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Industry Capacity Building and Professionalization in the Pacific



Panel



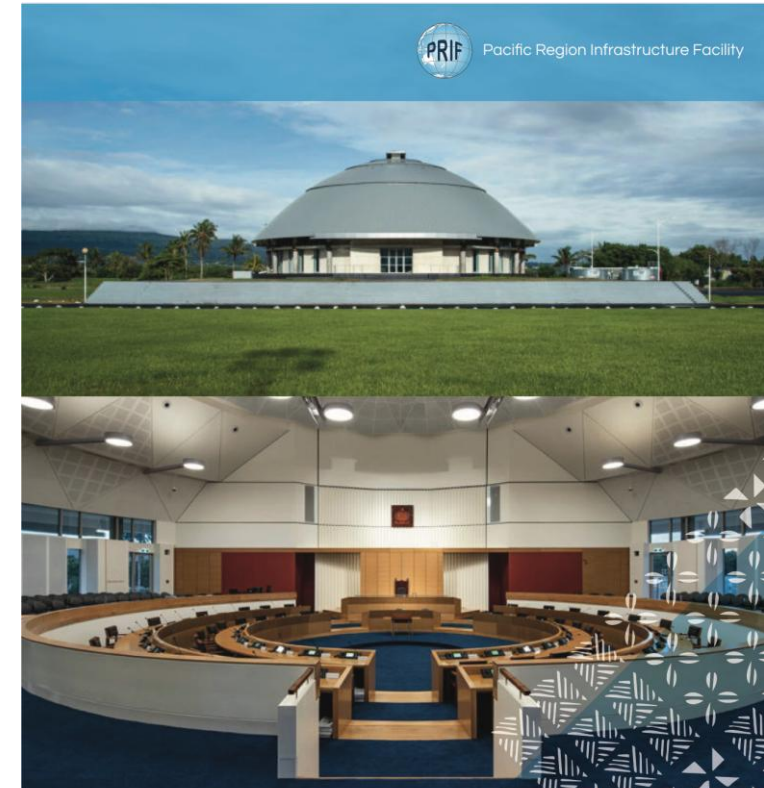
- Pratarp Singh, President of Engineers Fiji and Managing Director of Entec Limited Fiji
- Ro Salanieta Mae, Fiji Planners Association and Pacific Urban Regional Planning Network
- Oscar Olsson, Director, Blue Pacific Engineering
- Julianne Verma, President, Women in Construction and Trades Fiji
- Vincent Lobendahn, Country Manager Fiji, BECA International Consultants

Moderator

- Robert Guild, Team Leader, Pacific Region Infrastructure Facility

Objectives

- Quality infrastructure needs quality practitioners.
- The PQIP promote local content and engaging national practitioners.
- The pipeline of infrastructure projects from 2025-2030 is estimated at over USD 10 billion.
- This means dramatic need for increased professional services and skilled technicians.
- But there are critical skills shortages in all PICs, driving imports from outside the region, while participation of women and younger professionals lags.
- How can professional associations and accreditation councils help?



Enhancing Procurement
Practice and Local Content
in Pacific Infrastructure

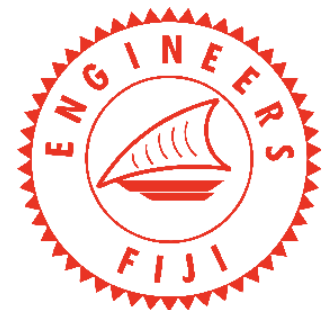
Industry Capacity Building and Professionalization in Pacific

Pratarp Singh, Managing Director, ENTEC Pte Limited and President, Engineers Fiji

A.OVERVIEW

Global – 17 UNSDGs: Understanding the more direct and relevant to the profession and industry.

4. Quality Education	11. Sustainable Cities & Communities
6. Clean Water & Sanitation	13. Climate Action
7. Affordable & Clean Energy	16. Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions
9. Industry, Innovation & Infrastructure	17. Partnerships



Industry Capacity Building and Professionalization in Pacific

Infrastructure Physical

- Energy, transport (land (road and rail), sea and air), water and wastewater, telecommunications, etc. Institutional/Organizational
- Administrative – Governance
- GIACC – Anti-Corruption – (corruption, prosecution, penalties)
- GIHub (G20 Initiative 2014)/WB/PPIAF (Pub; Pvt Infra; Adv; Facility) – Global Infra; Outlook, including Oceania. Investment needed, current and gaps.
- Oceania gap – 9% (needed \$1.9T, current \$1.7T, gap \$0.2T), cf; Africa – 28%, Americas – 32%, Asia – 9%, Europe – 13%, World – 16% (needed \$94T, current \$79T, gap \$15T)

Capacity Building and Professionalization (next slide)

Industry Capacity Building and Professionalization in Pacific

Capacity building

- Capacity, Professionalization and CAPABILITY coexist. Successfully, the end product in infrastructure development and delivery is of quality and sustainable.

Professionalization

- The profession gaining its recognition and being able to be properly regulated.
- Engineering – strictly a proud profession and NOT a business (like it has generally become in most developed economies)!!! Requires a formal university education
- Requires vigorous and intense training post uni; under an accredited EXPERT Requires gaining competence to be chartered to enable one to practice in public
- Requires lifelong learning/CPD
- Requires one to conduct and perform “ETHICALLY” – within practice boundaries, public safety is paramount, governance/accountability, etc

B.THE ROLE OF NATIONAL ENGINEERING ASSOCIATIONS IN QUALIFICATION, ACCREDITATION, AND REGULATIONS FOR REGISTRATION. Absolutely VITAL/CRITICAL!!!

