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**SOCIAL CAPITAL AND COHESIVE URBAN COMMUNITIES:
EXAMINING THE IMPACT OF CULTURE, RELIGION AND OTHER
LIVED EXPERIENCE ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
PROCESSES IN INFORMAL AND SQUATTER SETTLEMENTS IN
FIJI.**

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DECLARATION

I, *Kirk Yates*, hereby declare that this supervised research project is entirely my own work. All ideas, data and other information that have been reproduced and compiled herein have been duly acknowledged to their respective sources. Any other omissions and errors technical or otherwise, I fully acknowledge as my own.

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ABSTRACT

SOCIAL CAPITAL AND COHESIVE URBAN COMMUNITIES: AN EXAMINATION OF THE IMPACT OF CULTURE, RELIGION AND OTHER LIVED EXPERIENCE ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROCESSES IN INFORMAL AND SQUATTER SETTLEMENTS IN FIJI

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Urbanisation of Pacific cities is causing substantial growth in squatter settlements, particularly in Fiji. This growth in squatter settlements is placing government resources under stress in terms of affordable housing solutions and extension of essential services on government capacities. Furthermore, unregulated urbanisation processes are leaving many squatter settlements living below the poverty line and placing settlers increasingly under survival pressures. Many have studied the various poverty and social dynamics affecting squatter settlements in Fiji as well as the government and non-government institutional responses to these situations. This thesis addresses how the urban poor in settlements marshal the necessary resources to organise inclusive and effectual communities that can influence public policy directions on issues that affect them. The assumption in this thesis considers that squatters face significant cultural and ideological barriers that either support or block their ability to function adequately in their challenging settings. Furthermore, this thesis explores the impacts of culture, religion and lived experiences on urban community development processes and how these experiences may affect the socio-economic well-being of community members.

This research was based on primary data collection from a sample of eighteen householders across three contrasting squatter settlements in Suva, Fiji, during 2008. Householders were surveyed with application of a structured and internationally authenticated social capital-integrated questionnaire. The survey

was used to investigate settlers' perceptions of the various organisational and social cohesion indicators in communities considered necessary to support community functioning. Of particular interest was the relative significance and importance of key social capital indicators. Social capital was seen as prerequisite for community development in a Fijian, Indo-Fijian and an integrated settlement. This thesis investigated how people might work together to sustain socially cohesive communities. The community organisational and interactive data indicators were analysed to compare the capacity assessment results and presented in a visual format to provide a 'snapshot in time' of the status of community relations in the squatter settlements studied. It is contended that this approach could present a potential application for communities, government institutions and development practitioners to employ as an instrument to monitor the progress of community capacity development in future.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---------------------|-----|
| Declaration | ii |
| Acknowledgements | iii |
| Abstract | iv |
| List of Photographs | ix |
| List of Tables | x |
| List of Figures | x |

Chapter One

Introduction [4,867]

| | |
|--|----|
| 1.1 Introduction to Research Topic | 1 |
| 1.2 Research Questions and Research Plan | 8 |
| 1.3 Hypothesis and Assumptions | 13 |
| 1.4 Scope and Structure of Thesis | 15 |

Chapter Two

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework: Social Capital: Theories in Development [7,207]

| | |
|--|----|
| 2.1 Introduction | 17 |
| 2.2 The Ascension of Social Capital Theory in Development Thinking | 18 |
| 2.2.1 Origins of Social Capital | 18 |
| 2.2.2 Growth or Justice | 19 |
| 2.3 Forms of Social Capital | 22 |
| 2.4 Components of Social Capital | 26 |
| 2.4.1 Trust and Shared Values | 27 |
| 2.4.2 Networks and Voluntary Associations | 28 |
| 2.4.3 Bonding, Bridging and Linking | 30 |
| 2.4.4 Social Cohesion | 32 |
| 2.5 Social Capital and its Recent Application to Community Development | 35 |
| 2.6 Conclusion | 40 |

Chapter Three

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework: Culture and Identity: Theories in Development [5,708]

| | |
|--------------------------------------|----|
| 3.1 Introduction | 42 |
| 3.2 The Constructs of Identity | 44 |
| 3.3 The Place of Culture in Identity | 48 |

| | | |
|-----|------------------------------------|----|
| 3.4 | Social Identity Influences in Fiji | 51 |
| 3.5 | Conclusion | 58 |

Chapter Four

Fiji Country Background [7,825]

| | | |
|-------|--|----|
| 4.1 | Introduction | 60 |
| 4.2 | Fiji: An Overview | 60 |
| 4.2.1 | Historical Context | 65 |
| 4.2.2 | Twenty Years of Political Instability | 66 |
| 4.3 | Poverty in Fiji | 68 |
| 4.3.1 | Urbanisation and Poverty in Fiji | 71 |
| 4.3.2 | Section Summary | 81 |
| 4.4 | Fijian Social Structures | 81 |
| 4.4.1 | Reflections on Indigenous Fijian Culture | 81 |
| 4.4.2 | Reflections on Indo-Fijian Culture | 87 |
| 4.4.3 | Section Summary | 90 |
| 4.5 | Conclusion | 90 |

Chapter Five

Research Methodology [8,458]

| | | |
|---------|-----------------------------------|-----|
| 5.1 | Introduction | 92 |
| 5.2 | Area of Study | 92 |
| 5.3 | Research Methodology | 94 |
| 5.3.1 | Methodological Framework | 96 |
| 5.3.2 | Research Methods | 100 |
| 5.3.2.1 | Qualitative Methods | 101 |
| 5.3.2.2 | Quantitative Methods | 101 |
| 5.3.2.3 | Questionnaire | 101 |
| 5.3.2.4 | Living Standards Measurement | 106 |
| 5.3.3 | Observations | 110 |
| 5.3.4 | Archival Research Methods | 110 |
| 5.3.5 | Ethical Considerations | 111 |
| 5.3.5.1 | Choice of Participants | 112 |
| 5.4 | Settlement Profiles | 113 |
| 5.4.1 | Socio-Demographic Characteristics | 113 |
| 5.6 | Limitations | 121 |
| 5.7 | Conclusion | 122 |

Chapter Six

An Assessment of Community Structures in Informal and Squatter Settlements in Fiji [6,622]

| | | |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|------------|
| 6.1 | Introduction | 124 |
| 6.2 | Community Organisation | 126 |
| 6.2.1 | Group Structures | 127 |
| 6.2.2 | Group Participation | 132 |
| 6.2.3 | Group Leadership | 136 |
| 6.2.4 | Benefits of Group Networks | 139 |
| 6.2.5 | Social Networks | 143 |
| 6.3 | Community Well-being | 144 |
| 6.4 | Conclusion | 147 |

Chapter Seven

An Assessment of Community Cohesion in Informal and Squatter Settlements in Fiji [9,595]

| | | |
|----------------|---|------------|
| 7.1 | Introduction | 149 |
| 7.2 | Socio-Cultural Environment: Community Cohesiveness | 150 |
| 7.2.1 | Horizontal Community Interactions | 151 |
| 7.2.1.1 | Subjective Components of Horizontal Community Interactions | 151 |
| 7.2.1.2 | Objective Components of Horizontal Community Interactions | 160 |
| 7.2.2 | Vertical Community Interactions | 164 |
| 7.2.2.1 | Subjective Components of Vertical Community Interactions | 164 |
| 7.2.2.2 | Objective Components of Vertical Community Interactions | 168 |
| 7.3 | Household Poverty Levels | 170 |
| 7.4 | Conclusion | 180 |

Chapter Eight

Mobilising Social Capital in Informal and Squatter Settlements in Fiji [10,955]

| | | |
|--------------|---|------------|
| 8.1 | Introduction | 183 |
| 8.2 | Community Organisation | 186 |
| 8.2.1 | Organisational Structures and Participation: Key Factors 1&2 | 186 |
| 8.2.2 | Quality of Group Leadership: Key Factor 4 | 190 |
| 8.2.3 | Summary of Community Organisation | 193 |
| 8.2.4 | | 193 |
| 8.3 | Squatter Settlements' Social Relations and Networking | 193 |

| | | |
|---------|---|-----|
| 8.3.1 | Horizontal Connectivity in Settlements' Social Relations: Key Factors 3 & 6 | 194 |
| 8.3.1.1 | The Strongest Social Bonding from Daily Associations | 196 |
| 8.3.1.2 | Strength of Familial Ties | 196 |
| 8.3.1.3 | Length of Residency Effects | 197 |
| 8.3.1.4 | Summary: Horizontal Connectivity in Settlements Communities | 198 |
| 8.3.2 | Vertical Connectivity in Settlement' Social Relations: Key Factors 5 & 11 | 199 |
| 8.3.2.1 | Group Membership Benefits (Key Factor 5) | 202 |
| 8.3.2.2 | Vertical Interactions with Policy Makers (Key Factor 11) | 203 |
| 8.3.2.3 | Summary: Vertical Connectivity in Settlement Communities | 205 |
| 8.4 | Implications of Community Cohesion in Squatter Settlements | 206 |
| 8.4.1 | Shared Values and Social Tolerances | 207 |
| 8.4.2 | Sense of Belonging: Key Factors 8 & 9 | 208 |
| 8.4.3 | Volunteerism and Social Giving: Key Factors 9, 10, 12 & 13 | 212 |
| 8.4.4 | Section Summary: Implications on Social Cohesion | 214 |
| 8.5 | Conclusion | 215 |

Chapter Nine

Sustaining Social Capital in Informal and Squatter Settlements in Fiji [8,138]

| | | |
|-------|--|-----|
| 9.1 | Introduction | 218 |
| 9.2 | Implications of Social Capital Resources on Community Capacity | 222 |
| 9.2.1 | An Assessment of Community Capacity in Squatter Settlements | 224 |
| 9.2.2 | Community Capacity Interpretation | 230 |
| 9.3 | Further Research Areas | 240 |
| 9.4 | Conclusions | |

| | |
|--------------------------|------------|
| <u>References</u> | 247 |
|--------------------------|------------|

Appendices

| | | |
|-----|---|-----|
| 1.0 | Diagnostic Tool for Analysing Social Capital in Communities | 269 |
| 2.0 | Researchers Field Notes Summary | 282 |
| 3.0 | Field Survey Questionnaire | 285 |
| 4.0 | Basket of Food Costing for Fiji Households | 310 |
| 5.0 | Food and Income Security Analysis | 313 |
| 6.0 | Research Information Sheet | 326 |

| | | |
|------------|---------------------------|------------|
| 7.0 | Participant Consent Form | 328 |
| 8.0 | Confidentiality Agreement | 329 |

PHOTOGRAPHS

| | | |
|-----------|---|------------|
| 4A | Typical Squatter Settlement, Suva | 73 |
| 4B | Urban Housing Quality Contrasts: Fiji Muslim League | 76 |
| 4C | Overcrowding in Squatter Settlements | 76 |
| 4D | Squatter Housing in Flood Prone Areas | 77 |
| 4E | Squatter Housing in the Coastal Mangroves | 77 |
| 4F | Waila 3B: A new Subdivision in Nausori #1 | 79 |
| 4G | Waila 3B: A new Subdivision in Nausori # 2 | 79 |
| 4H | Public Rental Board Flats: Fletchers Road, Raiwaqa | 80 |
| 5A | Haphazard Water and Power Connections | 119 |

TABLES

| | | |
|------------|---|------------|
| 4.1 | Greater Suva Region Urban Population | 61 |
| 4.2 | Summary National Economic Revenue Indices for Fiji | 62 |
| 4.3 | Fiji Domestic Exports | 64 |
| 4.4 | Dispersal of Poverty Line | 70 |
| 5.2 | Participant Household Demographic Comparisons | 114 |
| 5.3 | Groups and Networks Religious and Faith-based Groups | 118 |
| 6.1 | Community Activity By Organisational Category | 130 |
| 6.2 | Community Groups Ranked Most Important | 131 |
| 6.3 | Participation In Community Groups: Activity Levels of Households by Settlement | 134 |
| 7.1 | Community Volunteering: Participation Levels by Settlement | 161 |
| 7.2 | Social Donations: Household Levels by Settlement | 162 |
| 7.3 | Impacts of Social Obligations on Household Income and Food Security by Settlement | 173 |
| 7.4 | Poverty Indices: By Settlement | 177 |
| 9.1 | Domains Diagnosis: Squatter Settlements, Suva, Fiji | 229 |
| 9.2 | Domains Diagnosis: Urban and Rural Communities, Fiji | 235 |

FIGURES

| | | |
|------------|--|-----------|
| 1.1 | Map of the Republic of Fiji | 12 |
| 2.1 | Two-Way Framework for Measuring Social Cohesion | 34 |
| 2.2 | Domains Approach for Measuring Community Empowerment | 39 |

| | | |
|------------|---|------------|
| 4.1 | Distribution of Informal Squatter Settlements in Fiji | 72 |
| 4.2 | Informal Squatter Settlement Trends in Fiji | 74 |
| 5.2 | Community Diversity | 117 |
| 6.1 | Groups and Networks: Household Participation Levels in Various Group Activities | 137 |
| 6.2 | Overall Benefits from Joining Organisations | 140 |
| 6.3 | Facilitating Access to Services | 141 |
| 6.4 | Household Lifestyle Indicators | 146 |
| 7.1 | Horizontal Community Interactions: Perceptions About Trust and Honesty with Others | 153 |
| 7.2 | Vertical Community Interactions: Perceptions About Trust and Honesty with Institutions | 166 |
| 7.3 | Vertical Community Interactions: Information and Communications | 169 |
| 9.1 | Community Capacity Comparison for Squatter Settlements in Suva Fiji – June 2008 | 230 |
| 9.2 | Community Capacity Assessment: Urban and Rural Comparisons in Fiji | 236 |

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACCRONYMS

| | |
|----------|---|
| ADB | Asian Development Bank |
| AEU | Adult Equivalent Units |
| AFNH | Actual Food-basket Needs Per Household |
| AHI | Actual Household Income |
| ANFNH | Actual Non-Food-basket Needs Per Household |
| BNPL | BASIC NEEDS POVERTY LINE |
| CCT | Caubati Topline Squatter Settlement |
| cpi | Consumer Price Index |
| CSI | Civil Society Index (<i>Civicus</i>) |
| CSR | Colonial Sugar Refinery |
| ECREA | Ecumenical Centre for Research Education and Advocacy |
| FJD | Fiji Dollar |
| FML | Fiji Muslim League Squatter Settlement |
| FPL | Food Poverty Line |
| FPR | Fiji Poverty Report |
| FSI | Food Security Index |
| FST | Food Security Threshold |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| GGC | Great Council of Chiefs |
| GSR | Greater Suva Region |
| HIES | Household Income and Expenditure Survey |
| ISI | Income Security Index |
| IST | Income Security Threshold |
| MUHEC | Massey University Humanitarian Ethics Committee |
| Nan | Nanuku Squatter Settlement |
| NGO | Non Government Organisation |
| NZAID | New Zealand Aid Programme |
| PNG | Papua New Guinea |
| RBF | Reserve Bank of Fiji |
| SC-IQ | Social Capital-Integrated Questionnaire |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| USQ-BNPL | Urban Squatter Basic Needs Poverty Line |
| WCC | World Council of Churches |
| WB | World Bank |

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Context and Rationale

The focus of development since the 1990's has been on eliminating world poverty and over that time the perspectives on what is required to combat it have changed significantly. The top down government interventionist approaches of the 1950s to '60s gave way to the rural integrated approaches of the late '80s and '90s. More recently area-based community development and empowerment approaches have emerged as projects of choice to help achieve the Millenium Development Goals 1 of halving world poverty by 2015. But a relatively new threat to the poverty gains has emerged as a consequence of globalisation - the rapid escalation in urban development where cities have become the "powerhouse of homogenised markets and ever increasing trade" (Norberg-Hodge, 2006, p. 57). An increasing worldwide urban migration trend has resulted from the effects of the burgeoning economic growth in cities (Booth, Martin & Lankester, 2001, p. 3). A World Urbanisation Report predicted the rise in city dwellers to increase by 172% from 2000 levels to breach 5 billion by 2030 (Chamie, 2002, p. 1). The growth in shanty towns, slums or squatter settlements within world cities is a direct result of this rapid growth (Booth, Martin & Lankester, 2001, p. 6).

The Pacific Islands are not immune from this rising trend of urban migration (UNESCAP, 1999, p 11; SPC, 2007, p. 3). Already in the 1970s and more so in the '90s, Ward, (1970, p. 258) and Bryant-Tokelau (1995, p. 110) highlighted an increasing trend of urban migration and environmental degradation in the Pacific with specific reference to Fiji where half the country's population now lives (Lingham, 2007, p. 5). The traditional way of life in the Pacific is clearly being transformed. A new and very different form of 'Pacific community' has emerged, according to Purdie (1999) who stated that: "...the context of

livelihoods in the Pacific [now being] one of transition from a predominantly subsistence base to an increasingly urbanised population” (p. 71). Most city migrants end up living in one of the many squatter settlements found on the periphery of the main cities, prompting Storey (2005) to describe these new Pacific cities of the 20th Century as ‘borderless places’ due to the continual and unplanned growth of these squatter settlements resulting from the unavailability of freehold land, a lack of coherent urban planning controls and where there is unclear local government regulatory controls that apply (p. 3). This thesis considers how squatter settlers in Fiji cooperate together in a cohesive way at the community level, to respond to these globalisation constraints and the other more localised social pressures, including cultural and religious influences, that may impact on their livelihoods.

Urbanisation and Poverty in the Pacific

In a Pacific context poverty is linked to being urbanised. Increasingly new urban dwellers are living in densely populated, communities that are illegal (Clery, 2006, p. 61-62). While employment opportunities improve, wages are low, there is little left to afford the key basic services: power, water and sanitation (Abbott, 2006, p. 7 & 34; Narsey, 2006, p. 97 & 121; Meikle et al., 2001, p. 6). Urban costs of living are higher than rural living costs and there is no immediate family safety net in cities that although kinship systems in rural settings may provide (Kurusiga et al., 2006, p. 103; Barr, 2007b, p. 11; Mohanty, 2006, p. 2). The combination of these survival pressures can result in breakdown of social relations within neighbourhoods leading to social disintegration at the community level and with it dire consequences of environmental degradation (Meikle et al., 2001, p. 5; Norberg-Hodge, 2006, p. 53). Consequently, there are significant economic challenges in not only dealing with the backlog in affordable urban housing but to find sustainable solutions to the complexities of Fiji’s urban poverty issues as well (McKinnon, Whitehead, Chung and Taylor, 2007, p. 36).

The socio-economic development of urban settlements is now a key focal area for New Zealand’s Aid Programme in parts of the Pacific due to the continued proliferation of informal housing in peri-urban areas which has placed huge

stress on local government structures and is resulting in a rapid increase in poverty within these communities (Storey, 2005b, p. 1). As an employee of the New Zealand High Commission in Fiji, managing the New Zealand-Fiji bilateral aid programme, the Researcher for this thesis had developed a close interest in the plight of squatters there due to some of the aid programme activities targeted at supporting community development initiatives in squatter settlements. Other donors had in recent times looked at developing elaborate urban planning programmes aimed at integrating these unplanned squatter settlements into local government structures while combating the growing inequality and poverty issues there (ADB, 2006c). Mindful of the wide scope of these issues the New Zealand Aid Programme (NZ Aid) commissioned a study of Fiji's squatter settlement predicament to better inform it of the underlying social, economic and policy issues of squatter settlements in Fiji and to provide a basis for a framework for engagement which would support of the Fiji Government's ambitious redevelopment plans (McKinnon, et. al., 2007). The researcher felt a small but useful contribution he could make would be to study the underlying social issues behind community development processes those living in some of the urban squatter settlements of Fiji were involved in. However, much about the plight of urban squatter settlers in Fiji had already been well documented as had been the general lack of effective strategies for dealing with the many problems faced by them (Barr, 2007a, p. 20; and others¹). Given the dire living conditions and challenges facing many settlers, a specific area of interest that emerged for the researcher was about how effective communities were in developing their own responses and strategies to address their shared needs.

Existing Literature on Squatter Settlements and Community Development

There have been many studies about various social dynamics affecting those in squatter settlements: from Walsh (1979) early studies of urban migration and cultural determinants around squatting; Barr (2004) and Chand (1997) on religious and ethnic identity; Tui (2006) about kinship, traditional obligations and

¹ Fernandes (2002); Brochu (2002); Reddy, Naidu and Mohanty (2003); Wegelin et. al. (2004); Qalowasa (2005); Mohanty (2006); Storey (2006); Tui (2006); Barr (2007b); Kotoiwasawasa (2007) and Lingham (2007), to name a few. Refer also to Chapter 4, Section 4.3 for more details on the national and squatter settlement poverty situation in Fiji.

reciprocal arrangements; Clery (2006) on cultural identity and belonging; Kurusiga, Kado and Qoloni (2006) on learned coping strategies; and Sanderson, (2006) about material needs, community and culture as influenced by spirituality. Learned coping strategies are defined as 'lived experiences', the set of coping strategies that are employed by the poor (in this case in the context of squatter settlements) that have been learned during times of hardship that expand one's capability to adapt or change (Wolfe & Frongillo 2001, in Kurusiga et. al., 2006). These studies underline that the urban environment is challenging and particularly for many long held cultural traditions. There is a need to develop different and new safety networks in the urban context based on trust and common needs but according to Kurusiga, et. al., (2006) these may be fewer than those existing in rural communities (p. 95). The need for community capability to be strengthened so it can act in support of its residents was outlined by Fernandes' (2002) study on squatters' rights delivered in Fiji. He recommended that strengthening of civil society organisations at the community level to participate more fully in decision making was crucial to improving individual and community social well-being (Fernandes, 2002, p. 25). Social well-being in the context of this research is defined as including all aspects that individual human happiness holds: incorporating social contexts, a spiritual dimension (including cultural beliefs and origins) alongside the physical, relational and mental health attributes of the individual or community (Sinner, Baines, Crengle, Salmon, Fenemor and Tipa, 2005b, p. 7; Illich 1992, p. 46). The views expressed above about the need for community strengthening and empowerment have been supported by the recently completed NZAID programme scoping mission (McKinnon et. al., 2007, p. 57) and a more sustainable approach to urban community development recognised internationally by many authors as a crucial step, including Devas et. al, (2001); Mitlin & Satterthwaite, (2004) and Racelis, (2005) among others.

Models for sustainable development in the urban context and future solutions for urban planning in the Pacific have and will continue to be debated (Haberkorn, 2006; Hassall and Collins, 2005; Jones, 2003; Lingham, 2004; Overton and Storey, 1999; Storey, 2005a). There is a lot yet that can be done not only on the basis of economic necessity but also to realise suitable solutions

that take account of the cultural, physical and relational dynamics of communities (McKinnon, et al., 2007, p. 53; Sinner et. al., 2005a p. 4 & 2005b, p. 10; Storey, 2006, p. 20). Many assert that the settlers themselves need to be involved in the planning process (Illich 1992, p. 46; O’Gorman, 1992, p. 63: Barr, 2007a, p. 26). A more participatory approach would empower informal settlers to have a hand in their own development leading to more sustainable outcomes (McKinnon et al., 2007, p. 17). Other authors agree that participatory and integrated approaches are needed to address the complexity of issues within urban squatter communities, (McGranahan et. al. 1996 p. 73; Satterthwaite, 2005 p. 4; Stavenhagen, 2003, p. 9; Van Vliet, 2004, p. 31; with Barr, 2007a, p. 22 and Storey, 2005, p. 5 & 2006, p. 23 referring the Pacific context). For example, in this context, Hand (2006) describes the choices people make and the behaviours they enact during their daily lives being the result of a complex process of negotiation that operates within the boundaries of “perceived social and cultural constraints or opportunities” (p. 36). Hand goes on to state that: “While communities guide the practices that individuals take up, individuals adapt and reorganize these practices as they negotiate competent participation across multiple communities” (Hand, 2006, p. 38).

In this context Hand expresses the opinion that an individual’s standing (or positioning and power) within the various communities to which they are placed is dependent on the types of relationships they cultivate with others, either in or outside those communities, and in the livelihood choices they make (Hand, 2006, p. 38). In turn, this allows individuals to selectively access human resources to assist their participation in or achievement of desired livelihood strategies (Hand, 2006, p. 38). In the collective sense, people’s active networking achieves a positioning and power that allows opportunity for them, or those they represent and others they are interacting with to benefit from these ties. People’s social transactions are claimed by Hand (2006) to be of fundamental importance to societies coherent functioning at all levels of humanity (p. 38). Social transactions on this scale is referred to collectively as ‘civic engagement’ by Tolbert (2005) who claims they are a consequence of healthy communities and an indicator of strong social capital ties (p. 1311).

Most commonly civil society organisations and community are used to indicate social capital (Pelling & High, 2005, p. 8). Thus, there is potential for utilising social capital as a tool that can help in revealing the power dynamics and unpack the contextual and cultural identities that exist between social actors in communities (Pelling & High, 2005, p. 8). Conversely once identified (for various conditions) it should be possible to gather that accumulated individual knowledge held by a group or community and mobilise it in coherent ways that can benefit all, (Fischer et. al. 2002 p. 5). These views about the role that social capital resources play in community development are also supported by Giddens (2000, in Stavenhagen, 2003, p. 10) and Veltmeyer (2004, p. 12). If communities are not functional and active then no amount of assistance directed at growth policies will affect the developmental change desired (Cohen, 2004, p. 31).

Empowering Communities

According to Amartya Sen (1992) community development is linked to an individual's sense of well-being. Sen developed the idea of an individual's "capability sets" as representing a person's freedom to achieve "functioning's" relevant for one's own well-being (Sen, in Stavenhagen, 2003, p. 11). Individual "capability sets" can be referred to as a resource in terms of their value as social capital. The resources needed by individuals, (such as information, knowledge and voluntary support networks) and thus communities alike, termed 'social capital' and can be secured through interaction with other people (groups or associates in and outside the community). Those 'assets' when mobilised in a sustained way are considered to be important precursors for socio-economic growth and development. The need to build the social and cultural (capital) determinants of poverty as well as the efforts of civil society as a tool for poverty reduction is thus an increasingly relevant issue in many developing countries and within the urban setting (Aitken, 1994, p. 264; Mitlin & Satterthwaite, 2004, p. 320).

What is implied here is that a communities development is dependent on a vibrancy of civic engagement that may only arise from community members who are not only motivated to make change but are comfortable with the

concepts of cultural coherence and their own identity precursors (Tolbert, 2005, p. 1311). More capable communities are empowered to link with the “social and economic structures and institutions that can buffer them from external and global forces” (Tolbert, 2005, p. 1311). The contention is that a community’s level of connectivity, as described above, depends on the strength of their internal organisational structures and the linkages made to external organisations, such as locally oriented business establishments, civic organisations, associations, and churches (Tolbert, 2005, p. 1311). Hence, the definition of ‘community’ can be contentious, and this is the subject of Chapter 2 Section 4, but its use here is in the sense of a geographically defined squatter settlement or neighbourhood within a settlement and as such has “a focus bounded spatially and/or socially delineated by a collective sense of place” (Tolbert, 2005, p. 1313).

The issue for policy makers and their implementers of social development programmes is how to empower communities to work cooperatively with them to find workable solutions to squatter settlement issues. How also can these communities capture release or activate the potential social capital resources they have for their collective well-being. Within the urban context the two predominant ethnic groups in Fiji (indigenous and Indo-Fijians) have sought, in some cases, the preference to establish their existence in communities based around ethnic dependent needs in contrast to mixed neighbourhoods. Perceptions of how indigenous Fijians cope with various dimensions of poverty are well studied but little is known about Indo-Fijian coping strategies nor how well each cooperates within integrated communities.

Many of the social dynamics outlined in the above studies infer that the absence of traditional support structures, (family/communal sharing and secure land tenure) in the urban context present a more equitable playing field between Fijians and Indo-Fijians², hence the opportunities to obtain the requirements for an adequate standard of living are devoid of ethnicity. Yet the lived experiences of both ethnicities are distinctly different, enmeshed within their own ethnic

² Section 4.2.1 provides an account of how there came to be two predominant ethnic groups living in Fiji.

cultures, struggles and identity (Ratuva, 2002a, p. 12). A study on the prerequisite social factors and lived experiences of both ethnic groups and how those contribute to the development of a strong and sustained sense of urban community represents a gap in research on the social relationships that exist in Fiji squatter settlements. Thus the research problem is to determine the extent and impact that existing social capital mechanisms and organised civic activity have on community development processes and social well-being within selected squatter settlements in Fiji.

1.2 Research Questions and Research Plan

In light of the significant role that community members play as a resource toward their own and group development, this research study will look at ways of examining the extent of those built forms of social capital in squatter settlements in Fiji. It will investigate how to utilise civil society organisations (informal and formal) as an indicator of social capital, given their acknowledged potential as a vehicle to better understand community dynamics and interrelationships (Pelling & High, 2005, p. 8 & p. 14). In order to do this it was necessary to understand the wider context: the effect of the worldwide urbanisation trends in the Pacific; why and how squatter settlements were being formed in Fiji; the processes of community development in urban settings; the concept of social capital, thought to underpin community development models; and the role of culture and identity in underpinning social cohesion within squatter settlements in Fiji.

Culture, religion and other lived experience can be thought of as 'built' forms of social capital and therefore potential sources of wealth in squatter and informal settlements in Fiji, (Kurusiga, et al., 2006, p. 100-101). As outlined above, what is of interest here is the relative significance or importance of such factors as prerequisites for community development and how these might intertwine to sustain a sense of social cohesion. In addressing these issues, this study is significant for four reasons. Firstly, it examines how cultural and religious factors shape communal perceptions and relationships in both negative and positive

ways within an urban squatter setting. An understanding of how the two ethnic groups cooperate around commonly held community issues could help provide improved understanding about the dynamics of urban community integration and how to empower squatters to organise and resolve shared problems. Secondly, the social capital and living standards surveying techniques³ are utilised as a tool to help reveal the power dynamics and unpack the contextual and cultural obstacles that exist between social actors in squatter communities. Thirdly, an instrument for analysing social capital trialled in rural Fiji villages, (focused on health promotion issues of community empowerment) is adapted to the urban squatter setting. Lastly, by combining these two diagnostic tools, a new approach is developed for taking stock of the status of community relations within a defined community of choice. It is contended that this approach could present a potential application for development practitioners to employ as an instrument to monitor the progress of community capacity development at any one point in time. Further explanation about the methodological approach is provided below.

Numerous studies have been carried out about how Government resources should address the demands of urban sprawl: From relocation of these undesirable squatter settlers to provision of better low-cost housing solutions to 'regularisation' – improving access to essential services and empowering the communities to initiate these changes for themselves (Brochu, 2002; Jones, 2003; Lingham, 2002 & 2004; Storey, 2005). Most agree there is a need for better urban policy strategies so that structural and social development approaches like this can work and the economic growth potential there is adequately harnessed for the wider benefit of the city (Rao and Woolcock, 2001, p. 3; van Vliet 2002, p.1). However, little is understood about how the urban poor in settlements marshal the necessary resources to organize effective and inclusive communities.

Therefore the main objective of this study is to consider how social integration, religion and cultural influences may impact on the development of urban

³ Based on a modified version of the World Bank Integrated Questionnaire for the Measurement of Social Capital (SC-IQ), refer to Chapter 5 Section 3.1.

squatter communities and its resultant effects to individual well-being. The primary question of this research is:

What are the processes by which communities mobilise social capital in informal and squatter settlements in Fiji?

In responding to this question, the research will endeavour to use quantitative mechanisms to provide a 'snapshot' in time of the capacity of these settlements: based on analysis of their strengths, traditional values, functionality and cohesiveness. A comparative analysis will be possible that may allow for better understanding of appropriate development processes targeted as squatter settlements and appropriate to the socio-economic context of Fiji. To do this there are three important ancillary questions that need to be addressed and they are:

- (1) How do culture, religion and other lived experience impact on urban community relations?
- (2) How do belief systems, such as expressed in culture and religion, support or block potentially positive changes to urban squatter community development processes that may otherwise improve squatter householders' well-being?
- (3) What strategies could effectively be pursued to augment and sustain social capital in urban squatter communities?

In order to address these questions, measuring community capacity in a pragmatic way, one that recognised the breadth of knowledge already existing about appropriate social capital instruments, is a fundamental part of this research project. From a literature search on measuring community capacity three recent bodies of work influenced the researcher in the development of a methodology for this study of urban settlements. The first was Glen Laverack's (2001, 2003, 2006a) domains approach to community empowerment; the second was Grootaert, Narayan, Jones & Woolcock (2004) Social Capital – Integrated Questionnaire (or SC-IQ) and Living Standards Measurement, and the third Heinrich's (2004) Civil Society Index (or CSI) which has been

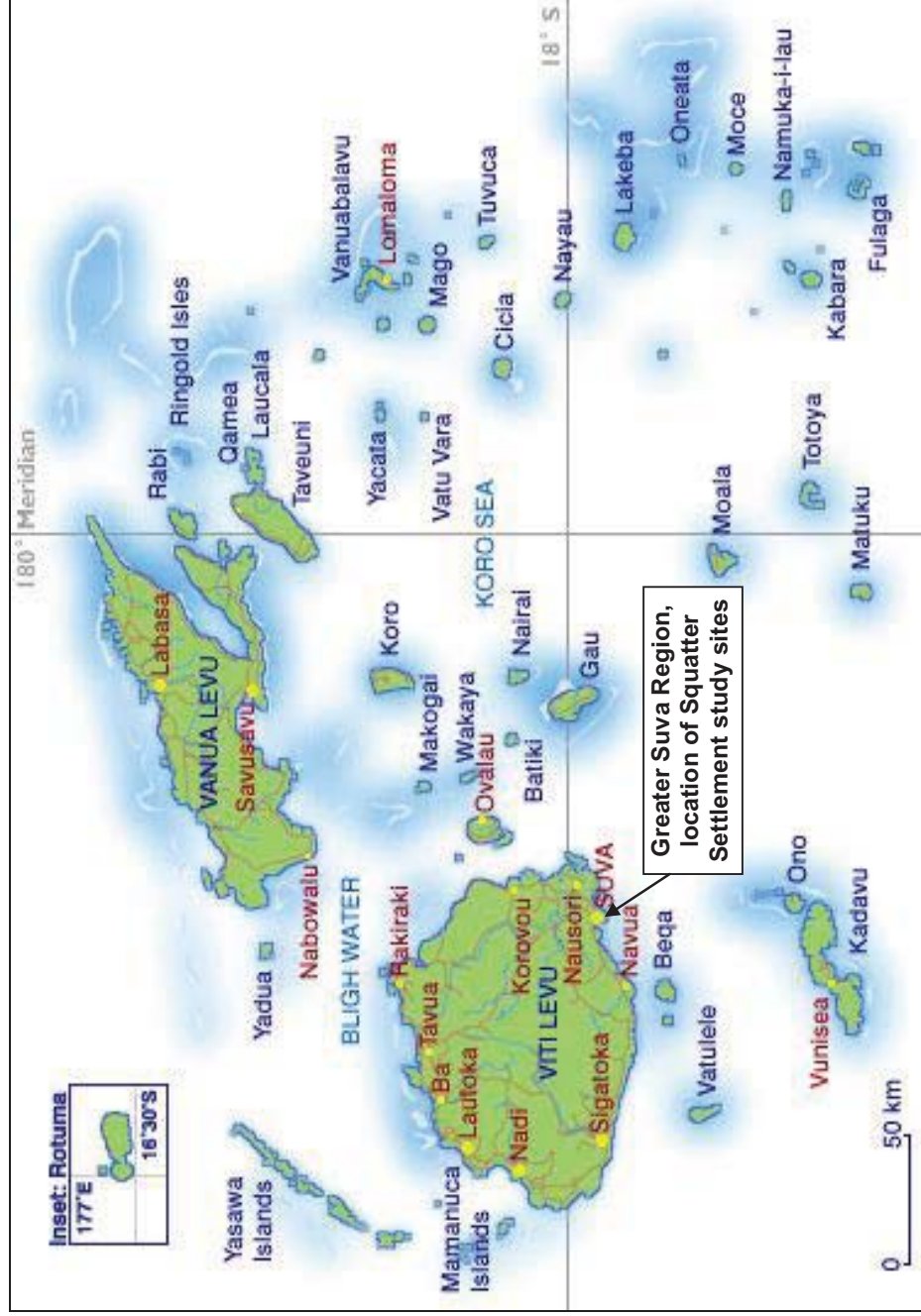
successfully applied in a global benchmarking exercise to assess the vibrancy and effectiveness of civil society at the national level.

The SC-IQ questionnaire provided a core set of questions for practitioners and researchers to draw on to explore six key 'dimensions' of social capital regarded as important for the linking of community members structural organisation to their cognitive perceptions about working together, and the outcomes being achieved by these inter-relationships (Grootaert et. al. 2004, p.4). There were common 'dimensions' of community capacity with all three including: (a) Community Organisational Structure; (b) Socio-cultural Environment; (c) Community Values; and (d) Community Impacts. A further nine 'operational domains' were aligned as sub-sets of interest that fall within the broader 'dimensions' of social capital above (for example 'depth of participation', leadership quality, 'problem solving ability', 'critical assessment' and 'resource mobilisation'). The resultant questionnaire utilised the four dimensions and nine domains but with some modification with suitable questions that would help diagnose the strengths and weaknesses of each community. The aim here was not to design a completely new questionnaire but to adapt an approach from an existing pool of knowledge in order to retain some continuity of learning on the subject of social capital and cohesion in communities.⁴

The objective of the survey process was to assist the researcher in determining the baseline capacity of social capital (such as group networks, linkages to key outside organisations and institutions, level of their civic action) within the target communities, which underpins the types of livelihood and/or coping strategies employed by its members (the householders) and could possibly also assist with strengthening overall community capacity. Eighteen participants were interviewed from three urban squatter settlements selected from the Suva-Nausori corridor of the Greater Suva Region, as indicated on the map of the Republic of Fiji Islands as Figure 1.1 on the following page.

⁴ Refer to Chapter 5, Section 5.3.1 for more details on the methodology for the research.

Figure 1.1: Map of the Republic of Fiji



(Source: NZAID, 2005, p. 2)

This selective approach provided a systematic way of measuring the different 'dimensions' of social capital identified as important in providing the full 'baseline of socio-economic information' about a community (Grootaert et. al. 2004, p.2). A Microsoft Excel spreadsheet to process and analyse the data trends across each settlement for each question and dimension and domain. Trends were highlighted in percentage terms then graphed or tabulated for result presentation (Chapters 6 and 7). The consolidated results for the nine domains were diagnosed utilising the results of the indicators measured under each from the questionnaire. The results for each settlement could then be presented in diagrammatic form so that a 'snapshot in time' of the 'state of community affairs' was illustrated in the 'spider web' graphic configuration based Laverack's (2007) community empowerment work. The result provides a baseline mapping of each community's social capital capacity development, against which further future assessments can be made, that would in turn provide some measure of progress of functionality and cohesion (Laverack, 2007, p. 73-76).

1.3 Hypothesis and Assumptions for the Research

The research study of three squatter communities in Suva, Fiji is concerned with the hypothesis that Fijians and Indo Fijians alike in informal and squatter settlements face significant cultural and ideological barriers that either support or block community development processes. The consequence of this assumption is profound as it is impeding the level of social cohesion and adversely affecting the well-being of squatter householders'. Additionally, these impacts on community relations and functionality may also affect the ability of external agents to formulate effective community development strategies for urban settlements in Fiji.

Assumptions

As previously stated, the Researcher had been employed by the New Zealand Government based in the New Zealand High Commission in Suva as Manager of

the NZ-Fiji bilateral aid programme for a three year period during which this research took place. A key focus of the NZAID programme was on socio-economic development programmes to squatter settlements and this was informed by the recently completed Informal and Squatter Settlements Scoping Study (McKinnon et. al., 2007). Consequently, the Researcher had a broad knowledge of the topic from the discussions with industry commentators during the period of the scoping study mission and prior to his field research. This in turn helped to formulate a number of key assumptions that were to underpin the above Hypothesis statement.⁵ The five key assumptions are as follows:

- I. Informal settlements and squatter communities experience high levels of poverty due to lack of access to basic services and regular means of living.
- II. Householders in squatter settlements rely significantly on their own initiatives, resourcefulness and familial connections as the primary means of survival in times of hardship.
- III. The social cohesiveness of squatter settlements relies on these established traditional connections underpinned by cultural customs and religious affiliations observed within the community. These in turn provide the primary basis for settlers' social identity and cooperative interactions.
- IV. The community development model is based on this strong sense of place yet capability for collective action within squatter settlement communities is constrained due to their poverty situation.

⁵ Refer Chapter 5, Sections 5.2 and 5.3.2.1 for an explanation of the Researchers professional role as a New Zealand Government donor representative and involvement in NZAID's squatter settlements programmes in Fiji.

- V. It is possible to measure these different components and factors of social capital and analyse the status of a community's functionality.

Each of these assumptions, underlying the hypothesis statement, will be tested through the analysis of the survey data to be presented in Chapters 6 and 7 and further addressed in relation to their applicability to squatter settlement context during the discussion in Chapter 8. A fuller explanation of the scope of the thesis and what each Chapter will cover is provided in the following section.

1.4 Scope and Structure of Thesis

The next two chapters will examine the theoretical framework relevant to this research. Chapter Two provides an overall appraisal of social capital theory including describing the principal concepts of social capital, from its origins and evolution in social theory, to its more recent elevation to the forefront of social practice. It also explains the different forms and functions of social capital as they apply to community development. Chapter Three focuses on two specific aspects of social capital: culture and identity. An explanation is provided about the sources of identity determination and the diverse set of influencing factors that underpin it, including life experiences, culture, religion, social group interactions and community connectedness.

Following these theoretical framework chapters, Chapter Four details Fiji's geographical and socio-economic development status along with an examination of poverty in the country and specifically in relation to urban squatter settlements. Chapter Four finishes with reflections on the Fijian social structures as defined by the two main ethnic groups, highlighting ethnic and political struggles over the post colonial years which have contributed to the political, social and economic development of Fiji.

Chapter Five outlines the research methodology and data collection process utilised for this study. Justification will be presented in relation to the choice of study area, field research sites and the methodological design, followed by a summary of the ethical considerations in relation to the field work. The Chapter concludes with a synopsis of the socio-demographic information for each of the field research study sites and an assessment of the key constraints faced by the researcher in carrying out the data collection.

The field research findings are presented in the following two chapters with Chapter Six presenting the findings on community organisational structures and participation levels and Chapter Seven those for the community cohesion aspect of the field research. These are considered key indicators of community well-being and precursors for resource mobilisation in urban squatter communities. Chapter Eight discusses the findings in relation to the primary objectives. In doing so it examines, by way of a comparative analysis of the three urban squatter communities studied, the organisational structures functioning within each settlement and the quality of social relations operating around these. Secondly, this Chapter then discusses the impacts organisational capacity has on community functionality-and the fostering of social cohesion and mobilisation of social capital resources to address shared needs.

Chapter Nine will conclude by outlining any implications from this research on development theory. In so doing some recommendations will be provided on potential for future research in related areas of social capital pertaining to urban settlements and community empowerment. Strategies that may be useful to employ to enhance delivery of development assistance for positive outcomes in the fight against urban poverty in Fiji are also highlighted in this Chapter. The thesis now moves on to provide the theoretical framework for this thesis with the following two chapters (two and three). The first chapter will provide an appraisal of social capital theory, and the second will review culture and identity, two specific aspects which also fall within the realms of social capital theory.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: SOCIAL CAPITAL: THEORIES IN DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Introduction

The relevance of social capital theory in strengthening community resilience is well captured by Francis O’Gorman (1992) in her book ‘Charity and Change’ in which she outlines her view of development as a process of ‘social action for change’. (p. 2). O’Gorman’s book describes the realisation of how she came to combat these ‘social injustices’ in the urban slums of Rio de Janeiro, through what she called the ‘*Beacon* approach’ (p. vii). O’Gorman describes this approach as an equitable, socially just and appropriate way to attack the root causes of poverty which she claims result from factors that are structural in nature, (for example, outside the control of the poor) and non-institutional (for example, connected to the local circumstances) (p. 72). O’Gorman (1992) goes on to describe the social movement that developed from her approach and what it achieved through realising the benefits of mobilising social capital – the assets held within their communities (p. 63). This approach achieved good results within that particular setting and provides some indication as to what the fundamental basis might be for mobilising community stocks of social capital, thereby suggesting that similar approaches may be adapted from social capital theory in other circumstances.

This chapter will describe the principal concepts of social capital, from its origins and evolution in social theory, to its more recent elevation to the forefront of social practice. It will also explain the different aspects of social capital, its forms and functions, as they apply in particular to community development. The chapter

concludes with mention of how social capital instruments will be utilised as the basis of the methodological approach adopted in this study of urban settlement communities. Historically social capital thinking has been a gradual process.

2.2 The Ascension of Social Capital Theory in Development Thinking

Discourse about the concept of social capital in development has gathered significant momentum since the mid 1990s and across a wide spectrum of the social sciences, in the search for economic and social development solutions for the advancement of society (Ostrom and Ahn, 2000, p. xi). This section will examine how social capital theory came to be positioned at the forefront of social science and contemporary development thinking.

2.2.1 Origins of Social Capital Theory

Social capital theory was arguably founded on the work of two early sociologists through the late 1800's: Karl Marx (1894) studied group behaviours and interaction as a mobilizing agent of community welfare in contrast to his theories on the struggles of individual consciousness and Émile Durkheim's (1893) theories of capital and labour relations within a class conscious society (in, Portes, 1998, p. 2 & p. 10). It was in the early 1900's that the concept of social values as constituting a form of 'capital' was first coined by Lyda Judson Hanifan who used it to describe such interactions like good will, fellowship, sympathy considered important to daily life in rural communities (Hanifan 1916 in, Fischer et al 2002, p. 4; and in Ostrom and Ahn, 2000, p. xxv). A long gestation period followed until the 1980's and 1990's when the term 'social capital' rose to prominence through a number of author's exploits notably Loury (1977), Bourdieu (1985) and Coleman (1988). These authors contended that benefits could accrue for individuals and society through investing efforts into exploiting the dynamics of group connectivity (in, Portes, 1998, p. 3-5 and in Quibria, 2003, p. 2). Their definitions of social capital essentially referred to a collection of resources to which an individual or group had

access to through their membership and relational networks (Robinson and Williams, 2001, p. 54).

During the 1990's, social capital gained prominence with researchers studying social behaviours. Its application was to take a predominantly economic overture in its association to a range of disciplines including education and social stratification (Coleman, 1988, in Pelling and High 2005, p. 309); institutional performance and political science (Putnam, 1993, in, Pelling and High, p. 309); business management (Meyerson 1994, in, Fischer, 2002, p. 4); social policy around health, education, community development, social exclusion and poverty alleviation (Woolcock, 1998, in, Pelling and High 2005, p. 310); and organizational theory, (Cohen and Prusak, 2001, in, Fischer, 2002, p. 5). It seemed that social capital had become the new metaphor for the discourse on social behaviours, civic function and collective action in development, though this was tempered by those who considered it another vague notion and perhaps undeserving of the attention (Quibria, 2003, p. 6; Pelling and High, 2005, p. 310). Two of the more disparaging were Dagsgupta (2000) who described the tendency to utilise social capital in different forms as, "social capital [has been] a peg on which to hang all those informal engagements we like, care for and approve of", and Fischer (2001) who commented that, "the concept is expand[ing] in all directions like a swamp in a bad weather" (in, Quibria, 2003, p. 6). Whatever differences exist, most agree that a clear enunciation of what social capital is and extends to, is important to debate if it is to represent refined and accumulated knowledge on this critical aspect of human development (Ostrom and Ahn, 2000, p. xxxiv). Underpinning this debate was a range of opinions as to whether application of social capital should be primarily for economic growth or social justice.

2.2.2 Growth or Justice

In considering the question of growth and justice there is little getting away from the fact that social capital is spoken of in the terms of economics – resources, assets, capital. Be that as it may, there is no doubt that the 'social' side of the term

is as important to its meaning as the 'capital' side as the following four authors Bourdieu (1986), Fitzsimmons (200), Putnam (1993-95) and O'Gorman (1992) explain. The first is Bourdieu's (1986) explanation of social capital as a social good in the pursuit of social justice. He deconstructs social capital into two elements; firstly, the social relationship itself that allows individuals to claim access to 'resources' conveyed through their associations with others; and secondly, the amount and/or quality of those 'resources' (p. 16). In this regard, Bourdieu saw social capital as "a good consciously maintained by individuals" and rationalised its place among other 'forms' of capital as holding more emphasis in conflict and power functions (as opposed to economic or cultural capital)⁶ (Pelling and High, 2005, p. 309; Siisiainen, 2002, p. 1).

In contrasting terms to Bourdieu's (1986) explanation, the second author, Fitzsimmons (2001) refers to social capital as "economic sociology", claiming that neoliberal economists stylise the individual as acting rationally to maximise their own resourcefulness or self interest. Fitzsimmons argues that economists have deliberately discounted the prospect that individuals were capable of acting irrationally or in pursuit of goals other than the maximization of utility (for example, in the interests of cultural norms, discussed further in Chapter 3) (p. 5). Coleman, (in Portes, 2005) also underlined this intangible nature of social capital (p.7).

In a study of modern democracies the third view is from Putnam (1993-95) who stresses both the economic worth of social capital as 'networks' and its social intangibility as 'sources of continual social interaction' that reinforce social norms, especially trust (Putnam, 1995, p 2). In focusing on the social aspects further, Putnam (1993, in, Siisiainen, 2002) distinguished social capital as having three components: moral obligations, social values (especially trust) and social networks (especially voluntary associations) (p. 2). However, Putnam's central thesis still

⁶ Refer to Beeton (2006) for a full account of the different forms of 'capital' including an explanation about other non-social forms not mentioned here including: financial capital (surplus assets readily converted for monetary gain); physical capital (for example investment in infrastructures); and environmental capital (common publicly owned resources like national parks or marine reserves).

imbued economic undertones: Geopolitical regions with well organised social structures that create a more inclusive and trusting 'operating environment' which in turn, encouraged social 'transactions' to occur and thus communities that were more likely to 'accumulate' and mobilise 'elements' of social capital (in, Siisiainen, 2002, p. 2). The conclusion Putnam reached was that development of a strong economy resulted from government (both central and local) reform that was supported by a florescence of 'civic community' (Siisiainen, 2002, p. 3).

The views of Bourdieu supported by Siisiainen on the symbolic power relations are supported by the last author, O'Gorman (1992) who claims that 'social consciousness' still trails behind the modern concept of development which places economic gain as the driving force of society (p. 70). She highlights the need for just-oriented-structures as a part of Putnam's well functioning society, stating that it is the affluent, (who she terms the 1/3-World)⁷ that are in the position to influence the poor's ability (who she terms the 2/3-World)⁸ to interact as they determine the parameters that form the overall socio-economic operating environment, (referring to their leadership roles in the schools, churches, social agencies, banks, mining enterprises, political system and in setting foreign policy) (p xii). O'Gorman goes on to claim that in order to provide the incentives and initiatives to achieve this the '1/3-World' need to understand what 'assets' the poor hold and which can be enhanced to realize that vision (O'Gorman, 1992 p. 78).

It is perhaps no coincidence that social capital, as a predisposing factor for individual or community development, should in itself substantiate the theory of economic gain as the driving force of society. An essential feature is that social capital provides capacity to associate – which in itself facilitates coordination and

⁷ One-third (1/3) World – those in the upper third of societies pyramid, who benefit from and control access to the majority of the worlds natural and produced riches, (not to be confused with the term Third World). The 1/3-World therefore refer to the privileged majority (the haves; the rich) of the industrialised (or First World) countries, together with those at the top of the social pyramids of the poor (or Third World) countries (O'Gorman, 1992, pxii).

⁸ Two-third (2/3) World – the deprived or backward poor regardless of where they live in the world who fill the lower pyramid and are behind others in progress or development (O'Gorman, 1992, p. 41).

cooperation for mutual benefit (Fukuyama 1999 in, Fischer et. al. 2002, p. 5). Coleman (1988 in, Siisiainen, 2002 p. 5) maintained that the more social capital is used the more it grows and can be viewed as 'a public good or an asset' (Dasgupta, 2003, in, Pelling and High, p. 314).

A studied and analysed 'science', social capital has now become the modern and evolving interpretation of social explanations interwoven with cultural behaviours which are together treated as precursors to vitality within communities and toward economic growth. As social capital theory has the propensity to slip across the boundaries of socio-economic theory and the relevance of this research for strengthening sources of social capital within urban communities. The next section will explain the different forms of social capital cited in sociological literature. The aim is to distinguish where there are overlaps as each form, in some way, underscores the process of improving the cohesiveness of communities.

2.3 Forms of Social Capital

This section presents views on different forms of social capital and how these enhance collective action among communities. A definition of social capital will be provided that draws on aspects of social capital theory discussed so far. While social relationships are regarded as a form of capital itself – social capital – there are three other commonly recognised forms of social capital most often associated with or as a part of it:

- (i) Human Capital – An individual's accumulated knowledge, experience and know-how that enable them to extract or impart benefits to themselves or others and which can be built up through education, skill development and lived experience (Coleman 1988, in, Portes 2005, p. 7; Fitzsimmons, 2000, p. 5). Includes 'knowledge capital' which is defined as:

Experiential knowledge is held by individuals and communities as they manipulate environmental, financial, physical, and social capital in private or public contexts. Frequently, knowledge capital is empirical and stems from the experience of past successes and mistakes (Beeton, 2006, p. 5).

Human and knowledge capital are often seen as a subset of social capital (Beeton, 2006, p. 5).

- (ii) Intellectual Capital – distinguished apart from human capital as it is associated with intangible human assets. In other words an individual's biologically inherited talents implying potential for a higher level of knowledge accumulation. These assets can be transposed into wealth for example, through exclusivity of information or intellectual property (Stewart, 1997 in, Fitzsimons, 2000, p. 4). Also often referred to as a subset of social capital (Beeton, 2006, p. 5).

- (iii) Cultural Capital – the shared language, beliefs, values, and learned practices, knowledge or behaviours and ways of thinking among members of a society and who may be of the same indigenous origins (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 20; Quibria, 2003, p. 6). In many indigenous cultures this is a birth right which strongly transcends to the spiritual nature of land and heritage values. It is an important aspect of social capital that becomes an expression of cultural capital in practice (Robinson and William 2001, p. 55). Cultural capital is regarded as a distinct yet complex subset of social capital (Beeton, 2006, p. 5).

To define social capital in precise terms is difficult given the many applications that different authors accord. However, two applications are more suitable for this Pacific Island based thesis because they take into account more accurately the importance of indigenous culture and spirituality as explained in the above

definitions as well as an individual's familial affiliations and the density of their extended kinship networks. They also recognise that features of social capital can be a source of collective community strength in addressing shared needs, particularly in relation to the urban setting. The first definition claims:

[Social Capital] is the product of social interactions with the potential to contribute to the social, civic or economic well-being of a community-of-common-purpose. The interactions draw on knowledge and identity resources and simultaneously use and build stores of social capital. The nature of the social capital depends on various qualitative dimensions of the interactions in which it is produced, such as the quality of the internal-external interactions, the historicity, futuricity, [sic] reciprocity, trust and the shared values and norms (Falk and Kilpatrick 1999, p. 19).

And the second contends that:

[Social Capital] characterises the interpersonal relationships that an individual has with the other members in a surrounding community and provides the basis for analysing the sense of community and the degree to which the individual is connected with others in the community (Fischer et. al., 2002, p. 4).

The theory that, 'definitions of social capital should focus primarily on its sources rather than its consequences' (Woolcock 1998, in, Falk and Kilpatrick 1999, p. 19), while Portes (1998, p. 15) and Pelling and High (2005, p. 314) describe both the positive and negative aspects of social capital which are difficult to convey in its definition. Both the definitions above acknowledge those dynamics as well as recognising that social capital accrues from social interactive processes and in relationships, and in a conducive environment can be realised or produced as a result of that process for positive or negative gain (Portes, 1998, p. 7-18).

This social interaction or as Falk and Kilpatrick (1999) describe it 'community-of-common-purpose' both encompass the raft of applications for the term 'community' noting that people can have 'multiple memberships' of such communities and that their existence within these can vary by practice (Falk and Kilpatrick, 1999, p. 19). This is supported by Pelling and High (2005) who refer to two types of community, firstly the 'community-of-place', referring to a group of individuals that co-habit in the same locality and secondly 'community-of-practice', referring to an organisation, business, government or institution (p. 315).⁹

There is evidence that civil organisations and businesses can be used to indicate social capital and as vehicles to advance our understanding of informal social relationships. Tolbert's (2005) study of the strength of civic communities makes connection between the stocks of social capital in a community and the viability of local retail establishments, showing a correlation with key quality of life outcomes (p. 1311). He analysed the numbers of small manufacturing businesses, associations and public gathering places, which he terms "third places," in small town of rural United States (p. 1312). Tolbert (2005) found that many of these proprietors are closely involved in voluntary work, are active in the local churches and financially support community activities. He also asserts that "third places" provide a veritable breeding ground for developing networks both formal and informal and revitalising communities and buffering them from external global forces (p. 1311).

The above descriptions show that there are multiple forms of social capital and that these underpinned by a number of key 'attributes' or 'elements, (including trust, shared values and norms, interpersonal relationships) which hold varying degrees

⁹ Recognising the breadth of meaning that 'community' and 'community development' can extend to Section 1.1 describes the application of the term 'community' for this research study. Using the terms 'community-of-practice' or 'of-common-purpose' are considered analogous to that and therefore specifies which permutations of this 'slippery' term are being discussed adequately (Falk & Kilpatrick, 1999, p. 18; Pelling & High, 2005, p. 2). For further scholarly debate on this refer to Stoutland, (1999).

of importance according to the specific setting and which require further explanation.

2.4 Components of Social Capital

There are four key components of social capital that will provide a term of reference for the extent of its attributes relative to this research topic. Each will be considered separately under this section with relevant examples provided from an urban squatter or Pacific context to illustrate relevance to this research. The first attributes to be introduced will be trust and shared values which are considered important norms underpinning daily social interactions and society structure (Chan et al., 2006, p. 289 & 291; Carpiano, 2006, p. 168; Lev-Wiesel, 2006, p.335).

The second attribute are the voluntary actions of residents in developing social networks and assisting with group activities to benefit society (Lev-Weisel, 2003, p. 336). The third is the strength of interpersonal relationships within communities which underpins their feelings about togetherness and willingness to help others (Chan et al., 2006, p. 289 & 291). The last to be discussed is community social cohesion which represents the intensity of peoples social networks, their sense of belonging and togetherness as a community, claimed to underpin peoples willingness to work together in order to meet shared needs (Capriano, 2006, p. 168; Kleinhans et. al. 2007, p. 1077).

How these four attributes of social capital combine is varied and complex but Ostom and Ahn (2000, p. xiv) refer to these components of social capital as "...attribute[s] of individuals and of their relationships that enhances their ability to solve collective-action problems". Communities who utilise their social connections and discuss common issues are more able to find possible solutions to them which is relevant to this thesis topic and the context of the poor in squatter settlements (Laverack, 2001, p. 140).

2.4.1 Trust and Shared Values

Shared values (for example trust and honesty) and societal norms have long been a cornerstone of the social capital theory (Carpiano, 2006, p. 168; Lev-Wiesel, 2006, p.335). In modern societies trust comes in the form of 'generalised trust' (Siisiainen, 2000, p. 3). Giddens (1990) observed that some people will be accorded trustworthy because of their 'role and position in society', usually as a result of their public reputation or credentials as reliable and honest citizens (in, Pelling and High, 2005, p. 311). Putnam (1995) claims that social trust is garnered from acts of "generalised reciprocity" which can augment social reputations (p. 2). Siisiainen (2000) terms this association 'a positive development of communal relations' arising out of the need to rely on new reference points for trust in those new communal relationships made as a consequence of weaker familial social networks (in, Siisiainen, 2000, p. 3).

For example, life for the impoverished in the urban shanty towns surrounding many large cities is a struggle and dependent on existential survival¹⁰ skills that may include the close ties with friends or neighbours who are in similar positions, referred to by Portes (1998) as 'urban kin' (p. 11). The levels of trust that form from these affiliations is underscored by shared cultural, religious or other lived experiences including kinship ties, traditional obligations and reciprocal arrangements (Tui, 2006, p. 2). Kurusiga et. al., (2006, p. 98) refers to these learned coping strategies as 'built forms of social capital' which can therefore become potential sources of 'wealth' important for community cohesion, a term that will be discussed later in this chapter.

¹⁰ The phrase 'existential survival skills' refers to a set(s) of coping strategies that have been learned during times of hardship (Wolfe & Frongillo 2001 In Kurusiga et. al., 2006, p. 99). In other words a kind of social capital accrued through lived experience. These skills can then be employed by the poor (in this case in the context of urban squatters) during times of hardship as an act of existential survival (Kurusiga et. al., 2006, p. 99).

In discussing the building of social capital, Carpenter, Daniere and Takahashi (2004) found that the size and nature of urban communities might influence the level of trust measured (p. 867). For instance, Kleinhans, Priemus and Engbersen (2007), found in their study of urban neighbourhoods that “factors associated with higher levels of social capital were a higher net income, presence of households with children, stronger place attachment, higher perceived neighbourhood quality, homeownership and single family dwellings” (Kleinhans et. al., 2007, p. 1069). Other authors agree, speculating that forms of social capital in urban settlements may be very low as they lack the requisite levels of trust and cooperation (Carpenter et. al., 2003, p. 855; Driskell, Bannerjee and Chawla, 2001, p. 79). Others point out that trust relationships do exist in low-income communities but the issues are concerned with weak vertical networks which preclude members’ access to financial or physical capital and assistance from public institutions (Beard and Dasgupta, 2006, p. 1453). Carpenter et al., (2003) argue the importance for “advocacy and grassroots mobilisation” in the case of assisting these communities to strengthen these networks and “claim their rights”, (for example in better access to services) (p. 856). While this view is shared by other authors, many also outline the need for structural and institutional change, through better constructed social policies (Beard and Dasgupta, 2006, p. 1453; Driskell et. al., 2001, p.88; Lorenzen, 2007, p. 814).

In summary, while there are potential gains in social networks based on trust and reciprocity and lived experiences, (for example in establishing sets of coping strategies) these may constrain residents from reaching beyond the confines of the immediate locality and so deprive them of potential sources of knowledge and information about services, entitlements and/or employment opportunities (Portes, 1998, p. 11).

2.4.2 Networks and Voluntary Associations

Social networks and the voluntary actions of residents within the various ‘communities-of-common-purpose’ play an integral part in the concepts of social

capital theory (Siisiainen, 2000, p. 3; Tolbert, 2005, p. 1311). Putnam's (1995) views on generalised reciprocity, mentioned above are premised on the existence of strong networks and the social exchanges they engender (p. 2).

To distinguish the sources of networks in social capital theory and their functionality Portes (1998, p. 9) describes three different 'functions' of networks that can operate. The first are those sourced in the strength of horizontal ties within tight community networks that can produce a kind of bounded solidarity and enforceable trust. The second are family connections (includes kinship or tribal affiliations) which are termed familial support networks. The third are the social 'linkages' that exist beyond these first two, referred to as the vertical interactions of 'outside networks'. These three are regarded as the starting point of trust and social bonding that can build social capital within a community (Portes, 1998, p. 12; Siisiainen, 2000, p. 4). Putnam (1995) also stressed the importance of both horizontal and vertical networks in establishing 'sturdy norms' (p. 9).

Authors place varying degrees of importance on these different types of connections, often determined by the subject and locale of their study but most agree that many individuals will make multiple connections across these boundaries (Stewart, 2001, p. 2; Portes, 1998, p. 16). Such multiple identities can have a fundamental influence on behaviour both by the individual and the group, including modifying an individual's 'composite' sense of identity (Boissevain, 1974, p. 31-33; Portes, 1998, p. 17). For instance, Barth (1969 in, Stewart, 2001, p. 2) argued that, "the constraints on a person's behaviour which spring from his ethnic identity...tend to be absolute", and Rumbaut (1997) to say, "Family ties bind, but sometimes these bonds constrain rather than facilitate particular outcomes" (p. 39). In Pacific Island culture family ties and bonds are extended beyond family connections.

