



Strategic Plan

2024 - 2027



Fijian Elections Office
My Election. My Fiji

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Abbreviations

Act - Electoral Act 2014

Constitution - Constitution of the Republic of Fiji 2013

CSO - Civil Society Organisation

EC - Electoral Commission

EMB - Election Management Body

FEO - Fijian Elections Office

NGO - Non-Government Organisation

SoE - Supervisor of Elections

SPT - Strategic Planning Team



Message from the Acting Supervisor of Elections

As the current head of the Fijian Elections Office [“FEO”], it is my distinct pleasure to introduce the FEO’s Strategic Plan for the period 2024-2027. This document represents the culmination of extensive collaboration, dedicated effort, and a shared commitment to furthering the cause of democratic governance in our beloved nation.

The FEO has over the years made significant strides in enhancing the credibility and efficiency of electoral processes. However, we recognise that the journey towards perfection is a continuous one, and we remain firm in our dedication to improving electoral services.

As such, the 2024-2027 Strategic Plan serves as a roadmap that will guide the FEO endeavours over the coming years. It is a comprehensive framework that outlines key objectives, strategies, and actions to ensure that every vote is counted and every election is conducted with the utmost integrity.

Our strategic priorities encompass a broad spectrum of initiatives, including the modernisation of electoral processes, the promotion of voter engagement and the enhancement of stakeholder collaboration. We are committed to fostering an environment where inclusivity and diversity are respected, and where Fijians can exercise their right to vote with confidence, pride and without fear.

The success of this plan will rely on the collective efforts of our dedicated team with the support of our stakeholders including the active engagement of voters. Together, we will work to achieve the goals outlined in this Strategic Plan and ensure that the FEO continues to be a beacon of democratic excellence in the Pacific region.

I would like to express my gratitude to the entire FEO team for their unwavering commitment and tireless efforts in developing this plan, and to our stakeholders for their trust and confidence in our work.

As we embark on this journey, I invite all Fijians to join us in shaping the future of our democracy. Together, we will uphold the values that define our great nation, and together, we will build a stronger, more inclusive Fiji for generations to come.

Vinaka vakalevu and thank you for your continued support.



Ana Mataciwa (Ms.)

ACTING SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS

Introduction

Elections play a critical role in any democracy. It is the largest logistical exercise that any country conducts. It is imperative that proper planning is undertaken to deliver successful outcomes. Developing a Strategic Plan is a fundamental step for an Election Management Body [“**EMB**”] to map its commitments and objectives during an electoral cycle.

The FEO conducted its first General Election under the Constitution of the Republic of Fiji, 2013 [“**Constitution**”] on 17 September 2014. After the first General Election, the FEO embarked on the journey to develop its first Strategic Plan for the period 2015-2019. The second Strategic Plan for the period 2020-2023 was developed after the 2018 General Election and it comes to an end this year.

As such, the strategic planning process for the 2024-2027 Strategic Plan commenced in May this year. This Strategic Plan builds on our past successes, addresses contemporary perspectives, and provides a vision of the future that ensures a continued thriving democracy for all Fijians. This is the foundation for the organisation's larger planning environment. Together with other plans, the Strategic Plan guides our work as it is an important tool to assist the FEO in making decisions, planning projects and aligning work with commitments to stakeholders.

This Strategic Plan has been enriched with input and lessons learnt from previous activities including the past three (3) General Elections, observer reports and other key recommendations from internal and external stakeholders. The past two (2) Strategic Plans allowed the organisation to design extensive plans for the 2018 and 2022 General Elections respectively. This Strategic Plan envisions to achieve the same outcome.

Fijian Elections Office

The FEO was established in 2014 as an independent EMB, responsible for conducting elections in Fiji. Since its inception, the FEO has conducted three (3) General Elections and a number of Trade Union Elections. It has also implemented two (2) Strategic Plans for the periods 2015-2019 and 2020-2023.

The FEO is headed by the Supervisor of Elections [**"SoE"**] and is responsible for:

- Administering the registration and regulates the conduct, funding and disclosures of Political Parties;
- Administering the registration of voters and maintaining the Register of Voters;
- Administering the registration of election candidates;
- Implementing voter information and educational initiatives;
- Conducting election of members of Parliament and such other elections as prescribed under section 154 of the Electoral Act 2014 [**"Act"**], including the conduct of voting, counting, and tabulating of election results;
- Overseeing compliance with campaign rules and reporting requirements; and
- Performing other functions in accordance with any written law.