- National Engineering Association – Engineers Fiji (EF)
- Its purpose is to advance the science and practice of engineering for the benefit of the community.
- EF is the peak professional body representing the profession of engineering in Fiji.
- EF is a self-regulating professional membership institution, some 60 years in existence since 1966.
- Governed by a Council of 11 members with a membership of some 400+. All positions on the Council are voluntary. EF is locally, regionally and internationally recognized.
 - Member of the Commonwealth Engineers Council (CEC)
 - Member of the world peak body, World Federation of Engineering Organizations (WFEO), based in UNESCO premises in Paris.
 - Former member of the South Pacific Engineers Association (SPEA).
- Generally, it advocates ethical practices, industry standards and professional development. It awards membership and ensures ethical practices are followed.
- Represents the interests of engineers to the government and industry, including teaching institutions.

- Engineers Fiji supports its members continuous professional development/lifelong learning.
- Ensures university eng; programs meet global standards (WA, SA, DA and the various Agreements for engineers' mobility, International Engineering Alliance, etc)

Qualifications

- Technical and Vocational Education & Training (TVET). Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).
- Role of Fiji Higher Education Commission – recognition and registration

Accreditation International recognition

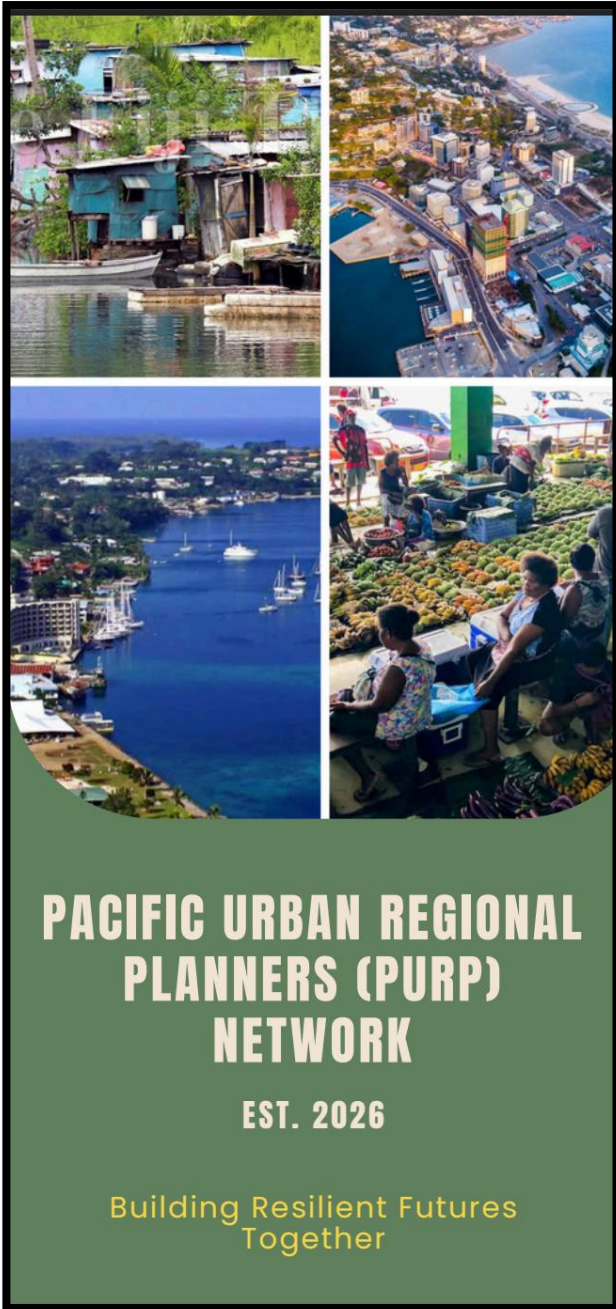
- BE programs – Washington Accord (1989) BETech; programs – Sydney Accord Diploma programs – Dublin Accord
- Registration Fiji scenario
- Engineers Reg; Act 1976 – recently appointed board (previously in early 2000), no registration yet!!!
- Draft Chartered Professional Engineers Act of Fiji 2011 is pending outcome from the government
- PICs scenario
- PNG – PE Act 1953, amended 2007 Samoa – PE Act 1998
- Cook Islands, Kiribati, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu – lack registration.

With foregoing, quality infrastructure is CRITICAL.

- **To deliver quality infrastructure, quality engineering is the cornerstone.**
- **The governments and development partners play a major role in supporting the professional associations in the PICs. The administration of the association secretariats needs financial support as the associations cannot effectively run with low budget and volunteers. Initially, properly set up associations with good infrastructure and manpower could make a substantial difference to the manner in which projects could be delivered for better outcomes and sustainability. Eventually the associations would be viable on their own.**
- **Further engagement is recommended between the parties to better understand the support and talent that is available in private sector to enhance the delivery of quality and sustainable infrastructure.**

Pratarp Singh

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Pacific Infrastructure Business Opportunities Seminar - 2026

27 May 2026

Panel Discussion: Industry Capacity Building and Professionalization in Pacific

Ro Salanieta Mae –

Fiji Planners Association (FiPA)

Pacific Urban Regional Planners (PURP) Network

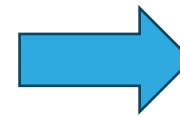
1. Urban and Regional Planning in the Pacific

Across the Pacific, planners are working in isolation—small teams, high workloads, and increasing pressure from climate change, informal settlements, and rapid urbanisation.

There is **no regional platform** dedicated to urban planners themselves. We had forums, conferences, and projects—but no **continuous professional community** where planners could learn from each other, share tools, and build capability between events.

We need a **peer-to-peer, practitioner-led network** that connects national planning associations, municipal planners, universities, and technical agencies across the region.

It is not a new institution. Pacific planners already know each other! It is a **light, flexible, low-cost network** that strengthens what already exists.



