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Participation of women in development

**With particular emphasis on people participation
in the Fiji pine forestry sector**

**A Theses submitted in partial fulfilment of
the degree of Master of Philosophy**

By

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Abstract

The study examines the degree and authenticity of women's and men's participation at four levels of the development arena: The development organisations of Development Assistance Countries (DAC), the New Zealand Development Cooperation Division of the Ministry of External Relations and Trade (MERT), the Fiji Pine Limited and the two participating case study villages of the Fiji Pine project; Vakabull and Tau. The thesis starts with the premise that the degree of participation depends on the question: who controls the central institutions of a given society?

For the development organisations of the Development Assistance Countries, strongly positive, significant correlations were seen between the independent variable of the Proportion of Women Parliamentarians and the dependent variables of the UNDP Gender Index, Proportion of GNP spent on Development cooperation and the Proportion of Development Budget spent on Women In Development. These results present strong evidence that a high proportion of women power-holders are influential in improving development solidarity and gender equality at the policy level.

Compared to most Development Assistance countries, nominal women's representation in the Ministry of External Relations and Trade of New Zealand's Development Cooperation Division was above average with an increasing number of women in mid-hierarchy positions. Overall, the study of the Development Cooperation Division found a low level of gender awareness and a high variability of conceptual understanding of participation among the survey participants.

Within the organisation of Fiji Pine Limited significant inequality was found in regard to women's access to training. Furthermore, as was the case with the Development Cooperation Division, the degree of gender awareness was low and the conceptual understanding of participation highly variable among the survey participants.

The village case study found that for women, patriarchy is most strongly pronounced during adolescent, early marriage and the reproduction phase, and that patriarchal control reduced with age. Women were found to participate to a low degree, and in a passive mode in project implementation. While women had access to most of the project's inputs and benefits, they practically never had control over them.

Overall, the men and women of Vakabull and Tau villages were participating in a passive mode which was characterised by minimal information flow, little project related knowledge, little project co-responsibility and inadequate conflict solving structures. The study found that women could be more actively involved in the tree nurseries, tree planting and tree weeding in the area of independent contractors. The second avenue for active women's participation was professional women extension workers, forestry managers and project administrators.

Overall, the thesis confirmed the view that the degree of participation in development is a function of the importance of the roles played by gender in their society's central institutions.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| BCA | Benefit Cost Analysis |
| BNA | Basic Needs Approach |
| CDC | Commonwealth Development Corporation |
| DAC | Development Assistance Countries of the OECD |
| DAC-Survey | Survey conducted with bilateral and multilateral development organisations |
| DEA | Department of External Affairs |
| DEV | Development Cooperation Division of MERT |
| EAD | External Aid Division |
| EIB | European Investment Bank |
| F | Female |
| FAO | Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations |
| FPC | Fiji Pine Commission |
| FPL | Fiji Pine Limited |
| FPL-Survey | Survey conducted with FPL |
| GDI | Gender sensitive Development Index |
| HDI | Human Development Index |
| ILO | International Labour Organisation |
| IRR | Internal Rate of Return |
| NGO | Non-Government Organisation |
| NLC | Native Land Commission |
| NLTB | Native Land Trust Board |
| NZ | New Zealand |
| M | Male |
| MFA | Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| MERT | Ministry of External Relations and Trade |
| MERT-Survey | Survey conducted with the DEV of MERT |
| ODA | Overseas Development Assistance |
| OECD | Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| PO | Participant Observation |
| RRA | Rapid Rural Appraisal |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNRISD | United Nations Research Institute for Social Development |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| WID | Women In Development |

GLOSSARY

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Koro | Village |
| Sevusevu | Greeting ceremony |
| Vuvale | Household |
| Vakabull | Case study village in Lololo estate |
| Tau | Case study village in Nabou estate |
| Taukei | People of the land |
| Turaga | Chief |
| Turaga - ni - Koro | Village Chief |
| Turaga - ni - Mataqali | Chief of sub-clan and land owning unit |
| Turaga - ni - Yavusa | Chief of clan |
| Turaga - ni - Vanua | Chief of tribe |
| Tokatoka | Extended family |
| Tabua | Whale's tooth |
| Yaqona | Common Fijian drink |