Robinson and Williams (2001) contemporary study of New Zealand Maori highlights the need to consider the cultural and heritage dynamics that contribute to

social cohesion in Pacific cultures. They observed that some forms of voluntary activity are based on cultural obligation and therefore does not meet the definition of voluntary activity in the European sense of the word where there is an expectation of reward or reciprocity (p. 69). They explain that kinship ties¹¹ exist within the Pacific concept of 'family'¹² that evokes the need for 'sharing' and 'giving' as social obligations, borne out of generosity rather than choice, which is the key ingredient evident in the concept of volunteerism. They advise that these differences need to be understood, particularly by external supporting agencies when interacting with community members (Robinson & Williams, (2001).

From the above discussion it is clear that the bonds established within social networks underscore the density of these relationships and their resourcefulness. The density of relationships includes the depth, breadth and strength which in the Pacific context must include reference to kinship ties. The types and strengths of bonding capital will be examined further in the next section.

2.4.3 The Bonding, Bridging, Linking Resources of Social Capital

The strengths of ties within interpersonal relationships and networks are categorised in terms of bonding, bridging or linking ties. 'Bonding ties' are used to describe shared co-identifying norms and values or basically a tighter community identity which is typified by ethnic and religious groups and analogous to Portes (1998) first source of social capital (Pelling and High, 2005, p. 310-311). Strong bonding ties are often more associated with community survival than development (in the case of recovery from natural disasters or following conflict) as evidenced by those affected turning to close-knit groups for support (Pelling and High 2005, p. 310; Pelling, 1998, p. 474). In the extreme it can explain the tight group affiliations

¹¹ Refer also to Section 3.3 for an explanation of the concept of Kinship which is rooted in indigenous cultural identity (Robinson & Williams, 2001, p. 57).

¹² Refer also Section 4.4.2. This governs the complex set of relationships which exist within the family (*whanau*), it's wider or extended family networks (*hapu*) and the tribe (*iwi*) structures that characterise the basis on which social interaction and interchange occur. For Fijian context this could read family (*i-tokotoko*), clan (*mataqali*) and tribe or exogamous family groups (*yavusa*) (Geddes 1945; reprinted 2000, p. 50).

that exist where social control and exclusion have developed a distorted sense of societal norm, for example youth gangs, business cartels or lobby groups, old boy networks or even institutionalised racism (Pelling and High, 2005, p. 315).

'Bridging ties' describe relationships of exchange, often associations between people with shared interests or aspirations but contrasting social backgrounds, analogous to Portes (1998) second source of social capital. A subcategory of 'bridging ties' are termed 'linking ties' which hold together relationships that transcend group boundaries in a vertical direction, for example between social classes or community to institutional levels and paralleling Portes (1998) third source of social capital (Pelling and High, 2005, p. 310). Another example is that communities with good vertical links have active channels to facilitate the transfer of information or goods and services between themselves and key institutions (Pelling and High, 2005, p. 310).

The strength of the bonding, bridging and linking ties is claimed to be what holds communities together (Portes, 1998, p. 13). Pelling and High (2005) note that when these overlapping connections fail they can cause the splintering of communities and organizations into segregated sub-communities (p. 311). Pelling and High (2005) also refer to discerning the balance between the 'bonding/bridging/linking triplet' in a social system as a good indicator of 'the direction and speed' with which a community can adapt to change (p. 310).

As noted earlier most people are at the 'intersection of multiple social connections,' straddling one or more Levels of civic activity at one time. This has drawn some authors to describe the bonding / bridging and linking 'triplet' as too simple and analogy (Leonard and Onyx, 2003 In Pelling and High, 2005, p. 311). It has been suggested that urban communities tend to have stronger bridging ties but weaker bonding ties (Pelling and High, 2005, p. 313). Similar differences have been reported with gender analysis with women being associated with bonding and men with bridging or linking ties (Pelling and High, 2005). Also the absence of strong

forms of social capital from the second source (familial) within many urban areas, due to diversity in origins, ethnicity and social structures resulting out of inward-migration, may explain the lack of adaptive capacity of those individuals who reside there (Pelling, 1998, p. 2; Pelling and High, 2005, p. 310).

Stoutland's (1999, p167) framework of community development is a useful way of categorising civic organisations, according to the levels of society at which they operate and people interact with them. Level Zero organisations operate at the grassroots and interface with community members. These are the voluntary formal associations that residents establish to respond to neighbourhood and community social needs. Level One is termed the "front-line organisations that directly serve Level Zero" (p171). For example the external groups of clubs, youth groups and non-government advocacy organisations as well as small businesses like restaurants, shops and bank branches. Level Two community groups include city level organisations or businesses including local council offices and service agencies. Lastly Level Three organisations are the national level policy makers, government departments and business corporations. This framework provides a straight forward system at which to analyse where the different levels of civic activity and linkages may be occurring.

2.4.4 Social Cohesion

Social cohesion is the term used to depict how well people in society 'cohere' or 'stick' together in order to meet shared needs or when facing threats to their existence (Siddique 1999, p. 19; Colletta, Lim and Kelles-Viitanen, 1999, p. 2; Lev-Wiesel, 2003, p. 333; Robinson, 2005, p. 1415; Chan et. al., 2006, p. 289). Chan et. al., (2006) view is that social cohesion arises from the realisation and expression of an individual's 'state of mind' through certain behaviours towards people they interact with in their community, in terms of trust, honesty and their sense of belonging (p. 289).

In Carpiano's (2006) observation factors for social cohesion are aspects of social interaction and levels of trust and shared values among community members are predisposing (p. 168). Lev-Wiesel (2006) adds to this a 'sense of belonging, solidarity and a shared emotional connection' as other key elements of cohesion (p.335). At the community level Chan et al. (2006) believes the condition of a community's collective actions describe their 'state of affairs' in terms of the level of social cohesion that has developed within that community (p. 293) While the different authors offer varying definitions for social cohesion, Chan et. Al's work (2006) defines these key factors clearly and concisely, stating that:

Social cohesion is a state of affairs concerning both the vertical and horizontal interactions among members of society as characterised by a set of attitudes and norms that includes trust, a sense of belonging and the willingness to participate and help, as well as their behavioural manifestations (p. 290).

Their view on what social cohesion is further supported by the work of Colletta, et. al., (1999, p. 3-7), Lev-Wiesel (2003, p. 333) and Pelling and High (2005, p. 314). Based on this understanding, each of these authors developed similar frameworks for analysing social cohesion, but only Lev-Wiesel (2003) and Chan et al., (2006) provided detail about the approach to measuring social cohesion. Both used a quantitative questionnaire to collect their data from participants. Whereas Lev-Wiesel's (2003, p. 336) method of analysis concentrated on scoring a list of 67 indicators, Chan et. al., (2006) was more operational, employing a 'two-by-two framework' that identifies both 'subjective (peoples state of mind) and objective (peoples behavioural manifestations)' as indicators of horizontal and vertical community interactions, (refer Figure 2.1 below) and provided a set of questions that could be utilised as proxy's to measure these four different dimensions (p. 294-297).

Figure 2.1 Two Way Framework for Measuring Social Cohesion

| | Subjective component (People's state of mind) | Objective component (Behavioural manifestations) |
|---|---|--|
| Horizontal dimension (Cohesion within civil society) | General trust with fellow citizens | Social participation and vibrancy of civil society |
| | Willingness to cooperate and help fellow citizens, including those from "other" social groups Sense of belonging or identity | Voluntarism and donations Presence or absence of major inter-group alliances or cleavages |
| Vertical dimension (State-citizen cohesion) | Trust in public figures | Political participation (e.g. voting, political parties etc.) |
| | Confidence in political and other major social institutions | |

[Source: Chan et.al., 2006, p. 294]

The advantage of this approach is that it provides a systematic way of assessing both the individual and group level interactions (including vertical connectedness) whereas Lev-Wiesel's (2003) approach neglects these interactions. Chan et al's (2006) framework is summarised in the following figure, and it is this framework for measuring social cohesion that will be used in this study.

To summarise, the term social cohesion is used to describe how robust a community's networks are, given these networks underpin its stock of social capital. The 'closeness' or degree of 'togetherness' of a community, in this sense, is thought to afford it the ability to adapt better to social change, especially if threatened by either internal or external pressures. Chan et al's operational and pragmatic approach to measuring social cohesion has been adopted here for use in this particular case study and will be referred to throughout this thesis.

2.5 Social Capital and its Recent Application to Community Development

As evidenced above there has been a body of literature that has extended the concept of social capital from an asset of individuals to a feature of communities and civic engagement. This section will review recent examples of where social capital theory has been applied to support the achievement of improvements to collective community well-being. In particular, attention will focus on aspects of community empowerment and capacity strengthening in the urban context.

There are many definitions for community development.¹³ Most agree that it is a slow process, intangible in nature and can involve aspects of community capacity building/strengthening¹⁴ and/or empowerment of their members, to organise themselves in a focused way to mobilise collectively held resources toward social change (Middleton, Murie and Groves, 2005, p. 1714; Laverack, 2006b, p. 267). It is important to differentiate between capacity strengthening and empowerment approaches (Laverack, 2006b). Empowerment processes have an explicit purpose to bring about some form of social or political change whereas capacity strengthening is aimed at skills development or enhancing peoples abilities to enable more informed decision-making and collective action (Laverack, 2006b, p. 268). Of particular interest in this review was the definition of Labonte & Laverack (2001a) who described 'community capacity' as "a confluence of ideas" and involving "elements of peoples' day-to-day relationships, conditioned and constrained by economic and political practices, that are important determinants of the quality of their lives, if not also of communities' healthy functioning" (p. 112).

Processes that involve people as the central focus, as in most contemporary community development practices, use participatory research to ensure the subjects are active partners in the identification of their own problems and solutions

¹³ Refer to Footnote 4.

¹⁴ The terms 'capacity building' and 'capacity strengthening' are referred to here as the various literature sources cited utilize both these. However the preference is to use 'strengthening' as it recognizes that communities are not 'built' as they already have a level of their own strengths and assets (as already discussed) which may only require enhancing, subject to the community members participating fully in their own development and according to their identified needs.

(Green & Mercer, 2001, p. 1926). There has been a proliferation of general studies on the broad application of social capital theory to the urban context in recent times which have emphasised participatory approaches, including: Driskill et.al., (2001), about obstacles for youth in community development in the slums of Bangalore, India; Carpenter et. al., (2004), focusing on sources of social capital and gender differences in squatter settlements including Bangkok in Thailand and Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam; Racelis (2005), discussed how community mobilisation by poor informal settlers in many large Philippine cities has lead to changed political dynamics and better services for their communities; Katzman (2005), discussed spatial segregation, fragmentation and social exclusion within contrasting urban neighbourhoods of Montevideo, Uruguay; Beard and Dasgupta (2005), explored community level collective action in rural and urban communities in Indonesia; and Kleinhans et. al., (2007), assessed changes in social capital development in four different post-war neighbourhoods of Rotterdam, the Netherlands. All have examined as part of their assessments, the social capital precursors within these communities with the view to understanding better the dynamics behind how these communities work to mobilise collectively held resources toward benefiting themselves which is materially relevant to this thesis topic.

There has also been a broad debate about what constitutes urban sustainability including aspects of poverty and social cohesion. McGranahan, Songsoore and Kjellen (1996), discussed urban sustainability, poverty and spatial segregation of the poor due to environmental problems using a three city study including, Accra in Ghana, Jakarta in Indonesia and São Paulo in Brazil; Whitehead (2003), analysed what sustainable cities means to regulation and socio-environmental relations in the United Kingdom; and Storey (2005), summarises well the complexities of current urbanisation trends within the Pacific and the challenges faced in order to find stable and sustainable development options in Fiji. These studies emphasised that finding sustainable solutions to urban issues had a lot to do with how engaged the communities were in finding those workable solutions which in turn was dependent on their social cohesiveness. The wider the diversity of groups

accessed both internal and external to the community, the greater the propensity for improved social cohesion and civic activity (Laverack, 2001, p. 139). The notion that social cohesion in urban squatter communities is reliant on good social networks and that this can underscore potential for finding sustainable solutions to their plight has application to the context of this thesis.

However, there is little available research on how community capacity or social cohesion within urban informal settlements can be measured or monitored, perhaps reflecting how difficult it has been to apply in practice (MacLellan-Wright et. al., 2007 p. 300). Many authors have tried, first concentrating on a 'community action' approach where there is a specific change identified as beneficial. Any community capacity strengthening that occurs is a consequence of that outcome (Littlejohns et al. 2001, p. 11; Labonte et. al., 2002, p. 489). For example Pelling and High (2005) utilised this approach to diagnose social capital assets when mapping adaptive theory and capacity (in their study related to climate change) in relation to four domains of social action. This involved assessing the maturation of social networks and norms regarded as fundamental to communities' abilities to adapt, change or adopt new technologies (p. 309). It enabled the researchers to gain an understanding about the level of development and receptivity to various types of interventions targeted at fostering social change through better collective decision making processes (Pelling and High, 2005, p. 312).

Other key elements that have been identified as 'constructs' of community development include strengthening sources of social capital and improving social cohesion (Grootaert & van Bastelaer, 2001, p.21; Chan, 2006, p. 291; Lev-Weisel, 2003, p. 332); community cultural and heritage dynamics (Robinson and Williams 2001, p. 69); progressive issue development (Sen, R. 2003, p. xvii) and building capable communities (Bopp, 2002, p. 2; Laverack, 2006b, p. 267). More recently others representing public service providers have utilised these techniques to collaborate with communities to identify strategies that will support better dissemination of information to underpin social change in order to improve delivery of public health programmes and to reduce the burden of the health system

(MacQueen et. al., 2001, p. 1929; Labonte and Laverack, 2001, p. 112; Laverack, 2005, p. 267).

Aligned to this focus on finding improvements in health service delivery, a recent body of work by Glen Laverack (1999 to 2006) focused on community capacity and empowerment. Laverack (2003) took a programmatic approach to health promotion work by focusing on the development of a tool to assess community capacity and which could also translate that capacity into community action (p. 100). Based on a participatory process, this approach utilised a strategic planning focus as an entry point then facilitated the community's collective resources and information base into community lead programmes that would bring about social and political change. Laverack described this process as 'organisational empowerment' and building 'capable communities' (Laverack, 2001, p. 134; 2003, p. 99-100),

The most recent description of the approach was outlined by Laverack (2006a) and refers to nine 'operational domains' designed to 'build more empowered or capacity-rich communities' through 'guiding community development practitioners in their planning, application' and interactions with target communities (p. 7).

Laverack's domains and the corresponding outcome arising from Laverack's interpretation are included in Figure 2.2 on the following page. The effectiveness of Laverack's operational domains has been demonstrated through various field demonstrations within Fijian rural villages (Laverack, 2003 & 2006a & b).

Laverack's approach and use of domains has been further adapted by other researchers who developed their own variants of the 'operational domains' list for achieving organisational and social change, particularly in areas of health promotion work (Labonte & Laverack, 2001a & b; Bopp, 2002; Gibbon, Labonte & Laverack, 2002; Laverack and Brown, 2003; Lev-Wiesel, 2003; MacLellan-Wright, et. al., 2007) and more recently for ecotourism (Laverack & Thangphet, 2007).

Laverack's use of operational domains (see Fig 2.2) has been further developed into a tool for communities and practitioners to apply in the measurement of community capacity and assessing the results of capacity strengthening (Anderson, MacLellan-Wright & Barber, 2007).

Figure 2.2 Domains Approach for Measuring Community Empowerment

| Domain | Interpretation in the literature (Gibbon, Labonte and Laverack, 2002) |
|---------------------------|---|
| Participation | Participation is fundamental. Only by participating in small groups or larger organizations can individual community members better define, analyse and act on issues of general concern to the broader community |
| Leadership | Participation and leadership are closely connected. Leadership requires a strong participant base just as participation requires the direction and structure of strong leadership |
| Organizational structures | Organizational structures in a community include small groups such as committees, church and youth groups. These are the organizational elements which represent the ways in which people come together in order to socialize and to address their concerns and problems. The existence of and the level at which these organizations function is crucial |
| Resource mobilization | The ability of the community to mobilize resources both from within and the ability to negotiate resources from beyond itself is an important factor in its ability to achieve successes in its efforts |
| External linkages | Links with people and organizations, including partnerships, coalitions and voluntary alliances between the community and others, can assist the community in addressing its issues |
| Problem assessment | The identification of problems, solutions to the problems and actions to resolve the problems are to be carried out by the community. This process assists communities to develop a sense of self-determination and capacity |
| Project management | Programme management includes the control by the community over decisions on planning, implementation, evaluation, finances, administration, reporting and conflict resolution. The first step is to have clearly defined roles, responsibilities and line management of all the stakeholders |
| Critical assessment | The ability of the community to critically assess the social, political, economic and other causes of inequalities is a crucial stage towards broader capacity building |
| Outside agents | Outside agents are often an important link between communities and external resources. Their role is especially important to increasingly transform power relationships between the agency and the community, such that the community assumes increasing authority |

[Source: Laverack and Thangphet, 2007, p. 5-6]

2.6 Conclusion

As indicated above various authors maintain that social capital accumulates over time, for any one society and is dependent upon the historical development path taken (Pelling and High, 2005, p. 8). Empirical studies of civil society and collective action observed there are a number of common attributes of social capital including trust, reciprocity and various other social norms that can combine in different forms. Various functions can result from these resources, including networking and voluntary cooperation (McIlwaine, 1998, in Pelling and High, 2005, p. 8). In the context of this thesis the ways in which social capital occurs within communities is important because it can open up access to external sources of information and assistance. Social networking of this nature provides a functional basis for communities to working collectively and to critically assess the available information sources in a focused way (Middleton, Murie and Groves, 2005, p. 1714; Laverack, 2006b, p. 267). Using social capital indicators as a tool can also help reveal the power dynamics, contextual and cultural identities that exist between members of communities (Pelling and High, 2005, p. 314).

Once the social capital indicators are identified within a community it should be possible to gather that accumulated individual knowledge held by a group or community and mobilise it in coherent ways that can benefit all. This accumulation of individual knowledge fits nicely with O’Gorman’s (1992, p. 78) ‘model’ of community led development as an impetus for social change (Fischer et. al., 2002, p. 5). Utilising social capital indicators such as those discussed here as precursors to identifying suitable ‘community development’ approaches should also recognise that community development is a dynamic process, involving a number of desirable elements that, if nurtured and strengthened, can result in communities achieving improvements in living standards and quality-of-life outcomes (Laverack, 2005, p. 267). In view of the recognition of community development as a dynamic process it is clear that social capital theory can be applied to monitor community cohesion and capacity utilised over time to empower communities to make social change

related to economic and social development and well-being (Carpenter et. al., 2003, p. 855; Cock, Keele, Cheers, Kruger and Trigg, 2006, p. 1).

Community “capacity strengthening and empowerment” arising from social capital resources and social cohesion, are some of the key ideological concepts that this research wishes to explore in the urban settlements context. Using social capital indicators for monitoring improvements in community capacity and well-being, aligned to those approaches outlined above, has merit given the absence of any other socially constructed frameworks of human-group behaviours. Chapter Five will provide an explanation about the approach taken for this research and how the data was collected, based on the findings of this review.

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: CULTURE AND IDENTITY: THEORIES IN DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Introduction

This Chapter continues the examination of a theoretical framework for this thesis by focusing on two specific aspects of social capital: culture and identity.

Stavenhagen (2003) argues that we each need to identify with somewhere, and for most it is the nuclear family at the core and the community that surrounds it which provides this sense of belonging (p. 9).

The very concept of 'a person' or identity for an individual is complex, involves a multiplicity of dynamic factors, and will vary from one culture to another as the following quote by Holland et al (1998, p.5) demonstrates:

[I]dentities [are] the imaginings of self in worlds of action... lived in and through activity ... [and] must be conceptualized as they develop in social practice. ... [I]dentities [are also] psycho-historical formations that develop over a person's lifetime, populating intimate terrain and motivating social life.

This quotation summarises the concept of multi-dimensionality of identity constructed by process through social interaction and life's learnings. These dynamics have long been recognised in the social sciences, first emerging from the early 1900's through Freud's psychoanalytical explorations of the human mind. Freud and others suggested that identity developed from reasoned choice and self actualisation, which they termed "identity of [the] 'rational man'" (Mayo, 2000, p.

42).¹⁵ Following were others like Mead (1934) who during the inter-war years studied the socialisation processes of human infants, highlighting that identity was shaped through consciousness of one's self stemming from various societal interactions through their development (Zaretsky, 1994, in Mayo, 2000, p. 42). The theme of life being shaped by the interactions and options available is developed further by Giddens (1991) in what he terms a 'post-traditional order of modernity'. He argues:

The more tradition loses its hold and the more daily life is reconstituted in terms of the dialectical interplay of the local and the global, the more individuals are forced to negotiate lifestyle choices among a diversity of options (In Mayo, 2000, p. 43).

Giddens's contention that people's sense of identity forms by the experiences of associations or interactions with others is shared by Amartya Sen (1998) who adds:

[T]here are strong influences of the community, and the people with whom we identify and associate, in shaping our knowledge and comprehension as well as our ethics and norms. In this sense, social identity cannot but be central to human life (p. 5).

Shared understanding or lived experiences may then develop or accumulate becoming important determinants for both the individual and a group's collective resources a view highlighted also by Holland et. al., (1998):

Identities are the key means through which people care about and care for what is going on around them. They are important bases from which people create new activities, new worlds, and new ways of being (p. 5).

As resources that are available to the individual or community these factors can be termed 'social capital' and are considered potential sources of wealth. This is

¹⁵ For a detailed anthropological discussion on identity and how it may change over time, see Jenkins (1997) account, *Rethinking Ethnicity*.

because they can engender the development of common social values and norms that underpin the social networks and cohesion of functioning communities¹⁶. The claim here is that when challenged or empowered, communities can utilise these resources to organise themselves to seek resolutions to shared problems, provide benefits to members or to overcome adversity.

Key questions that arise from these assertions relevant to this research are: How do identity perceptions and culture influence social relations, particularly in an urban setting? How do these multiple identities support the collective empowerment processes of communities and what benefits are there for the individual's sense of well-being¹⁷ within such a community setting? These questions are particularly relevant given there are dualities of ethnic groups being studied.

To address these, this chapter will go on to provide an analysis of what determines individual and group identity and its social connections to culture, religion and lived experience. This explanation will suggest what the sources of identity determination are and review the diverse set of influencing factors that contribute to them, including life experiences, social group interactions and community connectedness.

3.2 The Constructs of Identity

This section will explain the three foundational determinants of self-identity by firstly examining the key factors that comprise them and secondly, the influence they may have on development of the individual and hence the social groups to which they belong. Self identity is an abstract association and so needs to be thought in terms of its 'primordial' set of physical and quintessential characteristics

¹⁶ Social values and norms and social networks are two concepts of 'social capital' and the underlying determinant of a communities 'social cohesion' as introduced in Chapter 2.

¹⁷ Refer definition of 'well-being' relevant to this study in Section 1.2.

and attributes which together constitute people's personality (Stewart, 2001, p. 5). The personality determinants can then be conditioned by both 'internal' and 'external constructs' that converge over time (Ratuva, 2008a) to influence the individual's outlook or demeanour on life (Sen, 1998, p. 13) determining a unique or at least distinctive sense of identity. Understanding how the foundational determinants of self identity can be conditioned by environmental or lived experiences is important to this thesis study given what people identify with forms the basis for how they may associate or interact with each other at the community level (Watson-Gegeo, 2005, p. 413; Giddens, 1991 In Mayo, 2000, p. 43).

Primordial Characteristics

Primordial characteristics are considered to be characteristics that one is borne with (Ratuva, 2008a); in other words, they are personal traits which predispose the individual's psyche in a unique way for perceiving the world. These characteristics may be maintained or reinforced through one's ethnicity, origins or cultural heritage, shared history, language or religion (Dummett, 2001; Hermann & Kempf, 2005; Ratuva, 2002a; Ratuva 2008a). Primordial characteristics also may be reinforced through stories or legends, passed down through the generations. An example of this from Dirkhardt (2005) was in the significance of current events linked to those of the past through his interpretations of the stories or legends held in and shared through cultural Fijian dance (*meke*) (in Jolly, 2005,).

Internal Constructs

Internal constructs evolve over time and most often through reflections on how external or primordial factors may influence one's outlook on life or the way life events are perceived (Ratuva, 2002a, p. 13). These are either absorbed into or become markers for one's own sense of self (Ratuva, 2008a). These markers include the way someone may perceive the world, understand reality, accept norms, and argue about what is to be done (Sen 1998, p9). Internal constructs may also be those that are developed by community or group members – either

individual or collective interpretations – what others in the group stand for, do or say and which are absorbed to be part of the groups' identity (Ratuva, 2008a).

External Constructs

External constructs are derived from social interactions with others or groups and are formulated by the individual's perceptions of how others view them. Amartya Sen (1998) explored the role and implications of what he termed 'social identity' in the development of individual identity in his essay *Reason Before Identity*. Sen describes how interactions with others, individuals or groups, in terms of associating with or adopting their behaviours have a profound effect on the individual:

[S]ocial identity figures prominently as the principle determinant of people's understanding of the world, their modes of reasoning and conceptions of rationality, their behavioural norms and practices, and their personal moralities and political commitments (Sen, 1998, p. 6).

Sen (1998) claims that associations and interactions with other people allow us to express closely held values such as generosity, public-spiritedness, responsibility, trustworthiness and other social norms (p. 3). In this quote Sen relates a person's functioning with productivity which he describes in terms of transactions resulting from the associations and interactions between people. These individual or group held assets, Sen claims, are essential to survival and well-being and in turn allow a successful market economy to prosper (p. 3). When adhered to, this sharing allows individuals to function, exchange and prosper or falter (Sen, 1998, p. 6).

This notion of social identity resonates well with what constitutes 'built' forms of social capital. A type of collective resource held within the community. In the context of this thesis, for the urban poor mobilising their social resources is a challenge. Urban settlements or squatter communities consist of densely populated neighbourhoods that are culturally diverse and socially fragmented (Meikle, Ramasut & Walker, 2001, p. 5). These and other environmental factors pose

challenges for individuals to organise themselves around shared needs. In those circumstances Meikle et. al. (2001) argues the need for a different set of survival strategies that are for the most part dependent on ‘the opportunities and constraints under which they are operating’ (p. 4). These, they maintain, are fundamentally different from those practiced in the traditional sense in rural areas (p. 5).

These dynamics will be illuminated later in this Chapter when considering the social influences of groups on identity. For now though, it is sufficient to note that these three multidimensional constructs may be further developed or shift over time (Ratuva, 2008a) through interaction within differing cultural settings or social relationships (Mayo, 2000, p. 42). In addition to these three main constructs another external construct process to consider is termed ‘lived experiences’, gained from the outcomes of life’s learnings and which may later predispose the individual to view life events in certain ways. The recent study of a Fijian squatter settlement in Suva showed how externally learned behaviours, termed ‘lived experience’, became key factors determining their sense of self identity (Kurusiga, Kado and Qoroni’s, 2006, p. 98). They defined ‘lived experience’ as a set of coping strategies which had been gained and are employed during times of hardship (Kurusiga, et al., 2006, p. 100-101). Other authors referred to these as ‘livelihood’ strategies relating these to a householder’s ‘pattern of activities’ which together constitute their means of living¹⁸ or more fundamentally, existential survival (Meikle et al., 2001, p. 12). Lived experience includes the impact of culture on a person’s identity and growth.

¹⁸ Livelihood strategy is a term used to describe ‘ones means of living’ as defined by the DFID Sustainable Livelihoods Approach or model of development (Ashley & Carney, 1999; Carney, 2002). For a more detailed explanation of this term refer to Chapter 3 Methodology.

3.3 The Place of Culture in Identity

In developed countries many have come to associate the word 'culture' more with its contemporary meaning, where it has been used to describe lifestyles – the way we choose to live, both ideologically and materially in a rapidly modernising world (Pearson, 1995, p. 9). For example contemporary theorists now refer to the term "late modern culture" or "high culture" as the reference set for the elitist (Bennett, 2004, p. 170; Halle, 2002, p. 334). Culture in this contemporary sense has its roots in the Bourdieuan perspective of a dominant class and prodigious living (Di Maggio & Mukhtar, 2004, p. 170; Halle, 2002, p. 334) where stylishness has become the measure, gained from education, enlightenment or sophistication and reflected in elements like fine dining, poetry, art, music, fashion and even for connoisseurs of good coffee and wine (Pearson, 1995, p. 6). However, the lifestyle or livelihood connotations to culture go deeper when sourcing the sociological origins of culture, as shared beliefs and values, customs, language, practices and social behaviour, most typical of a particular group of people (Park, 2005, p18). In that sense 'culture' is defined well by Gill (1983) as:

[Culture is] what holds a community together, giving a common framework of meaning. It is preserved in language, thought patterns, ways of life, attitudes, symbols and presuppositions and is celebrated in art, music, drama. ... It constitutes the collective memory of the people and the collective heritage which will be handed down to generations still to come (in, Tuwere, 2002, p. 99).

This definition describes key elements that constitute what culture is: Shared history, custom, symbols, rituals, material and social goods. They also underline the importance of social groups in shaping human behaviour and thus our way of living. According to Ratuva (2002a) group membership extends from one's family affiliations, to cultural affinities and friendship associations too (p. 12). The importance of cultural influences on the material and ideological needs involved in shaping identity is determined by Stavenhagen (2003) in this way, stating: "Human

needs are fulfilled in these collective human environments: food, shelter, security, education, work, leisure, participation, creativity, spirituality ...all conditioned by culture” (p. 10). Thus, culture is operationalised as an entity external to the individual that can be described, captured, and quantified (Hand, 2006, p. 37).

In Pacific Island indigenous cultures the concept of group or community identity is one of a strong sense of communalism with its origins in tribal affiliations and rural villages where life consists of relatively simple tasks and processes. In these settings, social structures reinforce the collective, connectivity and spirituality of the people within their environment. Cultural practices form the sets of socially accepted norms that bind a community and with that provide a sense of security for those individuals that belong.

Indigenous Cultural Influences on Identity

In many Pacific Island cultures, land holds an important place. Its intrinsic value is highlighted through customs and spirituality and in its vital links to the Pacific way of life, and thus becomes part of identity, as Pond (1997) describes:

In Cook Islands Maori, ‘enua’ means ‘land, country territory afterbirth’; in Futuna (Wallace) ‘fanua’ means ‘country, land, the people of a place’; in Tonga, ‘fonua’ means ‘island, territory, estate, the people of the estate... in [other] Polynesian languages, proto-fanua is both the people and the territory that nourishes them, as a placenta nourishes a baby (In Batibasaga, Overton & Horsley, 1999, p. 100).

Similarly, in Fijian indigenous society the concept of *vanua* encompasses the kinship and sharing nature of physical resources within a community’s collective lifestyle. It also includes aspects of societal hierarchy, authority, customary practices, links to ancestry and connection with the land and sea and what natural resources they hold. When referring to the *vanua* “the use of the word encapsulates the notion of people with a common territory and often a common

dialect, history and cultural icons” (Batibasaqa et al., 1999, p. 101).¹⁹ This one term is, for many Fijians’, at the core of their cultural identity and provides the boundaries that determine “how people interact with each other and the land and also the social structure through which these are carried out” (Batibasaqa et al., 1999, p. 101).

Cultural influences can also be operationalised through rituals paired with symbolic materials that are valued thus integral to a people’s way of living (Ratuva, 2002a, p. 12). Cultural influences also provide the sets of protocols for group behaviours and guide how they might associate with other people(s) from outside. For example, the Fijian practice of *kava* drinking²⁰ used to formally welcome guests to the village or for reconciliation purposes is a symbol of authentic Fijian culture (Hermann & Kempf, 2005, Section 4, para’s 2 & 5).

The importance of cultural influences on group identities and community relations in the context of this research is clear: Community relations in urban squatter settlements necessitates cultural bonding between the two main Fijian ethnicities, not normally encountered in such intimate circumstances compared to the rural setting from whence these people have originated. This urban assimilation for two predominantly diverse cultures in Fiji has been aptly captured in the following statement of former Vice President Ratu Joni Madraiwiwi, “While our cultures give us our identity, globalisation will not allow them to be the sole defining elements to our being” (Madraiwiwi, 2008, p. 27). In this statement Madraiwiwi is pointing out that while culture forms part of our identity, it is not the only force that defines Fijians and their place in a global world.

¹⁹ Refer Section 4.4.2 for Tuware’s (2002) concept of the *vanua* being one of three strands upon which Fijian social structure is built. For an authoritative discussion of the concept of *vanua* and in relation to intracommunal land conflict in Fiji, see Ratuva’s (2002b) account, *Anatomising the Vanua Complex: Intra-Communal Land Disputes and Implications on the Fijian Community*.

²⁰ For an explanation of the various uses and practice of sharing this beverage, derived from the root of the *yanqona* plant and called Kava (or ‘grog’) refer to Section 4.4.2 also.

3.4 Social Identity Influences in Fiji

In a 2001 Fiji study on concepts of national identity and church unity, The World Council of Churches claimed that both external and internal factors can be imposed on social groups by individuals (WCC, 2001, p. 17). These can influence individual behaviour and values, determine how others regard or react towards each other hence affect one's own behaviours (Ratuva, 2008) or sense of well-being (Stewart, 2001, p. 2). The binding agent may be ethnicity, locality or religion, (Stewart, 2001, p. 2; Ratuva, 2002a, p. 12) class or gender (Mayo, 2000, p. 44). In the words of Tuware (2005, p. 19), "social contexts shape the way people formulate (construct) their perceptions and expressions of self".

The idea that a binding agent such as ethnicity or religion can shape social identity is supported by Gellner (1964) who extends this concept to include affects of more intrinsic attributes like the links between human life and the need to "belong, to identify and hence to exclude" (in Stewart, 2001, p. 2). Here Gellner draws a direct connection between group membership and its social influences on identity and acceptance. Socially constructed, identity can change over time according to changing circumstances (Ratuva, 2002a, p. 19), or shared histories (Ratuva, 2002a, p. 12) and lived experiences particularly in the urban context (Kurusiga, et al., 2006, p. 100-101) which is of material interest to this thesis study given these attributes of social identity underpin people's ability to across ethnic and religious boundaries of difference if they are to address shared needs.

In his essay on the indigeneity claims of Indo-Fijians in Fiji Dummett (2001, para 14) refers to the robustness of Fiji in maintaining its native cultural identity despite the perceived threat of assimilation due to the impact of the Indo-Fijian culture. Conversely for the Indo-Fijian²¹, their cultural identity has been reconstituted

²¹ Here I adopt Ratuva's terminology for ethnic Indian citizens of Fiji. That is to say those of Indian ancestry but who are also Fijian. The use of the term 'Indian' would otherwise deny this historical and cultural association with Fiji (Ratuva, 2002a, p. 7).

according to Satendra Nandan and other commentators²², by necessity as they have moved from indentured labourers to Fiji's colonial sugar cane companies in the late 1800's - early 1900's to the business people of the late 1900's. Thus the Indo-Fijian culture has thus been acquired not inherited, out of these many struggles²³ while helping to shape the current political state of Fiji as it is known now hence lending claim to their indigeneity recognition (Dummett, 2001, para 39; Walsh, 2006, p. 100; Nandan, 2008, p. 6).

Unfortunately the separate development of ethnic Fijians and Indo-Fijians encouraged by the colonial and subsequent governments has caused inter-ethnic tensions between these two groups and given opportunity for resentment and misunderstandings to develop (Jolly, 2005, Section 2 para's 12-13; Rakuita, 2008). Some commentators have described these ethnic differences as incapable of resolution (Madraiwiwi, 2008, p. 29). It is not for this study to explore all of these in detail²⁴ but rather to highlight the linkages and duplicities of identity that occur. These processes of assimilation and delineation are continual and in some cases perceived to be antagonistic, particularly when politicised (Douglas, 2002, p. 13) as has been the case in regards to Fiji over the rights of Indo-Fijians to access land for productive means and Fijians notion of *vanua* which is fundamental to the value of indigeneity (Jolly, 2005, Section 3, para. 1; Trnka, 2005, Section 7, para. 7).²⁵

In recent times the social mobility of educated Fijians has lead to a more egalitarian perception of self but one that still contains an underlying, deep sense of connection to the *vanua*. This has been evident with the continued support by many of these 'modernist Fijians' for the pro-Fijian preferential policies within

²² Among others including Hermann & Kempf (2005); Trnka (2005); Rakuita (2007) and Lal (2008).

²³ Refer to Chapter 4 for a fuller account of the Indo-Fijian historical development.

²⁴ For a theoretical discussion on communal and ethnic identity and its politics in post-colonial Fiji, see Ratuva's (2008b) account, *Politics of ethno-national identity in a post-colonial communal democracy: The case of Fiji* and Rakuita's (2007) study on *Identity and Belongingness* in Fiji.

²⁵ Refer to Footnote 6 and also to Chapter 4 for a fuller account of concept of *vanua*.

government institutions (WCC 2001, p. 21). These programmes had been justified based on the need to improve the economic status of Fijians in reference to that of Indo-Fijians (WCC 2001, p. 21). John Garrett, after the first coup in 1987, said of Indo-Fijians that, “their success and their work ethic are often resented by ethnic Fijians, whose societies still prize economies based on material gift exchange and subsistence affluence rather than the rough-and-tumble standards of capitalism and cash” (Garret 1988 In Barr, 2002b, p. 23).

In the aftermath of the 1987 coup these views became more deep seated through the *i-taukei* movement (Barr, 2002b, p. 7). *Taukei* means literally ‘owner of the land’ hence has nationalistic connotations with its use while *vulagi* literally means ‘visitor’. For example, Europeans are termed *kai vulagi* or ‘white visitor’. Barr (2002b) maintains it was this Fijian ethnocentricity that led Christianity to be used as a means to justify racist attitudes among Fijians toward Indo-Fijians (p. 14). A view that was founded on the claims of Balawanilotu (1989) and Weir (2000) who stated that some Methodist leaders had colluded with ethnic Fijian religious and political fundamentalism, by seeking constitutional ratification of Fiji as a Christian state in which *i-taukei* (people of the land) exercise paramouncy over non-indigenous communities, especially Indo-Fijians (In Douglas, 2002, p. 11). This association of God with land (the *vanua*), God with Fijian authority and Christianity upheld as superior to other faiths and peoples sought to validate Fijian culture through “divine revelation” above the rights of other communities in Fiji (Barr, 2004, pp. 3, 6 & 28; Jolly, 2005, Section 2 para. 4).

This evidence of antagonistic delineation between the two ethnic groups in relation to certain perceived stereotypes about each other is an example of where external factors have influenced group identity over time. Various social behaviours have manifested an identity perception that reinforces either negatively or positively and in some cases may affect the status of community affairs. An example of this is the resourcefulness of Indo-Fijians is seen by Fijians as selfish and greedy, the result of unprincipled individualism and so by association are not to be trusted (Ratuva,

2002a, p. 20). Paradoxically the values of frugality and hard work are upheld by Fijians as a way to achieve success. The success of Indo-Fijians in education and business reinforces that. Ratuva (2002a) states that “Indo-Fijians’ perception of Fijians are also double edged. They are seen as patient, generous and good hearted people while conversely they are also perceived as lazy, uncivilized and unreliable” (p. 20).

Religious Influences on Identity and Culture

As indicated above, the key differences in respective religious beliefs within Fiji society – Fijians being Christians and Indians being Hindu (who worshipped idols) or Muslim (non-Christian), has seen a steady rise in religious and political tensions and condescension (Barr, 2002b, p. 6). These hostilities persist in today’s society, evident through the regular (yet sporadic) desecration of Hindu Temples, widely accepted to be both racially and religiously motivated (Fiji Sun, 2006).²⁶

A recent example of how the dualities of cultural identities have again been tested for both Fijian and Indo-Fijian is through the livelihood choice of migrating to urban squatter settlements. This has presented advantages in terms of savings on household expenses and avoidance of cultural obligations, enabling the family to be more financially secure. This presents a number of trade-offs too in terms of “quality of life”, particularly with regard to environmental, health and social concerns (Kurusiga et al, 2006, p.107).

The Pacific Island culture of communal living and familial connectivity can narrow the exposure to other influences which can lead to a tendency for fundamental or conservative levels of thinking. Moreover the influences of customary values and lifestyle, spirituality and power relations (be it government, tribal loyalties or religious teachings) can in turn have a strong influence on shaping individual and

²⁶ Refer to Chapter 4.4.2 and 4.4.3 for more descriptive reflections on Fijian and Indo-Fijian cultures and the importance of religious beliefs to both ethnic groups.

group identity. In Sen's words, "making a definitive communal identity a matter of self-realisation, not of choice" (1998, p. 15).

These observations infer that social and cultural identities are manifest by the degree of commitment an individual has to the beliefs, values, and goals of their community.²⁷ Hand (2006) expressed the opinion that the "process of acculturation²⁸ involves reconciling one's personal identity (internal) with the values, norms, and meanings of cultural institutions (external) through the development of social and cultural identities" (p. 37). Sen (1998) argues that individuals have the freedom to identify more strongly with some domains of "social concern or appropriate conduct" over others, and that "choice and reasoning" becoming the shaper (p. 14). Continuing this theme Hand (2006) describes the choices people make and the behaviours they enact during their daily lives are the result of a complex process of negotiation that operates within the boundaries of "perceived social and cultural constraints or opportunities" (p. 36). While this view concurs with Sen's (1998) contention about 'choice and reason', Hand also emphasises that individual preferences are more often than not, conditioned by the position an individual may hold within the hierarchy of society.

For many, the extent of these social relations will extend across a range of groups in, and potentially beyond their own community. This could also include the relative position or status ones ethnicity (as a social group) may hold within a multicultural society (that is whether it is marginalised or not for instance) which has relevance to how Fijian citizens of all ethnicities view their national identity. These perspectives collectively form one's preferences and ultimately how one chooses

²⁷ The definition of 'community' here is in the group sense which includes a geographically located settlement, village but includes ethnic groups and the cultural or extended family (tribal) affiliations in the sense of Ratuva's definition of 'the group' as mentioned earlier (Ratuva, 2002a, p. 12).

²⁸ The term acculturation means 'cultural change' - a change in the cultural behaviour and thinking of a person or group of people through contact with another culture. Can also mean the process by which somebody absorbs the culture of a society from birth onwards (Encarta® World English Dictionary [UK Edition] © & 2009 Microsoft Corporation).

to act within these social structures (individual agency) and hence define individual identity. Hand describes well this perspective of individual agency in the following statement:

This perspective shifts our focus to the activity of positioning and being positioned in such a way that culture, power, and privilege are made manifest in human relations. Who we perceive ourselves to be is inseparable from what we do (and have done to us); identity and social practice are two sides of the same coin. While communities guide the practices that individuals take up, individuals adapt and reorganize these practices as they negotiate competent participation across multiple communities. Holding both the individual and the social context in view affords a perspective of identity that reveals both social structure and individual agency (Hand, 2006, p. 38).

Hand's observations could explain why, in the absence of a strong and just sense of community identity and in the face of adverse pressures, individuals or groups within a community can make detrimental 'lifestyle' choices. Individuals may choose to identify with certain social behaviours that lead to potential conflicts arising between dual identities and these may manifest in behaviours or how one reacts to given situations (Sen, 1998, p. 15). For example, acts of domestic related violence or inter-ethnic violence which led to an accepted practice within society or societal groups. Fulcher (2005, p. 292) believes that the post colonial effects on minority indigenous cultures are evidence of this type of cultural change where a "culture of violence" has come to be accepted behaviour in the urban gangland Maori youth groups in New Zealand. Fulcher claims this has resulted due to dislocation from traditional tribal links and hence cultural values. Winston Halapua endorses this idea in his reference to successive coups in Fiji:

The prevalence of such violence within home boundaries indicates the intensity of the tragedy currently crippling Fiji. The breakdown of social and moral integrity is now within the ... extended family system. The institution for the formation of a community is threatened. Fiji society is damaged at its very core ... a society becoming increasingly gripped by a culture of violence.

Militarism contributes to this culture of violence in no small way (Halapua, 2008, p. 116).

This view of violence becoming acceptable within community is supported by von Strokirch (2005, p. 422) although Buvinic & Morrison (2000) claim these are the result of globalisation and its effects on income inequalities, which underlines this sections opening quote from Ratu Joni Madraiwiwi that claimed, "... globalisation will not allow [our cultures] to be the sole defining elements to our being" (Madraiwiwi, 2008, p. 27).

Descriptions of culture and religion as externally and socially constructed characteristics of identity illustrate that culture never remains static or unchanged (Scheyvens, 1999, p. 48). Across the Pacific, cultural diversity is as much under threat as biodiversity (Scheyvens, 1999, p. 49). As has been outlined above changes in society within the Pacific are most under threat from the adoption of Western and post colonial influences, in culture and commerce (Scheyvens, 1999, p. 52) politics and spirituality (Batibasaqa et al., 1999, p. 103) and the growing impacts of urban migration (Storey, 2006). Purdie (1999) in his study of Pacific Livelihoods talks of the reality of many people "constructing their daily livelihoods" under an environment in transition from "a predominantly subsistence base to an increasingly urbanised population" (Purdie, 1999, p. 71).

One example of how these external factors have impacted on Pacific youth was highlighted in a study of cultural change by Joseph Veramu (2002) which revealed Pacific youth are struggling to find their identity in this changing world (p. 11). His view was supported in Vakaoti's study of disaffected Fijian youths (2002, p. 49). Veramu (2002) outlines that traditionally, in the village their role was clearly defined and their identity moulded by the authority figures of the elders (p. 11). Today Fijian youth are facing challenges from the influences of media (for example TV and hand held electronic devices), the need to achieve an education, the desire of consumerism and with it, exposure to a wider variety of role models that conflict

with the values bestowed culturally (p. 11). This observation has a measure of coherence with the notion of delineated stereotypical perceptions between these two predominant Fijian ethnic groups highlighted earlier.

3.5 Conclusion

Defining one's identity is an evolutionary process (Ratuva, 2002a, p. 13). Firstly, it is the nurturing environment of the family and kin ties that shape one's view of the world and foster learned behaviours which build on a person's inherited sense of perspective (that is one's own personality traits) (Ratuva, 2002a, p. 13). Secondly, these behaviours are consciously or subconsciously modified (that is internally constructed) through people's associations and interactions with various individuals or groups and resulting from their lived experiences, including aspects of custom, spirituality or religion (termed external constructs) (Mayo, 2000, p. 42; Robinson, 2001, p. 56; Kurusiga et al., 2006, p. 98; Meikle et al., 2001, p. 12).

Simply defined the concept of culture denotes images common to all people: shared knowledge, technologies, values, behaviours and way of life (Mayo, 2000, p. 13). These views are supported by Park (2005, p18) who includes the influences of customs, language, practices and social behaviour. Ratuva (2002, p. 12) also refers to the "cultural boundaries" around which group structures and identity are formed. This suggests group membership, including the social interactions that pertain to them, is an important external factor that helps to determine individual identity. Ultimately one's sense of self is underwritten with certain fundamental traits and learning which help to subconsciously filter how one identifies with various external and social influences. Thus there can be multiple levels of identity that emerge to shape the individual, the personal, group or communal (which may include tribal affiliations or ethnic identity), religious, community and national level.

Within these domains shared understandings or experiences develop or accumulate and become important determinants for both the individual and communities' collective resources. Choice and reasoning do play a part in how one delineates the pull of a person's various identities through these encounters (Sen, 1998, p. 13). The compilation of these identity perceptions and cultural influences become key elements in social relations and group interactions which can result in both positive and negative implications for social cohesion and community empowerment. In this sense, "social identity cannot but be central to human life" (Sen 1998, p. 5).

This thesis relates to culture and identity and explores what people identify as the basis for how their associations or interactions with each other at the community level. Therefore in terms of potential benefits, identity and cultural influences can be thought of as potential sources of wealth and, when meaningfully employed, can assist in developing effective social networks that can underpin cohesive, functioning communities focused on meeting shared needs. Conversely, if negatively utilised these may lead to the further degradation of a communities' social fabric. In the context of urban squatter settlements, improved well-being will very much depend on these underlying social resources and what level of community functionality exists.

CHAPTER 4

FIJI COUNTRY BACKGROUND

4.1 Introduction

Fiji's geographical and socio-economic development status as well as an examination of poverty will be outlined in the following sections in reference to available data up until the year that the research was conducted, 2008. This chapter will also take a closer look at urban poverty, in particular squatter settlements, which house some of Fiji's poorest people. These squatter settlements are at the core of this thesis's investigation. This chapter finishes with reflections on the Fijian social structures as defined by the two main ethnic groups. Furthermore, it will highlight ethnic and political struggles over the post colonial years, which have contributed to the political, social and economic development of The Republic of Fiji Islands.

4.2 Fiji: An Overview

The Fiji Islands consist of a total land area of 18,272 square kilometres over 330 islands²⁹ of which fewer than half are inhabited (Walsh, 2006, p. 3; Ernst, 1997, p. 11; Tuwere, 2002, p.16). They encompass an area of some 650,000 square kilometres of sea between latitude's 15° and 22° South, longitude 177° West and 175° East, in the central pacific as shown in Figure 4.1 (Tuwere, 2002, p.15; Walsh, 2006, p. 402). The two main islands of Viti Levu and Vanua Levu comprise 87% of total land area (Walsh, 2006, p. 304). Fiji is in a tropical marine zone with little seasonality. The wet season coincides with the cyclone season in October to

²⁹ There are varying statements as to the exact number of Fiji's many islands and islets or atolls but all cited agree the number is above this figure with Goodwin (2004, p. 227); Ernst (1997, p. 11) and Tuwere (2002, p.16) all stating 322 Islands compared to the authoritative *Fiji: An Encyclopaedic Atlas* counting 522 islets (Walsh, 2006, p. 402).

May (Walsh, 2006, p. 402). Rainfall is much greater on the eastern side. The high sunshine hours of the west has led to the development of tourism.

In 2007 the population was estimated at over 835, 500 with annual growth rate of 0.7% (Rallu, 2007, p.1). Fijians and Rotumans are the indigenous people of the Fiji Islands, making up 57% with Indo-Fijians at around 38% (Bainimarama, 2007). The remaining 5% consist of other minority groups. 'Fijian' refers to indigenous Fijian people and is the ethnic term used in official documents to differentiate from 'Indo-Fijian' the adopted term for Indians born in Fiji (Prasad, 2004, p.291). This thesis will refer to these two ethnic groups as 'Fijian' and 'Indo-Fijian.' When referencing all national citizens of Fiji the term 'Fiji citizens' or 'nationals' will be used. Viti Levu holds around 75% of the population and Vanua Levu 18%. The mainstay of rural living among the 1,652 rural villages and settlements is subsistence based agriculture (Walsh, 2006, p. 21). Suva the capital, situated in Viti Levu has 26% of the total population or more than half of Fiji's total urban dwellers (Bainimarama, 2007, p. 2 & 5). Increasing urban migration over the last 20 years has resulted in over fifty percent of all Fijians now living and working in urban areas, as illustrated in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1: Greater Suva Region Urban Population

| Greater Suva Region | Population | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|-------------|
| | 2007 | 1996 | Change |
| Suva City | 75,225 | 77366 | -3% |
| Suva Peri urban | 10,956 | | |
| Total Suva City | 86,181 | 77,366 | 111% |
| Nasinu Town | 75,719 | | |
| Nasinu Peri urban | 11,051 | | |
| Total Nasinu Town | 86,770 | 112,226 | 129% |
| Nausori Town | 24,630 | | |
| Nausori Peri urban | 22,181 | | |
| Total Nausori Town | 46,811 | | |
| Total Greater Suva | 219,762 | 189,592 | 116% |
| as % Urban Population | 52% | 53% | |
| Total Fiji Population | 827,900 | 775,077 | 107% |
| Total Urban Fiji Population | 421,086 | 359,495 | 117% |
| as % Fiji Population | 51% | 46% | 5% |

(Source: Bainimarama, 2007, p. 2 & 5)

The cities noted in the table are the capital, Suva City plus two adjacent townships Nasinu and Nausori which collectively are termed the Greater Suva Region. While each is governed locally by a separate local government structure these urban areas have in effect merged, so that no rural boundary existing between them anymore. The Nasinu-Nausori corridor is the most populous of areas. These figures for the first time are presented separately in the national statistics for this reason.

Economically Fiji is one of the larger developed Pacific Islands but has not met economic expectations over the past two decades (NZAID, 2005, p. 4). Annual economic growth of only 1.5% over the past four years ranks Fiji eighth in the Pacific region (Abbott, 2008, p. 1). Serious political and social upheavals following coups in 1987 and 2000 had adverse consequences for Fiji's economy (NZAID, 2005, p. 10). Table 4.2 below provides a summary comparison between Fiji and other Pacific Island Countries for seven key national economic indicators (World Bank [WB], 2008a, p. 1).

Table 4.2: Summary of National Economic Development Indices

| Development Index | Fiji Level | Year Measured | Melanesian Country Average | Pacific Island Country Average |
|-------------------------------|------------|---------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Real GDP World Ranking | 150 | 2007 | 157 | 179 |
| GDP per capita World Ranking | 98 | 2007 | 122 | 118 |
| GDP per capita Rate of Growth | -3.8% | 2007 | 2.9% | 1.7% |
| Inflation Rate | 7.5% | 2007 | 4.9% | 4.0% |
| Human Development Index | 92 | 2007 | 122 | n/a |
| Human Poverty Index | 50 | 2007 | 62 | n/a |
| Percent below BNPL | 34% | 2003 | 28% | 28% |

(**Sources:** Abbott, 2008, p. 7; UNDP, 2007, p. 230 & 240; WB, 2008a & WB, 2008b, p. 1).

Table 4.2 lists Melanesia as a distinct group for comparison given Fiji is a part of that sub-region, (includes Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu and Solomon Islands). The Pacific Island Country column provides the full regional averages and includes

Melanesia plus Samoa, Micronesia, Tonga and Kiribati noting some of that data does not correspond to the relevant year each indicator was measured for Fiji (predominantly 2007), for example the most recent figures available for PNG were for 1996 and for Solomon Islands, 2006. However, Table 4.2 does demonstrate that Fiji is one of the more developed Pacific Island countries.

Table 4.2 also demonstrates a current period of stagnation in the negative growth and high inflation rate for Fiji, which is partly to do with instability factors for its domestic economy arising from continued political upheavals but also, and like other Pacific nations, Fiji faces several economic and physical hurdles when attempting to compete in a global economy. Pacific Island nations currently face pressure from developed countries to jointly liberalise regional trade. This combines with several other factors which highlight Fiji's vulnerability in competing globally. According to Hughes & Sohdi (2008, p.17) these factors are:

- small market size and isolation from significant markets
- resultant high transport costs for imports/exports
- weak governance structures
- a reliance on subsistence based agriculture susceptibility to natural disasters

One of the indicators, Gross Domestic Product (GDP)³⁰ is one of the main measures of productive health of an economy. Fiji ranks 150th on World Bank GDP list of 183 countries and while it is comparable to the Melanesia group (refer Table 4.2 above), it is fifteen places behind the highest ranked Pacific Island nation, Papua New Guinea. Sugar, garments and fish are the main exports represented in GDP with tourism the best performing of domestic contributors to GDP. Table 4.3 on the following page summarises the status of domestic exports for Fiji and its reliance on these three sectors for most of its income (Reserve Bank of Fiji [RBF], 2008, p. A60).

³⁰ Defined as 'the market value of all goods and services from a nation in a given period' and usually calculated over a calendar year (World Bank, 2008a, p. 1).

Table 4.3: Fiji Domestic Exports (FJD\$millions)

| Commodity | 2000 | 2007 | | |
|-----------------------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|
| | \$m | \$m | % | % cf 2000 |
| <i>Sugar</i> | 237 | 185 | 95% | -22% |
| <i>Molasses</i> | 10 | 10 | 5% | 106% |
| Total Sugar Products | 247 | 195 | 24% | -21% |
| Gold | 70 | 3 | 0% | -96% |
| Garments | 322 | 97 | 12% | -70% |
| Fish | 71 | 101 | 12% | 144% |
| Lumber | 43 | 48 | 6% | 110% |
| Coconut Oil | 4 | 4 | 1% | 122% |
| Others | 240 | 381 | 46% | 159% |
| Totals (rounded up) | 996 | 829 | | -17% |

(Source: RBF, 2008, Table 43, A56.)

For its size and the sugar industry has not performed to expectations. The non-performance of the sugar industry involves a combination of factors including low productivity and poor efficiency of the sugar mills but it is also linked to the non-renewal of farm land leases. The non renewal of farm leases is an ongoing issue with nearly 5,000 farms to disappear in the next 5 years and around 14,500 families (predominantly Indo-Fijian) looking for new livelihoods and in many cases migrating to the cities in search of better employment opportunities (McKinnon, Chung, Lesley & Taylor, 2007, p. 3). Non-sugar agriculture contributes less than 10% to GDP but sustains about 54% of the total population and is dominated by small subsistence farms – over 80 per cent are less than 4ha in size (Loze, 2007, p.3.).

Within this gloomy outlook future growth of the Fiji economy will be dependent on factors such as future preferential access to European Union sugar, garment and fresh fish markets, an improved agricultural export trade situation and continued political stability which should then see a return of investor confidence in the economy (NZAID, 2005, p. 10).

4.2.1 Historical Context

Fiji was discovered in 1643 by Abel Tasman but it was not until 1774 that the first European, Captain James Cook stepped foot on Fiji soil. There followed a number of early European whaling operations in the 1800s before the arrival of two Wesleyan missionaries (Walsh, 2006, p. 405). The two missionaries brought Christianity to the Lomaiviti (eastern) Island Group of Fiji, which over the ensuing 20 year period would prove to have a profound effect on societal structures in Fiji. Christianity spread rapidly due to its endorsement by powerful chiefs (Ernst, 1997, p.20). Christianity is now at 58% with two thirds of Christians as Methodist. Hinduism follows at 34% and Islam 7% (Walsh, 2006, p.201).

Fiji was colonised by cession to Britain in 1874 until independence was granted in 1970. The predominant farming institution of the time was the Australian owned Colonial Sugar Refinery (CSR). To obviate themselves from a lack of willing labourers, and with British backing the sugar refinery brought in slaves from the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu (referred to as *black birding*). Eventually this was forbidden, and Fijian high chiefs consented to bring sixty thousand Indians to Fiji as indentured labour for the sugar cane industry. The Indian labourer scheme, known as the *giritiya*, ran between 1879 and 1914 allowing Fijians to remain in their villages preserving their traditional way of life (Prassaad, 2004 p.29). For the *giritiyas* the low wages, hard tasks, scant food, appalling conditions and violence they were subjected to during their indenture period was referred to as *narak* or hell (Prasad, 2004, p. 60).

The British devised, native policies collectively became known as the ‘Divide and Rule’ Policy. This policy effected protection from ethnic rivalries, achieved by: (Rakuita, 2007, p. 32).

- Preventing any Fijians from being utilised as labour on the burgeoning sugar plantations.
- Protecting Fijian native land from foreign ownership through leasehold arrangements, principally available to the European plantation farmers.

- Keeping Fijians confined to their rural villages and districts, away from the commercial centres.
- Confining indentured Indian migrants to plantation life under the control of their colonial masters.

Native Policy set up centralised governance structures to manage indigenous Fijian affairs. These included; Great Council of Chiefs (GCC)³¹, the Native Land Authority, the Provincial Councils and the Legislative Council. The Native Land Authority was established to manage indigenous Fijian land with entitlements based on kin lines (World Council of Churches, 2001, p. 31). The Native Administration policy affirmed the 'natural condition' of indigenous Fijian communal identity including their ownership of all land, its natural resources and that of the sea that abounds it. In so doing this also asserted their paramount status (they termed themselves as *i-taukei*) over any others (*vulagi* or non-*taukei*) particularly their political 'separateness from the *Kaidia*' or Indian (World Council of Churches, 2001, p. 18). This would form the basis of social, economic and political development of Fiji.

During this period Indo-Fijians worked hard to secure their place socially, economically and politically in Fiji. By the late 1960's the Indo-Fijian population seemed to begin exceeding the indigenous population (Rakuita, 2007, p. 31). After their time of indenture was completed, most 'free' Indians stayed on in Fiji in rural communities as small farmers leasing land. These farmers became the future back bone of the sugar industry (Rakuita, 2007, p. 36).

4.2.2 Twenty Years of Political Instability

Fiji is governed as a Republic and until recently under the 1997 Constitution. The democratically elected Government of 2006 was usurped in a coup on 5 December

³¹ The GCC or Bose Levu Vakaturaga was formed in 1876 galvanizing the previous seventy autonomous tribal Chiefs into three Confederacies under one overall head, Ratu Seru Cakabau who reported to the Governor (Walsh, 2006, p. 3).

2006 by Commodore Josaia Voreqe Bainimarama of the Republic of Fiji Military Forces. There have been four coups in the last twenty years in Fiji; May and September 1987, May 2000 and now December 2006.³² It is widely accepted that nation wide ethno-nationalistic agitation and mobilisation were predominant causes behind what is now referred to as an endemic 'coup culture' (WCC 2001, p. 8). Each coup has impacted in the following areas: (Madraiwiwi, 2008, p. 16; Robertson, 2006, p. 27).

- reduced investment
- reduced economic performance
- ethnic tension
- emigration, particularly Indo-Fijians
- donor aid redistributed or withheld
- declining tourism numbers
- international isolation

Over this period the Indo-Fijians have been hit hardest stemming from three key factors. Firstly a succession of marginalising 'affirmative action' policies favoured indigenous Fijian development over Indo-Fijians (Reddy and Prasad, 2002, p. 60). Called the 'Blueprint for the Advancement of Indigenous Fijians' the current programmes and policies were designed in 2002 to bridge the gap between ethnic Fijians and Indo-Fijians, particularly in education and commerce (Casimira, 2004, p. 2). The rationale for affirmative action was the notion that economic equality across all ethnic groups but particularly between Fijians and Indo-Fijians was fundamental for social unity (Chand, 1997, p. 2). Secondly, the decline of two of Fiji's key industries where most Indo-Fijians are employed, the sugar and garment industries resulting in job and income losses and thirdly the non-renewal of land leases all of which have forced many Indo-Fijians into poverty or hardship. This has led many Indo-Fijians to regard their future in Fiji as less than promising. Many seek to migrate. Over the past five years, the drain of skilled nationals from the Fiji Islands has become a serious concern but has lead to the ethnic balance swinging

³² Refer also Section 3.2.2.

back in favour of indigenous Fijians, who now represent over 50% of the population (Robertson, 2006, p. 25 & 27; ADB, 2006b, p. 2).

As a result of the current administration's militarisation of the public service, lack of respect for civil liberties (for example in the form of media censorship and prohibition on public meetings), alleged human rights abuses and an unwillingness to hold elections Fiji has been suspended from the Pacific Islands Forum, (the Regional Pacific Government Institution whose headquarters are based in Suva, Fiji). Fiji also has been withdrawn from the Commonwealth. There is no indication of a return to democracy in the near future. This current state of affairs including the political instability, social tensions and global downturn will only exacerbate this period of stagnation which does not bode well for Fiji's future development (Madraiwiwi, 2008, p.16).

4.3 Poverty in Fiji

The following definition of poverty in the Fijian context is briefer than the original text from the Fiji Poverty Report (FPR, 1997, p.98) but the more précised form is now the most widely adopted in later publications on Pacific and Fiji poverty:

An inadequate level of sustainable human development manifested by a lack of access to basic services; a lack of opportunities to participate fully in the socio-economic life of the community; and a lack of adequate resources (including cash) to meet the basic needs of the household or customary obligations to the extended family, village community and/or the church (ADB, 2004, p. 8).

