



# FDC

THE FOUNDATION FOR  
**Development Cooperation**

## Partners Improving Marketplaces Project

Piloting New Initiatives for “Empowerment of Women Vendors  
and Engendering Market Management in Melanesia”  
(Phase Two)

Partners Improving Marketplaces is a Melanesia-wide project that seeks to improve the social, economic and physical conditions of women market vendors and to encourage local governments and those managing markets to adopt a gender responsive approach to marketplace planning, operations and governance.



A market vendor with her stall in Suva, Fiji

### Background

Phase Two of the Partners Improving Marketplaces (PIM) Project (Fiji) sought to build upon the ground work established in Phase One of the project, which consisted of a widespread scan of markets throughout Melanesia. Phase Two provided invaluable insights into the inner workings of marketplaces and the economic activities surrounding the markets. A number of issues, areas of need and concerns for women market vendors were raised following Phase One, including:

- Lack of transport facilities to get themselves and their goods to and from the market
- Lack of basic facilities such as clean toilets, shelter, water supply and clean surroundings
- Lack of safety and security measures to protect themselves
- Uncooperative local government authorities
- Outdated or vague regulations regarding market vendors and their rights
- Lack of organised vendor representation
- Lack of business development services for women vendors (i.e. microfinance and other services), and
- Occasionally limited asset management and maintenance systems.

### Project Activities

The aims of Phase Two in Fiji were to focus on a smaller number of specific markets and to pilot responses to the identified needs from PIM Phase One.

Activities undertaken to meet these aims included:

- 1) Providing recommendations for the development of a Fiji Market Improvement Handbook to guide the improvement of markets
- 2) Reviewing existing market by-laws and developing recommendations for improvement through a participatory process with market stakeholders
- 3) Assessing current asset management policies in existing markets and helping to develop enabling conditions for the diversification of market products



Women and children at a market in PNG

4. Facilitating the formation of rural women market vendors associations
5. Assisting selected markets and stakeholders in preparing donor proposals for market improvements, and
6. Contributing to national policies on market places as part of informal sector development.



A market vendor with her produce in Honiara, Solomon Islands

## Project Outcomes

PIM activity outcomes included:

- Recommendations provided for the development of a Fiji-wide Market Improvement Handbook
- Provision of a market by-laws framework which addresses gender sensitivities
- Analysis of asset management policies of target markets
- Economic analysis of each target market, which provided a platform for advocacy
- Training of women market vendors in forming associations, and
- Development of a guidelines toolkit for roll-out across other marketplaces in Fiji.

## PIM Phase Three

UN Women contracted FDC to design the Fiji PIM Phase Three Project in 2011-12, which will build new gender sensitive approaches to planning, developing and improving markets, and engage in small-scale capital works/infrastructural improvements in the five target municipal markets.

PIM Phase III will build upon the achievements and lessons from the Phase II pilot activities to raise the awareness, sensitivity and responsiveness of local governments to gender issues in the management of marketplaces.

Project activities within this phase will empower market women using a rights-based approach, and assist them to be fully engaged decision-makers and technical specialists.

This project will further develop their capacity to participate in planning, policy revisions providing input to gender-sensitive budgeting, and building partnerships for shared decision-making between women market vendors and market authorities.

Phase Three core outputs will be physical infrastructure improvements and enhanced institutions, from both a top-down governance perspective and a bottom-up empowerment and opportunities perspective.

### For more information on PIM contact:

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