



OFFICE of the AUDITOR GENERAL
Republic of Fiji

COVID-19 COMPLIANCE AUDITS

Management of Unemployment Benefits

Management of Concessional Loan Package to Micro
Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)



PARLIAMENT OF FIJI
PARLIAMENTARY PAPER NO. 42 OF 2021



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File: 102

27 May 2021

The Honorable Ratu Epeli Nailatikau
Speaker of the Parliament of the Republic of Fiji
Government Buildings
Constitution Avenue
SUVA.

Dear Sir

AUDIT REPORT ON COMPLIANCE AUDITS RELATING TO COVID – 19 RESPONSE

In accordance with section 152(13) of the Constitution of the Republic of Fiji, I am pleased to transmit to you my report on Compliance Audits related to COVID-19 response.

A copy of the report has been submitted to the Minister for Economy who as required under section 152(14) of the Constitution shall lay the report before Parliament within 30 days of receipt, or if Parliament is not sitting, on the first day after the end of that period.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ajay Nand'.

Ajay Nand
AUDITOR-GENERAL



Encl.

The Auditor-General and Office of the Auditor-General – Republic of Fiji

The Office of the Auditor-General is established as an Independent Office by the Constitution of the Republic of Fiji. Its roles and responsibilities include determining whether the operations or activities of entities are being performed effectively, economically and efficiently and in compliance with all relevant legislation. These audits are carried out by the Auditor-General on behalf of Parliament.

At least once every year, the Auditor-General must report to Parliament on the audits conducted and on *other significant matters* the Auditor-General wishes to bring to the attention of Parliament.

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Management of Unemployment Benefits

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Acronyms

Abbreviation	Meaning
COO	Chief Operating Officer
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019 or 2019 novel coronavirus or 2019-nCoV
ERP	Enterprise Resource Planning
FMA	Financial Management Act 2004
FNPF	Fiji National Provident Fund
GA	General Account
ISSAI	International Standards of Supreme Audit Institutions for ISSAI
MoE	Ministry of Economy
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures

Executive Summary

The Office of the Auditor-General carried out a compliance audit on the Management of Unemployment Benefit COVID-19 facilitated by Ministry of Economy (MoE) and administered by the Fiji National Provident Fund (FNPF) in 2020.

The primary objective of the audit was to obtain sufficient and appropriate evidence to form a conclusion on whether the MoE and FNPF had paid COVID-19 unemployment benefits for workers in the Tourism Sector and the Lockdown Informal and Formal Sectors in accordance with the required criteria.

The criteria's used in the audit were derived from the following sources:

- COVID-19 Response Budget Estimates 2019-2020;
- National Budget 2020-2021;
- COVID-19 Response Assistance Agreement for Government Subsidy for Phase 1 between MoE and FNPF dated 01/04/2020;
- COVID -19 Unemployment Assistance Agreement for Government Subsidy for Phase 2 between MoE and FNPF dated 20/07/2020;
- Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for Early Withdrawal – Pandemic Assistance; and
- Criteria for unemployment benefit for workers in Informal Sector within Lockdown Areas.

The significant findings identified from this compliance audit include the following:

- SOPs were not designed by MoE for disbursement of assistance process for unemployment in the informal sector COVID – 19 lockdown areas;
- Applicants who were still employed received Government subsidy;
- Double payment of FNPF and Government subsidy to eligible applicants;
- Government subsidy incorrectly calculated and paid out;
- Extra government subsidy paid to approved applicants;
- Government subsidy paid to ineligible applicants;
- FNPF not providing system closure report for each payment phase;
- Incomplete informal sector approved applications still received payment; and
- Some approved applicants for informal sector in the COVID – 19 lockdown areas assisted by MoE also benefitted from FNPF government subsidy COVID – 19 formal sectors financial assistance program.

The MoE should develop detailed and clearly defined SOP for all projects or programs undertaken by the government to enhance good governance and sound internal and quality controls to improve proper accountability. Furthermore, MoE through the FNPF can better manage the COVID – 19 financial assistance by using an integrated system that can properly collect, store, manage and interpret data in real-time. Integrated systems can also reduce the risk of errors and omissions common when manual intervention is made between one or more stand-alone systems.

Detailed audit findings with recommendations are included in **Section 6** of this report.

1. Introduction

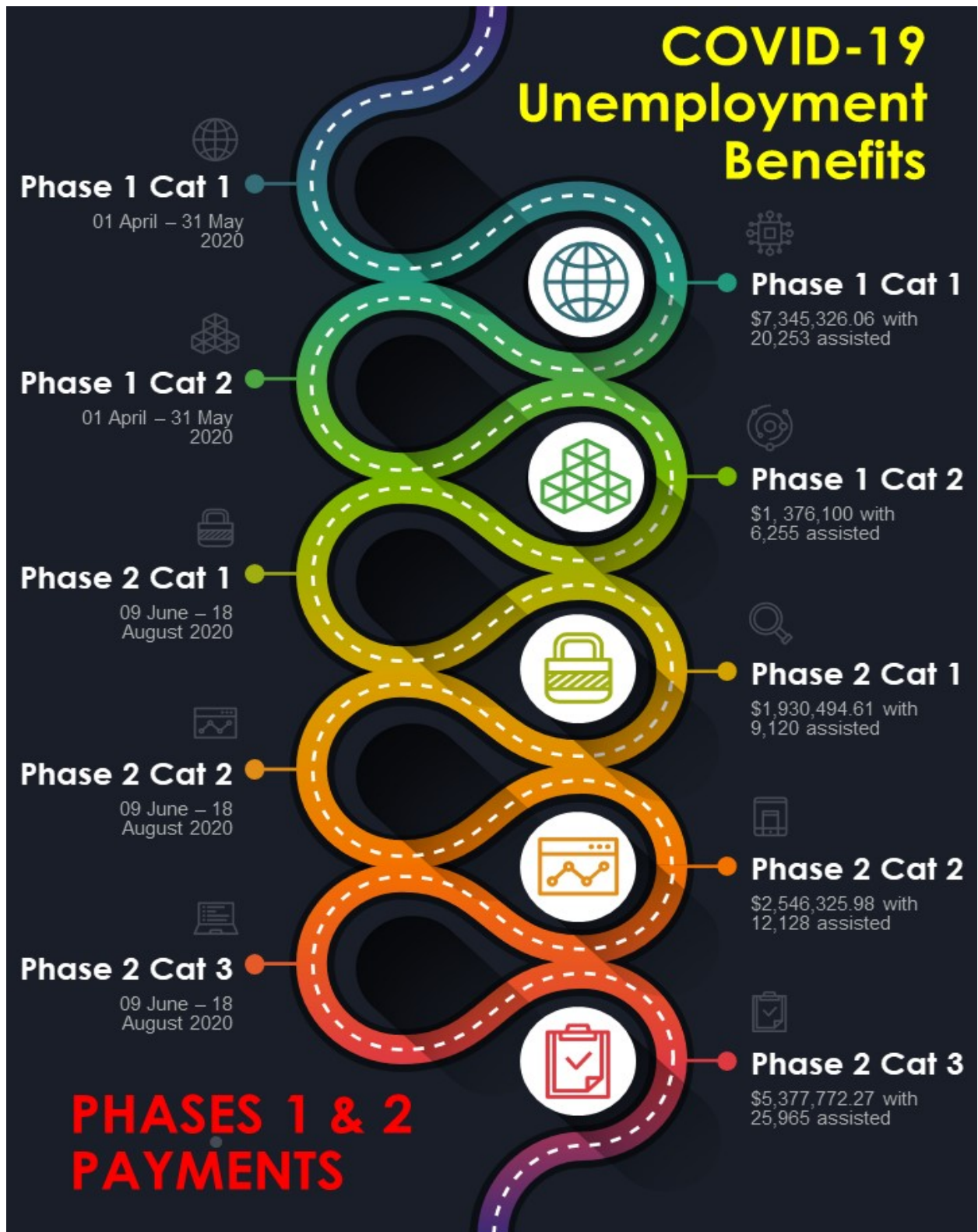
The MoE is responsible for managing public finances in accordance with the Constitution and the Finance Management Act (FMA) 2004. Government made a commitment through the MoE by providing financial assistance of \$150 per redundant worker/small business owners in the Informal sector. Assistance was provided to those Fijians who had been affected due to the lockdown in Lautoka, Suva, and Nasinu that were eligible for the financial assistance.

As per COVID-19 response plan for redundant workers, the Government of Fiji budgeted a total of \$210 million for redundancy and unemployment benefits of which \$60 million is subsidised by government and \$150 million is provided through FNPF. As at 31 August 2020, a total of \$35.6 million (17.38%) has been paid under this COVID-19 response plan.

Government together with the FNPF also implemented relief packages to assist the FNPF members and employers in two (2) phases as Fiji faced the economic impacts of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). This saw the facilitation of the formal sector unemployment benefit pay-out. The Phase 1 government subsidy financial assistance commenced on 01/04/20 and closed on 29/05/20, while Phase 2 was effective from 29/05/20 and 09/06/20 respectively being paid out in three different categories.

As at 31 August 2020, government subsidy that has been paid out totalled \$18,576,019 to 73,721 eligible applicants. The details are illustrated in **Figure 1.1**.

Figure 1.1: Payment Details of Phase 1 and Phase 2 Government Subsidy



Phase 1 consisted of the following two payment categories requirement:

- **Category 1 (Government Top Up is applicable)** - employees who work in the Tourism Sector (\$1,000) and those affected due to physical distancing issues or work within the lock-down zone nationwide (\$500). Employees who have had reduced working hours; been sent on leave without pay; reduced wage rate or salary; terminated or permanently laid off can apply for either \$1,000 or \$500 withdrawal.

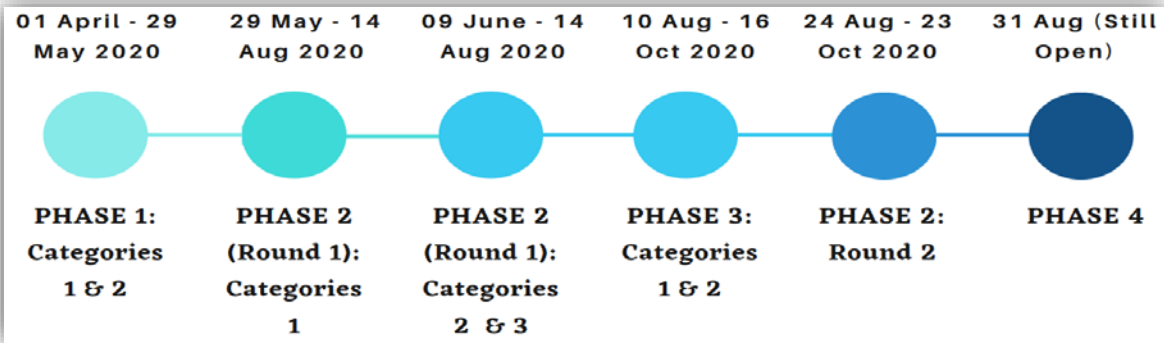
- **Category 2 (Government Top Up NOT applicable)** - covers taxi, minivan or hire drivers, small enterprise owners and employees who have resigned, been terminated, non-renewal of contract, laid off or seasonal workers in the last 6 months can withdraw up to \$1000 from their General Account depending on their eligibility.

Phase 2 consisted of the following three payment categories condition:

- **Category 1 (Government Top Up is applicable)** - members who withdrew in the first phase of COVID-19 Withdrawal & have exhausted their FPNF General Account (GA) balance will receive \$220 from the Government as first instalment by 29 May 2020. This does not include those that applied under SME and Taxi drivers in Phase 1.
- **Category 2 (Government Top Up is applicable)** - members who withdrew in the first phase of COVID-19 Withdrawal and are now/still unemployed, can apply for \$1,100 from your General Account. Payment in five instalments of \$220 per fortnight. This is effective from 9 June 2020.
- **Category 3 (Government Top Up is applicable)** - members who did not apply for the first COVID-19 Withdrawal and have become unemployed, can apply for lump sum of \$1,100 from your General Account. This is effective from 9 June 2020.

While **Figure 1.2** depicts the different phases for assistance in the formal sector, the scope of the audit covered Phases 1 and 2 up to 31st August 2020 only.

Figure 1.2: COVID-19 FPNF Unemployment benefit assistance phases



Source: FPNF website:
<https://myfnpf.com.fj/index.php/covid-19-updates/fnpf-relief-assistance>

We conducted this audit on the *Management of COVID-19 Unemployment Benefits* due to the large volume of applications received and processed by FPNF, and considering the large amounts of government subsidy paid out under the unemployment benefit assistance in both formal and informal sector.

The objective of the audit was to determine that the FPNF and the MoE had approved the payment of unemployment benefits in accordance with the eligibility requirements laid out by Government.

We conducted this Compliance Audit in accordance with the International Standards of Supreme Audit Institutions (ISSAIs).

2. Subject Matter and Scope

Following the COVID-19 response budget, the Government made a commitment to provide assistance to both formal and informal sectors in Fiji.

The subject matter for the audit was the payment of COVID-19 unemployment benefits to unemployed workers in the Tourism Sector and the Lockdown Informal and Formal Sectors. As part of our scope for the formal sector pay-out, we focused on the data extracted from FNPF's systems until 31/08/20 where the data was reconciled against the payments made specifically for Phase 1 and Phase 2.

For assistance to the informal sector managed by the MoE, the scope covered for those affected due to the lockdown in Lautoka, Suva and Nasinu, and were eligible for the \$150 financial assistance from 1st April 2020 to 31st May 2020.

3. Audit Objective

The objective of the audit was to determine that the FNPF and the MoE had approved the payments of unemployment benefits in accordance with the eligibility requirements laid out by Government.-

In order to form an overall conclusion on the subject matter, the following sub-objectives were also determined to:

- Establish that FNPF and MoE has proper processes and procedures to guide the payment of government subsidy to eligible applicants of unemployment benefits through FNPF and to the informal sector;
- Provide assurance that government subsidy has been correctly paid out to the members under the FNPF's Unemployment Benefits for Pandemic Assistance to those that have lost jobs or are on the reduced hours in the tourism and hospitality industry and to those affected by the lockdown or travel restrictions due to COVID-19 and have less than required amount in their FNPF General Account; and
- Provide assurance that processing of unemployment benefit for workers in Informal Sector within Lockdown areas has been correctly paid by Ministry of Economy out to recipients and in compliance with the Application Form requirements and Terms of Reference as advertised.

The audit is conducted in accordance with the requirements of ISSAI 4000 Compliance Audit Standards and ISSAI 100 Fundamental Principles of Public Sector Auditing to form a conclusion on whether the MoE and the FNPF have facilitated payments of unemployment benefits to eligible or bona-fide recipients in the tourism and lockdown informal and formal sectors.

4. Audit Criteria

The criteria used are as follows:

- Requirements for unemployment benefit for workers in informal sector within the lockdown areas:
 - Section 3 of Unemployment benefit for workers in informal sector within the lockdown areas based on the application guideline¹.
- FNPF Early Withdrawal Pandemic Assistance SOP requirements on:
 - *Section 6.1 – Roles and responsibilities;*
 - *Section 6.2 – Processing of application; and*
 - *Section 6.5 – Approval of application.*

5. Methodology

The audit was carried out based on the information and documentations provided by the MoE and FNPF. We reviewed and evaluated the information and documentations provided to assess compliance with the criteria set out on **Section 4**.

The applications for unemployment benefits for workers in Informal Sector within Lockdown Areas and those received by FNPF for Early withdrawal – Pandemic Assistance that had received government subsidy were in compliance with the eligibility criteria and requirements.

In executing this audit, various approaches were exercised which included:

- (i) Document reviews;
- (ii) Interview of responsible officials from the MoE and the FNPF; and
- (iii) Data analytics.

The findings of our audit were initially discussed with the MoE Head of Administration and Corporate Services accompanied by the Training Assistants on 30/09/20 while discussion of the FNPF findings was held with the Acting Chief Operating Officer (COO) and Finance Team of FNPF on 18/11/20, respectively. Responses received from MoE and FNPF have been incorporated in the report, where appropriate after the exit meeting on 12/03/21.

¹ Appendix 1 – Informal Sector Application Form

6. Findings

6.1 Established Disbursement Procedures

Question No 1

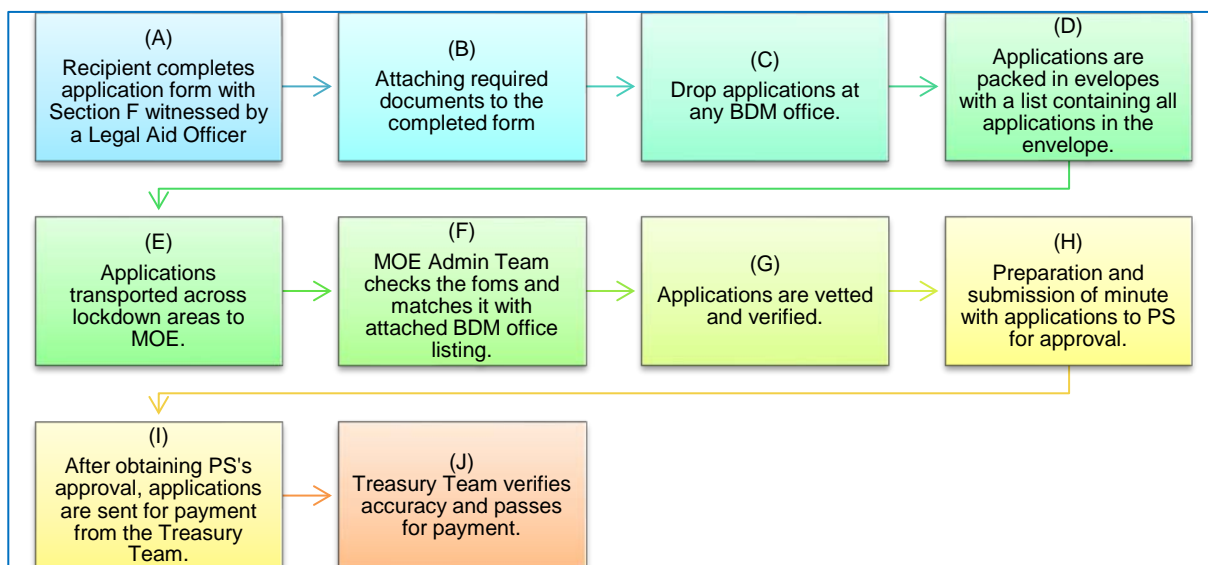
Did FNPF and MoE establish proper procedures to make payments and reconcile the government subsidy paid?

This audit question attempts to establish whether FNPF and MoE have proper work flow processes and procedures to guide the payments made to eligible applicants of unemployment benefits through FNPF and to the informal sector, respectively. SOPs are an integral part of a successful quality process that provides information to perform a task properly to achieve pre – determined specification and a quality end – result.

6.1.1 Informal Sector

We noted that SOPs were not prepared by the MoE for the informal sector financial assistance payments. However, we were able to confirm the application procedures based on the following processes which were adopted from receipt of application to payment as shown in Figure 6.1.

Figure 6.1: Process – Informal Unemployment Benefit Pay-out



Source: Processes (A) to (C) derived from guidance notes obtained from [https://www.fiji.gov.fj/getattachment/dbb53051-9f90-40fc-9f9a-00107d9b2eea/Unemployment-Benefit-for-Lockdown-Areas-\(Informal.aspx](https://www.fiji.gov.fj/getattachment/dbb53051-9f90-40fc-9f9a-00107d9b2eea/Unemployment-Benefit-for-Lockdown-Areas-(Informal.aspx) and Processes (D) to (J) obtained from information provided by MoE officials on 20/08/20.

The Ministry stated that the assessment and disbursement criteria for the informal sector unemployment benefit was clearly defined in the advertisement and application forms. Those with valid hawkers/business license in the lockdown areas were eligible for the one off \$150 payment.

Applicants also had to sign a self-declaration confirming that information provided was correct. The application forms were also verified by the Ministry of Justice and the Legal Aid Commission.²

The Ministry further stated that once the completed forms were received, then MoE had a checklist to verify if all required information was provided. Upon verification of all details, the applications were approved if the pre-set criteria were met. The final payments were approved by the Permanent Secretary.³

It was also noted that there has been no reconciliation has been performed by the MoE to verify the accuracy of payments of government subsidy made to FNPF because there was no SOP to address this element of the disbursement process. Even though there was a contract agreement on the acquittal processes, it did not address the reconciliation process to validate the government subsidy disbursed to FNPF.

