The latest Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) in Fiji was conducted in 2019-20. By World Bank definitions of data deprivation, Fiji is classified as vulnerable, as they have two HIES data points in the last 10 years with over five years between them (2013-14 and 2019-20).

The national cost-of-basic-needs poverty rate was 24.1 percent for 2019-20. Methodology changes prevent direct comparisons between the 2019-20 data and previous HIES rounds. Poverty was highest in the outer islands (39.2 percent), but rural areas in the main islands of Viti Levu and Vanua Levu experienced much higher poverty (36.2 percent) than the urban centers (13.8 percent). Poverty also varied significantly by education and labor market characteristics of the household. Households whose heads had higher levels of education were less likely to be poor: the poverty rate was 32.7 percent and 8.4 percent among those who completed primary and tertiary education, respectively. This was also the case for households whose heads were employers or involved in salaried work, particularly outside the agriculture sector.

Fiji has low levels of poverty by international standards, with only 1.3 percent of the population living under the US$2.15 per day poverty line in 2019. However, in the same year over half of Fijians (52.6 percent) lived below the standards of living for Upper Middle Income countries (US$6.85 per day). Inequality, as measured by the Gini Index using per capita consumption, was estimated at 30.7, which is among the lowest in Pacific Island Countries as well as in the East Asia Pacific region.
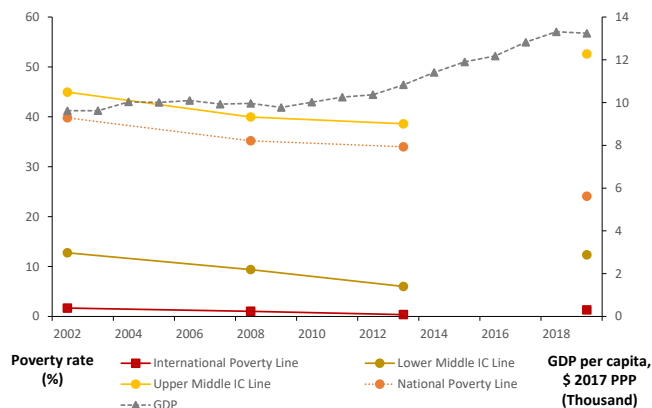
Poverty was estimated to rise sharply during the COVID-19 pandemic, up to an estimated 67.2 percent in 2021 (US$6.85 per day). However, strong economic recovery helped Fiji quickly recover to pre-pandemic levels of poverty, reaching an estimated 52.1 percent by 2023. A strong economic growth forecast over the next 2 years is projected to reduce poverty substantially, down to an estimated 46.6 percent by 2026.

The incidence of non-monetary poverty in Fiji is low. Only 2 percent of households have a school-aged child not enrolled in school, 5 percent have no access to electricity, and 5 percent have no access to limited-standard sanitation. However, access to safe drinking water is still an issue for 12 percent of households.

POVERTY	Number of Poor (thousand)	Rate (%)	Period
National Poverty Line	208.0	24.1	2019
International Poverty Line 2.2 in Fiji dollar (2019) or US$2.15 (2017 PPP) per day per capita	12.1	1.3	2019
Lower Middle Income Class Poverty Line 3.8 in Fiji dollar (2019) or US$3.65 (2017 PPP) per day per capita	113.5	12.4	2019
Upper Middle Income Class Poverty Line 7.1 in Fiji dollar (2019) or US$6.85 (2017 PPP) per day per capita	483.1	52.6	2019
Multidimensional Poverty Measure		1.6	2019
SHARED PROSPERITY			
Annualized Consumption Growth per capita of the bottom 40 percent		1.18	2008-2013
INEQUALITY			
Gini Index		30.7	2019
Shared Prosperity Premium = Growth of the bottom 40 - Average Growth		1.68	2008-2013
GROWTH			
Annualized GDP per capita growth		1.69	2008-2013
Annualized Consumption Growth per capita from Household Survey		-0.51	2008-2013
MEDIAN INCOME			
Growth of the annual median income/consumption per capita		0.73	2008-2013