1.1 The Climate and Disaster Resilient Urban Development Strategy and Investment Plan-CDRUDSIP (June 2024)

This project is financed by a grant from **Asian Development Bank** and is part of the Tonga Integrated Urban Sector Project (IURSP) which include the following outputs:

1. An effective flood risk management system
2. An effective water supply service
3. A better public and environmental health
4. **A disaster resilience strengthened**

Nov 2022 – June 2024
Implementing Agency - NSPAO

Objectives:

- To strengthen the resilience of Greater Nuku'alofa to face current and future climatic shocks
- Plan a balanced and safe urban development that considers current and future climate impacts
- Propose appropriate adaptation measures and capacity building for local actors
- Identify institutional and legal issues / gaps and make proposals

Updating the Greater Honiara Urban Development Strategy and Action Plan 2018 - 2035

GHUDSAP 2.0 2026 - 2045

Six Strategic Goals

- Goal 1: Establish a peaceful community
- Goal 2: Improve resilience to natural hazards and climate change impacts
- Goal 3: Ensure inclusive development
- Goal 4: Support sustainable economic growth
- Goal 5: Master planned urban development
- Goal 6: Effective urban growth management
- **Raising Financial Resources for GHUDSAP Implementation**

Phase 1 2026-2030: Setting the foundation
Phase 2 2031-2040: Implementation and Integration
Phase 3 2041-2045: Monitoring and Evaluation

Logos: ADB, Honiara City Council, LANDS (Ministry of Land, Housing & Survey), and the Pacific Islands Development Bank.

TLTR MASTER LAND USE PLAN FOR THE GREATER NORTHERN REGION 2020-2040

Implementing a Differentiated Approach to Urban Development in the Pacific

2. What Happened at Pacific Urban Forum (PUF) 7

At PUF7 in Port Moresby, we formally launched the PURP Network with focal points from the 4 founding countries.

- Signed a Memo Of Engagement
- Establish National Planning Associations, whose focal points form the PURP Network Committee.
- Tonga, Kiribati and Samoa have expressed interest to join the network*



1. Association Physical Planners PNG (APPPNG)
2. Fiji Planners Association (FiPA)
3. Planning Association of SI (PASI)
4. Vanuatu Planning Association



WHAT IS THE PURP NETWORK?

The PURP Network is a Pacific regional network of National Planning Associations (NPA).

NPAs provide a platform for planning practitioners to share ideas and solutions at their local level, creating a space to develop local methodologies for neighbourhood, township and city planning.

The PURP Network focuses on strengthening regional collaboration, knowledge sharing, and capacity development for urban planning across the Pacific, especially in Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS).



WHO CAN JOIN THE PURP NETWORK?

Urban and regional planning practitioners, friends of the profession, academics can join the PURP Network.

As long as you are a member of your locally registered NPA, you automatically are a member of the PURP Network. The unique set up of the Pacific NPAs calls for a blended model which can be refined as the PURP Network matures into a truly Pacific network comprising Pacific planners making urban planning decisions for Pacific people and places.

Don't have an NPA in your country?



WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF JOINING THE PURP NETWORK?

The PURP Network will help Pacific countries share :

- Knowledge
- Strengthen professional standards
- Build long-term planning capacity
- Establish Networks.

The founding member countries of the PURP Network are;

- Papua New Guinea
- Fiji
- Vanuatu and
- Solomon Islands.

OUR NETWORKS :

Asian
Development
Bank (ADB)

University of the
South Pacific
(USP)

Pacific Regional
Infrastructure
Facility (PRIF)

Pacific Islands
University
Regional
Network (PIURN)

EAROPH

5. Why Technical Assistance Support Matters

Agencies with a role in the Pacific at the intersection of infrastructure, planning, and capacity development. Support would allow the PURP Network to:

- Deliver structured continuous professional development modules for planners
- Develop standardised planning tools and templates
- Strengthen data systems and evidence-based planning
- Build a pipeline of planners ready to support infrastructure projects
- Ensure that planning capacity keeps pace with investment

The Network is designed to be **low-cost, high-impact**, and built on existing institutions.

What we need is targeted support for training, coordination, and tool development.

HOW TO CONTACT US



pacificplanningnetwork@gmail.com



Follow us on social media:



@ Pacific Urban Regional Planners - Network



Pacific Urban Regional Planners - Network



The PURP Network is more than a platform—it is a commitment to strengthening the Pacific’s planning profession, building resilience, and supporting better infrastructure and urban development outcomes.

With network partnerships, we can ensure that Pacific planners are equipped, connected, and empowered to lead the region’s urban future.



BLUE PACIFIC ENGINEERING

PACIFIC INFRASTRUCTURE LOCALLY LED

Oscar Olsson
Director
BPE Engineering



**PACIFIC
ENGINEERING
COLLECTIVE**

Building the Next Generation

*Continuing Professional Development
& Early Career Mentoring in the Pacific*

Oscar Olsson | Director, Blue Pacific Engineering

Pacific Region Infrastructure Facility
Industry Capacity Building Panel
25 to 27 May 2026



THE CHALLENGE



A Recognised Gap in the Pacific

No local CPD structure

No engineering technical society in Fiji provides civil engineers with consistent, accessible, industry-relevant CPD.

International options don't fit

Global technical societies are costly and their content is often not suited to Pacific infrastructure contexts.

The cost of the gap

Without structured CPD and mentoring, engineers stagnate, leave, or lack the competence to meet tomorrow's challenges.