In ensuring that the FEO effectively performs its duties and functions as required by law, the Parliament allocates to the FEO an annual grant in the National Budget. The Act empowers the SoE to determine all matters relating to the employment of staff at the FEO including the authority to appoint, remove and take disciplinary action. The FEO has three (3) directorates, responsible for delivering their specific functions to meet the overall objectives of the organisation. These are the Executive, Operation and Corporate Services directorates. They are headed by the SoE, Director Operations and Director Corporate Services respectively.

The Executive Directorate oversees legal and compliance, internal audit, communications, international relations and research. The Operations Directorate is generally responsible for the implementation of election plans, maintaining an accurate and current National Register of Voters, delivery of effective electoral services and management of election results. This Directorate also deals with voter registration and polling venues, divisional offices and industrial elections.

To ensure the operational mandate of the FEO is delivered effectively, the Corporate Services Directorate provides support services. This Directorate looks after the human resources, finance, procurement and asset management, training and development and information communication technology. During the election period, the organisation structure is developed to meet the specific needs of the organisation. This includes the hiring of additional staff over the election period. For the 2022 General Election, 7,577 Election Officials were engaged.

The FEO will use this Strategic Plan to map its journey in the conduct of the upcoming Local Government Elections and the next General Election.

Electoral Commission

The Electoral Commission [“EC”] is an independent authority established under section 75(2) of the Constitution. It has the responsibility of formulating policies and overseeing the conduct of elections in accordance with the law. It consists of six (6) members and a Chairperson who are appointed for a term of three (3) years. Under the Act, the SoE is the Secretary to the EC.

The FEO works closely with the EC in ensuring that its policies and procedures comply with the electoral legal framework. At the conclusion of every General Election, the EC and the FEO are required to submit a joint report to the President and Parliament.

Fijian Electoral System

In conducting the General Election to appoint Members of Parliament in Fiji, the electoral system used is multi-member open list system of proportional representation. Under this, each voter has one vote, with each vote being of equal value, in a single national electoral roll comprising all the registered voters.

To vote in the General Election a person must be a registered voter. Voters are registered to vote at a Polling Venue located close to their place of residence. To register to vote, a person must be a Fiji citizen and be at least 18 years of age at the time of registration.

To contest the General Election, a person may be nominated by a Political Party or can contest as an Independent Candidate. The criteria for qualification of candidates is outlined in the Constitution which requires a person;

- to be a citizen of Fiji;
- to not hold dual citizenship of any other country;
- must be registered as a voter;
- is ordinarily resident in Fiji for at least two (2) years immediately before being nominated;
- must not be an undischarged bankrupt;
- must not be a member of the EC any time during the four (4) years immediately before being nominated;
- must not be subjected to a sentence of imprisonment when nominated, has not at any time during the 8 years immediately before being nominated been convicted of any offence under any law for which the maximum penalty is a term of imprisonment of 12 months or more and;
- has not been found guilty of any offence under a law relating to elections, registration of political parties or registration of voters, including any offence mentioned in the Act.

A Political Party which is nominating candidates, can only nominate according to the number of seats in Parliament. In 2014, the number of seats was 50, and following a review by the EC in 2017, this increased to 51 for the 2018 General Election. It was further increased to 55 for the 2022 General Election.

In Fiji, voters can either circle or tick or cross the number of the candidate they wish to vote for. There are three (3) methods of voting, and they are Pre-Poll, Postal and Election Day voting. On Election Day, Polling Stations open at 7.30am and close at 6.00pm. After the close of polls on Election Day, Ballot Papers are counted at the Polling Stations. For Pre-Poll and Postal Voting, Ballot Papers are counted at the National Count Centre.

The FEO is responsible for preparing the Final National Results Tally and submitting it to the EC for allocation of seats. The seat allocation is done using the D'hondt formula. Political Parties and Independent Candidates must meet the 5% threshold to qualify for a seat in Parliament. The EC is responsible for publishing the outcome of the General Election and returning the Writ to the President.