The last Household Income and Expenditure Survey (2002), provides poverty statistics for the Poverty report. In the survey the poverty statistics are presented in two ways. The first, the food poverty line measures the level of income necessary for an average household to meet their weekly nutritional requirements. The second is the basic needs poverty line which is food and non food essentials

required for a basic standard of living (Abbott, 2006, p. 15). Absolute poverty is used to describe those whose income is insufficient to meet food requirements (Abbott, 2006, p. 21).

Relative poverty in Fiji is therefore equated directly with 'hardship,' defined as households that have inadequate incomes so have constantly to make choices between competing needs, such as daily food requirements or other non-food basic needs like water, power, travel to urban services or school fees (ADB, 2006b, p. 30). Abbott (2006) describes this struggle as follows:

Poverty in the Fiji context does not mean hunger or destitution ... but rather it means ... households ... are ... facing hardship on a daily or weekly basis. They struggle to pay bills, and to purchase adequate and suitably nutritious food, they borrow regularly from "loan-sharks" who charge very high rates of interest for small unsecured loans to meet family commitments and community obligations. They are frequently, and occasionally constantly, in debt (p. 4).

A significant finding is that employment does not insulate against poverty because low wages are a key factor in poverty. Over half of all wage earners are deemed to be living in poverty. Accordingly employment creation will not reduce poverty unless wages improve (Narsey, 2006, p. 97).

The national poverty level has more than doubled over the last 30 years to 34% of the population (ADB, 2006b, p. 29).³³ A further 25-30% live just above the poverty line are considered vulnerable to falling into poverty as a result of some kind of crisis. Rich-poor and in particular urban-rural disparities have grown wider (Abbott, 2006, p.7; Narsey, 2006, p. 121). Poverty is highest in informal squatter settlements with over 40% of households living below the poverty line (Mohanty, 2006, p. 2). Absolute poverty is more pronounced in the rural areas and in urban

³³ Referred to as the Basic Needs Poverty Line (BNPL). Refer to Chapter 5 for a definition of how this quantitative figure is determined.

squatter settlements compared to the national average (Abbott, 2006, p. 21). The poverty statistics provided in Table 4.4 (below) confirm this while illustrating the seriousness of poverty existing in squatter settlements in contrast to most the general urban setting. Those people identified by ADB (2006b, p. 29) as most likely to experience urban hardship are:

- single mothers and widows
- elderly people neglected by their families
- handicapped people
- orphans, unemployed people
- street dwellers.

TABLE 4.4: Dispersal of Poverty Line

| Incidence of Poverty in the Fiji Population 2002/03 (%) | | |
|---|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Percentage of Population with per capita income less than the poverty lines | Food Poverty Line | Basic Needs Poverty Line |
| National Average | 11% | 34% |
| Fijian | 13% | 34% |
| Indian | 9% | 35% |
| | | |
| Urban Average | 6% | 32% |
| Fijian | 8% | 30% |
| Indian | 5% | 34% |
| | | |
| High/Middle Class | 5% | 31% |
| Settlement/Housing Authority | 7% | 35% |
| Squatter Area/Urban Village | 14% | 36% |
| | | |
| Rural Average | 15% | 38% |
| Fijian | 15% | 37% |
| Indian | 13% | 39% |

(Source: Abbott, 2006, p. 3)

According to (ADB, 2006b, p. vii; p. xiii; p. 45; Narsey, 2006, p. 121) women are at higher risk of poverty because:

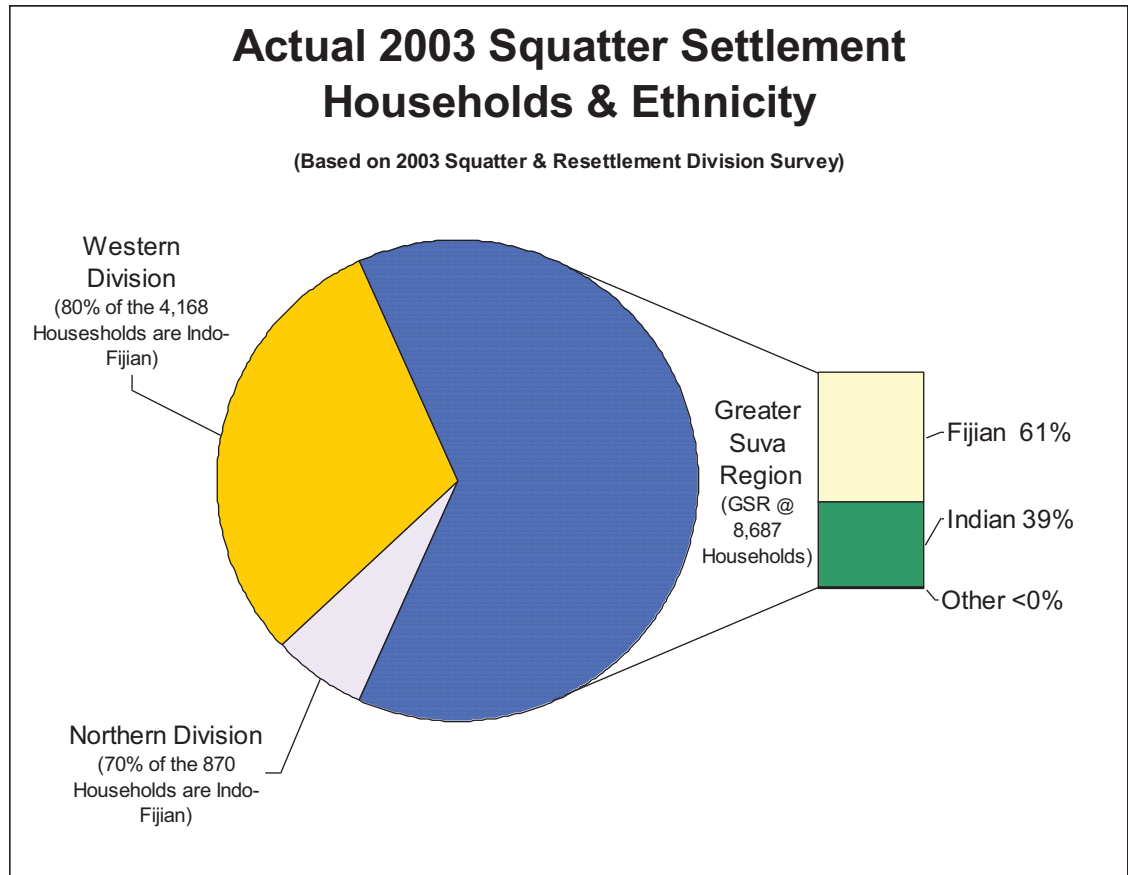
- inequalities due to entrenched traditional value systems in male dominated cultures
- inheritance laws which exclude women from inheriting land or other fixed assets.
- formal employment opportunities are less often available to women
- women are promoted less and are concentrated at the low-pay end of the labour market
- increasing divorce and separation rates
- lack of regulatory process to enforce maintenance payments

Perceptions of poverty vary by ethnicity. Indigenous Fijians feel there is no poverty in rural village because the village provides the basic necessities of life. In contrast Indo-Fijians perceive the poor as householders who do not have enough land to farm for a living or are urban squatters (ADB, 2006b, p. 32). The susceptibility to poverty among Indo-Fijians is exacerbated because they do not own land to produce their own food. Thus their cash needs are greater (Abbott, 2006, p. 34).

4.3.1 Urbanisation and Poverty in Fiji

As with the wider Pacific trend, there are increasing numbers of people who choose to reside in informal squatter settlements (Storey, 2006, p. 8). Figure 4.1 (page following) shows the distribution of informal squatter settlements by household and ethnicity. The distribution is illustrated by regions; Western, Northern and The Greater Suva which are further broken down into ethnicities. The highest concentration is in the Suva area and these consist of overcrowded settlements of rudimentary shelters.

Figure 4.1: Distribution of Informal squatter Settlements in Fiji



(Source: Lingham, 2004, p. 4).

An example of the close quarters living in dire environmental conditions and smallness of shelters leading to overcrowding of many squatter settlements is shown in photograph 4A immediately below and 4C on following pages (Lingham, 2004, p. 4). Hassall (2006) in summarising the outcomes of a recent policy dialogue on squatter settlement issues in the Pacific noted that: “Pessimistically, squatting is an indication of uncontrolled urbanisation, socio-economic disparity, poverty, and rural underdevelopment within a country” (p. 2). While this may be true, in Fiji the demand for cheap labour and the changing need in society for cash incomes to supplement or replace a predominant subsistence livelihood has attracted many to the main centres, as has been the trend in much of the industrialised world (Barr, 2007, p.13; McKinnon, 2007, p.13). However there are

few low cost housing options available in the main urban centres and combined with poor wages, squatter settlements become the only alternative (McKinnon, 2007, p.61).

Photograph 4A: Typical Squatter Settlement, Suva

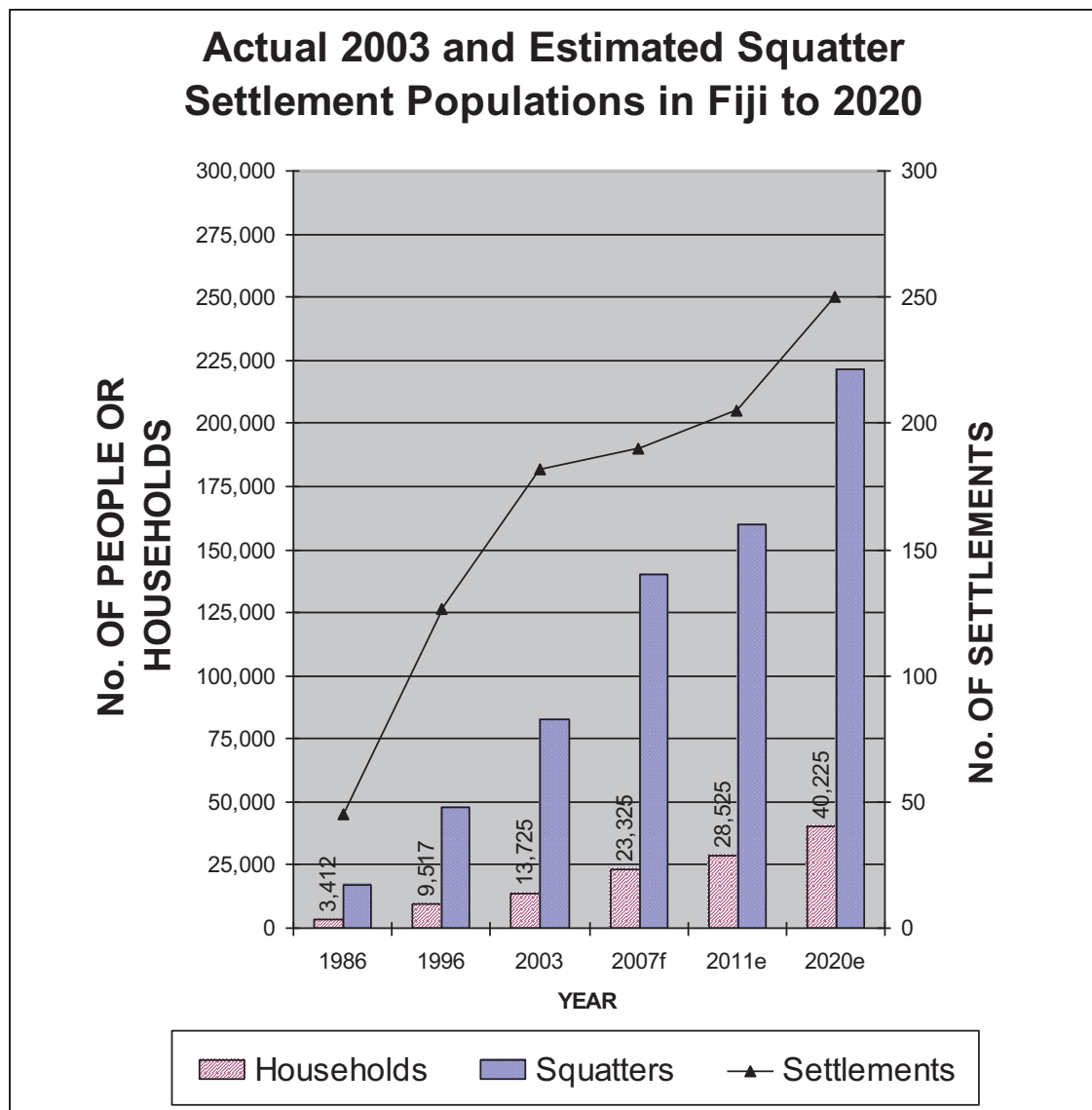


(Source: John McKinnon, February 2007)

The Ministry of Lands and Squatter Resettlement Unit survey from 2003 estimated 82,350 people live in 182 squatter settlements across the country (refer Figure 4.3). This represents a 73% increase over the preceding decade or an annual rate of increase of 28% (Lingham, 2003, p. 4). Recent estimates indicate the upward trend continuing. Settlement numbers have increased to 190 with over 140,000 residents. It is predicted these figures will increase further to over 730 settlements within the next fifteen years (McKinnon et al., 2007, p. ii). Included in those figures are the increases which will occur as a result of the expiration of 4,485 rural land leases. This increase will see the urban growth rate maintaining a steady climb

over the coming years at around 4-7% annually. Figure 4.2 below demonstrates the projected increase in squatter settlements by household. The left-hand axis gives the numbers of squatters (longest graphic bars) and households (shorter graphic bars with total numbers included above those). The numbers of settlements are described by the solid line to the right-hand axis (Bainimarama, 2007, p 2 & 5; McKinnon, 2007, p. 5).

Figure 4.2: Informal Squatter Settlement Trends in Fiji



Key: f = Estimated by McKinnon et.al 2007; e = estimation based on McKinnon et.al. 2007 and 2007 Bureau of Statistics census data trends.

(Reference: Lingham, 2004, p. 4; Bainimarama, 2007, p. 2 & 5; McKinnon et al., 2007, p. 1-5).

The Reasons for Urban Migration

Rural-urban migration has contributed substantially to the increase in squatter numbers. There are varying reasons, or push and pull factors that contribute towards migration, Pull factors include the perception of employment opportunities and higher income. Village life is limited in the type of employment offered. Cities also offer greater education prospects as well as better access to government services. The improved infrastructure that exists in cities is another reason cited as a motivator for migration. Push factors include the non renewal of rural agricultural leases. This is combined with a general downturn in sugar industry prospects. These uncertainties are aggravated by increased rents with limited cash incomes and no prospects of supplementing those cash incomes. A further pull factor is tribal or family crisis and conflicts (Barr, 2007, p. 12; Qalowasa, 2005, p. 2; McKinnon et. al., 2007, p. iii; 1 & 3; Chung, in McKinnon et. al., 2006, p. 15).

What is a squatter settler?

Squatter settlers (or 'squatters') are illegal occupiers of land. However, many of these settlers do have informal arrangements with land owners, often as tenants or through the traditional rights secured through kinship. For example the traditional *vakavanua* covenant which is where settlers have secured the right to occupy native land plots through kinship rights. This most often involves a financial gift to the local tribal chief (or *turaga ni mataqali*) who holds the land stewardship rights. The tenuous ownership means squatters must be prepared to pack up their dwelling and leave should they be forced to do so. These circumstances explain the appearance and poor construction quality of the dwellings in contrast to those of middle class housing estates as shown in photograph 4B, on the page following. Many of these settlements are densely populated, (photograph 4C on the following page) and sited on land that is not normally suited for residential living like hillsides or ravines which are prone to flooding, (photograph 4D on following pages) or coastal mangroves, (photograph 4E) and adjacent to utilities like rubbish dumps. (Lingham, 2006, p. 2).

Photograph 4B: Urban Housing Quality Contrasts; Fiji Muslim League.



(Fiji Muslim League, Ratu Mara Road, Suva: Yates, October 2008)

Photograph 4C: Overcrowding in Squatter Settlements



(Caubati Central Settlement, Nasinu. Yates, June 2008)

Photograph 4D: Squatter Housing in flood prone areas



(Fiji Muslim League, Ratu Mara Road, Suva: Yates, June 2008)

Photograph 4E: Squatter Housing in the coastal mangroves



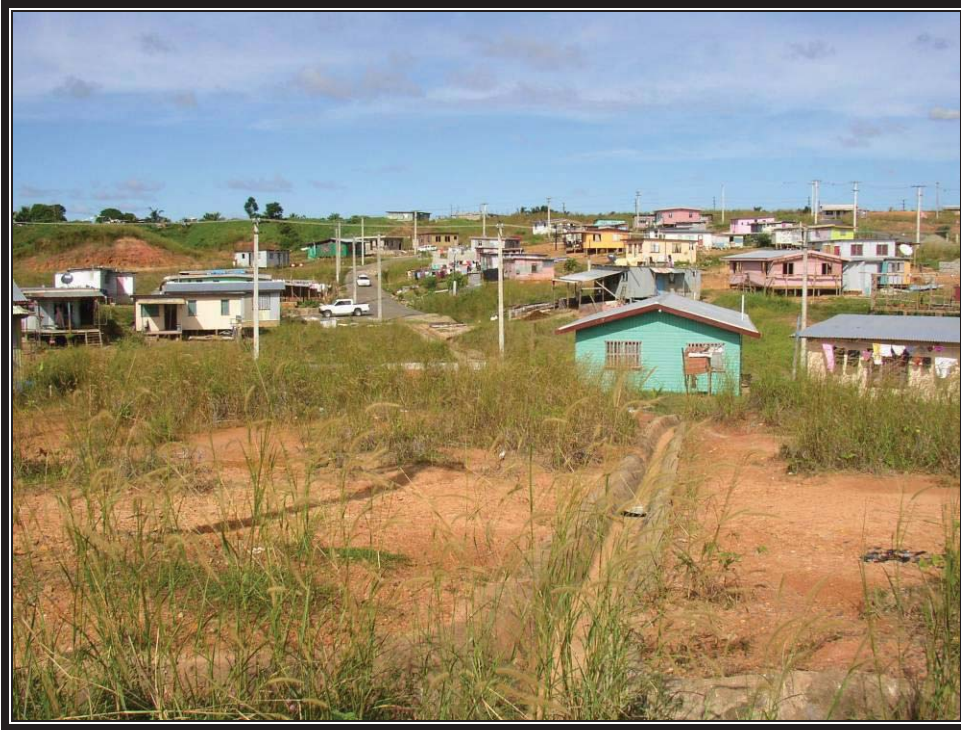
(Nanuku Settlement, Suva. Yates, May 2008)

Two separate quality-of-life surveys conducted by Chung (2006) a local sociologist found that living conditions common to most settlements were: a shelter made of makeshift materials; either the lack of or needing to share between households one or more of the following – a toilet, piped water, power supply; no refuse collection; having to cook over an open fire and inability to utilise basic household appliances (Chung In McKinnon, 2007, p. 12). Overcrowding is common with two or more families sharing the same shelter in day-night shifts. These substandard living conditions affect the general health status of the settlers, particularly the children whose school attendance often suffers (Barr, 2007, p 8).

Government Policies

Currently there is no national housing policy to guide all relevant agencies. A Squatter Development and Resettlement Policy, approved in 1994, remains in place within Ministry of Local Government and Urban Development (Lingham, 2004, p. 2). The 2004 Squatter Situation Report (Lingham, 2004, p. 8) provides authorities guidelines on how to discourage squatting, emphasising forced evictions as one solution although this contradicts the lack of affordable housing issue. Withholding consents for service connections (electricity and water) is another recommendation, as is, lowering the prioritising of developing new squatter settlements. There is a reluctant acknowledgement of the need for squatter settlements when lower prioritising of settlement development becomes a means to discourage squatting. The following photos 4B-4H illustrate the extent of squatter housing and show the positioning of squatter housing relative to approved housing development in Suva.

Photograph 4F: Waila 3B a new Subdivision in Nasouri



(Housing Authority Subdivision, Waila 3B, Nasinu. Yates, June 2008)

Photograph 4G: Waila 3B a new Subdivision in Nasouri



(Housing Authority Subdivision, Waila 3B, Nasinu. Yates, June 2008)

Photograph 4H: Public Rental Board Flats, Fletchers Road, Raiwaqa



(The occupiers evicted, these flats were demolished in October 2008. Yates, June 2008)

More constructive strategies are to encourage in-situ upgrading or to resettle squatters onto Housing Authority subdivisions (see photographs 4F & 4G above). Unfortunately subdivisions are often sited far from job markets or educational institutions. These are some of the reasons the residents migrated to cities in the first instance. Many settlements also experience a lack of services like rubbish removal. Poorer segments of the urban community are housed through the Public Rental Board or Housing Assistance Relief Trust flats. However, not surprisingly these are oversubscribed, poorly maintained, and of sub standard, (see photograph 4H above). The Government has continually looked to international donors to seek technical and financial assistance to tackle these issues. Many reviews have been completed looking at both 'push' and 'pull' factors but due to the current political instability there has been little progress. It is apparent the government does not appear to be aware of the magnitude of the problem (McKinnon, 2007, p. ii).

4.3.2 Section Summary

Rural-urban migration has been the major contributor to the rapidly expanding urban and peri-urban areas where approximately half the country's population now lives and where increasing numbers of people reside in squatter settlements. A significant number of these squatters are very poor and live well below the poverty line. The Government authorities have been unable to cope with the growing demand for affordable housing and services. The regulatory framework often dating back to colonial times is no longer adequate for the changing needs. The planning and implementation capacity of local and central government in urban development has not been able to cope with increasing urban squatter settlement growth that has resulted. Fiji now faces a backlog in urban housing and services demand that requires huge resources and rapid planning and implementation to address the situation. Yet the level of commitment to address these issues appears entirely inadequate. One of the difficulties in addressing this demand for housing is tied to the social structures of Fiji which contributes to this problem.

4.4 Fijian Social Structures

This subsection will provide an understanding of the two predominant ethnic cultures in Fiji. It will explore some key aspects of cultural importance that underpin their traditional ways of life and which may present challenges to inter-ethnic integration and community cohesiveness in an urban settlement setting.

4.4.1 Reflections on Indigenous Fijian Culture

Indigenous Fijian culture is founded at the village level on a communal way of life which revolves around a complex array of kinship relations conducted throughout the different societal groups, the *yavusa*, *mataqali* and *itokatoka*. Groups of *yavusa* (tribes) form the *vanua* or (people of the land), which are headed by the highest ranking chiefs. *Yavusa* are the basis of social organisation at district (or *tikina*) level and descendents of a common ancestor. *Yavusa* are divided into groups (or clans)

of *mataqali*, which are headed by a second layer of chiefs and in which membership is based on patrilineal descent. These are the most important of all divisions of communal society in respect of land ownership. The *mataqali* are further subdivided into closely-related family groups called *itokatoka* and usually it is both these groups that form the community within the village in which they reside (Geddes, 2000, p. 52; Walsh, 2006, p. xi).

Kinship relations conducted within the village, community or family context take the form of collective rituals or cultural obligations which reinforce traditional societal values and norms. Reciprocal in nature these arrangements are often referred to “as both the essence and bane of Fijian life” (Kingi, 2006, p. 11).³⁴

Two important examples of these are *kerekere* and *sevusevu*. The first is a means by which wealth can be redistributed to others who are resource-poor thus serving to sustain the community (King, 2006, p. 98 & Kingi, 2006, p. 2). The second is the ceremonial presentation of gifts which most often takes the form of valued items (for example coconut oil) or weaved *pandanus* mats at weddings or funerals. *Sevusevu* is also carried out by way of welcome to village visitors and most often carried out in combination with the presentation of *yagona* (*kava* or grog) on arrival to the village head (or chief). This ritual involves the presentation of the plant *piper methysticum* and sharing of the beverage³⁵ designed to break down barriers, renew old friendships and build trust. However, also according to King (2006), *kava* “serves to maintain identity, create social solidarity and maintain important livelihood networks in a process of socio-economic integration...thus central to cultural sustainability” (p. 99).

³⁴ For fuller discussions on the importance of the reciprocal arrangements in Fijian society refer to William Geddes study of life in a Fijian village (Geddes, 1997) and Trevor G. King's recent thesis about sustainable agriculture in a Fijian rural village (King, T. G. 2006).

³⁵ *Kava* (*yagona*) is produced from the crushing of the dried plants, roots and stem by pounding in a narrow cauldron then adding water to produce a brown liquid which is served from a ceremonial bowl called a *tanoa*.

While still holding this symbolism at ceremonial occasions, these days the act of drinking *kava* has developed into a daily habit, commonly used as a socialising tool with little ritual involved at all. The *yagona* beverage, *kava* contains a relaxant substance that reduces alertness presenting as a mild stupor-like state (King, T. G. 2006, p. 99). *Kava* imbibing is now commonplace among Fijian and Indo-Fijian alike at functions, in the office, at meetings, conferences and sports events and unfortunately where its significance has become lost prompting this comment from Siwatibau about its abuse: “Many people are reinventing culture to suit themselves to protect or promote their own self interest” (Siwatibau, 1991, p. 121).

In reference to how another important reciprocal arrangement *solevu* (large gathering and exchanging of gifts) has changed over time Siwatibau (1997) past director of UNESCAP in the Pacific was drawn to state that: “It is hard for our people to save when ceremonial obligations are continuing to escalate imposing increasing burdens on people...modern inventions are compounding the scale of ceremonies and the burden of them” (Siwatibau, 1997, p. 123). He was referring to major family events like weddings, births, deaths and marriages, which can place large financial encumbrances on families. While this is primarily due to the larger numbers within family circles these days there are also deeper reasons for this, a fundamental sense of obligation to the *vanua*, to maintaining family pride and the prestige conveyed to chiefly leaders (Kingi, 2006, p. 4; Siwatibau, 1997, p. 123). More existentially, this is also considered to exhibit as a need to compete with others in terms of grandness (Siwatibau, 1997, p. 124).

The concept of *vanua* is a key communal symbol to indigenous Fijian culture but holds a more complex meaning than its literal English translation as ‘land and its people’ or ‘people of the land’ can give to it (Tuwere, 2002, p. 52). Referring to Fijian village life and the acts of reciprocity that are central to it, Kingi (2006, p. 19) describes the concept of *vanua* in her study of sustainable rural livelihoods as the nexus of symbolic, cultural and communal capital, as related in the following statement:

The relationship between land and people is encapsulated in the term *vanua* ... this relationship is symbolised by chiefly power which has political and spiritual dimensions...[the accumulation of] resources build on the communal sense of obligation to the *vanua* (Kingi, 2006, p. 4).

Land tenure is encapsulated within the concept of *vanua*. Indigenous Fijians retain control of 83% of all land (Walsh, 2006, p. 60). Fijians view land as the ultimate safety net, a place they can fall back to at any time and with it, to the kinship ties of the village³⁶. This sense of security is criticised for its effect on Fijian ambition, through “locking Fijians into communal life and the communal subsistence sector [thereby] retarding their active participation in mainstream economic development which has led to Fijians believing they were of lesser ability and intelligence compared to Indo-Fijians” (Ratuva, 2002, p. 14).

This close multi-dimensional relationship of indigenous Fijians to land reinforces the disenfranchisement that Indo-Fijians find themselves in with respect to land ownership or even access to it through leasehold arrangements for farming purposes. This is discussed more in the following section.

Christianity and particularly Methodism play a very important and central role in Fijian life³⁷ (Ernst, 1997, p. 18; Ratuva, 2002, p. 15). It is said to be one of three strands on which their social structure is built – *matanitu*, (government), *lotu* (church) and *vanua* (land and its people) (Tuwere, 2002, p. 52). Such symbolism reaffirms these values of conformity governing all interpersonal relations, harmony, acceptance of authority and interdependence which are inherent aspects of a communal culture and which have over the years become enmeshed with religious values, (Yabaki & Norton, 2004.)

³⁶ The *Vola ni Kawa Bula* is a record of all family lineage and land ownership that is held at the Native Land Commission. A recorded entry on this register provides authenticity of ‘Fijian’ identity through ancestral connection and with it land entitlement (WCC 2001, p18). Refer also section 4.2.1.

³⁷ Indigenous Fijian Christians represent approximately 55% of the national population and 34% of which are Methodists (Ernst, 1997, p. 18).

Fijian loyalty to their church is legendary. The church not only covers their need for spiritual guidance but also an unparalleled financial commitment to its running costs and more often than not the excesses of its celebrant. This financial expectation causes serious erosion of their hard earned and in many cases meagre wages. Robinson and Williams (2001) explained the bind that obligation places on many Pacific families: "Tithing to a church, although it may be counted as a form of gift in an economic analysis, has a strong element of obligation and in some cases, of compulsion" (Robinson & Williams, 2001, p. 62).

Fijians themselves have highlighted this compulsion as a problem and potential negative aspect to their culture, "cultural priorities over family obligations, land ownership and wrong priorities in family and church" (Ratuva, 2002a, p. 28). Regardless the pull of the church remains a significant part of life (Khan & Barr, 2003, p. 35). This brings most pressure to bear on women as they are expected to spend a large proportion of their time on fund raising or non-fund raising activities for the upkeep of the church which is on top of their traditional mother's role (Khan & Barr, 2003, p. 36; Yabaki & Norton, 2004, p. 16).

Every year, for example, the Methodist Church organises a fund raising event disguised as an annual choir competition, "where singing takes second place to fund raising" (Yates, 2006, p. 3). All families are levied a fixed sum while villages are also expected to fundraise to boost the overall 'donation'. This in effect is another type of *sevusevu* with village pride at stake but also endears an immense pleasure to the community concerned when they better others. An indication of the consequences on the families was gained in two otherwise unrelated newspaper articles that featured on the second day of competition. The Fiji Times (2007) reported the Methodist Church had raised \$1.5 million dollars towards an overall target of \$3million while also reporting the Fiji Teacher's Union plea for schools not to send children home on the first day of the new term if their families could not pay their fees (Fiji Times, 2007a, p. 3).

There are many critics who question the Methodist Church motives about giving quotas and need to raise such a large sums of cash while ignoring the effect it has on their congregations' livelihoods (Khan & Barr 2003, p. 36). There are no comparable obligations demanded by other religions practiced in Fiji. Coupled with the authoritarian nature of Fijian society, initiative and responsibility is stifled making people more fatalistic about their circumstance, (Khan & Barr, 2003). Mausio, (2002) refers to this as the 'culture of silence' stemming from traditional ethnic Fijian culture and value systems that provide a Fijian religious and political means of 'gate keeping,' so maintaining a power base with the elite leaders of society, (be they the Church Minister, political leaders of the country or the chiefly leaders of society). (p. 62).

Globalisation and urban migration have been two other external factors that have effected change on the need for indigenous Fijians to rely on their heritage value systems. It is under these forces that the traditional chiefly status as provider for his community is diminished, which in turn has contributed to a decline in community social structures (Yabaki & Norton, 2004, p. 15). Men contribute little to family life, and are more involved in income generating activities, leaving ample time for leisure in spite of this (Yabaki & Norton, 2004). As mentioned earlier women's roles are increasingly burdensome. The youth, once affectionately groomed for adulthood through active traditional roles and manual tasks, are now denied the necessary supervision. Along with financial pressures this manifests in lower priorities placed on children's education and health needs (Devi, S., 2006, p. 3). Youth can become drawn to the wider society where they are influenced by their peers to indulge in drugs, alcohol and other deviant activities that characterise their daily lives (Vakaoti, 2001, p. 22). In many cases the combined result of these significant changes are diminished civic life and self respect in the urban communities. Furthermore, solidarity among settlers to work together, help and care for each other is gradually being eroded (Yabaki & Norton, 2004, p. 24).

4.4.2 Reflections on Indo-Fijian Culture

Other than in its use as a political category, the notion of 'Indian' as a collective socio-cultural identity is difficult to define, the more so given the scarcity of research on what constitutes the Fijian Indian cultural identity in comparison to indigenous Fijian culture (Kamikamica, 1998; Ratuva, 2002).

Indo-Fijian behaviour has been acquired, not inherited, out of the many struggles they have faced in Fiji from the time of the indentured labour period until the present day³⁸ (Walsh, 2006, p. 100; Nandan, 2008, p. 6). These struggles include the suffering under *girit* system itself (Prasad, 2004, p. 99); the breaking-in of native leasehold land for farming (Ratuva, 2002, p. 16; Walsh 2006, p. 111); the early establishment of a commercial business sector (WCC 2001, p.23); the ethnic tensions of the last twenty years, and forced internal migration patterns as a result of non-renewal of land leases (Walsh, 2006, p. 46); and the movement of the educated into positions of the professional ranks either within Fiji or abroad (Ratuva, 2002, p. 17; Robertson, 2006, p. 25; Walsh, 2006, p. 57). The effect of such struggles was to see the development of a common Indo-Fijian Hindi dialect called Fiji *Baat*, which is the predominant language of today spoken in the cane fields, at home and work (Mugler, 2006, p. 390).

The Indo-Fijians strived to establish new values as their continental Indian culture slowly changed, influenced by the new surroundings and with the next generation becoming Indo-Fijians (*Kai Idia ni viti* or now just *kaidia*). The formerly indentured became involved in the sugar industry now as farmers and tradesmen while others moved into small and medium sized business ventures with the later arrivals (the *Gujeratis*) doing well and a number becoming extremely wealthy (Walsh, 2006, p. 111). The nuclear family became the more central and the Indo-Fijian enthusiasm for education a key element in their economic and social success (Ratuva, 2002, p.16).

³⁸ Refer also Section 4.2.1.

For Indo-Fijians religion has an importance central to their way of life with its teachings and rituals providing the guiding principles that underpin their own perceptions of identity (Ratuva, 2002, p. 17; Walsh, 2006, p. 113). Within the Indo-Fijian there is diversity of religious affiliations but the majority belong to the Hindu faith (77%) but with a growing number of Muslims (16%) (Walsh, 2006, p. 201).

While there is now within the Indo-Fijian a diversity of religious affiliations, the main faith-based groups are still Hindus (77% of Indo-Fijian population) followed by Muslims (16%) but there are also Christians (6%), Sikhs (<1%) and Buddhists (<1%), (Walsh, 2006, p. 201).

Hinduism in Fiji, while based on the inherited patrilineal North India Hindu family pattern and ideology, does not hold the same caste system values and social framework (Walsh, 2006, p. 201; Lateef 1990, In Yabaki & Norton, 2004, p. 7). This is not to say that class distinction is not still important and mainly invoked between social income strata's and job status rather than traditional distinctions (WCC, 2001, p. 24). Hierarchical levels within the family continue to be strongly supported. For example, arranged marriages, the perpetual subordination of women exercised through maintaining their traditional roles in marriage and the sanctity of chastity. Women themselves, who readily accept men's right to control them, as well as the importance of pre-marital purity and later their marital status are said to inadvertently aid in their own sense of subordination (Yabaki & Norton, 2004, p. 8). This is sometimes evident by frequent acts of physical violence, still regarded as an effective way of maintaining gender roles and male dominance (Lateef 1990 In Yabaki & Norton, 2004, p. 8).

Whereas Hindu teachings involve a rich sense of social responsibility there is no obligatory pressures comparable to those of indigenous Fijians. Many Hindus worship in their own homes, attend the temples occasionally or for key ceremonies or religious observances. Both the Hindu and Muslim faiths contribute to their temples/mosques by way of voluntary donations in time and money. In the case of

Muslims they are encouraged to give directly to the poor. Their religious faith is not worn as a 'straight jacket' in the same way it may be worn by indigenous Fijians with Christianity.

The fact that Indo-Fijians have adapted so much prompted Geraghty (1997) to comment that “[f]or all their differences, Fiji Indians have become far more like Fijians than most people, including themselves, usually realise” (In Walsh 2006, p. 113). This is evident by the easier going and less formal nature, compared to their forebears, in family relations and inter-ethnic friendships demonstrated by example in their regular socialising around the kava bowl and the fact that more Indo-Fijians speak the Fijian language than Fijians speak Fiji *Baat* (Walsh, 2006, p. 113). More fundamentally through the common beliefs and values held to those of indigenous Fijians, both are founded on the importance of religious faith as in the sanctity of marriage and respect of elders and positions of authority.

However their ethnic identity still remains strongly celebrated, evidenced by the beautifully ornate Hindu temples and Muslim mosques; the Indian administered schools and community support groups of the key Indo-Fijian institutions such as the Sanatan Dharma Sabha and the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha Hindu groups; the various religious observances, some of which are publicly observed holidays;³⁹ their strong affiliations to various trade unions and political parties that advocate for Indo-Fijian rights (Walsh, 2006, p. 113). Naryayan (1984) summarised this overall development of the Indo-Fijian ethnic identity in Fiji as achieving a “solidarity” where their “Indianness”, as he termed it, was “no longer based on caste or family loyalties but rather on common economic interests, ethnic identity, and perhaps even on the perception of a common foe”, the latter referring to colonial and post-colonial influences⁴⁰ (In WCC, 2001, p. 23).

³⁹ Diwali, the festival of lights is a Hindu religious holiday observed on 28 October while the Prophet Mohammed's birthday is observed on 17 March.

⁴⁰ Refer to Section 3.4 for descriptions of how Fijian ethnocentricity has developed and the cross cultural tensions that have developed as a result.

4.4.3 Section Summary

This section highlighted there are distinctly different social identities for Fijian and Indo-Fijian and that cross cultural integration, and with that social tensions exist within Fiji society. For the most part these two main ethnic cultures co-exist daily in relative social harmony based on their strong sense of ethnic and religious identity but also fundamental behaviours associated with both cultures. These include respect and protection of the family and community oriented values common to both (United Nations Development Programme [UNDP], 2006, p. 18:42; Ratuva, 2002a, p. 20). However, there is also evidence of two cultures with polarised views of certain communal behaviours that can lead to perceptions that threaten cross cultural relations (Ratuva, 2002a, p.20). It is this impact of culture and religion and other lived experiences that this thesis is examining in relation to urban squatter community development processes.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter has elaborated on the level of Fiji's economic and social development in the years preceding 2008 which is the setting for this research study. From this it was found that Fiji is experiencing an urban migration boom. There are a significant and growing number of people choosing to live in urban squatter settlements around the main centres, particularly in Suva the capital, reflecting a Pacific wide and global trend. Most are very poor and living well below the poverty line. In Fiji 'push factors' play a big part in urban migration, the most common being the non-renewal of rural land leases (predominantly from the sugar cane belts), ongoing rationalisation in the sugar industry and garment industry along with the rising cost of living. Some people make this move to provide a better opportunity for higher incomes, greater job and education prospects, and better access to government services and infrastructure. The availability of low cost housing options are few and those who do obtain full time employment do not earn enough to cover rentals, so in most cases squatter shelters are the only alternative. Most migrants

who end up living in urban squatter settlements face life in poorly developed and densely populated shanty towns where their economic status means constant hardship and discrimination.

The last economic review of Fiji by the ADB (2006b) concluded, among other matters that there was a need for effective social safety nets for the unemployed and that improved economic growth could only occur if there were training and investment opportunities and improved access to microfinance which would encourage more self-employment. The report also called for the promotion of alternative livelihood options in urban areas, particularly for women displaced from the manufacturing sector (Robertson, 2006, p. 25). While the Government has pursued initiatives to provide substantive investments into some of the key rural-based engine rooms of the economy which may address the urban push factors, they have yet to do so in main cities. One area of neglect remains the lack of housing options available for the growing numbers of urban-based low income earners who live in the many squatter settlements and are the main source of low cost labour. The context of the poor in urban squatter communities is the setting for this thesis study, concerned with assessing how people in these underprivileged areas can effectively harness available social capital resources to address shared community needs. The following Chapter will describe further details about the choice of study area, the socio-demographic characteristics of each and outline the methodological framework that was applied to the field research in these study sites.

CHAPTER 5

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5.1 Introduction

The following Chapter outlines the research methodology and data collection process utilised for this study. The methodological framework will be outlined, based on a semi-qualitative approach augmented by quantitative social data collected from field research involving a field survey of a sample of squatter settlement residents. The Chapter will outline the basis for this approach including justification for the selection of the field research areas, the design of the data collection and capacity analysis instruments, how the researcher conducted the field research and analysed the data followed by a summary of the ethical considerations in relation to the field work. Finally, this Chapter then provide a synopsis of key demographic information for each of the field research study sites and an assessment of the key constraints faced by the researcher in carrying out the data collection.

5.2 Area of Study

Fiji was chosen as the study area for three reasons. Firstly, the proliferation of informal housing in peri-urban areas around Pacific cities has placed huge stress on local government structures resulting in a decline in the social fabric of these communities (Storey 2005b, p. 1). The increase in informal housing needs raises questions about how best to integrate the peri-urban [informal] squatter settlements

into local government structures⁴¹ and how to combat the growing inequality and poverty issues there (ADB, 2006c).⁴² Secondly, the researcher was employed by NZAID, and posted to the New Zealand High Commission in Suva as Manager of the NZ-Fiji bilateral aid programme for more than three years from July 2005 to November 2008. This position provided an ideal opportunity for the field research to be completed, but it also involved some challenges which will be discussed later, (refer Section 5.5).

Thirdly, social and economic development in urban squatter and informal settlements was an important focal area for New Zealand's aid programme in Fiji. Programmes aimed at addressing urban development issues were a new frontier for NZAID. A key benefit to the researcher in this study was its potential relevance to his professional role by providing a better understanding about the underlying social, economic and policy issues involved in addressing such rapid yet unplanned urban growth. In further refining the site chosen for analysis, the Greater Suva Region was selected for detailed field research as it has the highest concentration of squatters and informal settlements in Fiji. After consultation with industry commentators the researcher saw merit in demonstrating that a "social-well-being" or "civic activity" oriented diagnostic tool, suitable for use by NGOs and donors alike, would be a way to monitor ongoing social change within squatter communities. This would provide the basis for the field research.

These industry commentators helped to identify four potential settlements for case studies where the researcher could investigate these dynamics in the field. These were chosen because they best highlighted variations in the way communities of different ethnic composition work together for the collective benefit of all residents in the urban context. After an initial site assessment by the researcher, three

⁴¹ Peri-urban areas are where 'informal settlements' (the accepted term used locally to describe squatter and similar settlements) have developed - outside or 'peripheral' to the legal planning boundaries of town or city centres hence without the legal access to services and the compliance obligations that 'regular' citizens have as 'true' urban dwellers.

⁴² Refer also to Footnote 1 and to Chapter 4, Section 4.3 for more details on the national and squatter settlement poverty situation in Fiji.

settlements were selected. The first, Caubati Topline Topline is a recently resettled Indo-Fijian community located in Nasinu Township, 15km north of the city but one of the most densely populated areas of Suva.⁴³ The second is Fiji Muslim League, a long-term and predominantly Fijian community located on Ratu Mara Road, Nabua, 5km northeast of the city. The third is Nanuku, a long-term ethnically integrated community, (both Fijian and Indo-Fijians co-habiting) located on the coastal floodplain in Vatuvaqa, 10km east of the city centre. The fourth, Delaivalelevu, also Fijian, was considered unsuitable due to a mix of residents with formal and informal lease arrangements which classified it as an 'urban village' not an informal settlement.⁴⁴

The researcher's professional role in Fiji provided a deeper understanding about urbanisation in Fiji. The field research was conducted after three years living in Fiji and was completed in a two month period from May to June 2008.

5.3 Research Methodology

The main objective of this study is to understand how social integration, religion and cultural change impact on the development of urban squatter communities. A second interrelated objective is to demonstrate how easily civil society organisations can measure social capital resources held within the communities with which they work, (termed community capacity). An underlying normative motivation for this study is, to better understand, how to formulate and monitor effective responses to urban poverty in order to be able to more fully utilise the strengths, effort and underlying values prevailing in poor urban communities.

⁴³ The Greater Suva Region includes Suva city centre and the Nasinu-Nausori corridor. In 1997 the Nasinu area, between Suva and Nausori, was a growing collection of peri-urban settlements. By 2002 it could no longer be ignored and was incorporated into the Suva City boundaries and represented at that time the second largest "town centre" in Fiji with about 21% of the total urban population (McKinnon et. al., 2007, p. 2).

⁴⁴ Urban villages are treated administratively as part of a town but there are many 'unofficial villages' within or peripheral to townships whose inhabitants, both settlement and squatters, live on tribal land and where the community is organised in the traditional Fijian way (Walsh, 2006, p. 85).

In order to explore the notion that social change can build cohesive urban communities in Fiji, a semi-qualitative approach was used. Information was gained from key commentators working on informal settlements issues in Fiji, and this was augmented by quantitative social data collected from field research – the conducting of a questionnaire survey on a sample of residents and associated field observations at three selected sites. This study was concerned with measuring community capacity in a way that recognised the breadth of the dynamics involved in order to gain an understanding about how communities mobilise social capital in informal and squatter settlements in Fiji. The premise in this approach could be applied to gain a snapshot of the ‘state of community affairs’ within a defined community of choice, in this case urban squatter settlements (Chan, 2006, p.289). There were three important questions about this process that needed to be addressed:

- (i) How do culture, religion and other lived experience impact on urban community relations?
- (ii) How do belief systems, such as expressed in culture and religion, support or block potentially positive changes to urban squatter community development processes that may otherwise improve squatter householders’ well-being?
- (iii) What strategies could effectively be pursued to augment and sustain social capital in urban squatter communities?

In order to address these questions, the researcher was interested in how to measure community capacity in a pragmatic way and one that recognised the breadth of knowledge already existing about appropriate social capital instruments. Such a tool could present a potential application for development practitioners to employ as an instrument to monitor community capacity development.

Capacity in this context was defined in Chapter 2 as a process of strengthening and empowerment of communities.⁴⁵ The assumption applied for this thesis is that organised communities with active voluntary networks and groups in service of common needs can draw collectively on their human resources. When those human resources are combined and mobilised toward common goals it can facilitate social change and improvements for community members (Laverack, 2006b, p. 267).

5.3.1 Methodological Framework

It was important to base the data collection on successful, internationally known, and authenticated survey models due to the complexity of assessing social capital resources held within communities. Five assessment application frameworks for measuring community capacity were researched and assessed for suitability for this study of urban settlements. The first assessment framework was a quantitative approach developed by the World Bank to measure social capital (Grootaert & van Bastelaer, 2001, p. 21). Grootaert and a group of other specialists went on to design the Social Capital – Integrated Questionnaire (or SC-IQ), a tool used to measure the broad scope of social connectivity in poor communities involved in various development projects in Africa during the period 2002-2004 (Grootaert, Narayan, Jones & Woolcock, 2004, p. 25). Most commonly used in combination with a living standards assessment tool the SC-IQ survey provided a systematic way of measuring the different ‘dimensions’ of social capital identified as important in providing the full ‘baseline of socio-economic information’ about a subject community (p.2). A core set of questions were provided for practitioners and researchers to draw on to explore six key ‘dimensions’ of social capital the group regarded as important for the linking of community members structural organisation to their cognitive perceptions about working together, and the outcomes being achieved by these inter-relationships (p.4). The dimensions included: (i) groups and networks; (ii) trust and solidarity; collective action and cooperation; (iii)

⁴⁵ Refer to Social Capital Chapter Section 2.5.

information and communication; (iv) social cohesion and inclusion and (v) empowerment and political action (p. 5).

The second assessment approach was another quantitative methodology developed by a global non-government organisation based in South Africa called *Civicus* – the Civil Society Index, (or CSI). It has been successfully applied in a global benchmarking exercise to assess the vibrancy and effectiveness of civil society at the national level (Heinrich, 2004, p. 1). It also measured ‘dimensions’ of social capital but rather those held within civil society organisations and is now used to ‘assess the state of civil society in countries around the world’ (p.1). A comprehensive manual about how to apply the methodology contains a core set of questions for researchers to draw on that explore the four basic ‘dimensions of social capital’ regarded as important for ‘creating a knowledge base and impetus for civil society strengthening initiatives’ (p.7). These dimensions included: (i) the structure of civil society; (ii) the external operating environment; (iii) the values practiced and promoted by them; and (iv) the impact of activities pursued by civil society actors (p. 7).

Common ‘dimensions’ utilised between both were: (a) community organisational structure (in terms of community structures, membership and participation); (b) socio-cultural environment (in terms of shared values, trust and honesty, and collective action and public spiritedness); (c) community values (in terms of social cohesion, tolerances and inclusivity); and (d) community impact, (in terms of empowerment and/or social change aspects by way of resource mobilisation for example).

The third and fourth capacity assessment tools were from the work of Chan et. al., (2006) and MacLellan-Wright (2003), both for measuring social cohesion – as summarised in Chapter 2, Section 2.4.4, Chan’s et. al., (2006) ‘two-way framework’ included questions to determine both the horizontal (within) and vertical (external) dimensions of community interactions and utilised peoples ‘subjective’ (state of

mind) and 'objective' (behavioural manifestations)' as indicators for these two dimensions of community capacity. These were helpful to develop questions to distinguish between the structural (types of networks and extent of peoples contributions) and cognitive (peoples perceptions) elements of social capital.

The fifth tool was applied by Glen Laverack (2007) who through the late 1990's had developed an instrument for measuring community capacity across nine 'operational domains' that assisted in health issue promotion⁴⁶ - coincidentally also in Fiji (p. 60-62). The Laverack approach looked more closely at the empowerment 'domains' of community capacity and provided potential for constructively evaluating the researchers data including a means to visually represent the results in a meaningful way (p. 93). Two aspects distinguish the usefulness of Laveracks' approach for this research. Firstly, the specific 'domains' of interest fall within the broader 'dimensions' of social capital that the World Bank and *Civicus* tools are assessing and secondly its suitability for micro level (village/settlement) assessment as compared to the former which are aimed at the macro level (broader community or countrywide). Laveracks work has since been supported by others, notably Lev-Wiesel (2003) and MacLellan-Wright, et. al., (2007), who included domains associated with measuring social cohesion and Anderson, MacLellan-Wright & Barber, (2007) who have developed a manual for planning public health outreach programmes for communities in Canada.

A review of these three assessment methods determined that these were applicable for this study on Fijian squatter settlements, and that nine 'domains' best represented the requirements for assessing and comparing capacity levels between squatter settlements in this study. These also aligned well to the common set of social capital 'dimensions' that the other macro level assessments followed.

⁴⁶ Refer to Chapter 2, Section 2.5. Lavarack's methodology had drawn on a wider body of work about community capacity and empowerment, differentiated by a focus on achieving that outcome through a strategic planning approach. For a more detailed summary refer to: Labonte, R., & Laverack, G., (2001 a & b) and Gibbon, M., Labonte, R., & Laverack, G., (2002).

The nine domains are summarised below with each paired with the demonstrated outcome:

- (i) Organisational Structures: broad and empowered
- (ii) Participation: improves
- (iii) Leadership: developed locally
- (iv) Sense of Community: well developed sense of trust and belonging including increased local controls
- (v) Problem assessment: capacity increases
- (vi) Critical Assessment: enhanced awareness
- (vii) External Linkages: strengthened, including with public institutions and other organisations
- (viii) Resource Mobilisation: improved
- (ix) External Agent Supports: equitable relationships created

In summary, the IQ-SC survey and Laverack's approach were considered the most suitable to determine this research questionnaire and method of analysing data. Further detail on the actual structure of the questionnaire is provided in the next section.

There was a general lack of direction from this literature on how to analyse, interpret and report the findings of data collected from such surveys. Grootaert et. al. (2004) outlined a process that was considered too sophisticated and the *Civicus* CSI method only provided a guide as to how key trends and differences could be highlighted. Therefore the researcher developing a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet to process and analyse the data trends across each settlement for each question, dimension and domain. Trends were highlighted in percentage terms then graphed or tabulated for result presentation (Chapters 6 and 7). A full summary of the survey records for the three settlement case studies are presented in Appendix 2.

For diagnosing the results of the community empowerment domains, the researcher was guided by the Laverack (2007, p. 73-76) approach, modifying

some of the indicators in order to take an objective view of the 'state of affairs' of each community. The consolidated results from the spreadsheet analysis for the nine domains were diagnosed utilising the indicators measured under each domain obtained from the questionnaire (see methodology Section 5.3.2.3). The results for each settlement could then be presented in diagrammatic form so that a 'snapshot in time' of the 'state of community affairs' was illustrated in the 'spider web' graphic configuration based Laverack's (2007) community empowerment work. The graphic presentation will provide a baseline mapping of each community's social capital capacity development, against which further future assessments can be made, that would in turn provide some measure of progress of functionality and cohesion (Laverack, 2007, p. 94). These results are presented in Chapter 7 and a full summary of the steps and indicators is presented in Appendix 2.

5.3.2 Research Methods

Keeping the above discussed methodological framework in mind, a mixed-method approach has been applied due to the complex dynamics involved in measuring social capital and community capacity (Pelling and High, 2005, p. 311). There were seven research methods followed in three different steps (referred to below in alphabetic order). Step one was to gather information through a range of qualitative ways including: (a) archival research; (b) industry discussions and (c) supplemented through field observations and discussions with squatter settlers. The second step involved a survey questionnaire employed as the primary means of interaction with squatter settlers to collect: (d) the baseline data about the community organisational structures and assess the extent of their social capital resources, including community group participation and social interactions with both internal and external groups, the quality of those social relations and extent of social cohesiveness that existed; and (e) living standards data to provide the socio-economic status of settlers in relation to the social dimensions measured. The third and last step was data analysis which involved: (f) a systematic way of analysing the data collected from the survey; then (g) diagnosing that information and the indicators for the different 'dimensions' and 'domains' of social capital identified.

Collectively these seven methods (a) to (g) were considered important to revealing the full 'baseline of a community's capability (Grootaert et. al. 2004, p.2). Each of these methods will be described in the following sub-sections.

5.3.2.1 Qualitative Methods

While not comprising the bulk of the primary research activity the qualitative approaches provided valuable contextual information and helped the researcher to formulate the design of the field research. Discussions with industry commentators were carried out during the early period of the researcher's professional work in Fiji. It consisted of a series of semi-structured and informal interviews with key contacts among development professionals, government agencies, academics, non-government organisations, representatives of religious bodies and local government. These interviews helped build an understanding of the complexity of the situation and identified key concerns facing the stakeholders.

5.3.2.2 Quantitative Methods

The researcher collected the community social data by carrying out face-to-face interviews with a total of 18 settlers, six from each of the three different squatter settlements, including three female and three male – achieving, a 50:50 gender ratio. Interviews with household members were conducted in the settlers' homes during non-work hours. Their responses to survey questions were recorded. While the survey was the principal point of reference with one nominated household participant, its findings were augmented from the dialogue with others from within the household or neighbours. They voiced opinions that agreed or disagreed with the principal responder. These opinions were kept by the Researcher as Field Notes for later use when discussing issues arising from the analysis of this data, (refer Appendix 2 for a full account of these Researcher's Notes).

5.3.2.3 Questionnaire

Interviews followed a predetermined survey questionnaire consisting of 56 questions divided into four sections, each aligned to one of the broad 'dimensions'

of community capacity development identified above. These were: (i) Community Organisational Structure; (ii) Socio-cultural Environment; (iii) Community Values; and (iv) Community Impacts. A further nine 'operational domains' were aligned as sub-sets of interest that fall within the broader 'dimensions' of social capital above (for example 'depth of participation', leadership quality, 'problem solving ability', 'critical assessment' and 'resource mobilisation'). The resultant questionnaire utilised the four dimensions and nine domains but with some modification with suitable questions that would help diagnose the strengths and weaknesses of each community. Each section used a set of questions that required participants to select various specified choices. These choices represented the range of indicators considered appropriate to the 'domain' of community social interaction being explored. For example, under 'Community Organisational Structure' the domain called 'depth of participation' sought information from people about the level of participation in community groups; under the 'Socio-cultural Environment dimension' the domain called 'trust' gauged perceived levels of trust with others and was one aspect that contributed to the wider 'sense of belonging/ community' domain. This dimension and the domain 'external linkages' also attempted to gauge the levels of trust or honesty with certain professionals like doctors or in people from key social and power-based institutions like the police or church leaders.

The structure and style of questions within this survey were based on the Social Capital –Integrated Questionnaire (SC-IQ) (see methodology Section 5.3.1 earlier) because of its success in eliciting social capital information. Questions were sourced from the SC-IQ although most needed modification in order to align to the four dimensions chosen and to obtain an assessment of the associated micro level domains. Other questions were adjusted and added to suit the research area. The researcher aimed at extracting information to help diagnose the strengths and weaknesses of each community. The reason for adapting the questionnaire in this manner was to retain some continuity of learning on the subject of instruments for measuring social capital and cohesion in communities. As Labonte and Laverack

(2002) pointed out there was no intention to “create a best practice template. One size doesn’t fit all communities”. Thus researchers determine the different domains suited to the particular community situations within which their research is targeted (p. 117). Further detail on the questionnaire design utilised for this study refer to Appendix 3.

The questionnaire’s first dimension, ‘organisational structures’, assessed community-based group activity (internally organised and with external groups operating within the settlement). Group types were aligned to the 18 categories of organisations defined by Grootaert et.al., (2004, p. 11) most likely to represent the majority of civil based groups that people may come in contact with. Questions inquired about individuals’ attitudes and behaviours towards the importance of these groups to the community; about membership levels; group participation; group leadership; volunteerism; social obligations to support groups (for example religious donations) and perceived benefits arising from their active participation. There were a total of 23 questions in the first section of the questionnaire. The domain and number of questions relating to that domain are listed here:

Domain 1: Community Structures

- 1.1 Family & Household Overview (1 question)
- 1.2 Groups & Breadth of Participation (4 questions: Number’s. 1.2 to 1.5)

Domain 2: Participation

- 1.6 Diversity of Membership (2 questions: Number’s. 1.6 to 1.7)
- 1.8 Depth of Participation (5 questions: to Number 1.13)

Domain 3: Leadership

- 1.14 Leadership (3 questions: to Number 1.16)

Domain 8: Resource Mobilisation

- 1.17 Volunteering (1 question)
- 1.18 Social Giving (1 question)

Aspects of question 1.12 also contributed to the evaluation of this domain.

The second section of the questionnaire assessed the 'socio-environmental' dimension of community life with a series of questions related to trust levels within the community and toward people within institutions that they may expect to interact with. Other questions assessed householder's key sources of information on matters that may affect the community and how they go about fostering collective action and public spiritedness to respond to such issues, all of which are considered as some of the important precursors for socio-economic growth and development⁴⁷ (Cheers, Cock, Keele, Kruger and Trigg, 2006, p. 1). In section two there were a total of 10 questions, relating to three of the nine domains as indicated below:

Domain 4: Sense of Community

2.1 Trust (4 questions: to Number 2.4)

Domain 6: Critical Assessment

2.5 Information & Communication (2 questions: to Number 2.6)

Aspects of questions 1.9 also contributed to the evaluation of this domain.

Domain 5: Problem Assessment

2.7 Collective Action & Public Spiritedness (4 questions: to Number 2.10)

Aspects of questions 1.11, 2.2, and 3.5-3.7 also contributed to the evaluation of this domain.

The third section of the questionnaire assessed the 'community values' dimension with a series of questions related to the degree of tolerance and social inclusiveness within the community -- considered key factors for improved quality of life and the development of healthy functioning communities (Labonte & Laverack, 2001a, p. 112). There were a total of 8 questions in this third section, all related to one domain of interest: Sense of community

⁴⁷ As acknowledged earlier there are many determinants associated with community capacity that contribute to economic development as an ultimate goal and this is outlined well in Labonte & Laverack, 2001a, p. 111-113.

Domain 4: Sense of Community

3.1 Belonging, Tolerance & Inclusion (8 questions: to Number 3.8)

Aspects of questions 4.15 also contributed to the evaluation of this domain.

The final section of the questionnaire assessed the 'community empowerment' dimension with a series of questions related to household income and food security, assessing levels of hardship. Other questions included how often people in their community had jointly petitioned or approached government officials or leaders during the last year for something to benefit the community. There were two specific domains involved in this final section; external linkages and external agency supports. This section included 8 questions:

Domain 7: External Linkages

4.1 Sociability (4 questions: to Number 4.4)

4.12 Political Action (3 questions: to Number 4.14)

Domain 9: External Agency Supports

4.15 Political Action (1question)

Aspects of questions 1.2 and 2.3 also contributed to the evaluation of this domain.

Questions on impacts were also included under the various dimensions. These were used to gather qualitative information about members' perceptions of the benefits they received from their involvement in group activities and from community interactions with other community members. These included:

1.19 Impact & Benefits (2 questions)

1.21 Networks (3 questions)

4.5 Well-being (3 questions)

4.8 Empowerment (4 questions)

Aspects of questions 1.2-1.5, 1.9-1.10 also contributed to the evaluation of overall impacts.

The researcher carried out the field data collection with the help of two research assistants - one Fijian and one Indo-Fijian. They assisted both the participant's understanding of the questions and the researcher's understanding of their replies. The use of research assistants was to ensure accurate linguistic interpretation and the use of terms specific to either Indo-Fijian or Fijian. Both research assistants signed confidentiality agreements prior to commencing the research (refer to Appendix 8).

5.3.2.4 Living Standards Measurement

Another method applied to establish the household socio-economic situation was within the analysis of Section Four of the questionnaire: the livings standards measurement. To accurately compare household poverty across settlements it was necessary to complete a series of income and food security calculations to obtain an objective comparison that would meet internationally accepted standards. These various calculations are based on standard poverty analysis formulas obtained from Kurusiga, Kado & Qoloni, (2006); Abbot, (2008) and Narsey, (2008) and the baseline figures for each household were obtained from the survey.⁴⁸ The National Fiji poverty ratings are defined in Chapter 4, Section 4.3 in the context of urban settlements. The poverty assessment determined whether the level of community organisation and cohesion was having any beneficial impact on the community. There were three key aspects assessed:

- i. The baseline demographic situation of each community;

⁴⁸ As determined by the two most prominent poverty analysts in Fiji, Prof. Wadan Narsey in *The Quantitative Analysis of Poverty in Fiji* (2006) and David F. Abbott of UNDP Pacific Sub-regional Centre in *Fiji Analysis of the 2002/03 Household Income and Expenditure Surveys* (2006) who produced this work with the support of the Fiji Bureau of Statistics chief statistician, Timoci Bainimarama.

- ii. The household income and expenditure which would assist with deriving the relative food and income security status of the sampled families.
- iii. The types of livelihood and/or coping strategies employed. For example:
 - Reducing expenditure on food items and family hunger frequency, (survey questions 1.19-1.20 and 4.5-4.6)
 - Use of other coping mechanisms to ensure the availability of food in the home, (survey questions 1.21-1.23 and 4.7)
 - Utilising a list of predetermined coping strategies as proxies for what families may employ and asking the participants to comment on them. This helped to assess their relative vulnerabilities (Kurusiga, Kado and Qoloni, 2006, p. 98).

The Food Poverty Line by settlement was the first measure to determine followed by the Basic Needs Poverty Line. The method followed to calculate these is outlined in detail in Chapter 7, Section 7.3 the Household Poverty assessment as this is where the results of the calculations are presented. Appendices 4 & 5 also provides full details on the assumptions and formulas used and a step by step guide on the process. To determine these poverty measures there are ten steps involved as summarised below:

- i. Determine the Adult Equivalent Units (AEU) per household (and average for settlement) – this is necessary so that the basis for comparison is standardised. AEU's are the universal method of converting the numbers of children per household into their equivalent adult units, necessary to highlight differences between household unit sizes and settlements. The method followed is outlined in detail in Chapter 7, Section 7.2.1.2(a) and also in Appendix 5.
- ii. Define the actual food basket needs per household (AFNH) which can vary according to ethnicity and location, (explained further below).
- iii. Define the actual non-food essential needs per household (ANENH). This also varies according to ethnicity (for example rural versus urban).