**PACIFIC
ENGINEERING
COLLECTIVE**

A structured answer to a real problem



Monthly online CPD sessions — locally relevant, free to access



Diaspora network connecting all engineers, industry professionals and graduates



Topics grounded in Pacific practice: donor-funded delivery, climate resilience, risk



Mentoring pathways linking early-career engineers to chartered professionals

1 hr

per month
free to access

*Proof of concept
already underway*

THE DIASPORA MODEL

Turning goodwill into a programme

Pacific diaspora engineers

Chartered professionals in
AU/NZ with Fijian heritage and
Pacific project experience

Pacific Engineering Collective

Structured monthly sessions,
curated topics, mentoring pairs,
online resources

Engineers on the ground

Graduate and undergraduate
engineers in Fiji and across the
Pacific region

The model requires no large budget — only institutional recognition, endorsed CPD hours, and a willingness to partner.



PACIFIC ENGINEERING COLLECTIVE



WHAT WE'RE ASKING FOR

Two asks. One system.

01 **Treat CPD as a priority, not a nice-to-have**

In the Pacific, CPD access is a retention and sovereignty issue. Structures that make quality development accessible locally must be recognised and funded.

02 **Formally recognise the diaspora model**

Twinning arrangements, endorsed CPD hours, and institutional partnerships turn volunteer goodwill into a sustainable, scalable system.

The Pacific
Engineering
Collective
is proof
of concept.

Help us scale it.

The role of a national associations in promoting labour force participation in the skilled trades...challenges for inclusion and diversity.



WICAT FIJI

WOMEN IN CONSTRUCTION AND TRADE FIJI

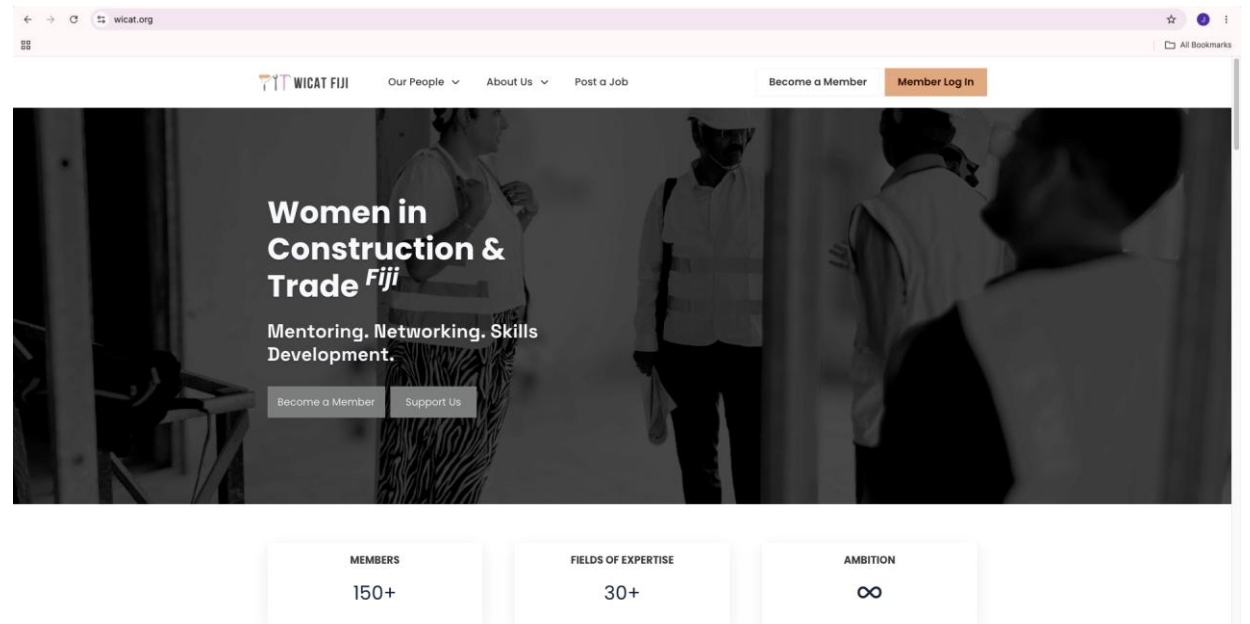
Visibility



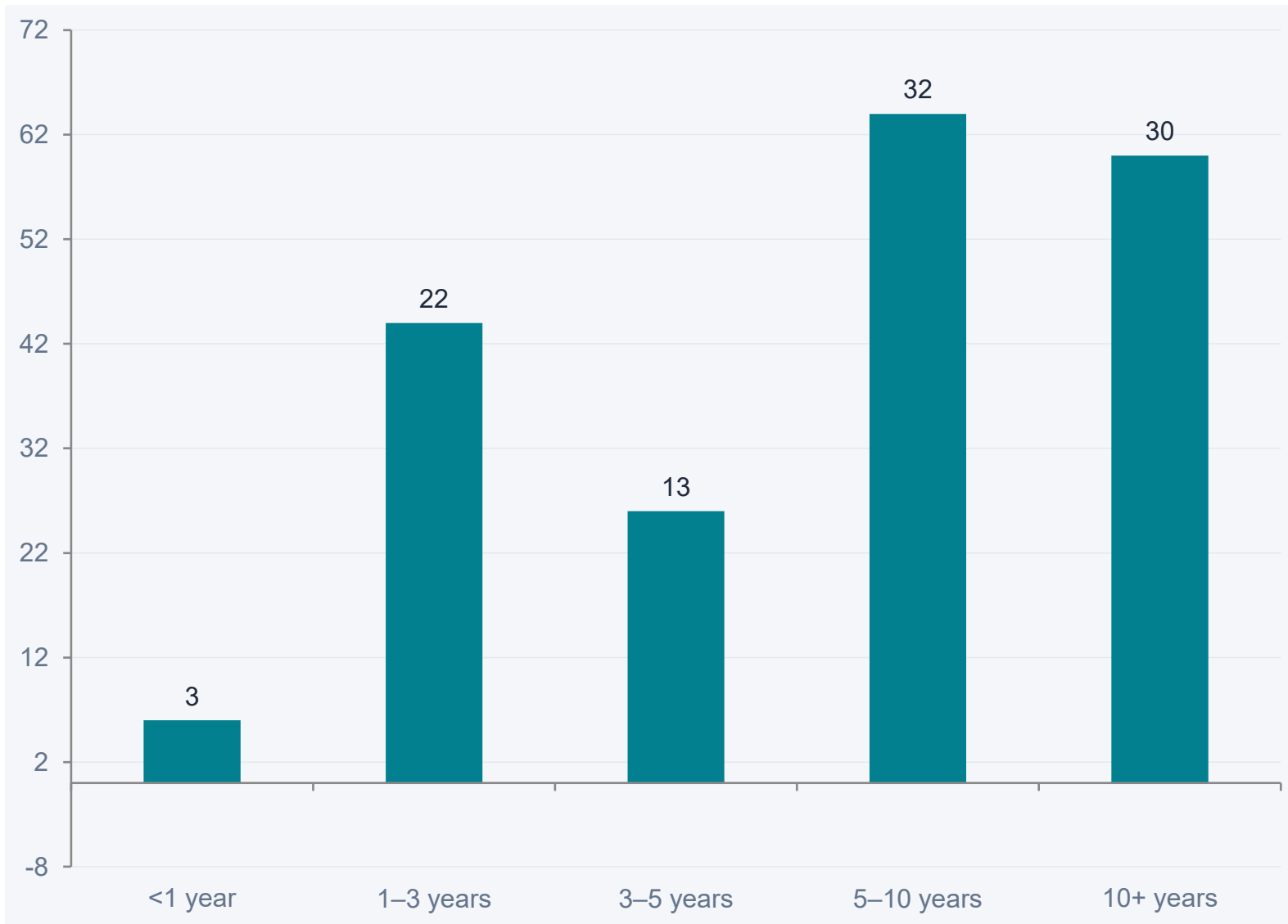
Women in Fiji's construction and trades sector were not extensively visible and there lacked a professional identity. No formal community. No platform. No network.