The Ministry stated that the disbursement of phase 1 unemployment assistance was undertaken by FNPF and was guided by an agreement between the Ministry of Economy and FNPF. Acquittals were submitted to the Ministry of Economy and FNPF undertook reconciliations to ensure that correct subsidy amounts were paid to members as per the agreement guidelines.⁴

The Ministry further informed us that the disbursement of assistance was undertaken by FNPF given the confidentiality of member balances and FNPFS access to employment information relating to these affected members. It is practically difficult for MoE to undertake this reconciliation. It is important to note that the unemployment assistance is still continuing and MoE will undertake a joint review with FNPF for the verification of acquittals. If there are any issues of overpayments, would FNPF reimburse Government.⁵

6.1.2 Formal Sector

We noted that FNPF had developed two separate SOPs with one specifically for Phase 1 which is based on the manual processes lodged at any of the nearest FNPF Office while for the Phase 2 directly deals with withdrawal applications through the FNPF Online Employer Portal. These good practices by FNPF shows that there is proper accountability of different role and functions for the Phase 1 and Phase 2 payment processes of eligible applicants for this government subsidy assistance scheme.

To understand the processes and role of FNPF Officers for the processing of Early Withdrawal for Pandemic Assistance applications for members, a process flow diagram was designed on the basis of SOPs using Phase 1 manual application process provided in **Appendix 2** and Phase 2 online application is shown in **Appendix 3**.

Recommendation

MoE should ensure that the roles and responsibilities in any programme are clearly defined and demarcated for accountability purpose and all disbursement processes including the need to

² Management response dated 11/03/21

³ Management response dated 11/03/21

⁴ Management response dated 11/03/21

⁵ Management response dated 11/03/21

prepare reconciliations are captured in SOPs for any future government scheme or program, of this nature.

6.2 Applicants still employed receiving Government subsidy

Question No 2

Are the Formal Sector applicants eligible to receive government subsidy?

To determine whether applicants for the COVID-19 financial assistance withdrawal qualify, and the FNPF Processing Officers verified the applicant’s information with the employer. Applicants were required to submit a letter clarifying the status of their employment (termination, or reduced wages and reducing working hours), which were also verified by the processing officer on the contra system to validate the last 3 months of employer contribution under the same employer as stated on the letter for Phase 1, withdrawals were also available for applicants employed within the lockdown areas of Suva and Lautoka.

Figure 6.2: Applicants assisted and still working under Phase

The FNPF employer’s contribution is used to validate the members that had applied through the correct employer by verifying the contributions received for the member before approval is granted to eligible applicants.

Some applicants for Phase 1 who had received government subsidy under Phase 1 in the Terminated or Permanently Laid-off category are still being employed during this period as we noted that the applicant’s employers’ contributions are still being disbursed to FNPF as shown in Figure 6.2 for samples extracted.

	Employer FNPF Last Contribution	Application Date	Subsidy Paid (\$)
MN12026974N	May - 20	7/04/2020	570
MN12921947Z	Sep - 20	9/04/2020	438.98
MN12584102S	May - 20	15/04/2020	867.31
MN12931324T	May - 20	21/04/2020	771
MN12967617J	May - 20	18/04/2020	676.76
MN12594120A	May - 20	5/05/2020	167
Total Paid			3,491.05

(Data source: Fiji National Provident Fund)

The Ministry stated that under Phase 1 of the assistance rolled out together with FNPF, employees who had completely lost jobs or were on reduced hours in the tourism and hospitality industry were eligible to withdraw a lump sum of \$1,000. Employees affected by the lockdown and travel restrictions were also eligible for a lump sum withdrawal of \$500.⁶

FNPF stated that due diligence had been exercised on the time application were received. However, we rely on the confirmation on the employers affected by COVID-19 and in the lock down areas. Even with this, FNPF is still faced with practical challenges in verifying the employer and employee confirmation and relied on the processing officers for the category that members will fall in for the COVID Government assistance.⁷

⁶ Management response dated 11/03/21

⁷ Management response dated 11/03/21

The Ministry further stated that given the uniqueness of the situation with lockdowns around the country, some level of flexibility was exercised. It is important to note that the unemployment assistance is still continuing and MOE will undertake a joint review with FNPF for the verification of acquittals. If there are any issues of overpayments, then FNPF reimburses Government⁸

Recommendation

Due diligence needs to be exercised by processing and approval officers should validate members employment status prior to approval.

6.3 Formal Sector Government Subsidy Pay-out

Question No 3

Was the Formal Sector government subsidy correctly calculated and paid out to members?

The primary objective of the audit work carried out was provide assurance that government subsidy has been correctly paid out to the members under the COVID – 19 financial assistances.

The application forms received and processed were generally in compliance with the SOPs where applicants had submitted all relevant documents together with the completed application forms subject to the following exceptions:

6.3.1 Double Payment to Eligible Applicants

We noted that there were cases where applicants had received double payment after an appeal was made by eligible members who had initially received \$500 and later received a second payment of \$500 totalling to \$1,000. However, we also noted cases where payments had been made with amounts greater than \$1,000. Details given in **Figure 6.3** is for Government subsidy double payments in Phase 1.

Figure 6.3: Details of Double Payment of Government Subsidy for Phase 1

	Payments Made	Paid (\$)
MN11512605G	2	2,000
MN11725412G	2	2,000
MN12726225W	2	1,573.27
MN12541452E	3	1,431.84
MN12125362H	2	1,359.72
MN12999588H	2	1,034.84
Total Paid		9,399.67

(Data source: Fiji National Provident Fund)

⁸ Management response dated 11/03/21

Figure 6.4: Details of Double Payment of FNNP for Phase 1

Total Number of Applicants	Total Number of Payments Applied	Total FNNP Paid (\$)
147	286	210,136.63

Figure 6.4 is for the FNNP double payments summary while the details are provided in Appendix 4.

(Data source: Fiji National Provident Fund)

We also noted double payment for Phase 2 Category 2 and Figure 6.5 provides the detail.

Figure 6.5: Details of Double Payment of Government Subsidy for Phase 2

The Ministry stated that appeals cases for which there was an excess payment made will be reimbursed to Government by FNNP. It is important to note that the unemployment assistance is still continuing and MOE will undertake a joint review with FNNP for the verification of acquittals. If there are any issues of overpayments, then FNNP reimburses Government.⁹

	Payment Dates	FNNP Amount (\$)	Government Amount (\$)	Total Paid (\$)
MN12711438G	24/06/20	-	1,100	1,100
MN12711438G	26/06/20	0.98	1,099.02	1,100
Total Paid				2,200

(Data source: Fiji National Provident Fund)

6.3.2 Government Subsidy Incorrectly Calculated and Paid Out

Figure 6.6: Summary of Government Subsidy for Phase 1

Mode of Payment	Number of recipients Overpaid	Amount Overpaid (\$)
EFT	1,147	\$70,440.17
M-PAISA	71	\$16,882.77
TMO	42	\$847.76
Aggregate	1,260	\$88,170.70

We noted that the government subsidy to top – up eligible members financial assistance was incorrectly calculated resulting in the overpayment of \$88,170.70 for Phase 1 and Figure 6.6 provides the summary of samples extracted.

(Data source: Fiji National Provident Fund)

⁹ Management response dated 11/03/21

We further noted that the government subsidy to top – up eligible member’s financial assistance was also incorrectly calculated for Phase 2 Category 1 and Category 2 resulting in the overpayment of \$257,051.85 which is summarized in **Figure 6.7**.

Figure 6.7: Summary of Government Subsidy for Phase 2

Category Type	Number of recipients Overpaid	Amount Overpaid (\$)
CAT1	449	\$19,452.20
CAT2	493	\$181,939.65
CAT3	59	\$55,660.00
Aggregate	1,260	\$257,051.85

(Data source: Fiji National Provident Fund)

CATEGORY 1¹⁰

FNPF advised that s the system business rule for phase 2 Round 1 payment was designed to cater for those members with Government Top up during payment of Phase 1. Also, FNPF noted that 6,255 members have zero general account (GA), therefore Government made an announcement to rollover these members and pay a sum of \$220. Phase 2 Cat 1 payment was made based on the announcement with relevant system business rules that members will have full top up. Due to the timing of report given to OAG, members had movement (interest credit 30-06-2020) to their GA balance.

CATEGORY 2 & 3¹¹

The overpayment for CATEGORY 2 & CATEGORY 3 as highlighted in the Office of Auditor General report is a result of the following:

- a) GA not fully exhausted- Processing Error
- b) RPA (System)

FNPF stressed that it is currently checking line details of the cases to confirm the actual overpayment by Government and FNPF will reimburse after completion. The Ministry stated that it is important to note that the unemployment assistance is still continuing and MoE will undertake a joint review with FNPF for the verification of acquittals. If there are any issues of overpayments, then FNPF will reimburse Government.¹²

6.3.3 Duplicate Payments to Approved Applicants

We noted that there were duplicate on the member’s FNPF and application ID where the results showed duplicate processing of the same application ID and in the process Government subsidy was paid out twice to these individual applicants.

For instance, there were members that had applied for \$1,000 and the processing and approving officer had approved for \$500 based on the eligibility of the applicant during Phase 1. However, after the payment of \$500 from member’s system then an additional \$500 was paid out from government subsidy through the FNPF financial information system but this should only be \$500 instead of \$1,000.

¹⁰ Management response dated 11/03/21

¹¹ Management response dated 11/03/21

¹² Management response dated 11/03/21

We further noted situation where the government subsidy was incorrectly paid to someone else’s account due to input error of account numbers or because manual application forms were incorrectly scanned and uploaded to system resulting in the incorrect payment. Refer to **Figure 6.8** for details extracted.

*FNPF stated that it is currently checking line details of the cases to confirm the actual overpayment by Government and FNFP will reimburse after completion. It is important to note that the unemployment assistance is still continuing and these issues will be rectified.*¹³

Figure 6.8: Details of Duplicate Payment in Phase 1

	Number of Payments	Total Subsidy Paid (\$)
MN11512605G	2	2,000
MN11725412G	2	2,000
MN12726225W	2	1,573.27
MN12541452E	3	1,431.84
MN12125362H	2	1,359.72
MN12999588H	2	1,034.84
Total Paid		\$9,400

(Data source: Fiji National Provident Fund)

6.3.4 Subsidy paid to Ineligible applicants

Figure 6.9: Government Subsidy Paid to Ineligible Applicants in Phase 1

	Category	Subsidy Paid (\$)
MN12113208F	Sole Proprietor	333.68
MN12001763Y	Small Enterprise owners impacted by COVID-19	152.42
MN11525493U	Small Enterprise owners impacted by COVID-19	561.23
Total Paid		1,047.33

(Data source: Fiji National Provident Fund)

We noted that there was government top-up done for eligible members that had applied for withdrawal under category 2 for sole proprietors and small enterprise owners impacted by COVID -19 and received government subsidy in the process with details in **Figure 6.9**.

¹³ Management response dated 11/03/21

We further noted that there was government top-up paid for 285 members that were assisted under Phase 1 being affected by COVID -19 and were also assisted in the Phase 2 Category 3 which they were ineligible for. Summary is given in **Figure 6.10** for applicants assisted in both Phase 1 and Phase 2 Category 3 while the details are in **Appendix 5**.

Figure 6.10: Summary of Applicant Ineligible for Phase 2 Category 3

	Category Type	Number of Recipients assisted	Amount Paid (\$)
Phase 2	Category 3	285	131,884.12
Aggregate		285	\$131,884.12

(Data source: Fiji National Provident Fund)

*FNPF stated that it is currently checking line details of the cases to confirm the actual overpayment by Government and FNPF will reimburse after completion. It is important to note that the unemployment assistance is still continuing and these issues will be rectified.*¹⁴

One notable limitation identified during our audit was the untimely availability of data because the two systems used by FNPF are not integrated. The financial reporting system used by FNPF only stores the government subsidy component paid while the member information system only maintains the member records which is extracted separately before the analysis can be carried out. On the same note, closure reports for each phase/category of the financial assistance payment made through the government subsidy are yet to be prepared by FNPF.

*The Ministry stated that FNPF will provide the closure report for each phase to MOE.*¹⁵

Recommendations

- **MoE should work with FNPF to develop a plan to determine and recover the subsidy that has been incorrectly paid out for each phase; and**
- **FNPF should provide closure reports on the payments of government subsidy for each phase and category.**

¹⁴ Management response dated 11/03/21

¹⁵ Management response dated 11/03/21

6.4 Informal Sector Unemployment Pay-out

Question No 4

Was the Informal Sector unemployment benefit for workers in lockdown area processed in accordance with the Eligibility Criteria?

Those affected due to the lockdown in Lautoka, Suva and Nasinu informal sectors qualified for assistance facilitated by the MoE.

To qualify for the unemployment benefit, applicants had to be under any of the following categories:

- Reside within the lockdown area and operate outside the lockdown area;
- Reside outside the lockdown area but operate informal businesses within the lockdown area; and
- Reside within the lockdown area and operate Informal businesses within the lockdown area¹⁶.

The guidance notes for unemployment benefit for workers in Informal Sector within Lockdown Areas requires that prior to payment of any recipient, apart from the copy of the hawkers/business license or permit, the following supporting documents needed to be submitted along with the completed form for processing:

- Section F on the application form as shown in **Figure 6.11** to be witnessed by a Legal Aid Officer;
- Attached documents available:
 - ✓ Birth Certificate;
 - ✓ Voter ID Card or any other form of photo identification; and
 - ✓ Details of Bank account or M-Paisa account or TMO.

File reviews for assistance paid by MoE noted the following:

- Recipients had submitted supporting letters from local municipal councils and did not hold any hawkers/business license or permit such as market vendors;
- Applicants who operated and/or work for other businesses such as dairy shops, barber shops and saloons had received assistance under the unemployment benefit for workers in informal sector.

We noted that all applications had submitted completed application forms which included the witnessing of **Section F** of the application form by a legal officer and provision of bank accounts or M-Paisa account or TMO.

¹⁶ [Appendix 1: Informal Sector Advertised Application Conditions](#)
MANAGEMENT OF COVID-19 UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Figure 6.11: Section F – Application Declaration Requirement

SECTION F: SIGNATURE
 I, (full name) _____
 of (address) _____
 solemnly and sincerely declare that the information contained in
 this form is true and correct and I make this solemn declaration
 believing the same to be true and by virtue of the Statutory
 Declarations Act 1970.
 Declared at _____

 this _____ day of _____ 2020
 before me and I certify that the declaration was read over
 in the _____ language to the declarant
 who appeared fully to understand the meaning thereof.

 (signature of witnessing officer)
 Name: _____
 Office held: _____

Source: COVID-19 – Unemployment benefit for Informal Sector Programme – Application Form

The following anomalies were noted where applicants did not correctly declare that they had complied with the application requirements as depicted in **Figure 6.11 and details are in Appendix 6:**

- **4 applications** reviewed **did not** submit their birth certificates;
- **8 applications** reviewed **did not** provide valid ID's; and
- **2 applications** reviewed **did not** provide business license/hawker's permit.

The Ministry acknowledged the findings and stated that applicants were required to submit birth certificates, voter ID or any other form of photo identification, copy of hawkers/business license and bank account details. For those with a valid photo ID and hawker's license flexibility was provided for the birth certificate given the verification by the Ministry of Justice and reliance on the voter ID. Business license/hawker's permit was a mandatory requirement and the processing team ensured that all applications processed had some form of proof of business attached to the application.¹⁷

The Ministry further stated that for those applicants that had no business licenses, MOE team had contacted the respective Municipal Council for verification and no application was processed without a business license.¹⁸

Recommendation

Proper scrutiny of the applications received should be carried out at the centres where applications are submitted for processing.

¹⁷ Management response dated 11/03/21

¹⁸ Management response dated 11/03/21

6.5 Informal Sector Calculation Reliability

Question No 4

Was Informal Sector assistance correctly paid out to the recipients of the Unemployment Benefit?

The secondary objective was to identify possible fraudulent withdrawals and to provide assurance that applications were handled in accordance with the SOPs.

We noted the following anomalies where:

- one applicant was paid twice as applications were lodged and processed in two separate batches;
- 8 payments were made to duplicate bank accounts of which 7 were joint accounts, and 1 was confirmed to be a double payment extracted from the payment voucher details as shown in **Figure 6.12**.

Figure 6.12: Double payments made

Birth Certificate Registration Number	Batch No.	Total Amount Paid (\$)
678053	21 & 38	300

Source: Result Extracted from MoE

The Ministry stated that the issue of double payment has been rectified with the bank and recovery has been made by Government.¹⁹

Figure 6.13: Recipients Assisted Under Both Benefits

Birth Certificate Registration No.	Application Number/Batch Number	MoE Assistance (\$)	FNPF Application ID	Government Subsidy	Total Government Assistance (\$)
1020807	018/26	150	2082897	476.65	626.65
1191657	048/18	150	2106329	500	650
129652	033/33	150	2048559	310.75	460.75
140006	25/15	150	2093785	281.24	431.24
172580	46/11	150	2067609	130.44	280.44
24197	34/15	150	2048033	381.43	531.43
250180	001/30	150	2129407	211.95	361.95
252824	005/35	150	2125799	285.26	435.26
314499	018/20	150	2124942	438.74	588.74
8224	046/34	150	2098988	493.81	643.81
98015	23/06	150	2055968	252.97	402.97
Aggregate Payment		2,100		4,785.50	6,885.50

Source: Result of Auditors File Reviews

We further noted that there were recipients that had been assisted in both the informal sector for businesses that had received assistance under the unemployment benefit through the MoE \$150 and also from FNPF under the COVID -19 financial assistance government subsidy to formal sectors with details in **Figure 6.13** for details.

The Ministry further noted that payments were paid to holders of business/hawker's licenses and there has been instances where one person owns more than one business.²⁰

¹⁹ Management response dated 11/03/21

²⁰ Management response dated 11/03/21

Recommendations

- **MoE should put into place measures so that applicants are not financially assisted twice by separate schemes through different mediums; and**
- **In future, MoE should clearly define the meaning of an “Informal Sector” with appropriate parameters so that eligibility for financial assistance is correctly assessed for eligible applicants.**

7. Conclusion


Overall, the results of our audit indicated that the COVID – 19 unemployment benefit subsidy assistance provided by Government and facilitated by MoE through the FNPF can be better managed by using integrated systems that can properly collect, store, manage and interpret data in real-time. Integrated systems can also reduce the risk of errors and omissions common when manual intervention is made between more than one stand-alone system.

We also identified a number of areas where internal controls for recording and reconciliation of processed payments can be further strengthened. Recovery of overpayments and implementation of recommendations provided in this report can assist in ensuring the integrity of the government financial assistance data in the financial and member information management systems used by FNPF.

In addition, the MoE can develop and design detailed SOPs for similar programs undertaken by government so that staffs are able carry out tasks correctly and consistently to reduce variation within a given process. Properly designed operating procedures will assist in enhancing accountability and transparency on the use of public funds.

Processes and procedures for early of detection of payments made in error or overpayments can result in significant savings in time, effort and costs instead of determining and effecting recoveries after significant time lapse.

Appendix 1: Informal Sector Advertised Conditions



Unemployment Benefit for Workers in Informal Sector within Lockdown Areas

As part of Government's COVID-19 stimulus package, Fijians working in the informal sector within **lockdown areas** of **Lautoka**, **Suva** and **Nasinu** are eligible for \$150 in financial assistance. This pay-out will be provided to those with valid hawkers/ business license or permit.