MISSION

We deliver electoral services that have the trust and confidence of our stakeholders.

VISION

Excellence in the conduct of elections that strengthens democracy in Fiji.

Guiding Principles

Guided by our mission and in realising our vision, we commit to uphold the following Guiding Principles:



Strategic Pillars and Goals



LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Upholding the legal framework in delivering elections.



ELECTORAL OPERATIONS

Efficient delivery of elections in line with electoral best practices.



INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING

Strengthen FEO's organisational and human resources capacity.



STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Foster greater stakeholder engagement and collaboration to increase voter participation.



TECHNOLOGY

Adopt innovative technological solutions to enhance the delivery of electoral services.

Overview of the 2020-2023 Strategic Plan

The FEO has implemented two (2) Strategic Plans since 2014 and each time, achieved over 80% of the strategic milestones. For the 2020-2023 Strategic Plan, the FEO has achieved 84% of its strategic milestones. The achievement rate is set to increase by the end of 2023 once scheduled strategic milestones for 2023 are completed.

The strategic milestones completion rate is provided below:

YEARS	STRATEGIC MILESTONES ACHIEVED
2020	100%
2021	90%
2022	86%
2023	60% (ongoing)
Overall Achieved (4 years)	84% (ongoing)

Strategic Planning Process

Planning Strategy

To initiate this process, an Induction Workshop on Developing Strategic Plan was conducted by Mr. Antonio Spinelli (Senior Advisor, Electoral Processes for International Institute of Democracy and Electoral Assistance) for senior staff of the FEO. The workshop was held from 09 to 12 May 2023.

The Management appointed a Strategic Planning Team ["SPT"] on 16 May 2023 to spearhead the development of the Strategic Plan. The SPT comprised of members from all the FEO Directorates and a representative from the EC Secretariat.

In line with international best practices and governance for EMBs, the FEO decided to use "A Practical Guide for Election Management Bodies to Conduct a Strategic Planning Exercise" authored by Mr. Antonio Spinelli as a reference. This resource was contextualised to suit the ground realities and the environment in which the FEO operates.

The FEO in its Strategic Planning exercise, adopted a four (4) year planning cycle to coincide with the electoral cycle. This approach is similar to the past two (2) Strategic Plans. Having the Strategic Plan coincide with the electoral cycle allows for efficient and effective planning for the upcoming Local Government Elections and the next General Election.

In order to develop the Strategic Plan successfully, the SPT developed a master plan which outlined the key activities and timelines. The master plan was submitted to Management and was approved on 19 May 2023.

It was agreed that the 2024-2027 Strategic Plan will not contain specific activities for each Measurable Objective. The activities will be developed annually, in line with the Measurable Objectives and will be captured in an Annual Operational Plan. This will ensure that the activities are planned properly and in accordance with the resources available for a particular year at the time of implementing a specific Measurable Objective.

Developing the Strategic Plan

During the initial meetings of the SPT, discussions were held to decide the approach that needs to be adopted to develop the Strategic Plan. Factors such as deadline for completion of Strategic Plan, available resources and current projects were considered when deciding the approach. After careful deliberation, it was determined that the Strategic Plan would be developed in four (4) phases, each phase having its own outcomes.

The four (4) phases of the Strategic Plan is provided below:

PHASE	OUTCOMES
1. Inception Phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master Plan • Organisational Appraisal- FEO Staff Survey
2. Development Phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisational Appraisal- SWOT Analysis • Foundations Document (Mission, Vision and Guiding Principles) • Strategic Pillars • Strategic Goals • Draft Strategic Plan
3. Consultation Phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder Consultation Report
4. Strategy into Action Phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Actions • Measurable Objectives • Final Strategic Plan 2024-2027

1. Inception Phase

An internal survey with the FEO staff was conducted which formed part of the organisational appraisal. A series of information sessions were also conducted to raise awareness among staff to ensure they were better informed when contributing towards developing the foundations document.

The following information sessions were conducted:

- Voter Turnout Trends: 24 May 2023;
- Gender and Elections: 25 May 2023;
- Legal Challenges: 01 June 2023;
- Update on Local Government Elections: 01 June 2023;
- 2022 General Election Multinational Observer Group Recommendations: 02 June 2023;
- Outcomes of Post 2022 General Election Media Consultation: 02 June 2023; and
- Budgetary Allocations (Election and Non-Election Years): 05 June 2023.

