

Fijian Stories from the Heart of Communities

New Water and Sanitation Systems Transform Lives in Lumiboso Village



Commissioning of the Water System with Community Members

With the support of the Embassy of Japan, Habitat Fiji was able to support over 100 residents across 23 households in Lumiboso Village, Cakaudrove Province, with access to safe drinking water and improved sanitation.

Through Japan's Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects funding support of FJD\$300,000 we were able to construct a new dam catchment, distribute pipelines, water tanks, and household water connections. Nine new sanitation facilities were also built, along with rainwater harvesting systems to increase water security during

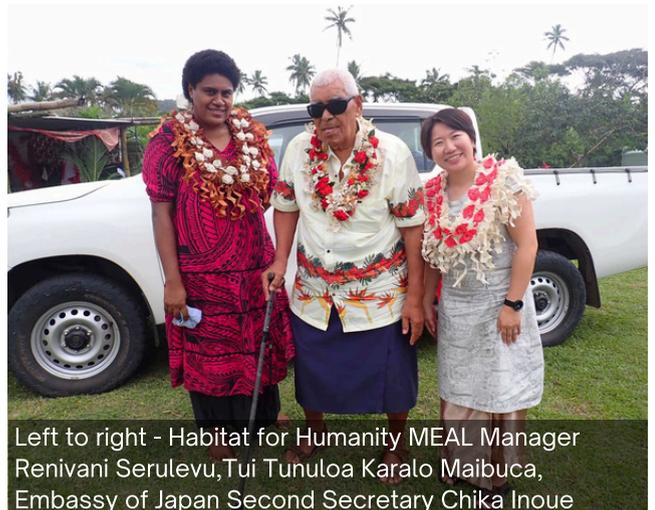
dry seasons. To ensure long-term sustainability, community members were also trained in system maintenance, basic plumbing, and financial literacy. This empowering approach enables us to build local skills and confidence, supporting families to take charge of their own water and sanitation systems.

Prior to this intervention, Lumiboso Village had no access to a government water supply system and relied on a single, unprotected water source. The initial WASH infrastructure constructed in the late 80s had deteriorated following years of service and a lack of proper maintenance.

Access to clean water and adequate sanitation is essential for safe, dignified, and resilient homes. We are grateful for the Embassy of Japan's support, which has made this critical intervention possible, and remain committed to delivering impactful and sustainable solutions at the grassroots level," said Sangita Kumar, Interim National Director, Habitat for Humanity Fiji.

"Access to safe water and sanitation is fundamental to people's health, education, and economic activities. Through this project, we hope for a brighter future for the children of this village", says Chika Inoue, Second Secretary, Embassy of Japan.

"At the same time, this project will be an important step in deepening the friendship between our two countries. This project, realized through the cooperation of both countries, is a joint effort toward sustainable development for the future, and we hope it will become a symbol of friendship between the people of both nations", she adds.



Left to right - Habitat for Humanity MEAL Manager Renivani Serulevu, Tui Tunuloa Karalo Maibuca, Embassy of Japan Second Secretary Chika Inoue

Welcoming Sangita Kumar as Interim National Director



We announce the appointment of Sangita Kumar as the Interim National Director of Habitat for Humanity Fiji. The Board warmly welcomes Sangita into this role. Her leadership will help maintain momentum on key initiatives and support the team during this important transition period.

Sangita currently serves as our Head of Regional Development and she brings over 20 years of experience across from the development and public sectors. Her expertise spans policy leadership, donor coordination and program management, with a strong track record in advancing initiatives across sustainable housing solutions and economic growth.

She has designed and led multi-sectoral programs across Pacific Island countries and held senior roles in government ministries, working closely with key partners including MFAT, DFAT, and regional stakeholders. She is passionate about creating impact at scale and influencing meaningful change in the housing sector in Fiji and beyond.