This assistance can be accessed by:

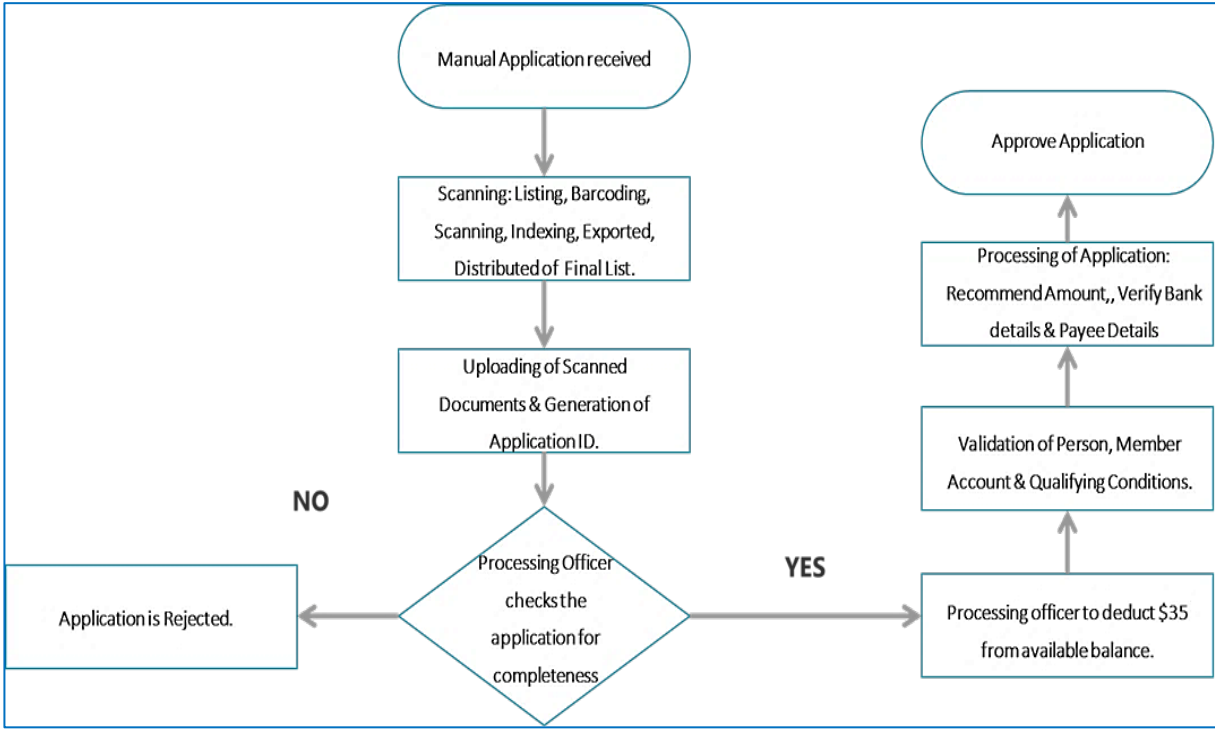
1. Completing an Application Form. Application forms are available at the Births, Deaths and Marriages offices in Ba, Lautoka, Nadi, Suva, Nasinu and Nausori.
2. Section F on the form is to be witnessed by a Legal Aid Officer.
3. Attaching the following documents to the completed form:
 - i. Birth Certificate;
 - ii. Voter ID Card or any other form of photo identification (driver's license, FNPF Joint Card, Passport);
 - iii. Details of Bank account or M-PAiSA account or TMO; and
 - iv. Copy of Hawkers/ Business License or Permit.
4. Dropping the application and accompanying documents at any BDM Registry Office.

The Ministry of Economy will process the applications within five working days once the application forms are received.

Application forms can also be downloaded from the Fijian Government website at www.fiji.gov.fj and the Fijian Government Facebook page at www.facebook.com/FijianGovernment

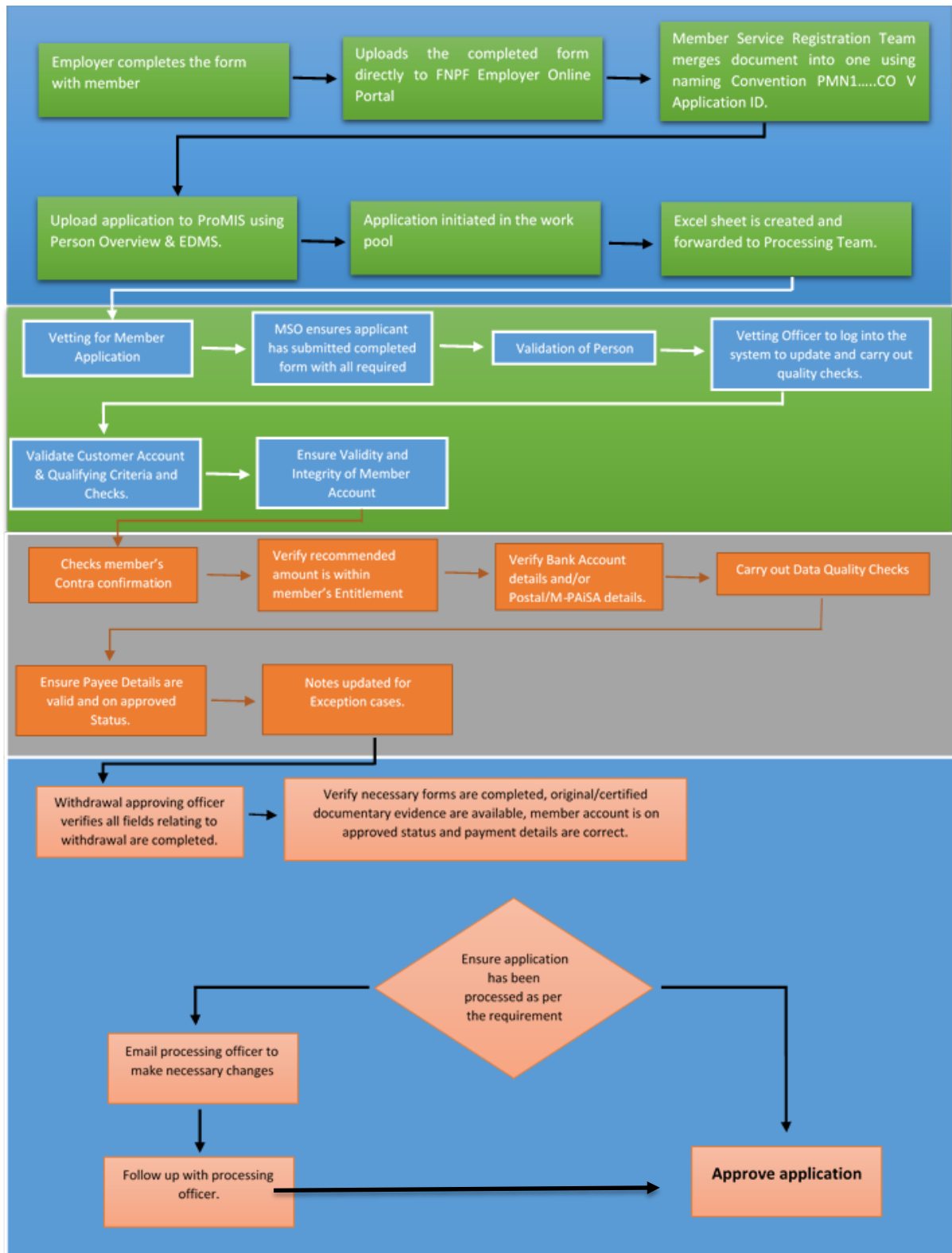
For further enquiries, please contact the Ministry of Economy on 8937846.

Appendix 2: Processing of Manual Applications



Source: FNPF COVID-19 Phase 1 Standard Operating Procedure

Appendix 3: Processing of Online Applications



Source: FNPF COVID-19 Phase 1 Standard Operating Procedure

Appendix 4: FNPF Details of Double Payments Greater than \$1,000

FNPF ID	Number of Payments per FNPF ID	Total FNPF Paid (\$)	FNPF ID	Number of Payments per FNPF ID	Total FNPF Paid (\$)
MN12114615Z	3	2,430	MN12619005J	2	1,465
MN12120643Q	2	2,030	MN12724048Q	2	1,465
MN12120344E	2	1,965	MN12621142J	2	1,465
MN12703247D	2	1,930	MN12703635N	2	1,465
MN12209899T	2	1,930	MN12574353M	2	1,465
MN11713325V	2	1,930	MN12596768Q	2	1,465
MN12571820B	2	1,810.59	MN12563463H	2	1,465
MN12944825N	2	1,786.79	MN12567417W	2	1,465
MN12588657K	3	1,500	MN12573154A	2	1,465
MN12934358B	2	1,465	MN12567546H	2	1,465
MN12917517Y	2	1,465	MN12600824T	2	1,465
MN12732163L	2	1,465	MN12579198C	2	1,465
MN12936642J	2	1,465	MN12559696G	2	1,465
MN12909048T	2	1,465	MN12593760H	2	1,465
MN12948461W	2	1,465	MN12594908U	2	1,465
MN12911138J	2	1,465	MN12572132K	2	1,465
MN12723881R	2	1,465	MN12596813T	2	1,465
MN12708395V	2	1,465	MN12572218V	2	1,465
MN12705266T	2	1,465	MN12578730M	2	1,465
MN12608014Y	2	1,465	MN12520447U	2	1,465
MN12717365M	2	1,465	MN12538974R	2	1,465
MN12613198R	2	1,465	MN12535430J	2	1,465
MN12606404B	2	1,465	MN12502421Y	2	1,465
MN12624565D	2	1,465	MN12542184L	2	1,465
MN12615013M	2	1,465	MN12505935W	2	1,465
MN12707974G	2	1,465	MN12530800Q	2	1,465
MN12616913E	2	1,465	MN12507756G	2	1,465
MN12714075M	2	1,465	MN12537217U	2	1,465
MN12618472L	2	1,465	MN12508257T	2	1,465
MN12722859T	2	1,465	MN12542082C	2	1,465
MN12424566R	2	1,465	MN12508575H	2	1,465
MN12226860M	2	1,465	MN12545055Q	2	1,465
MN12309379Y	2	1,465	MN12519109P	2	1,465
MN12302384E	2	1,465	MN12324897H	2	1,465
MN12321700V	2	1,465	MN12306521J	2	1,465
MN12302748S	2	1,465	MN12419748S	2	1,465
MN12326600S	2	1,465	MN12221395K	2	1,465
MN12302761J	2	1,465	MN12318071V	2	1,465
MN12413164J	2	1,465	MN12221486N	2	1,465
MN12303649V	2	1,465	MN12403740N	2	1,465
MN12422061Z	2	1,465	MN12222843R	2	1,465

FNPF ID	Number of Payments per FNPF ID	Total FNPF Paid (\$)	FNPF ID	Number of Payments per FNPF ID	Total FNPF Paid (\$)
MN12304325Y	2	1,465	MN11707253L	2	1,465
MN12501176G	2	1,465	MN11425441S	2	1,465
MN12305745B	2	1,465	MN11725264T	2	1,465
MN12323462R	2	1,465	MN11426583T	2	1,465
MN12203256T	2	1,465	MN11725806D	2	1,465
MN12206913U	2	1,465	MN12626039S	2	1,465
MN11907221M	2	1,465	MN12983225H	2	1,350.25
MN12016983H	2	1,465	MN12589349D	2	1,299.95
MN12007712Z	2	1,465	MN12607001J	2	1,271.25
MN12019796Z	2	1,465	MN12983674N	2	1,256.62
MN12125644T	2	1,465	MN12514310F	2	1,251.24
MN12020837W	2	1,465	MN11523861M	2	1,247.12
MN12205296R	2	1,465	MN12210718W	2	1,233
MN12022015N	2	1,465	MN12964664C	2	1,223.51
MN12208788D	2	1,465	MN12928966Q	2	1,206.21
MN12023295B	2	1,465	MN12967819W	2	1,189.57
MN12216734A	2	1,465	MN12595456Q	2	1,173.72
MN12112529W	2	1,465	MN12413253H	2	1,138.08
MN12218758A	2	1,465	MN12985191C	2	1,135
MN11426587B	2	1,465	MN12950641N	2	1,131.31
MN11706373R	2	1,465	MN12403904S	2	1,110.15
MN11701243B	2	1,465	MN12909589D	2	1,095.16
MN11120333R	2	1,465	MN12406653J	2	1,090.6
MN11713917W	2	1,465	MN12585762R	2	1,067.08
MN11214935S	2	1,465	MN12572541C	1	1,065
MN11606977S	2	1,465	MN12601569J	1	1,065
MN11406451N	2	1,465	MN12529203M	1	1,065
MN11704445E	2	1,465	MN12513820Z	1	1,065
MN11413393R	2	1,465	MN12522668W	1	1,065
MN11112150M	2	1,465	MN12308743N	1	1,065
MN11516707L	1	1,065	MN12415792Z	1	1,065
MN11522162E	1	1,065	MN12316606Y	1	1,065
			MN12577421T	2	1,038.43
Total Paid					210,136.63

Appendix 5: Ineligible Phase 2 Category 3 Applicants Detail

FNPF ID	Amount (\$)	FNPF ID	Amount (\$)	FNPF ID	Amount (\$)
MN12531297N	816.19	MN12957705Z	0	MN12534963Q	221.88
MN12575896G	753.43	MN12936303L	0	MN12504762L	989.32
MN12575397N	213.02	MN12925695U	1026.26	MN12416464M	942.93
MN12527872W	551.15	MN12725360X	0	MN12411637R	0
MN12420904P	0	MN12547173G	794.51	MN12310202S	0
MN12405658P	885.2	MN12506952B	0	MN12306879D	0
MN12304292K	0	MN12426266P	0	MN12305452L	0
MN12554656T	1099.69	MN12318672X	322.2	MN12302333M	0
MN12721859N	729.93	MN12312918X	0	MN12205198R	0
MN11612985B	1072.31	MN11723115Q	0	MN11605316R	0
MN12573140P	0	MN12415709L	0	MN12624619A	300.2
MN12416626M	1032.8	MN12917045H	809.45	MN12931523Z	504.1
MN11304982C	0	MN12559208R	0	MN12939471Y	0
MN12584487Q	0	MN13000996N	1098.02	MN12920886A	1031.11
MN12317144R	0	MN12989270U	1077.49	MN12705957W	0
MN12507844D	0	MN12731856N	1073.02	MN12730114M	1054.32
MN12529922V	936.68	MN12707763T	458.52	MN12586306U	1040.19
MN12124489C	425.08	MN12603037K	1037.63	MN12961917Q	1072.22
MN12107076E	0	MN12587751W	737.08	MN12941818A	1068.22
MN13004939W	1073.99	MN12542701E	0	MN12939185X	1071.49
MN12926467L	0	MN12531454C	0	MN12923550G	1082.8
MN12700596P	0	MN12517101M	0	MN12586298X	1070.82
MN12325769D	0	MN12507107T	1039.79	MN12535315J	0
MN12209592R	783.84	MN12316134H	0	MN12519401K	936.75
MN12991585K	1027.11	MN12995302R	1072.65	MN12512162G	1070.32
MN12574435P	0	MN12963811J	1059.76	MN12318398D	0
MN12945984P	264.59	MN12951780H	570.56	MN12009570R	0
MN12557061B	1064.4	MN12948709G	849.03	MN12416308X	0
MN12501201D	0	MN12924307C	0	MN12701724B	0
MN12541940T	1069.38	MN12915735Y	685.37	MN12548799F	0
MN12577849H	875.82	MN12915551N	1078.55	MN12543772J	0
MN11619123G	1030.79	MN12585307R	1082.96	MN12622752S	0
MN12001875X	0	MN12572533D	1076.88	MN12223449S	0
MN12722019X	1100	MN12567246V	0	MN12404276U	899.95
MN12724560A	1045.94	MN12549626D	0	MN12994097M	1052.42
MN12305836E	0	MN12501297U	0	MN12968823S	812.01
MN12726966Q	1041.31	MN12302211X	1070.99	MN12964502A	1048.56
MN12974010K	1069.29	MN12007867E	1051.15	MN12910717V	0
MN12206504B	0	MN11622214E	0	MN12908929W	338.73
MN12225365W	1090.7	MN12987972S	1036.91	MN12722813T	878.24
MN12124558V	0	MN12970012T	816.65	MN12618462H	1027.72

FNPF ID	Amount (\$)	FNPF ID	Amount (\$)	FNPF ID	Amount (\$)
MN12975585T	523.83	MN12957579W	723.79	MN12614182F	1032.36
MN12422010G	1041.51	MN12910677K	0	MN12532322Q	1008.07
MN12324512K	0	MN12608630W	547.61	MN12501293L	0
MN12319360H	989.99	MN12563256C	0	MN12936370B	0
MN12218458N	1005.42	MN12538803N	0	MN12589166V	892.31
MN12106244U	879.62	MN12422627Z	0	MN12956674K	1072.86
MN12026778N	1085.31	MN12962493R	870.58	MN12929746F	1100
MN12021587E	1033.55	MN12211004L	0	MN12581745V	832.93
MN12579107X	1016.74	MN12926123C	0	MN12607026A	919.28
MN12215840U	0	MN12217550V	0	MN12573104K	0
MN12615700G	1011.36	MN12995344H	1050.58	MN12539121R	1084.25
MN12315438Y	0	MN12919050L	0	MN12518201W	887.01
MN12920406J	816.01	MN12965487M	1044.9	MN12925605R	857.02
MN12551861D	0	MN12931234S	122.75	MN12604236W	1090.98
MN12940588E	1093.81	MN12928328G	297.59	MN12414611N	0
MN12565271J	0	MN12728010K	1098.27	MN12953292E	1085.84
MN12539506M	0	MN12717659E	0	MN12592042W	0
MN12996506N	1009.86	MN12594305N	0	MN13009522N	1100
MN12975204D	576.85	MN12589839W	0	MN12722693K	0
MN12957697C	0	MN12422117A	0	MN12729716G	1057.05
MN12943447B	0	MN11511374J	38.33	MN12521761F	0
MN12715188F	0	MN12606186T	0	MN12510157D	1071.52
MN12552892V	0	MN12601606N	1055.91	MN12945106K	640.14
MN12541383M	0	MN12313561M	0	MN12924782J	0
MN12419200S	0	MN12946515H	484.42	MN12705351J	0
MN12412209Z	1019.46	MN12963460F	1055.19	MN12574338R	563.16
MN12325761M	0	MN12527189K	0	MN11722612Z	1025.55
MN11826574W	675.83	MN12518180Q	0	MN12956411B	1046.77
MN12720436D	595.31	MN12421295V	0	MN12554849E	0
MN12914175F	0	MN11301447P	1091.94	MN12426256L	0
MN12916057K	343.94	MN12527537G	977.96	MN12511568F	334.09
MN12509107D	0	MN12021184G	0	MN12616076S	1007.92
MN12980183C	1015.11	MN12016361X	223.91	MN12584190R	0
MN12908064L	0	MN12704187S	0	MN11424497Q	1100
MN12987707X	1054.42	MN12595812L	0	MN12543492C	0
MN12413951H	0	MN12418765M	0	MN12508202S	0
MN12416596E	322.59	MN11723750S	0	MN12419840E	0
MN12512617X	0	MN12588985C	14.29	MN12707270U	1100
MN12588577M	587.9	MN12408781D	0	MN11608502D	0
MN13011089Q	1051.78	MN12708143S	0	MN11525274G	953.94
MN12989052J	1045.57	MN12939580D	1026.67	MN12548989L	1059.62
MN12966640Y	684.51	MN12420307V	0	MN12729891A	0
MN12942666J	0	MN12613908W	338.57	MN12522159Z	668.56
MN12920164L	0	MN12581314S	0	MN12623959V	556.75

FNPF ID	Amount (\$)	FNPF ID	Amount (\$)	FNPF ID	Amount (\$)
MN12911611J	696.93	MN12620217J	17.44	MN12557831A	315.33
MN12315594N	1080.99	MN12566339X	0	MN12604687F	0
MN12549143H	1100	MN12965689Z	843.39	MN12209288N	0
MN12112049G	1100	MN12225605Q	1100	MN12519036N	1100
MN12122493H	0	MN11612386D	0	MN12510056X	0
MN12125616N	0	MN12562989S	297.08	MN11709598G	147.11
MN12321910G	0	MN12560030K	1100	MN12703027P	1100
MN11311706T	0	MN12212947X	1100	MN12540124G	945.84
MN12305303T	0	MN11723105M	534.25	MN11614920H	0
MN12964664C	0	MN12226930G	0	MN12014199E	121.87
Total					131,884.12

Appendix 6: Informal Sector Unemployment Anomalies Details

Application Number	Batch Number	Birth Certificate Attached (Y/N)	Valid IDs Attached (Y/N)	Business Licence/Hawkers Permit
19	18	No Birth Certificate		
5	21	No Birth Certificate		
27	8	No Birth Certificate		
28	8	No Birth Certificate		
2	33		No Valid IDs	
3	34		No Valid IDs	
21	8		No Valid IDs	
22	8		No Valid IDs	
13	9		No Valid IDs	
15	9		No Valid IDs	
16	9		No Valid IDs	
24	9		No Valid IDs	
34	28			No Business Licence/Hawkers Permit
47	7			No Business Licence/Hawkers Permit

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Management of Concessional Loan Package to Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)

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Acronyms

Abbreviation	Meaning
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
MoE	Ministry of Economy
MCTTT	Ministry of Commerce, Tourism, Trade and Transport
BAF	Business Assistance Fiji
FIA	Fiji Institute of Accountants
WIB	Women in Business
FCEF	Fiji Commerce and Employers Federation
FCCI	Fiji Chamber of Commerce and Industry
FRCS	Fiji Revenue and Customs Service
RIE	Requisition to Incur Expenditures

Executive Summary

The Office of the Auditor General carried out a compliance audit to obtain sufficient and appropriate audit evidence to form a conclusion on whether in all material aspects that the processes and internal controls surrounding the MSME Concessional Loan Package are adequate and effective to ensure that only eligible MSME businesses benefit from the initiative.

