



The Rakorako Peer Learning Series

Supporting gender equal workplaces in Fiji

September 2021

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH





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IFC—a member of the World Bank Group—is the largest global development institution focused on the private sector in emerging markets. We work in more than 100 countries, using our capital, expertise, and influence to create markets and opportunities in developing countries. In fiscal year 2021, IFC committed a record \$31.5 billion to private companies and financial institutions in developing countries, leveraging the power of the private sector to end extreme poverty and boost shared prosperity as economies grapple with the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. For more information, visit www.ifc.org.

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1. Executive Summary

In response to persistent and widespread gender gaps that prevent women's equal participation in Fiji's private sector, IFC partnered with the Fiji Human Resources Institute (FHRI) to bring together 28 companies¹ as part of a peer learning platform, including a series of interactive workshops addressing the critical issues preventing women's equal participation in the private sector.

Fiji has a large gender gap in economic participation, with a female labor force participation rate of 38 percent, versus 77 percent for men.² Fiji also has a high rate of gender-based violence, with as many as 52 percent of women reporting an experience of violence from an intimate partner.³ Early evidence suggests the pandemic has exacerbated the incidence of violence.⁴

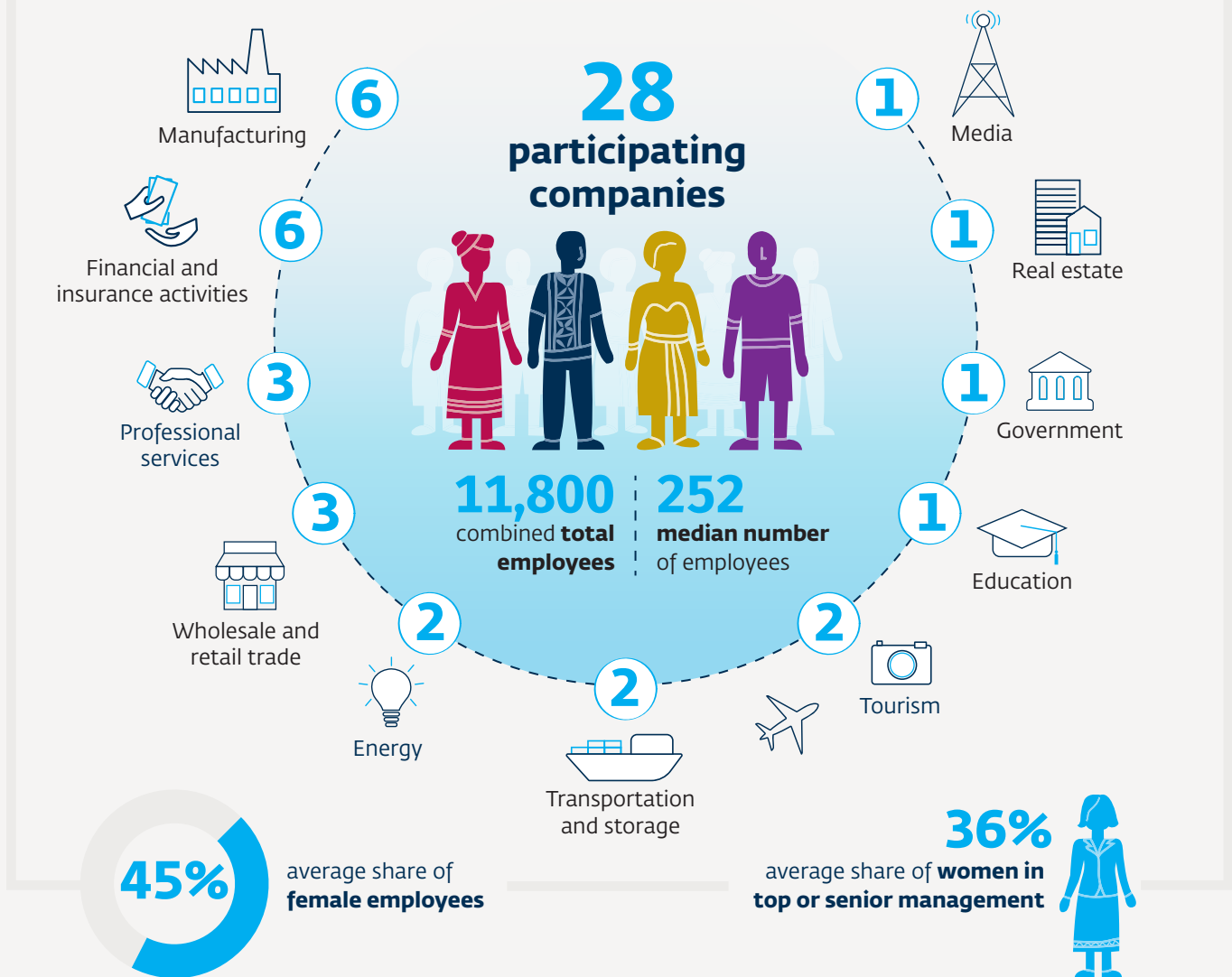
Launched in November 2019, Rakorako brought together representatives from companies in Fiji to participate in a workshop series on best practices to strengthen organizations' policies and practices. Taking place during the COVID-19 pandemic and through a series of devastating tropical cyclones in Fiji, both which exacerbated gender-based violence and childcare pressure on working parents, Rakorako was adapted to help companies provide stronger support to their staff. The program pivoted to emphasize flexible working practices and mental health support, which have become increasingly urgent during the pandemic, and also used innovative methods to blend online and in-person engagement.

Collectively Rakorako supported companies to implement 65 new policies and practices, impacting over 6,000 employees⁵ and catalyzing wider discussion and awareness within Fiji's private sector of respectful workplaces and childcare. Rakorako helped around 80 percent of the participating companies to improve their culture, while 46 percent reported it helped them maintain business continuity during the first waves of COVID-19.

Rakorako was based on the findings of two IFC studies in Fiji on childcare⁶ and workplace responses to domestic and sexual violence,⁷ both of which are barriers to women's equal economic participation. The studies demonstrated the business case for the private sector to take action to address these barriers.

The actions taken by companies through Rakorako represent an important first step by the private sector in Fiji to address this issue, but further action is needed. This report aims to show the achievements of these companies to provide a blueprint for other private sector entities in Fiji and across the Pacific, and to illustrate the compelling benefits to businesses if action is taken. The lessons learned through implementing Rakorako will also be foundational for the design of the next Fiji Women's Employment project and for other women's employment interventions across the region.

Rakorako companies



2 Rakorako workstreams

November 2019 – November 2020



Tackling Childcare

How to assess employee demand for childcare support and establish the business case. The workstream gave an overview of possible employer-supported childcare and flexible working models and how to implement them.

24

participating companies



Workplace Responses to Domestic and Sexual Violence

How to create a **respectful workplace**: a safe workplace that is free from all forms of workplace bullying and sexual harassment, where employees and others associated with the company treat each other with dignity, courtesy, and respect.

25

participating companies

Key Achievements from Rakorako

Companies that participated in Rakorako implemented or improved a wide range of new policies to strengthen their childcare and domestic and sexual violence support for employees.

Among the 28 companies participating in Rakorako:

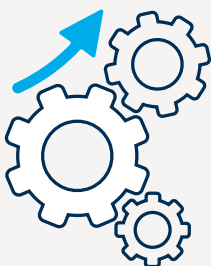


- 65** family friendly and/or gender-based violence (GBV) policies were introduced or improved as a result of Rakorako
- 19** out of 28 participating companies introduced or improved at least one human resources (HR) policy or initiative
- 14** companies introduced or improved at least one policy on gender-based violence
- 12** companies introduced or improved at least one policy on childcare

Business Impacts

Participants in Rakorako reported substantial and wide-ranging benefits from the program for their businesses and employees. **Eighteen companies (64 percent) reported at least one positive business impact following their participation in Rakorako**, and their implementation of new policies or practices.