As we begin recruitment for a permanent National Director, Sangita's steady and committed leadership will guide us through this transition and continue to advance Habitat's mission of building strength, stability, and self-reliance through shelter.

Please join us in congratulating and welcoming Sangita into this new leadership role.

Introducing Our New Board Member: Ms. Ann Patricia Naisara

We are delighted to welcome Ms. Ann Patricia Naisara as the newest member of the Habitat for Humanity Fiji Board of Trustees. Ms. Naisara is a highly respected legal professional with extensive experience across corporate law, compliance, and employment relations.

Her areas of practice have included property and large-scale transactions and acquisitions, hotel and tourism development, corporate compliance, foreign investment, company incorporations, and employment law. She began her career with the distinguished law firm Munro Leys before moving to Westpac Banking Corporation (Fiji) as the Senior Manager Legal where she currently serves as Head of Human Resources.

Beyond her professional roles, Ms. Naisara is deeply engaged in community leadership and is a Leadership Fiji alumni. She is the Chair of Women's Fund Fiji's Governance Board and represented Westpac on the Women's Entrepreneurial Business Council since 2020. She also previously held Board chairperson positions on the International School Suva Board and FemLINK Pacific.

Her wealth of experience and commitment to community development will be an invaluable asset to our mission of building homes, communities, and hope.



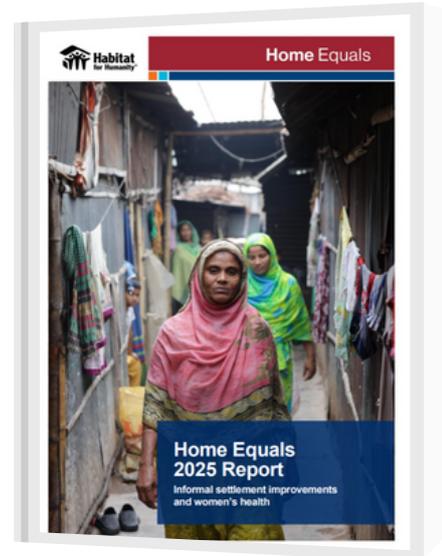
Women's Health and Informal Settlements

It is rare that a nation can address two pressing issues with one investment, but a newly released Habitat for Humanity International report finds that by investing in adequate housing in slums and informal settlements, governments can improve women's health outcomes, including lowering incidents of gender-based violence.

More than 1.1 billion people live in informal settlements. And while that is almost certainly an undercount, women are overrepresented in these communities. We know now through predictive analysis that within the first year of investing in informal settlements:

- **20.3 million illnesses could be prevented**, including respiratory infections, enteric infections, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, reproductive and urinary tract infections, and heat sickness. This improvement of the health of women in informal settlements is comparable to the case of paralysis avoided by the polio vaccine over 37 years.
- **2.9 million incidents of gender-based violence could be prevented** (intimate partner violence, non-partner sexual violence). At least one of every 17 cases of sexual violence could be prevented if improvements in informal settlements are implemented.
- **80,200 preventable deaths could be avoided**. At least one in four maternal deaths and one of every six deaths due to heat stroke could be avoided globally if improvements in informal settlements are implemented

Housing and women's health are linked as societal challenges, and governments worldwide can address both with a single investment. The full report, "[Informal Settlement Improvements and Women's Health](#)", is available now.



In Memoriam

Habitat for Humanity Fiji takes this moment to remember and honour our dear colleague and friend, Ledua Koto, who sadly passed away on 19th May.

Ledua was a valued member of our Habitat family for the past 13 years. He supported our WASH projects, bringing warmth, dedication, and compassion to every life he touched. His presence, both in the office and in the communities we serve, will be deeply missed.

Our thoughts and heartfelt condolences are with his family, friends, and loved ones during this difficult time.

Rest in love and peace, Ledua. 🌸

You will always remain in our hearts.