Our audit covered both the design and implementation of the programme including the review of the framework or policies and guidelines and the loan application, assessment and approval process for concessional loans registered by the Ministry of Commerce, Tourism, Trade and Transport as at 23 September 2020. Our audit was conducted based on the information and records provided by those charged with governance for MSME Concessional Loan Package during the period the audit was undertaken.

We examined four hundred (400) approved loan applications valued at \$3.2million and selected samples for eligibility testing based on the MSME Concessional Loan Package database as at 23 September 2020 which had registered 4,376 assessed loan applications. In addition, another 325 loan applications were randomly selected to assess the turnaround time by the assessors and further analytical review was carried out on the overall loans data registered in the database to assess its accuracy.

To form a conclusion against the audit objective discussed above, we adopted the following audit questions:

- Did the Ministry of Economy (MoE) and Ministry of Commerce, Trade, Tourism and Transport (MCTTT) develop an appropriate plan to support its implementation of the MSME Concessional Loan program and whether the responsible Ministry to the program demonstrated that it had a well-developed understanding of the risks to program implementation and the achievement of program outcomes?
- Did the MoE and MCTTT put in place effective and adequate measures to ensure that assessors carried out the assessment diligently and inform the Government within the stipulated timeframe?
- Are there effective and adequate measures put in place by MoE and MCTTT to ensure that the concessional loans were approved to only eligible MSME businesses?

The significant findings arising from this compliance audit include the following:

- Assignment of roles and responsibilities between the Ministry of Economy and the Ministry of Commerce, Tourism, Trade and Transport was not clearly demarcated at the beginning of the program;
- There was no documentation to support that risk assessment was performed for programme implementation to identify risks and internal controls to mitigate such risks in a systematic manner.
- The assessors' turnaround time of seven days as stipulated in the Memorandum of Agreements was not always met;
- It was not mandatory for assessors to declare any potential conflict of interest during the assessment of loan applications;
- The minimum assessment qualification scores as per the assessment forms (60% for micro business and 80% for small and medium businesses) was not aligned with the approved assessment qualification scores of 50% as per the Covid 19 Concessional Loan Package Guide;
- The assessors scores did not have a bearing on the loan amount approved resulting in the inconsistency in the loan amounts approved for each business. Therefore, loan applications assessed that were ineligible or did not meet the 50% qualification score threshold were still approved;
- There were instances when loan amounts that were approved by the BAF Panel was different from the amount assessed and recommended by the Assessors; and
- There were instances when application forms were not signed off by the receiving and verifying officers which indicates that the vetting processes was not strictly followed hence contributing to the delay in the assessment process as the applications submitted were incomplete.

1. Introduction

The COVID 19 pandemic has significantly impacted all businesses, including the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) and as such many are struggling with cash flow issues as revenue levels have declined due to weak demand. With the tourism industry coming to a halt and its adverse flow-on effects to almost all sectors of the economy, several businesses are struggling and unemployment has been on the rise.

To secure funding through commercial banks is a challenge as MSME business viability has been greatly affected and therefore credit risk is high. The MSME Concessional Loan Package was therefore established to assist affected businesses with immediate working capital need, expansion of existing operations and diversification into new business activities.

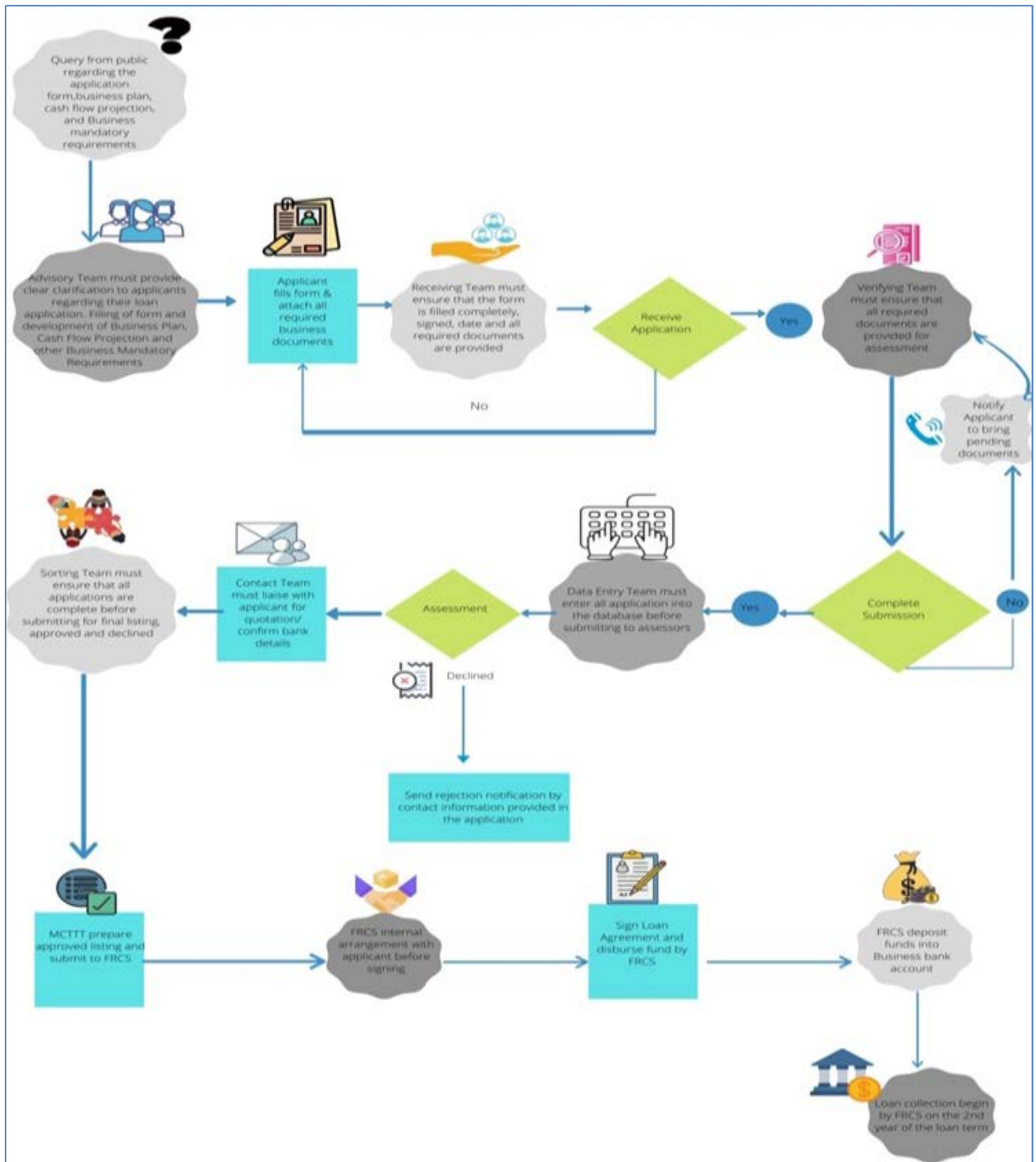
The Concessional Loan Package is provided to eligible MSME businesses with a 5-year repayment term, including one year grace period with no principal or interest payment. The loan repayments will commence from the second year with the flexibility of a single annual repayment or even with payments spread over the year. Interest calculation will be based on a simple interest method.

Apart from supporting existing MSMEs, the funding support will also be extended to new micro businesses to cater for those that may have lost jobs as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic but have the skills and professional capabilities that could be utilized to start a micro enterprise.

The funding support will be provided to genuine applicants that can demonstrate ability to effectively run a business, create employment opportunities and contribute to the overall development of the Fijian economy. The loan disbursement and repayments will be managed by FRCS that has offices all around Fiji.

The overall process flow for the Concessional Loan Programme is depicted in **Figure 1.1**.

Figure 1.1: Concessional Loan Programme Process Flow



(Source: Covid 19 Concessional Loan Package Guide)

The Office of the Auditor General has undertaken the audit to obtain sufficient and appropriate audit evidence to enable it to form a conclusion on whether in all material aspects that the processes and internal controls surrounding the MSME Concessional Loan Package were adequate and effective to ensure that only eligible MSME businesses benefit from the initiative.

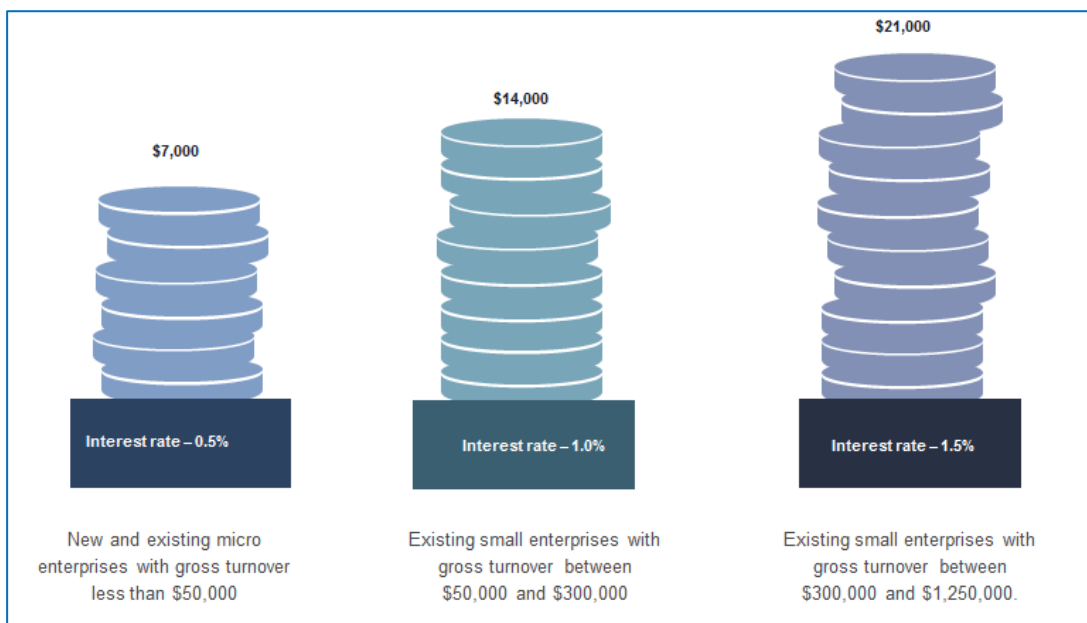
We conducted this audit in accordance with International Standards of Supreme Audit Institutions (ISSAI 4000) on Compliance Auditing. These standard requires that we plan and perform the audit

to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusion based on our audit objective. Accordingly, we have obtained evidence that provides a reasonable basis for our finding and conclusion based on our audit objective. The audit included test of controls and compliance with the Covid-19 Concessional Loan Package Guide, related Memorandum of Agreements and any other related laws, regulations and best practices.

2. Subject Matter and scope

The Concessional loan funding is provided by Government to eligible MSME businesses with a 5 year repayment term, including 1 year grace period with no principal or interest payment. Repayments will commence from the second year with the flexibility of a single annual repayment or even with payments spread over the year. Interest calculation will be based on a simple interest method. Details are provided in the figure below:

Figure 2.1: Concessional Loan Funding Categories



(Source: Covid 19 Concessional Loan Package Guide)

To execute this funding assistance, Government entered into a Memorandum of Agreement with the Fiji Institute of Accountants (FIA), Fiji Commerce & Employers Federation (FCEF), Fiji Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FCCI) and Women in Business (WIB) on 04 June 2020 to carry out verification, assessments and recommend approval or otherwise of loan applications.

The scope of this audit includes review of approved loan applications registered by the Ministry of Commerce, Tourism, Trade and Transport as at 23 September 2020 to ensure that loans processed are in compliance to the Covid-19 Concessional Loan Package Guide and the related Memorandum of Agreements. The audit also examined the current guideline used and made appropriate recommendations accordingly.

3. Audit Objective

The objective of this audit was to obtain sufficient and appropriate audit evidence to enable us to form a conclusion on whether in all material aspects that the processes and internal controls surrounding the MSME Concessional Loan Package were adequate and effective to ensure that only eligible MSME businesses benefit from the initiative.

4. Audit Criteria

The audit criteria for this audit are primarily derived from the approved Covid-19 Concessional Loan Package Guide and the related Memorandum of Agreements signed with each agency. We also derived criteria from best practices in regards to the overall planning to implement the Concessional Loan program.

5. Methodology

To accomplish the audit objective, we:

- Reviewed the Support for MSME Cabinet paper and decision, relevant guideline, agreements and related laws applicable to the Concessional Loan Package;
- Reviewed and performed analytical review of the information recorded on the MSME approved master sheet database maintained in MS-Excel by the Ministry of Commerce, Tourism, Trade and Transport.
- Reviewed key documents such as the application forms, assessment forms, related correspondences, business registration, Tax Identification Number, bank account details, business plans and cash flow projections.
- Interviewed key personnel at the Ministry of Commerce, Tourism, Trade and Transport involved in the MSME Concessional Loan Package.
- Met and interviewed the key personnel at the Business Assistance Fiji (BAF) panel which included personnel representing Fiji Commerce and Employers Federation, Women in Business, Fiji Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Fiji Institute of Accountants which had carried out the assessment.
- Reviewed the payment voucher records at the Ministry of Economy including the Ministerial minute approvals, Requisition to Incur Expenditure (RIE) approvals and related source documents

In the process of information gathering we had discussions with the responsible officers at the Ministry of Commerce, Tourism, Trade and Transport and the Ministry of Economy.

6. Findings

The Minister may, in writing and without further appropriation than this Act, authorize the transfer of any unspent amount in an appropriation category within a head of appropriation administered by a budget sector agency (other than a parliamentary body) to another appropriation category within that head of appropriation.¹

A sum of \$15.2 million was allocated by Government and paid to the Fiji Revenue and Customs Service for the purposes of the MSME Concessional Loan Package during the financial year ending 31 July 2020. As of 08 October 2020, a total of \$13.4million had been disbursed by the Fiji Revenue and Customs Service to 2,220 MSME enterprises.

¹ Section 16 of Finance Management Act 2004.

6.1 Question No 1

Did the Ministry develop an appropriate plan to support its implementation of the MSME Concessional Loan program and whether the Ministry of Economy and Ministry of Commerce, Tourism, Trade and Transport demonstrated that it had a well-developed understanding of the risks to program implementation and the achievement of program outcomes?

6.1.1 Planning to implement the Program

The Ministry of Economy designed the program and developed the implementation plan for the MSME Concessional Loan Package which was documented in Cabinet paper [CP (20) 112].

Ministry of Economy also carried out consultations with the Ministry of Commerce, Trade, Tourism and Transport, Ministry of Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations, Reserve Bank of Fiji, Fiji Institute of Accountants, Fiji Commerce and Employers Federation, Fiji Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Women In Business, Fiji Revenue & Customs Services and the Office of the Solicitor-General.

Following numerous consultations with these stakeholders, Ministry of Economy designed the Concessional Loan Package programme and advised Government that the COVID-19 crisis has significantly affected the MSME businesses and as such many are struggling with cash flow issues as revenue levels have declined due to weak demand and therefore are finding it increasingly difficult to continue doing business.

Subsequently, Government through a Cabinet decision dated 04 June 2020 agreed to the Concessional Loan Package funding to be provided to Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME's) and resolved that a Memorandum of Agreement to be executed with the Fiji Institute of Accountants, Fiji Commerce and Employers Federation, Fiji Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Women in Business for the assessment, verification and approval of MSME loan applications and the Fiji Revenue & Customs Service for the disbursement and collection of loans.

According to the Ministry of Economy (MOE), the Government for the first time had engaged private sector professional bodies with the likes of Fiji Institute of Accountants (FIA), Fiji Commerce and Employers Federation (FCEF), Fiji Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FCCI) and Women in Business (WIB) in such a manner and scale to carry out verification, assessments and recommend approval or otherwise for MSME loan applications. The arrangement was formalized with the signing of agreements with these agencies.

While MOE was involved in the initial planning and design of the programme, the Ministry of Commerce, Tourism, Trade and Transport (MCTTT) was tasked to provide Secretariat support and business advisory for applicants and be the lead Ministry in the rollout of the programme which involved receiving and sorting of applications, maintaining records and storage of all loan application forms received and disseminating it to the respective organizations engaged to carry out the assessment of the loan applications. In addition, MCTTT's role was also to advise the FRCS of the approved loan applications for disbursement of funds.

MCTTT also developed the "Covid19 Concessional Loan Package Guide" which was approved by the Permanent Secretary of MCTTT on 15 July 2020 to act as guideline to support the implementation of the program. The guide describes the process used for the processing, assessment, disbursement, and collection of funds under Micro, Small, Medium Enterprises

(MSME) COVID-19 Concessional Loan Package (Packages). However, we noted that the guide was not effectively used during the processing of the loan applications as discussed in detail in section 6.2 of this report.

Moreover, there was no Memorandum of Agreement between the Ministry of Economy and the Ministry of Commerce, Tourism, Trade and Transport to clearly demarcate the roles and responsibilities of each Ministry in rolling out the programme.

Absence of identification of roles and responsibilities of each party can cause accountability issues in terms of the delivery and outcome of the program.

6.1.2 Risk Assessment

For any Government program which involves public funds, it is imperative that a good practice with well-documented risk assessment is performed prior to its implementation. Proper risk assessment will assist in identifying any exposures and necessary risk mitigation required to safeguard the interests of government.

Cabinet was advised by the Ministry of Economy that there was a case to provide concessional loans to MSME businesses that were affected by financial pressures and were facing serious cash flow issues as securing of loans from commercial banks and licensed credit institutions is a challenge as business viability has been adversely affected and risk of default is high. The MSME concessional financial support aimed to assist MSMEs businesses with immediate working capital needs, expansion of existing operations and diversification into new business activities.

We were informed by Ministry of Economy that government had been fully mindful of the risks associated with lending to the MSME business segment as their business viability was threatened and thus default risk was very high. The financial institutions would not lend to this group and business closure was the only option if government did not intervene to keep them afloat. This was critical to safeguard employment and more importantly for economic revival when things normalize.

The initiative has been approved by Cabinet and endorsed by Parliament as part of the budget process. Funding approved in the 2019-2020 COVID_19 Response budget followed the normal appraisal, selection and risk assessment/mitigation process to ensure effective implementation and realization of the broader policy intent.

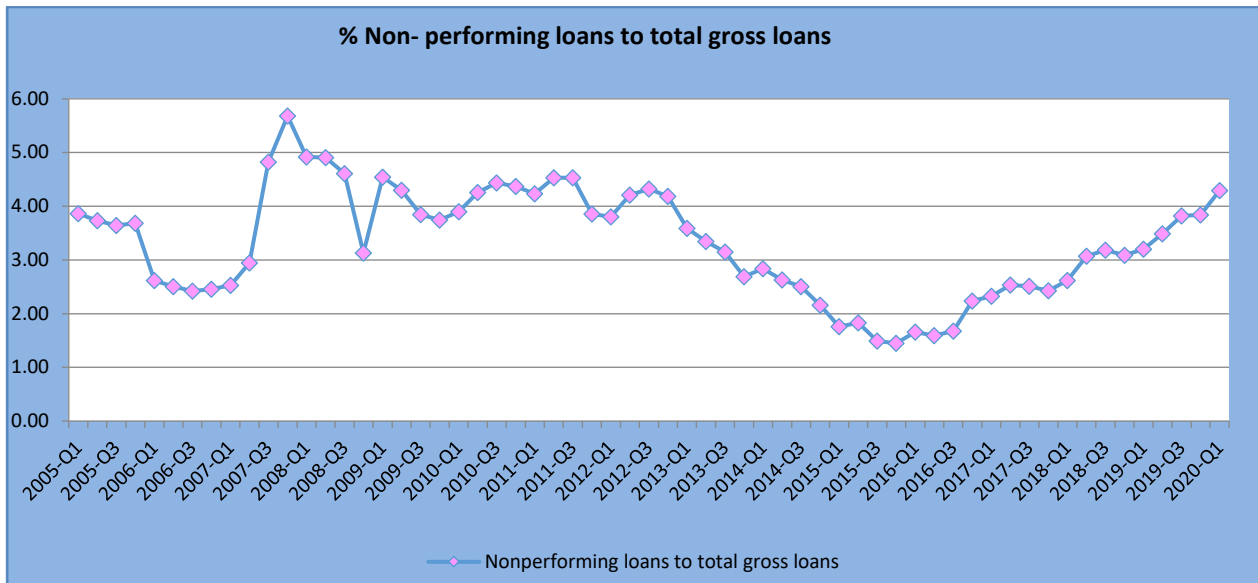
However, during our audit, we did not find documentation of the appraisal, selection and risk assessment/ mitigation and management strategies for the implementation of the programme. The areas where risks may exist for such programmes includes risks relating to eligibility and assessment, availability of funds and compliance.

Absence of proper risk assessment will not enable the MOE to identify potential risks associated with the program and put in place measures to mitigate them early in the program.

Moreover, review of the Cabinet Paper[CP (20) 112] dated 04/06/2020 noted that the Ministry of Economy did not include in its advice to government the default rate data for MSME loans that would have assisted in better decision-making and assessment of financial risks associated with establishing concessional loans programs to assist MSME businesses.

We reviewed the (%) non-performing loans data over the past 15 years provided by Reserve Bank of Fiji which is depicted in the graph below:

Figure 6.1: % Non-performing loan to gross loans



In response, the MoE indicated that extraordinary situation and the overall policy intent of the loan support was for keeping the MSMEs afloat at this point in time as the formal banking sector would not lend to this segment due to the obvious risks and the current circumstances. As such, public sector intervention was justified and approved by Parliament. This was never meant to be a competing alternative to commercial bank loans.

The Ministry also indicated that to mitigate the above risks, the Ministry of Commerce, Tourism, Trade and Transport was tasked to monitor the recipients to determine the usage of funds and to work closely with other agencies for monitoring purposes. These could include business trainings to the recipients to ensure they understand their responsibility as a MSME to repay the loan and how to manage their business. MoE also stated that Government will exhaust all opportunities available to allow the recipient to repay the loan.

Recommendations

1. For programmes where different government agencies are involved, the roles and responsibilities for each Ministry or agency should be clearly demarcated to ensure the effective rollout and accountability of the programme.
2. Proper risk assessment should be carried out and documented with mitigation measures to address risks associated with implementing the programme.

6.2 Question No 2

Did the Ministry of Economy and Ministry of Commerce, Tourism, Trade and Transport put in place effective and adequate measures to ensure that assessors carried out the assessment diligently and inform the Government within the stipulated timeframe?

6.2.1 Assessors not meeting the stipulated timeframe

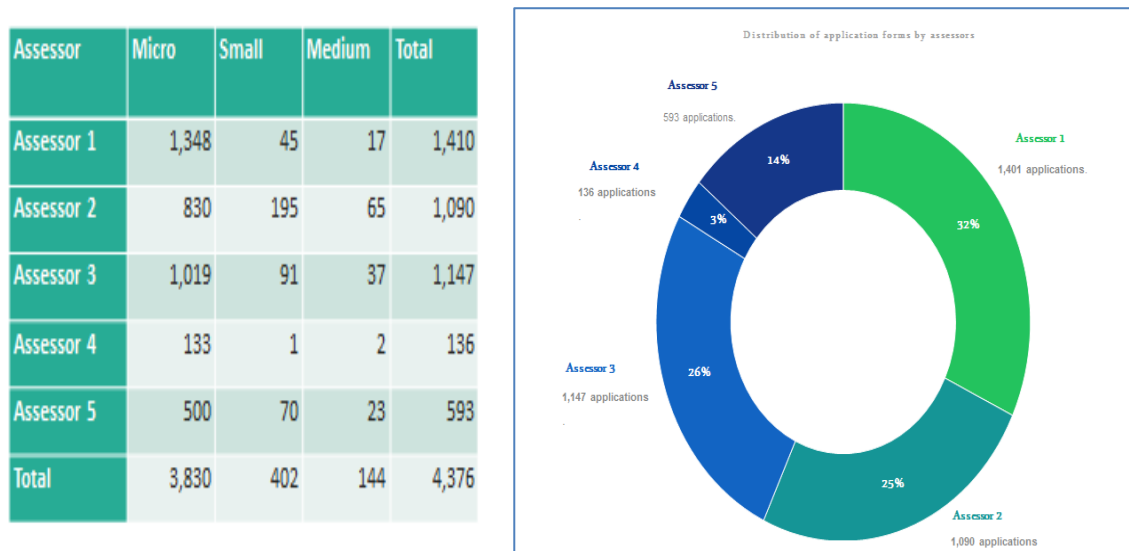
The Assessor must within 7 days of receiving the complete form, inform the Government in writing of eligible Applicants.²

The Assessor must accurately disseminate awareness of the programme, receive and verify the eligibility of applicants in accordance with the eligibility criterion, assess the applications in accordance with the assessment criteria and within 7 days of receiving the complete form, provide written confirmation to the government of eligible applicants.³

Contrary to the above requirements, based on the review of a sample of applications, it was noted that there were instances when the Assessors took more than seven days to complete the assessment of the completed application forms.

Based on the September 2020 listing of 4,376 assessed applications, the application forms were distributed to the respective assessors as follows:

Figure 6.2: Distribution of application forms by assessors



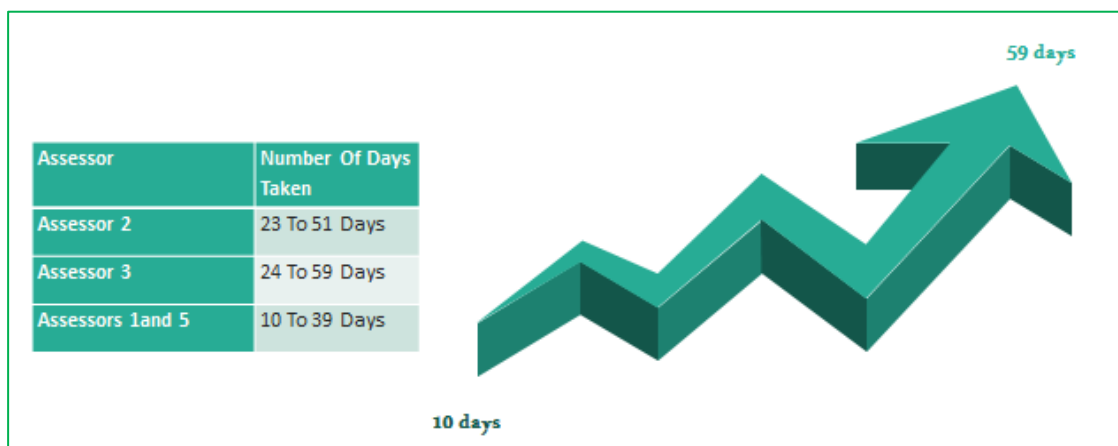
In most instances, the assessors took between 10 to 59 days to complete the assessment and submit the assessment forms to government. We noted that Assessor 2 and Assessor 3 were not able to meet the stipulated assessment timeframe for all application forms assessed.

² Section 4.1 of the Memorandum of Agreement

³ Section 5.1 of the Memorandum of Agreement

Refer to figure below for the average number of days taken by the assessors to process applications:

Figure 6.3: Average no. of days taken by assessors



Refer to **Appendix 1** for details.

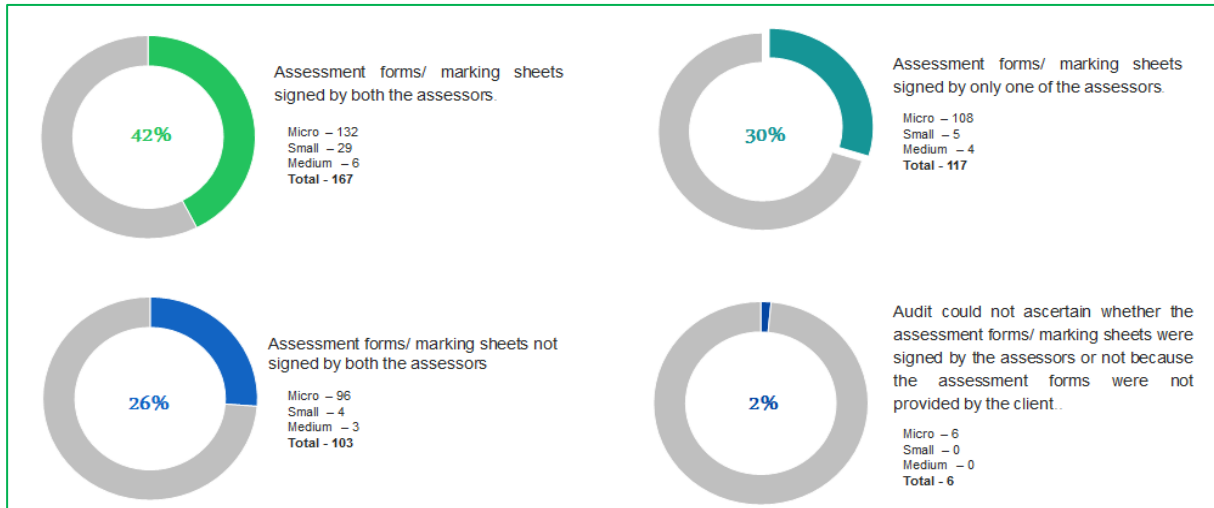
Discussion with representatives of the Business Assistance Fiji panel that were involved in the assessment of the loan applications noted that the seven days turnaround time relates to the individual assessors turnaround time for assessing a loan application form and it does not take into consideration the date the batch of the application forms were actually dispatched to the organisation given the huge number of application forms received.

We also noted that incomplete loan applications also contributed to the delay in the assessment of loan applications which indicates weaknesses in the verification process in ensuring that application forms submitted are complete.

6.2.2 Assessor not signing on the assessment sheets

Audit review of approved loan applications noted instances where assessment forms were not signed by the assessors and most applications had a soft copy marking sheet which did not include any signature of assessors to indicate their endorsement.

Figure 6.4: Summary of Assessment forms not signed by the assessors



Refer to **Appendix 2.0** for examples.

The current guideline also does not provide guidance on the signing of the assessment sheets hence the inconsistency in the approach taken by the assessors when filling out and signing the assessment forms.

In the absence of signature, there was no evidence to indicate that a loan application was assessed and endorsed by an assessor.

6.2.3 Conflict of Interest

The Assessor warrants that, to the best of its knowledge after making diligent inquiry, at the date of signing this Agreement no conflict of interest exists or is likely to arise in the performance of this agreement. If during the performance of this Agreement a conflict of interest arises, or appears likely to arise, the Assessor must notify the Government immediately in writing, make full disclosure of all relevant information relating to the conflict and take such steps as the Government reasonable requires resolving or otherwise dealing with the conflict. ⁴

The MCTTT advised that the assessors have an understanding that if they have any conflict of interest issue, than that application is given to the MCTTT as Secretariat who then allocates that particular application to another assessor.

It was noted from discussions with the Business Assistance Fiji (BAF) Panel, that conflict of interest was discussed in the meetings and the assessors would call out if there were conflict of interest issues.

⁴ Section 8 of the Memorandum of Agreement between the Individual Assessor Organizations and the Ministry of Economy

Based on the discussion with BAF panel, it was evident that there is no compulsory requirement for assessors to complete a Conflict of Interest declaration form.

In the absence of a signed declaration, the risk of conflict of interest still exists which may impair the credibility of the process.

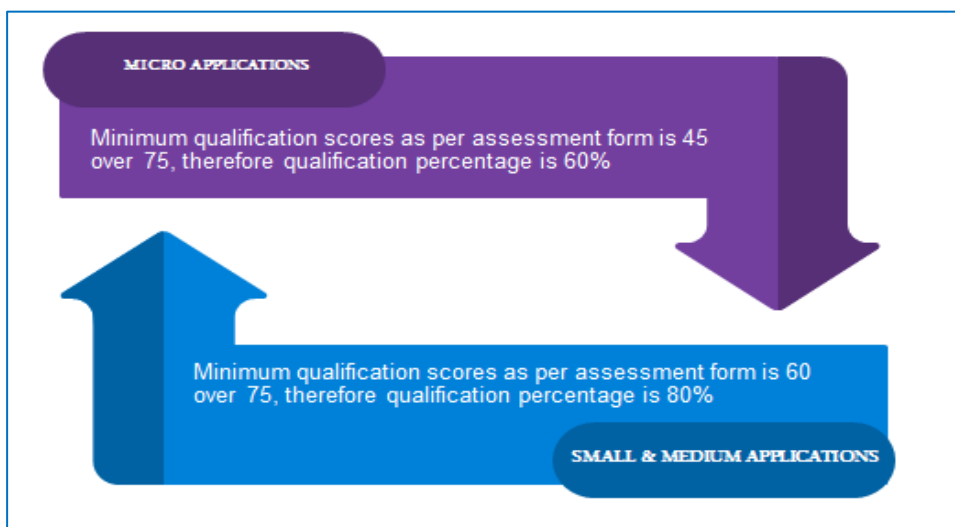
6.2.4 Conflicting assessment qualification scores (percentage)

Assessors must ensure that all applications are scrutinized in respect of the eligibility criteria and determine whether applicant meets eligibility criteria for the issuance of loan. Assessors will determine the score of all application which is **50% pass** and submit all application to MCTTT containing applicants that have either been approved or declined.⁵

The guideline required a 50% pass in terms of the actual scores attained against the overall assessment scores for applications to be eligible to be submitted to MCTTT for further processing and approval. However, the actual assessment forms used by the Assessors had a different qualification scores and percentage depending on the type of business. These percentages were based on the overall scores given by the assessors for each application which had a different minimum score for each type of applications.

We noted that the guide was approved in July 2020 but minimum qualification scores and percentages were not aligned to the assessment sheets qualification scores and 50% threshold. Refer to figure below for details:

Figure 6.5 Details of Qualification scores as per assessment forms



(Source: Auditors Analysis of the Assessment forms)

Based on the comments received from MOE during audit, it was indicated that the guideline is an internal document for the Ministry of Commerce Trade, Tourism and Transport which can be amended as and when the need arises to reflect new issues that were not anticipated during the planning stage. Initially, the assessors decided to have a qualifying score of 60% as the qualifying mark during the planning stage. Hence the assessment forms were designed accordingly. However, the qualifying score was relooked at and the assessors made a determination that the qualifying

⁵ Covid-19 Concessional Loan Package Guide

score to be 50% for all applications. Hence, any score between 50 – 59% were referred to the BAF Panel for ratification.

Due to the ability to alter the criteria for approval, there is a high a risk of subjectivity in the final approval process resulting in inconsistencies.

6.2.5 Improper filing or indexing system resulting in lack of audit trail

The Assessor must accurately disseminate awareness of the programme, receive and verify the eligibility of Applicants in accordance with the eligibility criterion, assess the applications in accordance with the assessment criteria and within 7 days of receiving the complete form, provide written confirmation to the government of eligible applicants.⁶

Upon receiving the applications from the assessors by MCTTT, the approved details are entered in the Approved Master sheet. The applications are then thoroughly checked again by MCTTT to ensure that all the required documents are attached before the details of approved applications are sent via email to FRCS in batches for disbursement.

However, it was noted that proper indexing and filing system is not in place to ensure that the application forms are easily identified and located. As result, application forms were not properly filed and in some instances application forms for the Micro, Small and Medium business types were filed together.

We could not ascertain the date the completed application forms were received from the applicants, hence, there is a possibility that application forms may have been received after the due date.

Moreover, there was a lack of audit trail to track the application forms dispatched to the assessors and those returned to the MCTTT after the assessments were carried out by the assessors. It was noted that the application forms were given in batches to assessors (secretariat), but assessed batches were returned in parts and the MCTTT is continuously updating the excel database to track which applications are pending from the assessors. Upon enquiry with MCTTT, we could not obtain details of the applications due to be received from the assessors which indicates that the current system of using the database in MS-Excel might not be working effectively.

Ministry of Economy indicated that MCTTT has introduced a filing and index system. However, the Ministry further stated that whilst the indexing has commenced, the priority remains in facilitating the approved applications from the assessors to FRCS and due to the influx of applications. Working on filing and indexing requires dedicated staffing and resources to undertake this administrative task which will be addressed by recruiting few volunteers to carry out indexing, filing, scanning and sorting of documents towards the end of the programme.

⁶ Section 5.1 of the Memorandum of Agreement

Recommendations

1. Assessors should be reminded of their obligation as per the Memorandum of Agreement to review the loan applications within the stipulated timeframes and if the timeline is not practical, the assessment turnaround time should be reviewed accordingly;
2. The full listing of the assessors from each institution involved in the assessment process should be submitted to the MCTTT for record purposes and it should be made mandatory for personnel involved in the programme to declare their interest. To achieve this, MCTTT should develop a conflict of interest form for all assessors to complete and submit to the Ministry;
3. The receiving and verification of loan application process should be strengthened to ensure that complete application forms are submitted with all required documents;
4. MCTTT should ensure that assessment forms are duly signed by the respective assessors;
5. A comprehensive review of the programme should be undertaken by the MCTTT to ensure that all potential risks are addressed and the requirements such as qualifying percentage are standardized; and
6. The MCTTT should implement a proper filing and indexing system to ensure that loan records are properly kept for ease of reference when required.

6.3 Question No 3

Are there effective and adequate measures put in place by MCTTT to ensure that the concessional loans are made for only eligible MSME businesses?

The Concessional loan package assistance is targeted at the new and existing micro enterprises, existing small and medium enterprises and the MSMEs are defined according to their concessional loan eligibility as depicted in the following table:

Table 6.1: Concessional Loan Package Assistance

	Product 1	Product 2	Product 3
Eligibility	Both new and existing micro enterprises with gross turnover less than \$50,000.	Existing small enterprises with gross turnover between \$50,000 to \$300,000	Existing medium sized enterprises with gross turnover between \$300,000 to \$1,250,000
Purpose	Funding available for working capital support and capital investment.	Funding available for working capital support and capital investment.	Funding available for working capital support and capital investment.
Maximum funding eligibility	\$7,000	\$14,000.	\$21,000
Interest rate	Concessional interest rate of 0.5 % per annum	Concessional interest rate of 1.0 % per annum.	Concessional interest rate of 1.5 % per annum.
Repayment term	5 years, inclusive of 1 year grace period (No principal and no interest).	5 years, inclusive of 1 year grace period (No principal and no interest).	5 years, inclusive of 1 year grace period (No principal and no interest).
Requirements	Business registration, Tax Identification Number, Bank Account Details, Business Plan, Cash flow projections, Completed application form.	Business registration, Tax Identification Number, Bank Account Details, Latest Financial Statements, Business Plan, Cash flow projections, FNPF compliant as at December 2019, FRCS compliant as at December 2018, Completed application form.	Business registration, Tax Identification Number, Bank Account Details, Latest Financial Statements, Business Plan, Cash flow projections, FNPF compliant as at December 2019, FRCS compliant as at December 2018, Completed application form.

(Source: Covid 19 Concessional Loan Package Guide)

To assess whether the measures put in place by the MCTTT to ensure that the concessional loans made for only eligible MSME businesses, we reviewed a total of 400 approved loan applications

selected from the “approved master sheet” database dated 23 September 2020 against the eligibility criteria.

The loan application forms were selected from the total of 4,376 MSME loan applications registered in the database maintained by the Ministry. Out of the 4,376 registered applications, 3,198 were approved applications, 1,134 applications were declined, 16 applications were conditionally approved and 28 applications under suspense due to more due diligence checks to be carried out.


As of 08 October 2020, a total of \$13.4million had been disbursed by the Fiji Revenue and Customs Service to 2,220 MSME enterprises. Audit review of a sample of loan applications noted the following weaknesses in the overall process:

6.3.1 Inconsistency in the loan amounts approved

The comparative analysis of the loan amounts approved for micro, small and medium enterprises as registered in the database noted that the assessors’ scores when expressed as a percentage ranged from 29 to 99%.

Refer to table below for summary of the registered applications;

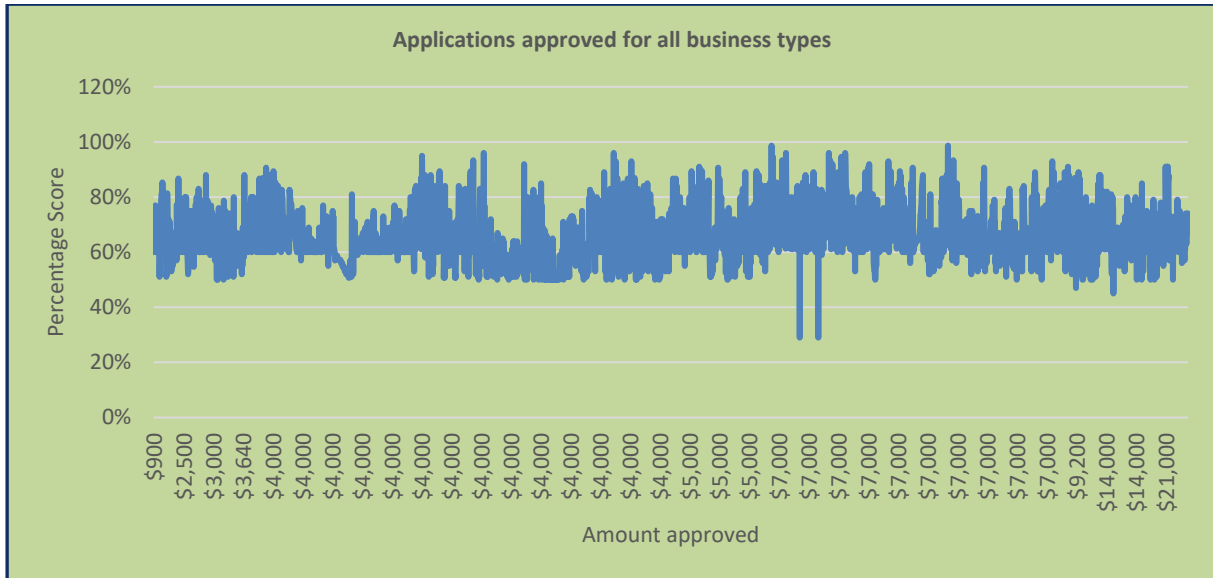
Table 6.2: Summary of Registered Applications



Range of Approved Loan amounts (\$)	No. of loan applications	Range of assessors % scores
Declined	1,134	0 - 92%
Conditional approved	16	50 - 79%
Suspense	28	0 - 85%
900 – 3,999	280	47 – 88%
4,000 – 6,999	1,620	50 – 96%
7,000	950	29 – 99%
7,001 – 14,000	259	45 – 89%
14,001 – 21,000	89	50 – 91%
TOTAL	4,376	

Based on our review, we noted that the assessors’ scores did not have any bearing on the loan amount approved. Refer to graph below for a snapshot of the percentage scores versus the loan amounts approved which shows the inconsistency in the loan amounts approved.

Figure 6.6: Summary of Approved Applications for all Business Types



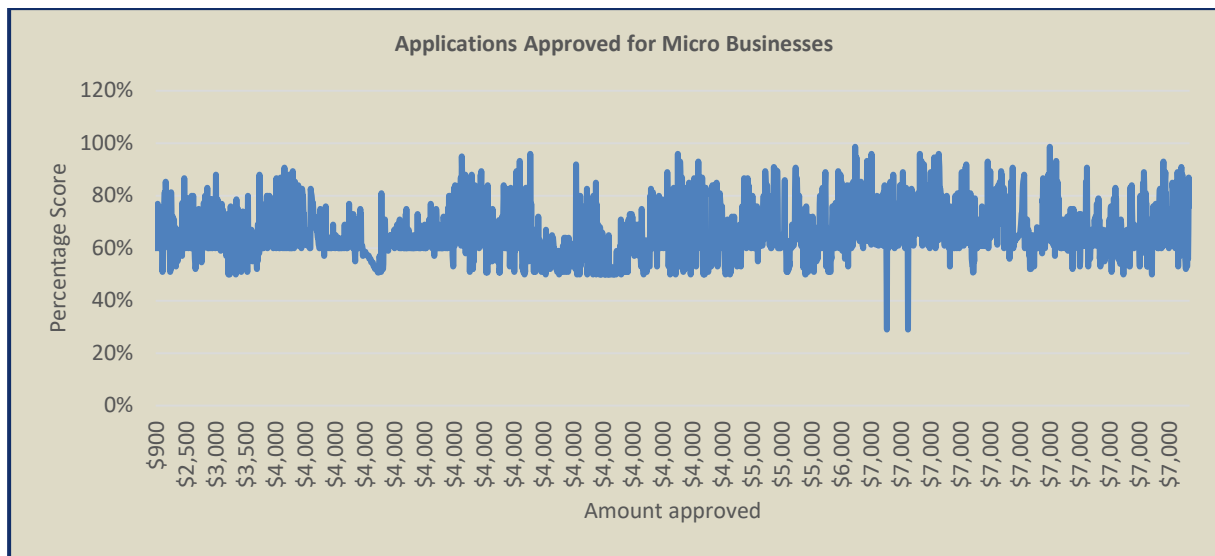
6.3.1.1 Analysis for Micro Business level

For the Micro business level, the percentage scores ranged from 29% to 99%, and the loan amount approved ranged from \$900 to \$7,000. Refer below for the inconsistency in the percentage scores to the loan amount approved for the micro business loans approved.

Table 6.3: Details of Micro Business Loans

 MICRO BUSINESS LOAN APPLICATIONS	Range of approved Loan amount (\$)	No. of loan applications	Range of assessors % scores
	Declined	1,021	0 – 92%
	Conditional approved	11	52 – 79%
	Suspense	16	57 – 85%
	900 – 3,999	279	47 – 88%
	4,000 – 6,999	1,591	50 – 96%
	7,000	908	29 – 99%
	TOTAL	3,826	

Figure 6.7: Details of Approved Micro Business Loans



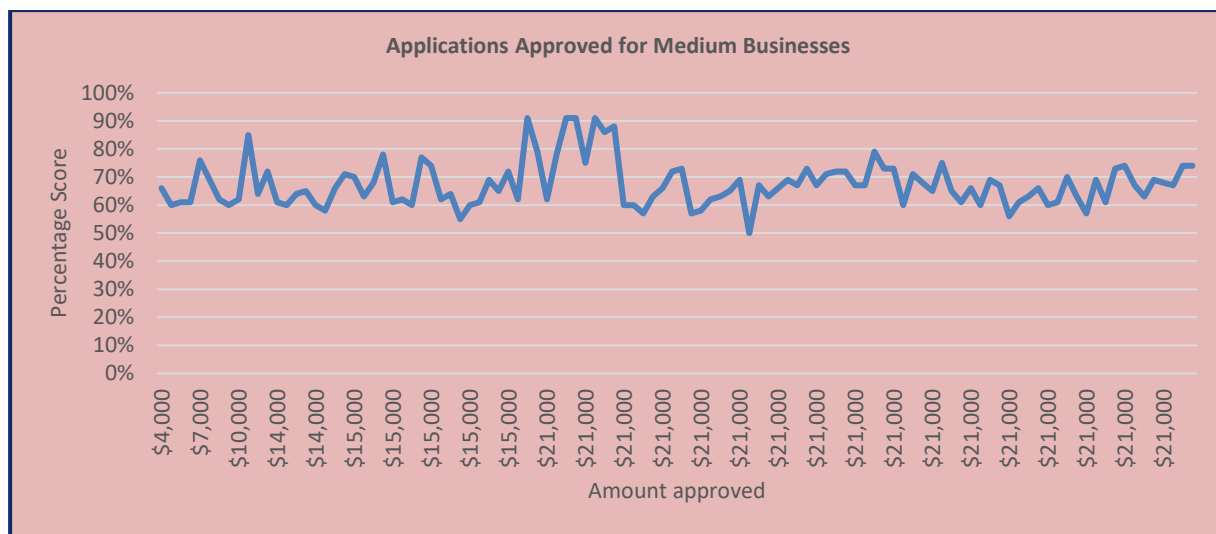
6.3.1.2 Analysis for Small Business level

For the Small business level, the percentage scores ranged from 45% to 89%, however, the loan amount approved ranged from \$3,500 to \$14,000. Refer below for the inconsistency in the percentage scores to the loan amount approved for the small business loans approved.

Table 6.4: Details of Small Business Loans

	Range of approved Loan amount (\$)	No. of loan applications	Range of assessors % scores
 SMALL BUSINESS LOAN APPLICATIONS	Declined	77	0 – 71%
	Conditional approved	3	59 – 77%
	Suspense	9	0 – 73%
	3,500	1	60%
	4,000 – 7,000	65	50 – 85%
	7,001 – 10,000	62	47 – 87%
	10,001 – 14,000	183	45 - 89%
	TOTAL	400	

Figure 6.9: Details of Approved Medium Business Loans



The MOE indicated that the amount approved was based on several factors which is based on professional judgement and considerations including the purpose of the loan, the nature of the business and sector which the business operates in, needs and requirements to commence or continue business, employment status of the applicant, whether being a new or existing business and the location of the business.

Further discussions with the Business Assistance Fiji panel revealed that loan amounts approved were based on some common understanding, discussions and consideration of factors such as the type of business, the location and the quoted amounts etc. The Panel advised that it had synchronized and standardized the amounts approved accordingly. The assessment forms and scoring system was only used to ensure that the minimum requirements are met and assisted the assessors to tally up the points and see whether they qualify. Their assessment did not have any bearing on the loan amount approved and therefore there were instances where amount approved by the BAF Panel was different from what assessors had initially approved.

We noted that there was no documentation on the basis on which the BAF Panel approved the loans which were different from amount approved by assessors.

In absence of appropriate documentation, there is a risk that process for final approval by the BAF Panel may not have been objective and consistent.

6.3.2 Loan amount disbursed higher than amount recommended by the Assessors

Our review of the loan applications and relevant assessment forms noted that the loan amounts approved and disbursed by the Fiji Revenue and Customs Services were higher than the loan amounts recommended by the assessors.

This was prevalent for Micro business applications where a number of applications out of the total 400 application samples reviewed were found to have been approved and paid a higher amount despite the assessor’s recommendation for a lower loan amount. Refer to **Appendix 3.0** for details.

From the discussions with responsible officers at the Ministry of Commerce, Transport, Tourism and Trade and review of the minutes of the “Business Assistance Fiji Selection Panel” ,we noted that the BAF selection panel had overturned the decisions of the individual assessors in some cases.

The reasons and justification for overturning each assessor's recommendations could not be obtained as detailed discussions for each case were not properly documented in the minutes of meetings.

According to MOE, some of the general reasons why the Business Assistance Fiji panel may overturn the decision of an individual assessor are as follows:

- i. Business impacted by COVID-19 or not.
- ii. The proposed loan utilization, is it operational expenditure, capital expenditure or both?
- ii. The nature of business and the sector which the business operates in.
- iii. Is the applicant currently employed elsewhere?
- iv. Quotations that was provided.
- v. New business or existing business.
- vi. Location of business.

Furthermore, the assessment forms and scoring system was only used to ensure that the minimum requirements are met and assisted the assessors to tally up the points and see whether they pass and did not have any bearing on the loan amount approved.

The above practise defeats the purpose of the assessment process and the use of the points scoring system in the assessment form which makes an assessment of the businesses ability to service its debt and also standardize the assessment process and brings fairness and objectivity into the process. Individual assessors have objectively assessed each applications based on the information provided in the applications forms and the assessors have provided their scores accordingly.

We also noted that the assessment form acts as a checklist for all required documentation, and also requires the assessors to carry out detailed assessment on the organizational, marketing and financial plans which are key areas of consideration when assessing the businesses ability to repay the loan.

6.3.3 Loan amount disbursed higher than amount requested by the applicant

From the sample reviewed, we noted instances where the approved loan amount was higher than the loan amount applied by the applicant. It was noted that the maximum eligible amount of \$7,000 was approved despite the applicants requesting for a lower amount. Refer to Table below for details.

Table 6.6: Details of Loans Approved More Than Amount Requested

TIN Number	Business Names	% Score	Amount as per Application	Amount Approved	Observations
13548xxxx	Business A	80%	\$6,689.85	\$7,000	Loan Amount Requested was \$6689.85 but was approved \$7,000
20557xxxx	Business B	57%	\$3,704	\$4,000	Loan amount requested \$3,704, however was approved and paid \$4,000.

The basis on which higher loan amounts were approved were not properly documented in the assessment forms and in the minutes of panel meetings.

6.3.4 Application forms not signed off by the receiving and verifying officers

Officers receiving the loan application forms must ensure that the form and the business plan are completely filled and that the required documents are attached. The receiving officer must ensure that he/she signs off on the required field and slot in the date the application form was received.

Officers verifying the application forms must ensure that the application is complete and that all mandatory documents are attached. The verifying officer must ensure that he/she signs off on the field provided. If an application is incomplete, the receiving officer must immediately request the applicant to complete the application form, attach the mandatory documents and resubmit the application whichever is applicable.⁷

Audit review of application forms noted several instances where the application forms had not been signed off and dated by receiving and verifying officers. In some cases, the forms were only signed off by either of the officers.

As a result, we could not ascertain the date the applications were received and ascertain whether these applications had gone through the verification process to ensure that the application form was complete and all mandatory documents were attached before it is submitted for assessment.

MOE indicated that there were also drop boxes provided by Assessor 3 in selected offices and applications received through the drop boxes could have been the ones not verified or signed-off.

The above finding shows non-compliance with the established process and indicates the weaknesses in the controls over the receipt and verification process of application forms.

Recommendation

MCTTT should review the current guideline to address the weaknesses noted above including the inconsistency in the amounts approved and ensuring that only eligible applicants are approved.

⁷ Covid-19 Concessional Loan Package Guide

7. Conclusion

Based on our audit and evidence gathered, we conclude that although the MSME Concessional Loan Package programme was implemented with its intended intent, there were instances where control measures were not effective to mitigate the risks associated with the programme. In addition, differences in decisions made and absence of documented justification over the loan amount approved between the assessors and the BAF Panel indicates that communication could be improved during the processing of applications for loans.

Absence of comprehensive risk assessment to identify potential risks and how these could have been mitigated reflects that more awareness needs to be done on risk in planning for the delivery of such programmes.

8. Ministry of Economy's Response

The audit findings and recommendations is noted by the Ministry of Economy. However since the programme is near to completion, the Ministry will consider all recommendations when undertaking similar programmes in the future.⁸

A Memorandum of Agreements was signed with the Fiji Institute of Accountants, Fiji Commerce and Employers Federation, Fiji Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Women in Business for the assessment, verification and approval of MSME loan applications and the with the Fiji Revenue & Customs Service for the disbursement and collection/recovery of loans. The Ministry of Commerce, Trade, Tourism and Transport provided the Secretariat support.

⁸ Exit Meeting held with Ministry of Economy on 12/03/21

9. Appendix

Appendix 1.0: Examples of Loan Applications where Assessors did not meet the 7 days turnaround time

TIN Number	Business Names Initials	Date received by Assessors	Date Loan Approved	No. of days taken
Assessor 2				
19556xxxx	RT & T	16/07/2020	17/09/2020	63
19374xxxx	NT	16/07/2020	09/09/2020	55
14978xxxx	VE	16/07/2020	17/09/2020	63
20521xxxx	BI	16/07/2020	17/09/2020	63
19537xxxx	AC	16/07/2020	17/09/2020	63
02363xxxx	LE	16/07/2020	17/09/2020	63
19756xxxx	ASC	16/07/2020	17/09/2020	63
20126xxxx	KI	16/07/2020	17/09/2020	63
22163xxxx	NC	16/07/2020	17/09/2020	63
18882xxxx	PJMC	16/07/2020	17/09/2020	63
18348xxxx	CLS	16/07/2020	17/09/2020	63
19921xxxx	NSD	16/07/2020	17/09/2020	63
12610xxxx	LY	16/07/2020	09/09/2020	55
02197xxxx	EBI	16/07/2020	09/09/2020	55
20744xxxx	THC	16/07/2020	17/09/2020	63
16362xxxx	BBS	16/07/2020	17/09/2020	63
11633xxxx	SSF	16/07/2020	19/08/2020	34
50540xxxx	MG (Fiji) Pte Limited	16/07/2020	12/08/2020	27
19377xxxx	GBC	16/07/2020	11/09/2020	57
03202xxxx	IT(Fiji)	16/07/2020	11/09/2020	57
12446xxxx	V FC S	16/07/2020	19/08/2020	34

TIN Number	Business Names Initials	Date received by Assessors	Date Loan Approved	No. of days taken
50150xxxx	ERC Pte Ltd	16/07/2020	17/08/2020	32
11547xxxx	SF	16/07/2020	11/09/2020	57
22217xxxx	DCS	16/07/2020	19/08/2020	34
18344xxxx	JPS	16/07/2020	17/08/2020	32
50344xxxx	NTS Pte Ltd	16/07/2020	17/08/2020	32
11463xxxx	PSC	16/07/2020	11/09/2020	57
19420xxxx	KR	16/07/2020	11/09/2020	57
01130xxxx	ANF	16/07/2020	19/08/2020	34
11160xxxx	MKWF	16/07/2020	12/08/2020	27
16341xxxx	AR& T	16/07/2020	12/08/2020	27
02186xxxx	786 DDS	16/07/2020	11/09/2020	57
11293xxxx	ES & M	16/07/2020	19/08/2020	34
19353xxxx	DRS	16/07/2020	10/09/2020	56
13591xxxx	KKS	16/07/2020	10/09/2020	56
20317xxxx	FS& ACC	16/07/2020	10/09/2020	56
20206xxxx	JT	16/07/2020	10/09/2020	56
18859xxxx	KB	16/07/2020	10/09/2020	56
12142xxxx	AOVM	16/07/2020	10/09/2020	56
22208xxxx	KFS	16/07/2020	10/09/2020	56
02291xxxx	NG	16/07/2020	10/09/2020	56
11412xxxx	ZM	16/07/2020	10/09/2020	56
18147xxxx	TWKS	16/07/2020	10/09/2020	56
20377xxxx	TGD	16/07/2020	15/09/2020	61
14270xxxx	NF	16/07/2020	15/09/2020	61
12342xxxx	SLI	16/07/2020	15/09/2020	61

TIN Number	Business Names Initials	Date received by Assessors	Date Loan Approved	No. of days taken
19025xxxx	YKM	16/07/2020	15/09/2020	61
23151xxxx	TOA	16/07/2020	11/09/2020	57
18340xxxx	BCS	16/07/2020	12/08/2020	27
20658xxxx	STMM	16/07/2020	11/08/2020	26
19089xxxx	FSM	16/07/2020	25/09/2020	71
14764xxxx	AI	16/07/2020	25/09/2020	71
25035xxxx	YR	16/07/2020	11/09/2020	57
11492xxxx	AMS	16/07/2020	12/08/2020	27
02435xxxx	FSK	16/07/2020	19/08/2020	34
21017xxxx	PPTS	16/07/2020	12/08/2020	27
19686xxxx	ISJ&GBW	16/07/2020	15/09/2020	61
02303xxxx	LE	16/07/2020	15/09/2020	61
20270xxxx	TC	16/07/2020	15/09/2020	61
13298xxxx	BI	16/07/2020	15/09/2020	61
13683xxxx	IPD	16/07/2020	15/09/2020	61
08129xxxx	TDH	16/07/2020	19/08/2020	34
25017xxxx	VCWS	16/07/2020	19/08/2020	34
23139xxxx	WRF	16/07/2020	25/09/2020	71
12239xxxx	LC	16/07/2020	25/09/2020	71
22427xxxx	RI	16/07/2020	25/09/2020	71
18555xxxx	BI	16/07/2020	25/09/2020	71
12455xxxx	TFV	16/07/2020	25/09/2020	71
20097xxxx	VE	16/07/2020	21/09/2020	67
11773xxxx	FBC	16/07/2020	25/08/2020	40
13456xxxx	JM	16/07/2020	21/09/2020	67

TIN Number	Business Names Initials	Date received by Assessors	Date Loan Approved	No. of days taken
11580xxxx	AS	16/07/2020	25/08/2020	40
20460xxxx	TMT	16/07/2020	21/09/2020	67
19390xxxx	MMPS	16/07/2020	25/08/2020	40
20557xxxx	TE	16/07/2020	25/09/2020	71
12190xxxx	VUE	16/07/2020	25/09/2020	71
19888xxxx	WLC	16/07/2020	25/09/2020	71
11225xxxx	KFS	16/07/2020	25/09/2020	71
13538xxxx	MC	16/07/2020	25/09/2020	71
11922xxxx	KE	16/07/2020	25/09/2020	71
18559xxxx	NC&MS	16/07/2020	25/09/2020	71
20106xxxx	VK	16/07/2020	10/09/2020	56
02476xxxx	AKC	16/07/2020	10/09/2020	56
16090xxxx	DE	16/07/2020	10/09/2020	56
08068xxxx	FB&C	16/07/2020	10/09/2020	56
19436xxxx	SS&V	16/07/2020	10/09/2020	56
16385xxxx	RHD&BS	16/07/2020	10/09/2020	56
14688xxxx	NW	16/07/2020	10/09/2020	56
18817xxxx	RE	16/07/2020	10/09/2020	56
19869xxxx	TC	16/07/2020	10/09/2020	56
13435xxxx	NA	16/07/2020	10/09/2020	56
19915xxxx	SC	16/07/2020	10/09/2020	56
19496xxxx	SMS	16/07/2020	10/09/2020	56
20254xxxx	MFF	16/07/2020	10/09/2020	56
13385xxxx	SB	16/07/2020	10/09/2020	56
11405xxxx	MKD	16/07/2020	10/09/2020	56