Sources: WDI for GDP, National Statistical Offices for national poverty rates, PIP as of October 2023, and Global Monitoring Database for the rest.
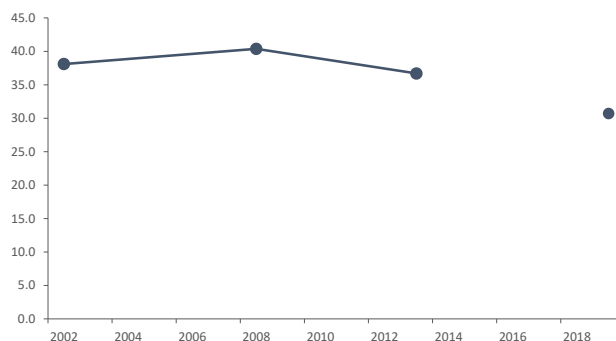
POVERTY HEADCOUNT RATE, 2002-2019

Poverty rate (%)		GDP per capita, $ 2017 PPP (Thousand)
■ International Poverty Line	● Lower Middle IC Line	
● Upper Middle IC Line	○ National Poverty Line	
▲ GDP		

Source: World Bank using HIES/EAPPOV/GMD

INEQUALITY TRENDS, 2002-2019
Gini Index

Source: World Bank using HIES/EAPPOV/GMD

KEY INDICATORS

Distribution among groups: 2019	Upper Middle Income line(%)		Relative group (%)	
	Non-Poor	Poor	Bottom 40	Top 60
Urban population	59	41	29	71
Rural population	33	67	54	46
Males				N/A
Females				N/A
0 to 14 years old	34	66	53	47
15 to 64 years old	52	48	35	65
65 and older	59	41	30	70
Without education (16+)	47	53	39	61
Primary education (16+)	46	54	41	59
Secondary education (16+)	51	49	36	64
Tertiary/post-secondary education (16+)	81	19	10	90

Source: World Bank using HIES/EAPPOV/GMD

Notes: N/A missing value, N/A* value removed due to less than 30 observations

Multidimensional Poverty Measures: 2019	(% of population)
Monetary poverty (Consumption)	
Daily consumption less than US$2.15 per person	1.3
Education	
At least one school-aged child is not enrolled in school	1.9
No adult has completed primary education	0.6
Access to basic infrastructure	
No access to limited-standard drinking water	12.0
No access to limited-standard sanitation	5.1
No access to electricity	4.5

Source: World Bank using HIES/EAPPOV/GMD

POVERTY DATA AND METHODOLOGY

Between the 2002-03 and 2013-14 HIES rounds, Fiji measured poverty using income aggregates. However, the Fiji Bureau of Statistics switched to a consumption-based measure starting with the 2019-20 HIES. The new method has the following features: 1) an adult equivalence scale with children aged 0-14 counted as half an adult; 2) a Food Poverty Line based on a calorie threshold of 2,228 calories per adult equivalent, as determined by the Fiji Food and Nutrition Centre in 2019; and 3) a single national poverty line, with spatial and temporal deflation applied to the consumption aggregates. To facilitate meaningful comparisons across countries, the World Bank publishes consumption-based estimates using three different poverty lines (2017 PPP): the International Poverty Line (US$2.15), and two other poverty lines at US$3.65 and US$6.85. For Fiji, per capita consumption aggregates were spatially deflated by survey strata (which covers the urban/rural split for each of the four geographical divisions) and temporally deflated by survey quarter.

Note on new global poverty lines: Poverty data are now expressed in 2017 Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) prices, versus 2011 PPP in previous editions. As price levels across the world evolve, global poverty lines have to be periodically updated to reflect the increase of the value of the lines in nominal terms. The new global poverty lines of $2.15, $3.65, and $6.85 reflect the typical national poverty lines of low-income, lower-middle-income, and upper-middle-income countries in 2017 prices. In addition to reflecting updates in nominal terms, upper-middle-income countries raised the standards by which they determine people to be poor from 2011 to 2017. Hence, the increase in the upper line is larger, and the population that does not meet the new standard is higher in most countries than it was with 2011 PPPs. See pip.worldbank.org.

HARMONIZATION

The numbers presented in this brief are based on the EAPPOV database. EAPPOV is a database of socio-economic statistics constructed using microdata from household surveys in the East Asia and the Pacific (EAP) region and is managed by the East Asia & Pacific Team for Statistical Development (EAPTSD). As of February 2024, the collection includes 21 countries and 127 surveys. Harmonized surveys in the EAPPOV database are compiled into 4 modules following Global Monitoring Database (GMD) Harmonization guidelines. A subset of the harmonized variables forms the basis of the GMD collection, including the welfare aggregate which is used for Global Poverty Monitoring. Terms of use of the data adhere to agreements with the original data producers.

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