- iv. Calculate the Food Security Threshold (FST) per household ($FST = AFNH + ANENH$) which is the consumer price index (cpi) adjusted Food Poverty Line (FPL) that can be compared to national averages.⁴⁹
- v. Determine the actual household income (AHI) from the survey questions.
- vi. Calculate the Food Security Index (FSI) which is the ratio of AHI to FST. This provides a relative comparison of household hardship status, (see Footnote 11).
- vii. Determine the national level Basic Needs Poverty Line for urban squatters (UsqBNPL), adjusted by the consumer price index (cpi) to current year.
- viii. Calculate the Income Security Threshold (IST) per household which is the UsqBNPL cpi adjusted figure for comparison to national averages.
- ix. Calculate the Income Security Index (ISI) which is the ratio of AHI to IST which provides a relative comparison of household poverty status.⁵⁰

Expressing the FPL and UsqBNPL through indices provides a better baseline comparison between households. These indices, the Food Security Index and Income Security Index, will be defined below.

Food Poverty Line

The minimal 'basket of food' component of the BNPL is often referred to as the Food Poverty Line (FPL) since it is a key measure of the health of households, so an important indicator for national food security (FPR,1997, p. 33-34). The Food Poverty Line is the mainstay of the BNPL calculation (Abbot, 2006, p. 16). The FPL is normally calculated in terms of weekly household-needs which include two key elements - the minimal nutritional 'basket of food' required for a family to live healthily plus an allowance for some non-food items. The latter include: shelter, water, electricity and fuel costs considered necessary in order to consume the food (Abbott, 2006, p. 15; Kurusiga et.al. 2006 p. 92). Appendix 5 details the two 'food basket' lists used for the basis of this calculation considered essential for a family

⁴⁹ Refer Section 7.3.1 for the method of calculation of FPL and FSI per household.

⁵⁰ Refer Section 7.3.2 for the method of calculation of Income Security Index (ISI) per household

to meet a basic standard of living (Kurusiga et.al. 2006 p. 92). The 'basket of food' requirements vary between households according to a number of factors, the most important being their location (urban or rural) and differentiated by ethnicity (Narsey, 2006, p. 19 and Abbott, 2006, p. 16). Generally the cost of food is more expensive in urban settings as there is less means for families to grow their own.

As the most recent national poverty figures were based on 2002/03 data from the Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) an adjustment for the consumer price index to current 2008 value is necessary (Abbot, 2006, p. 19; Kurusiga, 2006, p. 91). These indicators of poverty are normally given per household but since the average household size varies between ethnic groups the figures presented are often converted to a weighted average per adult equivalent unit or AEU.

As the benchmark for comparison, in 2002 the national urban squatter FPL was calculated at approximately \$92-\$95 per household or \$20 per AEU (Abbott, 2006, p. 15; Narsey, 2006, p. 28).⁵¹ The 2008 figure for FPL across all surveyed research sites is relatively unchanged from 2002 levels even when adjusted to current day value at \$93 per household or \$20 per AEU.

Urban Squatter Basic Needs Poverty Line

To calculate the BNPL for urban squatters, the value of all non-essential household expenditure is added to the FPL figure. For this research those items included transport, health, phone, education, clothing, social obligations and miscellaneous costs. Thus any further income earned will usually be allocated on a discretionary basis toward lifestyle choices, e.g. savings or improvements to the dwelling or to personal entertainment. Squatter settlements are considered to be in the lowest 3

⁵¹ Calculation of the 2008 research survey data figure is based on Abbott (2006) methodology. Both Abbott (2006) and Narsey (2007) are the main commentators on poverty in Fiji. Both used slightly different methodologies to establish the 2002 national food security and poverty incidence from the Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) while their respective resultant figures differ slightly they are nevertheless in close agreement, hence the range provided here.

deciles urban living (Abbot, 2006, S.2.1.1, Table 2, p. 10). The 2002 HIES showed the national urban squatter poverty line (UsqBNPL) to be approximately \$159 per household per week or \$34 per AEU⁵² (Abbott, 2006, p. 19). Further details about the formulas used in these calculations are provided in the discussion chapter, (refer Section 7.3). Further steps were taken to record any other details that became apparent during the fieldwork.

5.3.3 Observations

During the fieldwork period and while conducting the surveys, a journal was kept to note observations about the physical aspects of the research sites, social relationships, constraints apparent in the conduct of community relations, and the community organisational frameworks. These journal notes were supplemented by observations, recorded during interviews, of social relations in households and neighbourhoods and a summary is presented in Appendix 3, the Researcher Field Notes. These observations provided further depth to the information gathered from the questionnaires, which was beneficial to understand different circumstances and to link results with the theoretical framework of this thesis in the discussion section.

5.3.4 Archival Research Methods

An extensive literature review covered information on topics dealing with poverty, social capital, culture and identity and their respective links to development. Both international and Pacific Island contexts were examined. Topics included the development approaches that address various social empowerment issues pertaining to squatter settlements and sustainable urban living worldwide with particular reference to developing countries. Research papers and journals covering data on socio-historical and geographical features of the Fiji islands were mainly sourced from the University of the South Pacific General Library Collection, internet searches and consultation of reference publications, particularly the recent encyclopaedic publication on Fiji by Crosbie Walsh (2006). Statistical information

⁵² Slightly higher than the national average poverty line of approximately \$155 per household or \$33 per AEU (Abbott, 2006, p. 19).

was obtained from the Bureau of Statistics, Ministry of Local Government, Housing and Urban Development⁵³ and from technical reports of the United Nations Development Programme in Fiji.

5.3.5 Ethical Considerations

Before the start of the fieldwork period, ethical considerations were discussed through an internal ethics meeting with supervisors, and a formal application to the Massey University Ethics Committee (MUHEC) was lodged. The Massey University Human Ethics Committee assessed the research as low risk. According to agreements with MUHEC, interviews and consultations were conducted with participants with the consent of all participants. In the case of interviewing industry commentators, the researcher's professional role in Fiji was explained to achieve transparency. Settlement participants were fully informed about the purpose and content of the research.

Potential participants were taken through a series of steps to explain the survey as follows: (a) General introductions – bilingual information sheet were provided outlining the objectives and purpose of the research; (b) Identifying who in the household would take part in the survey – by checking eligibility; (c) The objective of the research was explained by showing the Information Sheet. Following that, if they were willing to participate in the survey, a Consent Form was signed recording they had understood the details of the study including right of withdrawal, (refer to Appendix 6 and 7 for a copy of these two documents). Confidentiality and anonymity in terms of all aspects of the interview were assured by way of a process. The Consent Form included a privacy clause. Furthermore, the confidentiality agreement outlined that results would be presented as a collective synopsis and where an individual case was referred to, that a pseudonym would be used. Research assistants also had to sign confidentiality agreements, (refer

⁵³ Formally known as the Ministry of Local Government, Housing, Squatter Settlements and Environment

Appendix 8). The researcher observed that generally people seemed to welcome the opportunity to discuss their general living situation.

5.3.5.1 Choice of Participants

Survey participants were selected to represent a sample size of six households per settlement. The sample was considered representative because of the relatively homogeneous circumstances of these householders: Being part of the same geographically defined community; being of same ethnicities; consistently facing the same hardships or obstacles; and targeted as one group identity by outside institutions in terms of provision of services or assistance. Authorisation from one representative of the community leadership committee of each site was obtained, who gave permission that the researcher could approach householders and seek their participation in the survey. Background information on the settlement was also provided, so that suitable households consisting of a range of family circumstances could be shortlisted. The term 'household' was defined as those using a single kitchen.

The selection criterion for household participants was partly outlined in Section 5.3.4 above. Participants⁵⁴ needed to be a resident of the household and over 16 years of age (via the next birthday rule). A 50% gender quota was utilised. If no-one suitable was found within the household then the next house on the left was selected. Each questionnaire was numbered, and the participants' designated house number noted so when archived there would be no direct association to the participant's name⁵⁵. The questionnaires and survey information were analysed by the researcher utilising standard software applications (Microsoft Excel). All written notes or information, collected during the interview was collated by the researcher at the end of each day.

⁵⁴ The term 'participant' refers to the individuals who consented to participating in the survey and whose responses were considered to have represented their household on these matters.

⁵⁵ Each house had been numbered by the Ministry of Local Government, Housing and Urban Development who maintain a database on squatter settlement populations and carry out their own socio-economic survey work so this was considered the best way for identifying the locality of respondents should any verification or further information be required relating to this study.

5.4 Settlement Profiles

The three communities chosen represented typical informal settlement situations: The Fiji Muslim League which has an informal tenure arrangement with the landowners is within the central Suva urban confines. Caubati Topline and Nanuku are illegal occupations on vulnerable sites in the Suva city, the latter being on the coastal mangroves.

5.4.1 Socio-demographic Characteristics

A brief description of the three settlements was provided earlier in Section 5.2. What follows is a summary of the key demographics for the three sites to establish a baseline description and highlight any distinguishing characteristics between each, particularly in respect to gender, age and ethnicity. This information is derived from the survey Questions 1.1 and 1.2 and presented in Table 5.2 on the opposite page.

Key differences will be highlighted between settlements and in comparison to other known squatter data sets from Kotoiwasawasa (2007) and the Fiji Census (2003). The Fiji Muslim League survey area consisted of a cross sectional transect of the subject area which extended up this hillside site from adjacent to Ratu Mara Road to the flattened top of the hill area (the neighbourhood known as '*Kecisimani*'). The Nanuku settlement survey area also used a cross sectional transect from one Indo-Fijian neighbourhood across a much larger Fijian neighbourhood to a second Indo-Fijian neighbourhood that bounded the mangroves. The Caubati Topline survey area took a similar transect heading north from the Caubati Road access point along a ditch line and then up the hillside to the top.

Table 5.2 Participant Household Demographic Comparisons

| By Settlement (Children < 18yrs) | Per HH | Infantile Ratio | Couples with children | Couples with No children | Single Parent | One Person Households |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|
| Indigenous Fijian | Census '03/'07 | n/a | 78% | 8% | 12% | 2% |
| | Kotoisuva '07 | 1.56 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| | Research '08 | 0.95 | 67% | 11% | 11% | 11% |
| Indo-Fijian | Census '03/'07 | n/a | 74% | 10% | 13% | 3% |
| | Kotoisuva '07 | 1.44 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| | Research '08 | 1.18 | 89% | 11% | 0% | 0% |
| Overall Average | Census '03/'07 | n/a | 75% | 9% | 13% | 3% |
| | Kotoisuva '07 | 1.10 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| | Research '08 | 1.07 | 78% | 11% | 6% | 6% |

Sources: Kotoiwasawasa N. B., (2007). *Squatter Settlements Within the City of Suva 2007*. Health Services Department, Suva City Council, Fiji Islands (20pp)

Bainimarama T.I., (2008). Fiji Facts & Figures 2008. Fiji Bureau of Statistics, Fiji Islands (p.8).

Rallu J. L., (2008b). *Household Structure in Fiji: An Exploratory Study from 2003 HIES data*. UNFPA Pacific SRO, Fiji Islands (p.3). Unpublished

Settlement Demographic Comparisons

While the Fiji Muslim League research sample had the two largest households at 7 and 8 people, the average family size of the sample was the smallest compared to the other two settlements at around 4 per household. This was due to a distinctly older community demographic with households in general having more adults, reflected in the lowest infantile dependency ratio at 0.47. The reasons for this are that many households provide board for the extended family members who migrate from rural villages and the inclusion of two single parent families in the sample.

The infantile dependency ratio represents the number of adults to children per household. The smaller the ratio is (decreasing from 1.0) the greater is the number of adults per household. The opposite trend (a figure greater than 1.0) would represent more children per household.

Caubati Topline had a large family size with an average of 5-6 people per household but consisted of a higher ratio of men to women and the second lowest infantile ratio at 0.72. Nanuku had the biggest average household size at 5 to 6 people with more female members and 1-2 children to every adult, (infantile dependency ratio of 0.83). This trend was similar for both ethnic groups represented. A generally older community demographic in the research survey was due to more youth in their late teens, the sample including one household couple with no children and a single parent household. The household infantile dependency ratio was significantly lower in the survey sample at 0.68 indicating a more mature cohort overall than that found by the Kotoiwasawasa (2007) survey of 1.10. This could be explained by the different adult base ages utilised, 16 years of age in this research questionnaire compared to 18 years of age for the Kotoiwasawasa survey.

While the surveyed household sizes were larger than the two base data sets these overall averages by ethnic origin show a smaller household for Fijian's at 4-5 than for Indo-Fijian households at 5-6 compared to the 2007 census urban averages of 5-6 and 4-5 respectively (Rallu, 2008b, p.3). This again was a reflection of 66% of households surveyed consisting of couples with children,

slightly lower than the 2003 population census data average for urban families at 75% (Rallu, 2008a, p. 3). Further variances to the two base data sets could be explained by the following research sample variants:

- The figures are averages across all households by settlement so do not represent individual family situations exactly.
- An adult was considered to be over 16 years of age since that was the minimum for participants to this survey (as mentioned above).
- Households were largest in Nanuku where the average Fijian family size was over 5 and for Indo-Fijian families at around 5-6. The higher number of adults in the Fijian households surveyed is due to one household having a retired couple and a single parent family with three other adult relatives living with them.
- The Fiji Muslim League had the highest infantile ratio (more children) due to one household being a lone parent family, two others being single child families and another being a single retiree.

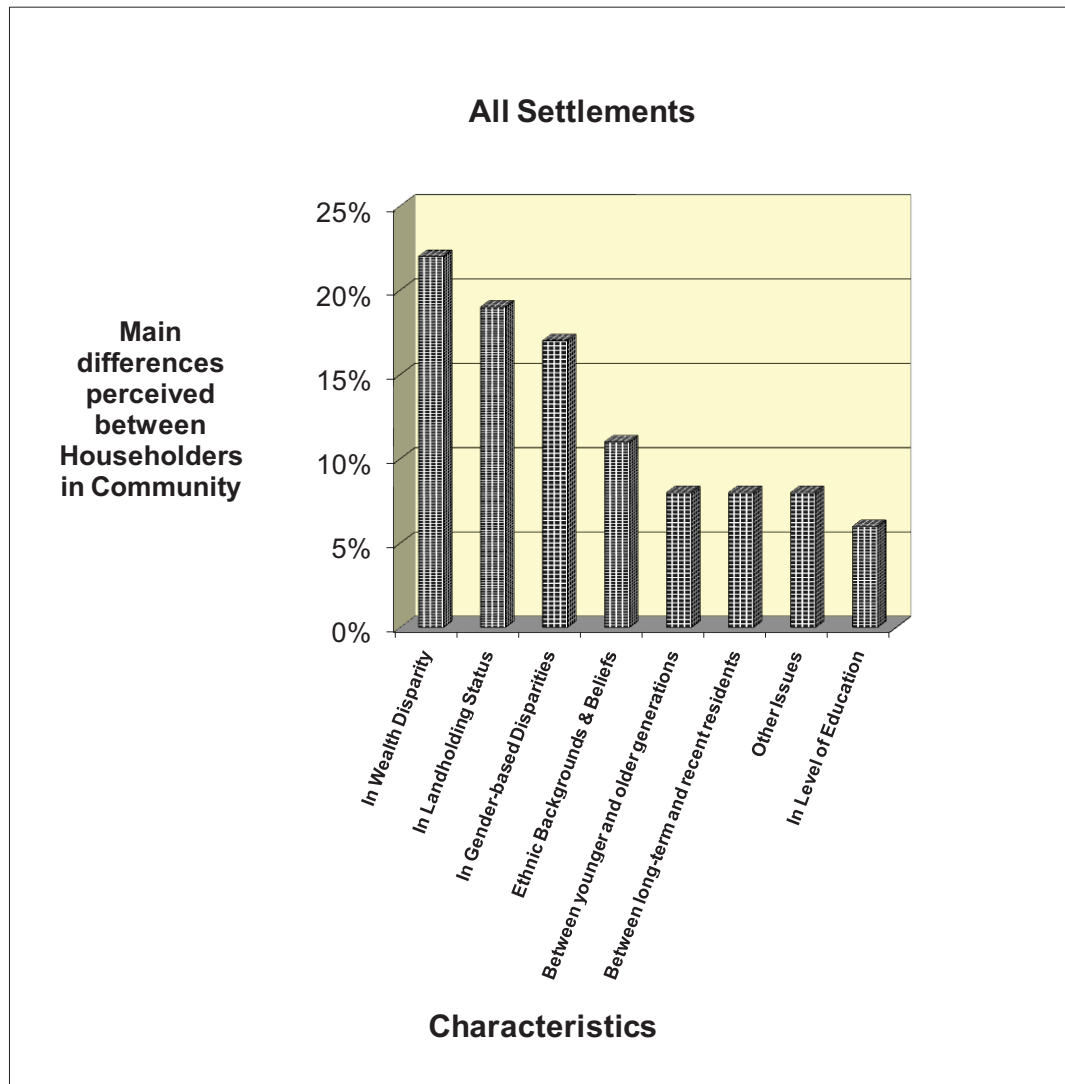
Whereas survey participants met the objective of a 50:50 gender participation ratio, and similar to the overall family dynamics of the households they represented, the settlements themselves demonstrated a different ratio for Fijian households (similar to the survey ratio) to Indo-Fijian households (more men).

Settlement Diversity

Part of the survey was designed to gather baseline information about perceptions of social diversity among the three communities. These are summarised in Figure 5.2 (below). Significant differences between community members, defined by the percentage of respondents to that choice, represented along the 'y' axis, (noting total number of respondents to this question were 12 from the 18 surveyed). The most significant differences noted were: Disparities in wealth; gender (particularly in relation to culturally defined roles for wives in the family structure and a prevalence of domestic violence directed at them); landholding status (meaning attachment to the land either through tribal affiliations or entitlement); and social status (related to ethnicity/culture and religious orientations). This last aspect was a perception raised predominantly

by Indo-Fijians who highlighted ethnic neighbourhood intolerances especially during faith-based ceremonial observances or family and festive events, often leading to harassment and threats of eviction. Indo-Fijians felt powerless in these situations, claiming their neighbours used their 'cultural land right' to threaten eviction. Living under this constant threat had a disempowering affect (Researcher's Notes, 2008, p. 3). Disparities in wealth and material possession were highlighted in particular within the Fiji Muslim League settlement, but the general viewpoint was that Indo-Fijian households were better off than Fijian households (Researcher's Notes, 2008, p. 5).

Figure 5.2 Community Diversity



Religious Diversity

Religious diversity within settlements is summarised in Table 5.3 below. Caubati Topline was predominantly Hindustani (87%) with a small number of Muslim members (13%), similar to the national trend. Fiji Muslim League had a wider but totally Christian representation with 80% Methodists, again reflecting the national trend. However, due to the 50:50 ethnic balance requirement of the survey at Nanuku the overall breakdown did not reflect the national trend with 46% being Christian, 49% Hindu and 4% Muslim.

Table 5.3 Groups and Networks: Religious and Faith-based Groups

| By Religion or Faith Based Group | Community (by Household Members) | | | | | Compared to National Significance ¹ (%) |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------|------------|---------------|----------|---|
| | Nan | CCT | FML | Totals | | |
| | | | | No. | % | |
| Indigenous Fijian | | | | | | |
| Methodist | 8 | 0 | 20 | 28 | 68% | 54% |
| Catholic | 0 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 7% | 14% |
| Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) | 8 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 20% | 6% |
| Church Later Day Saints (LDS) | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 5% | <1% |
| Subtotal | 16 | 0 | 25 | 41 | | |
| Indo-Fijian | Nan | CCT | FML | Totals | % | |
| Hindu | 17 | 27 | 0 | 44 | 92% | 78% |
| Muslim | 0 | 4 | 0 | 4 | 8% | 16% |
| Subtotal | 17 | 31 | 0 | 48 | | |
| TOTALS | 33 | 31 | 25 | 89 | | |
| Overall Religious Breakdown | Nan | CCT | FML | Totals | % | Overall % |
| Christian | 48% | 0% | 100% | 41 | 46% | 64% |
| Hindu | 52% | 87% | 0% | 44 | 49% | 28% |
| Muslim | 0% | 13% | 0% | 4 | 4% | 6% |

Source: ¹Bainimarama T.I., (2008). Fiji Facts and Figures 2008. Fiji Bureau of Statistics, Fiji Islands (p.9).

Key: Fiji Muslim League is abbreviated to 'FML'; Caubati Topline referred to as 'CCT'; Nanuku abbreviated to 'Nan'

Access to Essential Services

Many residents at all three settlements did not have access to essential services, the most common being those without power or electricity (90% of households), followed by water or sanitation (38%) and education (17%). In

regards to power and water services, where households did obtain access this was often on a shared basis, between households, with one arranging the connection fee and then splitting the supply by selling that 'privilege' to their neighbours. Photograph 5A illustrates how haphazardly water and power connections are arranged in this way at Fiji Muslim League, as compared to a regular housing development.

Photograph 5A: Haphazard Water & Power Connections



(Fiji Muslim League: Yates, September 2008)

Summary of Settlement Demographics

To summarise the socio-demographic context for these three case studies in this research: There were distinct similarities between all settlements in the Each is situated on Each of the settlements have developed in a distinct geographically defined locality in substandard environmental conditions: Fiji Muslim League on a steep hillside and river valley; Nanuku on a coastal mangrove strip and Caubati on a piece of undeveloped peri-urban land. As squatter settlements there is no legal requirement for basic services to be

provided by the authorities but many residents do have access to water via shared connections but are without power and sanitation.

Due to the semi-closed nature of these settlements and the propensity of inward migrants to seek neighbourhoods with like values they have a propensity for community structures to be developed along ethnic or religious orientations (Nanuku provided example of the former while both Fiji Muslim League and Caubati Toplevel were examples of the latter) that reinforced cultural norms and a sense of belonging (identity constructs) to that place. But a 50:50 ethnic balance requirement at Nanuku settlement meant that the religious diversity did not match the national statistics where the Christian Fijians are 64% of the population. Comparing the three settlements, as Fiji Muslim League was a Fijian settlement then it was also a Christian (predominantly Methodist) settlement and Caubati Toplevel being Indo-Fijian was predominantly a Hindi settlement.

In terms of households units, all settlements were of distinctly older demographic compared to national statistic averages due to more youthful adults (less children) within families. On average the Fijian household unit sizes were smaller than the national average (4.33 compared to 5.52) and the Indo-Fijian households were larger than the national average (5.33 compared to 4.05). The Fiji Muslim League and Caubati Toplevel household units had more men than women but Nanuku was distinctly the opposite. The most significant differences perceived between residents within these settlements were disparities in wealth, gender (in respect to women's focus on more traditional roles), landholding status and social status with Indo Fijians particularly sensitive on the last two of these matters. The variance of the demographics as outlined above did not present distinct limitations to this research since the settlements were deliberately chosen for their ethnic orientations to highlight any comparative differences in social capital dynamics and capacities. There were significant limitations for the researcher in communication with the settlers in the three settlements however which along with the other key limitations will be summarised in the following section.

5.5 Limitations

There were a number of constraints that required careful management and this will be described as follows:

a) *The researcher's professional status.*

The illegal overthrow of the democratically elected government in December 2006 increased political and civil tensions in Fiji. As an employee of the New Zealand High Commission in Fiji and Managing the New Zealand-Fiji bilateral aid programme this drastic change in government meant a significant change in engaging with the interim government. The situation required a careful dialogue with key public service personnel over the programme design and implementation. During this transitory time the New Zealand Government and its aid programme continued to work with the Ministry of Finance and National Planning, Ministry of Local Government, Housing and Urban Development on designing a framework for supporting urban squatter development needs.

b) *Lack of fluency in both the Fijian and Hindi languages.*

The researcher had a working knowledge of Fijian but this was not proficient enough to complete the survey interviews with householders. The Indo-Fijian, and the Fijian research assistants acted as interpreter which allowed the discussions to be conducted in the vernacular and responses simultaneously translated for the researcher's benefit.

c) *Reliance on research assistant's interpretation of responses.*

Reliance on the research assistant's interpretation of the study's concepts, survey questions and the participant's replies during the household interviews, presented a risk of misunderstandings or potential research bias. One, the interpreter may perceive they understood the participant's views, given their own knowledge or similar responses from previous interviewees, and translate outcomes accordingly. Secondly, participants became cautious when both research assistants, that is Indo-Fijian and Fijian, were present at the interview. Use of a standard questionnaire and some training prior to the field work with the research assistants and using the culturally appropriate research assistant helped to negate this constraint.

d) *Small research study sample size.*

Small study samples as in this case with only six household participants per settlement, presents questions as to accuracy of results. The small sample size (over three settlements amounted to eighteen households in total), was appropriate to show tendencies only. In most cases the results from analysis of the survey will be presented in percentage terms with the actual values in brackets so as to keep a perspective on the significance of the sample size. However, a small sample size was considered valid in this setting to achieve an overview of the situation, given the relatively homogeneous circumstances of these householders: Being part of the same geographically defined community; being of same ethnicities; consistently facing the same hardships or obstacles; and targeted as one group identity by outside institutions in terms of provision of services or assistance.

The survey questions encouraged participants to answer based on their perceived understanding of what their household members would agree was the right response. In some cases several household members were present and there would be discussion among them on some questions before the participant responded. With some questions people were asked to gauge perceptions and trends of the community groups to which they belonged. These techniques helped the researcher gain an accurate picture of community dynamics. On this basis the sample size represents a true reflection of community capacity.

5.6 Conclusion

This chapter outlines the background and basis to the research methodology adopted in relation to the primary research carried out for this study. A description of the different components comprising the research illustrates that the design approach involved both qualitative and quantitative aspects to it. The integrated social capital and living standard survey questionnaire acted as the primary point of contact with household participants at each of the three settlement sites. The survey approach was a constructive way of discussing

issues related to urban squatter living while at the same time gathering specific data for analysis to satisfy the objectives of the research.

The objective of the survey process was to assist the researcher to determine the baseline capacity of social capital (such as group networks, linkages to key outside organisations and institutions, level of their civic action) within the target communities. As indicators of social capital, these in particular are important to understand given they underpin the types of livelihood and/or coping strategies employed by settlers and could possibly also assist with strengthening overall community capacity. Considering the evidence of the literature discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, the methodological approach outlined in this Chapter should lead to an understanding about how effective community support structures are and how they may improve community members (families) sense of well-being. This chapter has also provided brief case histories of the research sites by way of establishing a baseline of community demographics and perceptions about members social status in the three settlements.

While some limitations were anticipated and others identified during the course of its implementation, these were largely of a technical disposition and so did not affect the basic research process itself.

Before reporting on the results of this fieldwork in Chapters 6 and 7, the following three chapters will firstly provide the theoretical framework for the concepts of social capital and communities, incorporating the relationships to culture, identity and religion, (in Chapters 4 and 5). And secondly, an overview of Fiji's geographical and socio-economic development status, (in Chapter 5) that will include an examination of poverty, in particular urban squatter settlements, which will represent the contextual framework within which the current research is based.

CHAPTER 6

AN ASSESSMENT OF COMMUNITY STRUCTURES IN INFORMAL AND SQUATTER SETTLEMENTS IN FIJI

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the field research findings as to community capability or the extent of the studied settlements' organisational structures and settlers participation levels in them, as an indicator of community well-being.

Community organisational structures are the foundational precursor for how urban squatter communities mobilise their resources, addressing the primary question of this thesis. The research premise is that the level of community group activity can ultimately present varying opportunities or obstacles for community members to advance community held needs. Group activity thus affects household livelihood choices and as a consequence, individual well-being. The methodology for collecting this qualitative social data was discussed in Chapter 5, (Section 5.3.1), relying on the use of an internationally authenticated approach involving a Social Capital – Integrated Questionnaire as the instrument to engage squatter settlers. A comprehensive questionnaire of this nature was necessary due to the broad scope of social connectivity indicators that were required to be assessed in these poor communities. To analyse the data a mixed-method approach was followed to measure the social capital and community capacity indicators, the subject of in this Chapter.

The literature reviewed in Chapter 2 revealed that intra-community or neighbourhood group networks are considered important for mobilising community held resources to meet shared needs (Capriano, 2006, p. 168; Falk and Kilpatrick 1999, p. 19; Fischer et. al., 2002, p. 4; Kleinhans et. al. 2007, p. 1077; Lev-Wiesel, 2003, p. 333). An analysis of community based group activity and their linkage to outside organisations is recognised as an indicator of the

social wealth a community holds and is often referred to as 'social capital' (Pelling and High, 2005, p. 8). Social capital is also described as the level of resources (or accumulated knowledge) held by a community that when mobilised can affect changes to their individual and collective well-being (Fischer et. al., 2002, p. 5). Chapter 3 outlined that people's personality can develop from a multi-dimensional sense of identity, borne of the associations and interactions they experience with others across the range of groups to which they belong (Watson-Gegeo, 2005, p. 413; Giddens, 1991 In Mayo, 2000, p. 43). Lived experiences are also considered to be integral in shaping peoples perspectives. These experiences can help people develop coping strategies, which can be employed in certain circumstances and alter the multi-dimensionality of their identity (Kurusiga, et al., 2006, p. 100-101; Mayo, 2000, p. 42; Ratuva, 2002a, p. 19). Community structures present the potential network within which these characteristics come into play if communities are to work together to address shared needs (Docherty, et. al., 2001, p. 2227). Well supported community groups structures imbue a trusting environment, encouraging social transactions to occur and the vehicle for improved community empowerment processes, a central theme to this thesis study (Laverack, 2001, p. 134; Putnam, 1995, p 2; Siisiainen, 2002).

The three settlements that were studied are all located in Suva city. The first, Nanuku (abbreviated to 'Nan' in tables and figures), is an integrated community in the suburb of Vatuaqa; the second, Caubati Topline a predominantly Indo-Fijian community in the suburb of Caubati Central (referred to as 'CCT') and third is Fiji Muslim League ('FML') predominantly a Fijian community in the suburb of Nabua. Six households per settlement were surveyed, a total of 18 households. The detailed socio-demographics for each community based on the information gathered from those respondents⁵⁶ have already been outlined in Chapter 5, Section 4.1. This Chapter will assess five features of community

⁵⁶ The terms 'respondent' and 'participant' will be used interchangeably within this paper and will refer to the responses given by the individuals who took part in the survey and who were considered to have represented their household on these matters. The number of respondents per question can vary as not all those surveyed answered every question therefore the figures presented, either as actual numbers or in percentage terms, relate to the number of people who responded to that question.

organisation and participation. The first section will examine the organisational aspects operating within each community, based on people's preferences for group activity and ranking of the most important three to their community life. Section two will analyse levels of participation in those community groups (membership, activity and frequency of activity) and section three will look at leadership qualities given these are closely linked. Good leadership is important for developing strong community organisations (Laverack, 2001, p. 138). Section four will assess what benefits people believe are gained from this social networking, including whether there is equitable access to the services they may provide. Section five will examine the strength of everyday social relations arising from contact with people living within the communities and externally. Social relations are considered important for generating trust and security as well as a means to serve as a catalyst for community empowerment (Laverack, 2001, p. 140). Any distinguishing features between communities will be highlighted during the presentation of these findings. The final section will explore the impact these levels of community organisation and activity have had on the people surveyed in terms of perceived benefits and improved sense of individual and/or household well-being.

6.2 Community Organisation

One of the assumptions of this research was that these settlements would have weak community support structures resulting in householders predominantly relying on their own initiatives and resources for coping strategies and livelihood choices. The following section provides an analysis of community based group activity which is widely accepted as the means for facilitating collective human behaviours and hence the accumulation of social assets (Pelling and High, 2005, p.8). There will be a focus on examining the breadth of community group structures that exist within each settlement, the level of membership and participation of settlers in those, as well as consideration of the group leadership qualities, gender influences and the benefits that settlers perceived they obtained from their active of involvement.

6.2.1 Group Structures

An assessment of group structures includes consideration of the breadth of community level groups, associations and organisations that exist within each settlement studied, initiated with the view to organise members social affairs. This Section represents the findings from a review of results for Questions 1.2-1.5 relating to this area of interest. For a complete list of the survey questions, refer to Appendix 3.

Participants were first asked to provide details of all civil society organisations⁵⁷ operating in their community and to indicate the level of involvement (membership, roles and participation) they and other household members had in these groups. According to Grootaert et. al., (2004, p. 11) eighteen different 'categories' of organisations were specified by the survey questionnaire as most likely to represent the majority of civil based groups that they may come in contact with, listed as follows:

- Traders or Business Associations (e.g. traders or business associations, co-operatives)
- Professional Associations (e.g. alumni groups, consultative practice related groups)
- Trade Unions (includes labour unions)
- Neighbourhood Committees (e.g. neighbourhood watch, fundraising etc)
- Religious or Faith-based Groups (includes religious study groups)
- Political Groups (e.g. movements, political party affiliations)
- Artistic Groups (e.g. dance, art, music, theatre)
- Microfinance (e.g. credit or savings groups)
- Education Groups (e.g. pre-school; parent teacher associations or school committees)
- Health Groups (e.g. birth attendants, nutritional societies, newborn baby groups)

⁵⁷ The terms 'organisation' and 'group' will be used interchangeably within this paper. These terms will refer to civil society structures or associations that have been established by the subject community's themselves or for stand-alone non-government organisations (NGO's) which operate within the community e.g. through support to community based structures/committees or by providing services.

- Water and/or Waste Management Groups (e.g. community water supply, refuse recycling)
- Sports Groups or Clubs
- Youth Groups
- Non Government Organisations (NGOs) or Civic Groups (e.g. Rotary clubs, NGO projects or programmes, hobby groups)
- Cultural-based groups (e.g. country of origin or kinship associations, cultural dance groups)
- Women's Welfare Groups or Associations
- Village (Rural based) Committees (i.e. associated with kinship groups)
- Other – non specified

Out of these 18 categories of organisations specified in the survey as representative of the breadth of civic activity possible in communities, only 12 were found to operate across these three settlements. Those categories are listed below. The bracketed number indicates the number of responses to each category that people gave as representative of the involvement that members of their household had with groups from these categories Respondents had a choice of multiple responding to this list so all civil organizations to which members of their household were involved with could be recorded:

1. Professional Associations (1)
2. Trade Unions (3)
3. Neighbourhood Committees (12)
4. Religious or Faith-based Groups (18)
5. Artistic Groups (2)
6. Microfinance (6)
7. Education Groups (1)
8. Sports Groups or Clubs (7)
9. Youth Groups (8)
10. Non Government Organisations (5)
11. Women's Welfare Groups (3)
12. Village (Rural based) Committees (2)

Each settlement had a different range of group categories. From these twelve categories only four were found common to all, (3, 4, 9 and 8). Overall Nanuku and Caubati Topline had nine organisations that were operating in their communities while in Fiji Muslim League only six were active. Six of the twelve categories were found to be internal-based groups, (Groups 3 - 6, 9 and 11). Internal groups are defined as those that are established and run by residents to benefit community members. The scope of these internal structures/committees/groups was generally to provide specific support for community identified needs, whether social, political or otherwise (Grootaert et. al., 2004, p. 11). The other six categories were found to be predominantly external-based groups (1, 2, 7, 8, 10 and 12). External groups are defined as those that are established and operating from outside the community. They are usually legally affiliated in some way (or registered as such through a relevant Government department responsible for charitable organisations). The scope of these external organisations was generally to provide advocacy or assistance aligned to the community identified needs (Grootaert et. al., 2004, p. 11). Some of these included civil society organisations that were working in the community, for example Non-government Organisations (NGO's - Category 10) who provided a range of services or programmes that worked on empowering communities or their members.

There were some exceptions to the above generalisations. For instance, while most religious or faith-based groups (No. 4) were operating from community centres a small number of householders attended churches or mosques outside of the community. Two categories listed, sports (No. 8) and youth groups (No. 9) while mostly informally organised by the community itself, (the youth groups often affiliated to a faith-based group) were in some cases operating from venues or clubs outside of the community. All microfinance groups (No. 6) were internally managed with one exception being at Nanuku where an NGO had established a savings group as part of a general community empowerment programming approach. Taking the above variables into account Table 6.1 on the following page summarises group activity by organisational category. This table shows that people enjoyed mainly activities that operated within the

communities (63% of those surveyed) with just over a third (37%) spending time outside their community.

There were clear variations between settlements. When considering the average numbers of categories represented at household level, Nanuku and Caubati Topline (at four groups per household and a range of 3-6; total group interactions of 24-25) demonstrated a slightly wider level of group involvement than Fiji Muslim League (at three per household; range 2-4; total 19 group interactions). The heavy reliance on church related activities resulted in a more internally focused community disposition for social interaction at Fiji Muslim League community, which was in contrast to the other two communities. This feature of Fiji Muslim League will be explained more fully later in this Chapter.

Table 6.1 Community Activity: By Organisational Category

| Group Activity by Category or Household (HHd): | Settlers Surveyed: Levels of Involvement | Level of Activity Per Household | | |
|--|---|---------------------------------|----------|----------|
| | | Nan | CCT | FML |
| External-based Groups per HHd | 37% | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| Internal-based Groups per HHd | 63% | 3 | 3 | 2 |
| Catagories Operating per Community | From the range of 12 across all settlements | 9 | 9 | 6 |
| Total Group Activity by Community | Overall 68 Interactions | 25 | 24 | 19 |
| Per Household (HHd) | Avg Range of 2 - 6 interactions per HHd | 4 | 4 | 3 |
| - Fijian | | 5 | 0 | 3 |
| - Indo-Fijian | | 4 | 4 | 0 |

[Note: 'Nan' represents Nanuku Settlement; 'CCT' is Cabati Topline and 'FML' is Fiji Muslim League.]

The following Table 6.2 below summarises the community member's (settlers) ranking of which groups they nominated as most important for 'widening householders' opportunities' explained to them as improving their choices and/or prospects for a better living. In all cases 'Religious or faith-based groups' were prioritised as the most important (refer Column 3 with rankings for each community in Columns 4-6). These rankings tended to correlate well with the groups settlers indicated they were most involved with in their neighbourhoods (refer to column 2). 'Community or Neighbourhood Committees' were ranked second in importance even though having less membership levels than the third ranked 'Youth' groups. Only two of these groups (NGO's and Sports Clubs) are external to the communities (with considerably lower levels of involvement compared to the others).

Table 6.2 Community Groups: Ranked Most Important

| Organisation or Group Category | For All Settlements | | Top Four Community Rankings | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|-----|-----|
| | Settlers Membership Levels | Overall Ranking | Nan | CCT | FML |
| Religious/Faith-based Groups | 80% | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Neighbourhood Committees | 19% | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 |
| Youth Groups | 27% | 3 | | 3 | 2 |
| Sports Groups/Clubs | 17% | 4 | | 4 | 4 |
| Non-Govt Organisations (NGO) | 9% | 5 | 4 | | |
| Microfinance & Savings Groups | 4% | 6 | 3 | | |

The heavy reliance on the three priority groups and lack of support for other community groups is considered the first key factor and an example of where there is a potentially a negative impact on individual and/or community development processes. An over-reliance by communities on internally oriented support structures and the strong influences of religious or faith-based groups contributed to a more intra-community focus and affirms one of the assumptions supporting the thesis statement. Chapter 8 will discuss potential reasons for this restricted community organisational capacity.

6.2.2 Group Participation

The extent of group structures alone is not enough to sustain community interests, there needs to be active participation in those groups as well to stimulate broad community social interaction around shared issues. The active participation of members in the community groups identified above will be examined in this section (Laverack, 2001, p. 134; Putnam, 1995, p 2). Group participation relates to the level of membership and involvement (their role, attendance and frequency of attendance) in group activities. These aspects of group participation are a representation of the findings from a review of Questions 1.2 and 1.7-1.8, (refer to Appendix 3).

One aspect of this research was to assess what impacts, if any, that community group activity (in particular resulting from Religious or faith-based groups⁵⁸ and cultural norms), have on settlers' abilities to engage in social change. These community group activity impacts are considered important in terms of whether these impacts either support or block potentially positive changes to individual wellbeing as well as collective community empowerment. In order to do assess the impacts it was necessary to assess the rates of participation - the level of involvement (membership, roles and activity) of people in community structures and groups. Because it was expected that religious groups were central to community life, the results (through to Section 6.2.5) are presented as averages of all groups alongside the proportion that religious groups have contributed to the total for the activity or issue at question for the three settlements. Where specific differences occur in the results, these will be emphasised.

Membership

There were three key elements to membership. Firstly, the prioritised groups alone across all settlements showed moderately high membership levels at 42% (FML was high at 48% as was CCT at 44% with Nan's 34% moderately

⁵⁸ The terms 'religion' or 'religious' will be used in this paper to identify the range of faiths that are followed at the three subject sites. As outlined in Section 2.6.1 the predominant faiths observed there are Christian, Hindu or Muslim faiths.

low)⁵⁹ as compared to international data for the same groups in urban areas at around 10%-56% (Narayan and Cassidy, 2001, p. 70). Secondly, membership of religious groups only was very high at 80%, (FML at 96%; CCT 81%; Nan 67%) compared to international data (Middleton et. al., 2005, p. 1730). And thirdly, membership across all active community groups dropped off considerably to just 15-20% (FML 24%; CCT 21%; Nan 17%), low compared to international data of around 63% for urban areas (Axelrod, 1956, pp. 14). This over-reliance by community members on the three prioritised groups and in particular, religious connectivity was affirmed by analysing which groups were more frequently accessed by surveyed householders. On average a total of 54 memberships in groups were recorded for householders in the three settlements at the time of the survey.⁶⁰ As expected religious groups were the most important in each settlement, representing 44% of all membership (or 24 out of the total 54 memberships in groups recorded across all settlements) compared to the categories which are ranked in the next four places which were; Neighbourhood Committees at 10% (6 memberships) with little difference between Sports Groups at 9% (8 memberships) and Youth Groups at 7% (8 memberships also).

Group Activity Levels

The activity levels of members in the community groups identified was assessed in two ways, firstly on the extent of householders 'active roles' in each group and secondly by the 'frequency' of attendance in each group. Across the three communities, levels of involvement were very high at over 95% and comparable with international data for poor urban areas (Middleton, 2005, p. 1730; Stevens, 2003, p. 9 and Kleinhans et. al., 2007, p. 1083). On average 45 household members (or 83%) classified themselves as 'very active' (including

⁵⁹ These figures represent the actual participation rates (i.e. number of householders active by community against total sample population) rather than relative participation rates which is derived from comparing the number of times an activity is accessed by household members. The latter measures the relative importance of activities to the community rather than the actual participation rate.

⁶⁰ As outlined earlier in this Chapter, (Section 6.1) 6 households were surveyed per settlement but activity levels were determined by the participation of all household members. Thus an average of 27 householder memberships per settlement represents access to an average of 54 group activities, each aligned to one of the 12 organisational categories specified.

9% who regarded themselves in 'leading roles') which can be considered a positive contribution to community development processes. The full range of group participation is summarised in Table 6.3 below for each settlement.

Frequency of activity by household members in these groups was compared based on weekly attendances across settlements. Religious group meetings were the most regularly attended. Attendance at religious groups varied from 21% of householders in attendance weekly to 11% who would attend these activities two-weekly and 2% monthly.

Table 6.3 Participation in Community Groups: Activity Levels of Households by Settlement and Gender

| Householders Role in & Level of Group Activity | For All Settlements | | Actual Numbers of Participants by Community | | |
|--|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|---|------------|-------------|
| | Total Level of Activity (%) | Average Participation (Numbers) | Nan | CCT | FML |
| Very Active Participants | | | | | |
| - In Leadership Roles | 9% | 5 | 7 | 4 | 3 |
| - As Members | 75% | 40 | 34 | 46 | 40 |
| Sub Total - Very Active People | 83% | 45 | 41 | 50 | 43 |
| Somewhat Active People | 14% | 7 | 7 | 8 | 7 |
| TOTAL Levels of Activity | 97% | 52 | 48 | 58 | 50 |
| Non-active People | 3% | 2 | 3 | 2 | 0 |
| Overall Participation Levels (%) | | 97% | 94% | 97% | 100% |
| - Male | | 57% | 35% | 68% | 62% |
| - Female | | 43% | 59% | 29% | 38% |

In terms of differences between settlements, Fiji Muslim League had the most active people in weekly church events (at 23%). This was predominantly due to this result including three surveyed households (representing 41% of the sample) who belonged to the *Kecisimani* Methodist Group, a close knit

neighbourhood within this settlement located at the top of this hillside site.⁶¹ Nanuku and Caubati Topline Indo-Fijian residents were also very active in religious activities, being involved in two-weekly neighbourhood group meetings organised through the Ramayan Madali, a social movement affiliated to the Fiji Sanatan Dharma Hindustani faith. The Ramayan Madali and the *Baal Vikash* youth groups (also connected to the Ramayan Madali) are both “valued for their moral teachings and opportunities for social interaction for families”, (Researcher’s Notes, 2008). Settlers considered these groups important for keeping in touch with the Hindu preachers’ (or *Pracharak*) messages about key social issues, (Researcher’s Notes, 2008). There was one Ramayan group operating in Nanuku and four in the Caubati Topline settlement, (refer also to Section 6.2.3). In contrast to the Fiji Muslim League the encouragement of these faith-based groups for members to socialise outside of their communities and the group organiser’s willingness to inform them about social issues of interest is an example of a more discerning religious focus where potentially more positive contributions can be made in support of to community empowerment processes. But despite this example and that of the high participation rates in general invested into the three prioritised groups, there was heavy reliance on religious connectivity and thus viewed as a potential limiting factor in terms of opening up opportunities for individuals and the community to access social capital resources. As such this These aspects of community relations are highlighted as the second key factor from this research of where there is a potential limiting factor for community capacity in these settlements.

Gender Differences

Table 6.3 above provides, an overview of gender differences (for men and women) comparing their active involvement in group events. This table shows that overall men are moderately more active (in 31 of the activities representing 57%) compared to women (in 23 activities representing 43%). However, the gender differences in the way activities are represented mask differences between the settlements when comparing, both aspects of participation,

⁶¹ Refer Chapter 8, Section 2.1 for further explanation of its significance to this community.

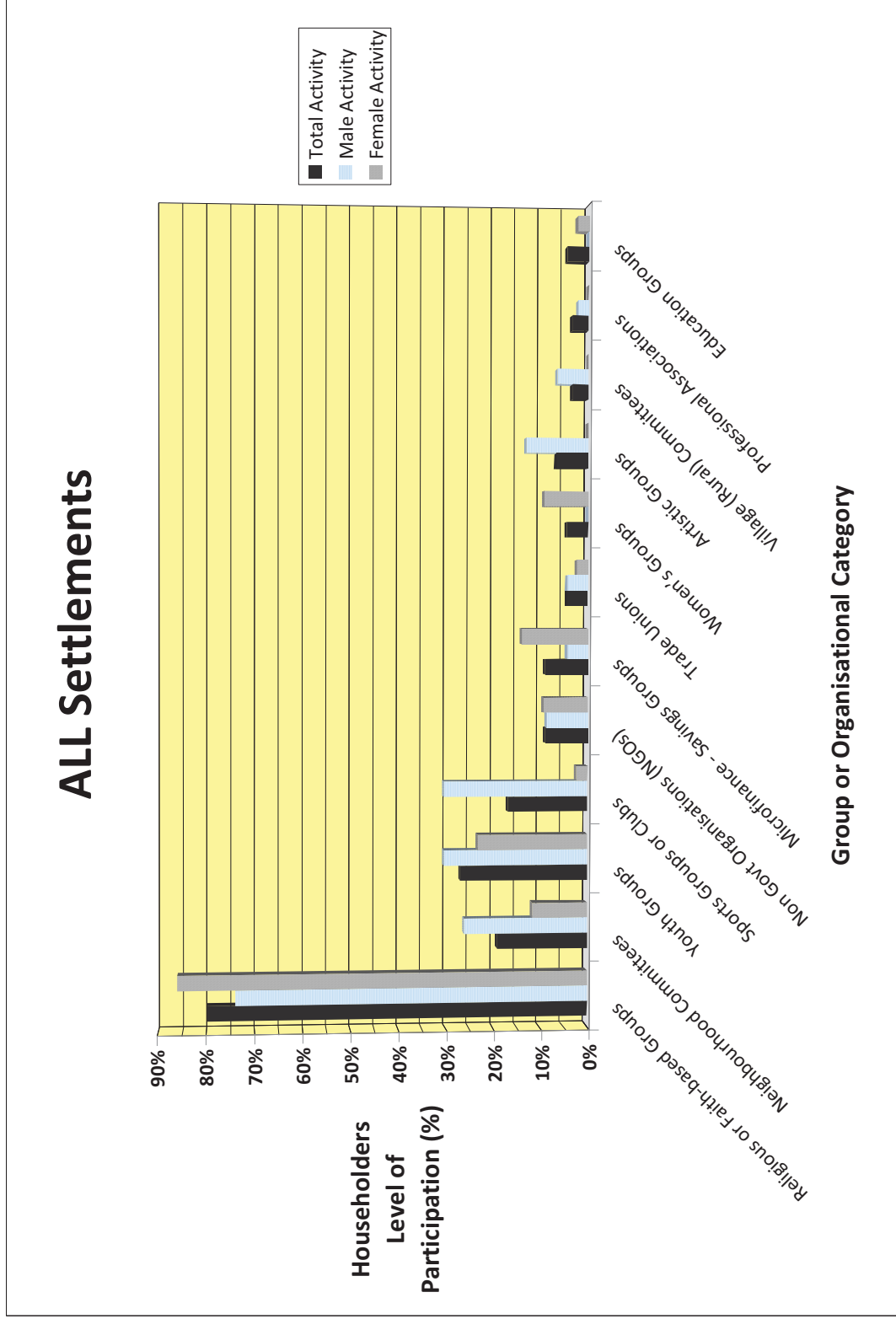
membership and activity levels. Nanuku demonstrates equity in membership with 20% being female and 21% male but with the women being more active across all activities (at 59%) compared to men (at 35%). Caubati Topline had greater numbers of female members, 35% compared to 21% men but it was men who were more active in those groups at 68%. On the other hand Fiji Muslim League had both greater memberships and activity levels for males, over 60% for both compared to around 40% for females.

In a similar context Figure 6.1 on the following page provides a breakdown of these figures across the 12 organisational categories of group activity across the three settlements studied. Figure 6.1 (on the following page) demonstrates that there was equal participation in activities for only two categories, the top ranked one Religious Groups and the NGO/Civic Groups. The other top ranked categories neighbourhood committees, youth and sport groups were dominated by male participation as were the artistic groups, rural-based village committees, trade unions and professional associations. Women were involved more in savings, education and naturally in women's group activities. Women's slightly higher levels of involvement in religious groups was likely due to their attending weekly church prayer sessions and in some cases (particularly with Indo-Fijians) educational groups. Education groups also catered for young children during the day time (preschoolers or after school activities) with an opportunity for mothers to socialise. This is the third key factor where there is a potentially negative impact on individual and/or community empowerment processes and will be discussed further in Chapter 8.

6.2.3 Group Leadership

Good leadership within community structures is considered important for fostering community cohesion, keeping the community focused on resolving shared problems, working to achieve mutually agreed objectives, organizing group events or getting help for the various group activities. Questions on leadership focused on how leaders were selected, how group decisions were made and how effective participants felt their leaders were. These aspects of group participation will be considered in this section and are a representation of results for Questions 1.14-1.16, (refer to Appendix 3).

Figure 6.1 Groups and Networks: Household Participation Levels in Various Group Activities



There was a similar trend in all three settlements, reflected in the average of 57% of responses to this series of questions (30) that maintained leaders were elected by democratic means (voting) while 17% (9) claimed just a small group of members chose their leaders and 11% (6) responded that the leader chose their own successor. A further 9% of respondents (5) believed that the group leaders selected themselves. Decision making was also considered and results showed 50% (25) of decisions were by group consensus while 26% (13) claim the leader consulted with the group and then decided. Twenty six percent (13) stated the leader made the decision then informed everyone concerned.

There were variations in leadership styles between the two ethnic groups. Fijian group structures were more autocratic. For example, in Fijian Christian religious groups leader selection and decision making were more autocratic according to 50% of respondents (2 of the 3 respondents from Nanuku and 2 of the 5 from Fiji Muslim League) and where overall only 25% of respondents claimed consensus with group decision making. In contrast Indo-Fijians followed more democratic processes (with greater consensus in decisions at 76%). In contrast, the Indo-Fijian neighbourhood from the integrated Nanuku community claimed a differential between the ways Ramayan Madali operated on leadership aspects compared to the wider community based organisational groups where Fijians were involved in lead roles. Indo-Fijian participants maintained they had less influence over who could represent their interests on those community-wide committees which tended to reflect more the views of Fijian representatives (Researcher's Notes, 2008). Interestingly, despite these differences, in terms of effectiveness, most agreed that their specific group leaders were effective in that role with an average 78% of respondents (42) claiming that was so. Neighbourhood networks were also considered as part of the discussion on groups. The variable quality of group leadership and decision making is the fourth key factor of where community organisational capacity is potentially constrained, impacting on individual and/or community empowerment processes in these settlements.

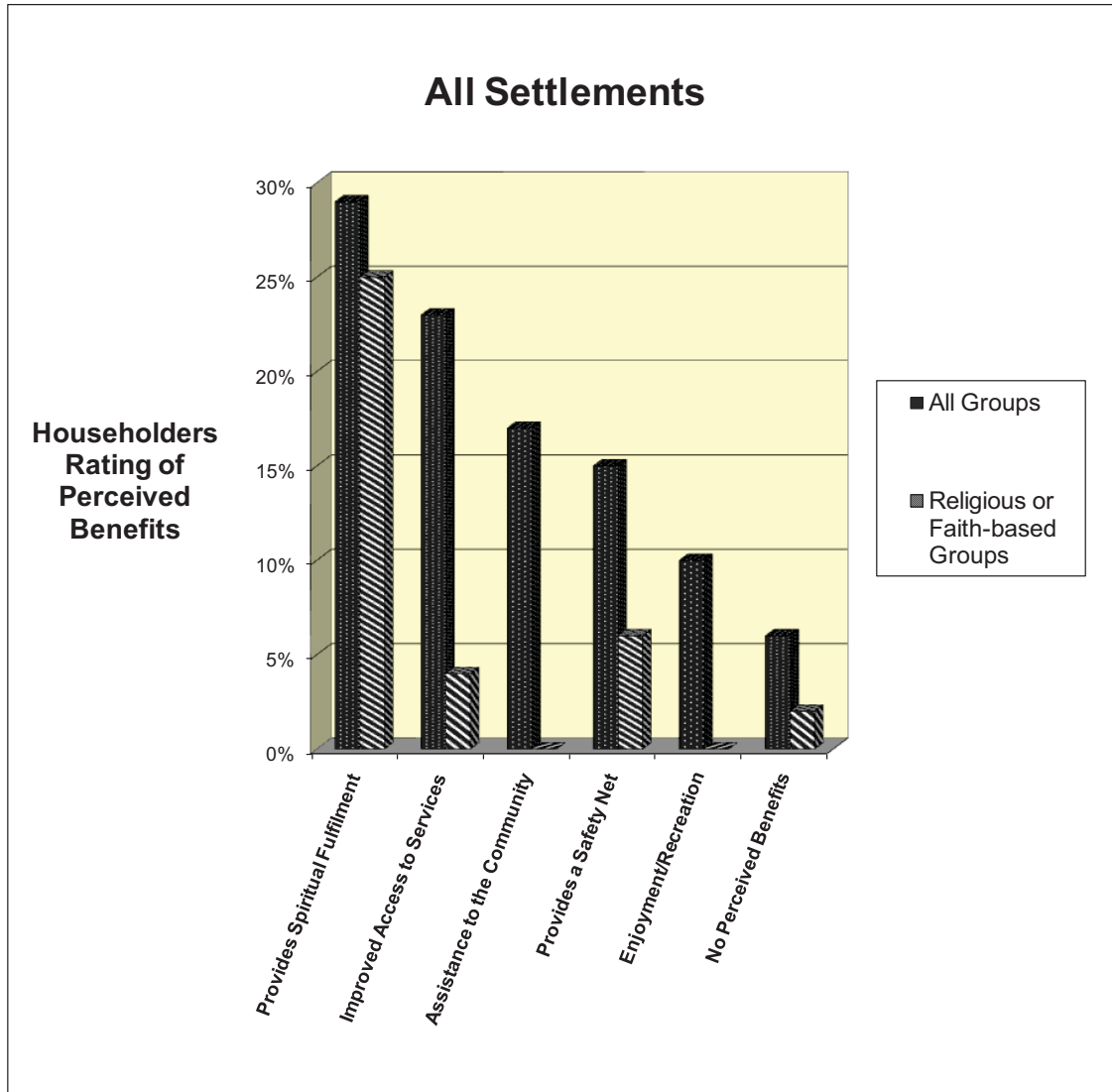
6.2.4 Benefits of Group Networks

Intra-community or neighbourhood networks are considered important for mobilising community held resources to meet shared needs. Active participation in community groups is foundational to this as discussed above. To obtain an understanding of the potential impacts from the breadth of community groups and the participation of the settlers in them, the survey asked questions of householders about the tangible benefits they gained from their active involvement in the top three ranked groups. These aspects of group participation will be assessed in this section and are a representation of results for Questions 1.9-1.13, (refer to Appendix 3).

The perceived benefits and householders ratings of them (the percentage who chose these as benefiting them or the community) are presented in Figure 6.2 on the following page. Since religious groups were expected to be ranked highly as a preferred group activity, those benefits attributed solely to religious groups are highlighted separately in the graph. Figure 6.2 shows that responders attributed tangible benefits gained from membership of internal groups⁶² as being: (i) a range of regular social contacts, in particular through faith-based activities that provided spiritual fulfilment and/or improved self esteem (supported by 28% of the 48 responses to this series of questions); (ii) facilitating access to services (23%); (iii) community interaction and meeting shared needs (17%); (iv) providing a safety net in times of hardship (15%) and (v) the enjoyment gained from recreational activities (10%). The Enjoyment/Recreational activity choice was predominantly representing Fiji Muslim League participants, highlighting their keen involvement in youth and sporting groups. Approximately 6% (3 – 1 at Nanuku and 2 at Caubati Topline) felt no benefits could be gained from involvement with internal groups activities. Figure 6.2 also demonstrates that outside of the ‘Spiritual Fulfilment’ aspect, few responders attributed many other tangible benefits to the activity of Religious or Faith-based groups. Of those who saw other benefits from religious or faith based groups (10% of people surveyed) the most commonly cited benefit was a safety net or facilitation to other services.

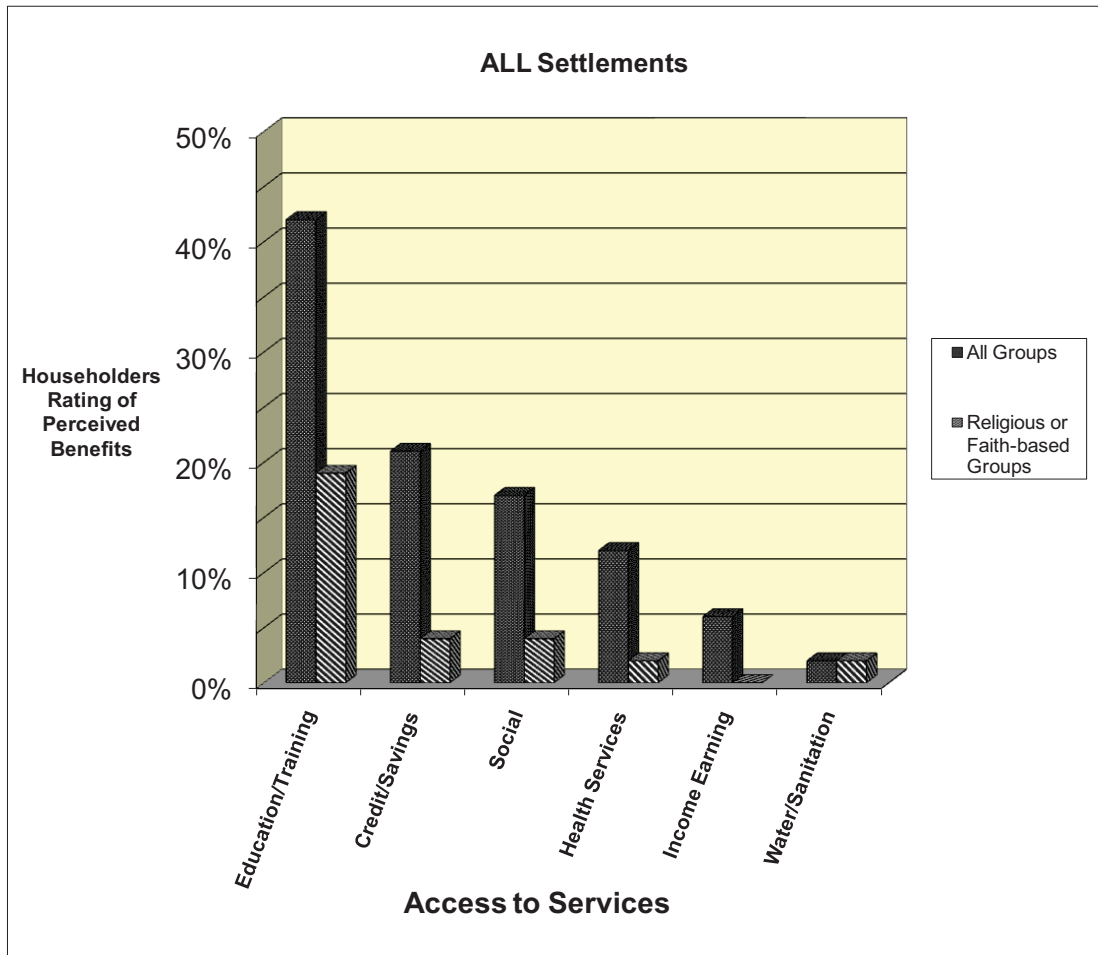
⁶² Refer this Chapter, Section 6.2.1 for the definition of Internal Groups.

Figure 6.2 Overall Benefits from Joining Organisations



The following paragraphs are an analysis of Question 1.10 which requested more information about the second listed benefit above, 'improved access to services'. Figure 6.3 (page following) summarises the results of the listing of six specific areas where people perceived tangible service oriented benefits arising from group membership. The benefits rated most important were with assistance in accessing: (i) education or training opportunities chosen by 42% of respondents (i.e. 22 from a total of 52 responses); (ii) savings schemes at 21% (11); (iii) social contact at 17% (9); (iv) health services at 12% (6); (v) income earning opportunities at 6% (3) and (vi) water and sanitation at less than 2%.

Figure 6.3 Facilitating Access to Services



Those contributions attributed solely to religious groups were again highlighted separately in the graph. Figure 6.3 shows that for the ‘education and training’ service 19% (10) or a little less than half the total people surveyed attributed this was as a result of the Religious groups they were involved in (represented on the graph by the second bar on the right [checked pattern] for this specified ‘service’). The predominant people influencing this result were Indo-Fijians involved in the *Ramayan Madali* and *Baal Vikash* religious groups as well as the youth groups. The very low levels of perceived support toward facilitating access to other community ‘services’ by religious groups are evident by comparison, (at less than two, or 4% overall). People were also asked in Question 1.11 about whether these organisations assisted or encouraged members to interact with other groups working *inside* their community. A great

deal of participants, or 46% (23), responded that they did so 'frequently' but 24% (12) said that they worked only 'occasionally' inside their community, and even 30% (15) responded with 'not at all'.

Question 1.12 asked whether the prioritised groups encouraged contact with external groups.⁶³ The responses to this question provided a significant increase in the 'not at all' responses (up to 40% or 20 responses). Forty-seven percent of the people surveyed at Nanuku (8 of 17) and 30% of those from Fiji Muslim League (5 of 15) confirmed that some of the groups working within their community did not encourage contact with external organisations. As mentioned earlier, the Fiji Muslim League *Kecisimani* group predominantly revolved around a Methodist Christian dominated lifestyle, which supported intra-community activities. The only external contacts facilitated by them were activities with other Methodist churches (Researcher's Notes, 2008). Others surveyed from this community, who were not involved in the *Kecisimani* group, verified in interviews that they felt unsupported in terms of establishing either internal or external contacts. This indicated that the *Kecisimani* group were not interested in supporting non-members or wider community activities (Researcher's Notes, 2008). On the other hand, the Nanuku Indo-Fijian neighbourhoods and Caubati Topline did mention support from the Ramayan Madali and the *Baal Vikash* youth groups with opportunities for both intra and inter-community social activities (Researcher's Notes, 2008). Only two nationally recognized NGO's were highlighted as working in the three settlements. One of these had initiated activities recently in both Nanuku and Caubati Topline while the other NGO had, during the last twelve months, suspended its preschool activities as mentioned earlier, which tends to underline the mostly intra-community networking that exists across all these subject sites.

