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CHAIRPERSON’S FOREWORD

I am pleased to present the Standing Committee on Social Affairs review report of the Ministry of Local Government annual report 2019-2020.

This review forms part of the Committee's oversight responsibility to examine the performance, achievements, challenges and accountability of government ministries and agencies.

The Committee carefully considered the Ministry's annual report and engaged with officials to seek clarification on matters relating to municipal governance, urban development, infrastructure projects, waste management and legislative reform. Through this process, the Committee identified several key findings and made recommendations aimed at strengthening service delivery, supporting sustainable urban development and enhancing the effectiveness of local government institutions throughout Fiji.

The Committee acknowledges the Ministry's ongoing efforts to promote sustainable town and city development, advance major infrastructure projects and align its work with the National Development Plan and the Sustainable Development Goals. The review also highlighted challenges relating to project implementation delays, municipal rate arrears, waste management and urban expansion, which require continued attention and collaboration amongst each stakeholder.

I extend my sincere appreciation to the Members of the Social Affairs Committee, Hon Rakuita Vakalalabure, Hon. Alipate Tuicolo, Hon. Viam Pillay, Hon. Alikia Bia, Hon. Parveen Bala and Hon Ketan Lal for their dedication, valuable contributions and commitment throughout the review process.

I also would like to thank the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Local Government and its executive team for facilitation of required information.

Finally, I thank the Secretariat for its professional support in coordinating the Committee's work and compiling this report.

On behalf of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs, I commend this report to Parliament and trust that its key findings and recommendations will contribute positively to improving local government services and promoting sustainable development for the people of Fiji.



.....
Hon. Iliesa Vanawalu
Chairperson

ACRONYM

DLG	Department of Local Government
DTCP	Department of Town and Country Planning
MLG	Ministry of Local Government
NDP	National Development Plan
NTDP	New Town Development Programme
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SO	Standing Order

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The Standing Committee on Social Affairs (‘Committee’) is established under Section 70 of the Constitution of the Republic of Fiji and Standing Order 109. The Committee’s mandate and functions are provided under SO 109 (2) and 110 (1) (a)-(d) & (f).

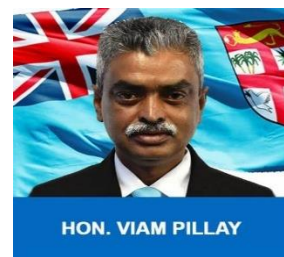
The Members of Committee are:



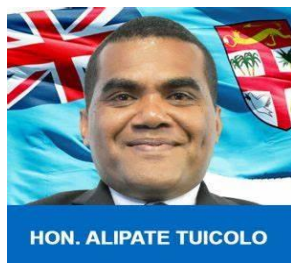
Chairperson



Deputy Chairperson



Member



Member



Member



Member

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The 2019-2020 Ministry of Local Government annual report was tabled in Parliament on 13th March 2026 and was referred to the Standing Committee on Social Affairs pursuant to Standing Order 109(2)(b).

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

1.1 Committee Procedures

Deliberations on the 2019-2020 Ministry of Local Government annual report commenced in May 2026. The Committee reviewed the report, prepared questions and sought clarifications on key issues of interest from the Ministry of Local Government.

A public submission was held with the Ministry of Local Government on 13th May 2026. Upon receipt of all pertinent information addressing the Committee's queries, the report was finalised and subsequently endorsed on 21st September 2026.

Responses from the Ministry of Local Government can be accessed via the following link:
<https://www.parliament.gov.fj/committees/standing-committee-on-social-affairs/>

2.0 Background of Ministry of Local Government

- 2.1** The Ministry of Local Government originated during the post-independence period to oversee municipal governance and urban development in Fiji. Its foundations were established through colonial municipal systems, beginning with Levuka and later Suva after it became the capital in 1882. The Ministry's core mandate is guided by the Local Government Act 1972, which provides for the establishment and regulation of municipal councils and local government functions.

Following Fiji's independence in 1970, the Ministry's responsibilities expanded significantly to support national development and improve service delivery to the communities. The Ministry focused on strengthening municipal governance, improving waste management, enhancing town planning processes and supporting urban infrastructure development. With rapid urban migration during the 1980s and 1990s, the Ministry became more involved in strategic urban planning, financial management reforms and improving the operational capacity of municipal councils.

The Ministry continues to evolve into a modern institution responsible for urban and regional planning, policy development and sustainable urban growth. Through agencies such as the Department of Town and Country Planning and the Department of Local Government, the Ministry continues to promote governance, digital transformation, resilient infrastructure and balanced regional development in line with Fiji's National Development Plan and Strategic Plan 2023–2028.

