

FIJI FRONTLINE NEWS

Increasing Water Security through Inclusive Climate Change Adaptive Approaches



Recipients of the Drua Innovation Small Grant Scheme
Source: UNDP in the Pacific

Habitat for Humanity Fiji is delighted to share that it has been awarded the Drua Innovation Small Grant Scheme. This grant presents an exciting opportunity for us to implement a transformative project aimed at enhancing water security in the Togobula community through inclusive, climate change adaptive approaches. Togobula village, situated in the Malomalolo district about 10 minutes from the Queens

Highway and Batiri Road junction in the Nadroga/Navosa province, relies primarily on rainwater and borehole water sources for daily use. However, community members have expressed concerns about the time it takes to pump the borehole and fill the storage tank at maximum capacity, which can be up to three days. The new project will bring significant benefits to the Togobula community by addressing these water security challenges. It will involve the installation of rainwater tanks and provide training on the operation and maintenance of the water supply system. This initiative aims to improve access to clean and reliable water for the community, contributing to better health and quality of life.



Furthermore, Togobula village is surrounded by a vast expanse of mangroves and dry forested areas. In collaboration with District Forestry Officers, Habitat for Humanity Fiji plans to establish native tree species and food trees in the Togobula catchment area. This effort will strengthen food security and align with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 13 on Climate Action whilst promoting sustainable forest management practices.

Habitat for Humanity Fiji is honored to be one of the 12 recipients of the Grant Scheme, and we are committed to improving water security and building resilience in the Togobula community. This project represents our dedication to creating positive change and making a lasting impact on communities in need.

Bridging the Skills Gap

Through a meaningful partnership with the Fiji National University, Habitat for Humanity has been providing vocational training to help create opportunities to develop and increase the skilled workforce to meet the demands of Fiji's evolving economy.

Rural communities often face challenges in accessing quality education and training programs, which can hinder their ability to secure stable and sustainable livelihoods. By partnering with the Fiji National University, Habitat for Humanity Fiji is actively working to address this gap and providing community members with valuable skills that are in demand in the job market.

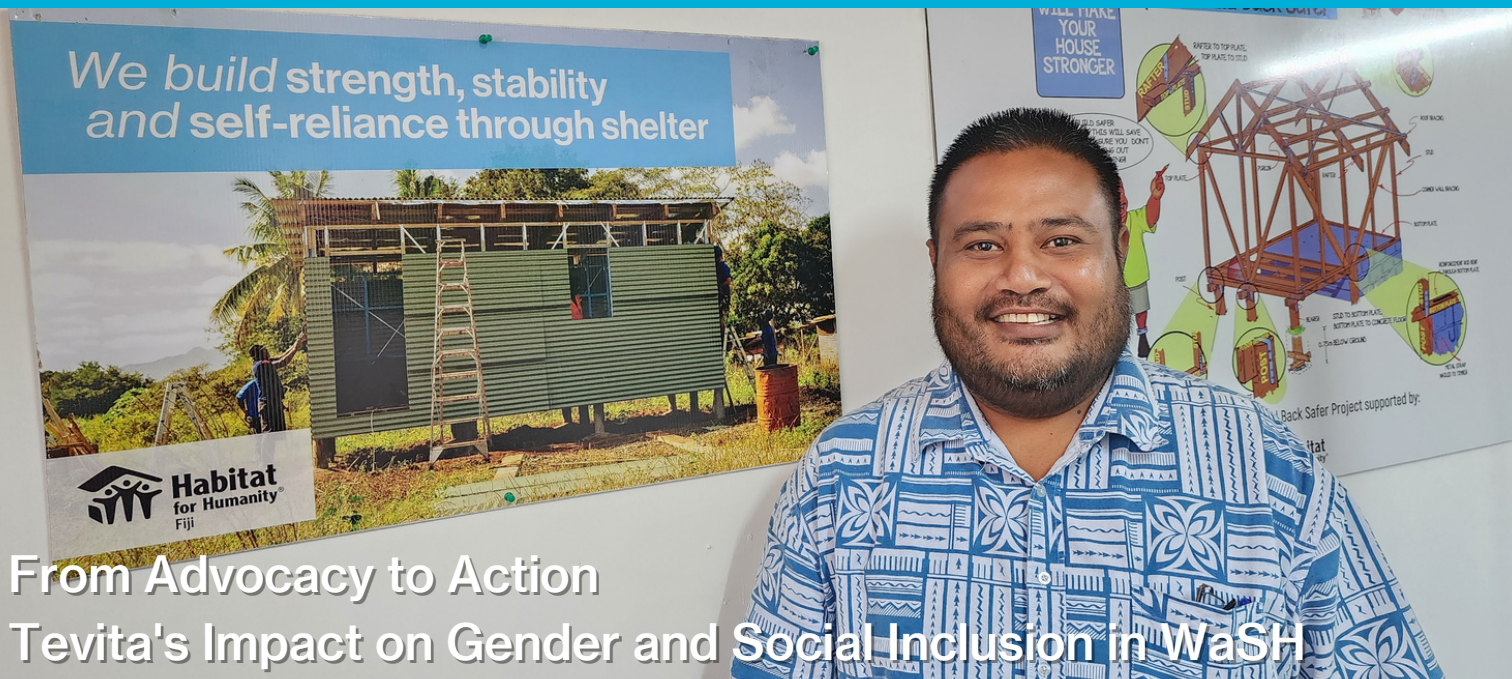
The partnership was established in 2019 after which **80 individuals** from 4 different communities around the country (Beqa, Kadavu, Rotuma, Lomaiviti) have become certified carpenters.

