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**Talking Points for Mr. Tsuguyoshi Hada, Counsellor and Deputy Chief of Mission,  
Embassy of Japan, at the Press Conference for the REACH Project during the Fiji  
National Women's Expo 2018,  
1:00 pm, Thursday 21 June 2018, FMF Gymnasium, Suva**  
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Mr. Josefa Koroivueta, Permanent Secretary for Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation,

Mr. Bakhodir Burkhanov, Country Director and Head of Regional Policy and Programme, United Nations Development Programme,

Mr. Lasiasa Rogoyawa, Manager Education, Fiji Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Commission,

Mr. Seremaia Waqainabete, Deputy Director of Legal Aid Commission,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Bula Vinaka, Namaste, Good Afternoon and Konnichiwa.

First of all, congratulations to the Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation for another successful Fiji National Women's Expo. This event has come to be an effective platform to empower women all over Fiji. Over the past five years, this expo has grown to be one of the most anticipated events of the year, here in Suva.

The REACH Project has entered into its third year, and Japan continues to be a proud partner. Through this project's outreach services and media coverage, many people have come to know about this project and its activities. More than 14,000 people in Fiji have benefitted from the REACH services, and Japan is honoured to fund such a fruitful project. We have great expectations for the third year, and we look forward to seeing the project further expand its scope and benefit more Fijians.

Our Embassy also continues its commitment to assist in the area of gender-based issues through our Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Project (GGP) programme.

The Ba Women's Forum Training Centre is one good and quite recent example of GGP assistance reaching out and benefitting women of Fiji. In February this year, the training centre was handed over to Ba Women's Forum in the presence of the Honourable Prime Minister of Fiji. I believe some of women are

here at the Expo are trained at the Training Centre, and are selling high quality goods at competitive prices. We wish them success in all their endeavours. Japan has also funded other vocational training projects like the Nalotawa Community Training Centre that opened in 2016.

The Project for Empowerment of Single Mothers and Their Children implemented in 2012 at Wainibuku, is another example project in the area of gender-based issues. The project, which has provided a sewing room for single mothers and a kindergarten for their children, gives hope to the women who are struggling to earn income for living and at the same time provides care and education for their children. Japan through the GGP Program has also helped build many other kindergartens around Fiji. These projects display our commitment to early childhood education and the empowerment of women.

The GGP Program has also implemented numerous water supply projects all over Fiji. Besides the improvement of hygiene and sanitation standards in the recipient communities, main beneficiaries of these water supply projects are the women who, without these projects, need to spend long time to walk to water source to fetch water for food and drink and wash clothes for their families.

I would like to invite representatives of the women's group present here today, who have come from different parts of Fiji, to contact our Embassy, if your communities or organizations are facing difficulties which can be addressed by our GGP Program.

Japan also continues to dispatch Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers to assist the Department of Women in its efforts to promote the livelihoods initiatives of women's groups in Fiji. There are currently two volunteers based at the Department of Women's Western Division office in Lautoka and Central Division office in Nausori. They have been involved in income generation and vocational training projects, providing guidance on bookkeeping and project management as well as advising on product development and marketing. We hope that the assistance provided by these volunteers contribute to empowerment of women in Fiji.

Thank you for listening, I wish all the women here a very joyous and fruitful National Women's Expo 2018.

**The End**