

## 6.5: Culture and Heritage

Fiji is a multi-racial, multi-cultural country with a

*Goal: Protection and management of our culture and heritage for current and future generations.*

multiplicity of languages, religions and ways of living. Culture refers to the diverse manifestation of human intellectual and artistic creativity, that is, both cultural heritage, and the living forms of cultural expression.

The Department of Culture and Heritage was established in 2000 and is working towards fostering a sense of national identity that is all inclusive and based on values of equality, mutual respect irrespective of colour, race, national or ethnic origin, religion, gender and physical abilities. The existing government and non-governmental organizations, in particular, the Fiji Museum, National Trust of Fiji and Fiji Arts Council, are the flagship agencies for cultural and heritage development.

Integral to the development of the nation is the conservation, development and promotion of the indigenous identity. One that is not mutually exclusive but recognizes that its strength and vitality comes not only from conserving the past but embracing the future in its mirrored dimensions including the existence of other cultures.

Tourism, as the fastest growing industry in the world, relies to a large extent on cultural heritage for its sustainability. Historic conservation and cultural activities can maintain the distinct character of communities and greatly enhance the quality of life and enhance tourism investment. The tourism industry and local community must find a balance between profitability and sustainability. Cultural heritage sites and traditional arts should be conserved and protected.

The association between gender and culture needs consideration. Both culture and gender have been highly politicized, affecting women's rights as well as our understanding of the place of culture in development. The challenge is to develop an agenda that recognizes women as significant actors in development and as bearers and signifiers of their culture.

Culture has the potential to address the challenges faced by our youth today. A major challenge exists in their economic inclusion, civic and cultural participation, and health and education needs. Part of the answer lies in the young people themselves and partly in creating an environment to express themselves. The education system provides a catalyst and an opportunity for this in instilling a sense of values and cultural identity.

There is a need to think culture and its impact on the environment. Local ecological knowledge and traditional management practices, as part of the local systems of values and meanings, have proved to be environmentally sustainable. The challenge is now to translate this into practical projects and to change policies that strengthen the cultural dimensions of the relations between the environment and development.

<b>Policy Objectives</b>	<b>Key Performance Indicators</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To protect, preserve and manage Fiji's cultural heritage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Establishment of a National Cultural Policy Framework</li> <li>▪ Review of existing legislation (Fiji Museum Act, the Intellectual Property Rights Act)</li> <li>▪ Feasibility study on National Cultural Industry</li> <li>▪ Infrastructure developed to strengthen the activities of existing heritage management agencies</li> <li>▪ Establishment of National Treasure and Oral History Database</li> <li>▪ Launch of Department of culture and Heritage Website</li> <li>▪ Research on archaeological, maritime, paleontological and material culture research</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To increase cultural and cross-cultural understanding.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Arts and culture subjects integrated in to the school curriculum</li> <li>▪ To strengthen and develop intersectoral linkages with NGO's and through small grant allocation and collaborative partnerships between government and donor agencies;</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To promote creativity in all forms and at all levels of society with particular emphasis on the role of women and youth;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increase number of women/youths individually and/ or collectively participate on part-time or full-time in creative arts.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Promote conservation and resource development that emphasizes partnership with local landowners;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increase number of 'mataqali' landowners engaged in commercial ventures.</li> <li>▪ Establish protected areas for national parks and marine parks.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop creative performing arts, and visual art focusing on traditional raw materials, techniques and designs;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop a database for Art and Craft Organizations</li> <li>▪ Fiji's participation at the next South Pacific Arts Festival</li> <li>▪ Increase in Natural Cultural Festivals</li> <li>▪ Increase in cultural exchange groups performances overseas</li> </ul>