The lack of perceived benefits by group members gained by the investment made in supporting religious group activities, other than for spiritual fulfilment, is the fifth key factor of where community empowerment processes are being constrained. This appears to be more apparent in the predominantly Christian

⁶³ Refer this Chapter, Section 6.2.1 for the definition of External Groups.

Fijian communities as compared to the Indo-Fijian communities. The next consideration is social networks.

6.2.5 Social Networks

People's regular interactions with others through group and individual contact forms a part of their social networks and these are integral part of social capital theory. This is because interpersonal relationships through the various networks people are a part of allows individuals access to potential resources (Robinson and Williams, 2001, p. 54). The quality, (extent and strength) of those social networks provide the potential for individuals to realise something tangible from these associations (Bourdieu, 1986, p16). These aspects of group participation will be examined in this section and are a representation of results for Questions 1.21-1.23; 4.1-4.4, (refer to Appendix 3).

People were asked to provide details about everyday social interactions arising from contact with people living within the communities and those from outside and apart from any generated from the organised group contacts. From the six households per settlement surveyed most daily social activities (over 75%) occurred between households within the immediate neighbourhood. Other than for work reasons, visits outside the community involved family and friends, accounting for the balance of activity (at less than 25%).

There were differences between the settlements. For example, Nanuku and Caubati Topline participants spent up to 18% of their time visiting family or friends outside the community while Fiji Muslim League again demonstrated a reliance on intra-community relationships with over 90% of visitations occurring within the neighbourhood to friends or neighbours.

The extent of these internal and external social networks was then assessed in relation to personal vulnerability, for example in the event of an emergency situation like hospitalisation or death of a breadwinner, job loss or monetary assistance in times of hardship. People were first asked who beyond their immediate household but from *within* the community they could rely on for help. Responses from Nanuku and Caubati Topline showed between 50% to 65% of

households surveyed (3-4) could turn to five or more people with around 35% (1-2) only able to rely on just one or two people's willingness to help. The split for Fiji Muslim League was more restricted at 65% (4 families) having to rely on just one or two within the community.

Furthermore participants were asked about who they could rely on from *outside* the community in times of hardship with most households (48%) indicating they would go to family, 38% to friends (including 17% who could go to either) while a further 14% had no such safety net to fall back on. Although Caubati Topline were the least able to rely on external assistance, more than 70% were able to go to family or friends while Nanuku at 100% and Fiji Muslim League at 86% were able to manage better.

The heavy reliance on neighbours and close friends outside of immediate family or kin as a safety net for people who fall on hard times is potentially a positive contribution toward community development processes and highlighted as the sixth key factor. In other word social relations within communities are important That closeness of social relations within neighbourhoods tends to underscore the findings highlighted earlier about a reliance on internal networks. However, as will become apparent later in Chapter 7 these internal networks are the least able financially to assist.

6.3 Community Well-being

An understanding of the processes communities employ to mobilise social capital resources in pursuit of shared needs is the principal focus of the thesis. In the preceding sections the levels of community capability were assessed - the breadth of group structures and levels of participation – considered the basis for generating social capital resources. This section examines what impacts this level of existing community capacity has had on the squatter

households in terms of improvements to individual 'well-being' and is a representation of the findings from Questions 4.8-4.11, (refer to Appendix 3).⁶⁴

To assess the impact of community organisation, participation, social networking and cohesiveness on the households surveyed well-being was assessed qualitatively by questioning people about their levels of happiness in four critical areas: (i) the families' health status; (ii) their current job situation; (iii) housing status; and (iv) social life. Lastly an assessment of how empowered people felt they were in terms of control over these aspects of their life (i.e. the ability to make life changing decisions) and more generally, about what impact they could have on making improvements to community/neighbourhood living conditions was gauged. The results are presented in Figure 6.4 with firstly the overall settlement (average) status for all four specified areas of their lives followed by each aspect from the one which was claimed most 'happy' to the least 'happy'.

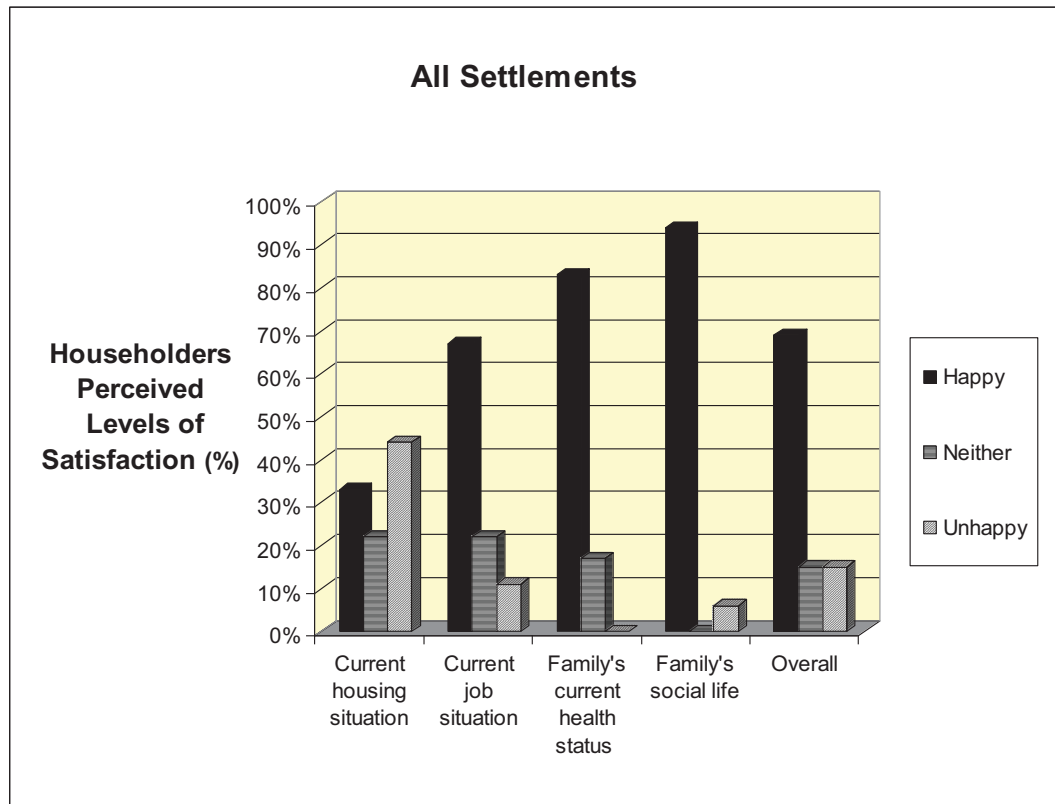
Overall 70% of the 18 household participants surveyed stated they were happy with all these aspects of their life. Two of the four areas were highlighted as giving the most satisfaction, social life (for 94%) and family health status (83%) with most satisfied with their current job situation (67%). Areas of dissatisfaction were with housing (44%) and to a lesser extent job status (11%) while a further 17-22% was non-committal on these aspects.

In terms of influence on their sense of well-being housing was by far the area of most concern for settlers, followed by job status. For Fiji Muslim League 66% of participants registered dissatisfaction on their current housing situation. Housing was Caubati Topline's only concern at 34% dissatisfaction and 33% non-committal while at Nanuku 33% were dissatisfied and a further 33% non-committed. On current job status, most at Nanuku were satisfied with only 33% non-committed. At Caubati Topline just 17% were dissatisfied compared to Fiji Muslim League where half were either satisfied or dissatisfied.

⁶⁴ The aspects of 'well-being' in the context of this paper are defined in Section 1.3 and 5.2.

The high levels of satisfaction overall in key lifestyle indicators but with a distinct level of dissatisfaction in the housing situation presented a significant impact on householders lifestyles as Figure 6.4 below summarises.

Figure 6.4 Household Lifestyle Indicators



The type of interviewing and questionnaire used in this survey was useful to gauge the relative impacts on well-being that result from existing community empowerment processes, it is recognised that the responses are subjective and could well be unreliable given the propensity of responders to under emphasise the negative and over emphasise the positive or remain non-committal. This subjectivity could place more significance on the two areas that most showed dissatisfaction with – housing and job status. The effects of household donations to social groups and any tangible impacts on well-being will be assessed in the next Chapter.

With this subjectivity in mind, people were then asked about how well they felt they could manage their current and future lifestyle choices. The majority, just

over 14 out of the 18 responders believed they had control over some or most decisions affecting their current status and 13 out of 18 believed that destiny was in their own hands rather than a need to rely on someone else, for example the government. There were differences between the settlements. For example, in Nanuku 17 out of 18 respondents and all respondents from the Fiji Muslim League believed they could manage in their current situation and plan for the future. This contrasted with Caubati Topline where a third believed they could not manage and another third felt they unconvinced about how they could manage on their own resources in the future. When asked about how much impact they might have on improving conditions within their community/neighbourhood, the mood was different with most (13 out of 18) believing they could make a big impact and the balance some impact. Whereas this was the general perception from Nanuku and Fiji Muslim League, Caubati Topline was again the exception with only two from the six surveyed believing they could be influential and one believing they could have some impact with half saying they could have no control over making the community a better place to live.

6.4 Conclusion

This Chapter has focused on presenting the field research data on community group structures and participation levels, determined as an outcome of qualitative survey work in three Suva urban squatter settlements. The first section examined the development of group networks both internally and external to the community and how these shared resources were effectively mobilised for mutual benefit. This is because organisational structures that operate within a community are often utilised as an indicator of the wealth the communities hold, referred to as social capital. The Chapter finished with an assessment of the impacts that the levels of household participation in community structures (or social capital resources) are having on the lives of the household members.

A number of factors highlighted potentially negative or positive benefits that impacted on the abilities of settlers' to engage in social change. One impact is the reliance on only a few leading but internally oriented community support structures and the strong influences of religious groups in support of this social interaction. An overall trend evident was the central role of these religious groups on community empowerment processes yet how limited those were in delivering benefits to the community and the cross-cultural and ethnic tensions that existed between neighbourhoods. Housing and job status were, for most settlers, the two key areas of concern. These findings along with those of the following Chapter about community cohesion will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 8.

The next Chapter will present further research data on community cohesiveness and how that is being mobilised for the collective good of the settlers. The premise is that social assets in the form of effective community structures and activity can facilitate the accumulation of knowledge and through those processes empower people to work together to meet shared needs, which can lead to beneficial social change.

CHAPTER 7

AN ASSESSMENT OF COMMUNITY COHESION IN INFORMAL AND SQUATTER SETTLEMENTS IN FIJI

7.1 Introduction

Community cohesion is an accepted concept to describe the way communities cooperate together in a constructive and focused manner toward resolving shared needs (Docherty, et. al, 2001 p. 2229; Capriano, 2006, p. 168; Kleinhans et. al. 2007, p. 1077). This study looked at ways, the studied settlements, build trust, interact and exist together. The findings for the community cohesion aspect of the field research are presented in this Chapter. The assumption is that community cohesion is a precursor for resource mobilisation and an indicator of community well-being in urban squatter communities. The greater the level of community cohesion the more opportunities there may be for community members to broaden their livelihood choices and/or incomes which in turn can change their poverty status (Sen, 1998, p. 6).

As discussed in Chapter 2 social cohesion within communities can be measured. This research study used the social capital survey questionnaire to ask people about some of the key indicators of social cohesion, shared values, trust and honesty levels and collective action (Chan et. al., 2006, p 293; Lev-Wiesel, 2003, p333). Communities that have functional relationships based on commonly held value systems are cooperative and better placed to mobilise the resources or social capital they possess to the benefit of their members (Pelling and High, 2005, p. 13). This Chapter will assess the degree of overall social interaction and social cohesion that exists within the three Fijian communities as

determined from a number of the survey questions.⁶⁵ The Chapter will then assess the impact that these processes have had on the livelihood choices of the households surveyed in terms of their current poverty status (according to international and national benchmarks).⁶⁶ Any distinguishing features that are evident in communities' functionality that may either support or block potentially positive changes to individual or collective community empowerment processes will be highlighted.

7.2 Socio-cultural Environment: Community Cohesiveness

As outlined in Chapter 2 this paper has adopted Chan's et. al. (2006, p. 290), social cohesion definition and the two way framework they outlined for measuring social cohesion in communities. According to Chan et al., (2006, p. 293) there are two dimensions for social cohesion: (i) the 'horizontal' which is the state of relationships between community members and (ii) the 'vertical' which account for the condition of community relations with the state and other external institutions, sometimes referred to as civic activity (p. 294). The framework includes assessment of two different aspects of these dimensions: Firstly the 'subjective' components of community interactions (or people's state of mind) and secondly the 'objective' components (or people's behavioural manifestations)⁶⁷ (Chan et al., 2006, p. 291 & 296; Lev-Wiesel, 2003, p. 335). Because different communities have different understandings as to how much cohesive behaviour should be maintained, for each of the three study sites the

⁶⁵ As outlined in the previous Chapter on Community Structures it is important to note that while the survey included 6 households per settlement or 18 in total, the number of respondents to each question varied as not all those surveyed answered every question. Therefore the figures presented will either be actual numbers or in percentage terms, relative to the number of respondents to that particular question.

⁶⁶ The national poverty benchmarks were presented in Chapter 4, Section 4.3. The approach to the calculation household poverty status was described earlier in Chapter 5, Section 5.3.2.4 and will be further elaborated on in this Chapter, Section 7.3.

⁶⁷ Note that each of these components account for a different set of factors that are specifically relevant to either the 'horizontal interactions' or the 'vertical interactions'. These are explained in each of the relevant Sections to follow.

degree of community functionality will be analysed by way of Chan's et al. (2006, p. 294) two way framework.⁶⁸

7.2.1 Horizontal Community Interactions

Horizontal community interactions are the social ties people have with close neighbours, friends and family and in the relationships they have with key people in society like teachers, religious leaders or local business people. This subsection reviews the subjective aspects of horizontal community interactions, utilising as indicators societal norms: community perceptions on trust and honesty as well as their feelings about togetherness and willingness to help others (Chan et al., 2006, p. 289 & 291). Furthermore, the 'objective' components of horizontal community interactions, utilising as indicators voluntarism as well as individual's readiness to contribute money toward community activities will be discussed in this section (Chan et al., 2006, p. 296).

7.2.1.1 Subjective Components of Horizontal Community Interactions

Subjective components of horizontal interactions are the perceptions people have about how they may act within the community given certain underlying preconditions of security, (for example strong sense of confidence in community). In most communities there are people that do get along or trust each other, while inevitably there are others who do not. The theoretical aspects of social capital presented in Chapter 2 indicated communities that are close or have strong feelings of belonging (for example identify with that settlement) are also more willing to value cultural, ethnic and religious diversity and help others in need irrespective of these differences, (the subjective aspects of social interaction) (Carpiano, 2006, p. 170; Chan et al., 2006, p.291). These are also the underlying factors associated with social cohesion. This section will analyse the findings about subjective aspects of horizontal connectivity that exist within these settlements. This Section represents the findings from a review of results for Questions 2.1-2.4, 2.7-2.10, 3.1, 3.5-3.8 and 4.15, (refer to Appendix 3).

⁶⁸ Refer to Section 3.4 for an explanation of Chan's et. al (2006) analytical framework for analysing the level of social cohesion in a community and a discussion about 'horizontal' and 'vertical' community interactions.

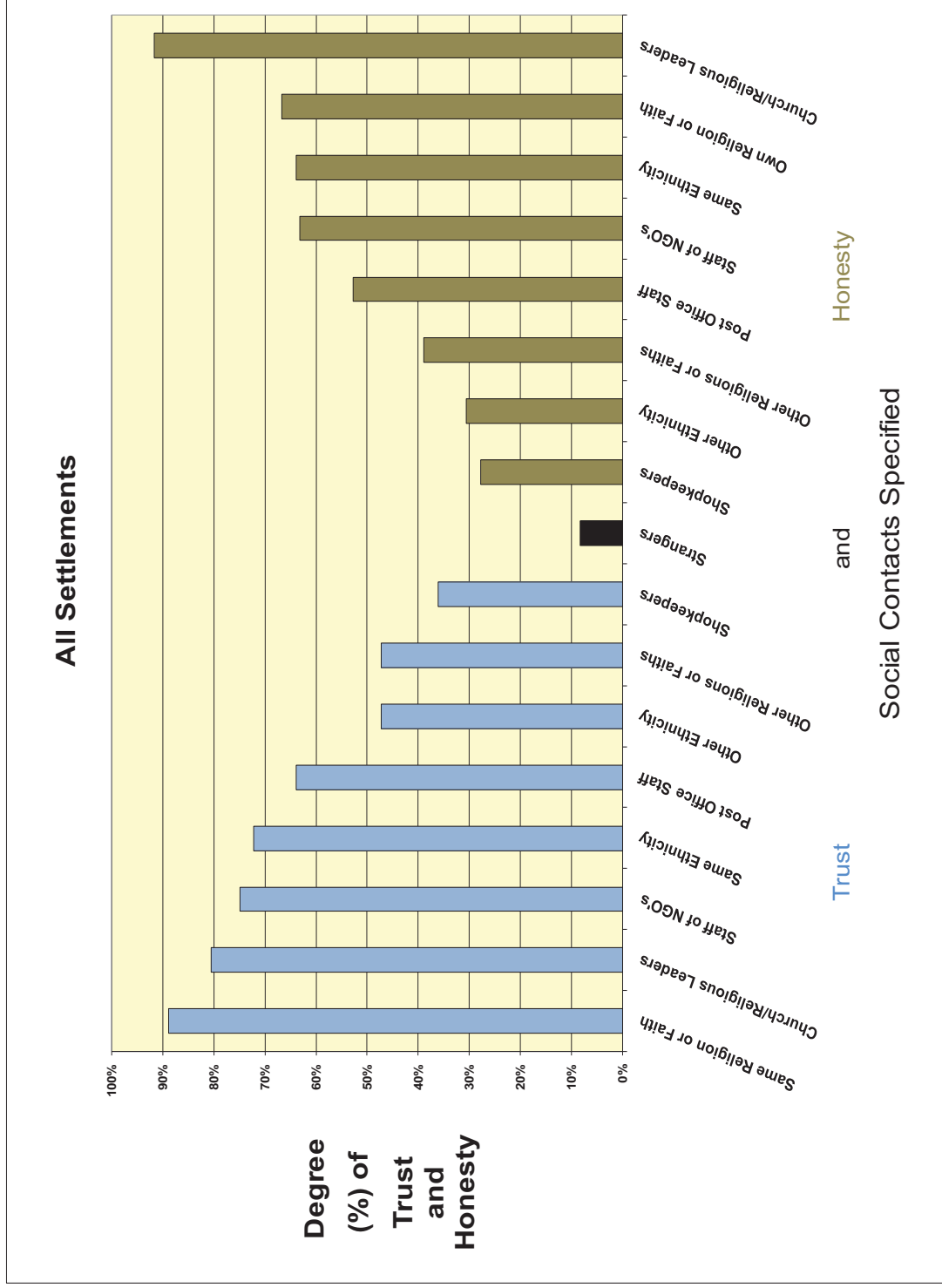
(a) Community Trust and Honesty Levels

The importance of trust and honesty in daily interactions with people are fundamental indicators for social cohesion. People were asked about levels of trust, and honesty in general dealings and also in relation to money matters, with people from within their community or neighbourhood with whom they may interact on a daily or weekly basis. To assist with a shared understanding about what was meant by the term 'trust', participants were prompted to evaluate if they felt able to rely or depend on individuals from the specified groups, for example whether neighbours would look after their house if they were not there or openly assist when in need, or could be trusted to manage community funds. A graph showing the degree of trust and honesty (percentage on the left-hand axis) conferred by the eighteen respondents across all three settlements for a variety of society groups is shown in Figure 7.1 on the following page.

To establish a benchmark for gauging the results participants were first asked whether most people in society could generally be trusted. The, majority of participants across all settlements agreed they could not. Less than twenty five percent or four of the 18 respondents said they trusted people they knew. This was only slightly higher than the level of trust associated to dealings with strangers: just 9% on average so only two out of the 18 respondents.

The graph shows that most people conferred the highest levels of trust on those: That had the same religion or faith (89% or 16 from the 18 household respondents surveyed); where leaders from their own religion (81% or 15 respondents); staff from NGOs (75% or 13-14 respondents); people from the same ethnic groups (72% or 13 respondents); and staff from the local post office (64% or 11-12 respondents). Less trusted but still significantly more trusted than strangers (at 8% or just 1 respondent who showed some trust in strangers) were: Other ethnic groups (47% or 8-9 respondents); other religious faiths (47%) and shopkeepers (36% or 6-7 respondents).

Figure 7.1 Horizontal Community Interactions: Perceptions about Trust and Honesty with Others



Participants' views on trust within communities showed most people were generally distrusting of fellow community members - below 40% trust levels. Across the three sites the lowest levels of trust occurred within the Nanuku community at less than 17%, (just 1 from the 6 household respondents surveyed) which was comparable to the benchmark levels indicated above. About 50% of Caubati Topline residents showed a moderate level of trust in their neighbours with the highest levels of trust found at Fiji Muslim League - over 80%, (5 respondents). This is probably due to the closeness of the *Kecisimani* neighbourhood where daily church activities marshalled their internal support networks. One Indo-Fijian participant from Nanuku commented that the "support networks and trust is strong among the Indian neighbourhood only" (Researcher's Notes, 2008). On the other hand a Caubati Topline participant commented that "while the spiritual group is active, you can trust people - otherwise after that [or when they have left] you cannot" (Researcher's Notes, 2008).

When asked if the level of trust over the last five years had improved, was worse, or stayed about the same, 50% of Nanuku residents said it was either the same. Thirty three percent said it was worse. At Fiji Muslim League, 50% of households were more definite about their declining levels of trust compared to 33%, (2 respondents) stating they were about the same. Both these settlements were in contrast to Caubati Topline where over 80% of participants agreed trust levels were better with only 17%, (1 respondent) saying they had decreased.

The strongest feelings about trust levels were toward other religious groups and other ethnic groups. The three people surveyed from the Indo-Fijian communities at Nanuku did not respond to this question. Only one out of six participants surveyed at Caubati Topline indicated they were trusting of other social groups. Fijians felt a little different about both social groups. Sixty three percent (all 3 from Nanuku but just 2 from Fiji Muslim League) responded they are trusting. The balance remained non-committal. One indication of the lack of trust levels between religious groups was the view of Hindi Indo-Fijians who claimed neighbouring [Christian] Fijians threw stones on the roof of their houses whenever they had prayer sessions or religious festivals (which involved music

and singing) (Researcher's Notes, 2008). For example, land security has created ethnic tensions. Indo-Fijians claimed they were made to feel of a "lower status than Christians" (in this context meaning Fijians) because, from their point of view, "Fijians will not let Indians grow flowers [next to their house] as they say this is not your land – the Fijians will over-night pull these plants out" (Researcher's Notes, 2008).

In gauging 'honesty', participants were asked to evaluate if they felt able to accept the actions of other individuals, as indicated in the groups specified, as truthful or fair and just. Honesty was considered for example, to represent community affairs impartially, to respect others' needs and rights or not to cheat on their fellow neighbours. To measure the 'relativity of trust levels' the participants' choices accorded to each social contact group specified, those choices were compared with the trust level they associated with "strangers", assuming this group would be the least trusted (which was in all cases). One interesting finding was the level of honesty credited to church or Christian religious leaders, (92% or 16-17 respondents) as opposed to the trust level afforded to other religious faiths, (39% or 7 respondents). The groups considered the least honest were other ethnic groups, (31% or 6 respondents) and shopkeepers, (28% or 5 respondents).

The key difference concerning honesty between communities was that, Indo-Fijians at Nanuku held the strongest feelings regarding the perceived lack of honesty of individuals from 'other religious groups' and 'other ethnic groups'. From the nine people surveyed, no-one responded "honest", reflecting similar findings of their perceptions of trustworthiness with these groups mentioned earlier. On the other hand, Fijian households responded a little more reservedly about the honesty levels of 'other ethnic groups' with 33% responding 'honest' (3 of 9 surveyed from both Nanuku and also Fiji Muslim League). But the balance either remained non-committal (33%) or chose 'dishonest' (33%) possibly indicating an overall negative trend. Fijian households perceptions about the honesty of 'other religious groups' was higher with 2 of the 3 surveyed from Nanuku (66%) responding 'honest' but at Fiji Muslim League the majority were non-committal, (5 of the 6 households taking part in the survey).

The cultural differences of Fijians to Indo-Fijians in the approach to answering these sensitive questions were evident. Fijians were polite in their responses, not wanting to voice negative feelings about others, thought to be due to their closely held norms of respecting others and showing dissent by silence, (refer Chapter 4, Section 4.4.2). Fijian's use of the 'non-committal' choice was perhaps the polite way of indicating that they had doubts about "honesty levels" of Indo-Fijians but did not wish to appear impolite by acknowledging it. In contrast Indo-Fijians were openly critical about others' behaviours, (refer Chapter 4, Section 4.4.3). Indo-Fijians provided several examples of Fijian behaviours that caused friction among ethnic neighbours. At Nanuku some Indo-Fijians complained they had contributed financially over the past twenty years to initiatives organised by Fijian residents in the belief this was for the wider communities' benefit only later (they claimed) to find the fundraising was actually oriented more toward supporting Fijian neighbourhood activities and improvements and that the management of funds was not transparent (Researcher's Notes, 2008). Some also claimed that Fijians used stand-over tactics to get what they wanted or to intimidate Indo-Fijians: "When you are smoking, they [will] come and stand there near you until you give them one or if you are drinking, until you invite them in. If you don't give them the cigarette or invite [them] in you will be threatened." Also "...they [will] extort money from us by coming and demanding money – roughly every 3 months – \$20 is usually enough for them to go away" (Researcher's Notes, 2008). The differences in the amount of negative information given by each ethnic group was noticeable . Indo-Fijians freely disclosed criticisms of Fijians whereas Fijians were not explicit with information that was critical of another ethnic group. This was not the only area where ethnic differences in response patterns showed.

(b) Belonging and Togetherness

The aim here was to gauge the degree of community cohesion as well as their connectedness to external organisations. People were asked about how strong they thought the feelings of 'togetherness' or 'closeness' was within their community or neighbourhood. Sixty one percent of all the 18 households surveyed across the three settlements indicated they either felt 'very close' or 'somewhat close' with only 23% stating they felt 'somewhat distant' or 'very

distant'. The strongest feelings of togetherness was from Fiji Muslim League (67%) and Caubati Topline (83%) while the integrated community of Nanuku only rated 33% with half the residents saying they were neither distant nor close. A Nanuku resident, commenting on the proximity of their neighbourhood to Fijians said, "support networks are strong among the Indian neighbourhood only" while a Fijian resident stated, "Most Indo-Fijians say they [sic] too busy and can't come down to solve these problems" referring to community issues (Researcher's Notes, 2008). A Caubati Topline resident summed up the lack of cohesion that the above findings indicated between the two ethnic neighbourhood groups claiming, "in terms of closeness between Indo-Fijians, that is somewhat close but between Indo-Fijians and Fijians, then that is very distant" (Researcher's Notes, 2008).

Social Exclusion

Householders surveyed were asked whether any people in the community/neighbourhood who were excluded access to any essential services or from participating in community activities. Of the 13 who responded 42% indicated over half were excluded in some way and a further 30% indicated less than half their community were excluded. Four of those respondents, 30%, said they were among those who were excluded. When asked about the reasons for their exclusion, 40% put exclusion down to their ethnicity, 20% because of their religious beliefs and 20% felt it was because they were poor.

Settlers from both Nanuku and Caubati Topine believed they were excluded from community activities due to ethnicity following the recent introduction of a social justice and empowerment programme for squatter communities, by a Suva-based NGO. This initiative was targeted at squatter settlements in the Suva-Nausori corridor and based on the premise that establishing a community savings scheme would develop trust within the community and foster cohesiveness. The concept had gained momentum and developed into a 'social network' involving a number of other squatter settlements. However, some from the Nanuku Indo-Fijian neighbourhoods claimed their involvement had been marginalized because the first point of contact for this NGO was via the Fijian community groups rather than through representatives from both ethnic groups.

One Fijian neighbourhood leader maintained that since one of the Indo-Fijian families was on the Community Committee savings scheme, they should have informed the other families (Researcher's Notes, 2008). Another Fijian household who had been involved at the start of this initiative agreed the organisational aspects of the network could improve giving the example of their own sub-group, dealing with community security, being currently inactive. They attributed this to poor leadership and felt it the responsibility of one or two of the members involved to visit the others so a new leader could be chosen (Researcher's Notes, 2008).

Indo-Fijians overall still attributed their exclusion from general community activities to differences in ethnicity and religious orientation. One resident summed up the situation by stating: "they [Fijians] sabotage any collective effort among [our neighbourhood] as they are jealous of the prolonged commitment we demonstrate but they still expect us to contribute to theirs" (Researcher's Notes, 2008, p.3). This series of observations on horizontal interactions (including belonging and togetherness) confirm there is closeness of residents within ethnic neighbourhoods but disparities between the ethnic groups. This is commonly manifested through religious and ethnic intolerances, primarily triggered by the lack of trust and honesty each has in the others' motivations for social exchange. This disparity between ethnic groups is the **seventh** key finding; supporting similar findings earlier about the narrow social support networks relied upon (refer Chapter 6, Section 2.5).

(c) Willingness to Help

People were then asked about how willing people were to help in their community or neighbourhood, to help each other or cooperate with others by contributing time toward shared physical needs or projects, such as repairing a road or maintaining a community centre. Participants agreed that most people from the three sites – more than 60% were generally willing to help neighbours out if requested with the highest levels coming from Fiji Muslim League (>80%) and Nanuku (50%). Most respondents indicated they preferred to donate time rather than money for such projects. Fijians listed involvement in community projects such as church related activities (repairs and maintenance, visiting less

fortunate) followed by community fundraisers and helping neighbours with their house repairs. Indo-Fijians mainly supported neighbourhood or community wide activities like fundraisers. These activities were foremost followed by helping neighbours to build or repair their houses, and by caring for the less fortunate. The willingness of Indo-Fijians to assist Fijians at the Nanuku settlement was declining with two thirds saying they were unwilling to help.

When asked about whether people, who do not participate in community activities, will be criticised or sanctioned, approximately 56% across all settlements indicated this would be unlikely (7 stating 'very unlikely' and 3 'somewhat unlikely'). These people were predominantly Indo-Fijians, 67% of Caubati Topline respondents (4 out of the 6 surveyed) and 100% from Nanuku (all 3 surveyed). In contrast only 33% or three of the nine Fijian participants believed people were 'somewhat unlikely' to be criticised indicating the majority would be critical of others not participating which may be linked to cultural expectations about collectiveness. This observation about the relative willingness of community members to contribute resources toward shared needs is considered the eighth example of potentially positive or negative impacts on community dynamics.

(d) Summary

While it was clear that most identified strongly with their settlement or locality and were willing to donate time toward shared needs, differences were highlighted in ethnic and religious orientation as the key issues that caused tensions between people living in these communities. These differences in ethnic and religious orientation manifested in the apparent lack of trust within neighbourhoods, especially at the integrated community Nanuku, as well as the overt lack of trust and suspicions about honesty between religious and/or ethnic social groups. Whereas Caubati Topline showed reasonable degrees of connectedness, Fiji Muslim League and Nanuku proportionately seemed less cohesive communities. These suspicions over honesty, lack of trust and differences in ethnic and religious orientation combine to form a barrier toward building cohesion communities and empowerment of communities.

7.2.1.2 Objective Components of Horizontal Community Interactions

This Section represents the findings from a review of results for Questions 1.17-1.18, (refer to Appendix 3).

Objective components of horizontal interactions are the actions people take to support others within the community. Communities that have strong feelings of togetherness and solidarity (subjective aspect) are more likely to volunteer some of their time as a contribution toward achieving community objectives or to give money (donations) for group activities (objective aspect of horizontal connectivity). These contributions are also indicators of social cohesion (Lev-Weisel, 2003, p. 336). This section will first consider and compare the levels of volunteerism between the settlements and later assess the levels of social giving relative to household income levels in order to determine the significance of these indicators to social cohesion within these settlements.

(a) Volunteerism

People were asked to estimate the number of days of voluntary work their household donated to each of the three prioritised groups. These results are presented in Adult Equivalent Units (AEU) to account for children and adults in a standardised way for comparative analysis between households.⁶⁹ This measure will be used throughout this paper where a standardised approach is required to highlight differences between household unit sizes and settlements and is determined as follows:

$$AEU = (0.5 \times c) + ((0.75 \times a) + 0.25)$$

Where a = adults and c = children where children are regarded as <16 years of age. Thus an average household of 5 adults = 4 adult equivalent units (AEU) or A family of two adults with one child = 2.25 adult equivalent units (AEU) (Abbot, 2006, p. 8)

⁶⁹ Refer to Chapter 5, Section 5.3.2.4 the Methodological Framework for an explanation of this term.

The following Table 7.1 below summarises the comparative results between settlements and by ethnicity in total time (AEU days/year). The percentage voluntary time spent supporting religious/faith-based groups (to total time) is provided separately to highlight what demand this group presented on peoples time in contrast to others. To determine the ethnic split the responses from both Indo-Fijians and Fijians in Nanuku were added to the relevant cohort at Caubati Topline (Indo-Fijian) or Fiji Muslim League (Fijian).

Table 7.1 Community Volunteering: Participation Levels by Settlement

| Volunteering within Community Groups [Measured in time (AEU days/year) and with Faith Related Contributions as (%) of that time] | | | | | | | | |
|--|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| By Ethnicity & Settlement (listed below) (to the right) | Average for ALL | | Nan | | CCT | | FML | |
| | Time in AEU (days/yr) | Faith Related (%) | Time in AEU (days/yr) | Faith Related (%) | Time in AEU (days/yr) | Faith Related (%) | Time in AEU (days/yr) | Faith Related (%) |
| Indigenous Fijian Groups | 7.0 | 29% | 9.5 | 22% | na | na | 6.1 | 32% |
| Indo-Fijian Groups | 7.5 | 54% | 9.1 | 41% | 7.4 | 60% | na | na |
| Overall Averages | 7.3 | 41% | 9.3 | 32% | 7.4 | 60% | 6.1 | 32% |
| Converted to Total Average Days per Household per Year | 20.6 | | 24.2 | | 22.6 | | 14.9 | |

Approximately 21 days per household or 7.3 AEU days work per year were contributed voluntarily per household. Of that time just under half (41%) was dedicated to religious groups. On average Indo-Fijians (with 7.5 AEU) contributed more than Fijians (7.0 AEU) in terms of time but interestingly more of their time was apportioned to religious groups (54% compared to 29%). For Nanuku, however, there was a reverse trend in that Fijians at 9.5 AEU/household contributed more than the Indo-Fijians at 9.1 AEU/household but the latter still contributed more time toward religious groups at 41% compared to 22% for Fijians.

Other differences between settlements, Caubati Topline and Nanuku were that the highest contributors spent annually 23 days and 24 days per household respectively compared to only 15 days for Fiji Muslim League. Caubati Topline were also the highest contributors to religious groups accounting for 60% of

total voluntary time compared to the integrated Nanuku community and Fiji Muslim League who both contributed less at 32%.

Other Groups that were well supported with voluntary time were community or neighbourhood groups at both Nanuku and Caubati Topline (23% and 25% respectively) compared to only 5% at Fiji Muslim League. Indo-Fijians overall were the largest contributors of time to community or neighbourhood groups at Nanuku making up 21% of that community total. Youth Groups were the next most supported particularly for Fiji Muslim League at 49% and Caubati Topline at 21% whereas for Nanuku the third largest recipient of voluntary time was the microfinance group at 43%.

(b) Social Giving

People were also asked to estimate the amount of money or goods in dollar terms their household donated to each of the three groups they nominated as the most important to them. Extended family social obligations such as weddings or funerals were not included as part of this analysis. While these are important occasions and where significant monetary and material contributions are made for both ethnic groups, these events were not considered as part of this research as they occur outside the bounds of community- lead structures. The results are summarised in Table 7.2 below, alongside the actual household income per week for relativity.

Table 7.2 Social Donations: Household Levels by Settlement

| Social Obligations per Household to Community Groups | | | | | | | | [Measured as | |
|---|---------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|--|
| weekly donations (\$/week) and with Faith Related Contributions as (%) of that donation amount] | | | | | | | | | |
| By Ethnicity & Settlement (listed below) (to the right) | Average for ALL | | Nan | | CCT | | FML | | |
| | Donations (\$/week) | Faith Related (%) | Donations (\$/week) | Faith Related (%) | Donations (\$/week) | Faith Related (%) | Donations (\$/week) | Faith Related (%) | |
| Indigenous Fijian Groups | \$ 8.73 | 46% | \$ 11.38 | 35% | na | na | \$ 7.40 | 52% | |
| Indo-Fijian Groups | \$ 9.36 | 68% | \$ 6.52 | 58% | \$ 10.79 | 73% | na | na | |
| Overall Averages | \$ 9.05 | 58% | \$ 8.95 | 49% | \$ 10.79 | 73% | \$ 7.40 | 52% | |
| Compared to Actual Household Income per Week | \$ 161.14 | | \$ 124.17 | | \$ 205.42 | | \$ 153.83 | | |

This table shows that approximately \$9 per household or 6% of the weekly income was donated, with 58% of that going to religious groups. Interestingly, Indo-Fijians contributed the most on average, but this figure was influenced by those living at Caubati Topline who donated significantly more than the average (about \$11/week/household), directing 73% to religious groups and 18% to community groups. Nanuku donated on par with the average at 7% of their income, directing 49% to religious groups and 53% to community groups.

Fijians donated almost double amounts per household compared to the Indo-Fijian neighbourhood but with less money in percentage terms going to religious groups. This result was surprising. Fiji Muslim League contributed least at 5% of their income with 52% to religious groups and 41% to youth groups.

(d) Summary

It is a commonly held impression that Fijians contribute more to the wider family unit and church through social obligations than do Indo-Fijians as argued by a range of scholars such as Abbott (2006, p. 32); Devi, (2006, p. 3); Kingi, (2006, p. 14) and Narcey (2006, p. 80).⁷⁰ Thus, it was expected at the start of this research that results would confirm this impression as well as quantify its relative significance. However, the opposite was found to be apparent - Indo-Fijians contributed more in time and money - in this survey of eighteen households across three settlements. Despite this unexpected result showing Indo-Fijians contributing a greater share of time and money to social and church, it is also surprising that the level of social giving from people who are arguably of the poorer sections of society was relatively high at an average of 6% of the total weekly income. The effect of these social donations on household incomes will be discussed further in Section 7.3.3., but for now these two aspects of horizontal interactions are highlighted as the **ninth** and **tenth** examples of potentially positive or negative impacts on community dynamics.

⁷⁰ Refer also to Section 4.5 for an explanation of the significance of social obligations within the context of Fijian social structures.

7.2.2 Vertical Community Interactions

Vertical community interactions are the external linkages people have with others outside their community in positions of power. For example those located at local government level, in public agencies or non-government organisations or political parties who may be vital sources of information or services on matters that may affect the community. This section will consider aspects of community connectedness to external agents from each settlement in two ways. Firstly 'subjective' components of vertical interaction will be described, utilising as indicators community confidence in socio-political institutions will be discussed (Chan et al., 2006, p. 294). Then secondly, the 'objective' components (or people's behavioural manifestations) which primarily are the levels of civic activity within the community will be shown, and in this case the indicators include sources of information about local, national and global events (Chan et al., 2006, p. 293-4).

7.2.2.1 Subjective Components of Vertical Community Interactions

This Section represents the findings from a review of results for Questions 2.3 and 4.15, (refer to Appendix 3).

Subjective vertical interactions (people's state of mind) will be assessed by considering the societal norms: trust and honesty, but this time toward people who are in positions of power in society, considered by Stoutland (1999) to include the national level policy makers, government departments and business corporations and making up those at Level 3 in his community development framework.⁷¹ Those in positions of power include various professions (nurses, doctors or teachers) or representing public institutions (e.g. local government, police or judges). The comparative analysis for trust and honesty levels in these positions are summarised in Figure 7.2 below, constructed in the same way as Figure 7.1 that summarised horizontal interactions.⁷² The graph again shows the degree of trust and honesty (percentage on the left-hand axis) conferred by

⁷¹ These organisations operate within society at a high level where community groups are considered at the bottom of the pyramid on Level Zero according to Stoutland (1999). Refer Chapter 2, Section 2.4.3 for more on this community development framework.

⁷² Refer Section 7.2.1.1 earlier in this Chapter.

the eighteen respondents across all three settlements for the variety of society groups specified. The benchmark here was again dealings with 'Strangers'. Only 8% of participants across all settlements indicated that they found 'Strangers' trustworthy or honest.

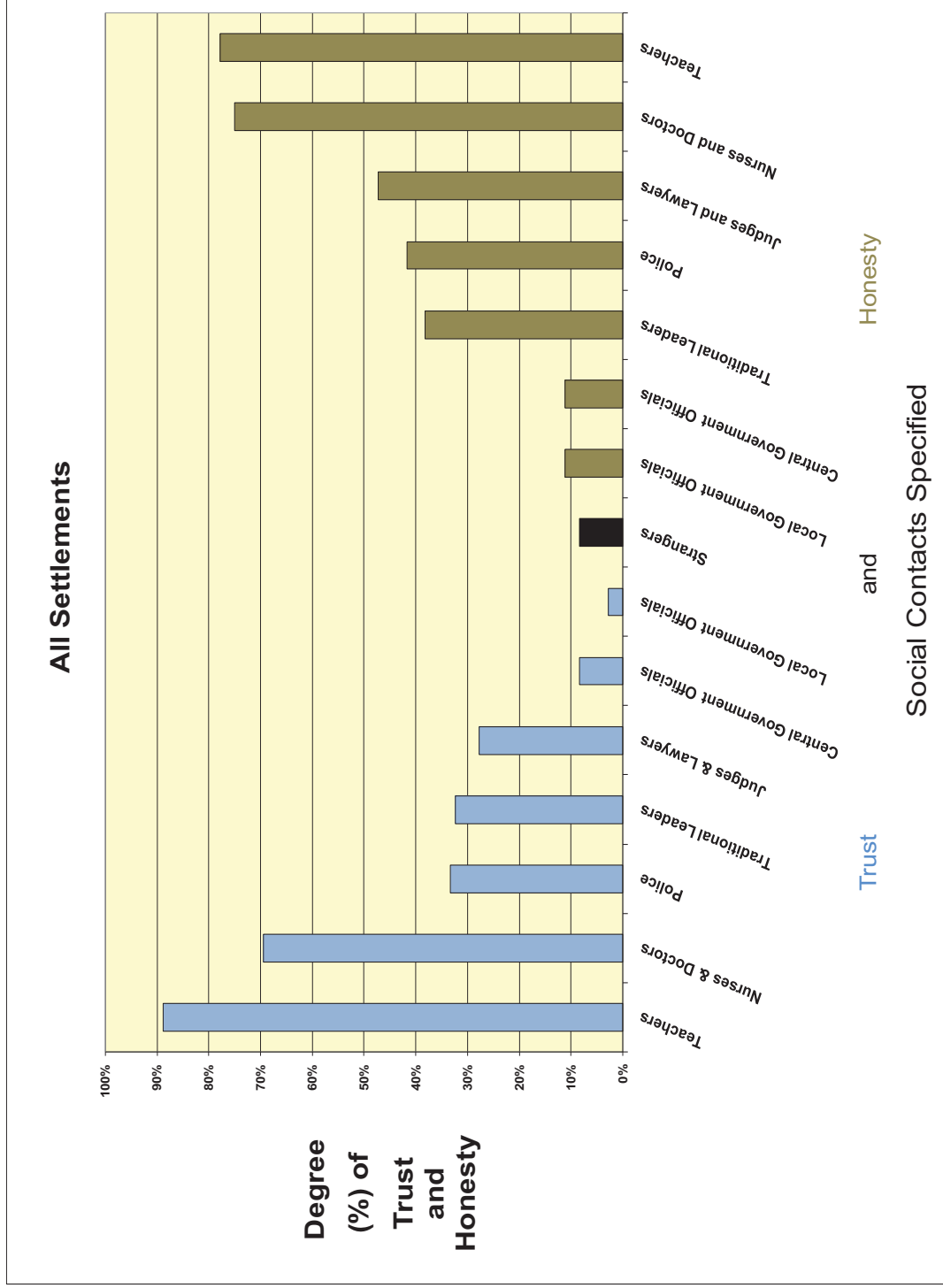
(a) Vertical Levels of Trust for People in Positions of Authority

As Figure 7.2 on the following page shows, people in positions of power that were conferred the highest levels of trust were teachers, (88% or 16 respondents) and nurses and doctors, (69% or 12 respondents). Judges and lawyers (28% or 5 respondents), police (33% or 6 respondents) and traditional leaders (32%) were a selection who were distinctly less trusted, and the lowest levels of trust were toward government officials (both at around 8% or less) on a par with the benchmark group, strangers (at 8% or just 1 respondent).

There were differences between the two ethnic groups about perceptions of trust. The lowest levels of trust indicated from Indo-Fijians were toward the police and the legal profession (at just 11% or just 1 of the 9 Indo-Fijian respondents) with no-one from Nanuku and only 1 of the 6 households from Caubati Topline rating police trustworthy. Fiji Muslim League also had a low trust level for police and judges and lawyers (at 33% each or 2 respondents) but was evenly divided over traditional leaders.⁷³ The latter was in contrast to both Nanuku, (at just 16% or 1 respondent) and Caubati Topline, (at 20% or 1-2 respondents) who by majority held traditional leaders at low levels of trustworthiness.

⁷³ This term is used to describe the indigenous chiefly system and in particular the Great Council of [Fijian] Chiefs. For an explanation on the significance of the traditional chiefly system in Fijian governance structures refer to Section 5.2.1.

Figure 7.2 Vertical Community Interactions: Perceptions about Trust and Honesty with Institutions



To illustrate the low levels of trust people held of those in positions of governance, one respondent echoed the sentiments of most stating that: “We are squatters so we are excluded from many mainstream Government services. Politicians come at election time, promise much but never deliver. So we feel used for voting purposes” (Researcher’s Notes, 2008). Similar sentiments were held about Judges and Lawyers, “[They] tell lies” and the Police, “They are too busy [to care]” (p. 3). Others commented that they had contacted the Consumer Council about the rental conditions they were subjected to but they never replied (p. 11). These experiences all reinforcing feelings of isolation from mainstream society, summed up by another settler who said, “Some officials refer to us as ‘swamp dwellers’ which makes us feel very sad inside and neglected” (p. 3).

(b) Vertical Levels of Honesty for People in Positions of Authority

Similar trends were found with assessments of honesty for the different types of people who hold positions of power in society, as for trust levels. People who were in positions of power that conferred the lowest levels of honesty were government officials, (at 11% or 2 respondents). This low trust level was almost on a par with strangers. The next lowest grouping was perceptions of honesty of traditional leaders, (38% or 7 respondents), police (42% or 7-8 respondents) and judges and lawyers, (47% or 8-9 respondents), all at higher levels than that conferred upon them for trust. Those accorded the most honest were nurses and doctors (75% or 13 respondents) and teachers, (78% or 14 respondents out of the 18 households surveyed).

Considering the differences between the ethnic groups about perceptions of honesty, the lowest ratings were among Indo-Fijians for the police (11% representing just one of the nine Indo-Fijian respondents), traditional leaders (26% or 2 respondents) and judges and lawyers (33% or 3 respondents). Significantly no Indo-Fijian householders from Nanuku rated the police or traditional leaders as honest. As indicated above in the trust level assessment, this is significant given that both the police force and the Great Council of Chiefs

(the traditional leaders) are recognised as Fijian institutions.⁷⁴ The recognition of police and Great Council of Chiefs as Fijian institutions is possibly the reason why Fijians accorded higher ratings for honesty with Police (56%), traditional leaders (44% or 4 respondents) and judges and lawyers (44%) which demonstrate their greater comfort in the justice system.

(c) Summary of Subjective Components of Vertical Connectivity

All settlements accorded low levels of trust and honesty to people in authoritative positions, including those in public office, the law and justice sector, traditional positions of leadership including the clergy. The lack of confidence in society's policy makers demonstrated a low level of connectivity to a key source of information, advice and influence on settler's future as urban residents, (in terms of community security, local regulatory and planning laws and consents procedures). The low levels of contact and trust accorded in these institutional representatives' underscores the earlier findings about the restricted reach of squatter settlers who rely predominantly on their own resources for dealing with community affairs, confirming an underlying assumption for this thesis.

7.2.2.2 Objective Components of Vertical Community Interactions

This Section represents the findings from a review of results for Questions 4.12-4.14, (refer to Appendix 3).

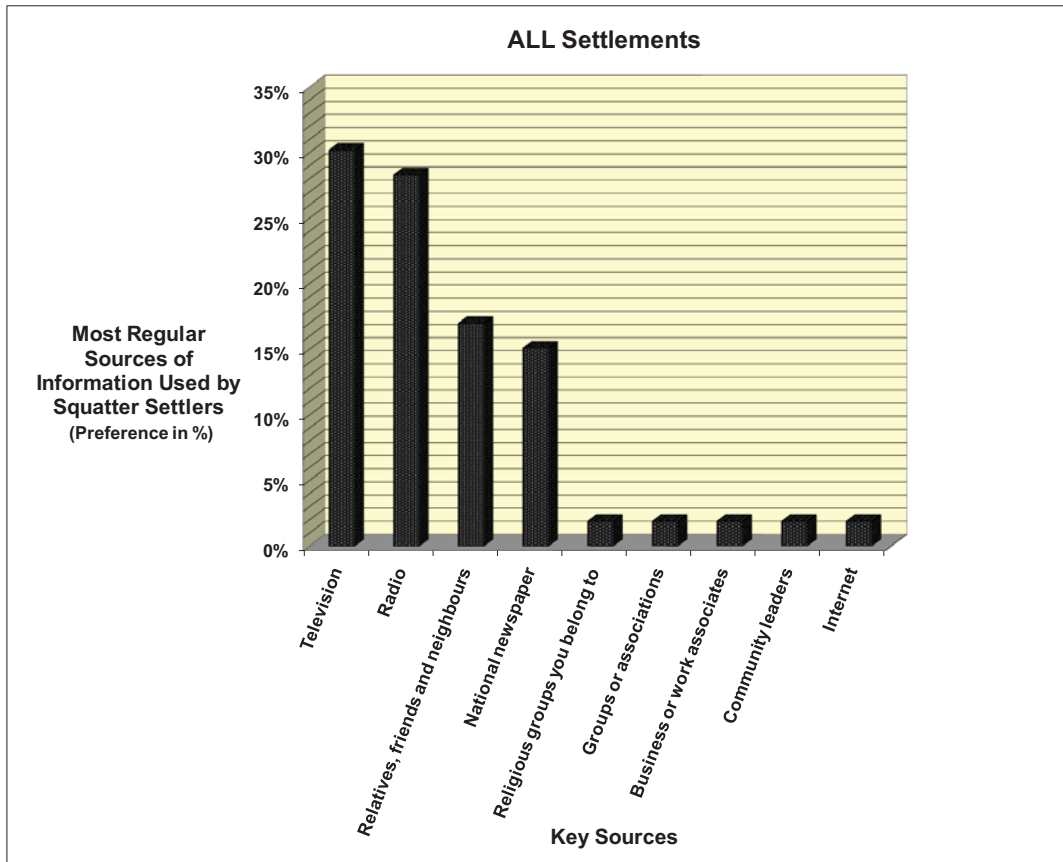
This subsection reviews the objective aspects (behavioural manifestations) of vertical community interactions by examining how householders mobilise social capital resources through collective political activity and external agents. The indicators were awareness levels about local, national and global issues that may influence settlers' livelihood choices and the linkages they may have to state institutions (or in other words the level of civic activity).

⁷⁴ The ethnicity of the national police force is dominated by Fijians at 67% to 33% Indo-Fijians and in terms of gender, is a predominantly male domain at 88% to 12% female. The Republic of Fiji Military Force (RFMF) is a Fijian institution with less than 10% Indo-Fijian representation (Walsh, 2006, p. 327).

(a) Information and Communication

People were first asked to indicate how connected they were with outside agents (friends, family or private sector). They were then asked about what the three most important sources of information were to them for keeping in touch with issues that could impact on them such as low cost housing/rental availability, water or other service delivery, jobs and family planning. The responses are summarised in Figure 7.3 below and show that the most important sources of information for people was television, radio, and discussions with relatives, friends or neighbours followed by the national newspapers. The amount of involvement in the wider community is considered next.

Figure 7.3 Vertical Community Interactions: Information and Communications



(b) Political participation

People were asked how often people in their community or neighbourhood had gathered to jointly approach government officials or political leaders in the last year to ask for something benefiting the community and whether these were successful or not. Approximately 61% said they had never taken such action while 33% indicated they had done this once but without success. More than 45% had attended a community or neighbourhood meeting, with about a quarter complaining to police on one or more occasions. Less than 16% had met politicians when they visited around national election time. Participants generally had strong views about politicians, indicating they only show concern over the problems they face prior to an election but never following through after they get into power, with one claiming: “Politicians only come at elections [time], promise to fix the power [electricity] then when they get the seat they never care” (Researcher’s Notes, 2008). The low involvement of residents in the wider community adds to the isolation of squatters from mainstream life but the fact that most respondents face similar experiences is an unlikely form of community cohesion.

(c) Summary

While there were high levels of confidence in key professionals with whom most in society interact for social reasons (for example with nurses, doctors and teachers), overall there was a lack of confidence in the quality of leadership of public institutions, politicians, traditional leaders and the justice system. This lack of trust with public leadership and institutions is a concern given that these are considered a key foundation in any democratic society (Walsh, 2006, p. 327). In other words, this lack of credible vertical connectivity can be regarded as the eleventh example of where a lack of social networking can impact individual and/or community empowerment processes.

7.3 Household Poverty Levels

This Section represents the findings from a review of results for Questions 1.18-1.20 and 4.5-4.7, (refer to Appendix 3).

The previous sections have concentrated on analysing householder's willingness to help each other, to cooperate over common issues and to exploit their established connections with outside agents to collectively address the needs of the community. The previous Chapter had already examined community organisational ability, assumed to underpin people's capability to interact socially and provide pathways for linkages to outside help. A key finding from that analysis was the general lack of benefits people perceived they were gaining out of their involvement in the three groups prioritised most important to community life. This was one way to gauge what impact civic and community cooperative behaviour may be having on the households surveyed in terms of improvements or constraints to householders. Another way was to quantitatively assess what, if any, tangible benefits the existing level of civic activity produced in terms changes to householder's incomes or livelihood choices.

This section will analyse information gained from survey questions about the household weekly income and expenditure and the choices people had to make regarding managing these matters, referred to as a 'living standards measurement'.⁷⁵ There are three areas of concern to consider in assessing income security and livelihood choices. The first is whether families have enough income to meet their weekly nutritional requirements. If not they are considered to be living below the 'food poverty line' or in 'absolute poverty'. The second, is whether people's weekly income was sufficient to cover both food and non-food essentials, required for a basic standard of living. This is termed the 'basic needs poverty line'. Thirdly, whether householders were experiencing periods of 'hardship,' (termed 'relative poverty') where they have inadequate regular incomes and so constantly make choices between competing needs, be it daily food requirements or other non-food basic needs like paying school fees or club memberships. These standard measures of poverty could then be compared to national poverty ratings as the benchmark for quality of life measures.⁷⁶ Householders were then questioned about their voluntary monetary commitments to the church or faith-based groups to gauge the level

⁷⁵ Refer Chapter 5, Section 5.3.2.4 and for a full description of this process.

⁷⁶ National poverty ratings are defined in Section 4.3 in the context of Fiji and urban settlements.

of weekly social giving and what impact that may have on livelihood choices. Lastly, in order to understand the levels of hardship that may be faced by some people, questions were asked about the choices they have to make when there is not enough income to cover their weekly food and basic needs requirements.

Food Security Status of Households

To accurately determine these measures of poverty across settlements it was necessary to complete a series of food and income security calculations.⁷⁷ The first step was to assess the level householder's relative food security. There are two elements involved in the standard calculation to verify the minimum amount of weekly income needed to purchase and prepare a fully nutritional meal for each family (a) establishing the weekly dietary requirements for Fijian, and separately, Indo-Fijian households, termed the minimum 'basket of food' requirements per household⁷⁸; and (b) costing the non-food items considered necessary in order to consume the food. This derives what is called the Food Security Threshold (FST) or dollar amount of food and materials needed to satisfy weekly dietary requirements per family unit (or household). To standardise this measure for comparative purposes between households, the actual weekly household income is divided by the FST and presented as an index figure between zero and one. The result is the Food Security Index (FSI). Table 7.3 (page following) presents the gross FSI for each household in ascending order for gross weekly incomes. It also summarises the other key poverty assessment figures, food security and income security thresholds for urban squatters, the income security index and what affect social giving has on these, presented as net figures for the ISI and FSI. The following paragraphs will explain further the significance of this information as presented in the table.

⁷⁷ Refer Footnote 10 and for a full explanation of the calculations involved, refer to Appendix 5.

⁷⁸ Refer Appendix 5 and 6 for the application of this requirement for determining food security.

Table 7.3 Impact of Social Obligations on Household Income and Food Security by Settlement

| Poverty Indices (per Household) | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|---------|---------------------------|---------|--------------------------------------|
| Security Threshold Term | Ethnicity | Settlement By Household | Income (FJ\$/week) | | Income Security Index (ISI) | | Food Security Index (FSI) | | Security Threshold Value (FJ\$/week) |
| | | | Gross Income | Net of Social Obligations | Gross ISI | Net ISI | Gross FSI | Net FSI | |
| Usq FST | Fijian | Nan01 | \$40 | \$27 | 0.6 | 0.4 | 0.8 | 0.5 | \$89 |
| | Fijian | FML03 Kc | \$70 | \$63 | 0.4 | 0.3 | 0.5 | 0.5 | |
| | Indo-Fj | CCT1 | \$90 | \$88 | 0.8 | 0.8 | 1.0 | 1.0 | |
| | Indo-Fj | CCT4 | \$90 | \$84 | 0.8 | 0.7 | 1.0 | 0.9 | |
| | Indo-Fj | Nan03 | \$90 | \$86 | 0.7 | 0.6 | 0.9 | 0.8 | |
| | Indo-Fj | Nan06 | \$90 | \$86 | 0.9 | 0.8 | 1.1 | 1.1 | |
| Usq IST | Fijian | FML06 | \$98 | \$96 | 1.9 | 1.9 | 2.7 | 2.6 | \$119 |
| | Fijian | FML02 Kc | \$105 | \$89 | 1.5 | 1.2 | 2.0 | 1.7 | |
| Usq BNPL | Indo-Fj | CCT6 | \$135 | \$126 | 1.8 | 1.7 | 2.4 | 2.2 | \$191 |
| | Fijian | Nan02 | \$160 | \$154 | 0.9 | 0.9 | 1.3 | 1.2 | |
| | Fijian | FML05 | \$180 | \$180 | 2.2 | 2.2 | 3.1 | 3.1 | |
| | Fijian | Nan05 | \$180 | \$165 | 1.4 | 1.2 | 1.9 | 1.7 | |
| | Indo-Fj | Nan04 | \$185 | \$173 | 1.4 | 1.3 | 1.8 | 1.6 | |
| | Fijian | FML01 Kc | \$200 | \$188 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.4 | 1.3 | |
| | Indo-Fj | CCT2 | \$200 | \$193 | 2.1 | 2.1 | 2.7 | 2.6 | |
| | Fijian | FML04 | \$270 | \$263 | 3.3 | 3.2 | 4.6 | 4.5 | |
| | Indo-Fj | CCT5 | \$318 | \$307 | 2.8 | 2.7 | 3.6 | 3.4 | |
| | Indo-Fj | CCT3 | \$400 | \$370 | 1.8 | 1.7 | 2.3 | 2.2 | |

Source: The various calculations are based on standard poverty analysis formulas obtained from Kurusiga, Kado & Qoloni, (2006); Abbot, (2008) and Narsey, (2008) and the baseline figures for each household were obtained from the survey.

Households whose FSI ratio is equal to or below 1.0 are considered living in absolute poverty and are constantly facing hardship. In the assessment of this research those with an index in the range of 1.1-1.6 are considered to be experiencing only periods of hardship so living in relative poverty. If the FSI ratio was between 1.7-2.0 the household would be considered food secure but remain vulnerable to falling into poverty if exposed to a crisis situation, like demanding family obligations (for example weddings, funerals) or adverse events (for example affects of cyclones) or other such crises (for example death of a bread winner). Above a value of 2.0 the household livelihood is considered

food secure and able to comfortably manage such shocks. This index partitioning also holds for the results of calculations for the income security ration (ISI) presented later.

Each household code is provided in Table 7.3 to identify where the family is from, (thus 'FML01' represents Household 1 from Fiji Muslim League; while 'CCT' represents Caubati Topline and 'Nan' Nanuku), their ethnicity and which settlement neighbourhood they are from, (for example Kc represents the *Kecisimani* neighbourhood in Fiji Muslim League). Interpreting the data presented for each household, the indices numbers in red represent those households that are on or below the poverty line – the poorest of the poor in fact. Noticeable is the 28% (5 households) who are 'food insecure' or living in absolute poverty, (with FSI below 1.0). The households in the black are vulnerable to poverty, either experiencing regular hardship (index below 1.6) or who may fall into poverty as a result of a crisis situation (those >2.0) due to a major family obligation or affected by external events like a cyclone or political upheaval. A further 33% (6 households) were therefore living in relative poverty. The households in blue (7) represent those considered living above the food poverty line, representing 39% of those surveyed.

Income Security Status of Households

The second step in determining poverty levels is to measure the level of household income security. This index is based on the family average weekly income figure and compared to the national Urban Squatter Basic Needs Poverty Line (Usq BNPL) figure for urban squatter communities. The gross ISI for each household is also presented in Table 7.3, in ascending order for weekly household incomes. Each arbitrary poverty standard is indicated by the use of a single horizontal line along with the Fiji dollar values for each of those key calculations in the column at the right.

The Usq BNPL is the benchmark for measuring poverty levels the 'urban squatter' context and defined as "the monetary value of a minimum cost of living" (Bainimarama, 2008, p. 13). These figures illustrate a key constraint faced by these householders regarding their ability to fund improvements for

and sought after by community groups. As can be seen by the horizontal line representing the Usq BNPL, the level of poverty within these settlements was is high at 66% of households (12 from the 18 surveyed) living below this arbitrary poverty standard. This level of poverty is considerably worse than the national figure of 40% for squatter settlements and is considered the twelfth constraint to potential community empowerment processes to be highlighted in these findings (Mohanty, 2006, p. 2).⁷⁹ However this figure does not represent the actual income security threshold (IST) for each household. To construct the IST a complex calculation is required and for the purposes of this study the methodology utilised by Kurusiga, Kado and Qoloni (2006, p. 91) has been adopted.⁸⁰ To derive the IST the Usq BNPL is adjusted by the number of adult equivalent units (AEU) for that household against the national AEU figure. To complete the calculation the IST is converted to an index by using the ratio of actual household income (AHI) to the adjusted IST figure.⁸¹

On closer analysis there are eight households that are considered income insecure (44%) and three (17%) facing hardship with another three vulnerable. What is immediately apparent from these figures is that some households that are below the poverty line in terms of ISI are earning gross incomes above the arbitrary national figures for poverty reporting (for example households Nan02 and FML01 Kc). This is most likely because of their weekly expenditure requirements are high or not managed as well as others. Conversely there was one household (FML05) considered not to be living in poverty with a moderate level of gross weekly income. The exception to this was with the FSI where all six households below that arbitrary line were in fact suffering from absolute poverty (noting that Nan06 was marginally so).