The most frequently reported impact on participating companies included:



- 14** out of 28 companies reported improved employee satisfaction or loyalty
- 13** reported Rakorako helped them maintain business continuity during COVID-19
- 13** reported increased productivity or efficiency
- 13** reported reduced absenteeism

Participants in Rakorako also highlighted broader changes within their company as a result of the program:



- 23** out of 28 companies said Rakorako helped to improve the organization's culture
- 19** out of 28 companies - over two-thirds - said Rakorako improved their ability to address workplace bullying
- 19** out of 28 companies said Rakorako improved their ability to address workplace sexual harassment

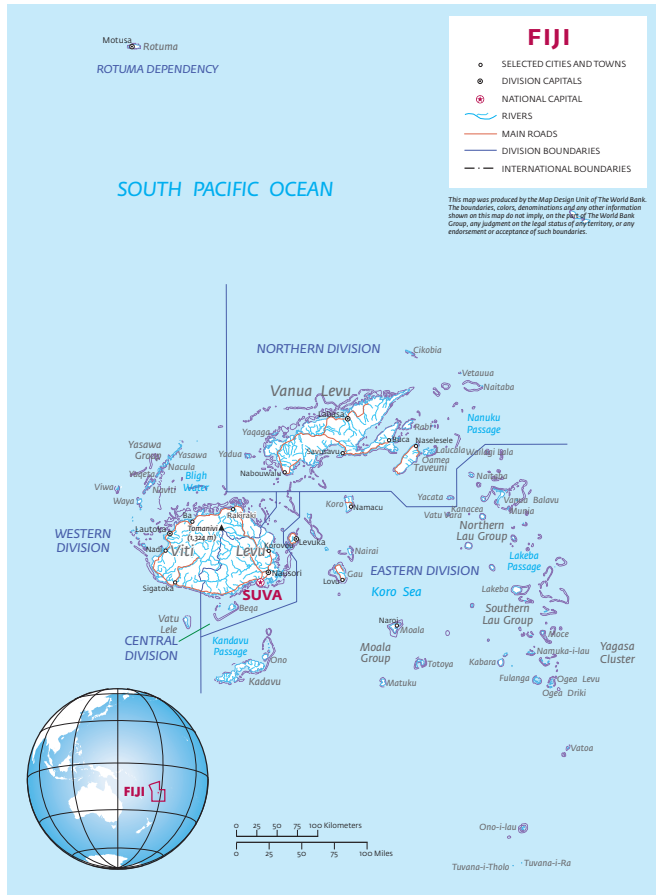
Participating companies unsure of how to implement good practices appreciated the strong technical assistance and guidance provided by IFC through Rakorako. Some companies highlighted that employee attitudes towards women colleagues have improved, and that women are now treated with greater respect.



#RAKORAKO

*#Respectful
Workplaces*

2. Context and background to Rakorako



2.1. GENDER EQUALITY IN FIJI

Fiji has a substantial gender gap in economic participation. Only 38 percent of women in Fiji participate in the workforce, compared with 77 percent of men,¹⁰ and it ranks 113 out of 156 countries on the World Economic Forum 2021 Gender Gap Index, and 127 out of 156 countries in the Economic Participation and Opportunity Sub-index. Additionally, women in Fiji earn on average less than half of what men earn. Estimated income for women is \$8,100 compared with \$17,200 for men.¹¹ Fiji also has a high rate of gender-based violence, with as many as 52 percent of women reporting an experience of violence from an intimate partner.¹² Addressing these inequalities presents a significant opportunity to improve economic, social, and human development in Fiji, and to improve businesses' efficiency and competitiveness.

Companies in Fiji could improve their talent pool by more effectively engaging women as employees and leaders. Fiji has a highly educated female population, with a higher proportion of women in tertiary education than men,¹³ yet women are poorly represented in the formal labor force. The private sector would benefit from more effectively attracting, retaining, and promoting this large, under-utilized pool of well-educated women in Fiji.

IFC research has highlighted the cost to businesses of the challenges experienced by working parents balancing work and childcare demands — an average of 12.7 working days per employee per year.¹⁴ Each year every employee, whether they have personally experienced violence or not, loses an average of almost 10 work days due to domestic violence because they feel tired, unwell, or distracted, are late or absent from work, or are helping others respond to domestic and sexual violence.



Box 1: The World Bank Group's Gender Strategy

Gender is a key component of IFC's and the World Bank Group's strategies in Fiji. The World Bank Group's Fiji Country Gender Action Plan FY2020-24 priorities are to promote women's economic empowerment and reduce gender-based violence, with a commitment to incorporating opportunities to do so into all activities.

IFC is working to remove structural and social impediments to female workforce participation, increasing business outcomes in target firms by increasing women's recruitment, retention, and promotion in the formal workforce. This work is focused on three main areas:

- Enhancing female recruitment, promotion and job quality in local firms
- Reducing the impacts of domestic violence at work
- Increasing the supply of childcare services to better support the needs of working parents

Causes of private sector gender gaps in Fiji

Several factors contribute to women's limited representation in the workforce in Fiji.

- **High rates of domestic and sexual violence** contribute to elevated levels of absenteeism and presenteeism (being at work but unable to work effectively), which costs firms in Fiji up to 9 percent of an annual wage bill in lost productivity.¹⁵ Gender-based violence also creates occupational health and safety risks for employees.
- **A lack of quality childcare options** in Fiji limits the ability of many parents to participate fully in the labor market. IFC research in Fiji found that childcare responsibilities have significant impacts on parents' abilities to consistently perform at work and focus on their job.¹⁶ The research found that, in the nine surveyed companies, lost staff time due to childcare responsibilities costs an average of \$265,000 (FJD\$550,000) annually. There is an unmet need for formal childcare services to respond to growing demand caused by changing family structures and increasing internal migration for work.
- **There are substantial gaps in legislation, policy, and regulation related to childcare services** in Fiji, with the provision of early childhood care and education services for children below three years of age largely unregulated. This lack of licensing and quality standards creates a risk for private sector employers who might wish to provide childcare for employees. However, with technical support from IFC and other members of the ECCE Taskforce,¹⁷ the Fijian Government is developing regulation and policies for early childhood care services to ensure safe and quality childcare services in Fiji and improve outcomes for children including in health, safety and nutrition, while also helping to reduce absenteeism and improve productivity in businesses.

Addressing these underlying barriers represents a substantial commercial opportunity for the private sector, although awareness and understanding of them, their costs, and potential solutions are low.



2.2. NATIONAL CRISES IN FIJI: COVID-19 AND TROPICAL CYCLONES

Since the start of 2020, Fiji experienced multiple external shocks. The social and economic impacts of COVID-19 brought Fiji's tourism sector, which accounts for around 38 percent of its GDP, to a virtual standstill. This was exacerbated by six tropical cyclones including two severe Category Fives, hitting the country between January 2020 and February 2021.¹⁸ These external shocks contributed to an economic contraction of 19 percent in 2020 – the most severe in Fiji's history – and a rise in unemployment to 27 percent.¹⁹

By July 2020, 50 percent of tourism businesses had either suspended operations or permanently closed, along with 19 percent of non-tourism businesses. In April 2020, tourism revenue declined by 59 percent and non-tourism revenue by 32 percent, when compared with revenues from April 2019. Twenty-seven percent of staff from tourism businesses were working reduced hours or days, 25 percent were on leave without pay, and 8 percent had been made redundant. Comparatively, 20 percent of staff from non-tourism businesses were working reduced hours or days, 7 percent were on leave without pay and 4 percent had been made redundant.²⁰

Although Fiji avoided the worst of the health effects of the pandemic in 2020, the second wave of COVID in 2021 has had a more profound health impact, resulting in repeated lockdowns and long-term business closures. As of July 2021, 115,000 Fijians had lost their jobs or had their hours cut as a result of COVID-19, amounting to one third of the total workforce.²¹ The full economic impact of the pandemic on Fiji is not yet clear but will likely be significant and long-lasting.



3. Overview of Rakorako

3.1. ESTABLISHING THE RAKORAKO PEER LEARNING SERIES

Rakorako was a year-long program, delivered in partnership with FHRI, that invited companies in Fiji to learn and share good practices on creating respectful workplaces and implementing and strengthening supportive childcare policies, practices and procedures for employees. Initially intended to last six months, Rakorako was extended to accommodate delays caused by COVID-19.

Rakorako builds on the successes of IFC’s Waka Mere program, which delivered a similar peer learning platform for companies in the Solomon Islands, and IFC’s Powered by Women program in Myanmar, which brought companies in the power sector together to promote women’s equal career advancement.

To support companies in addressing barriers to women’s employment in Fiji, Rakorako offered **two main streams** which were made available in both Suva and Nadi.



Tackling Childcare: The Business Case for Employer Supported Childcare



Workplace Responses to Domestic and Sexual Violence

Twenty-eight companies signed up to Rakorako, representing a diverse cross-section of the Fiji’s private sector.

