

# FIJI FRONTLINE NEWS

## Improving Access to Clean Water

Adequate housing serves as a foundation to improved accessibility to Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) infrastructure. Without secure and suitable housing, it is challenging to install and maintain water and sanitation systems effectively. The recently released Fiji Water Sector Strategy 2050, developed by the Water Authority of Fiji and the Fijian Government, has highlighted significant challenges facing the water sector. These challenges include escalating pressures from climate change, population growth, urbanization, poor land management practices, and a scarcity of skilled workers, all of which are negatively impacting water quality.



The shortage of adequate housing not only exacerbates existing pressures on the water sector but also reflects broader issues related to urban planning, resource management, and social development. Addressing the housing deficit is therefore crucial not only for improving living conditions but also improving access to water by alleviating stress on water resources and enhancing overall sustainability in Fiji. One of the communities that recently benefitted from WASH interventions is Naivibuli Village in Koroinasau District, Sigatoka.

With 20 households and 124 individuals, the community relies primarily on surface water sourced from the nearby creek. Habitat Fiji's key intervention included the construction of a new dam, installation of a new reticulation line and stand pipes and installation of an overhanging pipe across the river. The Water Committee was also provided with capacity development training to support the community with the operation and maintenance of the WaSH infrastructure.



*Sainimere Lewalau now benefits from accessible water*



“ Thank you for the development on water supply, it helps my life and I no longer have the risk of falling ”

Mr. Kami Namalo, who is visually impaired was previously faced with the challenge of collecting water from the creek. The creek is at a the distance with uneven terrain making it unsafe for Kami, women and girls as well. is project has significantly improved the community's access to safe drinking water by installing standpipes near homes.

Furthermore, it has enhanced the role of the water committee in effectively operating and maintaining the newly installed WASH facilities. This initiative not only addresses the specific needs of individuals like Mr. Namalo but also promotes a safer and more sustainable water supply for all community members, particularly benefiting women and girls who are often disproportionately affected by such challenges.

## Habitat Fiji at the Affiliates Conference

Habitat for Humanity affiliates across the U.S. and National Organizations worldwide came together in Atlanta for the 2024 conference, a moment of gratitude and hope for Habitat for Humanity Fiji. We are thankful for the opportunity to stand alongside our global partners, advocating for and garnering support for Fiji and other Pacific Island countries. The conference has given us the opportunity to share the unique challenges of our geographically dispersed population, courageously battling the harsh realities of climate change on a global level. Following the event we are filled with anticipation and eagerness to collaborate with our fellow National Organizations around the globe to achieve our collective goal of ensuring everyone has a decent place to live.



Left: Mr Patrick Ettampola Habitat for Humanity International  
Right: Ms Susan Naidu, National Director, Habitat for Humanity Fiji



# International Womens Day - Vunuku Women

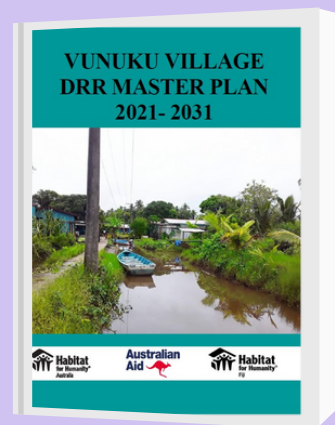


The participation of the Vunuku Women with Disability Group in the 2024 Central Division Women's Expo to showcase their handicrafts is a testament to the empowerment of women and persons with disabilities in Vunuku Village. These groups highlight the skills and talents of their members and also demonstrate the importance of inclusivity and diversity in economic development.

The progression of Social Enterprises within Vunuku Village has been one of the outcomes achieved through the DRR Master Plan 2021-2031.

These handicrafts now provide a source of income for women and persons with disabilities while simultaneously fostering a sense of community and pride in their traditional crafts.

They are shining examples of how women and persons with disabilities can contribute meaningfully to society when given the opportunity.



## Habitat Fiji in the TWG-HM

Climate change and disasters pose significant challenges in the Pacific, impacting communities and livelihoods. To address this complex issue, the Pacific Resilience Partnership Technical Working Group on Human Mobility (TWG-HM) recently held a workshop to review ongoing priorities, assess progress, and develop an actionable work plan for 2024–2025.

Habitat for Humanity Fiji provides valuable insight in the TWG-HM because of our involvement in community relocation projects, such as Nakanacagi. These projects are essential for helping communities adapt to the impacts of climate change and disasters, ensuring their resilience and sustainability.



*Members of the Technical Working Group*

Addressing climate change and disasters in the Pacific requires coordinated and targeted action. By working together with other stakeholders, we hope to contribute to the development of strategies and policies aimed at addressing climate-related human mobility challenges in the Pacific and build a more resilient and sustainable future.



# Renivani Serulevu: A Passion for Community at Habitat Fiji



Renivani Serulevu serves as Habitat for Humanity Fiji's Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, Analysis, and Learning (MEAL) Manager, originally from Tamusua Yasawa. Joining Habitat Fiji in 2018 as a MEAL Officer, her decision stemmed from a profound belief in God's calling and dedication to community development. Previously, Renivani held positions as an Assistant Health Inspector for Suva City introducing her to monitoring and enforcing health regulations to safeguard community well-being. Renivani discovered her passion for community development during her tenure as a Community Development Officer at Viseisei Sai Health Centre. It was fate that led her to Habitat for Humanity Fiji; she first noticed the organization's logo on a passing vehicle, sparking her curiosity and ultimately guiding her towards a fulfilling career path

In her current role, Renivani is instrumental in implementing evidence-based interventions and evaluating project impact through meticulous data collection and analysis. For Renivani, Habitat for Humanity Fiji is more than just a workplace; it's a place where she can truly make a difference in people's lives.

*"This is one place that has given me the opportunity to do what I love; help communities and improve lives,"* Renivani shares. Her passion for community development shines through in every aspect of her work. "I wanted to help people change their lives through behavior change, and community development is an area where we can practice that," she adds.

Balancing her roles as a mother, part-time student pursuing Postgraduate studies, and a dedicated professional, Renivani travels weekly between Lautoka and Suva to fulfill her responsibilities. Despite the distance, Renivani remains dedicated to both her work and her family, balancing her commitments with grace and determination.

Looking ahead, Renivani hopes to enhance her expertise and eventually venture into consultancy work. Her aim is to pursue her passion in promoting accountability, learning, and evidence-based decision-making in the development sector ultimately contributing to a brighter and more sustainable future for all.

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