And you cannot engage and recruit women from the industry, if you can't find them.

<https://www.wicat.org/>



Years of Experience — Combined Network



62%

have 5 or more
years experience

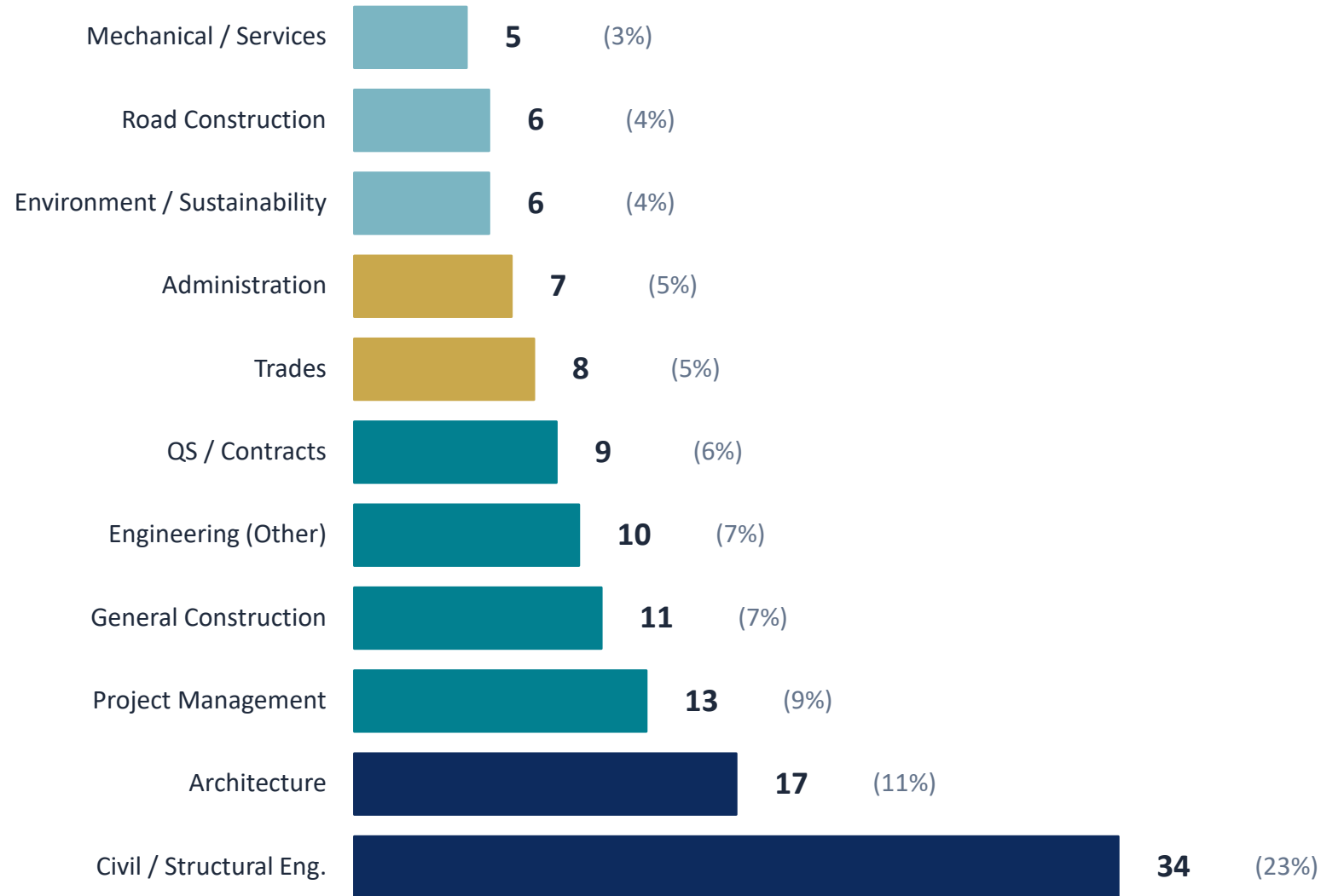
30%

have 10+ years
experience

22%

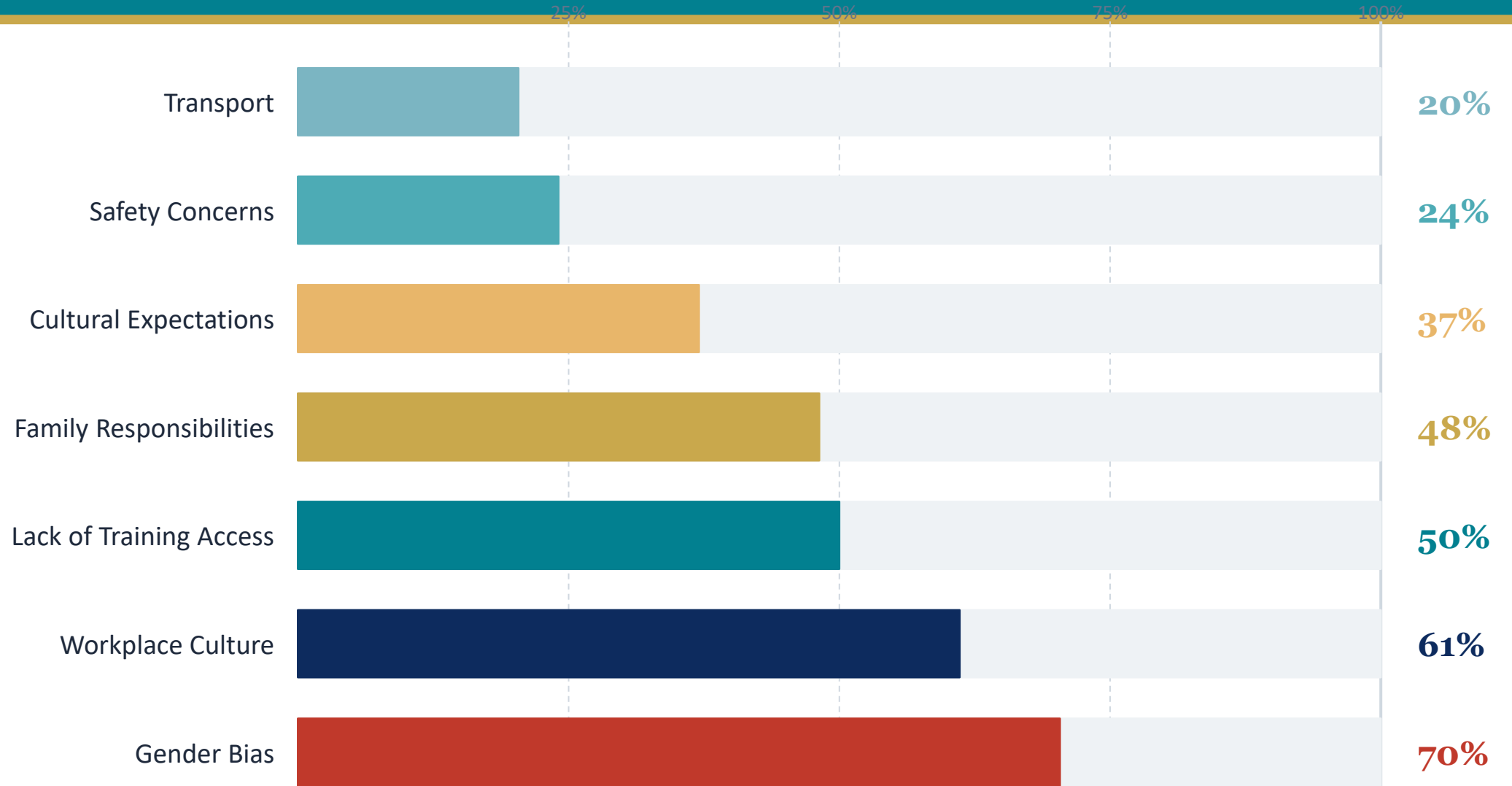
are early-career
(under 3 years)

