various sectors in the economy,
- changes in public expectations, and
- extraordinary advances in technology

The Asset Management Cycle

There are three main processes within an Asset Management Cycle which is explained below:

1. Acquisition of an asset
2. Maintenance of an asset
3. Disposal of an asset.

ACQUISITION OF AN ASSET



Overarching guide

Any decision on asset acquisition or replacement, use, maintenance and disposal should be integrated with strategic planning. This is achieved by linking assets with program delivery standards and strategies including a gender strategy.

Product

An Asset Management Strategy complements the Information System, Human Resource and Financial Management Strategies in the Operational or Business Plan of a council.

Success Factors

- Asset management functions must be matched with the services that the assets provides and prioritise accordingly
- Asset management strategy time-frame works alongside the corporate planning of the council and ideally extends over the life of longer lived assets.
- Asset management strategy incorporates capital and recurrent (operating) costs which link with budgets in financial management strategy.
- Asset management strategy can be linked with gender strategy to ensure the needs of the users are a key element in it.

Outcome

The integration of asset strategies into operational or business plans will establish a framework for existing and new assets to be effectively utilised and their service potential optimised.

ASSET MAINTENANCE

Overarching Guide

Effective accountability frameworks identify those responsible for assets. This responsibility encompasses all phases of the life-cycle. Mechanisms establish ownership, control and responsibility for use, condition and performance of assets.

Product

An operation and a maintenance plan which establish standards for the level of use, condition, maintenance and performance of assets. The plans also document the resources required to operate and maintain assets.

Success Factors

- Control of, and accountability for, assets is established at the program level.
- Fiscal responsibility for assets is established through the budget process and by cost allocation/attribution.
- Condition, use and performance measures are established.
- The standard of performance of assets is an input to the next planning cycle.

Outcome

Effective accountability mechanisms will establish a culture where assets are adequately maintained and protected and, through optimisation of performance, maximise their outputs or service potential.

DISPOSAL

Principle

Effective asset disposal frameworks incorporate consideration of alternatives for the disposal of surplus, obsolete, under-performing or unserviceable assets. Alternatives should be evaluated in cost-benefit terms.

Product

A disposal plan which establishes the rationale for, the anticipated time and method of, and the expected proceeds on, disposal. The plan is reviewed and refined, if necessary, prior to disposal to take account of the market and physical condition of the asset.

Success Factors

- Under-utilised and under-performing assets are identified as part of a regular, systematic review process.
- The reasons for under-utilisation or poor performance are critically examined and corrective action taken to remedy the situation, or a disposal decision is made.
- Analysis of disposal methods has regard to potential market or other intrinsic values; the location and volume of assets to be disposed of; the

ability to support other government programs; and environmental implications.

- Regular evaluation of disposal performance is undertaken.

Outcome

Effective management of the disposal process will minimise holdings of surplus and under-performing assets, and will maximise the return to the Commonwealth on such assets.

INTERNAL CONTROL STRUCTURE

Principle

An effective internal control structure will establish and promulgate asset policies and procedures and use an information system which provides reliable, relevant and timely data with which to make informed asset management decisions.

Product

A policy and procedure manual which details the requirements for effective governance of assets is complemented by an information system, based on an asset register, which provides the financial and non-financial information necessary to manage assets.

Success Factors

- The policies and procedures address all aspects of the asset life-cycle, are promulgated to all relevant staff, and are updated regularly.
- Staff involved in asset management receive training commensurate with their responsibilities.
- The asset register contains data on acquisition, asset identification, accountability, information, performance, disposal and accounting.
- The asset register is integrated with the financial and budgetary systems.
- Asset information is readily accessible to staff who are accountable for assets.

Outcome

An effective internal control structure provides the framework within which improvements to asset management are affected. Without it there is limited scope for informed decision making or implementing management's intentions.