SOCIAL PROTECTION FOR OLDER FIJIANS

Expert Group Meeting: Measuring population ageing: Bridging Research and Policy” Bangkok Thailand, 25-26 Feb 2019
**Total Population**: 884,887

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of Male Population</th>
<th>50.7%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% of Female Population</td>
<td>49.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Median Age</td>
<td>27.5</td>
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*NB: While the proportion of males was higher below the age of 59 years, the female population was higher in the age groups above 60, indicating greater female longevity.*
<table>
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<th>Total Older Persons Aged 60+</th>
<th>80,483</th>
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<tr>
<td>% of Older Persons Aged 60+</td>
<td>9%</td>
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<td>Total Persons Living with Disabilities</td>
<td>113,595</td>
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<td>% of Persons Living with Disabilities</td>
<td>12%</td>
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Social Protection for Older Persons
1874
British Colony
At the request of Ratu Cakobau and other Fijian chiefs, Fiji becomes a British crown colony.

1875-76
Measles Rebellion
Uprising by Fijians due to 1/3 of the population being wiped out by measles. The rebellion is suppressed by British forces and Fijian chiefs.

1879-1916
Indentured Labourers
Over this time in excess of 60,000 Indian indentured labourers brought to Fiji to work in the sugar cane fields.

1904
Legislative Council
A Legislative Council is formed with elected Europeans and nominated Fijians. Their role is to advise the British governor.

1916
Indian labourers stopped
British colonial government in India ceases any further recruiting of indentured labourers for Fiji.

1920
End labour indenture
All labour indenture agreements end in Fiji.

1963
Women vote
Women obtain the right to vote.

1970
Independence
Fiji gains independence from Great Britain. Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara becomes the Prime Minister.
Exchange in the early 19th Century

started as a Destitute Allowance in the 1920s (generic inclusive of vulnerable older persons)
The Destitute scheme evolved into a family social protection program targeting individuals that were vulnerable. Older Persons was a category assisted under the scheme.

**Year 2011**: Total recipients under the Scheme (19,666) inclusive of OPs

**FAMILY ASSISTANCE SCHEME**
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Key Developments</th>
<th>Photo</th>
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<td>2009</td>
<td>Government approved <strong>formation of Inter Agency forum</strong> to oversee development of a National Policy on Elderly.</td>
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<td>2011</td>
<td>On 30 August, Cabinet endorsed the <strong>National Policy on Ageing</strong>.</td>
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<td>2012</td>
<td>The <strong>National Council for Older Persons (NCOP) Decree</strong> was enacted.</td>
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<td>2013</td>
<td><strong>NCOP Council</strong> was <strong>established</strong> by the Minister SWWPA (July 3rd).</td>
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<td>Fiji’s Constitution (September 6th 2013) Bill of Rights</td>
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<td>2014/2015</td>
<td>Government resourced the Council $200,000 to carry out its activities.</td>
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The year 2012 witnessed progress on partnership efforts between Government via the Ministry and the World Bank. This was evident through the further endorsement by Cabinet in November 2012 to reform the exiting social protection programs into 2 newly targeted programs. The two programs include the:

i. Poverty Benefit Scheme; and the
ii. Social Pension Schemes
POVERTY BENEFIT SCHEME (2012)

- Household targeted poverty benefit (deviation from the individual targeting of the former Family Assistance),
- Does not include Older Persons
- Currently since 2013 a total of 26,374 families (average of 4) are assisted under the scheme.
SOCIAL PENSION SCHEME (2013)

• Govt. Social Protection Scheme for Older Persons
• Established in 2013
• A pension tested scheme
• Age eligibility 65+
• Coverage 41,294 Older Persons
• 51.3% of Older Persons
Older Persons **below 70 yrs** of age are covered for:

1. injury ($3,000)
2. fire ($3,000)
3. life ($3,000)

Older Persons **above 70 yrs** of age are covered for funeral benefit ($1,000)
• Both Older Persons aged 60+ and persons with disabilities are provided $40 value on their e-transport cards for public bus transportation on a monthly basis.

BUS FARE ASSISTANCE
Older Persons are also entitled to free medicine. 
Income threshold of salary below $20,000 per year

FREE MEDICINE SCHEME
• Currently Fiji has a total of 8 institutional Homes which either specifically or generically provide care for older persons (220 residents).

• 5 Homes who has qualified residents for the welfare scheme do get the assistance.
CHALLENGES

1. Implementation Issues (collaboration/ resources/ sensitization)
2. Research and Development (impact assessments)
3. Data and information on Ageing
4. Validating realities from Older Persons themselves
5. Administrative mechanism to specifically be responsible for the collaboration and implementation aspects of service delivery on Ageing
6. Legislation specifically for the rights and protection of older persons
1. Establish an administration to specifically coordinate activities for implementation
2. Partnership and collaboration
3. Awareness and Sensitization of communities and institutions
4. Conduct periodical surveys
5. Formalize data and information system of colating, analyzing and sharing information (local/ regional/ international)
6. Lobby for a holistic legislation for older persons
THANK YOU FOR LISTENING!