MARKETS: INCREASING WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP AND INFLUENCE
WHY SUPPORT WOMEN AND LEADERSHIP?

• Women bring particular perspectives, priorities and strengths resulting from their life experiences, which are often different from men’s.

• Greater gender equality, especially in leadership and decision-making, improves economic circumstances at the country, local and household levels.

• Increasing women’s leadership and decision making challenges basic and longstanding power relationships between men and women, and this needs careful consideration to avoid negative impacts.
IN THE PACIFIC

• Supporting women in leadership is a key priority for the Pacific Leader’s Gender Equality Declaration.

• To progress these commitments, Leaders commit to implement specific national policy actions to progress gender equality in the areas of gender responsive government programs and policies, decision making, economic empowerment, ending violence against women, and health and education: Gender Responsive Government Programs and Policies

• A key commitment under CEDAW, the Revised Pacific Platform for Action on Advancement of Women and Gender Equality (2005 to 2015); the Pacific Plan; and the 42nd Pacific Island Forum commitment to increase the representation of women in legislatures and decision making.
DFAT: GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT STRATEGY

DFAT’s work on gender equality is guided by 3 priority areas:
1. Enhancing women’s voice in decision-making, leadership and peace building
2. Promoting Women’s economic empowerment
3. Ending violence against women and girls

This strategy aligns well with the priorities of the Pacific Islands and the Leaders Declaration on Gender equality.
WOMEN ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT AND LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

• Markets for Change (M4C) aims to ensure marketplaces in rural and urban areas of Fiji, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu are safe, inclusive and non-discriminatory, promoting gender equality and women’s empowerment.

• The $17 million project is funded by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and implemented by UN Women and UNDP. The project commenced in 2014 and is scheduled for completion in 2020.

• M4C works in marketplaces to make a positive difference for women market vendors, and by extension their families and communities. M4C addresses the intersectional barriers that women face in advancing and empowering themselves economically.
Markets for Change Program (M4C) works towards the following four outcomes:

• Increased voice and participation for market vendors
• Improved socio-economic security for market vendors
• Gender-responsive local government and market management
• Accessible and gender-responsive marketplace infrastructure and on-site services
OUTCOME 1 – REPRESENTATIVE MARKET GROUPS

• UN Women, or implementing partners in each country, train market vendors in how to organise themselves in groups or associations to collectively influence the management of the markets and improve their working conditions through “Getting Started” workshops and supporting materials. The training is designed for vendors to understand the functioning of councils and the basic principles of market management.

• M4C provides support to MVAs to conduct consultations, elections and annual general meetings and improve good governance by providing ‘Leadership and Communication’, ‘Strategic Planning’, and ‘Good Governance’ training and workshops to MVA executive committee members.
OUTCOME 2 – MARKET VENDOR CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

• M4C facilitates commercial banks in each country to deliver the Continuing Market Business

• Education training to women market vendors: Westpac in Fiji,

• M4C also partners to deliver training on Increasing Agricultural Productivity and Income for Market Vendors and Farmers (IPI-MVF). M4C partners with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fiji National University (FNU) College of Agriculture in Fiji;

• As of December 2017, 5936 market vendors had been trained across the three countries including 4700 people in Fiji; 508 in Solomon Islands and; 728 in Vanuatu.
OUTCOME 3 – LOCAL GOVERNMENT CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

• M4C supports local government and market managers increase their capacity to manage markets.

• M4C, or training providers, conduct training needs analysis and deliver training to local government, market management and MVAs on a range of topics to improve market management and gender responsive management.

• Training topics include: customer service, financial management, gender responsive budgeting, the powers of the Councillors and the Council and the separation of powers and duties, and market by-laws.

• M4C has effectively supported local governments to become more gender responsive and interactions between market vendors and market management have improved.
OUTCOME 4 - INFRASTRUCTURE

• M4C conducts consultations with MVAs on required infrastructure improvements to increase market sustainability, resilience, safety and accessibility. M4C then works collaboratively with local councils to fund and manage infrastructure development to meet the needs of market vendors, particularly women.

• M4C has supported infrastructure improvement in eight markets in Fiji. Infrastructure works in Solomon Islands and Vanuatu are slowly progressing.
EARLY ACHIEVEMENTS FROM FIRST THREE YEARS OF THE PROJECT

• 19 market vendor associations (MVAs) have been established or strengthened across three countries. MVAs now have over 7,500 registered members, 70% of whom are women.

• 13 out of 19 project-supported MVAs have over 50% women in leadership positions. Ten out of the 19 project-supported MVAs are headed by a woman.

• In all three countries: Local governments and councils have started to hold regular consultations with MVAs, including MVAs in key local government consultations, including infrastructure improvements, budgets and development of by-laws and ordinances.

• MVAs have started to provide services to members in key areas, such as linking their members to health services, savings clubs, banking and financial services, training and other forms of support.