⁷⁹ Refer Chapter 4, Section 4.3.

⁸⁰ Kurusiga, Kado and Qoloni (2006) studied the importance of informal sector activities for squatter settler's income security in Fiji. They utilised the Bryant Tokelau approach (Bryant, 1990 In Kurusiga et.al. p. 91) to maintain some consistency with earlier work as is the case here, in order to continue building a credible basis for further comparative research with squatter settlers in Fiji.

⁸¹ Refer Footnote 11. For the AEU calculations refer Section 7.2.1.2 (a).

Presenting income and food security results by community gives a clearer comparison of the average poverty figures for the ethnic, settlement and neighbourhood dimensions and these are summarised in Table 7.4 on the following page. In terms of settlements differences Nanuku was the worst-off being vulnerable to food insecurity and income insecure. Caubati Topline was considered 'vulnerable' to poverty for both indices while Fiji Muslim League was food secure yet vulnerable to income insecurity. When examining the settlements more closely, the Indo-Fijian community Caubati Topline had a higher proportion of residents less vulnerable to poverty than for Fijians. Four of the six Caubati Topline households surveyed were near to income secure (CCT Households 2, 3, 5 & 6) with an Index (ISI) of 1.8 compared to the Fiji Muslim League *Kecisimani* micro-community (FML Households 1-4) at ISI of 1.4, and on a par with Nanuku residents. The low ISI for the *Kecisimani* neighbourhood may indicate that it's more introspective focus to community development is not producing the gains for its members that the Indo-Fijian neighbourhoods are. A similar situation can be seen for the Fijian neighbourhood at Nanuku compared to the marginally better-off Indo-Fijian neighbourhood at that locality.

Affects of Social Giving on Household Food and Income Security

The third area of concern for poverty analysis was the impact of social donations on household incomes, assessed utilising the figures collected earlier (refer Section 7.2.1.2 Social Giving). Household income, net of the social giving amount is listed alongside the gross income column in Tables 7.3 and 7.4 above to illustrate the effects on weekly household incomes. Evident is that the impact of social giving appears less than might be expected, producing in most cases a one point drop in each index measure. The most affected by their own social giving regime was the poorest household (Nan01) which dropped two points on both indices. This suggests that families, who are already living in poverty, more often than not, felt they could still help themselves or others by being charitable; knowing the consequences it would have on them.

Table 7.4 Poverty Indices: By Settlement

| Settlement By Household | Income (FJ\$/week) | | Poverty Indices (per Household) | | | |
|--|-----------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------|--------------|------------|
| | Gross Income | Net of Social Obligations | Gross ISI | Net ISI | Gross FSI | Net FSI |
| Nanuku (Nan) - Integrated | | | | | | |
| Nan03 IF | \$90 | \$86 | 0.7 | 0.6 | 0.9 | 0.8 |
| Nan04 IF | \$185 | \$173 | 1.4 | 1.3 | 1.8 | 1.6 |
| Nan06 IF | \$90 | \$86 | 0.9 | 0.8 | 1.1 | 1.1 |
| Nan01 F | \$40 | \$27 | 0.6 | 0.4 | 0.8 | 0.5 |
| Nan02 F | \$160 | \$154 | 0.9 | 0.9 | 1.3 | 1.2 |
| Nan05 F | \$180 | \$165 | 1.4 | 1.2 | 1.9 | 1.7 |
| Indo-Fijian (IF) HHd | \$122 | \$115 | 1.0 | 0.9 | 1.2 | 1.2 |
| Fijian (F) HHd | \$127 | \$115 | 0.9 | 0.8 | 1.3 | 1.2 |
| Average Nan HHd | \$124 | \$115 | 1.0 | 0.9 | 1.3 | 1.2 |
| Caubati Topline (CCT) - Indo-Fijian | | | | | | |
| CCT1 | \$90 | \$88 | 0.6 | 0.6 | 0.7 | 0.7 |
| CCT2 | \$200 | \$193 | 1.7 | 1.7 | 2.2 | 2.2 |
| CCT3 | \$400 | \$370 | 1.7 | 1.5 | 2.1 | 2.0 |
| CCT4 | \$90 | \$84 | 0.6 | 0.5 | 0.7 | 0.7 |
| CCT5 | \$318 | \$307 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.6 | 2.5 |
| CCT6 | \$135 | \$126 | 1.8 | 1.7 | 2.4 | 2.2 |
| Average CCT HHd | \$205 | \$195 | 1.4 | 1.3 | 1.8 | 1.7 |
| Fiji Muslim League (FML) - Fijian | | | | | | |
| FML01 Kc | \$200 | \$188 | 0.9 | 0.8 | 1.2 | 1.2 |
| FML02 Kc | \$105 | \$89 | 1.5 | 1.2 | 2.0 | 1.7 |
| FML03 Kc | \$70 | \$63 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.5 | 0.4 |
| FML04 | \$270 | \$263 | 2.9 | 2.9 | 4.1 | 4.0 |
| FML05 | \$180 | \$180 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.7 | 2.7 |
| FML06 | \$98 | \$96 | 1.6 | 1.6 | 2.2 | 2.2 |
| Average Kc HHd | \$125 | \$113 | 0.9 | 0.8 | 1.2 | 1.1 |
| Average FML HHd | \$154 | \$146 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 2.1 | 2.0 |
| Overall | | | | | | |
| Indo-Fijian (IF) HHd | \$178 | \$168 | 1.3 | 1.2 | 1.6 | 1.5 |
| Fijian (F) HHd | \$145 | \$136 | 1.3 | 1.3 | 1.9 | 1.7 |
| Total Average | \$161 | \$152 | 1.3 | 1.2 | 1.7 | 1.6 |

Source: The various calculations are based on standard poverty analysis formulas obtained from Kurusiga, Kado & Qoloni, (2006); Abbot, (2008) and Narsey, (2008) and the baseline figures for each household were obtained from the survey. Refer Appendix 2 for further details.

From Section 7.2.1.2 we know the extent of voluntary household contributions in time and money were strongly in favour of Religious Groups to any other and Indo-Fijians were regularly contributing a little more than Fijians. In order to verify whether this level of social giving was a constraint on the households meeting their weekly basic needs the level of financial contributions was factored into the FSI and ISI calculations to see what actual affects if any there was on household poverty status, summarised in Table 7.4 above.

The overall result demonstrates there was no significant difference between Indo-Fijian and Fijian poverty levels after accounting for social giving, as measured by the average net Income Security Index. But there was a significant difference at the settlement level with the integrated Nanuku community on a lower ISI than the other two. However the Indo-Fijian community Caubati Topline had only two that were food insecure compared to Fiji Muslim League where there were three food insecure (only one of those from the *Kecisimani* group) indicating Caubati Topline were less vulnerable than the other Settlements.

To check on the affects of low incomes and the level of social giving people were committed to were having respondents were asked about how often they experienced 'periods of hardship', (explained as day's where families may go without food during a week or month on a regular basis). Eight out of the 18 households surveyed (44%) claimed they had to go without some essential items on a weekly or monthly basis and 76% (6) of those indicated this was a regular occurrence. Households at Fiji Muslim League were the most prone to this type of hardship while some at Caubati Topline would only occasionally face such hardship. When faced with hardship choices, families indicated that the first item they would drop from their expenditure list would be school fees (chosen by 50%), then food items (38% or 6-7 households) and fuel for cooking (13% or 2-3 households). School lunches were one area that suffered in regards to the lack of food items as was the amount or quality of meat consumed, some restricting this to once a week (Researcher's Notes, 2008). There are some hard choices being made here and of particular concern,

relating to children's health and education needs, highlighted as the thirteenth key constraint to community livelihood choices. These figures tend to correlate well with the findings of Section 7.3.1 and raise the question: Why do households continue to donate income that would be best spent on their own essential needs? To check about that question, householders were then asked, if they had an extra \$10 or \$20 per week extra disposable income, what they might spend it on as a matter of priority. Most chose education costs (27% or 4-5 households), extra food (19% or 3-4), improvements to the house (14% or 2-3, predominantly from CTT) and savings (13%). Fijian priorities were more aligned toward savings and improvements to the house (Nanuku) or extra food (FML) whereas Indo-Fijian priorities lay with education and extra food or donations to the needy (predominantly the "better off" CTT households). Other choices included spending on oneself (14% and predominantly the higher income earners of FML) and improving their water or power supply (one household for each from FML). It is interesting that the first two items to be dropped in the case of hardship (school fees and food items) were also the first two people would spend more money on indicating these are considered more discretionary over and above anything else. While it seems curious that education should be thought of in this way given it was one of the most common reasons for people to migrate to the city,⁸² it is also not surprising given the financial constraints most are facing, confirming findings from other studies about the plight of squatter settlers.⁸³ The greater importance accorded to education by Indo-Fijians, who indicated their first preference to spend any extra money would be on education, affirms earlier accounts from other literature on this aspect of Indo-Fijian culture.⁸⁴

⁸² Refer Chapter 4, Section 4.3.1 about the 'pull' factors for urban migration.

⁸³ Refer Chapter 4, Section 4.4.2 Reflections on Indigenous Fiji Culture.

⁸⁴ Refer Chapter 3, Section 3.4 on Social Identity Influences in Fiji and Chapter 4, Section 4.4.3 Reflections on Indo-Fijian Culture.

7.4 Conclusion

This Chapter has focused on presenting the field research data on community cohesion, determined as an outcome of qualitative survey work in three Suva urban squatter settlements. The first section explored community structure and the level of social cohesion that existed in each community, considered important elements for mobilising community held resources. In addition the extent of horizontal (internal based) and vertical (external) community interactions including an assessment of trust, honesty and social tolerance levels were assessed within each Settlement. All these factors are considered key predisposing societal norms necessary to foster a functional 'sense of community'. The premise for this being that working collegially with others in their community on shared objectives can achieve benefits for all. The Chapter finished with a look at the impacts these levels of community cohesion were having on the lives of the household members in terms of well-being and poverty levels.

The findings of this Chapter highlighted a number of factors where potentially negative or positive benefits impact on the abilities of settlers' to participate in community groups and hence potentially benefit from such interactions. These included:

- **Finding 7:** closeness of residents within communities of one predominant ethnicity (Fiji Muslim League and Caubati Central) who identified strongly with their settlement and were willing to help neighbours out if requested or contribute resources toward shared needs. In contrast there was weak community cohesion for the integrated community of Nanuku. This was commonly manifested through religious and ethnic intolerances between people living within the micro-communities or ethnic neighbourhoods.
- **Finding 8:** a general willingness of community members to contribute resources toward shared needs
- **Finding 9:** Indo-Fijians contributed more to their community activities both in time and money compared to Fijians

- **Finding 10:** the general level of social giving from people who are poor was high at 6% (approximately \$9 per household) of average weekly income with 58% of that going to religious groups. More often than not this resulted periods of hardship where children were most likely to suffer in terms of hunger and reduced education opportunities.
- **Finding 11:** a lack of credible vertical networking to public institutions and external agencies, manifest in the low levels of confidence in society's leaders, particularly those in public offices.
- **Finding 12:** 66% or 12 households from the 18 surveyed live below the national poverty line. This is substantially higher than the most recent survey figure of 40% for squatter settlements (Mohanty, 2006, p. 2).⁸⁵
- **Finding 13:** When faced with hardship choices, the first two discretionary items to be dropped were school fees (for Fijians) and food items (for Indo-Fijians). Conversely these were also the first two items people would spend more on, if they had extra discretionary money. The greater importance accorded to education by Indo-Fijians, who indicated their first preference to spend any extra money would be on education, affirms earlier accounts from other literature on this aspect of Indo-Fijian culture.

The arbitrary level of poverty within these settlements based on the national Urban Squatter Poverty basic needs poverty line (Usq BNPL) was higher than expected with 66% of households (12 from the 18 surveyed) living below that level. However, when assessing individual households the actual income security level was lower than the arbitrary figure at 44% (or 8 households) which compared more favourably with the most recent survey (Mohanty, 2006, p. 2). Almost two thirds of these households (28%) were considered 'food insecure' or living in absolute poverty, with the remainder experiencing frequent income and food hardship. A further 17% (3) were considered vulnerable to poverty, experiencing periods of hardship where they may either be food or income insecure at intermittent times during any particular month.

⁸⁵ Refer Chapter 4, Section 4.3.

Overall in terms of differences between settlements, Nanuku was the worst affected in terms of being vulnerable to food insecurity and income insecure. Caubati Toplevel was considered 'vulnerable' to poverty for both indices while Fiji Muslim League was food secure, yet vulnerable to income insecurity.

All seven key findings above have potential to create either positive or negative impacts on individual and/or community empowerment processes and will be discussed in more detail in the next Chapter.

CHAPTER 8

MOBILISING SOCIAL CAPITAL IN INFORMAL AND SQUATTER SETTLEMENTS IN FIJI

8.1 Introduction

This chapter will firstly discuss the extent of organisational capacity and participation within each of the three settlements and the quality of those social relations. Secondly, there will be discussion on the effects that the amount of organisational capacity had for its members in terms of solidarity and social cohesion. Thirdly, an assessment will be made on whether these processes have fostered a sense of empowerment to critically look at shared problems and hence the means by which community members' social capital resources can be mobilised to address these shared needs.

Functional communities are considered to be well organised and empowered to address shared needs which can in turn help to improve community and individual well-being (Putnam, 1995, p. 2). The theoretical framework for social capital outlined in Chapter Two summarised aspects of social capital theory including the community based organisational capacity and social cohesion attributes of a community's functioning. In Chapter Three the theoretical framework for culture and identity established that what people identify with forms the basis for how they may associate or interact with each other at the community level. These qualities are dependent on the resources of social capital held, most commonly in the internal and external linkages to institutions, considered an important means by which these assets can be mobilised (O'Gorman, 1992, p. 63). Thus an understanding about the intensity of these social relationships and, in the context of Fiji the role religion, culture and other lived experiences play in these was considered central to this thesis statement.

Research results on community structures and organisational capacity including an analysis of the levels of participation by community members as well as findings on community values which underpin their sense of cohesion have been discussed in the previous two chapters. This chapter now aims to pull literature and research results together. The following sections will discuss these research findings in relation to the primary research objective:

to investigate the processes that squatter settlements employ to mobilise social capital resources in Fiji.

In response to this research objective and a list of research questions (as outlined in Chapter 1, Section 3) this research identified thirteen factors about community functionality and social capacity in the three Fijian settlements investigated. These key factors, which are listed below, were assessed as to either support or block potential change in community empowerment processes:

- **First Key Factor:** Each settlement had limited organisational reach.
- **Second Key Factor:** Participation levels in the three prioritised groups were high.
- **Third Key Factor:** A lack of encouragement for women to take leadership roles in community groups allowed men to predominate as group heads.
- **Fourth Key Factor:** An important operational domain of community capacity is the quality of group leadership and decision making.
- **Fifth Key Factor:** Community empowerment processes were considered as constrained.
- **Sixth Key Factor:** Social relations within communities are important.
- **Seventh Key Factor:** In communities where one ethnicity was dominant a stronger sense of identity was prevalent.
- **Eighth Key Factor:** Single ethnicity communities were more willing to help or contribute resources toward shared needs.

- **Ninth Key Factor:** There is a significant level of weekly donations by squatter households.
- **Tenth Key Factor:** There are different levels of volunteering and contributing between Indo-Fijians compared to Fijians.
- **Eleventh Key Factor:** There is a lack of credible vertical connectivity.
- **Twelfth Key Factor:** Actual household poverty levels within settlements were higher than expected and higher than the national average.
- **Thirteenth Key Factor:** Constraints are due to household exposure to hardship.

Each of these key factors will be explained in detail over the next two chapters. Some discussion links between identified key factors. Key factors are therefore not discussed in strict numerical order. For example factors three and six are placed together. Section headings will identify each factor's discussion order. This chapter will discuss all factors 1-13. The key factors will be linked back to thesis statement and assumptions at the point where the key factor is raised in this discussion. In doing so, this chapter will firstly discuss the extent of organisational capacity and participation within each of the three settlements and then examine the quality of the social relations that ensue. Secondly, there will be discussion on the effects that the amount of organisational capacity and social interactions had for its members in terms of solidarity and social cohesion within the three settlements studied. To conclude the chapter there will be an overall summary about whether these processes have fostered a sense of empowerment to critically look at shared problems and hence the means by which community members' social capital resources can be mobilised to address these shared needs.

8.2 Community Organisation

This section discusses the three operational domains of community organisational capacity: community based group activity, participation and leadership quality. The number of groups operating in communities and the level of involvement of their community members are key indicators of a community's functionality (Laverack, 2001, p. 139). The wider the diversity of groups accessed both internal and external to the community, the greater the propensity for improved social cohesion and civic activity (Laverack, 2001, p. 139). People from cohesive communities are also more likely to gain a wider choice of economic opportunities and/or prospects for better living standards (Docherty et. al., 2001, p. 2229). Consideration of community and social cohesion included analysis of community based group activities.

8.2.1 Organisational Structures and Participation: Key Factors 1 and 2

In Chapter 6 the range of community based group activity operating within the three settlements was examined. These activity groups included those considered as internal groups, (for example committees, associations, faith-based groups, youth groups and self-help groups), as well as those that were categorised as external groups, (for example non-government organisations, clubs and unions) known to support or provide services to the community. Each of the three settlement communities were analysed by examining three distinct social indicators of organisational structure and participation: (i) Diversity of group categories being accessed by communities and in particular the three groups prioritised by them as most important to community well-being; (ii) membership levels within those groups and (iii) the depth of people's involvement in group activities (including roles and frequency of attendance).

The **first key factor** showing the limits of organisational reach confirmed one of the thesis assumptions II: *Settlements have weak community support structures hence householders rely significantly on their own initiatives and resources.*⁸⁶

⁸⁶ Refer to Chapter 1, Section 1.3 for the hypothesis statement and assumptions of the research.

This limited organisational reach was described by the moderately few vertical linkages to external groups compared to international data (Kasarda and Janowitz, 1974, p. 9; Putnam, 1995, p. 67; Narayan and Cassidy, 2001, p. 70; Middleton, 2005, p.1730). Vertical connectivity includes people-to-people linkages with those from other community's or outside groups and institutions that provide a source of relevant information or supports to the community based groups. Section 8.4 will address these matters in more detail. There was also an over-reliance by members on the first of the three groups prioritised as most important – religious or faith-based groups with the other two, youth groups and community/ neighbourhood associations, the only two that provided access to external support services. The results of the survey ranking the importance of these groups to the participants matched findings from other international social surveys (Kasarda and Janowitz, 1974, p. 9; Putnam, 1995, p. 67; Narayan and Cassidy, 2001, p. 70; Middleton, 2005, p.1730).

The **second key factor** highlighted as one of the research outcomes was that participation levels in the three prioritised groups were high. However, participation was heavily biased toward faith-based groups. Interestingly, as this discussion will explain, this was a potential constraint for community development dynamics. Given the significance of religion to both ethnic cultures in Fiji, it was not surprising that religion should play an important part in daily life.

It is not surprising that membership in community groups provides an important way for settlers to make friends, but it also provided a way in which to take an interest in community affairs. Other urban studies have confirmed that there is a relationship between the 'number of friends' and a 'stronger group membership', which has a direct effect on the extent of involvement in community affairs (Kasarda and Janowitz, 1974, p. 336).

The lack of breadth in community groups operating from within these poor communities and limited potential for participation and connectivity to a wider catchment of external social networking opportunities was expected. This is a more general feature of low income communities, rendering them less able to

join clubs or groups and to participate in social activities compared to higher income communities (Middleton, 2005, p. 1730; Stevens, 2003, p. 9 and Kleinhans et. al., 2007, p. 1083). Some commentators have therefore questioned whether social capital is a consequence of economic well-being rather than the cause of it (Kleinhans et. al., 2007, p. 1083; Middleton et. al., 2005, p. 1729). Certainly this premise is partially supported from the findings of this study where two of the settlements of least group activity Fiji Muslim League and Nanuku, were also the poorest while Caubati Topline the most 'income secure' settlement of the three, had the widest organisational base.⁸⁷

Aside from economic factors, there are three other possible explanations for a community focus that is introspective and predominantly religious. Firstly, that church leaders encourage the belief that outside assistance, including other group structures, are not necessary, and that a collective strength in spirituality will give the individual faith that their needs will be provided for. Speculation that this might be the case is supported by the example of the Methodist *Kecisimani* micro-community at the Fiji Muslim League settlement. This micro-community had a high level of activity that was predominantly focused on faith (>80%). The name *Kecisimani*, Fijian for Gethsemane, is significant given the symbolism involved. This name represents a direct correlation between this area and the sacred garden of the same name in Jerusalem⁸⁸ (Researcher's Notes, 2008). The *Kecisimani* church building is located, on the hilltop with many of the settlers living just below on the hillsides. Fijian culture and spirituality is intertwined and integral to identity and with it there is the belief in a 'divine revelation', that God has validated Fijian culture above the rights of other communities in Fiji.⁸⁹ In contrast to this, the Ramayan *Madali* and *Baal Vikash* Hindustani groups that operate at Nanuku and Caubati Topline settlements were more supportive of wider contacts for its members. Both groups were also

⁸⁷ Refer discussion in relation to Table 7.4 in Chapter 7, Section 7.3.

⁸⁸ Gethsemane was at the base of the Mount of Olives where Jesus had a last meal with his disciples the day before his crucifixion, remaining an important site for prayer pilgrimages to this day (Meistermann, 1909).

⁸⁹ Refer Chapter 3, Section 3.4 on Social Identity Influences in Fiji.

“valued for their moral teachings and opportunities for social interaction for families”, (Researcher’s Notes, 2008).

Secondly, there may be a failure of leadership to communicate information about groups other than faith-based to community members. This has been found to be an impediment to community development processes in rural Fijian villages more generally (Laverack, 2006b, p. 270). In Fijian culture traditional protocols mean that the Chief must give approval for any community meetings to take place. As outlined in Chapter 4, the clergy’s position in society is second only to a tribal Chief and can also act as the ‘religious gate keeper’ in relation to community affairs (Laverack, 2006b, p. 270). Community members in Fijian society may be reticent of asking their leaders (including the clergy) for concessions to normal village protocols because they are either fearful of them, lack respect for them or are not on good terms with them (Laverack, 2006b, p. 270). While the fatalistic nature of Fijian culture in relation to the quality of leadership will be discussed later in this Chapter, it is worth noting here that the lack of inclusiveness for activities other than those sanctioned by traditional leaders is one example of where cultural and/or religious beliefs are blocking potentially positive changes to urban squatter community development processes, a limiting factor noted in support of the thesis statement.

A third reason for a community focus that is introspective and dominated by religion could be that there is a desire for settlers to associate in ways that assists them to mitigate the negative aspects of settlement life and this can best be achieved by supporting each other closely, a feature not uncommon from other urban studies (Kasarda and Janowitz, 1974, p. 338). The importance of kinship and religious bonding and its affects on community development will be discussed further in the next section about leadership.

These last two issues – weak community capacity and religious gate-keeping – are key limiting factors to the effectiveness of community processes and associated with thesis assumption III: *most settlers among both ethnic groups identify with traditional customs and obligations and religious affiliations rather than the community as the primary source for social support.*

In order to more fully assess the constraint posed to community empowerment processes, a fuller explanation of how constraints or community processes impact on the breadth of group and social interactions is needed. A discussion on this will be covered in the following several sections which consider key factors four, followed by three and six and concluding with key factor five.

8.2.2 Quality of Group Leadership: Key Factor 4

Another important operational domain of community capacity is the quality of group leadership and decision making, which in Chapter 6 was considered to be variable across all three settlements. Leadership quality has been recognised as the **fourth key factor** that potentially could constrain community functionality.⁹⁰ Strongly inclusive leaders have been found important to maintaining group activity and conversely where leadership is weak group activity and membership has been argued to decline (Narayan and Cassidy, 2001, p. 72). This research supported the importance of leadership by showing that settlements which had the most active community committees also exhibited a more democratic style of leadership.

There were variations in leadership styles between the two ethnic groups. Fijian group structures were more autocratic with only 25% of respondents claiming consensus occurred with group decision making. Religious groups had a hierarchical leadership that discouraged the nurturing of younger leaders, making these groups particularly autocratic. In contrast, Indo-Fijians tended to follow more democratic processes, with greater consensus in decisions (76%). The Fijian cultural disposition to authority, mentioned earlier, was likely to account for this difference. The Fijian custom of consent through silence is accepted in decision making and an important norm in Fijian culture (Barr, 2005, p. 3), and being confrontational is considered 'un-Fijian' (WCC, 2001, p. 19; Mausio, 2002, p. 62). Mausio (2002) calls this the 'culture of silence' maintaining that this learned characteristic of avoiding conflict provides a Fijian

⁹⁰ The third example highlighted from Chapter 6, Section 2.2 will be covered later in Section 8.3.1.2.

religious and political means of maintaining a power base with the elite leaders of society (p. 62).⁹¹

The *Kecisimani* neighbourhood of Fiji Muslim League provided example of this cultural aspect of avoiding conflict. This tight knit settlement is subject to some forms of religious 'gate keeping' evident in the community structures, and is strongly influenced by the Methodist Church. The *Kecisimani* micro-community development model is a familiar approach among Fijian societies and not just the Methodist movement. An Anglican based Fijian settlement was studied closely by Sanderson (2006) who found that their view of community development was based around the "lived experience(s) of personal change," gained through the communities' beliefs and/or faith and the inherent relationship that exists between those beliefs and faith, Fijian mythology and their cultural values (p. 7). Sanderson's premise was that spirituality had been internalised by the community to inform changes in material provision and in community and cultural practices. The concept that spirituality or faith would provide for one's needs was thus adopted by the group as the preferred process of development in the same way capacity building is understood in contemporary development language. The author argued that it therefore held "primacy in informing community changes" (Sanderson, 2006, p. 7). This adopted way-of-life which emphasises conflict avoidance, may seem desirable and self supporting. It, however, has undoubtedly constructed a closed fraternity which constrains opportunity for establishing vertical linkages and engaging on civic issues that may be materially important for a community to grow in strength and wealth.

For other settlements, quality of leadership was more variable which meant group membership and functionality was also variable. Nanuku's experience of a preschool initiative showed this. The preschool had successfully operated for three years at the community hall situated in the Fijian neighbourhood. The hall also served as the Methodist Church place of worship. The preschool had performed well, supported by a partnership between a NGO and the Ministry of

⁹¹ Refer to Chapter 2, Section 4.4.2 Reflections on Indigenous Fijian Culture, for a fuller explanation of the 'culture of silence' in Fiji society.

Education, before being handed over to community management in 2006. Respondents involved explained that the preschool soon dissolved because of disagreements between the Methodist Minister and his Church Committee and the preschool committee. The Methodist Church and its Minister made it clear the community hall was a resource for church members and any other activity that took place in the hall including the preschool would come under the direction of the church committee. Indo-Fijian families withdrew their children from the preschool because their reason for attending was tied to the preschool being a community directed group without Christian church influence. The original concept promoted by the NGO was that the facility needed to be operated by a community appointed committee and supported by external agents. The Preschool eventually moved away to the Vatuvaqa Assembly Of God (AOG) church that ran a non-secular programme but charged \$2/day per child (compared to the previous fees of \$1/week). Because of the fee increase and extra distance to the AOG church, all Nanuku families were in actual fact excluded (Researcher's Notes, 2008).

The autocratic leadership of the church in wishing to influence all groups at Nanuku resulted in a distinct barrier to active participation by community members, (affecting women in particular given their roles as primary child carers). It also stifled potential sources of social capital (as information or learned experiences) gained from networking with outside community groups. Furthermore, this approach proved a source of tension between the two ethnic groups where efforts to work together had been undermined by a lack of trust and autocratic leadership style. Indo-Fijians interpreted this as a lack of initiative, unreliability or laziness,⁹² and further evidence of how religious based doctrines can exert influence over residents' lives. A similar confluence of issues had prompted Putnam (1983) to postulate that organised religion is "an alternative to civic community, not part of it." In other words, religion is associated more with vertical bonds of authority rather than horizontal bonds of fellowship and association (In Middleton et. al., 2005, p 1731).

⁹² Refer to Chapter 3 Section 4 for a more detailed explanation of how stereotypical biases arise from cultural and religious differences, affecting perceptions of identity.

The failed Nanuku preschool referred to in the previous paragraph demonstrates the power struggles between the church and what community members actually want and the apparent intent of religious faiths to maintain a more introspective group focus.

8.2.3 Summary: Community Organisational Structures

In summary, overall there was a greater emphasis on intra-community networking, with heavy reliance on religious connectivity as a basis for social relations within communities. The thesis assumption III, of the place of traditional customs, obligations and religious affiliations as a major source of identity for settlers was confirmed. This safety net of close fellowship and spirituality seemed to be the desired default coping mechanism for Fijian societies in particular, and is reinforced through church teachings and cultural predisposition. A reliance on internal networks in preference to networking with outside organisations dominated within each community studied. Settlers were discouraged by leadership from becoming a part of external groups that were not community or church run. In contrast Indo-Fijian societal norms and religious beliefs were more flexible in that wider, external associations were encouraged as demonstrated in the Caubati Topline case where youth groups within the community were encouraged to join and be active in youth groups outside the community. The place of women in leadership is considered in the next section and considered with social networks.

8.3 Squatter Settlements' Social Relations and Networking

The quality of social relations and networking were described earlier in Chapter 2 as the most important social capital element as they present individuals the means by which to sustain access to social capital resources held by others (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 16). Chapter 2 summarised two key social capital elements about the worth of people's social relationships that could add value to community resource mobilisation. Firstly that interpersonal relationships allow individual's access to potential resources. Secondly, the quality (extent and strength) of those relationships is important. Together these elements provide

the potential for individuals to realise that something tangible could be gained from involvement in these associations (Bourdieu, 1986, p16). This section therefore discusses how the levels of social connectivity outside of, and as a result of, activity within community groups may encourage people to gather and critically assess common problems and find solutions to better advance their collective and individual interests. This social connectivity relates to one of the ancillary question of this thesis (question 2): *How do belief systems, such as expressed in culture and religion, support or block potentially positive changes to urban squatter community development processes that may otherwise improve squatter householders' well-being?*

Two types of social networks were considered in Chapter 2. Firstly, horizontal connectivity which included: (a) informal acquaintances (including friends and neighbours) and familial ties (including kinship or tribal connections) often referred to as 'bonding capital' (Middleton et. al., 2005, p. 1725); and (b) formal acquaintances with communities of similar economic status⁹³ referred to as 'bridging capital' (Middleton et. al., 2005, p. 1729). Secondly, vertical connectivity, which is defined as the linkages to outside networks including institutions or other external based groups and referred to as 'linking capital' (Middleton et. al., 2005, p. 1732). Vertical connectivity within squatter settlements will be discussed in Section 8.3.2 while the horizontal connectivity aspects will be the focus of the next subsection. Together these different aspects of social relations, the bonding, bridging and linking capital resources of horizontal and vertical connectivity are often referred to as the 'linking triplet'.⁹⁴ The following sections will discuss the extent the linking triplet plays with the extent of connectivity that exists in the three squatter settlements studied.

8.3.1 Horizontal Connectivity in Settlements' Social Relations: Key Factors 3 and 6

Households with children at home tended to have greater connectivity as well as activity with community organisations than those that did not. It is well known

⁹³ In Stoutlands (1999) framework these are termed Level One and Two community groups and include sports and other clubs or associations. Refer Chapter 2, Section 4.3 for more details.

⁹⁴ Refer to Chapter 2, Section 2.4.3 for an explanation of this element of social capital theory.

that women's and children's activities provide a common means of social contact both within and between communities, for example at preschools or in youth groups, and can lead to family to family associations where sharing of information on various community issues inevitably occurs (Kleinhans et al, p 1082). The propensity for women to very quickly make connections during their day-to-day activities and to engage in relations outside of the familial and neighbourhood circle was a social capital resource that could have been better harnessed as a potential networking strategy. However, more often than not, the women's group's energy was directed toward religious activities or traditional roles that underpinned cultural imperatives in deference to advancing the benefits of their wider connectivity or utilising them in leading community campaigns to address shared needs.

The **third key factor** identified in Chapter 6 was the lack of encouragement for women to take leadership roles in community groups which allowed men to predominate as group heads. The greater involvement of women in family savings and welfare groups (with church prayer and educational group sessions figuring prominently) rather than in community leadership roles confirmed this observation. The exception was in the integrated community of Nanuku where women were more involved in all activities than men except from NGO and trade union activities. This, however, was due in part to one large Fijian household consisting predominantly of women.

A lack of women's empowerment in Fiji society is well known as an obstacle to development. According to the ADB Country Gender report (2006b), inequalities exist not only between ethnicities and social strata in Fiji but also, because of "the traditional value systems" entrenched within the male gender dominated cultures (p. 45). For example women's share of formal employment is significantly lower than for men (ADB, 2006b, p. vii). Religion undoubtedly brings positives in its influence and teachings to Fiji societies as indicated above but it can also stigmatise people's attitudes particularly in relation to gender roles, for example women being the main carers in the roles of parenting and domestic duties (Flaws, 2006, p. 4-5). A **sixth key factor** related to socialising is the attachment or importance of social relations within

communities. This closeness of social relations within communities has been described in Chapter 6. Two important aspects will now be discussed in relation to the quality of social connectivity within the case study settlements: firstly, the importance of the nuclear family and friends as support networks; secondly, the length of residency. Related to the discussion on women is a third aspect; gender balance in participation, and the importance of women's' groups which holds a 'hidden' potential for social connectivity. These three aspects will be considered in the next sections.

8.3.1.1 The Strongest Social Bonding from Daily Associations

One characteristic of settlement social relations, evident from the findings, was that the daily associations of neighbours during various informal or formal group meetings were the basis for most social relations in all three settlements (at over 75%). These neighbours were the people, other than family, who residents were most likely to turn to in times of hardship. Socialising was not a prerogative for all residents, however. While most invested in strengthening their social networks, others seemed to retreat from them, perhaps due to their inability to afford the time to reciprocate (Stevens, 2003 p.9).

8.3.1.2 Strength of Familial Ties

Settlers relied most on familial ties for their first choice safety net, confirming findings from other studies about family connections acting as a critical asset for the urban poor in times of hardship (Stevens, 2003, p. 9). Strong family ties could certainly be seen in the Fijian community approach, seemingly seeking to recreate the normal village living practice in their new urban environment, thus providing a second social safety net choice. In that regard two things were very important – church and kin. Consequently, in the urban environment Fijians were more concerned with investing their time and resources into kinship connectivity which may explain why the pull of the church was so significant (Researcher's Notes, 2008). Here the actions of the church are considered to perpetuate the Fijian cultural norms, which is not surprising given its fundamental place in Fijian social structure. While Fiji Muslim League was the most obvious example of this, Nanuku too relied on the church providing a

central pivot around which all other community activities revolved (Researcher's Notes, 2008).

The importance of church and kin in an urban context was evident even at the point of deciding where to live in the city. The main reason for Fijian families' choice of settlement location was based on the importance kinship ties have to maintaining their cultural value systems and collective way of life (Researcher's Notes, 2008). Although it should be noted that kinship priority was not exclusive to all Fijians, for example at Fiji Muslim League one Fijian family had largely withdrawn from community activities due to financial constraints but could still rely on their connections to the (rural) village-based committee for support in times of hardship (Researcher's Notes, 2008).

In contrast Indo-Fijians based their choice of settlement on proximity to friends or family but more importantly also considered where they could find a secure space free of eviction threats (Researcher's Notes, 2008). Indo-Fijian urban settlers therefore tended to rely more heavily on their nuclear family, in other words, the immediate family unit, rather than the extended family networks as a survival mechanism. Fijians, in contrast, often had the extended family or kin connections within easy reach.

One of the earliest urban settlements studies confirms that little has changed over recent times. Crosby (1979) observed that "for most Fijian squatters higher incomes are obtained by an accumulation of kin through extended household structures" whereas "Indian households ... are largely deprived of the benefits of kinship support. [They] therefore have a greater need than Fijians to make other forms of investment." (p. 4). These learned experiences have obviously become a key determinant for community life in the urban setting.

8.3.1.3 Length of Residency Effects

A final key aspect about settlement social relations evident from the findings was that length of residence was a central and crucial factor in the development of social bonding, consistent too with other urban studies (Kasarda and Janowitz, 1974, p. 338). Both the Fiji Muslim League and Nanuku provided

evidence of the effects of length of residency, with their long term residents having well developed social networks within the neighbourhoods, including some who had established viable businesses. Residents who invested in the community in this way had broadened their networks and hence were more likely to be prevailed upon to become group leaders (Researcher's Notes, 2008).

As mentioned above, Indo-Fijians gained positively from feelings of stability from the length of their residency situation which afforded them the 'security' needed to invest time and effort into establishing a better quality house and improving their lifestyle (Researcher's Notes, 2008). In contrast, Indo-Fijians create a safety net by investing in community structures. Relying on community structures was found generally to be a common livelihood strategy that creates trust and raises awareness of community affairs in urban settlements (Kasarda and Janowitz, 1974, p. 336; Kleinhans et. al., 2007, p1076; Middleton et. al., 2005, p 1726; Stevens, 2003 p.9). In the Indo-Fijian case, people invested time in their community as result of their investment in property, and then social capital may be a consequence of well-being and not a cause, a view that is supported by Middleton et. al. (2005, p 1728). Residents' comments during the survey part of this research tended to support this claim. An example of this is provided by two long-term Nanuku Indo-Fijian residents who had invested much to improve the quality of their own houses, and had also established businesses and were active in community structures (including leadership roles).

8.3.1.4 Summary: Horizontal Connectivity in Settlement Communities

The research findings discussed above demonstrate a strong reliance on internal networks and church oriented activities and secondly, extended family as safety nets for people who fall on hard times. People created further stability in their neighbourhoods through length of residency, some investing in the quality of their house or even establishing businesses to foster support for community affairs.

The contributions of women were restricted, mostly to traditional roles and therefore their potential contributions understated. The restricted value given to

women leads to an underutilisation of potential connectivity and reduced opportunity for leadership roles.

Horizontal community interactions demonstrated a closeness of residents within neighbourhoods and predominantly the product of networks underpinned by faith-based group activities. In the case of Fiji Muslim League, these bonds were particularly strong. Collectively these observations about the strength of horizontal relationships are considered examples⁹⁵ of potentially positive and negative social impacts on community dynamics. These observations confirm thesis assumption II: *Householders in squatter settlements rely significantly on their own initiatives, resourcefulness and familial connections as the primary means of survival in times of hardship*. The next section will consider vertical connections.

8.3.2 Vertical Connectivity in Settlements' Social Relations: Key Factors 5 and 11

Vertical connectivity at the community level refers to connections that communities have with one another, such as communities of similar demography, or to external groups that operate to support community-based groups by providing services or information. Membership of some groups (for example sports or youth or neighbourhood associations) can provide opportunity for linkages (which was termed in Chapter 7 bridging capital) to other organisations outside of the community (for example clubs, unions or NGO's)⁹⁶ (Middleton et. al., 2005, p 1732). People who are connected with external agents are potential sources of information and, through these linkages, can help others in the community understand better the issues and problems they face. Communities who utilise these connections and discuss common issues are more able to find possible solutions to them (Laverack, 2001, p. 140).

⁹⁵ The fifth example highlighted from Chapter 6, Section 2.4 will be covered later in Section 8.3.2.1.

⁹⁶ Refer earlier to Section 8.2.1 about the levels of NGOs active in these communities.

In assessing the strength and quality of these vertical linkages the findings presented in Chapter 7 identified four important aspects from the survey findings: (i) the low level of involvement of external agents; (ii) the lack of trust in such institutions; (iii) the lack of inter-community connectivity with those experiencing similar issues; and (iv) a reliance on relatives, friends or neighbours as key sources of information and connection to the outside world. Overall there was a general lack of intensity for this social capital resource demonstrated in all three settlements which underscored the earlier findings of a heavy reliance on intra-community connectivity.

The highest levels of trust and honesty were accorded to those who were of the same religious faith, (their leaders being held in particularly high regard) and ethnicity and with members of NGO's working in the community. People considered that the least trusted and honest were those from other religious faiths and ethnicity.⁹⁷ These perceptions can result in tensions and divisions developing between neighbourhoods. For example, an apparent lack of tolerance for cross cultural issues at Nanuku came from Indo-Fijians who claimed they received threats on matters to do with land and financial security, particularly during special religious observances.⁹⁸ There were other claims of this nature raised by respondents in the different settlements, underlining the challenges faced by integrated communities in developing social cohesion. These challenging issues of social cohesions link well with findings from other studies about life in urban multi-cultural settings, such as investigated by Kleinhans et al. (2007) in Rotterdam in the Netherlands, which considered neighbourhoods restructured by residential mobility. Issues of trust in relationships between neighbours was managed, initially through social management by organisations like housing associations and then through resident's building their own social trust-forming capital (Kleinhans et. al., 2007, p1076; Researcher's Notes, 2008).

⁹⁷ Refer Figure 7.1 in Chapter 7, Section 2.1.1 (a).

⁹⁸ Refer Chapter 7, Section 2.1.1 (a) also.

Discerning the balance of both horizontal and vertical ties is considered important to assessing how functional a community may be (Pelling and High 2005, p. 13). The main indicator used to examine functionality was the ratio of external to internal groups that settlement members were in contact with (as outlined above those involved with external groups were in the minority). A higher ratio (greater than 1.0) is in favour of linkages to external groups and would indicate a less isolated community that potentially is more able to access outside sources of assistance or resources. Contrasting results revealed that the Indo-Fijian community Caubati Topline had the lowest index of 1.0, (with one internal group to one external group or 12 for 12) and thus, a greater numbers of external supports than either Nanuku, at index 1.5 (10 internal to 15 external), or Fiji Muslim League, with the least at index 2.8 (5 external to 14 internal).⁹⁹ The relative connectivity of Caubati Topline was surprisingly ahead of the integrated Nanuku settlement that arguably had the greater opportunities given the interest from external agents in the past. The lower result for Fiji Muslim League was a further confirmation that this settlement was less concerned with external assistance.

The NGO sector was one key group that provided external assistance, representing half of the 18% of respondents who indicated they were involved with external groups, (others included sports clubs, artistic groups, trade unions and professional associations, rural village committees, women's and education groups but on occasion youth groups, microfinance groups and other religious groups). Nanuku was the settlement where NGOs were most active. They were involved with a Suva-based NGO who was working to establish a network of squatter settlements in the Suva-Nausori corridor (only recently including Caubati Central but Fiji Muslim League was not willing). The aim of their assistance was to strengthen capacity and empower these communities to examine and solve common problems. It was hoped that this process of critical assessment would mobilise these communities to act together and in turn develop the trust levels within and across communities, fostering cohesiveness (Barr, 2007, p 36). Middleton et al. (2005) found that this type of social

⁹⁹ Refer Chapter 9, Section 9.3.1 and Appendix 2 for fuller details on this analysis.

networking provides an important opportunity for community associations to link vertically with public agencies that have power over them (for example local councils) and to influence public policy making (p 1732). Unfortunately, controversy between the two ethnic groups at Nanuku, compromised the effectiveness of the programme and raised questions over inclusivity and equitable benefits for all (Researcher's Notes, 2008).¹⁰⁰ An assessment of the social cohesiveness of the communities studied will be considered later in this Chapter under Section 8.5. Any discussion of community associations needs some consideration of perceived or actual benefits and this is considered next.

8.3.2.1 Group Membership Benefits (Key Factor 5)

Given the earlier revelations about the importance of faith-based activities as the basis for most social relations and the main safety net in times of hardship, it was important to try to understand what settlers perceived they had in return for supporting the top three prioritised groups. It is relevant to consider whether religious group membership served other community needs besides spiritual fulfilment alone. The potential for religious activity to either promote or block community development processes is pertinent to answering another ancillary question in this thesis (question 1)¹⁰¹: *How do culture, religion and other lived experience impact on urban community relations?*

The findings from Chapter 6 on this matter highlighted people's perceptions about the benefits of joining these community group activities as, in priority order: (i) For spiritual fulfilment and the safety net gained from social interactions of faith-based associations (accounted for 43% of responses); (ii) access to services, for example the preschool education groups (23%); (iii) as a means to assist with community improvements (17%). These results confirm perceptions or actual benefits as stated by another underlying thesis assumption, III: *Community faith-based affiliations were a primary source reinforcing settlers' social identity and cooperative interactions.* However, of greatest interest was that many people (40%) were also looking for wider

¹⁰⁰ Refer Chapter 7, Section 2.1.1 (b).

¹⁰¹ Refer to Chapter 1, Section 1.2 for the background to and list of three research questions.

benefits from faith-based groups, and in particular approached these for assistance with access to key basic needs and services.

Responses about benefits obtained from the 'access to services' option revealed, however, that only 31% of respondents felt church or faith-based activities benefited people's access to services. This result has been highlighted (in Chapter 6) as the **fifth key factor** where community empowerment processes were considered as constrained.

8.3.2.2 Vertical Interaction with Policy Makers (Key Factor Eleven)

Vertical connectivity with respect to external groups and other communities was discussed earlier in Section 8.3.2. This assessment is concerned with higher level linkages, to people of influence in formal institutions like local or central government departments.

The findings of Chapter 7 outlined settlers had a high level of confidence in key professionals with whom most in society interacted, for example nurses, doctors and teachers, but a distinct lack of confidence in public institutions, politicians, traditional leaders and the justice system. Networking with organisations and politicising community needs and active linking ties with these supporting bodies was narrower than expected if communities were to take advantage of such established connectivity. This result, the lack of credible vertical connectivity has been highlighted in Chapter 7 as the **eleventh key factor** constraining community empowerment dynamics.

Reasons for the lack of trust and feelings of dishonesty about those in positions of power are not surprising given the plight these squatter settlers find themselves in: Rural underdevelopment, decreased renewal of farmland leases and unemployment leave little choice but to migrate to urban centres (McKinnon, et. al., 2007, p. 15). The lack of ability of Government authorities to cope with that growing demand for affordable housing and services leaves little choice for these urban migrants but to live in squatter settlements (McKinnon, et. al., 2007, p. ii). Chapter 4, Section 4.3.1 outlined other factors involved that have led policy makers to largely ignore this uncontrolled urbanisation issue

including: a lack of capacity within central and local government planning departments to design or implement urban development plans; an authoritarian approach to finding solutions based on policies that aim to either evict, relocate or regularise settlements. Consequently the commitment to address these issues appears entirely inadequate (Brochu, 2002; Jones, 2003; Lingham, 2002 & 2004; Storey, 2005).

At the same time squatters overwhelmingly charge the government as being responsible for, not only their situation but in finding solutions also (Khan and Barr, 2003, p. 43). There were examples from respondents about the lack of action and responsibility from Government. One resident in Fiji Muslim League explained why he distrusted politicians and government institutions: “We are squatters so we are excluded from many mainstream services. Politicians come who are backed by some political organizations; they promise much but never deliver. They only come around at election time so we feel used for voting purposes”. There were examples provided from other settlements of similar circumstances (Researcher’s Notes, 2008).

Another issue was the clear lack of trust and suspicions of dishonesty Indo-Fijians held over a key sector of society, the law and justice system. Indo-Fijian’s sense of insecurity was absolute due to the lack of support they felt in the Police and justice system. For example a respondent from Nanuku was explaining the disinterest of the Police in dealing with community problems stating: “[The] Police usually tell us they are too busy and will only come if they pay the fuel/taxi [cost] or give [them] food” and “Judges and Lawyers tell lies, [they] take money [and] only help Fijian people” (Researcher’s Notes, 2008).¹⁰² The ethnic imbalance found within the public services, police and armed forces is clearly one underlying factor.¹⁰³ The feelings of insecurity are well found being considering Indo-Fijians historical struggles: the deep seated issues arising out of their origins and cultural heritage in Fiji and the continuous

¹⁰² Refer also to Chapter 7, Section 7.2.2.1 (a).

¹⁰³ Aside from the RFMF and Police, the Public Service is also dominated by Fijians at 63% to 35% Indo-Fijians although one institution that is fairly well balanced is the judicial system (Walsh, 2006, p. 324).

political upheavals over the past two decades which sought to further undermine Indo-Fijians sense of place in Fiji.¹⁰⁴

8.3.2.3 Summary: Vertical Connectivity in Settlements' Social Relations

Overall most members of the three settlements studied relied on the close bonds they had formed within the community while lacking in vertical connections (or bridging capital) to external organisations and communities with comparable economic status and needs. A low capability for collective action within squatter settlement communities was an underlying assumption in support of this thesis statement. The apparent lack of creditable external linkages to outside organisations is consistent with findings elsewhere and considered a validation of this assumption (Kleinhans et. al., 2007, p1076; Middleton, p. 1735).

Religious groups were the more active safety net for squatter settlers and given the importance of religion and spirituality to daily life for most in Fiji society this result was not surprising. Strong bonding ties, a particular characteristic of faith-based groups, are well known as a major source of emotional and material support (Kleinhans et al., p. 1074). These can be so strong that they exclude outsiders from the network and impose social obligations in support of cultural norms on the group member's. The case of the *Kecisimani* micro-community and in some instances the Nanuku Fijian neighbourhoods provide example of this, referred to by Kleinhans (2007) as 'the dark side' of social capital (p. 1074).

In this context the Fijian sense of religious 'gate keeping' coupled with the vertical bonds of authority toward church ministers but also tribal leaders are reinforced even in the urban context, where survival is reliant more on the need to establish bridging capital rather than strong bonding capital. Social capital theory, outlined in Chapter 2, contends that communities with good vertical links have active channels to facilitate the transfer of information or goods and services between themselves and key institutions (Pelling and High, 2005, p.

¹⁰⁴ Refer to Sections 4.2 to 4.4 about descriptions of ethnic and cultural identity constructs; 5.2.1 to 5.2.2 for the historical origins of Indo-Fijians to Fiji and 4.4.3 for a description of Indo- Fijian societal structures.

310). In reference to the Fiji Muslim League and Nanuku Settlement development systems, where there is strong reliance on faith-based groups and little in the way of vertical connectivity, it is hard not to agree with Putnams (1993 In Middleton, p. 1731) assertion that membership of religious organisations on these terms means “an alternative to civic community, not part of it”.

The lack of vertical connectivity as an asset of squatter settlements is further evidence that a more introspective group structuring acts as a potential limiting factor for squatter settlements. A predisposition to intra-community connectivity limits the opportunities for opening up connections to outside organisations that may be able to help with individual and/or community empowerment processes, and is a common issue within low socio-economic urban settings (Beard & Dasgupta, 2006, p. 1453). A lack of capability to establish vertical bonds is confirmation of how difficult it is for these settlements to formulate effective community development processes and a validation of the thesis statement.

8.4 Implications on Community Cohesion in Squatter Settlements

This section will focus on discussing aspects of community cohesion for the three community’s studied and examine how the organisational structures and social connectivity dimensions of community relations, as outlined earlier, have encouraged people to mobilise resources to better advance their collective and individual interests.

The extent of community cohesiveness within the three study settlements was examined in Chapter 7 in reference to Chan’s et. al (2006, p. 291 & 296) two-way analytical framework, described in Chapter 2 (Section 2.4.4) The community cohesiveness framework identifies key predisposing factors for community cohesion aligned to two different aspects of the human psyche: (a) the subjective component (people’s state of mind), including shared values and social tolerances, a sense of belonging and togetherness, a willingness to help, trust and honesty levels in public institutions and their office holders; as well as

(b) the objective components –(the way people act on perceptions) manifest through voluntary help and social giving, and vertical linkages to policy makers (Chan et al., 2006, p. 294). These subjective and objective components are considered alongside the concepts of shared values and connections and belonging.

Earlier in this thesis, in Chapter 2 (Section 2.4.4) the subjective components of social cohesion were described as the levels of trust and ‘shared values’ among community members, a ‘sense of belonging’, ‘solidarity’ and a ‘shared emotional connection’ (Carpiano, 2006, p. 168; Lev-Wiesel, 2006, p.335). At the community level Chan et. al. (2006, p.293) believed that the condition of a community’s collective actions described their ‘state of affairs’ in terms of the level of social cohesion that has developed within the community. These aspects of community cohesion have been argued to be maintained if people’s attitudinal disposition toward one another remained positive, allowing collective interaction to more readily take place (Chan et.al., 2006, p. 290). While trust, norms and values are common features to both the concept of social capital and social cohesion, what differentiates them is that social capital involves resources accessible through social networks, whereas social cohesion represents the intensity of people’s social networks, their sense of belonging and solidarity as a community (et. al. 2007, p. 1077). The following sub-sections will discuss the research findings pertaining to these subjective aspects of social cohesion namely shared values, tolerances and sense of belonging. These shared values led to **key factors seven and eight** which identified that settlements with one ethnicity shared a stronger sense of identity and were more willing to contribute resources toward community activities as the following section will outline.

8.4.1 Shared Values and Social Tolerances

Shared values and tolerances are elements of social cohesion that reinforce members’ confidence to act together. Knowledge of the differences and commonalities between groups of people builds levels of trust and confidence within the community (these also refer to the subjective components of horizontal interactions) (Chan et. al. 2006, p.293; Lev-Wiesel (2003, p. 335).

The findings about two important precursors of social cohesion, trust and honesty levels have been presented in Chapter 6 (Section 6.2.4). While, undoubtedly, there are shared values within the respective faith-based and cultural teachings of both ethnicities, these were often undermined by the stereotypical perceptions each community had of the other. Some of these stereotypes had been arising out of the lack of tolerances held for different religious based activities.¹⁰⁵ Apparent intolerances between ethnic neighbourhoods had an integral effect on the sense of belonging and togetherness within these communities. This sense of belonging will be subject of the next sub-section.

8.4.2 Sense of Belonging: Key Factors 7 and 8

The literature review in Chapter 3 outlined that it was not only possible for simultaneous identities to develop but that a multi-dimensionality of people's sense of identity can develop from the experiences with associations or from interactions with others across the groups to which people are members (Watson-Gegeo, 2005, p. 413; Giddens, 1991 In Mayo, 2000, p. 43). Authors reviewed in Chapter 3 also emphasised on the importance of lived experience, and how lived experience can inform people of potential coping strategies that have been used during times of hardship and may be employed in certain circumstances and alter the multi-dimensionality of their identity (Kurusiga, et al., 2006, p. 100-101; Mayo, 2000, p. 42; Ratuva, 2002a, p. 19). Community solidarity has been described by the literature as allowing people the confidence to express closely held values such as generosity, public-spiritedness, responsibility, trustworthiness and honesty. These among other social values have been considered indicators for the level of requisite community cohesiveness that a community displays (Sen, 1998, p. 6).

The findings presented in Chapter 7 examined aspects of community cohesion and established that the communities of one predominant ethnicity (Fiji Muslim League and Caubati Central) identified strongly with their settlement, were

¹⁰⁵ Examples of this have been provided in Section 8.2 and Chapter 7, Section 7.2.1.1 (a) regarding so-called Fijian intimidation tactics on Indo-Fijians.

willing to help neighbours if requested, or contribute resources toward achieving changes around shared problems. These aspects of community cohesion were considered to be the **seventh and eighth key factors**, potentially impacting positively on community dynamics. The strong sense of place was manifest in strong intra-community bonding networks. Thus, alignment to community through ethnicity builds a more supportive and caring outlook toward others in that community. This intense quality of internal supporting ties is consistent with the earlier findings and other urban studies about how communities with limited organisational reach find support in their own communities in Fiji (Tui, 2006, p. 2; Kurusiga et. al., 2006, p. 98-101).¹⁰⁶ Consequently strong community feelings of 'togetherness' have been observed in the single ethnic settlements (range was 50% of responses in Caubati Topline to 83% in Fiji Muslim League) who were also the most willing to donate time toward community focused activities (Researcher's Notes, 2008).

In contrast there was weak community cohesion for the integrated community Nanuku which instead, consisted of more staunchly held ethnic and religious bonding ties rather than bridging ties across social strata boundaries, (only 33% claimed there were feelings of 'togetherness'). While there was a strong sense of identity attached to the settlement locality for individual residents, there was a stronger sense of place aligned to respective ethnic neighbourhoods, (Researcher's Notes, 2008). This result was consistent with findings of other authors notably, Amin, (2002, p. 968); Docherty, Goodlad & Paddison, (2001 p. 2229) and Robinson (2005, p 1423). An example of how this lack of community integration affected aspects of community cooperation was in the disbanding of a community youth group called the 'Nanuku Uprising Youth Group'. According to the organiser, a long time resident of Nanuku, this group was initiated by a small group of members for charitable reasons and at its height consisted of up to 40 members from both ethnic neighbourhoods. The organisers claimed that internal conflicts arose between the Fijian youths because some did not like the success of the group ahead of one that the Fijian neighbourhood had operating – a Methodist Church based activity. Members of Nanuku Uprising Youth Group

¹⁰⁶ The Fijian squatter settlement studies cited here were referred to in Chapter 2, Section 2.4.

believed the integrity of the group was purposefully undermined, causing it to dissolve. The Indo-Fijian youths were effectively excluded from participating in community led projects, which prevented any opportunity through this integrative activity to understand common values and to develop tolerances within the community. Unfortunately this close- down reinforced the entrenched feelings of resentment Indo-Fijians held for Fijians (Researcher's Notes, 2008). While the respondents did not connect the close-down to any church connection it could be speculated (given the pre-school experience) that because the other group was Methodist Church sanctioned subversive elements sought to undermine the Nanuku Uprising Youth Group.

Chapters 3 and 4 explained the origins of deep cultural divisions but the youth group example above demonstrates that, in the words of Amin, (2002): "habitual contact is in itself no guarantor of cultural exchange and can even entrench animosities" (p. 968). Robinson (2005) refers to the: "contradictory connectiveness" that distinguishes social cohesion from community cohesion (p. 1416). In doing so, the author implies that social relations can be contradictory as well as complementary, which may explain why social animosity within Pacific communities can still exist between socially cohesive neighbourhoods at Nanuku. It seems that the stronger the ties that bind these micro-communities, the greater the possibility of propensity for social, racial or religious tensions to arise between them. Conversely, there is also the realisation that ways of working together cooperatively need to be found for collective betterment, which is demonstrated in the willingness of Nanuku residents to work with external groups. Other authors' views support the need for diverse communities to cooperate on critically assessing shared problems which can build trust and strengthen relationships (Lev-Wiesel, 2003; and MacLellan-Wright, et. al., 2007; Mitlin & Satterthwaite, 2004; O'Gorman, 1992; Racelis, 2005). These observations about 'contradictory connectiveness' would seem to apply in this instance with Nanuku, suggesting that a settlement consisting of a socially cohesive community in regard to some shared interests, can be divided over others between neighbourhoods, yet still be able to mobilise their social capital resources toward achieving mutual benefits.

The above observations about inclusive community cooperation would suggest that community empowerment programmes in urban settings should focus on two components of social cohesion. Firstly, in fostering tolerance and understanding of commonly held values as well as differences, social cohesion establishes a basis for community members' sense of 'belonging and togetherness', as citizens with equity. If this approach would have been applied in managing the above Nanuku Youth Group, this group would have been affiliated as an official 'community association' activity and would have focused on fostering shared understandings and cross cultural tolerances. It then may have prevailed. Secondly, social cohesion could serve assisting 'micro-communities' to articulate their specific needs and ways in which they can network together in support of shared interests (for example better access to public services or land security), rather than attempting to establish a broad-based community cohesion (Robinson, 2005, p. 1417). In essence, it is these components of social cohesion that the Nanuku NGO squatter network empowerment programme, referred to earlier, set out to achieve. However, their focal point appeared to have been solely at the settlement level.¹⁰⁷ While it was logical for homogenous communities to focus on their local level only, integrated communities like Nanuku were inadvertently neglecting the inclusivity of various micro-communities within their locale.

This section has highlighted the strong community cohesion that exists in two of the settlements Fiji Muslim League and Caubati Topline, contrasted to Nanuku where there was weaker community cohesion but stronger social cohesion within neighbourhoods. Strongly cohesive communities are well organised and with cooperative horizontal linkages. Within these communities, a sufficient number of people will spend some of their time volunteering or donating money to group activities. The act of giving is considered important to achieving community objectives (Lev-Weisel, 2003, p. 336). Important aspects of civic activity are, furthermore, the established vertical linkages communities have to state institutions, their officials and to other external agents. These directional interactions may help settlers influence policy directions, or conversely, provide

¹⁰⁷ See Sections 8.2.2 and 8.3.2 for more details about this NGO programme of support.

information for people to assimilate and use in support of community oriented activities that benefit members. The following sub-section will discuss the implications of the findings from Chapter 7 pertaining to settlers' ability to contribute toward these objective aspects of social cohesion.

8.5.3 Volunteerism and Social Giving: Key Factors 9, 10, 12 and 13

The roles of residents in voluntary actions through community group structures have been described by Docherty et. al. (2001) as the: “providers of services or sources of assistance and social cohesion” (p. 2227). As described in Chapter 7 the level of volunteerism and social giving in the settlements studied was higher (the latter averaging 6% of the total weekly income) than would have been expected of communities where most settlers were either living below the poverty line or suffering regular hardship. Most of these donations (73%) were in support of faith-based group activities, while other priority community groups (18%) accounted for a majority of the balance.¹⁰⁸ Indo-Fijians contributed more in time and money toward community activities. Such contributions are in distinction to previous studies that emphasized the burdens of social obligations on Fijians¹⁰⁹ (Kingi, 2006, p. 11; Siwatibau, 1997, p. 123). Two aspects of social giving; firstly the significant level of weekly donations by squatter households, and secondly the different levels of volunteering and contributing between Indo-Fijians and to Fijians have been defined as the **ninth and tenth key factors** where potentially positive impacts can accrue on community dynamics but at a cost in terms of householders exposure to more hardship.

The proposition for engaging voluntary activity as an essential aspect of building social cohesion is largely based on a European- model of community dynamics (Putnam 1995, p. 65; Robinson and Williams, 2001, p. 55). In the Pacific culture, using social cohesion indicators like trust and social giving to diagnose and understand the dynamics of social relations and networks in communities, can present some challenges. According to Robinson and Williams (2001) volunteering in Pacific cultures was as much a matter of social obligation and

¹⁰⁸ Refer to Chapter 7, Section 7.2.1.2(b) for fuller explanation of the breakdown of social giving.

¹⁰⁹ See Chapter 4, Section 4.4.2 about the expected tithing and social obligations that the Methodist Church place on Fijians.

respect for the whole community rather than choice, and not so much a need to be rewarded individually for that effort (Robinson and Williams, 2001, p. 65). In this sense voluntary activity is seen to hold, "...a value beyond any monetary equivalent" (Robinson and Williams, 2001, p. 69).

The willingness to act, and consequently the levels of volunteerism and social giving, is evident from settlers who felt the need to support community wide activities and that in engaging in such supporting activities would benefit in return. However, settlers generally felt that there was a lack of benefits in return for their voluntary involvement. This perception was particularly linked to their involvement in shared community events and highlighted in particular by Indo-Fijian residents at Nanuku, as previously explained (Researchers Notes, 2008). More directly respondents were asked to verify what (if any) tangible benefits, from supporting activities impacted on the householder's income status. Results, presented in Chapter 7 describe a lack of direct benefits to individuals within communities, accruing from their current levels of civic activity. The limitations evident from living with poverty and meeting social giving obligations become **the twelfth and thirteenth key factors** considered a constraint to potential community development processes.

In more detail, the **twelfth key factor** points out actual household poverty levels within these settlements (at 66%) of households living below the urban squatter basic needs poverty line, were higher than expected and higher than the most recently recorded poverty survey figure of 40% for squatter settlements (Mohanty, 2006, p. 2). Furthermore almost half of all households were considered 'food insecure' or living in absolute poverty, with the remaining households experiencing frequent hardship. The low quality housing and people's current job security were the other two key areas of concern for most settlers, (as explained in Chapter 6).