Fields of Work



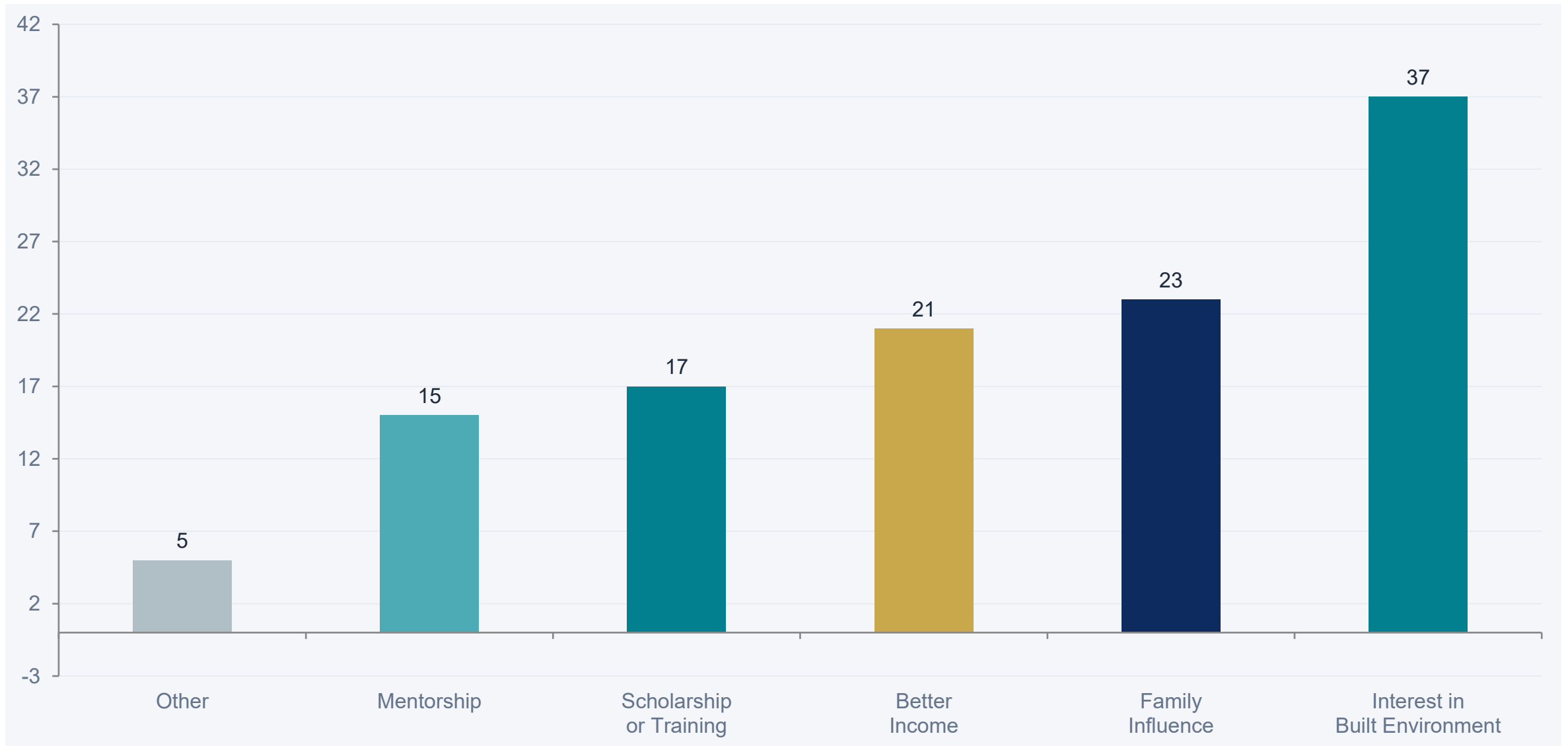
Civil/Structural Engineering is the most represented discipline, reflecting Fiji's infrastructure-focused construction sector.

Challenges Experienced as Women in Construction