3.0 KEY FINDINGS

The Committee conducted its review of the annual report and identified the following key findings:

- 3.1 The Committee observed that the revenue of the Ministry of Local Government depends on Fiji's economic activity such as increase in urbanization, land development, commercial, residential and tourism related developments.
- 3.2 The Committee noted that the responsibility of the rural local authority was transferred to the municipal council in 2018.
- 3.3 The Committee noted that the funding for Govind Park reconstruction raised from initial \$4.17 million in 2018 to \$9.06 million. A total of \$13.8 million was used to complete the project as at 31.07.2026.
- 3.4 The Committee noted that the Ministry has acquired 10 acres of land next to the market and 40-acres for the development of Korovou Urban Centre.
- 3.5 The committee noted that the cost of maintaining the Korovou restroom is much higher than the revenue collected.
- 3.6 The Committee noted that the major projects such as the development of new towns in Nabouwalu and Keiyasi, Seaqaqa Market & Bus stand development experienced delays due to funding, weather condition, land issues and relocation requirements.
- 3.7 The Committee noted that the Korovou Urban Centre faces major parking issues, traffic congestion and limited space for commercial activities.
- 3.8 The Committee noted that the total municipal rate arrears for all municipalities remain approximately \$71 million from the last 10 years.
- 3.9 The Committee noted that all 13 municipalities have developed solid waste master plans under the J-PRISM 11 program however the open dump site remains a challenge for the municipal councils.
- 3.10 The Committee noted the Ministry's plan for a comprehensive review of the Local Government Act, Town and Country Planning Act and the subdivision of Land Act.

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends the following:

- 4.1 More funding must be allocated to the municipal councils to provide waste collection services beyond municipal boundaries.
- 4.2 The Ministry of Local government must deliver a thorough and detailed report of how the funds were utilized for the completion of the Govind Park project.
- 4.3 Ministry of Local Government to work closely with all key stakeholders to prioritize the funding of the development of Korovou urban center.
- 4.4 The Ministry of Local Government to assist in the upkeep and maintenance of the Korovou Urban Centre restroom.
- 4.5 The Government must strengthen project planning and monitoring framework to prevent prolonged delays by securing funding commitments before the commencement of projects.
- 4.6 The Ministry of Local Government should expand recycling and waste segregation program by increasing public awareness campaigns on waste management and recycling.
- 4.7 The Ministry must prioritize the review of all three acts ensuring broader consultation with its stakeholders

5.0 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND GENDER ANALYSIS

SDG Analysis provided by Ministry of Local Government.

The Ministry of Local Government has made strong progress in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through its policy, planning and implementation functions, guided by the New Town Development Programme (NTDP), the Ministry's Strategic Plan 2023–2028 and the National Development Plan (NDP).

Delivery of these outcomes is undertaken primarily through the Department of Town and Country Planning (DTCP) and the Department of Local Government (DLG), working in coordination with Municipal Councils and key agencies.

SDG 11: Sustainable Towns and Cities		
PROGRAMS	KPI	Related SDGs
Urban Policy Action Plan	Nabouwalu Township development	SDG 1: No Poverty
	Passenger Terminal and Foreshore development	SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being
	Keiyasi Township development	SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation
	Seaqaqa Market Development	SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth
Municipal Council Infrastructure Development	Viti Levu Strategic Master Plan 2075	SDG 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure
	Re-development of Govind Park, Ba	SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities
	Botanical Garden Aquatic Center, Lautoka	SDG 13: Climate Action
	Mead Road Mini Market, Suva	SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals
	Nakasi Mini Market	
	Re-development of Tavua Municipal Market	

Gender Analysis

Gender analysis for the Ministry of Local Government is tabulated below

Year	Male	Female	Total
2018	33	28	61
2019	24	27	51
2020	23	28	51
2021	21	25	46

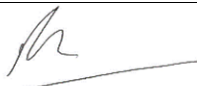
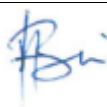
6.0 CONCLUSION

The Committee emphasizes the importance of implementing the recommendations contained in this report, particularly those relating to improved project planning and monitoring, enhanced support for municipal councils, sustainable waste management, urban expansion planning and the review of key legislation governing local government administration. These measures will contribute to more effective service delivery and sustainable urban development across the country.

The Committee commends the Ministry of Local Government for its work during the reporting period and recommends that the key findings and recommendations in this report be considered and acted upon by the relevant authorities to improve the efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of local government services for all Fijians.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS' SIGNATURE

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

Committee Member	E-Signature
Hon. Iliesa Vanawalu Chairperson	
Hon. Ratu Rakuita Vakalalabure Deputy Chairperson	
Hon. Alipate Tuicolo Member	
Hon. Viam Pillay Member	
Hon. Parveen Bala Member	
Hon Aliko Bia Member	
Date: 21 September, 2026	

ANNEXURE

Published evidence

Written evidence, transcripts, and supporting documents can be viewed on the Parliament website at the following link: <https://www.parliament.gov.fj/committees/standing-committee-on-social-affairs/>