2. Development Phase

For this phase of the process, a comprehensive four (4) day Developing Foundations Document Workshop was conducted from 06 to 09 June 2023.

The objectives of the workshop were to:

- Develop a draft Mission and Vision Statement;
- Develop draft Guiding Principles;
- Identify organisational strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats;
- Identify strategic issues facing FEO; and
- Develop strategic pillars and goals for the 2024-2027 Strategic Plan.

At the end of the Workshop, the SPT deliberated on the outcomes and submitted the draft Mission Statement, Vision Statement, Guiding Principles, Organisational SWOT, Strategic Pillars and Goals to Management for their consideration and approval. After approval, a draft Strategic Plan containing the Foundations Document, Strategic Pillars and Goals was developed.



3. Consultation Phase

A series of consultations were conducted with internal and external stakeholders to gather feedback on the draft Strategic Plan. There was a need to have targeted consultations with identified stakeholders as well as generic consultations that were open to the public. The methodologies used were face to face consultations and a survey was conducted. Face to face consultations enabled the FEO to have direct discussions with identified stakeholders to gather feedback. The survey on the other hand was used to reach voters and the wider public for their contribution towards the draft Strategic Plan.

a) Survey

An online survey was conducted by the FEO starting from 05 July 2023. This survey was promoted on the FEO's digital platforms to allow greater participation and feedback from the public. Provisions were also made for tablets containing the survey to be placed at the Voter Services Centres so that members of the public could participate. The survey was open for three (3) weeks and the feedback received was valuable in compiling this Strategic Plan.

b) Face to Face Consultations

Face to face consultations were conducted with our key stakeholders from 05 to 11 July 2023. Key stakeholders were invited by the FEO to be part of these consultations.

The schedule for the consultations were as follows:

Date	Time	Stakeholder Group
Wednesday 5 July	8.30am	CSO
Wednesday 5 July	8.30am	Media Organisations
Thursday 6 July	8.30am	Government Ministries
Thursday 6 July	8.30am	Statutory Authorities
Friday 7 July	8.30am	Political Parties
Tuesday 11 July	8.30am	Development Partners

Presentations were conducted by Management during the consultations. Invited stakeholders were provided with a copy of the draft Strategic Plan and a round table discussion was conducted. The outcomes of these discussions were used to conceptualise various projects for the next four (4) years.

4. Strategy into Action Phase

After the consultations, a Stakeholder Consultation Report was developed and submitted to Management. In this phase, staff were required to develop Strategic Actions and Measurable Objectives.

