

SPORTS DEVELOPMENT

Fact Sheet

BACKGROUND

Fiji has made significant strides in promoting sports and nurturing talents, which not only fosters athletic talent but also offers numerous social, economic, and health benefits. Sports development promotes unity, national pride, and social cohesion among citizens, attracts tourism, boosts local businesses, and creates employment opportunities. Popular sports include rugby union, rugby league, soccer, cricket, volleyball, and netball. The National Sports, Recreation, and Physical Activity Policy provides a contemporary framework to guide and enhance sports and physical activity delivery at all levels of participation through a coordinated partnership approach by the government, statutory, non-state agencies, regional and international sporting agencies, and civil society. This all-inclusive approach to sports development aims to build an active, healthy society and a socially inclusive nation.

CURRENT STATUS

Fiji's sports development focuses on building healthy and socially engaged youth through non-formal education and a physically active nation through sport. The country aims to promote gender equality, support athletes from underrepresented communities, and develop para-sports and adaptive sports. The Fiji Rugby Union (FRU) works closely with national sports companies to develop legislation and policies for sports development. Fiji's strong tradition in rugby union and sevens has led to numerous titles and Olympic medals. Remittance from overseas athletes has become an essential source of funding for sports development in Fiji, contributing to foreign exchange earnings and improving training facilities. The government has invested \$119m in sports development over the past decade, and the nation's passion for sports and support from citizens and athletes have propelled Fiji onto the global sporting stage. The FRU hosts various international rugby events, including the Fiji International Rugby Sevens tournament, which attracts teams from around the world.

CHALLENGES

1. *Limited resources and funding:* lack of funding for smaller/minority sporting bodies.
2. *Lack of sporting facilities:* Youth and sports personnel's are not able to access facilities especially in peri urban and urban areas.
3. *Physical Education:* Inability to provide quality physical education in both formal and non-formal education sectors.
4. *Local Understudy:* Lack of qualified coaches and rugby sporting professionals in development area. Absence of local under study and representation of local expertise in international governing bodies.
5. *Sports Medicine:* Fiji is facing a pressing issue of a shortage of sports medical staff, posing a threat to athletes' health and hindering the country's sports development. This shortage is particularly critical for high-performance sports personnel, particularly those preparing Fiji athletes for international competition.

OPPORTUNITIES

1. *Gender Equality-* means of female empowerment through participation to address their vulnerability context, while also providing opportunities for greater gender relationship. Thus, key stakeholders should consider developing a gender mainstreaming plan to address these gaps.
2. *Talent Identification and Development:* National sports bodies may have talent identification programs in place to identify promising athletes and provide them with specialized training and support. These programs aim to groom athletes for national and international competitions.

FUTURE POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

➤ Developing a productive and healthy nation through a systematic and coordinated sports development program:

- ✓ Aligning legislation, policy, and practices for cohesive youth and sports services.
- ✓ Promoting partnerships with ministries, educational institutions, and stakeholders.
- ✓ Providing mass sport recreational opportunities and targeted campaigns.
- ✓ Ensuring maximum access to sports, recreational, and physical education in all educational institutions.
- ✓ Ensuring sports policy for persons with disabilities and gender equality.
- ✓ National survey on physical activity in Fiji.
- ✓ Increasing collective understanding and approach across sporting codes on ending violence against women and children.

➤ Developing a sporting nation to build the capability of sport and the people involved for National Sports Talent Identification and development program:

- ✓ Establishment of a National Sports Talent Identification System
- ✓ National Sports administrators / technical officials and strength & conditioning & coaches, medical and physio trained to international accepted qualifications

➤ Ensure an Enriching Nation that uses sports as mechanism in place to achieve economic development through the maximum return of investment prioritising sporting codes best suited to broadening the participation base and achieving international success:

- ✓ Maximising the potential to host international sporting events in Fiji.
- ✓ Maximising communication and social and recreation mass mobilisation to support and achieve a diverse range of national priorities.
- ✓ Sports Tourism to encompass guidelines criteria for the bidding and hosting of major sports events as well as an event roster detailing.
- ✓ Implementation of traditional sporting events
- ✓ Develop more medical facilities for sports science and sports medicine.

➤ Promote the enabling environment that develop local athletes into elite athletes and every citizens' access to sporting facilities:

- ✓ Development of sports as a sustainable future.
- ✓ Increase opportunities for sustainable futures through sports.
- ✓ Development of a Sports House that provides an administrative support centre for identified National sporting Organizations entrenching principles of good governance.
- ✓ Strengthen Fiji National Sports Commission roles in Safeguarding, initiatives and National Sporting Organisation safeguarding policy development and implementation.
- ✓ Implementation of a Sports Information centre; from grassroots to elite athlete development to be part for strategic decision makers, acquire accurate and be accessible to sports information and knowledge.
- ✓ Review the processes and identify the needs in areas for Donation of Sports Equipment's.