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Bula Vinaka! Our activities continue to progress well across the Ba and Ra provinces. Habitat for Humanity Fiji field staff are busy completing engagements as well as monitoring the impact of our WaSH infrastructure in schools and communities. Since our last newsletter we have completed all planned school engagements and are looking to wrap up our community engagements by the end of August – watch this space!

In this newsletter edition, we take a closer look at what it means to be a water committee member in maritime communities in Yasawa, and what is a First Flush Device and how it works. We're also excited to share how one woman in Ra is using her new WaSH knowledge and skills to make changes in communities. Read on to find out more!

First Flush Device



The First Flush Device clears away any dirt and debris from rooftops, gutters and downpipes before filling the water tank. This ensures that water tanks are filled with the cleanest water possible for drinking.

Images: A First Flush Device in Malevu Village - Yasawa. © Habitat for Humanity Fiji



Timoci Ravovou of Vinaka Fiji is the Rainwater Harvesting Coordinator for Yasawa. Timoci along with his brother Bill have been working with community volunteers installing First Flush Devices in homes and schools across the Yasawa islands since 2013.



Images: 1. Brothers (L) Bill and Timoci Ravovou. 2 & 3. Installation of a First Flush Device.
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Vinaka Fiji in partnership with Habitat for Humanity Fiji is supporting 11 communities across the Yasawa islands to improve their drinking water supply.

Click [here](#) to see how the First Flush Device works.

The Malevu Water Committee

The tasks of Water Committees in Fiji's remote rural areas go beyond planning meetings. In Malevu village of the Yasawa islands, water committee members hike over a mountainous terrain, through overgrown grasslands and dense forests to access their water sources.

On this journey they're usually greeted by fire ants, bees and the occasional snake. The water committee must also thoroughly inspect kilometers of piping for leaks, water flow rates and necessary maintenance work.

This undertaking is vital for the water committee to make the best-informed decisions so their village has a good supply of drinking water.



Images: 1. Water committee members hiking to water source. 2. A baby snake hanging out on route. 3. Water committee members taking notes and measurements for necessary pipe maintenance. 4. Water committee members testing flow rate with a Habitat Fiji field officer.

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Closing The Gap In Community WaSH Planning

WaSH data is used by government, and project implementers to design and measure impacts of WaSH projects in targeted communities. However, the government and project implementers do not have the capacity to reach all the communities in Fiji. In Burenitu (Ra Province), Habitat Fiji is empowering the committees to make their own informed decisions on how to improve community WaSH infrastructure, through teaching water committee members to collect and analyse WaSH data.

Community members like Adi Makubuna now have the skills and knowledge to gather detailed WaSH statistics about their own communities and use this to see where the gaps are in village level developments. Adi has been collecting and sharing this data back to her community. She was particularly interested in the data around inclusivity of vulnerable groups in WASH planning like people living with disabilities.

Adi Makubuna: "From the Habitat workshop, I learnt the importance of carrying out WaSH audits to effectively plan and address our community's inclusive WaSH needs. It was interesting as the data collection included people living with disabilities, this is normally overlooked in village WaSH planning."

Image: Adi Makubuna standing next to a tippy tap. © Habitat for Humanity Fiji





Adi has also shared her knowledge on carrying out WaSH audits, SODIS and tippy taps with two neighbouring settlements – Nasukamai and Multuva. Since her intervention, Multuva has established their own WaSH committee while families in Nasukamai are practising SODIS!


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