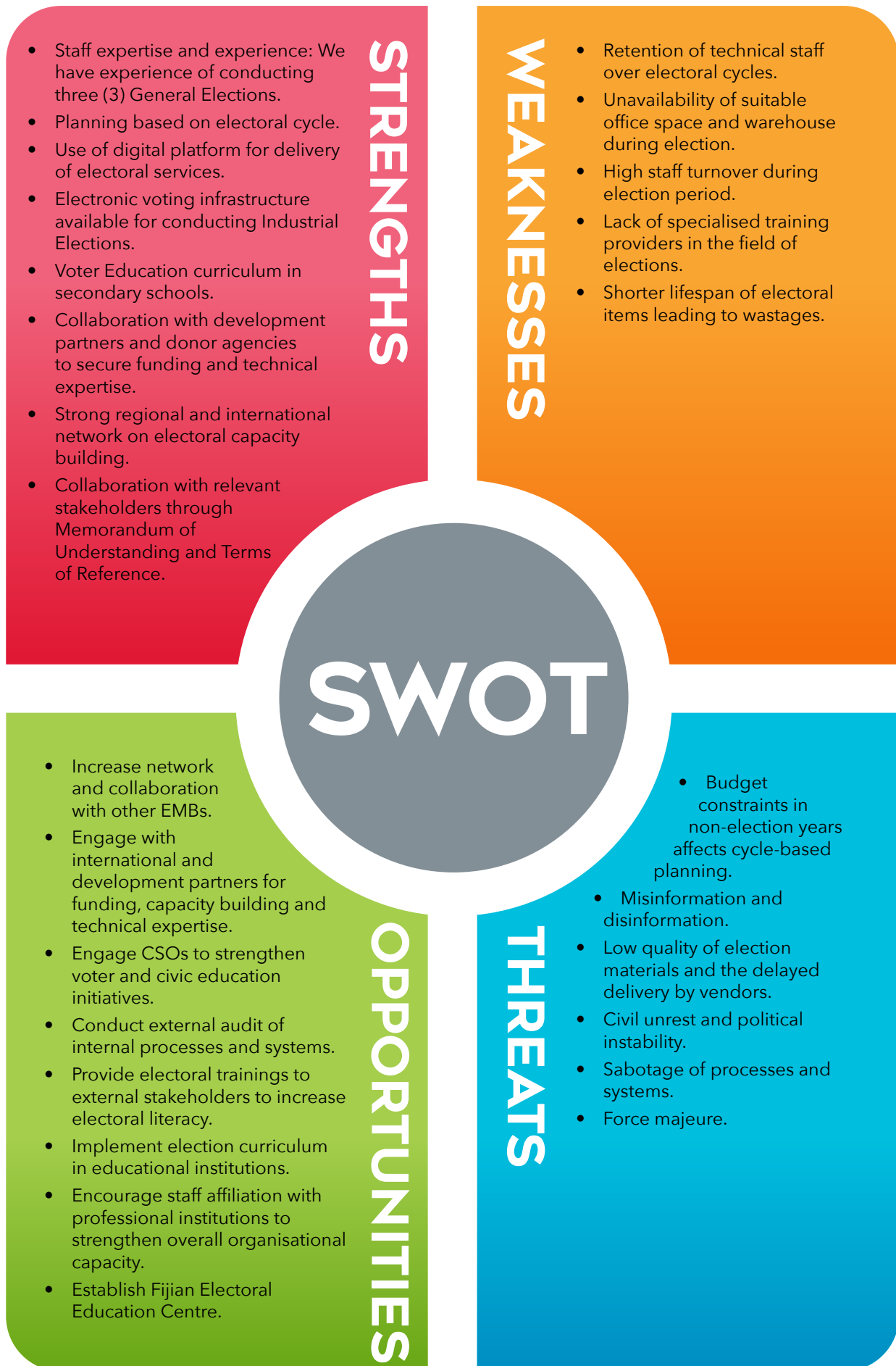
An information session was conducted on 31 July 2023 to enable staff to develop Strategic Actions. Staff developed their Strategic Actions under different Strategic Goals and submitted it to the SPT. These Strategic Actions were vetted by the SPT then submitted to Management for approval.

Then on 18 August 2023 another information session was conducted for developing Measurable Objectives. In this session, the rules and criteria for developing Measurable Objectives were conveyed to the staff. Following this, Measurable Objectives were developed at departmental level.

It was essential to assess the merits of each Measurable Objective and make a determination as to whether they were specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time-bound. As a result, a two (2) day Workshop on Developing Measurable Objectives was conducted on 25 and 28 August 2023.

In this Workshop, staff were encouraged to identify areas that were not covered by initial Measurable Objectives and more time was allocated to some departments to revise and resubmit or develop additional Measurable Objectives.

The Measurable Objectives were then submitted to the SPT, vetted and consolidated for Management approval. The Measurable Objectives were approved on 25 September 2023.



Our Stakeholders

The FEO works with various stakeholders to deliver its mandate. The stakeholders are categorised as follows:

- Fijian Citizens;
- Political Parties and Candidates;
- Parliament of Fiji;
- Government Agencies;
- International and Development Partners;
- Media;
- Advocacy Groups (CSOs, NGOs, faith-based organisations and etc);
- Multinational Observer Group;
- Vendors; and
- Professional Skill Institutions.

Implementation and Monitoring Strategy

Proper implementation of this Strategic Plan is critical to ensure organisational success. To deploy the Strategic Plan effectively, Annual Operational Plans will be developed which will contain specific activities for achieving each Measurable Objective. These activities will be tagged to individual staff to ensure that scheduled activities are completed on time.

A Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections (BRIDGE) Module on Operational Planning will be conducted for staff to support the development of the first Annual Operational Plan. In addition, a template for the Annual Operational Plan will be designed and shared with all staff. Management will ensure that sufficient resources are allocated to respective departments to achieve set Measurable Objectives.

A Strategic Plan Progress Review exercise will be conducted on a quarterly basis to monitor the achievement of Measurable Objectives. Using the findings from this review, a Strategic Planning Progress Report will be developed and submitted to the SoE. These Reports will be used to identify the strategic milestone achievements for each year.

Risk Analysis and Mitigation

The FEO has an established risk management process in place to respond to ongoing and new risks including those that are associated with the implementation of this Strategic Plan. During the strategic planning process, a Risk Management Training was conducted on 08 August 2023, to allow staff to identify and respond to potential risks.

Additionally, project planning at the FEO is done using a risk-based approach and a thorough risk analysis is conducted before deploying any project. This includes identifying mitigation strategies to minimise risk impact. Tools such as a Risk Register are generally used to monitor risks during election period.

For the implementation of this Strategic Plan, the following potential risks were identified:

NO.	OUTCOMES	MITIGATION
1.	Lack of adequate funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore opportunities to secure funds from international and development partners for projects. Streamline operational processes to decrease cost for elections.
2.	Misinformation and Disinformation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure accurate and timely communication of electoral information. Establish fact checking and verification avenues. Increase voter awareness. Establish a robust media monitoring framework. Develop long term voter education initiatives.
3.	Negative public perception	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear and timely communication relating to key electoral events and processes. Enhance Complaints Management Framework. Increase stakeholder involvement in electoral processes including providing opportunities to witness key electoral events and making electoral information available and accessible. Conduct voter awareness and education programs.
4.	Cyber attacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance cyber security management. Increase staff awareness on cyber security. Develop an Incident Response Plan. Encrypt sensitive data.

5.	Civil unrest	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue collaboration with security agencies through the Election Security Advisory Group ("ESAG").• Engage with Political Parties, CSOs and other stakeholders to foster dialogue and promote peaceful electoral participation.• Develop Crisis Management and Contingency plans.
6.	Force Majeure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop contingency plans for projects.• Establish a Business Continuity Plan.
7.	Loss of skilled staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improve staff welfare and security.• Create career progression and growth opportunities for staff.

Strategic Milestones

The FEO has identified the following outcomes as strategic milestones for the period 2024-2027:

2024

1. Local Government Elections conducted.
2. Fijian Electoral Education Centre re-established.
3. Business Continuity Plan implemented.
4. School Election Toolkit implemented.
5. Digitalisation of Internal Corporate Processes.
6. Local Government Elections Report published.
7. Post 2022 General Election Survey completed.

2025

1. Post Local Government Elections Review completed.
2. Primary School Election Program implemented.
3. Digitalisation of Accreditation processes completed.
4. Electronic Voter Registration web-based system implemented.
5. Staffing structure for General Election 2026-2027 finalised.
6. General Election 2026-2027 Calendar finalised.

2026

1. Cascade Voter Education program for CSOs implemented.
2. External Audit of Results Management System completed.
3. External Audit of Election Management System completed.
4. Know Your Election Campaign completed.
5. 2026-2027 General Election completed.
6. SoE's General Election Report published.

2027

1. SoE and EC Joint Report published.
2. Post General Election Review completed.
3. Local Government Elections 2028 Plan finalised.
4. Strategic Plan 2028-2031 developed and launched.