The **thirteenth key factor** described constraints because of household exposure to hardship. Although there were differences in the levels of (monetary) social giving, no significant difference was detected between Indo-Fijian and Fijian poverty levels. However, the extra expense of monetary giving

added pressure to an already inadequate weekly household budget. This extra budget pressure, more often than not, meant extended periods of hardship and difficult choices, for settlers who had to decide what expenses could be cut. Unfortunately it was the children's needs that were most likely to suffer in terms of hunger and reduced education opportunities. For Indo- Fijians', food purchases were the first reduction from a household budget, and for Fijian children, school fees were the first item removed during times of hardship. Correspondingly Indo-Fijians indicated that their first preference for spending choices for extra money would be on education and Fijians indicated food as a first choice. This stronger emphasis on education by Indo-Fijians has already been observed in earlier accounts on this aspect of Indo-Fijian culture (Ratuva, 2002).¹¹⁰

Most householders believed, as outlined in Chapter 6, that they were capable of effecting processes of social change themselves. However, this perception was different to fieldwork observations which showed the reality as being most suffered from low levels of empowerment, and that these were affecting the overall well being of families. Most settlers explained that their main focus was on weekly survival, as explained by two residents from Nanuku,: "All we know is to survive - go to work, come home, look after children" and "We are just self-sufficient and surviving for the family" (Researcher's Notes, 2008). This survival mode for most inhabitants limits the empowerment experience which potentially could enrich their social capital. These results confirm two thesis assumptions: assumption I, *that squatter communities experience high levels of poverty due to a lack of access to basic services and regular means of living*; and assumption II, *that squatters rely heavily on their own (limited) resourcefulness and familial connections as the primary means of survival*.

8.4.4 Section Summary: Implications on Community Cohesion

This section addressed the implications of the findings on the second component of community functionality, social cohesiveness, for the three settlements studied. All measured by how well empowered the settlements are

¹¹⁰ Refer Chapter 3, Section 3.4 on Social Identity Influences in Fiji and Chapter 4, Section 4.4.3 Reflections on Indo-Fijian Culture.

to work together in assimilating the resources they hold to address shared needs, which can in turn help to improve lifestyle choices

All settlers were found to identify strongly with their settlement but in Nanuku this identification was more aligned to the various ethnical micro-communities than the whole for Indo-Fijians. This sense of place was manifest in strong intra-community bonding networks indicating cohesiveness. All settlements were also found to suffer monetary hardship and poverty levels above the reported poverty squatter settlement levels. The constraints due to income limited the opportunity for community empowerment. Social giving and voluntary contributions towards community or religious groups stressed an already burdened budget.

These aspects of social cohesion were both positive and negative. Positive in the sense that people were willing to give time and money toward community activities thought to provide benefits to the group but negative in that there was limited opportunity for vertical connectivity arising out of these activities tending to underscore the limited reach of community organisational structures highlighted earlier in Chapter 8 and consistent with other studies of urban squatters. The concept of contradictory cohesiveness was introduced to explain the apparent ethnic tensions that exist within the integrated Nanuku settlement. There were tensions about how to contribute, for what activities and who benefited most but an underlying acceptance that working together would not always be easy underlining both the negative and positive elements to community social cohesion in diverse settlements.

8.5 Conclusion

The main objective of this study was to consider how social integration, religion and cultural influences may impact on the development of urban communities and its resultant effects to individual well being. Several answers have been identified by this chapter which considers research results. Social integration is

shown, in this research, to be hindered by trust issues particularly when there are religious and ethnic differences.

Traditional cultural influences, notably among Fijians, and with particular regard to the place of religion and religious leaders hinders development of urban communities for several reasons. Firstly the role of women and the potential for connectivity remains submerged in a traditional role of child minding and domestic duties. Leadership opportunities for women are not encouraged due to traditional and cultural social structures. Secondly, the role of religion and the place of the Church in the lives of Fijians leave limited opportunity for non-church related groups to play any significant part in settlement life. In mixed ethnic communities this domination by religious leaders prevents both ethnic groups from social capital building opportunities offered through external connections. Thirdly, Fijians accept the decision making, of religious leaders and church committees, without question due to cultural belief systems, specifically the value of not questioning authority held by Fijians. These differences constrained empowerment processes which in turn limit cohesiveness and subsequently social capital building processes.

Research question 1 asked: *what are the processes by which communities mobilise social capital in informal and squatter settlements in Fiji*. This research shows communities mobilise through participation in groups and there is a strong bias towards faith based groups particularly with Fijians. Cost, travel and religious gate keeping kept group participation mostly to within settlement communities rather than external groups. Group organisation and participation was slightly higher among those with more income leaving those with very limited income isolated. Trust hampers social capital mobilisation at horizontal levels because of ethnic and religious mistrust and vertical levels through a lack of trust in officials from authorities including government, police and religious leaders. Vertical connections in relation to trust were highest for NGO's, teachers and medical personnel. These trust issues and confined participation led to limited organisational reach which impacted negatively on social capital building and community social cohesion.

However, aspects of social cohesion were both positive and negative. Positive in the sense that people were willing to give time and money toward community activities thought to provide benefits to the group but negative in that there was limited opportunity for vertical connectivity arising out of these activities tending to underscore the limited reach of community organisational structures highlighted earlier and consistent with other studies of urban squatters. The concept of contradictory cohesiveness was introduced to explain the apparent ethnic tensions that exist within the integrated Nanuku settlement. There were tensions about how to contribute, for what activities and who benefited most but an underlying acceptance that working together would not always be easy underlining both the negative and positive elements to community social cohesion in diverse settlements.

CHAPTER 9

SUSTAINING SOCIAL CAPITAL IN INFORMAL AND SQUATTER SETTLEMENTS IN FIJI

9.1 Introduction

The primary objective of this thesis was to explore what cultural and ideological barriers people in squatter settlements face that may either support or block community development processes. The initial assumption leading the arguments of this thesis was that squatter householders are faced with significant constraints that impede the level of social cohesion within their communities and hence adversely affecting community and individual well-being. A comparative analysis of three contrasting urban squatter settlements in Fiji was undertaken to address this assumption with three main research questions:

1. How do culture, religion and other lived experience impact on urban community relations?
2. How do belief systems, such as expressed in culture and religion, support or block potentially positive changes to urban squatter community development processes that may otherwise improve squatter householders' well-being?
3. What strategies could effectively be pursued to augment and sustain social capital in urban squatter communities?

The primary concern of the thesis is the hypothesis that Fijians and Indo Fijians alike in informal and squatter settlements face significant cultural and ideological barriers that either support or block community development processes. The consequence of this assumption is profound as it is impeding the level of social

cohesion and adversely affecting the well-being of squatter householders'. The hypothesis is supported by five key assumptions as follows:

- I. Informal settlements and squatter communities experience high levels of poverty due to lack of access to basic services and regular means of living;
- II. Settlements householders rely significantly on their own initiatives, resourcefulness and familial connections as a means of survival;
- III. The social cohesiveness of squatter settlements relies on established traditional customs and religious affiliations observed within the community, which provide the primary basis for social identity and cooperative interactions;
- IV. The community development model is based on this strong sense of place yet capability for collective action within squatter settlement communities is constrained due to their poverty situation.
- V. It is possible to measure these different components and factors of social capital and analyse the status of a community's functionality

To address these questions, it was necessary to devise a suitable way of measuring community capacity. The approach taken was a pragmatic one that built on a direction set by previous authors about how best to measure social capital in communities (Grootaert & van Bastelaer, 2001, p. 21; Grootaert et. al., 2004, p. 25; Heinrich, 2004, p. 1). A Social Capital-Integrated Questionnaire (SC-IQ) was a primary method for data collection in this thesis. The SC-IQ tool provided a core set of questions for which to engage squatter settlers. The full methodological framework has been presented in Chapter 5.

The SC-IQ survey included sets of questions that solicited people's perceptions based on four 'dimensions' of community capacity and nine 'operational domains' as sub-sets of interest that fell within these with the purpose to assess key social capital indicators that support community capacity assessment. The four dimensions were:

- (a) Community Organisational Structure: Domains examples included: 'community structures' and 'participation';
- (b) Socio-cultural Environment: Domains examples: 'shared values' and 'collective action');
- (c) Community Values: Domains examples: 'social cohesion', 'tolerances' and 'inclusivity'; and
- (d) Community Impact: Domains examples: 'critical assessment' and 'resource mobilisation'.

The various domains comprise a specific set of social indicators of capacity, (for example under the community organisational structure dimension specific domains of social capital would include the numbers of groups, their diversity, membership and frequency of participation). How people act within each domain provides the indicator as to what influence they may have on the community capacity process (Laverack, 2006b, p. 267).

With guidance from industry commentators and thesis supervisors, the three squatter settlements were selected from the Greater Suva Region, the most densely populated part of Fiji and eighteen participants were interviewed, six from each settlement. Of interest was whether there were distinctions between the settlements, one Indo-Fijian, one Fijian and the third an integrated community, around how they mobilised social capital resources available to them, and in the barriers they faced to enact those processes.

For data analysis a mixed-method approach was applied, involving the researcher's own Microsoft Excel spreadsheet to process the quantitative data trends across each settlement for each question, dimension and domain in combination with a qualitative analysis of some of the open questions. The results from this were assimilated using a social capital capacity assessment tool so that a 'snapshot in time' of the 'state of community affairs' on community capacity could be presented (Chan, 2006, p.289; Pelling and High, 2005, p. 8). The outcome provides a baseline capacity profile for each settlement for future

comparative assessments (Laverack, 2007, p. 73-76). Each of the nine social capital domains will be discussed in this conclusive chapter in relation to the capacity assessments of the three settlements.

The aspects of social capital examined were reviewed in Chapter 2 and focused firstly on organisational structures, measured as the numbers of groups operating in the settlements, the level of member's involvement in them and the extent of their social relationships. Secondly, social cohesiveness measured by how well empowered the settlements are to work together in assimilating the resources they hold to address shared needs, which can in turn help to improve lifestyle choices (Laverack, 2001, p. 139; Putnam, 1995, p. 2).

Recognised in many of the social dynamics outlined above is the role that traditional support structures, (familial ties and kinship sharing) religious beliefs, culture and lived experience play in determining the multidimensionality of peoples identity in the urban setting (Kurusiga, et al., 2006, p. 100-101; Ratuva, 2002a, p. 12; Sanderson, 2006, p. 7). Aspects of culture and identity were reviewed in Chapter 3. Within this context, fundamental differences were expected in how the cultural boundaries and these other precursors of identity would be navigated by Fijians and Indo-Fijians in their approach to community organisation and cooperation, critical to mobilising social capital resources (Stewart, 2001, p. 2; Ratuva, 2002a, p. 12). Chapter 4 provided a cultural, historical and geographical context on the squatter settlements that were chosen for fieldwork in 2008. Similar to other Pacific Islands, Fiji is experiencing an increasing urban migration trend and growth in illegal squatter settlements. Here Fijians and Indo-Fijians alike who chose to live as squatters in the pursuit of better opportunity, for education and employment, face overcrowding and substandard living conditions (Barr, 2007, p 8).

The results of the survey questionnaire were described in Chapters 6 and 7, and then discussed in Chapter 8. Thirteen key factors considered to potentially constrain community functionality could be extracted from the outcome of the data analysis. The case studies presented in this thesis showed the significance of these constraining key factors and especially in how they related to

community functionality and capacity. Community capacity encompasses the social capital resources held within the dimensions of community structures, social interactions and community cohesion. The results found in these case studies supported the general understanding that when a combination of community functionality and cohesion is mobilised toward common goals, that capacity can facilitate social change and improvements for community members (Fischer et. al., 2002, p. 5; Laverack, 2006b, p. 267).

This concluding chapter will follow on to discuss the implications of the findings from this study. These concluding discussions will be presented as an overall community capacity assessment for the three settlements studied, arising out of the results and discussion on the key findings. The capacity assessment tool will be described and the results interpreted with an applied focus reflecting the intent to present the assessment results in a pragmatic and relevant way that can be used also to monitor community capacities in squatter settlements in future.¹¹¹ Following will be a section presenting recommendations on future research and practice in the areas of social capital and community capacity, arising from the overall findings presented in this thesis. Finally the Chapter will provide a thesis conclusion framed around the original study hypothesis and the extent to which these could be verified by this research.

9.2 Implications of Social Capital Resources on Community Capacity

Communities which are well organised are generally also more cohesive and interactive so provide a better operating environment to encourage networking and mobilise resources (Putnam, 1995, p. 2). Community capacity was defined in Chapter 2 as the confluence of underlying factors of healthy community functioning's, encompassing all the aspects governing peoples' daily relationships and interactions, (both horizontal and vertical) which may influence and constrain the quality of people's lives (Labonte and Laverack 2001, p. 112). A body of recent literature (also outlined in Chapter 2) demonstrated how social

¹¹¹ Refer Chapter 1, Section 1.2.

capital indicators can be used to diagnose community functionality in the urban setting (Laverack, 2001, 2003, 2006a, 2007; Lev-Wiesel 2003; MacLellan-Wright, et. al., 2007; and Anderson, et. al, 2007). The use of social indicators in this way can present a snapshot in time of the 'state of community affairs' within a defined community of choice (Chan, 2006, p.289). The researchers view is that this approach to measuring community capacity, in a way that recognised the breadth of the social capital dynamics involved and how those resources can be mobilised has provided a useful tool for presenting the results of this thesis field study results.

An approach was also developed for graphically presenting the outcomes of the capacity diagnosis for each settlement studied based on previous community capacity development work in Fiji (Laverack 2006b, p. 268). Discussing the scope of various social capital indicators resulting out of the survey and interview process is helpful for unpacking the underlying social issues squatter settlers face in everyday life. A method of graphing the results of that assessment helped by providing a visual presentation around which to communicate more effectively the strengths and weaknesses of individual community capacities (see also Laverack 2006b, p. 269). The constraining key factors that could be revealed, (listed in Chapter 8) contributed to a better understanding of these social issues. While the list is helpful to highlight key issues requiring discussion with the community members and other stakeholders, the domains of influence are complex and the interrelationships between them dynamic presenting difficulties for comparative analysis across a number of diverse communities. These issues are also compounding as was outlined in Chapter 4 earlier. Fiji is faced with increasing growth in squatter settlements set to exceed 730 settlements within the next fifteen years (McKinnon et al., 2007, p. ii). Some of those settlers seek to understand more about the policy and economical affects to their livelihoods and government to find sustainable solutions for the increasing urban migration trend. Presenting the results of social capital studies concerning squatter settlements in a strategic way would add more value to the subjective discussions about key factors and findings and the complex dynamics behind them and how they influence socio-economic conditions of squatter settlers in Fiji. This study

adapted a recently developed analytical approach that represents the diagnosis of community capacity visually, helping to negate these obstacles and improve understandings about the social capital affects on communities. Managing discussions in this way may also point to potential areas where targeted assistance could benefit these communities (Laverack 2007, p. 129). This will be presented in the next section.

Hence, the researcher created a spider web configuration to present the results of this research in a more strategic way and provides a 'snapshot in time' of the 'state of community affairs' in the settlements studied. This graphic technique was first used by Laverack's (2006) in his community empowerment work with rural Fijian villages and represents consistency with previous community capacity diagnosis techniques (Laverack, 2006b, p. 270-271). Apart from highlighting strengths and weaknesses within each settlement the other advantage is that the combined data can provide a baseline assessment of community capacity development across multiple communities against which future such assessments can be made, in turn providing a means with which to measure progressive change (Laverack, 2006b, p. 273). Chapter 5 provided explanation of the theoretical basis for utilising the capacity assessment and spider web approach for diagnosing community capacity as a part of the full methodological framework adopted for this thesis.

It is contended that the implementation of these tools presents a potential application for development practitioners to employ as an instrument to monitor community capacity development. The following section will present and then discuss the results of the ensuing diagnosis to highlight the relative strengths and weaknesses of the three settlements across the nine domains of capacity (of community organisational structures and social cohesion) at the time of the social capital survey. Later, Section 9.4, will address the limitations identified during the application of this capacity assessment tool.

9.2.1 An Assessment of Community Capacity in Squatter Settlements

The application of the diagnosis tool was based on the social capital indicators gathered from the appropriate domain in the SC-IQ survey and those findings

were presented in Chapters 6 and 7. The approach to capacity diagnosis was to assess these key indicators under each of the nine defined operational 'domains' of community capacity. The number of specific indicators applicable to each domain varies, (between 2 and 9 indicators) and each was ranked individually and aggregated by settlement to provide an overall score. In recording the overall score there was a weighting attributed to indicators for some of the domains. For others no weighting was applied, following the assumption that they all the social indicators for that domain contribute equally to defining the strength of the domain being measured. Consequently the indicators represent a subjective ranking by the researcher. There was no triangulation of the assessments with community members or a reference group. Rather the results are the sole interpretation of the researcher based on the findings and observations discussed in Chapters 6-8. The list of domains assessed with relevant diagnosis comments are presented below. In each case the relevant outcome sought is stated followed by the list of indicators assessed under each domain. The composite ranking for each settlement was derived from the average of each indicator score and is provided after the assessment. Each settlement is referred to by its code (Nanuku as 'Nan'; Caubati Topline as 'CCT' and Fiji Muslim League as 'FML'). Appendix 1 provides fuller account of the weightings applied and the ranking process. Thus the domains analysis is as follows:

1. Organisational Structures: Outcome – broad and empowered
 - Indicator 1 [I1]: The number of group categories from the eighteen specified as possible, represented per community
 - Indicator 2 [I2]: Number of actual organisations, associations or groups per community

Overall there was a lower than expected number of groups and a narrow range of categories of groups either operating or represented in each community compared to what was expected, particularly in Fiji Muslim League, resulting in an overall ranking as follows: Nan 2.0; CCT 2.0; FML 1.5.
2. Participation: Outcome - improved

- [11-3] Membership: Those belonging to community groups; the levels in three most important groups as prioritised by community; as compared to religious groups only
- [14-5] Participation rates: Level of activity of members in community organisation activities or projects
- [16-7] Frequency of activity and gender balance
- [18] Organisations present in communities are addressing and overcoming barriers to participation of their members in these activities, (subjective analysis)
- [19] Organisations use a range of methods to inform members and other stakeholders about the activities or projects

Overall membership and participation levels were high but within the three prioritised groups only and particularly religious groups with the wider groups less patronised resulting in an overall ranking of: Nan 2.2; CCT 2.5; FML 2.2

3. Leadership: Outcome - developed locally

- [11] Elected by democratic means
- [12] Decisions by democratic means
- [13] Leaders determined as effective in role

Overall, while leadership levels were strong in Fijian communities there was a tendency for autocratic decision-making and lack of encouragement to all community members to participate compared Indo-Fijian communities resulting in an overall ranking of: Nan 2.3; CCT 3.0; FML 1.6.

4. Sense of Community: Outcome - well developed sense of trust and belonging including increased local controls

- [11] belongingness
- [12] Levels trust and honesty within the community

Overall communities with one predominant ethnic group identified strongly with their settlement and locality. This sense of place was generally manifest in strong intra-community (bonding and/or bridging) networks, thus a more supportive/caring outlook toward others in their

immediate neighbourhood. For the integrated community Nanuku a strong sense of place was more aligned to the closeness of bonding ties within specific neighbourhoods rather than bridging ties across social strata boundaries which were regarded as weak, resulting in an overall ranking of: Nan 2.0; CCT 2.5; FML 3.0.

5. Problem assessment: Outcome - capacity increases
- [11] Extent of bridging linkages to other groups and/or communities
 - [12] Social exclusion from community activities
 - [13] Willingness of people to help with community or neighbourhood activities/projects

Overall there was a general lack of encouragement for members to establish linkages or coordinate with other community based groups thus a tendency to over-rely on resources generated out of the group's members already belonged to, rather than looking to leverage from aligning with other groups. Levels of exclusion were moderate due to affordability concerns or in the case of Nanuku neighbourhood tensions, resulting in an overall ranking as follows: Nan 2.3; CCT 3.0; FML 2.7.

6. Critical Assessment: Outcome - enhanced awareness
- [11] Extent of information from external sources canvassed
 - [12] Sharing of knowledge and learning gained from outside information sources horizontally
 - [13] People are willing to help or come together to discuss common issues in areas of social, political, and economic influences

Sources of information and sharing were limited due to affordability. While people were generally willing to help or come together to discuss issues there was a lack of critical assessment of the social, political, and economic influences that may impact them. Fiji Muslim League was particularly limited in this area. Overall this was demonstrated in the low level of perceived benefits gained from membership of community structures resulting in an overall ranking as follows: Nan 2.3; CCT 2.3; FML 1.3

- 7.. External Linkages: Outcome - strengthened, including with public institutions and other organisations
- [1] Extent of vertical linkages
 - [2] Degree of activity of NGOs in the community
- Networking with public institutions or outside organisations was generally low with the exception of Nanuku which remained relatively more active in its vertical connectivity than Caubati and in particular with NGOs, resulting in an overall ranking of: Nan 2.25; CCT 1.5; FML 0.5
8. Resource Mobilisation: Outcome - improved
- [1] Levels of volunteerism and social giving
 - [2] Encouragement to establish linkages or negotiate support from outside networks
- Levels of volunteerism and social giving was generally higher than would be expected in communities that faced hardship challenges and for Nanuku, where cross cultural/ethnic and religious tolerances were low. There was also a lack of encouragement to establish linkages or negotiate support from outside networks for mobilising complimentary resources, resulting in an overall ranking of: Nan 2.0; CCT 2.0; FML 1.7.
9. External Agent Supports: Outcome - equitable relationships created
- [1] Ratio of external groups to number of internal groups with the higher the ratio (in favour of external groups) the less isolated the community will be from outside sources
 - [2] Levels of trust and honesty with outside supporting bodies
- Levels of trust and honesty with outside institutional bodies were generally lower than would be expected if communities were to take advantage of what these institutions have to offer. Indo-Fijians were particularly untrusting of the law and justice system. The ratio of external groups to number of internal groups - with the higher the ratio in favour of external groups the less isolated the community will be from outside sources of assistance or resources were low as was expected. Caubati had greatest numbers of external supports compared to Nanuku and Fiji

Muslim League who had the lowest ratio, resulting in an overall ranking as follows: Nan 2.5; CCT 2.75; FML 1.5.

The combined scores of each domain from the above assessment process are presented in Table 9.1 below. Each settlement domain ranking is compared to the overall average for all three settlements in the column to the right (titled Average 2008 Squatters).

Table 9.1: Domains Diagnosis: Squatter Settlements, Suva, Fiji

| Yates' 2008 Domains Diagnosis | | Squatter Settlement | | | Average 2008 Squatters |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Domain | | Nanuku | Caubati Topline | Fiji Muslim League | |
| 1 | Community Structures | 2.0 | 2.0 | 1.5 | 1.8 |
| 2 | Participation | 2.2 | 2.5 | 2.2 | 2.3 |
| 3 | Leadership | 2.3 | 3.0 | 1.6 | 2.3 |
| 4 | Sense of community | 2.0 | 2.5 | 3.0 | 2.5 |
| 5 | Problem Assessment | 2.3 | 3.0 | 2.7 | 2.7 |
| 6 | Critical Assessment | 2.3 | 2.3 | 1.3 | 2.0 |
| 7 | External Linkages | 2.3 | 1.5 | 0.5 | 1.4 |
| 8 | Resource mobilisation | 2.0 | 2.0 | 1.7 | 1.9 |
| 9 | External Agent Supports | 2.5 | 2.8 | 1.5 | 2.3 |

These figures are the source for the spider graph (Figure 9.1) that follows. For example the analysis of 'Sense of Community' Domain 4 above resulted in a rank for Fiji Muslim League or 3.0 compared to Nanuku at 2.0 and Caubati Topline at 2.5. These rankings are graphed on the 'spider-web' appropriately to provide the visual representation of the capacity assessment result for this domain. Each capacity assessment rank uses the following ranking scale:

Rank Indicator

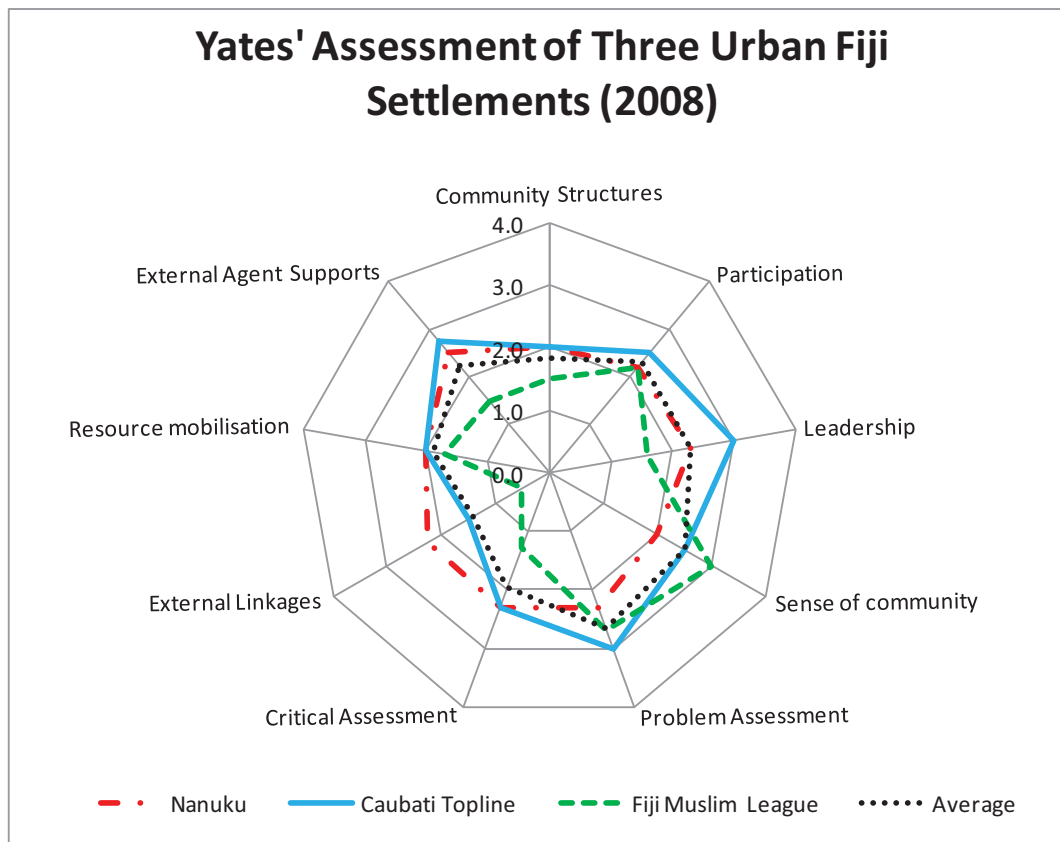
- 0 Non Existent
- 1 Low
- 2 Moderately Low
- 3 Moderately High
- 4 High

The spider graph is analogous to the form of a bicycle wheel and spoke arrangement. Each Domain is represented by a spoke and the ranking numbers appear in the centre of the graph, indicate the different levels of capacity for each. For the example above of Domain 4 the spider web for Fiji Muslim League intersects the spoke of Domain 4 at the level 3.0 ranking and is the highest rank for this Domain of the three settlement profiles.

9.2.2 Community Capacity Interpretation

The spider graph configuration of Figure 9.1 below presents the outcome of this analysis of urban squatter settlements using the nine domains of functionality, as summarised in Table 9.1 above. Each settlement is represented in this graph with its own profile, as indicated from the key at the bottom of the figure.

Figure 9.1: Community Capacity Comparisons for Squatter Settlements in Suva, Fiji - June 2008



Interpretation of Settlement Profile Results: Figure 9.1 and later in Figure 9.2

The average figures for all three settlements are presented as one (dotted) profile line also. The spider web scale is based on the ranking for each domain as determined by the above assessment process with the ranking of zero meaning the indicator (domain) is 'non-existent', up to a ranking of four meaning there is a 'high' level outcome for that indicator. Two distinctive zones are distinguished in each of the spider web graphs. The right side of the spider web (from 'community structures' domain to 'problem assessment') represents the community functionality assessment, how well communities are organised and cooperate toward identifying issues that affect them. The left side of the spider web (from 'critical assessment' to 'external agent supports') represents the cooperative social interaction assessment, how well communities marshal the combination of social capital resources available to them, (not only from within but also to negotiate with external sources) and strategise ways to effect desirable changes to their social or living conditions. These zones have been demarcated in Tables 9.1 and 9.2 below by the use of a double line. The sequence of presenting the domains in the graph below is new. Earlier research by Laverack (2006b and 2007) presented the domains in a different orientation and focused the interpretation on individual domains. The presentation applied above represents, in the researcher's view, a more compelling way to interpret and contrast the strengths and weaknesses of each settlement. It is supported by Narayan's and Cassidy's (2001) observations that a strong sense of community engenders active groups (the right side of the graph and conversely, a lack of community cohesion impede the creation or maintenance of active groups. Hence, a lack of community cohesion stifles cooperative social interaction (the left side of the graph) and with that community development processes (p. 71). Settlement profiles can be described in terms of their capability with reference to each of the two separate zones of the graph, explained above based on how their 'spider web' (which represents the profile) is oriented across the graph.

Settlement Capacity Profile Descriptions

The integrated community Nanuku profile demonstrated a lower level of functionality (right side of graph) due to a weaker perception of organisational

structure and 'participation' levels, 'sense of community' and 'problem assessment' indicating community capacity in that area is lacking. However, Nanuku shows a greater propensity for cooperative social interaction (left side of graph) due to a demonstrated ability to 'critically assess' issues and 'mobilise' resources. A possible explanation for this contrast is that while there were and continue to be conflicting issues of an ethnic and religious nature, the community was confronting these daily and in constructive ways within the remit of groups activities. The diversity of groups had also seen more success with establishing vertical linkages to the outside and there were external agencies supporting community driven activities (through the squatter network activities for example). The combination of wider connectivity and especially to external agents provided more positive results for the various community groups, which in turn strengthened the resolve of the community to seek solutions for its shared problems. This strategy for mobilising resources relates to one of the ancillary question of this thesis (question 3): *What strategies could effectively be pursued to augment and sustain social capital in urban squatter communities?*

In particular the Caubati Topline settlement profile demonstrated a moderate level of functionality due to stronger 'participation' levels which took advantage of relatively fair organisational structures, highly commended 'leadership' quality perceptions, a moderately strong 'sense of community' and 'problem assessment' indicating community capacity in that area is good. Caubati Toplines propensity for cooperative social interaction was variable due to a weak 'external linkages' but a demonstrated ability to 'critically assess' issues and 'mobilise' resources. A possible explanation for variability this was the strong level of 'community organisation' where 'participation' levels and respect for others opinions was evident. As mentioned in Chapters 6 and 7 the encouragement of the *Ramayan Madali* and *Baal Vikash* faith-based groups actively supported settlers establishing vertical linkages and alternate sources of social interaction and information. Overall the vitality of community group activities provided benefits and support to community members (for example social music and sports groups and from a savings group the less financial members were assisted with medical and education needs) demonstrating an overall moderately strong community capacity. This is another strategy for

mobilising resources relating to a thesis ancillary question (question 3): *What strategies could effectively be pursued to augment and sustain social capital in urban squatter communities?*

In contrast, the Fiji Muslim League settlement profile demonstrated the weakest level of functionality due to its strong internalised 'community organisation' structures and low 'leadership' quality perceptions. On the positive side there was a strong 'sense of community' reflected in the high participation rates in the few groups that were active there and this is reflected in its perception for being moderately capable in 'problem assessment.' Fiji Muslim League's propensity for cooperative social interaction was weak due to the lack of 'external linkages' and use of 'external agents' which constrained ability to 'critically assess' issues and 'mobilise' resources. The explanation for this has been described in detail earlier but to summarise, while there was vitality in the community's religiously motivated activities that strong model of spirituality in community development demonstrating a constraint to community capacity thus far. An over reliance on strong religious connectivity can therefore be a constraint to community development, which is evident from the result of the Fiji Muslim League settlement profile and consistent with findings from other Fijian community capacity research (Laverack, 2006b, p. 270). This outcome also validates the thesis statement:¹¹² *Squatter settlements face significant cultural and ideological barriers that either support or block community development processes.*

Further Comparisons between Squatter Settlement Profiles

Considering some of the contrasts between the three settlement profiles, Figure 9.1 demonstrates that overall the level of community functionality and capability within squatter settlements is low to moderate due to the considerable constraints, other than poverty, that settlers face in mobilising resources ,confirming thesis assumption IV: *Squatter community development models are based on a strong sense of place yet capability for collective action is constrained due to their poverty situation.*

¹¹² Refer to Chapter 1, Section 1.3.

The thesis assumptions, IV was built on the notion that strongly organised and cohesive communities could mobilise resources more effectively. The Nanuku capacity profile demonstrates two important considerations within the context of urban life within Fiji squatter settlements: Firstly, an integrated community, while presenting challenges to its development model can still function effectively to address its common needs as outlined earlier in this section; Secondly, the more homogenous a community is with respect to ethnic or religious values and norms, (for example Caubati Central or Fiji Muslim League) the more predisposed people will be to rely on horizontal connectivity and internal social relations to find solutions for community issues, even when considering the Caubati Topline capacity profile where settlers capability is primarily reflected in a higher external/internal group ratio. The Fiji Muslim League profile demonstrates however, that stronger bonding capital on its own can become a limiting factor to the community's future development. Thus, a heavy reliance on internal connectivity can limit the extent of social capital resources available to a community and preclude it from access to vital assistance from beyond itself. Furthermore, this low level of capacity can also limit the ability of community groups to critically assess what to do about solving commonly identified problems and consistent with other findings on urban community development, (Kleinhans et. al., 2007, p1076; Middleton, 2005 et. al., p. 1735). The risk with this community development model is that if community groups do not achieve satisfactory outcomes for those they represent then there is potential for social structures to either become more isolated from the outside world, or conversely, the residents become disillusioned. As is evident from the findings of this study internal oriented community structures can lead to an increase in negative social behaviours that exaggerate intolerances or entrench even further the vulnerability of its members to poverty.

The final observation on community capability arising from Figure 9.1 is that while Nanuku (in particular) and Caubati Topline may have a better foundation and capability to mobilise resources for mutual benefits, (strong community social cohesion) settlers have not yet been able to capitalise on this capability (less community organisational reach and external linkages). Neither have

settlers been encouraged to cultivate further the current external linkages they have established which could augment those inherently stronger internal potentials.

Comparing the Squatter Study Profiles with Other Work on Community Capacity

The foundational work of Laverack (2003 and 2006b) with rural Fijian communities was based on health promotional work and involved community self assessment of seven domains of functionality at Naloto and Nasikawa villages. The results of his diagnosis are reproduced in Table 9.2 below, alongside the average (2008) ranking of the three squatter settlements studied, (in the right hand column). The approach to interpretation is the same as outlined earlier for the squatter settlement results in Table 9.1. The ranking indicators of 1-4 for both pieces of research (Laveracks and the squatter study) are of equivalent value. There are, however, two points to note when considering Laverack's results: Firstly, ten years have passed since Laverack's (2003) study; and secondly, there are two domains which had not been assessed. These domains were 'sense of community' and 'external agent support'.

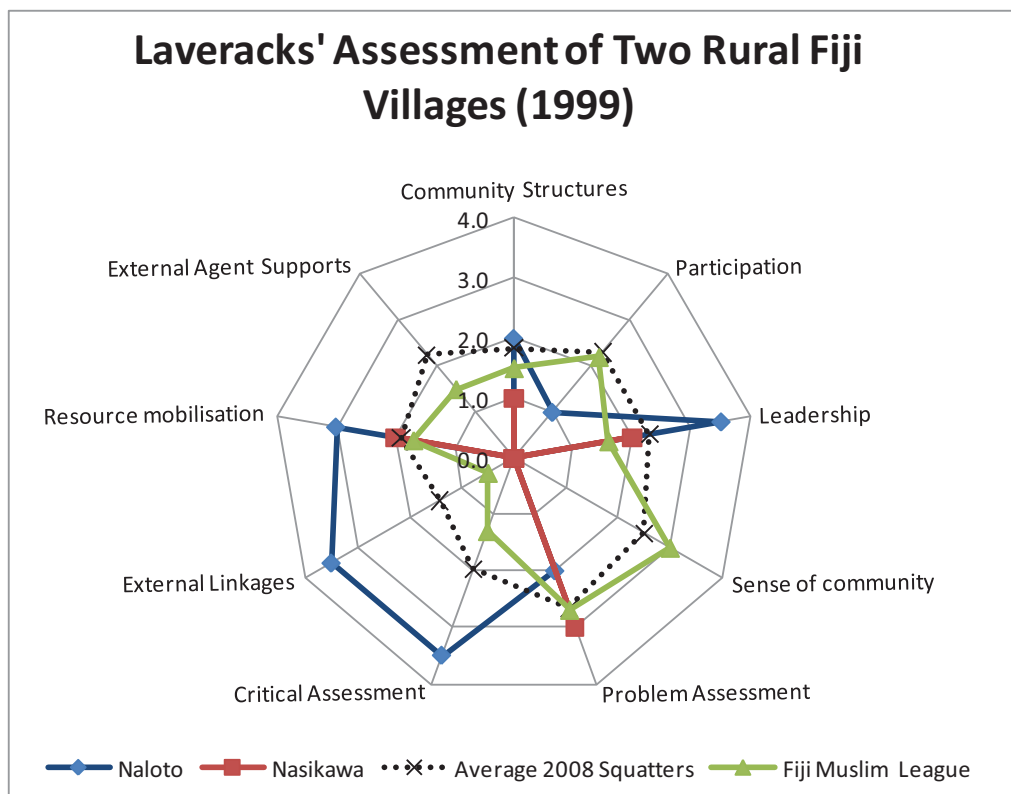
Table 9.2: Domains Diagnosis: Urban and Rural Communities, Fiji

| Laveracks' 1999 Analysis ¹ | | Community | | | Average 2008 Squatters |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|----------|--------------|------------------------|
| | | Naloto | Nasikawa | Average 1999 | |
| 1 | Community Structures | 2.0 | 1.0 | 1.5 | 1.8 |
| 2 | Participation | 1.0 | 0.0 | 0.5 | 2.3 |
| 3 | Leadership | 3.5 | 2.0 | 2.8 | 2.3 |
| 4 | Sense of community | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 2.5 |
| 5 | Problem Assessment | 2.0 | 3.0 | 2.5 | 2.7 |
| 6 | Critical Assessment | 3.5 | 0.0 | 1.8 | 2.0 |
| 7 | External Linkages | 3.5 | 0.0 | 1.8 | 1.4 |
| 8 | Resource mobilisation | 3.0 | 2.0 | 2.5 | 1.9 |
| 9 | External Agent Supports | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 2.3 |

¹ Laverack, G. (2006). *Evaluating Community Capacity: Visual Representation and Interpretation*. Community Development Journal Vol. 41. No. 3. pp 266-276. Oxford University Press

Nevertheless, Table 9.2 and Figure 9.2 allow comparison of the averages of the two separate samples (Laverack’s and this research). This comparison of different study results shows that the rural village perceptions for ‘leadership’ and ‘resource mobilisation’ were higher than in the squatter settlements studied in this thesis, but for the other five domains the squatter settlers rankings were higher. Figure 9.2 below presents the domain rankings for each village and the two different sample averages (the rural village average compared to the 2008 squatter settlement average) from Table 9.2 graphically in the spider graph configuration and again, should be interpreted in the same manner as described earlier for Figure 9.1. The average line for the squatter settlements is (a dotted line) and the Fiji Muslim League profile, as it is the only Fijian urban community comparison are also included as community profiles in this graph.

Figure 9.2: Community Capacity Assessment: Urban and Rural Comparisons in Fiji



Interpreting the work of Laverack (2007) shows that the Naloto capacity profile ranks highly for 'leadership', 'critical assessment,' 'external linkages' and 'resource mobilisation' while according a low ranking to 'participation.' Laverack observed that the authoritarian nature of traditional village life was one reason villagers may have ranked these two domains highly; reflecting villagers respect their tribal chief and pride in the 'community' is important culturally (Laverack, 2007, p. 270). The Nasikawa community only ranked their 'problem assessment' highly and rated some domains as non-existent. In each case these communities decided to build upon their strengths thus the Nasikawa community chose to focus on organisational structures for improvement (Laverack, 2006b, p. 271). There are two key contrasts worth noting between the rural and urban studies. Firstly, the outcome demonstrates that there are some significant differences between the urban and rural graphs with the urban community average, exhibiting a more consistent yet moderately-low all round capacity and functioning than the rural Fijian communities. This outcome is not unexpected when considering the resourcefulness required living in an urban setting as compared to the subsistence lifestyle of the village (Tui, 2006, p. 2; Kurusiga et. al., 2006, p. 98-101). Secondly, the Fiji Muslim League profile presents a similar profile to the rural communities in all domains (other than the aforementioned Naloto variations) confirming their reliance on internal social networking, clearly a deliberate strategy to emulate village life in this isolated hilltop, yet urban fringe setting.

The application of the field research results for community capacity assessment as depicted in Figure 9.1 for squatter settlements in Fiji alongside the previous work of Laverack (2003 and 2006b) in Figure 9.2 provides a demonstration of the capacity diagnosis tool for comparative analysis. The descriptions about the strengths and weaknesses of the settlement profiles also present an opportunity to use the graphs as a talking point for introducing to community groups the dynamics of social capital indicators and how they may influence community development processes. Applied in this manner the technique provides potential for practitioners to monitor progress with community targeted programmes. These aspects of the community capacity diagnosis application provide conditional support to the study assumption V: *It is possible to measure different*

components and factors of social capital and analyse the status of a community's functionality. The term conditional is used in acknowledgement that further validation studies will be required to build more rigour into the analysis approach and interpretation before any dialogue around community capacity development and empowerment processes can be elevated as the following section will address.

9.3 Further Research Areas

This study has provided some insights into the potential for measuring community capacity and social cohesion within squatter settlements in Fiji. In so doing the study has highlighted certain areas that could benefit from further research in the interests of developing a more thorough understanding of community development dynamics and how social capital resources can be mobilising poor urban communities. However, this study was relatively small in scale and spread across three squatter settlements in order to obtain an understanding as to how different communities (in terms of locality, ethnicity and religious orientation) might act in marshalling their collective resources and find solutions to common problems. Further investigation on either one settlement, or two contrasting settlements with a wider selection of settlers in each, would firstly, validate the findings of this study, and secondly, work to establish a suitable minimum sample of householders to interview which may help to allay any concerns over the robustness of the approach...

Also recommended would be a more comprehensive study of a number of Suva settlements as a follow up in order to build up a bigger picture of community capacity and functionality and assess the wider impacts of poverty in squatter settlements around Fiji. The consequence of a wider investigation on Fijian squatter settlements would indicate whether this results presented in this thesis were consistent with other settlements around Suva and more widely.

A wider social capital and capacity assessment SC-IQ (?) survey would help to establish a baseline of what community capacity constraints or opportunities are

for squatter communities in urban areas so that future social capital studies could benchmark against the results presented in this thesis. Civil society organisations or public institutions who have been embarking on social change campaigns could use social capital and capacity assessments to monitor the changes in community capacities they were targeting in response to the support they were receiving. Through the course of possible further studies it could be hoped to achieve some refinement and standardisation of the approach. In particular the following aspects are recommended to address:

- Shortening the SC-IQ format by determining which questions are essential and which should be discretionary while still gathering enough social data on which to produce a sound analysis of the social capital indicators;
- Further approaches to analysing the results of the SC-IQ questionnaire needs consistency in the way data sets are assessed;
- Standardising the approach to the capacity assessment diagnosis is needed.
- A more participatory validation process that provides community based perspective to the independent audit approach to the SC-IQ exercise could be followed. This following up could take the form of a community self assessment on certain aspects of the questionnaire (for example the community structures; cohesion dimensions) and/or the use of reference groups. These self assessments could include a selection of willing community members and industry commentators, to whom the results of the survey could be presented to. Inviting community and commentators would provide feedback based on 'expert' knowledge of insiders on squatter settlement issues.

A growing number of authors are beginning to apply social capital and community empowerment techniques in support of programmes designed to promote desirable lifestyle changes. The health sector is one area where healthier lifestyles are linked to future public expenditure savings (Labonte & Laverack, 2001a, p. 112; Bopp, 2002, p. 2; MacLellan-Wright, et. al., 2007, p. i).

The health outcomes in rural Fijian villages have already been studied in terms of health promotion work. The results of such work could be used as the basis for comparative analysis to those presented in this study and in a similar way as approached above in the comparison to Laverack's study (Laverack, 2006b). There are two more examples where the application for the techniques demonstrated in this research could be helpful to track change in community capacity and social indicators: (a) The new low cost urban subdivisions currently being developed by the Government in the Nasinu-Nausori Corridor; and (b) the private sector rural urban-village concept currently being developed on the periphery of Lautoka (the second most populous city in the northwest on the main Island of Viti Levu). The SC-IQ, focusing on social capital, and a capacity assessment approach could be usefully applied in combination to establish a baseline of the 'state of community affairs' (both the social and poverty affects) in communities. Hence, future changes in community capacity could be effectively tracked and outcomes of social support programmes evaluated.

By conducting a great deal of broader social capital community capacity work, it is hoped that the data collected could be applied to better inform communities, practitioners, public and civil society organisations on the processes that urban squatter communities employ in pursuit of improved livelihood choices and contribute to better informed policy dialogue on the plight of squatters in Fiji.

9.4 Conclusions

The first sections of this Chapter explored the extent of social capital attributes that existed within the three squatter settlements studied and then discussed the processes that these communities employ to mobilise those resources. This final section will provide some concluding comments in support of the primary thesis statement and primary study objectives set at the outset of this Chapter. It also seeks to highlight key outcomes arising from the findings of the research in terms of general conclusions on the impact of social capital on community functionality in squatter settlements.

Functional communities are considered to be well organised and empowered so that their members can address shared needs. Furthermore, functional communities in turn can help enhance the well being of individuals and lead to the well-being of the whole. The key findings in this thesis are in support of supporting functional communities. Thirteen factors were highlighted as potentially limiting squatter settlers ability to mobilise their community held social assets. Based on observations and findings in this research, the primary questions at the start of this thesis project can be answered as follows:

1. Ideological thinking and lived experience do play an integral role in urban community relations affecting the way both Fijians' and Indo-Fijians' interests are engaged in community affairs. This was demonstrated through:
 - Indo-Fijians tolerances for Fijians' ceremonial observances has been observed as high with some aspects of the Fijian culture having been assimilated by Indo-Fijian as part of their social practices (for example the Kava ceremonies). Such merged cultural practices are presenting opportunities for positive cross cultural interactions.
 - There is varying tolerance between the different ethnic groups. Some of Fijian's Christian doctrines are affecting the acceptance of Indo-Fijian religious practices, and some of the Indo-Fijians show low tolerance toward Fijian Christian doctrines. This low tolerance and acceptance on both sides seems to undermine the common value systems both hold and as a consequence constrain confidence in social interactions.
 - Community affairs were restricted by certain cultural and religious practices, as for example the Nanuku Youth Uprising and preschool Groups that was shut-down because of Church bias, shows.
 - Indo-Fijians lack established and trustworthy relationships (vertical linkages) to key public institutions. This group is constrained due to apparent ambivalence of Fijian office bearers for Indo-Fijians. For

example, there were low employment numbers of Indo-Fijians in the law and justice sector and apathy toward them was regularly experienced by this group, which affected confidence levels in Indo-Fijians, and lack of trust in government sectors.

- Misunderstandings arose between the cultures over what was regarded as acts of 'sharing' and 'giving'. These communication problems led to a lack of confidence in Fijians about/for Indo-Fijians' commitment to contribute to community activities.
- All the above conclusions underpin the framework of community social relations, and the levels of comfort among members of different ethnicities in terms of interacting with each other. Awkwardness was demonstrated in the scarcity of intermarriage, for example.

2. Culture and religion and/or faith-based belief systems do support or block desired changes to urban squatter community development processes. Furthermore, belief systems can impact both positively and negatively on householders' well-being. This was demonstrated through:

- High levels of willingness to help neighbours or assist with community groups addressing commonly shared needs.
- Faith based groups are the most highly supported in both monetary contributions and voluntary time spent for contributions; but Indo-Fijians seem to generally contribute more in both aspects.
- There are social pressures to contribute among neighbourhoods. Pressures related to a higher sense of social obligation seem to appear more acute for Fijians than for Indo-Fijians. Contributions from religious groups toward support for community needs were generally perceived as low. However, people benefited from the social interaction around spiritual fulfilment. Indo-Fijians seemed to obtain the most benefit from their vertical relationships in terms of accessing alternative information sources and making new

contacts, which in some cases were encouraged through religious group social activities outside of the community. For example external linkages from *Ramayan Madali* and *Baal Vikash* groups seem to be in some cases more important for social interaction.

- There was a general lack of encouragement from the Christian church groups for community members to establish linkages or negotiate support from outside networks. This discouragement also applied to mobilising resources, even if such strategy could potentially support available internal group assets. This practice of discouragement was exemplified in the Fijian community model of development at Fiji Muslim League.
- Social relations can be contradictory as well as complementary, allowing social animosity still to exist between the micro-communities, as illustrated in Nanuku where a relatively moderate level of community cohesion exists because of settlers from each neighbourhood are becoming involved in an NGO squatter network programme that provides community strengthening services for community groups
- Women are more disadvantaged than men in accessing opportunities for better lifestyle choices. This result is evidenced in the lack of leadership roles in community groups held by women, and by restrictions and encouragement to take on more traditional roles within both ethnic groups.

3. Strategies employed to enhance and sustain social capital resources in urban squatter communities were based on two development models, firstly, the homogenous community model (Caubati Topline and Fiji Muslim League); and secondly, the diversity community model (Nanuku)

- The homogeneous community model: Caubati Topline demonstrated the highest level of capacity among the three settlements (moderate) based on an all round capability in community functionality and cooperative social interaction. Yet

Caubati Topline contrasted to the other homogeneous community model of the Fijian Fiji Muslim League settlement which was strongly based on faith in spiritual well-being to provide for the community needs, ahead of any physical or financial security. Fiji Muslim League capability was weak in community functionality and in its cooperative social interactions. However this homogenous model showed similar results to research conducted in others in squatter settlements (Kurusiga, et al., 2006, p. 100-101; Sanderson, 2006, p. 7; Tui, 2006, p. 2) and rural Fiji villages (Laverack, 2006b, p. 270).

- The diversity community model: Nanuku's integrated settlement based on a moderately-weak capability in community functionality but stronger cooperative social interaction. Nanuku practiced a more secular model of inclusivity with both micro-communities. Members were working hard to establish bridging ties and to overcome the ideological barriers they faced. Both presented numerous challenges.

Given the ongoing urbanisation trends Fiji continues to face for a range of economic, social and political reasons and the shortage of low cost, affordable housing alternatives, squatting will continue to be the only viable choice to those in search of better education and job opportunities in Suva. Many squatters however are also vital to the informal and formal economy in the main centres and the benefit of low labour sources to city businesses has been demonstrated through a positive correlation between urbanisation and economic and social development, as outlined by Biau, (2004):

The more urbanized a country the more developed the economy and the higher the average per capita income. Provided good urban policy is in place, sufficient political, managerial and technical capabilities are available, urban areas can offer gainful employment in both the formal and informal sector; access to better basic infrastructure, educational,

medical and recreation services, and a richer cultural life (In McKinnon et al, 2006, p. 1).

Yet many of these people who live in squatter settlements will face unenviable living conditions and hardship, where daily survival will often become the focus at the expense of any community oriented activities. While their available physical and financial resources are restricted the findings of this thesis has demonstrated there is potential in the everyday interactions of people's lives which if converted into something tangible could contribute immeasurably to squatter community life. Community based group activity and their linkage to outside organisations are recognised as an indicator of the wealth a community holds and is a key indicator of a community's functionality (Laverack, 2001, p. 139; Pelling and High, 2005, p. 8).

Currently two of the three study sites are involved with an NGO programme seeking to galvanise this wealth in squatter settlements through establishing a squatter network. This work is seen as not only important for strengthening community development processes but as a platform for squatter settlers to learn more of local government planning and processes. The thesis also confirmed the central role faith based groups played in settlement life but that many settlers received little benefit in the way of advancing the wealth they hold in social connectivity. The outcomes the local NGO are working too would be further strengthened if the main faith-based groups found ways to support this type of social movement, given they have themselves benefited so much from the settlers generous donations in time and money.

This thesis was concerned with how the urban poor in settlements marshal the necessary resources to organise inclusive and effectual communities that can influence public policy directions on issues that affect them. The field research results confirmed the thesis statement, as evidenced by the summary of the thirteen key factors, the capacity assessment and primary question answers above that there are significant cultural and ideological barriers that can support and block the ability of settlers to function adequately in this challenging setting. This thesis investigated how people might work together to sustain socially

cohesive communities and found models of community development that provided both positive signs that Fijians and Indo-Fijians do work together cooperatively in the urban squatter setting despite their fundamental ideological challenges experienced. The community organisational and interactive data indicators analysed created the basis for a comparison of the community capacity and presenting that as a 'snapshot in time' of the status of community relations in the squatter settlements studied. It is contended that this approach could present a potential application for communities, government institutions and development practitioners to employ as an instrument to monitor the progress of community capacity development in future.

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APPENDICES

| | | |
|-----|--|-----|
| 1.0 | <i>Diagnostic Tool for Analysing Social Capital in Communities</i> | 269 |
| 2.0 | <i>Researchers Field Notes Summary</i> | 282 |
| 3.0 | <i>Field Survey Questionnaire</i> | 285 |
| 4.0 | <i>Basket of Food Costing for Fiji Households</i> | 310 |
| 5.0 | <i>Food and Income Security Analysis</i> | 313 |
| 6.0 | <i>Research Information Sheet</i> | 326 |
| 7.0 | <i>Participant Consent Form</i> | 328 |
| 8.0 | <i>Confidentiality Agreement</i> | 329 |

APPENDIX 1: DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR ANALYSING SOCIAL CAPITAL IN COMMUNITIES

Analysis of Community Capacity Utilising the Domains Approach

This Annex is linked to Chapter 5 and the methodology for the diagnosis of capacity for each settlement studied. The concept behind demonstrating the application of such a tool was to present a potential application for development practitioners to employ as an instrument to monitor community capacity development. This Annex will present the results of the ensuing diagnosis of the strengths and weaknesses of the three settlements across nine domains of capacity (that is functionality and cohesion) for each community at the time of the social capital survey.

This explanation provides the basis for the analysis of the three study sites. The Analysis draws on two instruments for measuring social capital and capacity of communities, the first being MacLellan-Wright et. al (2007) techniques for monitoring changes to community capacity and Laverack (2006) method for visually presenting such data analysis, utilising the Schmidt and Rifkin, (1996, in Laverack, 2006 p. 269) designed spider web configuration.

Domains and Indicators

The assessment of each domain involves utilising a number of specific indicators each of which are ranked individually. In recording the overall result a weighting is attributed to indicators for some of the domain analysis. For others where no weighting is applied, the assumption is that they all contribute equally to defining the strength of the domain being measured. The composite ranking for each settlement is then derived from the average of each indicator. This method of presenting the analytical results of community capacity assessment uses the following ranking scale:

Rank Indicator

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| 0 | Non Existent |
| 1 | Low |
| 2 | Moderately Low |
| 3 | Moderately High |
| 4 | High |

The indicators are ranked subjectively by the Researcher. There was no triangulation of the assessments with community members or a reference group, rather the results are the sole interpretation of the Researcher but based on the observations highlighted during the discussion in Chapter 8 of this thesis. Each settlement will be identified by a three letter code as follows: Nanuku as Nan; Caubati Topline as CCT; and Fiji Muslim League as FML.

Domains

1. Community structures refer to all community based group activity including: (a) committees (formal or informal), clubs, societies or associations that have been established by the subject community's themselves (for example church groups, youth groups, and self-help group) or (b) stand-alone non-government organizations (NGO's) that operate to support these community based groups by providing services or information (includes professional groups, unions or public associations). Community structures are widely accepted as the means for facilitating interaction between members and the exchange of information and as such can foster cohesion. The analysis of this domain represents the findings from a review of results for the Survey Questions 1.2 to 1.5 (in future referred to as Q1.2-1.5 and refer to Appendix 3 for full copy of the questionnaire):

- The number of categories of groups from the 18 specified represented per community: >5 low; 5-9 moderately low; 10-14 Moderate; 15+ High: [Nan 9; CCT 9; FML 6], resulting in a ranking of: Nan 2; CCT 2; FML 2.

- Number of groups per community >20 low; 20-30 moderately low; 30-40 Moderate; 40+ High: [Nan 25; CCT 24; FML 19], resulting in a ranking of: Nan 2; CCT 2; FML 1.

Overall while group participation was strong, there was a lower than expected number of groups and a narrow range of categories of groups either operating or represented in each community compared to what was expected. This resulted in an overall ranking as follows:

[Nan 2.0; CCT 2.0; FML 1.5]

2. Participation is recognised as the level of active involvement (membership, roles and participation) of people in community structures and groups. Participation in matters that address individual and community well-being is defined as a process making decisions and evaluating the process/results of activities that may be designed to address shared needs. The analysis of this domain represents the findings from Q1.2 or Q1.7-1.8 with the following items making up the participation scale:

- Actively involved in community organisation activities or projects. Membership - Total: >60% overall considered good (Axelrod, 1956, p. 14): [Nan 17%; CCT 21%; FML 24%]. This resulted in a ranking of: Nan 1; CCT 1; FML 1, weighted accorded this indicator = 5.
- Membership levels in three most important groups as prioritised by community. Known range of 10-56% overall good (Narayan & Cassidy, 2001, p. 70): [Nan 34%; CCT 44%; FML 48%]. This resulted in a ranking of: Nan 3; CCT 4; FML 4, weighted accorded this indicator = 3.
- Membership levels in religious groups (prioritised by community as most important). How Active - Total: Known range of >40% overall

good (Middleton et. al., 2005, p. 1730): [Nan 67%; CCT 81%; FML 96%], which resulted in a ranking of: Nan 4; CCT 4; FML 4, weighted accorded this indicator = 1.

- Regular participation in community organisation activities or projects. Participation rates for householders attending/supporting chosen activities: Ratio of top three groups to total across all 9 categories of groups: [Nan 68%:32%; CCT 61%:39%; FML 72%:28%], meaning Nan has approximately 2/3 activity concentrated on 3 groups (incl. 43% of that in religious activities); FML has >2/3 activity in 3 groups, 48% of that on religious activities (the most of all 3 settlements); CCT with <2/3 and 42% of that on religious activities but with the most support to other activities of all 3 settlements; Although participation levels are high, the weighting reduces resultant rankings due to heavy reliance on few groups: Nan 3; CCT 4; FML 3, weighted accorded this indicator = 4.
- Frequency of activity on a regular basis relative to the weekly activity: [Nan 45%; CCT 50%; FML 56%]. This resulted in a ranking of: Nan 3; CCT 4; FML 4, weighted accorded this indicator = 4.
- These activities involve a representative range of the community members including (as guideline) a ratio M:F is 1:1 for those who participate: [Nan 21%M:20%F; CCT 26%M:35%F; FML 60%M:40%F]. This resulted in a ranking of: Nan 3; CCT 2; FML 1, weighted accorded this indicator = 4.
- Organisations are addressing and overcoming barriers to participation of members in these activities. Subjective analysis resulted in a ranking of: Nan 2; CCT 3; FML 3, weighted accorded this indicator = 2.
- A range of methods have been used to inform members and other stakeholders about the activities or projects. Subjective analysis

resulted in a ranking of: Nan 3; CCT 4; FML 3, weighted accorded this indicator = 2.

Overall membership and participation levels were high but within the three prioritised groups only and particularly religious groups with the wider groups less patronised resulting in an overall ranking as follows:

[Nan 2.2; CCT 2.5; FML 2.2]

3. Leadership within community structures is considered important for fostering community cohesion. This keeps the community focused on resolving shared problems, working to achieve mutually agreed objectives, and organising group events or getting help for the various group activities. Leaders who are effective share a common vision, as well as acknowledge, and encourage community discussion on common issues. They also share responsibilities, keep the group together, and direct effort strategically to achieve the main objectives. The analysis of this domain represents the findings from Q1.14-1.16:

- Elected by democratic means: [Nan 72%; CCT 50%; FML 44%], resulting in a ranking of: Nan 3; CCT 2; FML 1.
- Decisions by democratic means: [Nan 39%; CCT 72%; FML 28%], resulting in a ranking of: Nan 1; CCT 3; FML 1.
- Leaders determined as effective in role: [Nan 65%; CCT 72%; FML 61%], resulting in a ranking of: Nan 3; CCT 4; FML 3.

Overall, while leadership levels were proven to be strong, new leaders in each community were not nurtured. In comparison to the expected outcome, there was also a tendency for autocratic decision-making and a lack of encouragement to all community members to participate. The findings resulted in an overall ranking as follows:

[Nan 2.3; CCT 3.0; FML 1.6]

4. A sense of community can also be achieved through inclusive community-led activities or projects focused on resolving shared community problems, the processes involved potentially building trust and strengthening relationships. Such collective participation gives community members confidence to act and the conviction to feel hopeful about change. The analysis of this domain represents the findings from Q2.1-2.2, Q3.1 and Q4.15:

- Overall, communities with one predominant ethnic group identified strongly with their settlement and locality. This sense of place was generally manifest in strong intra-community (bonding and/or bridging) networks, creating a more supportive/caring outlook toward others in their immediate neighbourhood. While there was also a strong sense of place in the integrated communities, this was more prominently manifest in ethnically/religiously aligned bonding ties, rather than bridging ties across social strata boundaries which were regarded as weak. Thus, levels of belongingness (subjective horizontal interactions) were generally strong, for example, Nan 33%; CCT 83%; FML 67%. (Q3.1) resulting in a ranking of: Nan 2; CCT 4; FML 3, resulting in a ranking of: Nan 2; CCT 3; FML 3.
- Levels of trust and honesty within the community (subjective horizontal interactions) which underpin members' confidence to act were generally lower than would be expected from cohesive communities (Q2.2 & Q4.15) with Nan at 34%; CCT 34%; FML 50%, resulting in a ranking of: Nan 2; CCT 2; FML 3.

The findings resulted in an overall ranking as follows:

[Nan 2.0; CCT 2.5; FML 3.0]

5. Problem Assessment refers to a community process that uncovers the root causes of community issues (for example in areas of health, education or others of a more physical nature such as shelter, service delivery or infrastructural problems) and finds ways of resolving these. Exploring why and how these problems have arisen helps to deconstruct the problem and aids in understanding the key issues that limit community progress. The processes of analysing these can empower the community toward acting on implementing a solution. If these processes do not include representation of all community groups or diversity of members then there is a risk of solutions only benefiting some. The analysis of this domain represents the findings from Q1.11; Q2.2; Q2.7-2.9; Q2.10; Q3.5-3.7:

- General lack of encouragement for members to establish linkages or coordinate with other community based groups. As such, there is a tendency to over-rely on resources generated out of the groups members already belonged to. This was relative to gaining synergies or leverage from aligning to others (Q1.11): Nan 35%; CCT 56%; FML 39%, which resulted in a ranking of: Nan 2; CCT 3; FML 2.
- Levels of social exclusion from community provided services or activities as well as levels of negativity (public sanctions) toward those members who did not participate in collective activities were generally moderate, for example (a) Level of exclusion from community activities (Q3.5-3.7): Nan 50%; CCT 20%; FML 17%. (b) Likelihood of not being sanctioned due to non-participation (Q2.10): Nan 50%; CCT 67%; FML 50%, which resulted in a ranking of: Nan 2.5; CCT 4; FML 3.
- People were generally willing to help with community or neighbourhood activities/projects (subjective horizontal interactions) which were advantageous to assisting with the development

processes for example. Nan 45%; CCT 45%; FML 56%. (Q2.2; Q2.7-2.9), resulting in a ranking of: Nan 2; CCT 2; FML 3.