Rebuilding with Purpose: How Plumbing Skills Empowered Siteri



Siteri fixing a leaking pipe

In Narikoso Village, the rising sea is not a distant threat but a reality that has already claimed homes and livelihoods. Much like many low-lying island atolls in Fiji and the Pacific, Narikoso has experienced the devastating impacts of sea level rise and storm surges firsthand leaving individuals like Siteri with no option but to move to higher grounds.

For Siteri and her family, whose lives revolve around fishing and subsistence farming, starting over was not just emotionally daunting – it was economically overwhelming. But a new chapter began when the Fijian Government's relocation project moved a portion of the village to higher ground, offering safer, more secure housing to affected families.

To enhance community resilience, the relocation project constructed kitchens for all the seven newly built homes. Habitat for Humanity Fiji, with support from the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), lead this effort.

Understanding that women shoulder the primary responsibility for household tasks such as fetching and

managing water, preparing food, weaving, and caring for their families, we identified that these daily routines were often disrupted by ongoing water-related challenges.

Coupled with poor water system maintenance, limited plumbing knowledge, and a heavy dependence on the village water committee for repair works, it became quite difficult for women like Siteri to meet their families' needs. Without the skills or tools to address these issues directly, many women are left waiting – sometimes for days – before help arrives.

Given these challenges, we carried out basic plumbing training with women in the community.

With great support from community leaders and family members through a safeguarding and awareness process, twelve women, including Siteri, enrolled in the training. For Siteri, the experience was transformative. Through the training she has been able to independently set up a complete basic water system for the detached cooking structure her husband built.

"I can support my husband when he returns tired from the farm," Siteri says proudly. "And I can also repair the piping system if anything goes wrong." But beyond technical skills, the training reshaped how Siteri saw water maintenance at home. It is no longer "his" or "her" job. Instead, it has become a shared responsibility, rooted in care, and understanding.

Through inclusive training, safe housing, and supportive partnerships, the Narikoso project has been able to shift mindsets, empower women and support families like Siteri's to thrive.



Relocated homes in Narikoso Village



Building Resilient Homes, Empowering Communities

Two inspiring youths represented Fiji at the Habitat Youth Assembly in Cebu, Philippines last month to connect with other young changemakers and housing experts from across the Asia Pacific region.

The duo were shortlisted for the 2025 Habitat Youth Solutions Grant — among 40 other candidates across the entire Asia-Pacific region!

Meet Alowesi Taleiqio (Top Left)

Teacher | Vanuavatu, Lau

For Alowesi, a dedicated teacher at Ratu Filimoni Vukinamualevu Memorial School, a decent home means more than shelter, it is the foundation of stability, health, and hope.

“A decent home provides a foundation for stability and security. It safeguards families’ health.”

Her passion to uplift vulnerable families is matched by her commitment to empower youth. Through this program, Alowesi is sharpening her leadership and collaboration skills, aiming to inspire young people across Fiji to become active citizens and community champions.

“I want to see youth empowered to lead positive change — creating homes and communities where dignity thrives.”

Meet Ricky Nadan (Middle)

Civil Engineer | Ba

Ricky’s vision combines innovation and tradition. With a degree in Civil Engineering, he champions bamboo — a natural, sustainable, and abundant resource in Fiji — as a solution to the challenge of affordable and resilient housing.

“Bamboo is abundant here, but what’s missing is awareness and the knowledge to use it well.”

Driven by the desire to reduce vulnerability to cyclones and improve living standards, Ricky wants to lead community-based efforts that teach families how to build strong, affordable homes from locally available materials.

“I want to empower communities with the skills and confidence to build homes that stand strong — no matter the weather.”

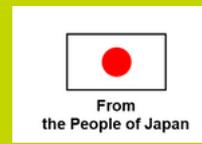
“This achievement reflects the creativity, commitment, and community spirit of Fijian youths. The selection of two local projects reflects the potential that exists within Fiji’s younger generation to influence regional development through grassroots innovation”, said Sangita Kumar, