



STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL AFFAIRS

REVIEW OF MINISTRY OF YOUTH AND SPORTS 2016 – 2017 ANNUAL REPORT



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAIRPERSON’S FOREWORD	4
LIST OF ACRONYMS	5
RECOMMENDATION	6
INTRODUCTION	6
Committee Members	6
ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MINISTRY OF YOUTH AND SPORTS	7
ISSUES RAISED	7
Increase in Youth Mobility (Rural-Urban drift)	7
Recommendations.....	7
Lack of Capital and Human Resources Capacity within the Ministry	8
Recommendation.....	8
Bureaucratic Processes	8
Recommendation.....	8
Changes in Competing Youth Issues	8-9
Recommendation.....	9
Data Capturing Platform	9
Recommendation	9
Need for Greater Awareness and Implementing of Sports Policies	9-10
Recommendations	10
Life after Sport	10
Recommendation	10
COMMITTEE SITE VISITS TO THE NAQERE AND VALELEVU YOUTH TRAINING CENTRES.....	11

Naqere Youth Training Centre.....	11
Background.....	11
Key Findings from the Site Visit.....	11-12
Committee Recommendations.....	12
Valelevu Youth Training Centre.....	12
Background.....	12
Key Findings from the Site Visit.....	13
Committee Recommendations.....	13
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS	14-15
GENDER ANALYSIS	15
CONCLUSION.....	16
COMMITTEE MEMBERS' SIGNATURE.....	17
APPENDICES	
Witnesses	18
Published Written Evidence	19

CHAIRPERSON'S FOREWORD

I am pleased to present the report of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs on the annual review of the Ministry of Youth and Sports for the period August 2016 to July 2017.

In accordance with its established Annual Report review process, the Committee examines Annual Reports of agencies, in order to investigate, inquire into, and make recommendations relating to the agencies' administration, legislative or proposed legislative programme, budget, functions, organisational structure and policy formulation. As part of this process, the Committee conducted public hearings to gather additional information.

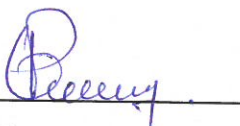
The process has proven to be an effective means of gauging its progress and maintaining a high level of scrutiny of the agencies under review.

This review was made and was done in accordance with Standing Order 109(2)(b) which mandates the committee to look into issues related to health, education, social services, labour, culture and media.

The review looked at nine key areas covering the period from August 2016 to July 2017, conducted into: The Ministry's administration; structure; budgetary allocation; programmes offered; policies; challenges; highlights; priorities for the coming years; and its implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

I thank the Permanent Secretary for Youth and Sports, Mr. Maritino Nemani, and his staff for their assistance in this inquiry. I also extend my gratitude to my Committee colleagues and Committee staff for their contributions and support.

I, on behalf of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs, commend this report to Parliament.



Hon. Viam Pillay
Chairperson

LIST OF ACRONYMS

FNSC	-	Fiji National Sports Commission
FNU	-	Fiji National University
FSC	-	Fiji Sports Council
IT	-	Information Technology
MOU	-	Memorandum of Understanding
MYS	-	Ministry of Youth and Sports
NSOs	-	National Sporting Organisations

RECOMMENDATION:

The Standing Committee on Social Affairs has conducted a review of the Annual Report of the Ministry of Youth and Sports for 2016 - 2017 and recommends that Parliament takes note of its report.

INTRODUCTION

The 2016 - 2017 Annual Report of the Ministry of Youth and Sports was tabled in Parliament during the February 2019 meeting and referred to the Standing Committee on Social Affairs, for its scrutiny.

Standing Orders 109(2)(b) allows the Standing Committee on Social Affairs to examine matters related to health, education, social services, labour, culture and media.

Standing Orders 110(1)(c) authorises the Standing Committee to *scrutinise the government departments with responsibility within the committee's subject area, including by investigating, inquiring into, and making recommendations relating to any aspect of such a department's administration, legislation or proposed legislative program, budget, rationalisation, restructuring, functioning, organisation, structure and policy formulation.*

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The substantive members of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs are:

- Hon. Viam Pillay (Chairperson)
- Hon. George Vegnathan (Deputy Chairperson)
- Hon. Alipate Nagata (Member)
- Hon. Salote Radrodro (Member)
- Hon. Dr Ratu Atonio Lalabalavu (Member)

During the Standing Committee's meetings, the following alternate membership arose pursuant to Standing Order 115(5):

- Hon. Simione Rasova
- Hon. Mikaele Leawere

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MINISTRY OF YOUTH AND SPORTS

The Ministry of Youth and Sports' core responsibilities are to establish a policy environment that provides strategic support systems, initiatives for personal development, character building, sports policy implementation and community based youth led programs.

There are two core programmes coordinated and facilitated by the Ministry of Youth and Sports:

Youth Development:

The programme centres on the provision of assistance to youth through advisory, empowerment and capacity building including specific skills training.

Sports Development:

The programme focuses on the development of sports and its infrastructure nationwide through the provision of grants to the Fiji National Sports Commission, National Sporting Organisations and the Fiji Sports Council as well as the provision of basic sports equipment and the development of rural playing fields.

ISSUES RAISED

INCREASE IN YOUTH MOBILITY (RURAL-URBAN DRIFT)

The Ministry has noted an increase in the number of young people moving out of rural areas to urban areas, looking for employment opportunities and a better lifestyle. As such, the Ministry is now slightly shifting its focus to ensure that there is more engagement with youth in the urban and peri-urban areas in order to address the issue of rural-urban drift.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Ministry continue to strengthen its network and broaden its cooperation with other Ministries such as the Ministry of Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations; Ministry of Agriculture; Rural and Maritime Development; Local Government; Housing and Environment; Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation; Health and Medical Services; Education, Heritage and Arts; iTaukei Affairs; Fisheries and Forests; and other stakeholders, in order to implement programmes that will help retain youth in rural and maritime areas.
2. That, in addition to the above, the Ministry should also aggressively increase awareness and its engagement with youth in terms of opportunities available to improve their lives in urban and peri-urban areas.

LACK OF CAPITAL AND HUMAN RESOURCE CAPACITY WITHIN THE MINISTRY

To strengthen its Human Resource capacity, the Ministry is currently undergoing restructure and internal staff are being reorganised and placed in the right positions. Furthermore, the Ministry has dedicated a significant amount of time to ensure the open merit recruitment and selection process is implemented across the Ministry in a consistent way so that the most meritorious candidates are selected to take up vacant posts.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Ministry strengthen its working relationship with the Ministry of Civil Service to ensure the successful implementation of the civil service reform strategies in Human Resource Development.
2. That the Ministry urgently fill all vacant positions.

BUREAUCRATIC PROCESSES

The committee notes that bureaucratic processes within the Ministry's external stakeholders has caused delays in the timely completion of its activities. This is due to the extended amount of time taken by external organisations to complete processes.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Ministry review its systems and processes to enable better coordination with its internal and external stakeholders to expedite processes for completion of its activities in a timely manner.

CHANGES IN COMPETING YOUTH ISSUES

The committee was made aware of the inevitable changes in competing youth issues such as, unemployment, crime, substance abuse, teenage pregnancies, sexual abuse, etc. To address these issues, the Ministry is looking at re-establishing the National Youth Council to replace the current National Youth Advisory Board as the voice of youth to the Ministry on youth issues.

Furthermore, the Ministry is strengthening its Monitoring and Evaluation platform and its collaboration with line Ministries, Non-Government Organisations and International agencies in light of the cross-cutting nature of youth issues.

In addition, the Ministry is implementing and facilitating youth development programmes across Fiji to address youth problems and challenges.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Ministry must engage in a “Whole of Government” approach to address pertinent issues affecting youth in Fiji.

DATA CAPTURING PLATFORM

The committee notes that the Ministry’s data capturing platform has not been well established. The Ministry informed that it will endeavour to complete the development of its database by 2019. The Ministry is also looking to employ a specialised data analyst who will be responsible for data analysis.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Ministry expedite all activities to ensure that its database is completed.

NEED FOR GREATER AWARENESS AND IMPLEMENTATION OF SPORTS POLICIES

There are two main policies that guide the work of the Ministry of Youth and Sports which are currently under review:

- National Youth Policy
- National Sports and Physical Activity Policy

Furthermore, the Ministry is currently developing the Anti-Doping Policy for which public consultations have been undertaken.

The committee is concerned with the low participation and poor response from National Sporting Organisations and other stakeholders in public consultations undertaken by the Ministry on the National Sports and Physical Activity Policy. It is essential that relevant Sporting Bodies’ views and inputs are considered prior to the finalisation of any sports policy and the Ministry should exert more effort in engaging as many stakeholders as possible. Furthermore, the committee recommends that extensive awareness should be carried out on the various sports policies and their impact on sporting bodies, coaches, sports officials, and other individuals. The committee

also has identified the implementation of sports policies, particularly the National Youth Policy, as an area that needs to be strengthened by the Ministry.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Ministry should communicate in writing and give timeframe to the Sporting Bodies to provide their views and submissions.
2. That extensive awareness should be carried out on the various sports policies and their impact on sporting bodies, coaches, sports officials, and other individuals.

LIFE AFTER SPORT

The committee notes from the Ministry's Strategic Plan 2018-2022 that services provided by its partners and stakeholders are often very linear. As such, the Ministry will need to build transitional pathways from one type of service or training to others so that youth are able to craft pathways to success even if they transition from one form to another. This is especially so for the transition from sports to life after sports. Furthermore, the Ministry should look into developing life-skills programs for athletes to prepare them for life after sport. It is also vital that athletes have the adequate support structures in place to help them to mentally and emotionally prepare for and navigate through this critical moment in their lives.

RECOMMENDATION

1. The committee recognises and is happy that the issues of life after sports is within the Ministry's Strategic Plan 2018-2022 but the committee recommends for wider consultations to be carried out with National Federations and current and former sportsmen and sportswomen.

COMMITTEE SITE VISITS TO THE NAQERE AND VALELEVU YOUTH TRAINING CENTRES

NAQERE YOUTH TRAINING CENTRE



BACKGROUND

The Naqere Youth Training Centre provides training in Carpentry to train youth in specific skills for sustainable livelihood development and self-employment. Currently, the training centre has 30 students with scope to increase student numbers in the coming years.

KEY FINDINGS

1. **Capital projects** – The Centre is currently undergoing capital project works with construction underway of new buildings for a gym on site, the learning and workshop centres for youth, dormitories upgrade, and kitchen/cafeteria for the youth and trainers.
2. **Accredited certificates provided upon completion of training** – Youth upon completion of eight months of training at the centre now receive certificates accredited by the Fiji Higher Education Commission which enables them to pursue further studies in technical colleges or at the FNU to build a career in carpentry.
3. **Need for more staff** – The committee noted that the centre is understaffed with only two staff available to teach and supervise students.

4. **Need for monitoring and evaluation of trainings and short courses** – The committee observed that monitoring and evaluation of trainings and short courses conducted at the centre was weak and is of the view that it should be strengthened. The training centre officials during the site visit informed members that monitoring exercises will be carried out in the fourth quarter of this year.
5. **Awareness** – The centre should increase awareness on its operations together with the trainings and short courses it provides to youth aged between 15-35 years in order to attract more youth to enrol and benefit from the work/life skills-related training programs offered.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Centre expand its programmes to include sports and leisure activities to attract and retain students.
2. That the Centre is adequately staffed.

VALELEVU YOUTH TRAINING CENTRE

BACKGROUND

The Valelevu Youth Training Centre or the National Youth Band Program was set up by the Ministry of Youth, Employment Opportunities and Sports in 1995 to provide a "second chance opportunity" to those students who have dropped out of the formal education system but have musical interests and talents. The aim of the program is to provide theoretical and practical training in music so that they can better their chances of finding employment in the music industry. Since its inception, the success rate of the program has been commendable with the majority of students who have graduated being able to find employment in the Fiji Military Forces Band, Fiji Police Force and Band, in the Fiji Corrections Services, Secondary Schools as Physical Education, Art & Craft and Music Teachers, in the British Army and in hotels and other tourist destinations around the country.

The main areas of study in the programme are:

- Musical Theories;
- Practical Musical applications;
- Physical Education and Sports;
- Culture and Customs; and
- Cultural entertainment.

KEY FINDINGS

1. **New Initiatives of the Valelevu Youth Training Centre** – The centre is looking to strengthen its National Youth Band through the addition of 25 Bandsmen to the current five core brass band. In addition, the centre aims to offer new training programmes such as, Tour Guides, Language, Security Services, IT Computer & Business studies. The centre will also be inculcating sports development programme as a new initiative. Furthermore, the committee noted that centre is planning to have a school administrator to oversee the operations of the centre as currently it is looked after by the Ministry of Youth and Sports Central Division Manager.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Ministry of Youth and Sports should consider the option of replicating the Centre in the Western and Northern Divisions to ensure more youth engagement and participation.
2. That the Centre in collaboration with the Ministry should engage in robust marketing strategies.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The Ministry of Youth and Sports has four Strategic Goals in its Strategic Plan 2018-2022 which, together with their Outcomes, are aligned to the Sustainable Development Goals. This is depicted in the table below:

Strategic Goal	Desired Outcomes of Strategic Goal	Sustainable Development Goals
<u>Strategic Goal 1</u> Improve cohesion between the Youth Development and Sports roles of MYS	Refinement, development and optimization of MYS services, facilities and resource utilization, and collaboration to present a ubiquitous approach to youth development and sports to raise the standards of youth all over the nation in education, employment, entrepreneurship, engagement, leadership, and life-skills.	1: No Poverty 2: Zero Hunger 3: Good Health and wellbeing 4: Quality education 8: Decent work and Economic growth 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure 17: Partnerships to achieve the Goal
<u>Strategic Goal 2</u> Reinforce MYS initiatives to be the Ministry for all youth	Improve outreach to all youth, increase youth involvement in MYS initiatives and programmes, reduce unemployment and poverty, improve engagement with youth in all segments of life, and create positive social influences into the future.	1: No Poverty 2: Zero Hunger 3: Good Health and well being 8: Decent work and Economic growth 10: Reduced inequality 17: Partnerships to achieve the Goal
<u>Strategic Goal 3</u> Building pathways to success	MYS adopting a systematic approach in developing youth profiles, aligning client demographics with service parameters, generating pathways for success to support youth in not only gaining employment, but also helping them become successful entrepreneurs.	1: No Poverty 2: Zero Hunger 3: Good Health and well being 5: Gender Equality 8: Decent work and Economic growth 10: Reduced inequality 13: Climate Action 17: Partnerships to achieve the Goal

Strategic Goal 4 Reframing MYS infrastructure and services	A more efficient Ministry operationally, and better utilization of information by the Ministry and its partners in providing services to the youth more efficiently and effectively	4: Quality Education 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure 17: Partnerships to achieve the Goal
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GENDER ANALYSIS

Gender is a critical dimension to parliamentary scrutiny. Standing Order 110 (2) requires committees to consider gender equality and ensure that the impact on both men and women is explored in all matters.

The Committee notes that recruitment in the Ministry is carried out through the Open Merit Recruitment Process and both females and males are treated equally with respect to recruitment, hiring and promotion.

CONCLUSION

The Standing Committee on Social Affairs has fulfilled its mandate approved by Parliament which was to examine and review the 2016-2017 Annual Report of the Ministry of Youth and Sports.

The Ministry of Youth and Sports equips youth who are not enrolled in school or actively employed and who are aged between 15-35 with basic skills to empower them to find employment. In the 2016-2017 financial year, the Ministry continued offering skills training through its five Youth Training Centres around Fiji and through mobile training in villages and urban centres which was done in close cooperation with other relevant Ministries.

In the area of sports, the Ministry's focus was on developing rural sports fields and supporting National Sporting Organisations (NSOs) through skills and organisational development, often times through memorandum of understandings (MOUs) signed with other countries. The Ministry also continued supporting the work of the Fiji National Sports Commission (FNSC) and the Fiji Sports Council (FSC).

However, the committee is of the view that the Ministry should undertake more awareness and increase its engagement with youth to reduce rural-urban drift, strengthen its Human Resource capacity, better coordinate with internal and external stakeholders, and urgently complete the development of its database. Furthermore, it is crucial that the Ministry consult extensively with the National Sporting Organisations prior to formulation of sports policies, increase awareness on sports policies, and prioritise the implementation of all such policies.

The review was conducted in a very tactful and comprehensive manner. This has enabled the committee for Social Affairs to submit to Parliament a more reliable and a cohesive report.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS' SIGNATURE

We, the Members of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs, hereby agree with the contents of this report:



Hon. Viam Pillay
(Chairperson)



Hon. George Vignathan
(Deputy Chairperson)



Hon. Alipate Nagata
(Member)



Hon. Salote Radrodoro
(Member)



Hon. Dr Ratu Atonio Lalabalavu
(Member)

APPENDICES

Witnesses

The following witnesses gave evidence. Transcripts can be viewed on the Parliament website at the following link: <http://www.parliament.gov.fj/committees/standing-committee-on-social-affairs/>

Monday 18 March 2019

Ministry of Youth and Sports

Maritino Nemani, Permanent Secretary, **Abdul Rasheed**, Senior Accounts Officer, and **Philip Hereniko**, Senior Coordinator Knowledge Management.

Published written evidence

Written evidence was received from the Ministry of Youth and Sports and can be viewed on the Parliament website at the following link: <http://www.parliament.gov.fj/committees/standing-committee-on-social-affairs/>