Twenty-one companies signed up to both workstreams, while three signed up only to Tackling Childcare, and four signed up only to Workplace Responses to Domestic and Sexual Violence – although over the course of the series many participants attended sessions and implemented policies related to a stream they had not registered for, particularly in light of changing business needs and challenges brought on by COVID-19 and tropical cyclones.

“Rakorako really teaches “the how” of implementing good practices to companies that do care about them, but don’t know how to implement or apply them, or reach out to employees to address issues.”

Susan Miller – VP Human Resources and Administration, Total Fiji

Box 2: Partnership with the Fiji Human Resources Institute (FHRI)

The Rakorako series was delivered in partnership between IFC and FHRI, a leading membership organization in Fiji whose mission is to promote excellence in the field of human resources to individuals, organizations, government, and country.

FHRI leveraged its strong connections throughout the private sector in Fiji to launch and deliver Rakorako, advocating for improvements in women’s economic participation and promoting the workshop series to business leaders to boost participation. FHRI also co-hosted events, disseminating information and good practice examples, and promoting the events throughout the series.

“In the partnership between FHRI and IFC to deliver Rakorako it has been encouraging to see the concerted effort of Fiji private sector businesses to take part in the trainings and activities to create a Safe and Resilient workplace for their employees in particular women. Gender equality makes unquestionably good business sense.”

Kameli Batiweti - President, Fiji Human Resources Institute



“ Each of us can promote healthy relationships, speak out when we see injustice in our workplace, stand with the survivors we know, and change attitudes that preserve the cycle of abuse.”

Rahul Amin – Chief Executive Officer,
Vinod Patel and Company Pte Ltd

Table 1: Rakorako Participating Companies and Sector

Air Terminal Services (Fiji) Pte Limited	Transportation and storage
Asaleo Care (Fiji) Pte Limited	Manufacturing
Bhikhabhai and Company Pte Limited	Manufacturing
BSP Life (Fiji) Limited	Financial and insurance activities
Fiji Development Bank	Financial and insurance activities
Fiji Gas Pte Limited	Energy
Fiji Hotel and Tourism Association	Tourism
Fiji Roads Authority	Government
Fiji Sugar Corporation Limited	Manufacturing
Fiji Sun News (Pte) Limited	Information and communication
Fiji National Provident Fund	Financial and insurance activities
FMF Foods Ltd	Manufacturing
Free Bird Institute Limited	Education
iTaukei Land Trust Board	Real estate activities
Kontiki Finance Limited	Financial and insurance activities
Lyndhurst Pte Ltd	Manufacturing
Mark One Apparel Pte Limited	Manufacturing
Munro Leys	Professional services
Packleader BPO	Professional services
R.C. Manubhai & Co. Pte Limited	Wholesale and retail trade
Shipping Services (Fiji) Pte Limited	Transportation and storage
Sofitel Fiji Resort and Spa	Tourism
Telecom Fiji Pte Limited	Professional services
Total Fiji Pte Limited	Energy
Vinod Patel & Company Pte Limited	Wholesale and retail trade
Vision Investments Limited	Financial and insurance activities
Westpac Fiji	Financial and insurance activities
Wormald Fire & Security	Wholesale and retail trade



“Rakorako not only provided a platform but required companies to share their practices and procedures and reflect and learn from each other... Enabling the private sector here in Fiji to have that platform to discuss and learn from each other was one of the biggest impacts that the program had.”

Preayant Kumar - Group HR Manager, FMF Foods Ltd

“The content of Rakorako gave me the strength and resilience to deal with the issues faced by women. I have always valued women in business and maintained support and commitment towards the gender-based issues faced by women in our society. Rakorako has greatly enriched me with my intellectual resources in better understanding the concept and at the same time a zest to learn more in the future from IFC programs.”

Zakia Dean – Head of Human Resources & Training, Fiji Roads Authority

Participation in Rakorako

Companies signing up to Rakorako committed to attending relevant sessions in the workshop series and providing data for the baseline and endline surveys. Each company nominated one or more representatives – typically at least one from the HR department – who would attend the entire workshop series, taking recommendations and learnings back to the senior management to implement and drive change within the organization.

Senior management buy-in to the program’s objectives was a key requirement for participating companies. Chief Executive Officers or their equivalent signed a document committing to their participation and attended a high-level event to convey their commitment.

The Rakorako workshop series provided information and good practices to help participants draft and implement policies that will ensure strengthened support and protection for all employees. Where further support was needed, IFC provided tailored policy review and implementation support. The series also encouraged participants to share and discuss common barriers and solutions to achieving more gender-equal workplaces, with the intention of creating a community of practice that would extend beyond the duration of the workshop series and foster a wider conversation in the private sector.

3.2. ADAPTING TO THE CHALLENGES OF 2020: COVID-19 AND TROPICAL CYCLONES

COVID-19 and the tropical cyclones that affected Fiji necessitated a significant adjustment of the Rakorako program, both to limit in-person gatherings and to ensure the continued relevance of the content. Workshops were moved to an online format for most of the series after February 2020. Sessions on domestic and sexual violence were postponed until they could be delivered via a ‘face-to-online’ format (with participants together in one room and the presenter joining remotely) due to the safety risks associated with delivering domestic and sexual violence content into people’s homes.²²



“ The sessions helped us as HR teams to identify the signs of issues present in our employees and has really helped our relationships within our company. The learnings from this Rakorako program have been so relevant and significant for our organization especially during this COVID-19 pandemic.”

Jane Koi – Manager, Administration – Shipping Services (Fiji) Pte, Ltd

Box 3: COVID-19 Response Survey

IFC ran a survey with Rakorako participants in April 2020 to determine the effects of COVID-19 on organizations in Fiji, and how the workshop series should be adapted in response.²³ Fifteen companies responded to the survey.

- Most (93 percent) had already been negatively impacted by COVID-19 in some way, mostly around restrictions to operations and reduction in financial turnover or cash-flow.
- Two-thirds of employers believed that COVID-19 had an impact on their employees’ experience of domestic and sexual violence.
- Most businesses had systems in place to allow their employees to work safely or work flexibly, though they were less prepared for more complicated scenarios such as increasing childcare needs, client aggression or domestic and sexual violence.
- Workers were found to be experiencing increased rates of bullying and harassment, including from clients.

The agenda of the series was subsequently updated to address the emerging needs of participants.

- Regular remote check-ins were scheduled with participants to provide support and allow participants to continue to share and discuss challenges and good practice.
- An increased emphasis was placed on supporting the mental health and wellbeing of staff, including by strengthening the link between local service providers and participating companies.
- Further resources and guidance were provided on workplace responses to client aggression – an emerging risk identified through discussions with participants.
- The program responded to a greater interest in flexible working policies as these became an increasing necessity due to COVID-19 restrictions and school closures. Some companies that were previously reluctant to consider flexible work policies became keen to explore how they might be implemented.
- As the content of the series was adapted to the changing circumstances, several participating companies attended sessions from workstreams they had not originally registered for, in particular given the increased importance of flexible working arrangements.

CASE STUDY: iTAUKEI LAND TRUST BOARD

iTaukei Land Trust Board's efforts to create a more respectful work environment prompted a cultural shift in the organization, and helped support staff in navigating challenging customer interactions during COVID-19

Upon joining Rakorako iTaukei Land Trust Board already had a range of HR policies in place to support its employees. However, as COVID-19 began affecting Fiji's economy, iTaukei Land Trust Board's staff began to face greater pressure and tension with customers, and it saw the importance of ensuring it was providing sufficient support to its employees.

Actions as part of Rakorako

- Conducted a comprehensive review of gender policies
- Introduced a new diversity and inclusion policy
- Conducted an employee survey to understand childcare demand, determining that 91 percent of employees of pre-school aged children sought out childcare options
- Developed a childcare project for after school care
- Comprehensive review of the anti-harassment and anti-sexual harassment policies and renamed it as a respectful workplace policy
- Introduced a domestic and sexual violence policy
- Introduced policies and conducted awareness sessions with employees on how to respond to client aggression, based on the content from the respectful workplaces Rakorako module

Impact of Rakorako

iTaukei Land Trust Board experienced a notable culture shift following its participation in Rakorako and resultant policy changes which led to increased discussion, awareness and learning amongst staff about the gender equity topics addressed through the program. Through the implementation of respectful workplace policies and awareness sessions, staff became better engaged around the topics of bullying and harassment.

The series helped iTaukei Land Trust Board maintain business continuity and support its employees throughout the pandemic. Based on content shared through Rakorako, it introduced policies and conducted awareness sessions with employees on responses to client aggression as it became more common.

iTaukei Land Trust Board is a body that controls and administers lands (91% of Fiji's land mass) belonging to the indigenous iTaukei ethnic group in Fiji.