TIN Number	Business Names Initials	Date received by Assessors	Date Loan Approved	No. of days taken
01232xxxx	RC&P	16/07/2020	10/09/2020	56
11067xxxx	CDE	16/07/2020	10/09/2020	56
07111xxxx	MGD	16/07/2020	10/09/2020	56
19715xxxx	WSSB	16/07/2020	10/09/2020	56
06036xxxx	GL	16/07/2020	25/08/2020	40
13480xxxx	NK	16/07/2020	25/08/2020	40
22213xxxx	RF	16/07/2020	25/08/2020	40
14596xxxx	NC	16/07/2020	01/09/2020	47
18504xxxx	RC	16/07/2020	01/09/2020	47
17085xxxx	VQC	16/07/2020	15/09/2020	61
11352xxxx	GM	16/07/2020	17/09/2020	63
20078xxxx	NC	16/07/2020	17/09/2020	63
13192xxxx	MCI	16/07/2020	17/09/2020	63
18425xxxx	RKS	16/07/2020	10/09/2020	56
23089xxxx	MDS	16/07/2020	10/09/2020	56
19257xxxx	NMB	16/07/2020	10/09/2020	56
01150xxxx	MA'sJS	16/07/2020	10/09/2020	56
04192xxxx	DAM	16/07/2020	10/09/2020	56
18444xxxx	RI	16/07/2020	10/09/2020	56
13500xxxx	IMFS	16/07/2020	10/09/2020	56
11797xxxx	ME	16/07/2020	10/09/2020	56
50163xxxx	NPTPL	16/07/2020	17/09/2020	63
50566xxxx	MFPL	16/07/2020	17/09/2020	63
50538xxxx	SSSPL	16/07/2020	17/09/2020	63
22148xxxx	ST (Fiji)	16/07/2020	17/09/2020	63

TIN Number	Business Names Initials	Date received by Assessors	Date Loan Approved	No. of days taken
23176xxxx	PWI	16/07/2020	02/10/2020	78
20229xxxx	VFF	16/07/2020	01/09/2020	47
13541xxxx	CT	16/07/2020	01/09/2020	47
01093xxxx	AC	16/07/2020	01/09/2020	47
19192xxxx	VSC	16/07/2020	01/09/2020	47
20218xxxx	TE	16/07/2020	01/09/2020	47
14731xxxx	NK	16/07/2020	17/09/2020	63
03526xxxx	LCC	16/07/2020	15/09/2020	61
12251xxxx	RI	16/07/2020	01/09/2020	47
20266xxxx	MHWR	16/07/2020	15/09/2020	61
08062xxxx	NJ&FW	16/07/2020	17/09/2020	63
23093xxxx	RVI	16/07/2020	15/09/2020	61
19783xxxx	VM&BT	16/07/2020	15/09/2020	61
20558xxxx	MBSI	16/07/2020	01/09/2020	47
02327xxxx	NM	16/07/2020	01/09/2020	47
20297xxxx	TE	16/07/2020	01/09/2020	47
18642xxxx	VC	16/07/2020	01/09/2020	47
20148xxxx	M&JRS	16/07/2020	01/09/2020	47
14749xxxx	JC	16/07/2020	01/09/2020	47
13305xxxx	VSC	16/07/2020	01/09/2020	47
19371xxxx	JS	16/07/2020	01/09/2020	47
03256xxxx	PCF&G	16/07/2020	01/09/2020	47
11278xxxx	AF	16/07/2020	01/09/2020	47
13390xxxx	MMM	16/07/2020	01/09/2020	47
20488xxxx	FTI	16/07/2020	01/09/2020	47

TIN Number	Business Names Initials	Date received by Assessors	Date Loan Approved	No. of days taken
18333xxxx	SK	16/07/2020	01/09/2020	47
02486xxxx	TBT	16/07/2020	01/09/2020	47
03357xxxx	ECRS	16/07/2020	17/09/2020	63
11590xxxx	MM&BS	16/07/2020	17/09/2020	63
19188xxxx	STE	16/07/2020	17/09/2020	63
19866xxxx	SSP	16/07/2020	17/09/2020	63
12089xxxx	ALC	16/07/2020	17/09/2020	63
22413xxxx	TVRS	16/07/2020	17/09/2020	63
18339xxxx	VKI	16/07/2020	30/08/2020	45
02116xxxx	JGS	16/07/2020	17/09/2020	63
22143xxxx	KC	16/07/2020	17/09/2020	63
13432xxxx	ELS	16/07/2020	17/09/2020	63
02179xxxx	JBI	16/07/2020	17/09/2020	63
20097xxxx	ECB	16/07/2020	17/09/2020	63
13451xxxx	MPI	16/07/2020	17/09/2020	63
14184xxxx	LI	16/07/2020	17/09/2020	63
14811xxxx	NC	16/07/2020	01/09/2020	47
18702xxxx	RI	16/07/2020	17/09/2020	63
12313xxxx	MI	16/07/2020	17/09/2020	63
11289xxxx	MK	16/07/2020	01/09/2020	47
13445xxxx	SK	16/07/2020	17/09/2020	63
11747xxxx	GBC	16/07/2020	17/09/2020	63
13350xxxx	SMSR	16/07/2020	01/09/2020	47
18454xxxx	RI	16/07/2020	17/09/2020	63
11482xxxx	SKC	16/07/2020	22/09/2020	68

TIN Number	Business Names Initials	Date received by Assessors	Date Loan Approved	No. of days taken
19530xxxx	ACS	16/07/2020	22/09/2020	68
11301xxxx	DKB	16/07/2020	22/09/2020	68
14432xxxx	SBC	16/07/2020	22/09/2020	68
01062xxxx	AI&SS	16/07/2020	22/09/2020	68
14346xxxx	SKC	16/07/2020	22/09/2020	68
16317xxxx	PDS	16/07/2020	22/09/2020	68
19525xxxx	RJJC&M	16/07/2020	22/09/2020	68
20635xxxx	ATI	16/07/2020	22/09/2020	68
19418xxxx	RES (Fiji)	16/07/2020	22/09/2020	68
16455xxxx	JPI	16/07/2020	22/09/2020	68
20033xxxx	CI	16/07/2020	22/09/2020	68
22213xxxx	KO	16/07/2020	22/09/2020	68
15009xxxx	FD	16/07/2020	22/09/2020	68
20382xxxx	EF	16/07/2020	22/09/2020	68
23023xxxx	WDW	16/07/2020	22/09/2020	68
22313xxxx	VI	16/07/2020	22/09/2020	68
19661xxxx	SC	16/07/2020	22/09/2020	68
18343xxxx	RI	16/07/2020	25/09/2020	71
11688xxxx	PMK	16/07/2020	25/09/2020	71
21017xxxx	MLT	16/07/2020	22/09/2020	68
11990xxxx	NM	16/07/2020	22/09/2020	68
11531xxxx	JKD	16/07/2020	22/09/2020	68
16419xxxx	TK	16/07/2020	22/09/2020	68
14711xxxx	NC	16/07/2020	22/09/2020	68
20224xxxx	SHS	16/07/2020	22/09/2020	68

TIN Number	Business Names Initials	Date received by Assessors	Date Loan Approved	No. of days taken
18759xxxx	UDF	16/07/2020	22/09/2020	68
13240xxxx	MF	16/07/2020	22/09/2020	68
17049xxxx	KC	16/07/2020	22/09/2020	68
22101xxxx	ET	16/07/2020	22/09/2020	68
Assessor 3				
12149xxxx	JS	26/06/2020	30/07/2020	34
16231xxxx	BDS	26/06/2020	11/09/2020	77
03318xxxx	IH&BS	26/06/2020	30/07/2020	34
14471xxxx	ST	26/06/2020	19/08/2020	54
22156xxxx	VNIF	26/06/2020	30/07/2020	34
12121xxxx	SS	26/06/2020	11/09/2020	77
16197xxxx	JLSC	26/06/2020	09/09/2020	75
12307xxxx	KTC	26/06/2020	19/08/2020	54
19964xxxx	TM	26/06/2020	17/08/2020	52
19425xxxx	BFHC	26/06/2020	04/08/2020	39
16257xxxx	VTF	26/06/2020	04/08/2020	39
20552xxxx	NF	26/06/2020	30/07/2020	34
4354xxxx	SI	26/06/2020	19/08/2020	54
11666xxxx	KFF	26/06/2020	12/08/2020	47
19579xxxx	HBF&T	26/06/2020	12/08/2020	47
20337xxxx	MSC	26/06/2020	25/08/2020	60
23090xxxx	WV	26/06/2020	11/09/2020	77
14918xxxx	NFFF	26/06/2020	17/08/2020	52
18496xxxx	RI	26/06/2020	30/07/2020	34
14050xxxx	HI	26/06/2020	30/07/2020	34

TIN Number	Business Names Initials	Date received by Assessors	Date Loan Approved	No. of days taken
14758xxxx	LSH	26/06/2020	30/07/2020	34
02199xxxx	BVS	26/06/2020	01/09/2020	67
03213xxxx	LKS	26/06/2020	02/09/2020	68
04170xxxx	PVD	26/06/2020	19/08/2020	54
18429xxxx	DES	26/06/2020	30/07/2020	34
12122xxxx	SB	26/06/2020	30/07/2020	34
14775xxxx	RSS	26/06/2020	30/07/2020	34
14521xxxx	KNE	26/06/2020	11/09/2020	77
19824xxxx	TK	26/06/2020	30/07/2020	34
19193xxxx	TSS	26/06/2020	06/08/2020	41
11175xxxx	SEW	26/06/2020	30/07/2020	34
50176xxxx	NLATBFB	26/06/2020	01/09/2020	67
18400xxxx	USC	26/06/2020	11/09/2020	77
13263xxxx	SMS	26/06/2020	03/09/2020	69
12331xxxx	MAE	26/06/2020	21/09/2020	87
12240xxxx	KOS	26/06/2020	25/08/2020	60
12243xxxx	LTS	26/06/2020	21/09/2020	87
13062xxxx	MNCS	26/06/2020	25/08/2020	60
13324xxxx	AI	26/06/2020	25/08/2020	60
21020xxxx	UI	26/06/2020	25/08/2020	60
25034xxxx	WI	26/06/2020	06/08/2020	41
22485xxxx	VC	26/06/2020	06/08/2020	41
22186xxxx	RB	26/06/2020	06/08/2020	41
17029xxxx	QI	26/06/2020	11/09/2020	77
16489xxxx	IE	26/06/2020	06/08/2020	41

TIN Number	Business Names Initials	Date received by Assessors	Date Loan Approved	No. of days taken
16514xxxx	PRS&SR	26/06/2020	06/08/2020	41
12509xxxx	ASRS	26/06/2020	06/08/2020	41
13228xxxx	FFFI	26/06/2020	19/08/2020	54
18658xxxx	RC	26/06/2020	21/09/2020	87
14318xxxx	NCD	26/06/2020	12/08/2020	47
16259xxxx	ERC	26/06/2020	12/08/2020	47
Assessors 1 and 5				
13158xxxx	MIL	14/08/2020	30/08/2020	16
50580xxxx	EHPL	14/08/2020	30/08/2020	16
03151xxxx	PSC	14/08/2020	03/09/2020	20
50175xxxx	RE&TSL	14/08/2020	03/09/2020	20
04164xxxx	FC	14/08/2020	29/08/2020	15
11153xxxx	KE	14/08/2020	31/08/2020	17
02295xxxx	SSFD	14/08/2020	31/08/2020	17
01098xxxx	VR	14/08/2020	31/08/2020	17
19253xxxx	IOS	14/08/2020	29/08/2020	15
50345xxxx	KRPL	14/08/2020	30/08/2020	16
80008xxxx	BCL	14/08/2020	30/08/2020	16
21014xxxx	TMM&TTUT	14/08/2020	29/08/2020	15
14347xxxx	AT	14/08/2020	30/08/2020	16
50582xxxx	MDPL	14/08/2020	03/09/2020	20
50574xxxx	TB&WPL	14/08/2020	01/09/2020	18
14265xxxx	PLS	14/08/2020	01/09/2020	18
18325xxxx	BTS	14/08/2020	01/09/2020	18
22130xxxx	BFE	14/08/2020	29/08/2020	15

TIN Number	Business Names Initials	Date received by Assessors	Date Loan Approved	No. of days taken
13180xxxx	CSM &CAAS	14/08/2020	03/09/2020	20
16208xxxx	TE&T	14/08/2020	29/08/2020	15
21026xxxx	EI	14/08/2020	29/08/2020	15
01153xxxx	GRC	14/08/2020	29/08/2020	15
16286xxxx	HRC	14/08/2020	04/09/2020	21
16498xxxx	ICHF	14/08/2020	29/08/2020	15
19452xxxx	MC	14/08/2020	08/09/2020	25
03336xxxx	MFWF	14/08/2020	08/09/2020	25
30092xxxx	NSP	14/08/2020	09/09/2020	26
14961xxxx	NVK	14/08/2020	08/09/2020	25
11393xxxx	NE	14/08/2020	08/09/2020	25
16308xxxx	SES	14/08/2020	29/08/2020	15
50534xxxx	STL	14/08/2020	30/08/2020	16
20268xxxx	TI	14/08/2020	29/08/2020	15
18247xxxx	VRI	14/08/2020	29/08/2020	15
19476xxxx	KCVS	14/08/2020	29/08/2020	15
11267xxxx	PD	14/08/2020	29/08/2020	15
11221xxxx	KES	14/08/2020	08/09/2020	25
30095xxxx	FCR	14/08/2020	21/09/2020	38
11269xxxx	K.M&S	14/08/2020	27/08/2020	13
18418xxxx	RMGS & 8 PC	14/08/2020	27/08/2020	13
30614xxxx	SP	14/08/2020	27/08/2020	13
12362xxxx	NCS	14/08/2020	27/08/2020	13
14317xxxx	FF	14/08/2020	27/08/2020	13
22415xxxx	BF&T	14/08/2020	30/09/2020	47

Appendix 2.0: Details of Loan application forms that were not signed

TIN Number	Business Names	Amount Approved	Observations
12218xxxx	AC	\$7,000	Both the receiving and verifying officers did not sign off on the application form
11166xxxx	MB	\$7,000	Both the receiving and verifying officers did not sign off on the application form
03322xxxx	RC	\$7,000	Both the receiving and verifying officers did not sign off on the application form
03307xxxx	PF	\$7,000	Both the receiving and verifying officers did not sign off on the application form
03346xxxx	LV	\$7,000	Both the receiving and verifying officers did not sign off on the application form
11418xxxx	JMM	\$7,000	Both the receiving and verifying officers did not sign off on the application form
25022xxxx	YE	\$7,000	Verifying officers did not sign off on the application form
20460xxxx	VTH	\$7,000	Both the receiving and verifying officers did not sign off on the application form
18368xxxx	AHI	\$7,000	Both the receiving and verifying officers did not sign off on the application form
11931xxxx	CC (Fiji) PL	\$7,000	Both the receiving and verifying officers did not

TIN Number	Business Names	Amount Approved	Observations
			sign off on the application form
13134xxxx	PTLT&T	\$7,000	Verifying officers did not sign off on the application form
10041xxxx	RTP	\$7,000	Both the receiving and verifying officers did not sign off on the application form
14211xxxx	NES	\$7,000	Both the receiving and verifying officers did not sign off on the application form
22234xxxx	TFI	\$7,000	Verifying officers did not sign off on the application form
13548xxxx	FD	\$7,000	Both the receiving and verifying officers did not sign off on the application form
32596xxxx	LN	\$7,000	Verifying officers did not sign off on the application form
19093xxxx	CE	\$7,000	Verifying officers did not sign off on the application form
03287xxxx	TT	\$7,000	Verifying officers did not sign off on the application form
14318xxxx	NBHT & TPL	\$7,000	Both the receiving and verifying officers did not sign off on the application form
07075xxxx	WME	\$7,000	Verifying officers did not sign off on the application form
21041xxxx	TH	\$7,000	Both the receiving and verifying officers did not

TIN Number	Business Names	Amount Approved	Observations
			sign off on the application form
14644xxxx	WH	\$7,000	Both the receiving and verifying officers did not sign off on the application form
07070xxxx	NB	\$7,000	Both the receiving and verifying officers did not sign off on the application form
12557xxxx	WT	\$7,000	Both the receiving and verifying officers did not sign off on the application form
19530xxxx	KT	\$7,000	Both the receiving and verifying officers did not sign off on the application form
02198xxxx	ZSE&MS	\$7,000	Both the receiving and verifying officers did not sign off on the application form
22269xxxx	CD	\$7,000	Both the receiving and verifying officers did not sign off on the application form
14691xxxx	NH	\$7,000	Both the receiving and verifying officers did not sign off on the application form
18704xxxx	SB	\$7,000	Both the receiving and verifying officers did not sign off on the application form
30616xxxx	TDCC	\$7,000	Verifying officer did not sign off on the application form

TIN Number	Business Names	Amount Approved	Observations
50177xxxx	GTTPL	\$7,000	Verifying officer did not sign off on the application form

Appendix 3.0: Details of those Loan applications where the amount approved was higher than the amount recommended by the assessors and Assessment forms not signed by the assessors

Business TIN Number	Business Name	% Score	Amount Approved	Observations	Assessors Comments and Panels Decision
12300xxxx	NFFS	65%	\$ 7,000.00	Assessors did not sign on the assessment sheet (only initials) Assessors recommended approval of \$5,000 Amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000	Recommended for approval to purchase diving equipment \$3,500 and fish \$1,500 Panel approved and paid \$7,000
20067xxxx	TM&TT	71%	\$ 7,000.00	Assessors did not sign on the assessment sheet (only initials) Assessors recommended approval of \$5000 Amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000. FRCS data (08/10/2020) does not contain information on loan.	Public transportation such as taxis and minibus is always a necessity as the bus services cannot cater for the public alone. Also In some places, buses have a schedule and a time frame on which they service that area, therefore taxis and minibuses are important as they can operate at anytime as long as it is within the curfew hours Panel approved and paid \$7,000
16514xxxx	PRS&SR	76%	\$ 7,000.00	Assessment form is not signed by the 2nd assessor. Assessors recommended approval of \$5,250,	Loan is to purchase materials, self-employed and potential to employ 1 additional person. Good business case however has an existing loan of \$4,000.