**Multiple choices were permitted.*

What Encouraged Entry into Construction?

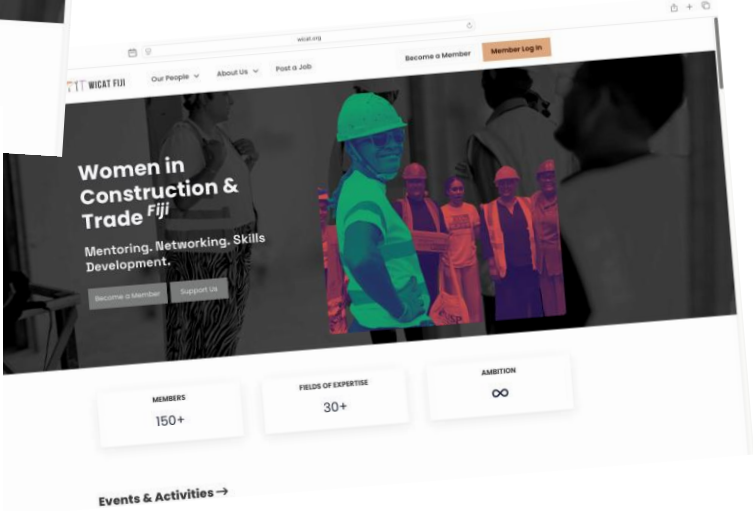
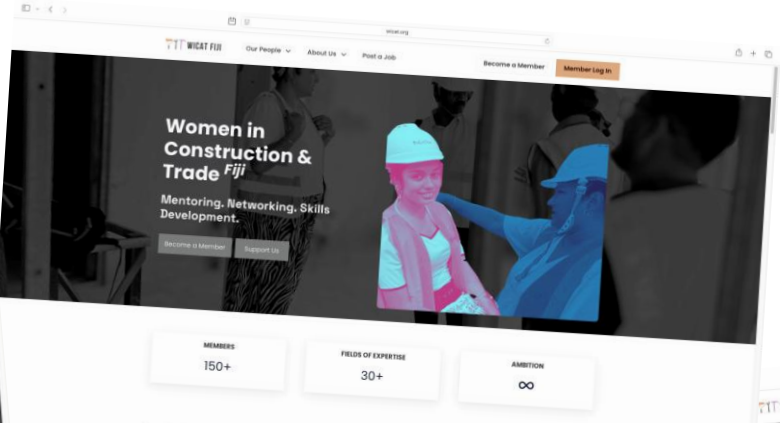
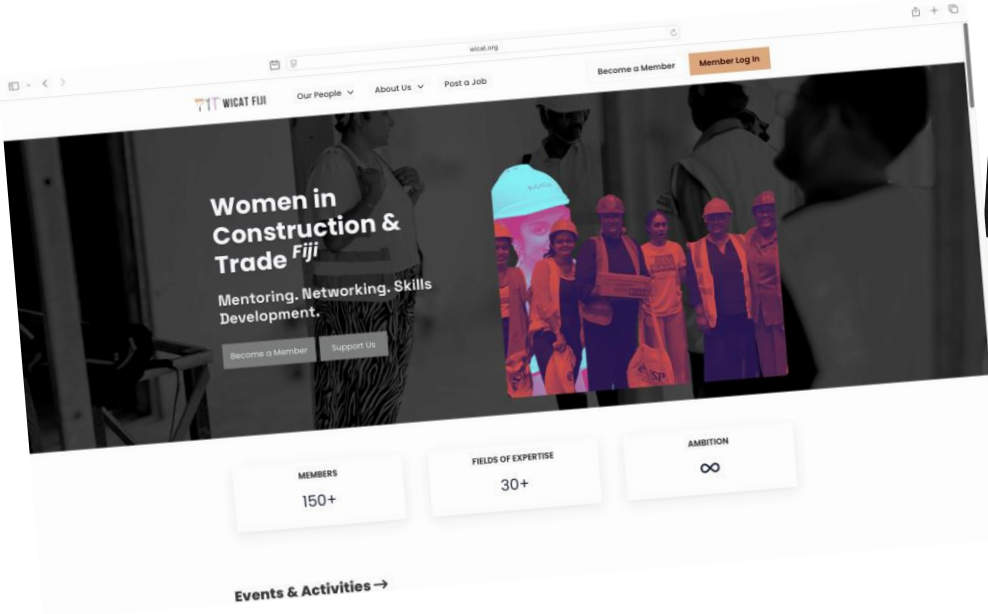