- ▷ 265 employees
- ▷ 40% female staff



Tackling Childcare workstream



Workplace Responses to Domestic and Sexual Violence workstream



“ At the iTaukei Land Trust Board our employees are key to our operation. Support of our employees' wellbeing during the current crisis is essential – that is why we will continue to foster a respectful and enabling working environment.”

Ms Joana Tira, Manager Human Capital, iTaukei Land Trust Board

Training delivered to employees also improved their empathy and understanding of challenges colleagues were facing during COVID-19, helping create a sense of confidence, and ensuring employees felt protected and supported by the organization. As a result of its employee survey, iTaukei Land Trust Board also introduced an after-school care service, providing further support to employees – the implementation was challenged due to the restrictions of COVID-19. As a result of these actions the organization continues to see improved staff loyalty and satisfaction, and an overall increase in productivity.

The case of iTaukei Land Trust Board demonstrates how a holistic and comprehensive review and update of gender policies can help support a culture change within organizations, helping support employees and strengthening commercial outcomes.



“ Following the sessions during COVID-19 we were able to support our employees better and, having had awareness sessions of respectful workplaces, our employees were better equipped to deal with disgruntled customers going through hardships at the time.”

Mere Wong – Senior Learning and Development Officer, iTaukei Land Trust Board

4. The Rakorako Workstreams



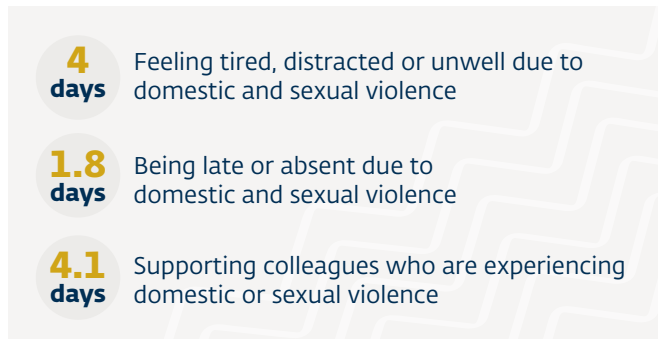
4.1. WORKSTREAM 1: WORKPLACE RESPONSES TO DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

The business case for workplace responses to domestic and sexual violence

Fiji has an extremely high rate of domestic and sexual violence, with over half the country’s women experiencing domestic or sexual violence during their lifetime.²⁴ This has serious negative impacts on individuals, families, communities, and workplaces, translating into lost staff time and reduced productivity equivalent to almost 10 days of lost work per employee each year.

It makes good business sense to introduce a formal and structured workplace response to domestic and sexual violence. Fijian companies can support affected employees, remove barriers to help employees achieve their full potential, mitigate productivity losses, reduce turnover costs, position themselves as an employer of choice, and contribute to their corporate social responsibility.

Figure 1: Annual average days lost per employee in Fiji due to domestic and sexual violence, whether they have experienced violence or not



Timeline - Workplace Responses to Domestic and Sexual Violence Stream

November 2019	Kick off workshop: Understanding your company’s business case
February 2020	Workshop: Respectful workplace policy
May 2020	Webinar: COVID impact survey results and recommended responses
June 2020	Webinar: Creating a caring company culture
August 2020	Workshop and webinar: Action planning sessions
October 2020	Workshop: Domestic and sexual violence policy

Overview of the Workplace Responses to Domestic and Sexual Violence workstream

A total of 25 companies signed up to the Workplace Responses to Domestic and Sexual Violence workstream. Sessions covered several key topics related to creating safe, supportive, and respectful workplaces for employees, and were tailored to account for the COVID-19 pandemic.

- **Respectful workplaces:** Participants were given guidance on how to develop and implement policies to create safe and respectful workplaces free from bullying and harassment. They were provided evidence of the scale and impact of workplace sexual harassment in Fiji, and information on the legal mechanisms to address it.
- **Supporting employees during COVID-19:** Guidance was provided on the elevated risks for employees during COVID-19, including from client aggression, workplace bullying, quid pro quo sexual harassment and domestic violence, and the support that companies could provide to employees to assist them during the pandemic.



“ In-house awareness sessions on bullying and harassment has encouraged more reports of bullying. [There is] increased support for employees affected by bullying and rehabilitation options for perpetrators of bullying such as counselling and anger management.”

Liliwaimanu Vuiyasawa - Public Issues Lawyer,
Munro Leys

“ The male staff see the females in the office differently; previously they were not appreciated but after Rakorako they are now treated with respect in the workplace. Rakorako slides are shared in the quarterly meetings along with discussions of better approaches to capture the Rakorako concepts in the organization. Awareness-raising of workplace bullying is ongoing via emails and department meetings.”

Viraaj Kantilal Lad - CEO, Bhikhabhai and Company Pte Limited

- **Creating a caring company culture:** The workstream included a focus on improving company culture, including how to respond to disrespectful behaviour and address customer and client aggressing, addressing workplace bullying and sexual harassment and how to encourage employees to become active bystanders who intervene when they see an issue.
- **Responses to domestic and sexual violence:** The final workshop of the series detailed how to provide support to staff who are experiencing domestic and sexual violence. The session provided an overview of how domestic and sexual violence affects employees' ability to work effectively and incurs a cost for firms in Fiji, and how to develop a supportive and non-judgmental workplace in which victims of domestic and sexual violence feel safe to come forward and seek support.

“ Raising awareness on domestic and sexual violence and establishing a referral system in the workplace empowered employees to come forward, report incidences and request help. Management responded by establishing relationships with counselling service providers and law enforcement agencies for the safety and wellbeing of our most valuable asset.”

Latileta Qoro – General Manager – Group Governance & HR, Vinod Patel and Company Pte Ltd

CASE STUDY: FIJI NATIONAL PROVIDENT FUND

Increasing support to staff experiencing personal challenges through the pandemic helped Fiji National Provident Fund build confidence with its staff and improve retention.

When Fiji National Provident Fund joined Rakorako it recognized that while staff were relatively accustomed to discussions about workplace violence and harassment, many were not well prepared to talk about domestic violence. However, Fiji National Provident Fund was committed to supporting staff facing personal challenges, and was confident of the positive impact it could have on the business.

Actions as part of Rakorako

- Enhanced its diversity and inclusion policy and incorporated domestic and sexual violence policies as part of a broader policy on harassment and sexual violence which now covers incidents that happen at home.
- Appointed an in-house counsellor, and all managers were trained to have an initial conversation with staff experiencing any issues of concern, and how to direct them towards resources for further support.
- Implemented remote and flexi-work policies after realising that many staff were facing childcare challenges due to early start times. Employees are now allowed to choose the start time that best suits their needs.
- Introduced split shifts early in the COVID-19 pandemic to meet social distancing guidelines and minimize risks.
- Created an email and online discussion forum for working parents to discuss topics such as day-care and nanny availability, children's medical facilities and for employees to seek information on domestic violence help centres.
- Introduced parental training for parents and carers.

Impact of Rakorako

Fiji National Provident Fund's actions have allowed staff to raise and address issues they would not have otherwise been comfortable discussing in the workplace, building confidence with employees. Most staff - especially women - have greatly appreciated the increased workplace flexibility, which allows them to manage their childcare needs more easily. Retention rates have improved, and turnover has reduced, with annual turnover declining from 50 percent overall at the beginning of the series to 25 percent for women and 13 percent for men at the end. The percentage of female employees remaining with the company one year following their maternity leave increased from 88 percent to 100 percent.

As an essential service provider, Fiji National Provident Fund has been obliged to keep its operations open throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. These provisions have helped the company to continue to do so, while keeping its employees safe.

Fiji National Provident Fund is Fiji's largest financial institution, offering retirement savings and pre-retirement benefits such as housing, medical and education assistance.

- ▷ 376 employees
- ▷ 48% female staff



Tackling Childcare workstream



Workplace Responses to Domestic and Sexual Violence workstream



“ Organizations need to understand that childcare needs and domestic and sexual violence is the reality which is faced by people that work for you, and you need to take responsibility for this as well... at the end of the day it affects the organization's productivity, it affects the organization's morale, and overall it affects the organization's culture as well.”