The findings resulted in an overall ranking is as follows:

[Nan 2.3; CCT 3.0; FML 2.7]

6. Critical Assessment is defined as the skills, knowledge, and learning attributes the community is required to combine in order to critically assess broader issues affecting the community's abilities to develop. These may include aspects related to social, political and economic influences that cause the inequalities being experienced in the community. Thus the gathering and assessment of information from both narrow or wide sources and matching these to the skills and learned experiences gained, is an important step in strengthening the community capacity to address their development needs. The analysis of this domain represents the findings from Q1.9; Q2.5-2.6; Q2.10:

- Gathering of information from outside sources (objective vertical interactions) were generally narrower than would be expected if communities were well connected. Key sources of information were from TV, Radio, Friends or neighbours and the national daily newspapers rather than external organisations and community structures (Q2.5-2.6) resulting in a ranking of: Nan 2; CCT 2; FML 2.
- While sharing of knowledge and learning gained from outside information sources was limited due to the narrow contacts and hence low knowledge base, this was generally higher in the Indo-Fijian and integrated communities as compared to the indigenous-Fijian community. From this subjective assessment, the critical assessment process and learning from that analysis of outside information sources was recognized as limited, and less than

expected for communities who would be considered well connected, which resulted in a ranking of: Nan 2; CCT 2; FML 1.

- While people were generally willing to help or come together to discuss these issues there was generally a lack of critical assessment of the social, political, and economic influences that result in differing standards and conditions relating to these matters. This was demonstrated in the low level of perceived benefits gained from membership of community structures (Q1.9) at FML 20%; CCT 45%; Nan 53%, which resulted in a ranking of: Nan 3; CCT 3; FML 1.

The findings resulted in an overall ranking as follows:

[Nan 2.3; CCT 2.3; FML 1.3]

7. External Linkages refers to linking with people and organisations outside of the community. The advice and information resulting from these links help the community understand better the issues and problems faced and realisation about possible solutions. This includes creating partnerships or coalitions with other like-minded networks or with outside agencies, namely NGO's, donors or funders, practitioners or technical advisors. The analysis of this domain represents the findings from Q1.2-1.5; Q4.12-4.14:

- Networking with organisations and politicising community needs and active linking ties with supporting bodies (objective vertical interactions) were generally narrower than would be expected if communities were to take advantage of such established connectivity although Nanuku persevered with better connectivity to some institutions, (Q4.12-4.14): Resulted in a ranking of: Nan 2; CCT 1.5; FML 1.
- There were limited interactions with NGO's who were working in communities to assist with strengthening capacity or empowering

communities e.g. the numbers of contacts per community with NGO's activities, (Q1.2-1.5): Nan 5; CCT 1; FML 0. Resulted in a ranking of: Nan 2.5; CCT 1.5; FML 0.

Resulted in an overall ranking as follows:

[Nan 2.25; CCT 1.5; FML 0.5]

8. Resource Mobilisation includes community members who have the conviction to volunteer time and/or money (other than that gained from funding bodies) but also contributing other resources like information sources and facilities negotiated from both inside and outside the community. The analysis of this domain represents the findings from Q1.12; Q1.17-1.18:

- Levels of volunteerism (objective component of horizontal interactions) was generally higher than would be expected in communities that faced challenges from lack of financial and physical resources, and where cross cultural/ethnic and religious tolerances were low, for example volunteerism within communities (Q1.17): Nan 9.3AEU days/yr; CCT 7.4AEU days/yr; FML 6.1AEU days/yr, which resulted in a ranking of: Nan 2; CCT 2; FML 1.
- Levels of social giving (objective component of horizontal interactions) were generally higher than would be expected in communities that faced hardship (Q1.18) with Nan at 7.2%; CCT 5.3%; FML 4.8%, which resulted in a ranking of: Nan 3; CCT 2; FML 2.
- General lack of encouragement to establish linkages, or to negotiate support from outside networks for mobilising other resources that support the available internal assets, for example members were not encouraged to establish linkages or coordinate with other groups by those already working within their community. Communities over-

relied on resources generated out of their strong familial or bonding ties (Q1.12): Nan 24%; CCT 44%; FML 53%, which resulted in a ranking of: Nan 1; CCT 2; FML 2.

The findings resulted in an overall ranking as follows:

[Nan 2.0; CCT 2.0; FML 1.7]

9. External Agency Supports such as government departments or authorities are important for linking communities to external resources. Communities that can take advantage of these established linking ties may help to facilitate and/or build momentum for implementing community led activities/projects. Effective linking ties are important for changing the power dynamics between the institution and the community so that the community assumes an increasing role in determining its own future. The analysis of this domain represents the findings from Q1.2; Q2.3; Q4.15:

- Ratio of external groups to number of internal with the higher the ratio (in favour of external groups) the less isolated the community will be from outside sources of assistance or resources (Q1.2). Contrasting results revealed the Indo-Fijian community Caubati Topline had the lowest index of 1.0, (with one internal group to one external group or 12 for 12) thus greater numbers of external supports than either Nanuku at index 1.5 (10 internal to 15 external) and Fiji Muslim League with the least at index 2.8 (5 external to 14 internal). Nanuku has greater numbers of external supports than either CCT or FML; CCT has the larger number of community based groups with 7 of these supported by outside organisations; FML has the least number of groups with the majority of members most active in a narrow fraternity of internal groups. This resulted in a ranking of: Nan 2.5; CCT 3; FML 1.

- Levels of Trust and Honesty with outside supporting bodies (subjective vertical interactions) were generally lower than would be expected if communities were to take advantage of these institutions, (Q2.3 & Q4.15). [Nan 34%; CCT 26%; FML 30%. Resulted in a ranking of: Nan 2.5; CCT 2.5; FML 2.

This resulted in an overall ranking as follows:

[Nan 2.5; CCT 2.75; FML 1.5]

APPENDIX 2: RESEARCHERS FIELD NOTES SUMMARY

Project Title: *The Implications of Culture, Religion and Other Lived Experience on Community Development in Informal and Squatter Settlements in Fiji*

Location: **Suva, Fiji – the Greater Suva Region**

Period: **28th May 2008 to 2nd June 2008**

Survey: The survey question numbers are outlined at the left of each household interview listed below, (refer Survey format in Appendix 3).

Fieldnotes These notes are an extract of the full Researchers journal notes which were taken down while interviewing. These notes provide some supplementary information and observations given by respondents or residents during site visits. Much of the detail remains in the journal however.

Site 1: Nanuku Settlement, Vatuvaqa

Characterised by distinct ethnic neighbourhoods that act mostly on their own in terms of social support and fund raising for community activities. The Indo-Fijian neighbourhoods are spatially separate from the Fijian residents and each other. One Indo-Fijian neighbourhood consisting of 7 households is surrounded by Fijian residents. The other is on the edge of the mangroves and is larger bordering Veidogo Settlement. Of these one ran his own business from a substantial house. There was at least one other resident (not interviewed) who was considered affluent and runs his own business from here.

GENERAL INTERVIEWS

Business Owner Interview on 31/5/08

Been here for 33yrs and one of original 5 families on this land who were all Indo-Fijian. He has been running his own sheet metal business from the site which is very successful. The Nanuku (right side coming in off Vatuvaqa end) all

predominantly Fijian, whereas the Veidogo side predominantly Indo-Fijian (left side). The land was Crown Land but sold to Bhindi estate who believed to have swapped it for some land in Wailea (adjacent to this area in Vatuaqa).

A story was relayed by a respondent of the “Nanuku Uprising Youth Group” that he started up consisting of approx. 40 members of both Fijian (50%) and Indo-Fijian (50%) from area. Group would do community work to clean up roadside (access to settlement) gravel it and other community work. They had also established their own rugby 7’s team. The aim was to raise funds to assist those families who couldn’t pay school fees through this group charitable approach. Unfortunately there was some internal conflict between the Fijian youths because some didn’t like to see the success of it ahead of the Fijian own youth group, so they sabotaged it by way of undermining the activities, causing fights and spreading rumours. The group dissolved and the Fijian community continued on with its own youth group. Mr Business Owner now focused on constructed his own 59Kva generator at own expense to provide power to the Indo-Fijian neighbourhood as he believes it provides more conducive environment for school kids to complete there homework important for their education.

Save Children MPP

According to the Fijian neighbourhood Head Man, Save the Children Mobile Preschool Programme used to operate a preschool in the community hall at the Fijian neighbourhood site adjacent to the church hall. It was handed back in 2006 to community to continue to run it under supervision of the Ministry of Education. Unfortunately it soon dissolved because the Methodist Church Minister reshuffled the Committee members. The Preschool was moved to the Vatuaqa Assembly of God who now charge \$2/day compared to the previous fees of \$1/week. Believed that the Assembly of God saw this as a potential money making project. It is now too far away for the community neighbourhoods to access and too expensive. The Indo-Fijians would not go to a preschool that is administered by a Christian Church either.

The Squatter Settlement Community Network Social Movement

According to the Fijian neighbourhood Head Man, a local NGO has introduced this concept to the community but the Indo-Fijians feel marginalized as it is predominantly coordinated through the Fijian youth group. That group recently held a successful fundraising drive for money to go towards a community bus shelter on Fletchers Road and a zebra crossing. The Police were to arrange this and coordinate the application with the Suva City Council. However one of the leading families from the Fijian neighbourhood claimed that one of the Indo-Fijian families was on the organisation committee and should have informed the others of the event.

Site 2: Caubati Topline Settlement, Caubati Central

Characterised by predominantly Indo-Fijian ethnic neighbourhoods that form groups under the *Ramayan Madali* Hindustani religion. These social and prayer Groups are often neighbourhood specific but not exclusively so. They mostly support each other and fund raise for the community activities. There are 4 groups in the Topline Settlement which are affiliated to the Fiji Sanatan T. Priests are members of that society and communicate through the various community groups.

Site 3: Fiji Muslim League

Characterised by predominantly Fijian residents but with at least two distinct and small Indo-Fijian ethnic neighbourhoods which are geographically separated from the Fijians.

APPENDIX 3: FIELD SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

SURVEY NO.

PARTICIPANT QUESTIONNAIRE

Social Capital - Integrated Questionnaire Interview

House/Lot NO:

Length of interview

Time initiated: _____

Time terminated: _____

Location

Settlement: _____

Years lived on site: _____

1. COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

Family & Household Overview

Firstly I would like to know a little more about who lives with you in this house and who share the same kitchen as you, (which I will term a *household unit*) and what job do they do.

1.1. How many family members live in this house?

Please state their relationship to you?

[ENUMERATOR: Please Circle the **gender** of this interviewee and insert **the number** of brothers/sisters etc that live here in the brackets (a tick = 1 only). Next to the Interviewee state what their **relationship** is to the others listed.]

| | | <u>Job/Employment</u> | | |
|--------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|----------|----------|
| Father | [] 1 | | | |
| Mother | [] 2 | | | |
| Brother(s) | [] 3 | | | |
| Sister(s) | [] 4 | | | |
| Grandfather | [] 5 | | | |
| Grandmother | [] 6 | | | |
| Uncle(s) | [] 7 | | | |
| Aunt(s) | [] 8 | | | |
| Cousin(s) | [] 9 | Gender | M | F |
| Interviewee _____ | [] 10 | Gender | M | F |
| Other (specify below) | [] 11 | Gender | M | F |

Groups & Breadth of Participation

Now I'd like to start by asking you about the groups or organizations to which you or any member of your household belong and that interact with this community. These could be formally organized groups or just groups of people who get together regularly to do an activity or talk about things.

- 1.2. As I read the following list of groups, please tell me if anyone in this household belongs to such a group. If yes, tell me which household member is most active in this group, and whether he/she participates actively in the group's decision making.

| Type of Organisation or Group | Name of Organisation or Group | Code of Most Active Household Member [ENUMERATOR USE CODED NUMBERS FROM #1.1 ABOVE] | How actively does this person participate in the Groups decision making? 1 = Leader or Committee Member 2 = Very Active 3 = Somewhat Active 4 = Does not participate in decision making |
|--|-------------------------------|--|---|
| A. Traders or Business Association, including cooperatives, groups for fishing or market vendors | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| B. Professional Association (e.g. doctors, teachers, veterans) | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| C. Trade Union or Labour Union | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| D. Neighbourhood /Settlement Committee (eg. Neighbourhood watch, but not the Peoples | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| Community Network which is an NGO) | | | |
| E. Religious or faith-based Group (e.g. church, mosque, temple, informal religious or study group) | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| F. Political Group or movement | | | |
| | | | |
| G. Artistic Group or association (e.g. dance, arts, music, theatre, film) | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| H. Finance, credit or savings Group e.g. microfinance group | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| I. Education Group (e.g. parent-teacher or school committee) | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| J. Health Group | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| K. Water or Waste management Group | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| L. Sports Group or Club | | | |
| | | | |
| M. Youth Group or | | | |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| Club (Please note if church affiliated) | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| N. NGO or Civic Group (e.g. Rotary Club, Red Cross, Peoples Community Network) | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| O. Cultural-based Community Group (e.g. country of origin, kinship, meke groups) | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| P. Women's Welfare Groups | | | |
| | | | |
| Q. Village Group (e.g. a committee for the development of the village) | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| R. Other Groups e.g. Hobby (please specify) | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

1.3. Compared to five years ago *, do members of your household participate in more or fewer groups or organizations?

[* ENUMERATOR: TIME PERIOD CAN BE CLARIFIED BY SITUATING IT BEFORE/AFTER MAJOR EVENT]

- 1 More
- 2 Same number
- 3 Fewer

1.4. Of all the groups to which members of your household belong; which three are the most important to your household for widening opportunities?

[ENUMERATOR: WRITE DOWN NAMES OF GROUPS & PRIORITY IN BOX]

Group A [] _____

Group B [] _____

Group C [] [CHURCH] _____

[Church/Religious or faith based group e.g. Church Women's or Youth Group such as Muslim Youth – But only if not already specified/chosen]

1.5. Where do these groups meet or gather?

[ENUMERATOR: WRITE DOWN **DISTANCE** TO (metres or km) WHERE THESE GROUPS LOCATED]

Group A _____

Group B _____

Group C [CHURCH] _____

[Only if not already specified/chosen]

Diversity of Membership

1.6. Thinking about the members of this group, are most of them of the same (pick 3 of the most predominant characteristics):

1 Yes

0 No

| | Group A | Group B | Group C |
|-----------------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| A. Neighbourhood /community | | | |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| B. Family or Kin group | | | |
| C. Religion | | | |
| D. Gender (i.e. male or female) | | | |
| E. Age | | | |
| F. Ethnic or linguistic group/caste /tribe | | | |
| G. Occupation | | | |
| H. Educational background or level | | | |
| I. Political viewpoint | | | |
| J. Mostly same income level | | | |
| K. Mixed (i.e. high and low income Levels) | | | |

1.7. In the past five years*, has membership in the group declined, remained the same, or increased?

[*ENUMERATOR: TIME PERIOD CAN BE CLARIFIED BY SITUATING IT BEFORE/AFTER MAJOR EVENT].

- 1 Declined
- 2 Remained same
- 3 Increased

Group A Group B Group C

Depth of Participation

1.8. How many times in the past 12 months did anyone in this household participate in this group's activities, e.g. by attending meetings or doing group work?

- 1 More than once per week
- 2 Once per week
- 3 Twice per month
- 4 Once per month

Group A Group B Group C

1.9. What is the main benefit from joining those community groups you mentioned?

[ENUMERATOR: if necessary note more than one of these categories in each Group box.]

- 1 Improves my household's access to essential services (i.e. power, water) and/or ability to endure life's difficulties (i.e. hardship)
- 2 Important in times of emergency / in future
- 3 Benefits the community
- 4 Enjoyment/Recreation
- 5 Spiritual, self-esteem
- 6 Other (specify) e.g. social status

Group A Group B Group C

1.10. Does the group help your household get access to any of the following services?

- 1 Yes
- 0 No

| | Group A | Group B | Group C |
|--|---------|---------|---------|
| | | | |

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|--|
| A. Education or Training | | | |
| B. Health services | | | |
| C. Water supply or sanitation | | | |
| D. Credit or Savings | | | |
| E. Agricultural inputs or technology | | | |
| F. Income Earning Opportunities | | | |
| G. Other (specify) | | | |

1.11. Does this group work or interact with other groups located ***in*** the community/neighborhood?

- 1 Yes, frequently
- 2 Yes, occasionally
- 3 No

Group A Group B Group C

1.12. Considering ***only*** the Group(s) that work within your community – do they involve or encourage community members to interact with other groups located ***outside*** the community/neighbourhood?

- 1 Yes, frequently
- 2 Yes, occasionally
- 3 No

Group A Group B Group C

1.13. What is the most important source of funding of the three community groups?

- 1 From members' levies or members' fund raising activities
- 2 Other sources within the community
- 3 Sources outside the community

Group A Group B Group C

Leadership

1.14. When there is a decision to be made in the group, how does this usually come about?

- 1 Decision is imposed from outside
- 2 The leader decides and informs the other group members
- 3 The leader asks group members what they think and then decides
- 4 The group members hold a discussion and decide together
- 5 Other (specify)

Group A Group B Group C

1.15. How are leaders in this group selected?

- 1 By an outside person or entity
- 2 Each leader chooses his/her successor
- 3 By a small group of members
- 4 By decision/vote of all members
- 5 Other (specify e.g. leaders select themselves)

Group A Group B Group C

1.16. Overall, how effective is the group's leadership? For example, in keeping the group together; working to achieve the main objectives; organizing group events; getting help for the group?

- 1 Very effective
- 2 Somewhat effective
- 3 Not effective

Group A Group B Group C

Volunteering

1.17. How many days of voluntary work did your household give to this group in the past 12 months?

Group A Group B Group C

Social Obligations

1.18. How much money and/or goods (\$ worth) did your household contribute to this group in the past 12 months?

[ENUMERATOR: This includes cultural obligations i.e. *kerekere* or *sevusevu* or *solevu* for example.]

Group A Group B Group C

Impact and Benefits

1.19. Do these commitments mean that the family will go without on some essential items on a weekly/monthly basis?

[ENUMERATOR: if necessary note more than one of these categories]

- 1 Yes, frequently
- 2 Yes, occasionally
- 0 No

1 [] Food items (Specify main types)

2 [] Fuel (i.e. Kerosene, firewood)

- 3 [] Electricity
 - 4 [] Enjoyment/Recreation
 - 5 [] School fees
 - 6 [] School lunches
 - 7 [] Other (specify)
-

1.20. What would be the first item that you would drop?

Networks

1.21. If you suddenly needed a small amount of money equal to about one week's wages, how many people beyond your immediate household and from within the community could you turn to who would be willing and able to provide this money?

- 1 No one
- 2 One or two people
- 3 Three or four people
- 4 Five or more people

1.22. [IF ZERO] Are you able to turn to some people from outside the community?

- 1 Yes
- 0 No

Family/Relatives
or Friends

| |
|--|
| |
| |

1.23. If you suddenly faced a long-term emergency such as the death of a breadwinner or job loss or [flooded house], how many people beyond your immediate household and within your community could you turn to who would be willing and able to assist you?

- 1 No one
- 2 One or two people
- 3 Three or four people
- 4 Five or more people

2. SOCIO-CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT

Trust

In every community, some people get along with others and trust each other, while other people do not. Now, I would like to talk to you about trust and solidarity in your community.

2.1 Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted, or that you can't be too careful in your dealings with other people (cannot be trusted)?

- 1 Most people can be trusted
- 2 Most people cannot be trusted
(i.e. you cannot be too careful with)

2.2 In general, do you agree or disagree with the following statements when it comes to community/neighbourhood members helping out?

| | |
|---|------------------------------|
| | 1 Agree strongly |
| | 2 Agree somewhat |
| | 3 Neither agree nor disagree |
| | 4 Disagree somewhat |
| | 5 Disagree strongly |
| A. Most people who live in this community/neighbourhood can be trusted | |
| B. In this community/neighbourhood, one has to be alert or someone is likely to take advantage of you | |
| C. Most people in this community/neighbourhood are willing to help if you need it | |
| D. In this community/neighbourhood, people generally do not trust each other in matters of lending and borrowing money | |

2.3 Now I want to ask you how much you trust different types of people. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means a very small extent and 5 means a very great extent, how much do you trust the people in that category?

| | 1 Trust strongly 2 Trust somewhat 3 Neither Trust nor distrust 4 Distrust somewhat 5 Distrust strongly |
|--|--|
| A. People from your ethnic or linguistic group/caste/tribe | |
| B. People from other ethnic or linguistic group/caste/tribe | |
| C. People from your religion or spiritual beliefs | |
| D. People from other religions or spiritual beliefs | |
| E. Shopkeepers | |
| F. Local government officials | |
| G. Central government officials | |
| H. Staff of post office | |
| I. Traditional leaders | |
| J. Church/Religious leaders | |
| K. Judges and lawyers | |
| L. Police | |
| M. Teachers and school officials | |
| N. Doctors and nurses in health clinic | |
| O. Staff of NGOs | |
| P. Strangers | |

2.4 Do you think that over the last five years*, the level of trust between neighbours or residents within this community/neighbourhood has gotten better, worse, or stayed about the same?

[* ENUMERATOR: TIME PERIOD CAN BE CLARIFIED BY SITUATING IT BEFORE/AFTER MAJOR EVENT]

- 1 Gotten better
- 2 Gotten worse
- 3 Stayed about the same

Information and Communication

2.5 In the past month, how many times have you made or received a phone call?

2.6 What are the three most important sources of information about what the government is doing (such as low cost housing/rental availability, water or other Service delivery, jobs, family planning, etc.)?

- 1 Relatives, friends and neighbours
- 2 Community bulletin or notice board
- 3 Local market
- 4 Religious groups you belong to
- 5 National newspaper
- 6 Radio
- 7 Television
- 8 Groups or associations
- 9 Business or work associates
- 10 Political associates
- 11 Community leaders
- 12 An agent of the government
- 13 Non-government organizations (NGOs)
- 14 Internet

| |
|--|
| |
| |
| |

Collective Action and Public Spiritedness

2.7 This section is about how well people in your community/neighbourhood help each other out these days. What proportion of people in this community/neighbourhood contributes time or money toward common

development goals, such as repairing a road or maintaining a community centre (or community save scheme)?

- 1 Everyone
- 2 More than half
- 3 About half
- 4 Less than half
- 5 No one

2.8 If a community project does not directly benefit you, but has benefits for many others in the community/neighbourhood, would you contribute time or money to the project?

A Time B Money

- 0 Will not contribute time 0 Will not contribute money
- 1 Will contribute time 1 Will contribute money

2.9 What were the three main such activities in the past 12 months? (e.g. repairing a road/path; clearing a drain; building or maintaining a community centre/church). Was participation in these voluntary or required?

| | Voluntary | Required |
|--|-----------|----------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

2.10 How likely is it that people who do not participate in community activities will be criticized or sanctioned?

- 1 Very likely
- 2 Somewhat likely
- 3 Neither likely nor unlikely
- 4 Somewhat unlikely
- 5 Very unlikely

3 COMMUNITY VALUES

Social Cohesion, Tolerance and Inclusion

3.1 How strong is the feeling of togetherness or closeness in your community/neighbourhood?

[Use a five point scale where 1 means feeling very distant & 5 means feeling very close].

- 1 Very distant
- 2 Somewhat distant
- 3 Neither distant nor close
- 4 Somewhat close
- 5 Very close

3.2 There are often differences in characteristics between people living in the same community/neighbourhood. For example, differences in wealth, income, social status, religion, ethnic background, caste, or tribe. There can also be differences in religious or political beliefs, or there can be differences due to age or gender (i.e. between men and women). To what extent do any such differences characterize your community/neighbourhood?

[Use a five point scale where 1 means to a very great extent and 5 means to a very small extent].

- 1 To a very great extent
- 2 To a great extent
- 3 Neither great nor small extent
- 4 To a small extent
- 5 To a very small extent

3.3 Which are the two differences that stand out more from the others listed below, you consider most often cause problems within the community?

- 1 Differences in education;
- 2 Differences in landholding i.e. access to land or forced evictions;
- 3 Differences in wealth/material possessions;
- 4 Differences in social status;
- 5 Differences between men and women;
- 6 Differences between younger and older generations;
- 7 Differences between long-term and recent residents e.g. fights between neighbours over various issues (like fencing, access etc);
- 8 Differences in political party affiliations;
- 9 Differences in religious beliefs e.g. through such things as attacks on other religious places of worship (i.e. church/mosque/temple);
- 10 Differences in ethnic background/caste/tribe e.g. cultural understandings or status in society;
- 11 Other differences e.g. domestic violence.

3.4 Do any of these differences cause problems?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

3.5 Are there groups of people in the Community/neighbourhood who are prevented from or do not have access to any of the following?

| | |
|---------------|---|
| 1 Yes 0 No | How many are excluded? 1 Only a few people 2 Many people, but less than |
|---------------|---|

| | | |
|----------------------------|--|---|
| | | half of the Community/neighborhood 3 More than half the Community/neighborhood |
| A. Education/schools | | |
| B. Health services/clinics | | |
| C. Water or Sanitation | | |
| D. Power (Electricity) | | |
| E. Police and the courts | | |
| F. Transportation | | |
| G. Other (Specify) | | |

3.6 Are there any community activities in which you are **not** allowed to participate?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No, I can participate in all activities - skip to #4

3.7 In which activities are you **not** allowed to participate?

[ENUMERATOR: LIST UP TO 3 ACTIVITIES FROM THE ABOVE LIST]

| |
|--|
| |
| |

3.8 Why are you not allowed to participate?

[ENUMERATOR: LIST UP TO 2 REASONS]

- 1 Poverty
- 2 Occupation

- 3 Lack of education
- 4 Gender bias
- 5 Age
- 6 Religion
- 7 Political affiliation
- 8 Ethnicity or language spoken/caste/tribe
- 9 Other (specify) _____

| |
|--|
| |
| |

4 COMMUNITY IMPACT

Sociability

I am now going to ask a few questions about your everyday social interactions.

4.1 In the last month, how many times have you met with people in a public place either to talk or to have food or drinks?

| | Activity |
|-------------------------------------|----------|
| 1 From <i>within</i> the community | |
| 2 From <i>outside</i> the community | |

4.2 In the last month, how many times have people visited you in your home?

| | Activity |
|-------------------------------------|----------|
| 1 From <i>within</i> the community | |
| 2 From <i>outside</i> the community | |

4.3 In the last month, how many times have you visited people in their home?

| | Activity | |
|--------------------------------|----------|--|
| 1 <i>Within</i> the community | | |
| 2 <i>Outside</i> the community | | |

4.4 Were the people you met and visited with mostly:

| | 1 Yes 0 No |
|--|---------------|
| A. Of different ethnic or linguistic group/caste/tribe | |
| B. Earning significantly more or less than you | |
| C. Of different social status | |
| D. Of different religious or spiritual beliefs | |
| E. Other (specify) | |

Well Being

4.5 What is the family average weekly income? (relative to a years period)

[ENUMERATOR: This may require determining the number of people in the household who are earning wages/income]

- Less than \$80 per week [] 1
- \$80 – \$100 per week [] 2
- \$100 – \$120 per week [] 3
- \$120 – \$150 per week [] 4
- Greater \$150 per week [] 5
- Other (specify) [] 6 _____

4.6 How often does the family experience periods of hunger? (i.e. days without food during a week/month as appropriate).

- One day per week [] 1
- 1 – 2 days per week [] 2
- 1 – 2 weeks per month [] 3
- Other (specify) [] 4 _____

4.7 What would you or your family spend \$10 or \$20 per week more on (in household income) as a matter of priority?

- On improvements to house [] 1
- On better water supply [] 2
- On better toilet facility [] 3
- On better power supply [] 4
- On better access to house
(e.g. Concrete path) [] 5
- On children’s education [] 6
- Spend on self [] 7
- Other (specify) [] 8 _____

Empowerment

4.8 In general, how happy are you in your current situation with your ... ?

| | |
|--|---|
| | 1 Very happy 2 Moderately happy 3 Neither happy nor unhappy 4 Mostly unhappy 5 Very unhappy |
| A. Families current health status | |
| B. Current housing situation | |
| C. Job situation | |
| D. Social life | |

4.9 How much control do you feel you have in making decisions that affect your current situation as described above? Do you have:

- 1 No control
- 2 Control over very few decisions
- 3 Control over some decisions
- 4 Control over most decisions
- 5 Control over all decisions

4.10 Do you feel that you have the power to make important decisions that change the course of your life? Rate yourself on a 1 to 5 scale, where 1 means being totally unable to change your life and five means having full control over your life.

- 1 Totally unable to change life
- 2 Mostly unable to change life
- 3 Neither able nor unable
- 4 Mostly able to change life
- 5 Totally able to change life

4.11 Overall, how much impact do you think you have in making this community/neighbourhood a better place to live?

- 1 A big impact
- 2 A small impact
- 3 No impact

Political Action

4.12 In the past 24 months, how often have people in this community/neighbourhood gotten together to jointly petition/approach government officials or political leaders for something benefiting the community?

- 1 Never - skip to question #4.14
- 2 Once
- 3 A few times (< 5)
- 4 Many times (> 5)

4.13 Were any of these petitions/approaches successful?

- 1 Yes, all were successful
- 2 Most were successful
- 3 Most were unsuccessful
- 4 None were successful

4.14 In the past 24 months, have you done any of the following?

| | |
|--|---------------|
| | 1 Yes 2 No |
| A. Attend a community/neighbourhood council meeting, public hearing, or public discussion group | |
| B. Met with a politician, called him/her, or sent a letter | |
| C. Participated in a protest or demonstration | |
| D. Participated in an information or election campaign | |
| E. Alerted newspaper, radio or TV to a local problem | |
| F. Notified police or court about a local problem | |

4.15 In your opinion, how honest are the officials and staff of the following agencies? Please rate them on a 1 to 5 scale, where 1 is very dishonest and 5 is very honest.

| |
|--------------------------------|
| 1 Very dishonest |
| 2 Mostly dishonest |
| 3 Neither honest nor dishonest |

| | 4 Mostly honest 5 Very honest |
|--|----------------------------------|
| A. People from your ethnic or linguistic group/caste/tribe | |
| B. People from other ethnic or linguistic group/caste/tribe | |
| C. People from your religion or spiritual beliefs | |
| D. People from other religions or spiritual beliefs | |
| E. Shopkeepers | |
| F. Local government officials | |
| G. Central government officials | |
| H. Staff of post office | |
| I. Traditional leaders | |
| J. Church/Religious leaders | |
| K. Judges and lawyers | |
| L. Police | |
| M. Teachers and school officials | |
| N. Doctors and nurses in health clinic | |
| O. Staff of NGOs | |
| P. Strangers | |

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APPENDIX 4: BASKET OF FOOD COSTING FOR FIJI HOUSEHOLDS

TABLE A4.1: FIJIAN Urban Weekly Low Cost Diet: Family of Five (4AEU)

The Food-basket list value for urban squatter Indo-Fijian families totalled \$105.37 plus a non-food essentials component of \$47.81 totalling \$153.18 and consisting of the following items:

| Food | Item | Quantity required per week | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|-------|
| Cereals | Sharps | 2.8kg | |
| | Rice | 4.1kg | |
| | Flour | 2.1kg | |
| | Bread (3x long loaf) | 3x 400gm loaf | |
| | Noodles | 2x 85gm pkts | |
| Meats/Eggs | Tinned Meat/Corned Beef | 2x 340gm tins | |
| | Tinned Fish/Mackerel | 3x 425gm tins | |
| | Mutton | 1.8 kg | |
| | Fresh fish | 1 kg | |
| | Eggs (2x 55g eggs) | 110g | |
| Vegetables & Fruits | Baigan | 2.1kg | |
| | Beans | 500g | |
| | Blue peas | 700g | |
| | Tubua | 3 kg | |
| | Bele | 1kg | |
| | Rourou | 1.5kg | |
| | Chinese cabbage | 500g | |
| | Dhal | 1.1kg | |
| | Pumpkin | 1.1kg | |
| | Carrots | 500g | |
| | Coconut | 6=904g | |
| | Root Crops | Kumala | 2.8kg |
| | | Cassava | 17kg |
| Fats | Cooking Oil | 1 Litre | |
| | Butter | 0.25x 500gm | |
| General | F/Cream Milk | 1 kg | |
| | Curry Powder | 2x 85gm pkts | |

| | | |
|--|-------|----------|
| | Sugar | 1 kg |
| | Tea | 200g pkt |
| | | |

Note: Food items are those established by Fiji Food and Nutrition Committee in 2002 (Abbot, 2006, p. 40; Narsey, 2008, p. 28-31). Prices listed are as costed at Suva Market in May 2008.

TABLE A4.2: INDO-FIJIAN Weekly Urban Low Cost Diet: Family of Five (4AEU) for a Week

The Food-basket list value for urban squatter Indo-Fijian families totalled \$105.23 plus a non-food essentials component of \$22.71 totalling \$127.94 and consisting of the following items:

| Food | Item | Quantity required per week |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Cereals | Sharps | 8.2kg |
| | Rice | 6.2kg |
| Meats/Eggs | Tinned Meat/Corned Beef | 2x 340gm tins |
| | Tinned Fish/Mackerel | 3x 425gm tins |
| | Eggs (12x 55g eggs) | 660g |
| Vegetables & Fruits | Baigan | 0.4kg |
| | Beans | 2.2kg |
| | Blue peas | 1.5kg |
| | Okra | 0.5 kg |
| | Tubua | 2.2 kg |
| | Tomato | 0.5kg |
| | Cucumber | 1.0kg |
| | Chinese cabbage | 1.5kg |
| | Dhal | 2.1kg |
| | Onion | 1.1kg |
| | Root Crops | Potatoes |
| Fats | Cooking Oil | 2 Litres |
| General | F/Cr Milk | 1 kg |
| | Curry Powder | 2x 150gm pkts |
| | Sugar | 0.56 kg |
| | Tea | 2x 200g pkt |

Note: Food items are those established by Fiji Food and Nutrition Committee in 2002 (Abbot, 2006, p. 41; Narsey, 2008, p. 28-31). Prices listed are as costed at Suva Market in May 2008.

APPENDIX 5: FOOD AND INCOME SECURITY ANALYSIS

This Section represents the findings from a review of results for Questions 1.18-1.20 and 4.5-4.7, (refer to Appendix 3).

A5.1 Introduction

The following outlines the process used to analyse information gained from survey questions about the household weekly income and expenditure and the choices people had to make regarding managing these matters, referred to as the 'living standards measurement'.¹¹³ The following assumptions, formulas and calculations utilised in the assessment of these aspects of income and food security support the research findings presented in Chapter 7 on these matters.

There are three areas of concern to consider in assessing income security and livelihood choices. The first is whether families have enough income to meet their weekly nutritional requirements. If not they are considered to be living below the 'food poverty line' or in 'absolute poverty'. The second, is whether people's weekly income was sufficient to cover both food and non-food essentials, required for a basic standard of living. This is termed the 'basic needs poverty line'. Thirdly, whether householders were experiencing periods of 'hardship,' (termed 'relative poverty') where they have inadequate regular incomes and so constantly make choices between competing needs, be it daily food requirements or other non-food basic needs like paying school fees or club memberships. These standard measures of poverty could then be compared to national poverty ratings as the benchmark for quality of life measures.¹¹⁴

Householders were then questioned about their voluntary monetary commitments to the church or faith-based groups to gauge the level of weekly social giving and what impact that may have on livelihood choices. Lastly, in order to understand the levels of hardship that may be faced by some people, questions were asked about the choices they have to make when there is not enough income to cover their weekly food and basic needs requirements.

¹¹³ Refer Chapter 5, Section 5.3.2.4 and for a full description of this process.

¹¹⁴ National poverty ratings are defined in Chapter 4, Section 4.3 in the context of Fiji and urban settlements.

A5.2 Food Security

This section assesses the ability of householders to purchase weekly grocery items that meet their family's minimum nutritional requirements. This is a basic component of the overall poverty assessment.

Food Security Index Definition

The food security index is the ratio of the food security threshold (FST) to actual household income (AHI) where the FST is the CPI adjusted figure for the FPL (or 'food basket' and 'non-food essential' needs) per AEU in that household. This is lower than the BNPL as that indicator also includes other household expenditure items for everyday living. The Food Security Index (FSI) is established using the following formula:

$$\text{FSI} = \text{AHI} / \text{FST}$$

$$\text{Where FST} = \text{AFBNH} + \text{ANENH}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Noting that: Actual Food-basket Needs per Household (AFBNH)} \\ = (\text{Food-basket} / \text{National Avg AEU}) \times \text{Household AEU} \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{And Non-food Essential Needs per Household (ANENH)} \\ = (\text{Non-food essentials} / \text{National Avg AEU}) \times \text{Household AEU} \end{aligned}$$

For example: FML01 is a Fijian household with an income of \$200 per week and 5.5AEU. The national average household size for the lowest 3 deciles of Squatter/Urban Villages is 5.2AEU (Abbot, 2006, S.2.1.1, Table 2, p. 10). For surveyed Fijian households the Food-basket list totals \$105 and non-food essentials totals \$48.¹¹⁵ For the adult equivalent unit or AEU calculation refer Chapter 7, Section 7.2.1.2(a). Thus the calculation is as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{FST} &= \text{AFBNH} [(105 / 5.5) \times 5.2] + \text{ANENH} [(48 / 5.5) \times 5.2] \\ &= 111 + 51 \\ &= 162 \end{aligned}$$

And

¹¹⁵ For this calculation involving surveyed Indo-Fijian households the parameters utilised were a national average household size for the lowest 3 deciles of Squatter/Urban Villages at 4.1AEU per household (Abbot, 2006, S.2.1.1, Table 2, p. 10); the Food-basket list totalling \$105 also and non-food essentials which totalled \$28 only. Refer Appendix 5 for the 'food basket' lists.

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{FSI} &= \text{AHI} / \text{FST} \\
 &= 200 / 162 \\
 &= 1.2
 \end{aligned}$$

(Ref: Kurusiga, S; Kado, M and Qoloni, M., 2006, p. 99).

Households whose FSI ratio is equal to or below 1.0 (as for FML01 in the above example) are facing constant hardship and can be considered the poorest of the poor. In the assessment of this research those with an index in the range of 1.1-1.6 are considered to be vulnerable to poverty and if between 1.7-2.0 the household would be considered vulnerable to falling into poverty if exposed to a crisis situation like demanding family obligations (e.g. weddings, funerals) or adverse events (e.g. affects of cyclones) and other such crises (e.g. death of a bread winner). Above a value of 2.0 the household livelihood is considered secure and able to comfortably manage such shocks. These zones are highlighted in Table 7.3 below by the use of a single horizontal line along with the values for each of the calculations made above.

Results of Food Security Index Analysis for the Three Settlements

Actual food security levels calculated for each Settlement household are listed in Table A6.1 below in ascending order from the poorest to the most affluent and with overall averages provided by Settlement and ethnicity at the base. The Table presents by column each key component of the FSI calculation provided above. The households are ranked by the FSI figure provided in the right hand column. Under the settlement each household code is listed to identify where the family is from, (thus FML01 represents Fiji Muslim League Household 1; CCT Caubati Topline and Nan Nanuku). The other columns contain the value for the relevant calculation from the formula for food security index above.

Table A5.1 Household Food Security and Vulnerability by Settlement

| By Settlement and Household Unit Code | Actual Urban Squatter BNPL per AEU 2008 [2003 HIES adjusted] ¹ (\$) | Adult Equivalent Units per Household [AEU] | Actual Foodbasket Needs per Household [F-BNH] (\$ per week) | Actual Basic Needs per Household [BNH] (\$ per week) | Household Food Security Threshold [FST] (\$ per week) | Actual Household Income [AHI] (\$ per week) | Food Security Index [FSI = AHI/FST] |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|---|--|---|---|-------------------------------------|
|---------------------------------------|--|--|---|--|---|---|-------------------------------------|

| | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|-----------|------------|------------|------------|
| Nanuku | | | | | | | |
| Nan01 | 41 | 1.75 | 35 | 16 | 52 | 40 | 0.8 |
| Nan02 | 41 | 4.25 | 86 | 39 | 125 | 160 | 1.3 |
| Nan03 | 42 | 3.25 | 83 | 22 | 105 | 90 | 0.9 |
| Nan04 | 42 | 3.25 | 83 | 22 | 105 | 185 | 1.8 |
| Nan05 | 41 | 3.25 | 66 | 30 | 96 | 180 | 1.9 |
| Nan06 | 42 | 2.50 | 64 | 17 | 81 | 90 | 1.1 |
| Average | 41 | 3.04 | 70 | 24 | 94 | 124 | 1.3 |
| Indo-Fj HH | 42 | 3.00 | 77 | 20 | 97 | 122 | 1.2 |
| Fijian HH | 41 | 3.08 | 62 | 28 | 91 | 127 | 1.3 |
| Caubati | | | | | | | |
| CCT01 | 42 | 3.8 | 96 | 25 | 122 | 90 | 0.7 |
| CCT02 | 42 | 2.8 | 71 | 19 | 89 | 200 | 2.2 |
| CCT03 | 42 | 5.8 | 148 | 39 | 186 | 400 | 2.1 |
| CCT04 | 42 | 3.8 | 96 | 25 | 122 | 90 | 0.7 |
| CCT05 | 42 | 3.8 | 96 | 25 | 122 | 318 | 2.6 |
| CCT06 | 42 | 1.8 | 45 | 12 | 57 | 135 | 2.4 |
| Average | 42 | 3.6 | 92 | 24 | 116 | 205 | 1.8 |
| Fiji Muslim League | | | | | | | |
| FML01 | 41 | 5.5 | 111 | 51 | 162 | 200 | 1.2 |
| FML02 | 41 | 1.8 | 35 | 16 | 52 | 105 | 2.0 |
| FML03 | 41 | 5.0 | 101 | 46 | 147 | 70 | 0.5 |
| FML04 | 41 | 2.3 | 46 | 21 | 66 | 270 | 4.1 |
| FML05 | 41 | 2.3 | 46 | 21 | 66 | 180 | 2.7 |
| FML06 | 41 | 1.5 | 30 | 14 | 44 | 98 | 2.2 |
| Average | 41 | 3.0 | 62 | 28 | 90 | 154 | 2.1 |
| Overall | | | | | | | |
| Indo-Fj HH | 42 | 3.4 | 87 | 23 | 110 | 178 | 1.6 |
| Fijian HH | 41 | 3.1 | 62 | 28 | 90 | 145 | 1.9 |
| Total Average | 41 | 3.2 | 74 | 25 | 100 | 161 | 1.7 |

[¹For the average Squatter Urban Village as referenced in Abbot (2006) S. 4.2. Table 12. p. 19]

Source: The various calculations are based on standard poverty analysis formulas obtained from Kurusiga, Kado & Qoloni, (2006); Abbot, (2006) and Narsey, (2008) and the baseline figures for each household were obtained from the survey.

Interpreting the data presented for each household, the indices numbers in red represent those households that are on or below the poverty line – the poorest of the poor in fact. Noticeable is the 28% (5 households - 2 at Nanuku, 2 at Caubati Topline and 1 at Fiji Muslim League) who are ‘food insecure’ or living in absolute poverty, (with FSI below 1.0). The households in the black are vulnerable to poverty, either experiencing regular hardship (index below 1.6) or who may fall into poverty as a result of a crisis situation (those >2.0) due to a major family obligation or affected by external events like a cyclone or political upheaval. Therefore a further 17% (3) that were vulnerable to regular food

security problems (2 at Nanuku and 1 at Fiji Muslim League). Therefore a total of 45% of households (7) were food insecure and so living in absolute poverty. A further 17% (2 at Nanuku and 1 at Fiji Muslim League) were considered vulnerable if exposed to a crisis situation. The households in blue (7) represent those considered living above the food poverty line, representing 39% of those surveyed.

In terms of differences between settlements Nanuku (or Nan) were the most vulnerable at an average index of 1.3 while Caubati Topline (or CCT at 1.8) and Fiji Muslim League (or FML at 2.1) were more secure. In terms of ethnic differences, while the overall averages were similar placing both above the 1.6 level the Indo-Fijian households were slightly worse-off than Fijian households at all levels for food security.

A5.3 Income Security

This section assesses the householder's income security which provides a comparative basis for assessing whether they earn enough to cover their basic needs and living costs (including the weekly food requirements assessed above). This figure is able to be compared alongside the national Basic Needs Poverty Line (BNPL) figure for urban squatter communities, the benchmark for measuring poverty levels in a country.

Income Security Index Definition

The second step in determining poverty levels is to measure the level of household income security. This index is based on the family average weekly income figure and compared to the national Urban Squatter Basic Needs Poverty Line (Usq BNPL) figure for urban squatter communities. The Urban Squatter BNPL is an arbitrary calculation designed to best represent the range of households for demographic and for comparative analysis as explained in Section 5.3.4.1. However this figure does not represent household income security threshold (IST) or, in other words, the minimum level of income a household must sustain to achieve a basic standard of living. To construct the IST a complex calculation is required and for the purposes of this study the methodology utilised by Kurusiga, Kado and Qoloni (2006, p. 91) has been

adopted.¹¹⁶ To derive the IST the Urban Squatter BNPL is adjusted by the number of AEU for that household against the national AEU figure. To complete the calculation the IST is converted to an index by using the ratio of actual household income (AHI) to the adjusted IST figure. The index partitioning outlined earlier for the FSI also hold for the results of calculations for the ISI ratio. Thus the Income Security Index (ISI) is established using the following formula:

$$\text{ISI} = \text{AHI} / \text{IST}$$

$$\text{Where IST} = (\text{Usq BNPL} / \text{National Avg AEU}) \times \text{Household AEU}$$

For example: FML01 is a Fijian household with an actual income of \$200 per week and 5.5AEU in the household. The national average household size for the lowest 3 deciles of Squatter/Urban Villages is 5.2AEU (Abbot, 2006, S.2.1.1, Table 2, p. 10). The Usq BNPL for surveyed Fijian households averaged FJ\$212. For the adult equivalent unit or AEU calculation refer Chapter 7, Section 7.2.1.2(a). Thus the calculation is as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{ISI} &= \text{AHI} / [(\text{Usq BNPL} / \text{National Avg AEU}) \times \text{Household AEU}] \\ &= 200 / [(212 / 5.5) \times 5.2] \\ &= 0.9 \end{aligned}$$

(Ref: Kurusiga, S; Kado, M and Qoloni, M., 2006, p. 99).

Results of Income Security Index Analysis for the Three Settlements

Actual income security levels calculated for each household are listed in Table A6.2 in ascending order from the poorest to the most affluent, by settlement and with overall averages provided by ethnicity at the base. These show that eight of the eighteen households surveyed (4 at Nanuku, 2 at Caubati Topline and 2 at Fiji Muslim League) were below an index level of 1.0 indicating that 44% were experiencing income security problems constantly. There were a further 22% of householders (4) that were 'vulnerable' to regular income security

¹¹⁶ Kurusiga, Kado and Qoloni (2006) studied the importance of informal sector activities for squatter settler's income security in Fiji. They utilised the Bryant Tokelau approach (Bryant, 1990 In Kurusiga et.al. p. 91) to maintain some consistency with earlier work as is the case here, in order to continue building a credible basis for further comparative research with squatter settlers in Fiji.

problems (2 at Nanuku and 2 at Fiji Muslim League). Therefore a total of 66% of householders (12) were 'income insecure' and so living in basic-needs poverty. A further 28% (4 at Caubati Topline and 1 at Fiji Muslim League) were considered 'vulnerable' if exposed to a crisis situation and the remaining 6% (1) was 'income secure' having an index above 2.0. In terms of differences between settlements Nanuku were 'income in-secure' with an average index of 1.0 while Caubati Topline (1.4) and Fiji Muslim League (1.5) were 'vulnerable' to income security on a regular basis. There was little in the way of ethnic differences with both groups considered 'vulnerable' at around the 1.3 level on average. On closer consideration of the individual cases, the Indo-Fijian community Caubati Topline had a higher number of households near to income secure (CCT Households 2, 3, 5 & 6) at ISI of 1.8 compared to the *Kecisimani* group from Fiji Muslim League (FML Households 1-4) at ISI of 1.4 which is on a par with Nanuku, indicating they were less vulnerable to poverty than the Fijians.

Table A5.2 Household Income Security and Vulnerability by Settlement

| By Settlement and Household Unit Code | Actual Urban Squatter BNPL per AEU 2008 [2003 HIES adjusted] ¹ (\$) | Adult Equivalent Units per Household [AEU] | Household Income Security Threshold [IST] (\$ per week) | Actual Household Income [AHI] (\$ per week) | Income Security Index [ISI = AHI/IST] |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| Nanuku | | | | | |
| Nan01 | 41 | 1.75 | 71 | 40 | 0.6 |
| Nan02 | 41 | 4.25 | 173 | 160 | 0.9 |
| Nan03 | 42 | 3.25 | 136 | 90 | 0.7 |
| Nan04 | 42 | 3.25 | 136 | 185 | 1.4 |
| Nan05 | 41 | 3.25 | 132 | 180 | 1.4 |
| Nan06 | 42 | 2.50 | 104 | 90 | 0.9 |
| Average | 41 | 3.04 | 125 | 124 | 1.0 |
| Indo-Fj HH | 42 | 3.00 | 125 | 122 | 1.0 |
| Fijian HH | 41 | 3.08 | 126 | 127 | 0.9 |
| Caubati | | | | | |
| CCT01 | 42 | 3.8 | 156 | 90 | 0.6 |
| CCT02 | 42 | 2.8 | 115 | 200 | 1.7 |
| CCT03 | 42 | 5.8 | 240 | 400 | 1.7 |
| CCT04 | 42 | 3.8 | 156 | 90 | 0.6 |

| | | | | | |
|---------------------------|-----------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| CCT05 | 42 | 3.8 | 156 | 318 | 2.0 |
| CCT06 | 42 | 1.8 | 73 | 135 | 1.8 |
| Average | 42 | 3.6 | 150 | 205 | 1.4 |
| Fiji Muslim League | | | | | |
| FML01 | 41 | 5.5 | 224 | 200 | 0.9 |
| FML02 | 41 | 1.8 | 71 | 105 | 1.5 |
| FML03 | 41 | 5.0 | 204 | 70 | 0.3 |
| FML04 | 41 | 2.3 | 92 | 270 | 2.9 |
| FML05 | 41 | 2.3 | 92 | 180 | 2.0 |
| FML06 | 41 | 1.5 | 61 | 98 | 1.6 |
| Average | 41 | 3.0 | 124 | 154 | 1.5 |
| Overall | | | | | |
| Indo-Fj HH | 42 | 3.4 | 141 | 178 | 1.3 |
| Fijian HH | 41 | 3.1 | 124 | 145 | 1.3 |
| Total Average | 41 | 3.2 | 133 | 161 | 1.3 |

[¹For the average Squatter Urban Village as referenced in Abbot (2006) S. 4.2. Table 12. p. 19]

Source: The various calculations are based on standard poverty analysis formulas obtained from Kurusiga, Kado & Qoloni, (2006); Abbot, (2008) and Narsey, (2008) and the baseline figures for each household were obtained from the survey.

In terms of comparisons to the national Urban Squatter Basic Needs Poverty Line (Usq BNPL) of FJ\$191 per week, 12 of the 18 households surveyed including all of the Nanuku households surveyed, (overall 8 Indo-Fijian and 4 Fijian) had actual weekly incomes below this arbitrary poverty line indicating a 66% level of poverty.¹¹⁷ There were only two households from Fiji Muslim League and three from Caubati Topline that were over the Usq BNPL level. This illustrates the difference in diagnosing poverty levels when taking strictly an arbitrary income approach in the case of the BNPL as compared to the threshold approach. The latter essentially looks more acutely at diagnosing poverty in terms of relative security levels, as can be seen in Table 5.3 below where the BNPL would put some householders either above (e.g. FML01) or below the poverty line (e.g. CCT06) indiscriminately with the result of potentially under or overstating the reality –although on this occasion the arbitrary income figure and ISI figures are in fact the same. This poverty figure is considerably higher than the 2003 HIES statistics which state that 36% of households living in informal and squatter settlements are below the BNPL.¹¹⁸ If this small sample is indicative there has been a significant increase in poverty levels (6% pa) in the last five years.

A5.4 Effects of Social Giving

The third area of concern for poverty analysis was the impact of social donations on household incomes, assessed utilising the figures collected earlier (refer Chapter 7, Section 7.2.1.2 about Social Giving). Household income, net of the social giving amount is listed alongside the gross income column in Table A5.3 below to illustrate the affects on weekly household incomes. Evident is that the impact of social giving appears less than might be expected, producing in most cases a one point drop in each index measure. The most affected by their own social giving regime was the poorest household (Nan01) which dropped two points on both indices. This suggests that families, who are already living in

¹¹⁷ See Chapter 4, Section 4.3. The national BNPL figure was FJ\$155.05 per household in 2003. However, for urban squatter households this average was slightly higher at FJ\$158.75. Adjusted to 2008 by the CPI this would be equivalent to FJ\$189.50 which is similar to what this survey average was calculated at \$191.41 (Abbot, 2006, p. 19).

¹¹⁸ Refer to Chapter 4, Section 4.3 for a description of the national poverty situation according to official 2003 Household Income and Expenditure Survey statistics.

poverty, more often than not, felt they could still help themselves or others by being charitable; knowing the consequences it would have on them.

From Section 7.2.1.2 we know the extent of voluntary household contributions in time and money were strongly in favour of Religious Groups to any other and Indo-Fijians were regularly contributing a little more than Fijians. In order to verify whether this level of social giving was a constraint on the households meeting their weekly basic needs the level of financial contributions was factored into the FSI and ISI calculations to see what actual affects if any there was on household poverty status, summarised in Tables above.

For all settlements approximately 21 days per household or 7.3 AEU days work per year were contributed voluntarily with just less than half that (41%) dedicated to religious groups. In terms of financial donations, approximately \$9 per household or 6% of the weekly income donated, with 58% of that going to religious groups. For both aspects Indo-Fijians were contributing a little more than Fijians. In order to verify whether this level of social giving was a constraint on the household meeting its weekly basic needs the level of financial contributions was factored into the FSI and ISI calculations to see what actual affects if any there was on household poverty status, summarised in Table A5.3 below.

The overall result demonstrates there was a significant difference between Indo-Fijian and Fijian poverty levels after accounting for social giving, as measured by the average Income Security Index. There was a significant difference at the settlement level with the Integrated Nanuku community lower than the other two. However the Indo-Fijian community Caubati Topline had only two that were food insecure compared to Fiji Muslim League where there were three food insecure (only one of those from the *Kecisimani* group) indicating Caubati Topline were less vulnerable than the others Settlements, In most cases the food insecure and vulnerable households had already indicated that any extra income they might accrue would be put to good use in providing for more food purchases, (refer Section 7.3.1 earlier).

Table A5.3 Impact of Social Obligations on Household Income and Food Security by Settlement

| By Settlement and Household Unit Code | Actual Household Income [AHI] (\$ per week) | Donations per Household to Community Groups (\$ per week) | Household Income Net of Social Obligations [NetAHI] (\$ per week) | Income Security Index [ISI = AHI/IST] | | Food Security Index [FSI = AHI/FST] | |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|---|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| | | | | Actual | AFTER Deducting Social Obligations | Actual | AFTER Deducting Social Obligations |
| Nanuku | | | | | | | |
| Nan01 | 40 | 13.00 | 27 | 0.6 | 0.4 | 0.8 | 0.5 |
| Nan03 | 90 | 3.86 | 86 | 0.7 | 0.6 | 0.9 | 0.8 |
| Nan06 | 90 | 4.10 | 86 | 0.9 | 0.8 | 1.1 | 1.1 |
| Nan02 | 160 | 5.77 | 154 | 0.9 | 0.9 | 1.3 | 1.2 |
| Nan05 | 180 | 15.38 | 165 | 1.4 | 1.2 | 1.9 | 1.7 |
| Nan04 | 185 | 11.62 | 173 | 1.4 | 1.3 | 1.8 | 1.6 |
| Average | 124 | 8.95 | 115 | 1.0 | 0.9 | 1.3 | 1.2 |
| Indo-Fj HH | 122 | 6.52 | 115 | 1.0 | 0.9 | 1.2 | 1.2 |
| Fijian HH | 127 | 11.38 | 115 | 0.9 | 0.8 | 1.3 | 1.2 |
| Caubati Topline | | | | | | | |
| CCT04 | 90 | 5.81 | 84 | 0.6 | 0.5 | 0.7 | 0.7 |
| CCT01 | 90 | 2.50 | 88 | 0.6 | 0.6 | 0.7 | 0.7 |
| CCT06 | 135 | 8.92 | 126 | 1.8 | 1.7 | 2.4 | 2.2 |
| CCT02 | 200 | 7.00 | 193 | 1.7 | 1.7 | 2.2 | 2.2 |
| CCT05 | 318 | 10.10 | 307 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.6 | 2.5 |
| CCT03 | 400 | 30.38 | 370 | 1.7 | 1.5 | 2.1 | 2.0 |
| Average | 205 | 10.79 | 195 | 1.4 | 1.3 | 1.8 | 1.7 |
| Fiji Muslim League | | | | | | | |
| FML03 | 70 | 7.12 | 63 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.5 | 0.4 |
| FML02 | 105 | 15.96 | 89 | 1.5 | 1.2 | 2.0 | 1.7 |
| FML06 | 98 | 2.12 | 96 | 1.6 | 1.6 | 2.2 | 2.2 |
| FML05 | 180 | 0.19 | 180 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.7 | 2.7 |
| FML01 | 200 | 12.5 | 188 | 0.9 | 0.8 | 1.2 | 1.2 |
| FML04 | 270 | 6.54 | 263 | 2.9 | 2.9 | 4.1 | 4.0 |
| Average | 154 | 7.40 | 146 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 2.1 | 1.6 |
| Overall | | | | | | | |
| Indo-Fj HH | 178 | 9.36 | 168 | 1.3 | 1.2 | 1.6 | 1.5 |
| Fijian HH | 145 | 8.73 | 136 | 1.3 | 1.3 | 1.9 | 1.7 |
| Total Average | 161 | 9.05 | 152 | 1.3 | 1.2 | 1.7 | 1.7 |

Source: The various calculations are based on standard poverty analysis formulas obtained from Kurusiga, Kado & Qoloni, (2006); Abbot, (2008) and Narsey, (2008) and the baseline figures for each household were obtained from the survey.

5.5 Summary of Findings

The findings of this Chapter highlighted a number of factors where potentially negative or positive benefits impact on the abilities of settlers' to participate in community groups and hence potentially benefit from such interactions. These included:

- **Finding 7:** closeness of residents within communities of one predominant ethnicity (Fiji Muslim League and Caubati Central) who

identified strongly with their settlement and were willing to help neighbours out if requested or contribute resources toward shared needs. In contrast there was weak community cohesion for the integrated community of Nanuku. This was commonly manifested through religious and ethnic intolerances between people living within the micro-communities or ethnic neighbourhoods.

- **Finding 8:** a general willingness of community members to contribute resources toward shared needs
- **Finding 9:** Indo-Fijians contributed more to their community activities both in time and money compared to Fijians
- **Finding 10:** the general level of social giving from people who are poor was high at 6% (approximately \$9 per household) of average weekly income with 58% of that going to religious groups. More often than not this resulted periods of hardship where children were most likely to suffer in terms of hunger and reduced education opportunities.
- **Finding 11:** a lack of credible vertical networking to public institutions and external agencies, manifest in the low levels of confidence in society's leaders, particularly those in public offices.
- **Finding 12:** 66% or 12 households from the 18 surveyed live below the national poverty line. This is substantially higher than the most recent survey figure of 40% for squatter settlements (Mohanty, 2006, p. 2).¹¹⁹
- **Finding 13:** When faced with hardship choices, the first two discretionary items to be dropped were school fees (for Fijians) and food items (for Indo-Fijians). Conversely these were also the first two items people would spend more on, if they had extra discretionary money. The greater importance accorded to education by Indo-Fijians, who indicated their first preference to spend any extra money would be on education, affirms earlier accounts from other literature on this aspect of Indo-Fijian culture.

The arbitrary level of poverty within these settlements based on the national Urban Squatter Poverty basic needs poverty line (Usq BNPL) was higher than

¹¹⁹ Refer Chapter 4, Section 4.3.

expected with 66% of households (12 from the 18 surveyed) living below that level. However, when assessing individual households the actual income security level was lower than the arbitrary figure at 44% (or 8 households) which compared more favourably with the most recent survey (Mohanty, 2006, p. 2). Almost two thirds of these households (28%) were considered 'food insecure' or living in absolute poverty, with the remainder experiencing frequent income and food hardship. A further 17% (3) were considered vulnerable to poverty, experiencing periods of hardship where they may either be food or income insecure at intermittent times during any particular month.

Overall in terms of differences between settlements, Nanuku was the worst affected in terms of being vulnerable to food insecurity and income insecure. Caubati Topline was considered 'vulnerable' to poverty for both indices while Fiji Muslim League was food secure, yet vulnerable to income insecurity.

All seven key findings above have potential to create either positive or negative impacts on individual and/or community empowerment processes and will be discussed in more detail in the next Chapter.

APPENDIX 6



Massey University

Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa

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RESEARCH INFORMATION SHEET

My name is **Kirk Yates** and I am in Fiji to do fieldwork for my thesis for a Masters of Philosophy qualification in Development Studies. I am a student of Massey University in Palmerston North, New Zealand.

Thank you for your interest in the research project: **'Implications of Culture, Religion and Other Lived Experience on Community Development in Informal and Squatter Settlements in Fiji'**. The objective of this study is to consider how social integration, religion and cultural change may impact on the development of urban squatter communities. A second focus is to determine ways that community based organisations could improve their ability to formulate effective responses to urban poverty that make the most of the strengths, effort and underlying values prevailing in these poor communities. This will involve conducting interviews with volunteers from three settlement communities, (Fiji Muslim League, Nanuku and Caubati Topline) which will require participants to respond to a set of questions about urban community life.

Anyone wishing to take part in this research will be asked to sign a consent form. The informal interview will take approximately one hour.

If a community member decides to participate, they have the right to:

- Decline to answer any particular question
- Withdraw from the study at any time during participation
- Ask any questions about the study at any time during participation

- Provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher
- Be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded

Data obtained will be analyzed and used for my Masters in Philosophy thesis and other academic publications. All data will be stored securely in a safe place. To protect the privacy of participants I will ensure that the data is transcribed only by me.

Where required names will be changed and pseudonyms will be used to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. All interview questionnaires will be kept safely by Massey University and will be erased after a period of five years. The thesis will be accessible through the Massey University library.

This research information sheet has been compiled to inform those interested or involved in this study indirectly and may include people from government, non-government, civil society, university or other tertiary institutes and settlement communities.

Thank you very much for your interest!

You are welcome to contact the researcher(s) and/or supervisor(s) at any time if you have any questions about the project. For your convenience, contact details are provided below.

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This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher(s) named above are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you wish to raise with someone other than the researcher, please contact Professor Sylvia Rumball, Assistant to the Vice-Chancellor (Ethics & Equity), telephone +64 6 350 5249, email humanethics@massey.ac.nz

APPENDIX 7



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Project Title: *The Implications of Culture, Religion and Other Lived Experience on Community Development in Informal and Squatter Settlements in Fiji*

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

This consent form will be held for a period of five (5) years

I have read the **Project Information Sheet** and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I *wish / do not wish* to have data placed in an official archive.

I agree to not disclose anything discussed in the Focus Group, *(if applicable)*.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Project Information Sheet.

Signature:

Date:

Full Name - printed

APPENDIX 8



Massey University

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Project Title: *The Implications of Culture, Religion and Other Lived Experience on Community Development in Informal and Squatter Settlements in Fiji*

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

Research Volunteers

I (Full Name - printed)

agree to keep confidential all information concerning the project '**Implications of Culture, Religion and Other Lived Experience on Community Development in Informal and Squatter Settlements in Fiji**'.

I will not retain or copy any information involving the project.

Signature:

Date:

.....