Conclusion

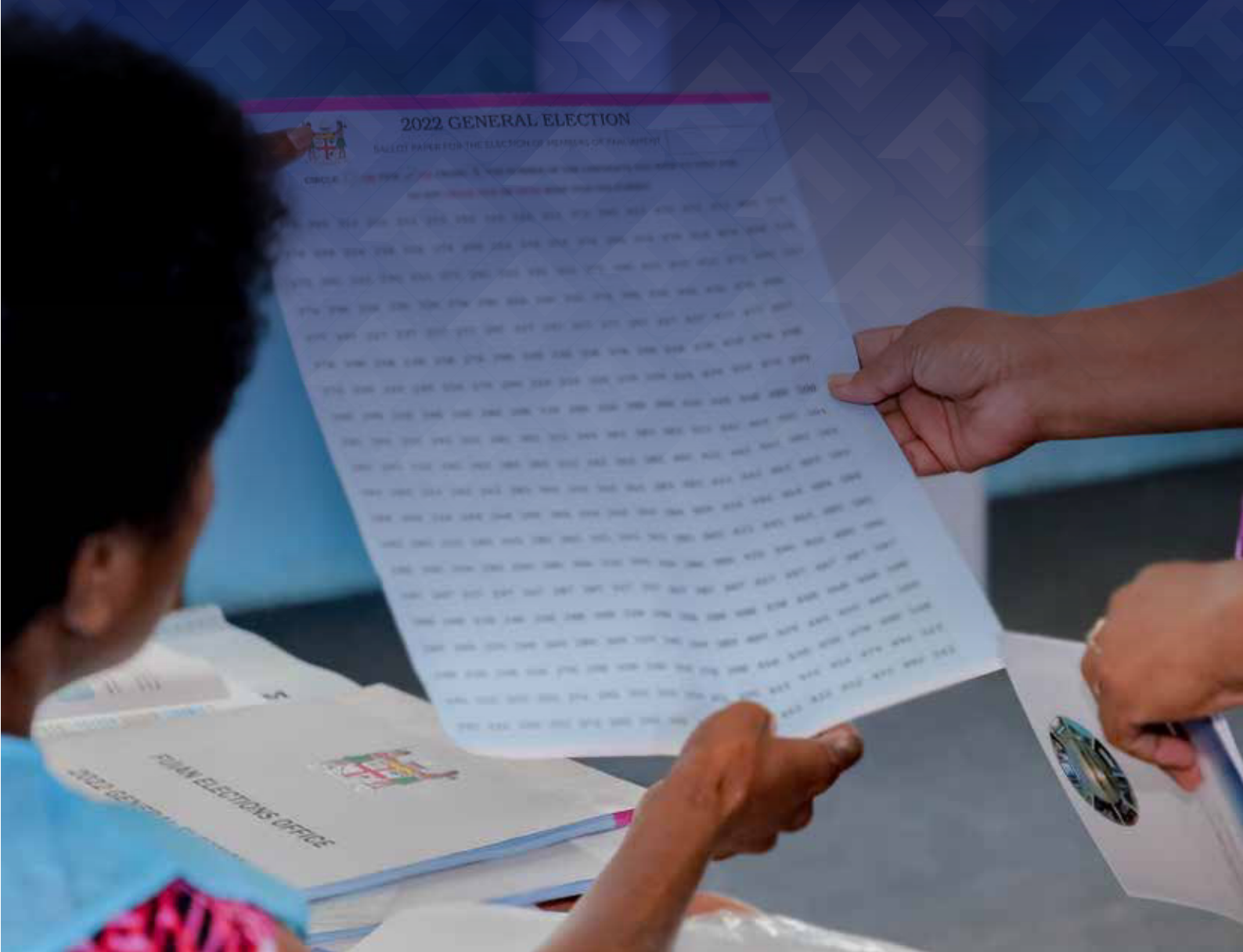
In conclusion, the 2024-2027 Strategic Plan for the FEO stands as a comprehensive blueprint designed to fulfil our core mission: earning the trust and confidence of our valued stakeholders in the conduct of elections. This plan embodies our unwavering dedication to continuous improvement, innovation, and the principles of inclusivity within the electoral process.

Moving forward, our steadfast commitment to upholding the fundamental tenets of democracy, nurturing civic engagement, and preserving the trust of our citizens in our electoral processes is paramount. Collectively, the FEO fully comprehends that our success is not solely determined by the efficiency of our procedures but also by the collective strength and active involvement of all Fijians.

With this plan as our guide, we look forward to the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead, reaffirming our promise to deliver credible and exemplary electoral services. Let us work together, adapt, and overcome, as we embark on this new journey towards a more vibrant and participatory democracy for Fiji.



MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES



Pillar 1

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Upholding the legal framework in delivering elections

[illegible]

1.6 Publish Election Reports

[illegible]

Pillar 3

Strengthen FEO's organizational and human resources capacity

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]



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