Ravinesh Krishna – General Human Resources Manager, Fiji National Provident Fund



4.2. WORKSTREAM 2: TACKLING CHILDCARE

The business case for employer-supported childcare in Fiji

Research by IFC found that each year businesses and the public sector in Fiji lose an average of 12.7 workdays per employee due to the responsibilities of working parents, which can cause absenteeism, lateness, low productivity, distraction, exhaustion, and stress. Only a small minority of working parents in Fiji currently use a childcare service and services that do exist are largely unregulated. The few affordable childcare services that are available are failing to meet the growing demands of families and this also has consequences for employers.

Childcare responsibilities are having significant impacts on the productivity of working mothers and fathers and their ability to consistently perform at work and focus on their jobs. The challenge of working and raising children in Fiji affects the choices parents make about the type of work they do; their career aspirations; the hours they work, and even whether they stay in the workforce at all. Impacts are significantly higher for women who are often the primary caregiver for children. Businesses can also incur considerable costs resulting from lost staff time due to childcare responsibilities. This can cost employers as much as \$265,000 (FJD\$550,000) a year in total or \$480 (FJD\$1,000) per employee.²⁵

By offering childcare support to employees, employers can expect a range of benefits. These include reduced absenteeism and turnover among workers with young children, greater employee concentration, motivation and productivity, improved ability to recruit employee relations and enhanced corporate reputation.

Timeline - Tackling Childcare: the Business Case for Employer Supported Childcare Stream

November 2019	Kick off workshop: Understanding your company's business case
February 2020	Workshop: Childcare demands assessment
May 2020	Webinar: COVID-19 impact survey results and recommended responses
June 2020	Webinar: Creating a flexible working policy
August 2020	Workshop and webinar: Action planning sessions

“ In entertaining and applying flexi hours much progress and productivity with our team has been experienced.”

Jane Koi – Manager, Administration – Shipping Services (Fiji) Pte Ltd



Overview of the Tackling Childcare workstream

Twenty-four companies initially signed up to the workstream, with several others subsequently attending sessions and adopting policies or practices. Guidance was provided to participants on key topics related to childcare.

- **Employer-supported childcare:** The workstream began by presenting the business case for employer-supported childcare in Fiji and gave an overview of the types of employer-supported childcare provisions that are most relevant to companies in Fiji. The workstream also detailed how to conduct a childcare demand assessment addressing availability, affordability, accessibility, and quality, and provided templates and survey instruments for data collection relevant to the context in Fiji. Participants were also provided with methods to assess absenteeism, presenteeism, and staff turnover and retention resulting from unmet childcare needs in their companies.
- **Flexible working:** As providing flexible working options to employees became a more pressing consideration for many companies during the COVID-19 pandemic, the workstream detailed the different flexible working models that could be suitable for companies in Fiji. These included variable start and finish times, flexible working hours, split shifts, job sharing and home-based working. Participants discussed the key steps to designing an effective flexible work policy, how to identify and address potential employee and management concerns related to flexible working, and important considerations when communicating with staff about a flexible work program. They were provided with a flexible working policy template to use when drafting their organization's policy.

CASE STUDY: **MUNRO LEYS**

Munro Leys believes that helping employees meet their childcare needs and ensuring their safety and wellbeing benefits both their employees and the firm in the long run.

Munro Leys was motivated to join Rakorako to refine its approach to supporting employees and strengthen its childcare practices. With a mostly female workforce, the firm believes on-site childcare and additional leave options would benefit employees and the business in the long run.

Actions as part of Rakorako

- Developed a ‘zero tolerance to inaction’ clause²⁶ to address gender-based violence and workplace bullying, including strengthening existing policies such as the reporting and grievances system.
- Conducted sessions on domestic violence to ensure that staff were aware of support services available internally and externally, and legal options to pursue if they experience domestic violence.
- In the process of implementing an expanded domestic violence policy with IFC’s guidance.
- Introduced additional parental leave, and policies for flexible work.
- Providing a dedicated child friendly space at the office for children who need to accompany their parents, including for after school care.
- In addition to internal reforms, Rakorako support motivated Munro Leys to share information on how to address gender-based violence during the pandemic to its own corporate clients.
- Conducted in-house training on workplace bullying and sexual harassment.

Impact of Rakorako

Munro Leys’ actions to strengthen gender equality have resulted in a more sensitive and supported workforce. There is a greater recognition and respect among employees for the work being done to advance gender equality and eliminate gender-based violence in the workplace and community. Munro Leys has also increased awareness of risks related gender-based violence amongst its clients.

“ The support and effectiveness of our engagement with Rakorako has been immense, and we look forward to more collaborations in future... Through Rakorako, I believe that we are more conscious of our actions and behaviors towards each other. I find people correcting themselves or apologizing if they have said something that sounded sexist or discriminatory.”

Liliwaimanu Vuiyasawa - Public Issues Lawyer, Munro Leys

Munro Leys is Fiji’s largest law firm. Operating for over 140 years, it has extensive client engagements in all of Fiji’s major business sectors.

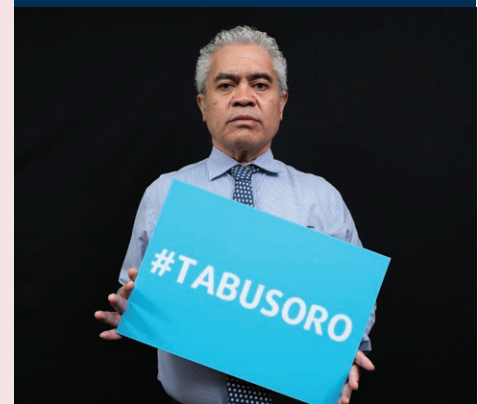
- ▷ 54 employees
- ▷ 70% female staff



Tackling Childcare workstream



Workplace Responses to Domestic and Sexual Violence workstream



“ Domestic violence is a national problem that affects our workers’ physical and mental health and their productivity. As employers, we must do our part to enhance the safety and wellbeing of every member of our team.”

Jon Apted - Partner, Munro Leys

CASE STUDY: **PACKLEADER BPO**

By identifying and responding to employee demand for childcare support and encouraging more respectful workplace conduct Packleader BPO has improved its culture and raised employee satisfaction.

Packleader BPO considers its employees a key asset to its business. However, the working environment in the company's call centres has not always been welcoming to women, and staff were not comfortable discussing and addressing the issues of bullying and domestic violence experienced by some employees.

Actions as part of Rakorako

- Held consultations with employees and conducted an employee survey, through which they identified a need for more respectful workplace practices, and demand for support with childcare.
- Implemented a respectful workplace policy covering bullying and sexual harassment.
- Introduced a flexible working arrangement, made available on a case by case basis, allowing staff to better manage home responsibilities while still delivering on work targets.²⁷
- Began providing counselling support through local service providers and assisting employees with legal arrangements related to cases of domestic violence.

Impact of Rakorako

Packleader BPO's new policies have improved awareness of acceptable workplace behaviour and encouraged employees to speak up and report concerns. Employees are also better informed on how they can seek support through the newly established referral system, and the company has taken actions to provide support to working parents, including introducing provisions for flexible working. The improvement in company culture that resulted from these changes has also translated into stronger organizational performance, demonstrating how creating a more respectful and supportive working environment can also deliver commercial returns for companies.

“ The process created a peaceful open forum and common ground to discuss and agree on solutions. This has greatly assisted HR and Management to understand how to better respond to employees on their well-being and at the same time maintain business continuity. We observed a decrease in absenteeism, improvement in employee satisfaction and loyalty, and there's evident positive changes in workplace culture”.

Neha Kumar – HR manager, Packleader BPO

Packleader BPO is the Fiji arm of Australian Packleader Group. It provides a range of outsourcing and telemarketing services.

- ▷ 180 employees
- ▷ 72% female staff



Tackling Childcare workstream



Workplace Responses to Domestic and Sexual Violence workstream



“ Our company cares about our employees and that is why over the next year we will continue to implement our respectful workplaces policies, continue training for staff and establish a team to support employees affected by domestic and sexual violence.”

Unaisi Nadumu – Local Director, Packleader BPO

5. Impacts of Rakorako

5.1. POLICIES IMPLEMENTED THROUGH RAKORAKO

Rakorako supported and guided the participating companies to review their policies related to childcare, domestic and sexual violence, respectful workplaces and flexible working. Where policy gaps were identified, they were encouraged to update them in line with international good practice, and drawing from IFC's global expertise.