This training program enables participants to learn alongside fellow community members using their preferred language or dialect. To accommodate diverse literacy levels, assessments are conducted primarily through practical evaluations. Moreover, we hope the training and capacity development will also lead to increased self-confidence and empowerment among participants. As they acquire new skills and knowledge, they will be able to take on leadership roles within their communities and advocate for positive change.

Currently, 20 participants in Udu district in Northern Vanua Levu are receiving training with the support of Habitat New Zealand and the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

This training program has improved access to livelihood opportunities whereby graduates are able to acquire employment as carpenters and plumbers and further enhance climate resilience by bridging the skills gap.





From Advocacy to Action Tevita's Impact on Gender and Social Inclusion in WASH

Tevita Senico's commitment to gender equality in water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) stems from his deep-seated belief in equality, rooted in the core principles of the Bahá'í Faith. Having started as a WASH officer, his passion for advocating for women's inclusion in WASH interventions led him to his current role as the Gender Equality, Diversity, and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) Coordinator.

Tevita shared that in the Bahá'í Faith, the equality of men and women is not just a principle but a cornerstone, inspiring him to prioritize women's education at all levels of society. He understands that empowering women through education brings about profound positive changes, not only within families but also at communal and national levels.





Recognizing that women bear significant household responsibilities, Tevita acknowledges that limited access to water hampers their ability to fulfill these duties and care for their families. Issues such as menstrual hygiene and the duty of care for children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities become even more challenging without adequate access to water.

Tevita encourages collaboration with faith-based organizations, recognizing their influential role in promoting equal decision-making rights within families. By ensuring women's participation in water committees and decision-making processes, Tevita works to empower them to have a voice, which in turn uplifts the voices of other vulnerable groups.

His work extends beyond empowering women; it aims to ensure that water infrastructure designs consider the needs of vulnerable groups, such as children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. This approach not only safeguards Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) standards but also contributes to a more inclusive and equitable society. Tevita's story reminds us of the transformative power of empowering women in WASH, amplifying their voices to create a ripple effect of positive change for all.

For more information, please visit
www.habitatfiji.org.fj OR scan the QR code.
 Ph: (+679) 331 2012
 Email: info@habitatfiji.org.fj
 Address: Lot 1 Foster Road, Walu Bay, Suva, Fiji.



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