Business TIN Number	Business Name	% Score	Amount Approved	Observations	Assessors Comments and Panels Decision
				Amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000.	Conditional approval Approved, subject to quotation
19564xxxx	SH	73%	\$ 7,000.00	Assessors recommended approval of \$6000. Amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000	Approved Panel approved and paid \$7,000
25032xxxx	SS	93%	\$ 7,000.00	Assessors recommended approval of \$5,000 Amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000	Approved Panel approved and paid \$7,000
23193xxxx	EB&HS	61%	\$ 7,000.00	Assessment Form is not signed by the two assessors. Bank account is not registered to the business name. Rather it is registered under Alanieta's name which should not be the case under a partnership business. Also, there was no Registration Confirmation letter from FRCS attached with the application to ascertain if the TIN number is registered to the business name. Assessors recommended approval of \$4,000,	Approved for purchase of equipment Panel approved and paid \$7,000

Business TIN Number	Business Name	% Score	Amount Approved	Observations	Assessors Comments and Panels Decision
				however, amount approved on MCTTT records \$7000.	
13484xxxx	ZU	68%	\$ 7,000.00	<p>Pre-operating 'Total Cash Inflows' is \$92,000, this shows that the turnover is more than \$50,000 and yet application is approved.</p> <p>Also, the assessment form is not signed by both the assessors.</p> <p>Assessors recommended approval of \$4,000 however amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000.</p>	<p>Packaging material for local market. Already on FDB Loan. Employs farmers indirectly</p> <p>Panel approved \$7000 subject to Ministry background check.</p>
33563xxxx	AM&T	63%	\$ 7,000.00	<p>The assessment form is not signed by the two assessors.</p> <p>Assessors recommended approval of \$4,000 in the assessment form, while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000.</p>	<p>Recommended for approval. Success factors include current customer retention & experience in that canteen/locality.</p> <p>Conditional approval by Panel.</p>
18340xxxx	BCS	61%	\$ 7,000.00	<p>The assessment form is not signed by the two assessors.</p> <p>Assessors recommended approval of \$3,000 in the assessment form, while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000.</p>	<p>Estimated \$3,000 funds could be approved for purchase of raw materials.</p> <p>Panel approved and paid \$7,000.</p>

Business TIN Number	Business Name	% Score	Amount Approved	Observations	Assessors Comments and Panels Decision
14758xxxx	LSH	68%	\$ 7,000.00	<p>Only one assessor signed the assessment form.</p> <p>Assessors recommended approval of \$3,000. "Approved \$7,000" written on the front page of the assessment form however there is no signature.</p>	<p>Applicant is in need of financial support to purchase two months supply of raw material and cost of sales. Approved \$3000 to assist the applicant.</p> <p>Panel approved and paid \$7,000</p>
16257xxxx	V(Fiji)	71%	\$ 7,000.00	<p>Only one assessor signed on the assessment form. Assessors recommended approval of \$5,000 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000.</p>	<p>Working capital is for purchase of materials and purchasing of equipment for producing products. No current loan. Products is specialised in handicraft products. No formal training but trained by his Grandfather for carving and designing etc.</p> <p>Panel approved and paid \$7,000</p>
10047xxxx	JT	76%	\$ 7,000.00	<p>Assessors recommended approval of \$3,500 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000</p>	<p>Approved</p> <p>Panel approved and paid \$7,000</p>
12263xxxx	MH	61%	\$ 7,000.00	<p>Assessors recommended approval of \$2,500 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000.</p>	<p>Approved</p> <p>Panel approved and paid \$7,000</p>

Business TIN Number	Business Name	% Score	Amount Approved	Observations	Assessors Comments and Panels Decision
12416xxxx	SC	67%	\$ 7,000.00	Assessors recommended approval of \$3,000 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000	Approved subject to quotation Panel approved and paid \$7000
12572xxxx	WH	67%	\$ 7,000.00	Only one assessor signed Assessors recommended approval of \$5,000 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000	Loan approved Panel approved and paid \$7,000
11090xxxx	APT	79%	\$ 7,000.00	Only one assessor signed the assessment form. Assessors recommended approval of \$5,000 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000. There is no signature of the assessor, only the name is typed and printed.	This applicant has genuinely shown interested the doing business. Has shown business plans and financials very clearly and it is effective Conditional approval Panel Approved and paid \$7,000, subject to quotation
11931xxxx	CC (Fiji) PL	68%	\$ 7,000.00	Only one assessor signed the assessment form. Assessors recommended approval of \$4,760 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000	Has the potential to create employment but no number indicated. It will contribute to the economy since materials will be purchased locally. Conditional approval

Business TIN Number	Business Name	% Score	Amount Approved	Observations	Assessors Comments and Panels Decision
					Panel Approved and paid \$7,000, subject to quotation.
22234xxxx	TFI	81%	\$ 7,000.00	One of the assessor has not signed Assessors recommended approval of \$5,691 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000	Applicant has business expansion including job creation in the future. Local supplier to be used injection of funds with local economy. Panel approved and paid \$7,000
22186xxxx	RB	67%	\$ 7,000.00	Assessors recommended approval of \$4,666.67 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000	Loan requested to purchase various asset. Ability to create 1 employment position per application. The business will serve the community. Business case well presented. Panel approved and paid \$7,000
12509xxxx	ASRS	68%	\$ 7,000.00	Assessors recommended approval of \$4,760 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000	Loan to purchase materials. Self-employed and generate business for wholesalers and serving the Community. No training but has been in in trade for 10years. Conditional approval Approved and paid \$7,000, subject to quotation

Business TIN Number	Business Name	% Score	Amount Approved	Observations	Assessors Comments and Panels Decision
11558xxxx	VT	61%	\$ 7,000.00	Assessors recommended approval of \$3,000 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000 Only 1 assessor signed off on the form.	Approved to purchase materials Panel approved and paid \$7,000
19867xxxx	SH	60%	\$ 7,000.00	Only 1 assessor signed off on the assessment form. Assessors recommended approval of \$3,000 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000	Approved for \$3,000. Diversifying into selling fish. Panel approved and paid \$7,000
50521xxxx	JWCL	61%	\$ 7,000.00	Assessor did the assessment on the soft copy and did not sign off on the assessment form. Assessors recommended approval of \$4,000 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000	I believe that this business would greatly benefit from the grant as it will create a few more job opportunities for the community. Their work involves cutting of grass, cleaning of drains, collecting rubbish etc which helps keep the Nausori Town clean as well as prevent diseases and sickness which arise from polluted environment Conditional approval Approved and paid \$7000, subject to quotations.

Business TIN Number	Business Name	% Score	Amount Approved	Observations	Assessors Comments and Panels Decision
18520xxxx	ASC&P	29%	\$ 7,000.00	<p>No assessor signature. Only one assessors name written. Amount approved by assessors not on marking sheet</p> <p>Verifying officer did not sign off on the application forms.</p> <p>No Business Registration Certificate attached</p> <p>FRCS data (08/10/2020) does not contain information on loan.</p>	<p>Applicant has lost job. Letter attached. Has not filled in the Financial plan</p> <p>Panel approved and paid \$7,000</p>
14318xxxx	NBHT&TPL	77%	\$ 7,000.00	<p>Assessors recommended approval of \$5,411 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000.</p> <p>Only one assessor signed off the forms</p> <p>Receiving office and verifying officer did not sign off on the form as it is blank.</p>	<p>Business will have the ability to employ 20 people. The set up of a car wash will benefit the people of Sanasana village. New business is based on the applicant current business line and will be dependent on Covid 19. The setup of a car wash business will supplement any income loss.</p> <p>Conditional approval, paid \$7,000.</p> <p>Seek clarification on the loan utilization (interview)</p>
22192xxxx	VH	85%	\$ 7,000.00	<p>Scored 64 of 75 Assessors recommended approval of \$5,000 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000</p>	<p>Approved</p>

Business TIN Number	Business Name	% Score	Amount Approved	Observations	Assessors Comments and Panels Decision
				Receiving and verifying officer did not sign off on the application form	Panel approved and paid \$7,000
16268xxxx	VBM	62%	\$ 7,000.00	Assessor recommended loan amount of \$3,000, however, as per approved list, its noted that \$7,000 was approved. Further comments noted that amount approved will depend on quotation.	Loan approved Conditional approval, Subject to list of items (quotations) & confirmation of location
19337xxxx	WE	80%	\$ 7,000.00	Assessors recommended approval of \$5,000 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000. Further comments noted that quotations needed before disbursement. Receiving officer and verifying officer did not sign off on the application forms	Approved Panel approved and paid \$7,000
16397xxxx	THC	71%	\$ 7,000.00	No assessors signature, only initials Assessors recommended approval of \$5,000 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000 FRCS data (08/10/2020) does not contain information on loan.	Whilst Financial statement is not provided in the application to ascertain growth over the 3 year period, cash flow for 1 year period provides sufficient comfort with regards to expected income and surplus, the Business plan provides comfort around sustainability and growth in the area.

Business TIN Number	Business Name	% Score	Amount Approved	Observations	Assessors Comments and Panels Decision
					Conditional approval. Panel approved and paid \$7,000 subject to current employment status.
19996xxxx	NC	75%	\$ 7,000.00	Assessors recommended approval of \$4,860 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000. FRCS data (08/10/2020) does not contain information on loan.	Approved Panel approved and paid \$7,000
11731xxxx	ST	75%	\$ 7,000.00	Only one assessor has signed. Assessors recommended approval of \$4,000 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000 FRCS data (08/10/2020) does not contain information on loan.	Loan approved Panel approved and paid \$7,000
19655xxxx	CR	69%	\$ 7,000.00	Assessors recommended approval of \$6,000 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000	Approved Panel approved and paid \$7,000
18504xxxx	RC	61%	\$ 7,000.00	No business registration certificate No TIN letter Assessors did not sign on assessment form Assessors recommended approval of \$4,000 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000 Audit noted that the Mirco Business Assessment Form	Approved

Business TIN Number	Business Name	% Score	Amount Approved	Observations	Assessors Comments and Panels Decision
				was not attached with the application. Therefore, checks 1 and 4 could not be ascertained by the audit. Also, the proper registration certificate was not attached with the application, rather an invoice from the Fiji Registrar of Companies was attached confirming that the business name has been registered.	Panel approved and paid \$7000
11289xxxx	MK	63%	\$ 7,000.00	Assessment form (amount approved section) not completed and no signatures	Accepted Panel approved and paid \$7,000
20520xxxx	TD	61%	\$ 7,000.00	Assessment form is not signed by the two assessors. Assessors recommended approval of \$3,000 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000.	Unique business. Needs funds to buy wood chipper. Recommended. Panel approved and paid \$7,000
25022xxxx	YE	72%	\$ 7,000.00	Assessment form is not signed by the two assessors. Assessors recommended approval of \$5000 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7000	Recommended. Carries out survey works. Needs assistance to buy equipment and tablet. Panel approved and paid \$7000
13427xxxx	LC	61%	\$ 7,000.00	Assessment form is not signed by both the assessors.	Recommended. Existing business. Quotation provided.

Business TIN Number	Business Name	% Score	Amount Approved	Observations	Assessors Comments and Panels Decision
				Assessors recommended approval of \$4,000 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000	Panel approved and paid \$7,000
18401xxxx	TCH	57%	\$ 7,000.00	<p>Assessment form is not signed off by one of the assessors.</p> <p>Also, in the assessment form it is noted that the loan was not approved because it did not meet the minimum qualified points. However, in this database the amount of \$7,000 is approved.</p>	<p>Working capital request or business plan is too generic. As per business plan, it will create employment opportunities only during peak seasons. The business will contribute to the economy through consumer spending and creation of employment opportunities during peak seasons. The applicant's loan request for \$7,000.00 does not meet the minimum qualified points.</p> <p>Panel approved and paid \$7,000</p>
3390xxxx	CMT	60%	\$ 7,000.00	<p>Only one assessor signed on the assessment form.</p> <p>Assessors recommended approval of \$5,000 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000.</p>	<p>An experienced therapist. Keen on opening her own business. Recommended.</p> <p>Approved by panel and paid \$7,000</p>

Business TIN Number	Business Name	% Score	Amount Approved	Observations	Assessors Comments and Panels Decision
14471xxxx	ST	29%	\$ 7,000.00	Only scored 22/75 and stated the loan amount approved on assessment form was \$0 Only one assessor signed on the assessment form.	Working capital of \$7,000.00 requested. There is no possible creation of employment. Not sustainable. Approved by panel and paid \$7,000
12307xxxx	KTC	68%	\$ 7,000.00	Only one assessor signed on the assessment form. Assessors recommended approval of \$4000 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000.	\$4,000.00 will be sufficient to cover the cost of machines and the as the confirmed balance. Approved by panel and paid \$7,000
18006xxxx	RT	65%	\$ 7,000.00	Only one assessor signed on the assessment form. Assessors recommended approval of \$5,000 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000	Working capital request for sewing machine. Intends to create employment for two. Contribute to economy through taxes and contribute to society. Based on information given recommend a loan of \$5,000.00 as she has the skills and knowledge to do this business. Approved by panel and paid \$7,000
19695xxxx	KH	68%	\$ 7,000.00	Assessors recommended approval of \$6000 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000.	Approved Approved by Panel and paid \$7,000

Business TIN Number	Business Name	% Score	Amount Approved	Observations	Assessors Comments and Panels Decision
13329xxxx	GBF	67%	\$ 7,000.00	Assessor's additional comments states that "Recommend a loan approval of \$6,000 "and "Loan to be used for purchase of industrial sewing machine (quotation needed)" In the Loan Amount Approved: "To depend on sewing machine and \$2,000 for pot planting equipment."	Loan approved Approved by Panel and paid \$7,000
13134xxxx	PTLT&T	63%	\$ 7,000.00	Assessment form is not signed by the second assessor. Assessors recommended approval of \$4,389 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000	Working capital of \$7,000 requested. Nature of business to determine if loan can be approved. Need to loan is not critical. Loan amount is based on points percentage. Approved by Panel and paid \$7,000
18632xxxx	DBS	71%	\$ 7,000.00	Assessors recommended approval of \$5,000 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000	Loan approved Approved by Panel and paid \$7,000
13338xxxx	MC	83%	\$ 7,000.00	Assessors recommended approval of \$3,500 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000	Approved Approved by Panel and paid \$7,000
01133xxxx	AES	83%	\$ 7,000.00	Assessors recommended approval of \$5,000 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000	Recommended for approval of \$5,000

Business TIN Number	Business Name	% Score	Amount Approved	Observations	Assessors Comments and Panels Decision
				Assessor did not sign on the assessment sheet and only one assessor stated his name. Assessment was done on the soft copy.	List of working capital requirements. Approved by Panel and paid \$7,000
04465xxxx	DE	65%	\$ 7,000.00	Assessors recommended approval of \$4,000 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000 Assessor did assessment on soft copy and assessment form is not signed off at all by the assessors.	Recommended. Existing business needs support for stock. Quotations provided. Approved by Panel and paid \$7,000
2233xxxx	EVFG&K	64%	\$ 7,000.00	Assessors recommended approval of \$4,000 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000. Assessor did assessment on soft copy and assessment form is not signed off at all by the assessors.	Recommended. To purchase freezers and materials. Quotation provided. Approved by Panel and paid \$7,000
30615xxxx	Jl	59%	\$ 7,000.00	No assessor signature, only one of the assessors name. Amount approved shows NIL (Declined). Application declined, business is a Small business but applying as micro, No bank statement, tax compliance or FNPF complinace letter.	Approved Approved by Panel and paid \$7,000
19540xxxx		55%	\$ 7,000.00	Assessor scores was only 41 out of 75 and NIL amount recommended by the assessor. Decision changed by assessor 2 however no justification provided.	Approved

Business TIN Number	Business Name	% Score	Amount Approved	Observations	Assessors Comments and Panels Decision
					Approved by Panel and paid \$7,000
20557xxxx	TE	57%	\$ 7,000.00	No assessment sheet attached Loan requested amount \$3,704, however \$7,000 was paid	Application is declined however further probing required - example market vending license should application is late considered for approval. Sales figures seem a bit over stated against the nature of business and its operation - There are no evidence of existing experience in the line of business. Applicant has failed to indicate how COVID-19 has impacted this line of business. Proposal seems to be a good line of business with future success however need to address the above issues more thoroughly (Upon Review -above 50%- recommend proceed) Approved by Panel and paid \$7,000
07075xxxx	WME	77%	\$ 7,000.00	Assessors recommended approval of \$5,411 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000 Only one assessor signed off on the assessment form FRCS data (08/10/2020)	Working capital of \$7,000 requested. Retention of employment x3. Continued business in providing information to schools and universities. Loan amount is based on point's percentage.

Business TIN Number	Business Name	% Score	Amount Approved	Observations	Assessors Comments and Panels Decision
				does not contain information on loan.	Was approved by panel on the 3rd sept. Quotation
03256xxxx	KH	67%	\$ 7,000.00	Assessors recommended approval of \$5,000 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000	For purchase of materials from the village/ island which are ready-made. Applicant also wanted equipment to build products. Creation of jobs for people creating handicraft. Contribute to economy by increasing productivity of people in the islands and people in the business to be employed to create crafts. Even though handicraft business is at a standstill, the business was good for the applicant. The applicant wants to create his own handicraft and has the skills to do so. He assumes that the business will be as usual from 2021. However, the intention is good but some figures of sales are overstated and need adjustment for COVID19. No estimates or quotations have been provided by applicant. Thus assumed amount of \$5,000.00 for loan seems appropriate keeping in mind that

Business TIN Number	Business Name	% Score	Amount Approved	Observations	Assessors Comments and Panels Decision
					<p>the applicant has enough money in his bank account.</p> <p>Approved by Panel and paid \$7,000. Quotations from applicant</p>
02657xxxx	ECD	61%	\$ 7,000.00	<p>Only 1 assessor signed off on the assessment form.</p> <p>Assessors recommended approval of \$4,270 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000</p>	<p>Full capital required. Intends to create employment and contribute to economy. Business case as per guideline.</p> <p>Approved by Panel and paid \$7,000. Quotations from applicant</p>
07070xxxx	NB	65%	\$ 7,000.00	<p>Assessors recommended approval of \$1,500 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000</p> <p>Both receiving and verifying officer did not sign off on the application forms</p>	<p>Weak Cash flow & Profit loss</p> <p>Approved by Panel and paid \$7,000. Subject to quotations for boutique business</p>
19530xxxx	KT	79%	\$ 7,000.00	<p>Assessors recommended approval of \$6,140.15 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000</p> <p>Receiving and verifying officer did not sign off on the application forms</p>	<p>Approved by Panel and paid \$7,000. Quotations from applicant</p>

Business TIN Number	Business Name	% Score	Amount Approved	Observations	Assessors Comments and Panels Decision
18745xxxx	HSC	83%	\$ 7,000.00	Applicant only requested \$2,000 however, assessors recommended approval of \$4,000 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000	Approved Approved by Panel and paid \$7,000
04155xxxx	SBS	71%	\$ 7,000.00	Assessors recommended approval of \$5,000 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000 The applicant had a score of 41 only which was below the qualified points of 45 out of 75, yet the loan was approved	Approved Approved by Panel and paid \$7,000
19513xxxx	SKS	76%	\$ 7,000.00	Assessors recommended approval of \$5,000 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000	Approved Approved by Panel and paid \$7,000
14212xxxx	BC	71%	\$ 7,000.00	The applicant did not state the loan amount requested, however the assessor approved \$7,000. Both assessors signed off on the form, 1st assessor recommended \$4,500 based on quotations provided but 2nd assessor approved \$7,000.	Approved Approved by Panel and paid \$7,000
13247xxxx	LTFS	65%	\$ 7,000.00	No Assessor signature. One of the assessors name shows FCEF. Assessors recommended approval of \$4,000 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000 FRCS data (08/10/2020)	Business needs assistance to grow its business. Buy stock and equipment's for food business. Existing micro business in Nadi

Business TIN Number	Business Name	% Score	Amount Approved	Observations	Assessors Comments and Panels Decision
				does not contain information on loan.	Quotations from applicant
13438xxxx	MCB&C	79%	\$ 7,000.00	Assessors recommended approval of \$4,000 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000 No assessor signed, only one assessors name mentioned. FRCS data (08/10/2020) does not contain information on loan.	Loan is approved for \$7,000 as it benefits both the business owner and the community
12480xxxx	VE	73%	\$ 7,000.00	Only one assessor has signed Assessors recommended approval of \$3,500 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000 FRCS data (08/10/2020) does not contain information on loan.	There is retention and creation of employment in Lajonia Applicant to provide quotation for items. Funds to be disbursed according to funds quoted. Applicant to attain training in financial management, financial literacy and entrepreneurship.
22176xxxx	FVI	64%	\$ 7,000.00	Pre- operating cash flow \$64,105 No assessor signed on the marking sheet Assessors recommended approval of \$4,480 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000 FRCS data (08/10/2020) does not contain information on loan.	Working capital requests, has an existing loan of \$5,1284. Should be under small category - High Liabilities Quotations from applicant
14357xxxx	MHR	93%	\$ 7,000.00	Assessors recommended approval of \$3,000 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000 FRCS data (08/10/2020)	Approved

Business TIN Number	Business Name	% Score	Amount Approved	Observations	Assessors Comments and Panels Decision
				does not contain information on loan.	List of working capital requirements and quotations
22551xxxx	WC	84%	\$ 7,000.00	Assessors recommended approval of \$4,000 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000	Approved Approved by Panel and paid \$7,000
12381xxxx	HS	76%	\$ 7,000.00	Both assessor has signed but one of the signatures has another signature on top of the previous Assessors recommended approval of \$3,500 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000	Approved Approved by Panel and paid \$7,000
11409xxxx	GAR	73%	\$ 7,000.00	Assessors recommended approval of \$2,450 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000. FRCS data (08/10/2020) does not contain information on loan.	Loan approved Quotations from applicant
19894xxxx	ASB	77%	\$ 7,000.00	Assessors recommended approval of \$4,500 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000	Approved
22354xxxx	MVE	64%	\$ 7,000.00	Assessment form not signed by the 2nd assessor. Assessors recommended approval of \$4,480 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000	Approved by Panel and paid \$7,000
02147xxxx	LKS	61%	\$ 7,000.00	Assessors recommended approval of \$4,000 while	Approved

Business TIN Number	Business Name	% Score	Amount Approved	Observations	Assessors Comments and Panels Decision
				amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000 FRCS data (08/10/2020) does not contain information on loan.	
22394xxxx	VRS	Purchase solar system and freezer	\$ 7,000.00	No assessor signature, FCEF written on one the assessors signature. Assessors recommended approval of \$5,000 while amount approved on MCTTT records \$7,000 Proper business registration was not attached	Recommended. Business in existence. Need to buy solar system and freezer. Quotation provided Approved by Panel and paid \$7,000

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