Companies implemented a wide range of new policies after their participation in Rakorako, motivated in part by a desire to provide additional support and protection to their employees during the challenging events of 2020. In total, 65 new policies or practices were implemented, and 19 out of 28 of the participants introduced or updated at least one policy or initiative. Among those not implementing new policies, a significant number renewed their focus on the consistent application and widespread communication of existing policies, or increased their informal support to staff. Many companies with existing policies in place highlighted that Rakorako had focused management's attention on the issues of childcare and GBV. Additionally, responses to the endline survey revealed that many companies were in the process of approving or implementing additional policies inspired by Rakorako.

In total, 14 Rakorako participants reported introducing or improving at least one policy on domestic or sexual violence, and 12 implementing or improving at least one childcare-related policy through the program. Anti-sexual harassment policies were implemented by 11 companies, making them the most common. Next most common were anti-bullying and domestic violence policies (each introduced by eight) and flexible work policies (implemented by seven companies).

Common childcare-related policies covered school vacation, after school or emergency childcare support (implemented by five participants), and additional parental leave for carers and enhanced maternity leave policies. Onsite childcare provision – a considerable investment and undertaking for any organization, made more complicated by the pandemic – was implemented by two companies. In addition to these changes, many other participants reported being in the process of



“ Previously, women in the organization experienced bullying and disrespect. The engagement with Rakorako program has developed an understanding of gender equality at the workplace. Another area of concern was absenteeism, and this had been rectified by regular meetings with staff.”

Yogeeta Raj – HR Manager, Mark One Apparel Pte Limited

discussing or finalizing new policies at the time of the endline survey in April 2021, which coincided with the start of the second COVID-19 wave in Fiji. Many of the companies to introduce flexible work policies also did so with the intention of supporting their staff to manage childcare needs throughout the pandemic. Many more took informal guidance from the sessions to help accommodate their employees' flexible working needs during COVID-19 and in response to tropical cyclones.

“ Companies survive only if they work to serve the nation and its people. It starts with caring for employees’ safety and well-being. That is why we implement workplace policies and practices on Respectful Workplaces.”

Ram Bajekal – Chief Executive Officer, FMF Foods Ltd

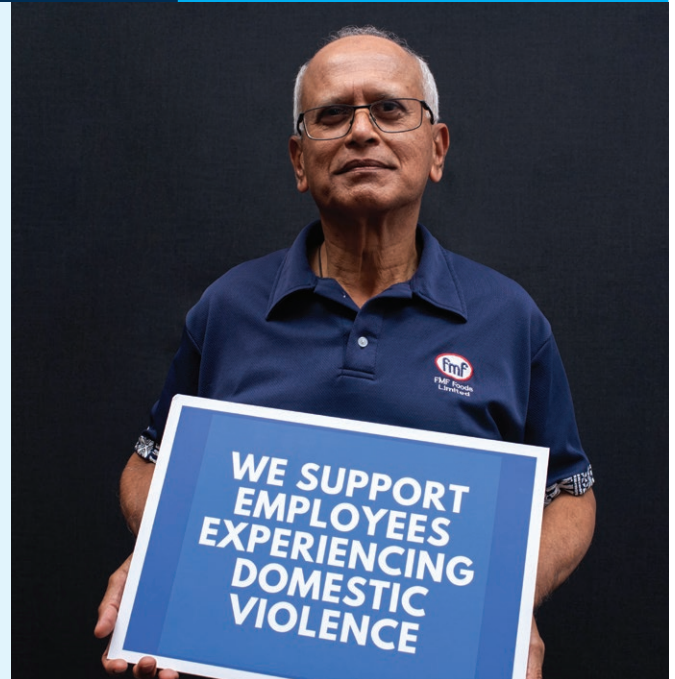
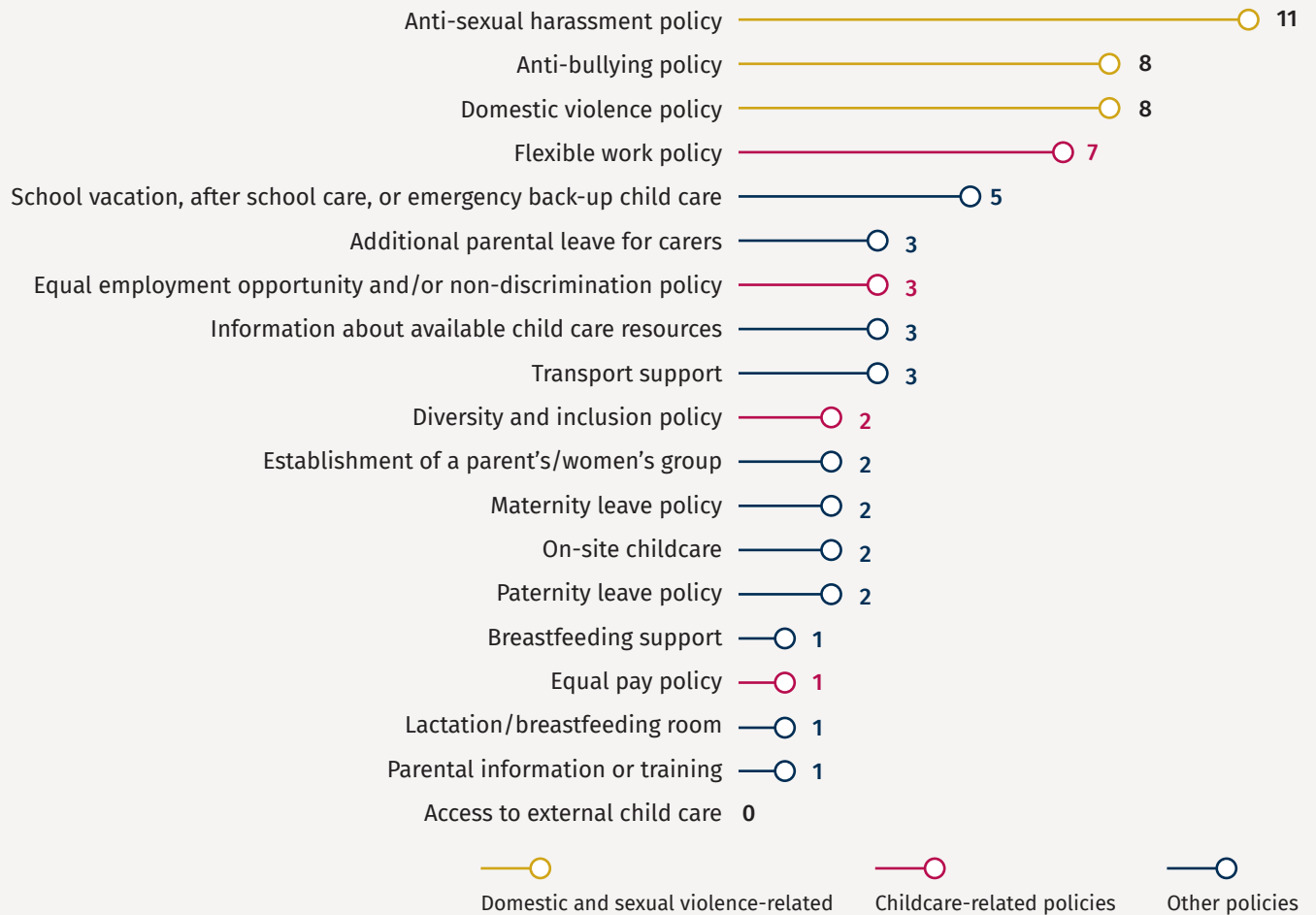


Figure 2: Number of organizations that drafted, implemented or improved policies through Rakorako - out of 28 total participants



5.2. BENEFITS TO COMPANIES FROM RAKORAKO

Companies reported a range of benefits resulting from their participation in Rakorako.



In addition to improving staff and company culture after participating in Rakorako, of the 28 participating companies, 18 also reported some business benefits, demonstrating that addressing employee childcare needs and supporting employees with domestic and sexual violence can also provide commercial returns to businesses.