Multiple selections permitted.

Needs Assessment

1. Training systems require a revised hybrid model – the current full-time TVET programmes do not cater for women who would like to learn however, they are primary carers which we all know is a limited-term role. Flexible, stackable, short-courses are needed!
2. Worksites without female amenities are not neutral environments – they exclude by design. Work sites need to be inclusive from the get go!
3. Critical mass matters. Women don't enter industries where they think they will alone. Part of what WICAT does is build a community through workshops, networks, a presence to show women considering the trades. Whilst we make every effort to create visibility of the women in this sector, please support the work we do

Thank you



WICAT FIJI

WOMEN IN CONSTRUCTION AND TRADE FIJI

Professional Institute for Engineers

26th MAY 2026

Benefits of being associated with a National Body

builds Capability & Trust

ensures High Standards & best Practice

supports Skills & Staff Development

Networking & Business Opportunities

Advocacy & Industry Influence

reduces Risk & Strengthens Compliance

access to Knowledge & Resources



Your Duty as an Engineer – Code of Ethics

CODE OF ETHICAL CONDUCT

OBLIGATIONS IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST

1. Take reasonable steps to safeguard health and safety

You must, in the course of your engineering activities, take reasonable steps to safeguard the health and safety of people.

2. Have regard to effects on environment

You must, in the course of your engineering activities,

- i. have regard to reasonably foreseeable effects on the environment from those activities; and
- ii. have regard to the need for sustainable management of the environment. In this rule, sustainable management means management that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations (including at least the future generations within the anticipated lifetime of the end products and by-products of those activities) to meet their own reasonably foreseeable needs.

3. Report adverse consequences

If you have reasonable grounds to believe that an engineering matter has, or could have, adverse consequences you must bring the matter to the notice of the relevant regulatory body unless, having made inquiries, you are satisfied on reasonable grounds that the matter is being dealt with through an appropriate process or in an appropriate manner.

OBLIGATIONS RELATING TO PERSONAL CONDUCT

4. Act competently

You

- a. must
 - i. ensure that your relevant knowledge and skills are kept up to date; and
 - ii. only undertake engineering activities that are within your competence; and
 - iii. undertake engineering activities in a careful and competent manner; and
- b. must not
 - i. misrepresent, or permit others to misrepresent, your competence; or
 - ii. knowingly permit other engineers for whose engineering activities you are responsible to: undertake engineering activities that are outside their competence; undertake engineering activities in a manner that is not careful and competent; misrepresent, or permit others to misrepresent, their competence.

5. Behave appropriately

In performing, or in connection with, your engineering activities you

- a. must
 - i. act with honesty, objectivity, and integrity; and
 - ii. treat people with respect and courtesy; and
 - iii. disclose and appropriately manage conflicts of interest; and
- b. must not
 - i. offer or promise to give to any person anything intended to improperly influence a decision relating to your engineering activities; or
 - ii. accept from any person anything intended to improperly influence your engineering activities; or
 - iii. otherwise engage in, or support, corrupt practices.

6. Inform others of consequences of not following advice

If you become aware that your professional advice may not be followed, and consider that a failure to observe that advice may have adverse consequences, you must inform the recipient of the advice of those adverse consequences.

7. Maintain confidentiality

- a. If you obtain confidential information from clients or employers in the course of your engineering activities you
 - i. must not use the information for any purpose other than the purpose for which the information was obtained; and
 - ii. must not disclose the information unless the disclosure is permitted by this rule.
- b. You may disclose confidential information if, and to the extent that
 - i. you are required to disclose the information in order to comply with rule 3 or rule 8 and you have first raised the matter with the person to whom confidentiality is owed; or
 - ii. you are otherwise required by law to disclose the information; or
 - iii. the information is publicly available; or
 - iv. the disclosure is authorised by the person to whom confidentiality is owed.
- c. Information disclosed under subclause (b)(i) or (ii) may only be disclosed to the person or organisation to whom or to which you are required to disclose it.

8. Report breach of Code

If you have reasonable grounds to believe that another Member has committed a significant breach of the Code of Ethical Conduct you must report the matter to Engineering New Zealand.

1. Takes Reasonable Steps to safeguard Health & Safety

2. Have regard to Effects on the Environment

3. Report Adverse Consequences

4. Act Competently

5. Behave Appropriately

6. Inform Others of Consequences of not following Advice

7. Maintain Confidentiality

Professional Engineering Growth & Development

don't reinvent the wheel – adopt what is applicable to the pacific context

invest in professional development of engineers throughout their careers (on-the job training; internal mentoring; conferences; networking)

why should Engineers join a professional association? what are the benefits?

Commitment to environmental and cultural responsibility



Q & A



Pacific Region Infrastructure Facility

theprif.org