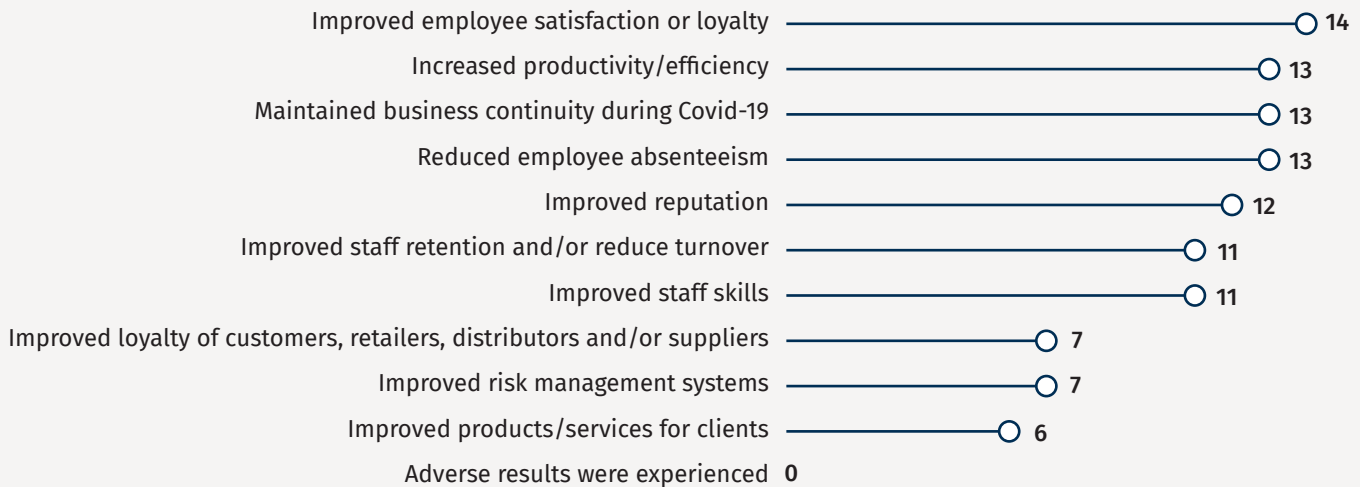
The most common benefit was improved employee satisfaction or loyalty, which was identified by 14 companies. Others were improved productivity and efficiency and reduced employee absenteeism, each reported by 13 companies; improved reputation – experienced by 12 companies – and improved staff skills and retention – each reported by 11 companies (see Figure 3).

Notably, 13 companies reported that Rakorako helped them to maintain business continuity during COVID-19. The program’s pivot to focus on content relevant during the pandemic, in particular its support to implement flexible working policies was reflected in this considerable impact on participants.

“Rakorako has been significant in the realization that these issues being addressed in the workplace – it affects the bottom line and duty of care of employer has expanded also for the good of the company... changes across various companies are encouraging and has a positive domino effect through private sector.”

Mere Wong – Senior Learning and Development Officer, iTaukei Land Trust Board

Figure 3: Number of entities experiencing business benefits as a result of participating in Rakorako - out of 28 total participants





“ Impact on private sector was powerful and important especially in making HR/Businesses aware of their role in curbing these issues raised by Rakorako and being able to address them in the workplace.”

Yvette Samson - Manager Human Resources, Kontiki Finance Limited

“ Rakorako gave us an opportunity to build a unique relationship with our staff members; they are able to openly communicate with Senior Management engaging in a productive workplace. The program made us achieve decreased staff absenteeism and engagement with staff family matters to better assist them and increase attendance. I would say it now has a cyclical effect on the business as a whole. Happy employees means increased productivity.”

Sakario Rabuli - Human Resource Manager, Bhikhabhai and Company Pte Limited

5.3. CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE GLOBAL PRIVATE SECTOR RESPONSE TO COVID-19

Learnings from working with Rakorako participants in the early stages of the pandemic contributed to several IFC publications that influenced the private sector’s attempts to mitigate the gender-differentiated impact of the pandemic, and highlighted the resilience (tabu soro) of Fijian workplaces in times of crisis.

The IFC global guidance note *COVID-19 and Gender-Based Violence: Workplace Risks and Responses*,²⁹ *Childcare in the COVID-19 Era: A Guide for Employers*,³⁰ *Tabu Soro: Building Resilient Workplaces in Fiji: Wormald Case Study*³¹ and *COVID-19 and Gender Equality: Six Actions for the Private Sector*³² were all based in part or in full on the experiences of Rakorako companies during the pandemic. The Rakorako presentation on how to implement an effective flexible work policy was subsequently adopted for use global use by IFC, including being deployed with private sector partners in Jordan and Egypt.³³

6. Conclusion

6.1. THE LESSONS LEARNED FROM RAKORAKO

Rakorako has demonstrated that there is demand and capacity in Fiji for the private sector to take action to create respectful and supportive workplaces. Even during the challenges created by the economic shocks of COVID-19 and multiple cyclones, companies were willing and able to take action to address the pressing needs of all employees and adapt to the evolving requirements of their workforce.

It is important that companies in Fiji continue what they have begun during the Rakorako series and encourage more dialogue within their companies, and throughout workplaces in Fiji more broadly. IFC will continue working with the private sector in Fiji to drive equal employment opportunities, expand the learnings and good practice established through the Rakorako workshop series to the private sector, as well as support future improvements by the participants in the series.

Rakorako provides a blueprint for companies in Fiji to implement gender sensitive policies and practices that support employees and meet business needs. The results highlighted in this report provide strong early evidence that taking action can result in substantial benefits to companies, improving working environments and staff satisfaction. It is likely that this early evidence will translate into longer-term benefits and increased resilience for companies that continue to pursue the reforms they have initiated as part of Rakorako.

IFC will take these encouraging early results as a starting point to broaden awareness of the business case for taking action on gender in Fiji, with the results from Rakorako providing a strong foundation for IFC's next phase of gender work with the private sector in the country. As COVID-19 continues to take a heavy toll on Fiji in 2021, and with the objective of creating an inclusive economic recovery from the pandemic, it is vital the private sector learns from Rakorako's practical solutions for implementing flexible working arrangements, providing support for working parents, creating more respectful workplaces and assisting employees experiencing domestic or sexual violence.

The Government of Fiji has also recognized the importance of many of the topics addressed during the Rakorako workshop series, most notably working with IFC to expand the provision of childcare. IFC is supporting the Fijian Government with developing its early childhood care services policy and regulations to ensure safe and quality childcare services in Fiji. The agreement will also ensure basic minimum standards for early childcare services and introduce a licensing and inspection system for service providers.

6.2. KEY TAKEAWAYS

- There is a strong business case for creating more gender equal workplaces in Fiji. Raising awareness of this is key to increasing women's low rate of economic participation.
- Identifying and addressing employee demand for family friendly, flexible, and more respectful workplace environments enabled Rakorako companies to strengthen their culture, raise employee satisfaction, improve retention and reduce absenteeism.
- Companies were in a stronger position to respond to COVID-19 lockdowns and tropical cyclones as they had already considered family friendly and flexible workplace policies through Rakorako.
- Trialling flexible and remote working helped participating companies understand the model's benefits and overcome management concerns relating to productivity.
- Senior management support was key to Rakorako's success. Having CEO buy-in enabled companies to put resources behind implementing the reforms recommended through the program.
- Companies demonstrated a desire to create more respectful and supportive workplaces for their employees but needed guidance on how to make the necessary changes. Rakorako helped overcome these barriers, and it is important to demonstrate effective models that can be adopted by others.
- Providing participants with a platform to discuss and learn from each other was a key benefit of Rakorako, allowing companies to share challenges and solutions.

Appendix 1: Methodology

To measure the impacts of Rakorako, a survey was administered with representatives from the HR department of the 28 participating companies at the beginning of the program (Jan – April 2020) and upon its completion (April – May 2021).

The baseline survey covered the following topics:

- Companies' workforce data, including sex-disaggregated data broken down by levels
- Existence of HR policies and practices around creating family-friendly workplace and supporting employees facing GBV, sexual harassment or bullying
- Customized data for each stream to measure potential changes in employees' behaviours


















The endline survey covered similar questions to the baseline, with the following adjustments:

- A set of questions were added to capture clients' feedback on the program's delivery, its contribution to any changes they had implemented within their organization, and the business impact of their participation in Rakorako.
- Several questions from the baseline were dropped as most companies had been found not to collect such information.

In addition to the baseline and endline survey results, the report also makes use of anonymous feedback provided by participants through the post-training evaluation questionnaires, which were collected throughout the series.

Appendix 2: Detailed timeline of Rakorako activities

Table 1: Timeline of Rakorako events

November 2019		Rakorako launch events in Nadi and Suva
January 2020		CEO Corporate Breakfast: Presenting the program to private sector leaders - Suva
February 2020		Workshop: Childcare demand assessment and respectful workplace policy – Nadi
February 2020		Workshop: Childcare demand assessment and respectful workplace policy – Suva
April 2020		Virtual Check-in Call: Discussion of COVID-19 impacts and responses & pivot to online delivery.
April 2020		COVID impact survey shared with Rakorako participants
May 2020		Webinar: COVID-19 impact survey results and recommended responses
June 2020		Online refresher workshop: Demand assessment for employer-supported childcare
June 2020		Webinar: Creating a caring company culture
June 2020		Webinar: Creating a flexible working policy
August 2020		Webinar and in person: Rakorako action planning: Session 1
August 2020		Webinar and in person: Rakorako action planning: Session 2
August 2020		Webinar and in person: Rakorako action planning: Session 3
October 2020		Workshop: Domestic and sexual violence policy – Nadi
October 2020		Workshop: Domestic and sexual violence policy – Suva
November 2020		Launch of 16 days of activism social media campaign
March 2021		IFC / FHRI Corporate Breakfast – Celebrating International Women’s Day – TABU SORO – Resilient Workplaces

Endnotes

- 1 Although Rakorako participants are described throughout this report as companies, they included several organizations that are part or fully government-owned or managed, including: iTaukei Land Trust Board, Fiji Development Bank, Fiji National Provident Fund, Fiji Roads Authority and Telecom Fiji Pte Limited. Additionally, Fiji Hotel and Tourism Association is an NGO.
- 2 International Labour Organization, ILOSTAT database, 2019
- 3 World Health Organization (2021) Violence against women prevalence estimates, 2018 <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240022256>
- 4 Sheldon Chanel, "Crisis within a crisis": Violence surges against women in Fiji", Al Jazeera, February 24, 2021 <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/2/24/crisis-within-a-crisis-violence-against-women-surges-in-fiji>
- 5 Refers to all employees of companies that implemented or updated at least one policy or practice as a result of Rakorako.
- 6 IFC (May 2019) Tackling Childcare: The Business Case for Employer Supported Childcare in Fiji https://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/region_ext_content/ifc_external_corporate_site/east+asia+and+the+pacific/resources/tackling+childcare-the+business+case+for+e+employer+supported+childcare+in+fiji
- 7 IFC (July 2019) The Business Case for Workplace Responses to Domestic and Sexual Violence in Fiji https://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/region_ext_content/ifc_external_corporate_site/east+asia+and+the+pacific/resources/fiji-domestic+and+sexual+violence+report
- 8 The World Bank (2021) Fiji, <https://data.worldbank.org/country/fiji>;
- 9 The Fijian Government. (2020, October 16). *Gender-Based Violence 'A Global Pandemic'* [Press release]. Retrieved from <https://www.fiji.gov.fj/Media-Centre/News/Feature-Stories/Gender-Based-Violence-%E2%80%98A-Global-Pandemic%E2%80%99>
- 10 International Labour Organization, ILOSTAT database, 2019
- 11 *Ibid*
- 12 World Health Organization (2021) Violence against women prevalence estimates, 2018 <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240022256>
- 13 Asian Development Bank (2015) Fiji Country Gender Assessment 2015 <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/institutional-document/210826/fiji-cga-2015.pdf>
- 14 IFC (May 2019) Tackling Childcare: The Business Case for Employer Supported Childcare in Fiji https://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/region_ext_content/ifc_external_corporate_site/east+asia+and+the+pacific/resources/tackling+childcare-the+business+case+for+e+employer+supported+childcare+in+fiji
- 15 IFC (2019) The Business Case for Workplace Responses to Domestic and Sexual Violence in Fiji https://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/region_ext_content/ifc_external_corporate_site/east+asia+and+the+pacific/resources/fiji-domestic+and+sexual+violence+report
- 16 IFC (2019) Tackling Childcare: The Business Case for Employer-Supported Childcare in Fiji https://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/region_ext_content/ifc_external_corporate_site/east+asia+and+the+pacific/resources/tackling+childcare-the+business+case+for+e+employer+supported+childcare+in+fiji
- 17 The Fijian Government has set up an Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Taskforce Committee under the National Coordinating Committee for Children (NCCC) to address the gap in the operating environment for early childhood care services. The taskforce is comprised of relevant stakeholders on early childhood care and education from government departments, private sector businesses, the childcare services sector and development partners including IFC, the World Bank and UNICEF. Recently the Fijian Government signed a cooperation agreement with IFC for this work on early childhood care services policy and regulation in Fiji. This work will be carried out with the oversight of the ECCE Taskforce to ensure a multi-sectoral approach is taken.
- 18 Tropical Cyclone Sarai in December 2019 and January 2020, Severe Tropical Cyclone Tino in January 2020, Severe Tropical Cyclone Harold in April 2020, Severe Tropical Cyclone Yasa in December 2020, Severe Tropical Cyclone Ana in January and February 2021, and Tropical Cyclone Bina in January 2021.
- 19 World Bank, "US\$50 Million Boost to Fiji's Social Protection System to Address Employment Impacts of COVID-19" Press release, February 9, 2021 <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2021/02/09/us50-million-boost-to-fijis-social-protection-system-to-address-employment-impacts-of-covid-19>
- 20 IFC (2020) Fiji COVID-19 Business Survey: Tourism Focus https://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/region_ext_content/ifc_external_corporate_site/east+asia+and+the+pacific/resources/fiji+covid-19+business+survey+-+tourism+focus
- 21 Naveel Krishant, "PM confirms 115,000 Fijians have lost their jobs or have had their hours cut as a result of COVID-19", *Fiji Village*, July 9th 2021 <https://www.fijivillage.com/news/PM-confirms-115000-Fijians-have-lost-their-jobs-or-have-had-their-hours-cut-as-a-result-of-COVID-19-8fxr45/>
- 22 IFC (April 2020) Childcare in the COVID-19 era: A Guide for Employers https://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/topics_ext_content/ifc_external_corporate_site/gender+at+ifc/resources/childcare+and+covid+guidance+for+employers
- 23 FHRI also conducted a survey of its members early in the pandemic and found similarly stark results, with 80 percent of the 37 businesses that participated reporting some impact from COVID19, particularly with finance, access to customers, and availability of staff, and 43 percent having to implement new flexible working policies.
- 24 FWCC (2013) *Somebody's Life, Everybody's Business!* National Research on Women's Health and Life Experiences in Fiji (2010/2011) <https://pacificwomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/FWCC-National-Research-on-Womens-Health-Fiji.pdf> and Suva: Violence against Women Prevalence Data: Surveys by Country Compiled by UN Women http://www.endvawnow.org/uploads/browser/files/vawprevalence_matrix_june2013.pdf
- 25 IFC (2019) Tackling Childcare: The Business Case for Employer-Supported Childcare in Fiji https://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/region_ext_content/ifc_external_corporate_site/east+asia+and+the+pacific/resources/tackling+childcare-the+business+case+for+e+employer+supported+childcare+in+fiji
- 26 While IFC does not recommend zero tolerance policies (for instance, automatic termination of perpetrators) because they can discourage reporting, 'zero-tolerance to inaction' can encompass a wider range of more nuanced responses.
- 27 A formal flexible working policy has been recommended by IFC as an opportunity to further increase support to staff.
- 28 Although only 13 organizations implemented new policies related to workplace bullying or sexual harassment, feedback from many other participants suggested that Rakorako provided their organizations with an increased awareness of these issues in the workplace, and a strengthened capacity to address them.
- 29 IFC (July 2020) COVID-19 and Gender-Based Violence: Workplace Risks and Responses https://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/topics_ext_content/ifc_external_corporate_site/gender+at+ifc/resources/covid19+and+gender+based+violence+workplace+risks+and+responses

- ³⁰ IFC (April 2020) Childcare in the COVID-19 era: A Guide for Employers https://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/topics_ext_content/ifc_external_corporate_site/gender+at+ifc/resources/childcare+and+covid+guidance+for+employers
- ³¹ IFC (March 2021) Tabu Soro: Building Resilient Workplaces in Fiji: Wormald Case Study https://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/region_ext_content/ifc_external_corporate_site/east+asia+and+the+pacific/resources/tabu+soro-wormald+case+study
- ³² IFC (November 2020) COVID-19 and Gender Equality: Six Actions for the Private Sector https://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/d42380a5-1da3-4605-812e-036125bd6659/202011_IFC_GuidanceNote_COVID19_Gender+B.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CVID=nm-19lc
- ³³ American Chamber of Commerce in Egypt: Remote and Flexible Working Policies During Covid-19 and Beyond , Online September 24, 2020 <https://www.amcham.org.eg/events-activities/events/1303/remote-and-flexible-working-policies-during-covid-19-and-beyond>





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September 2021

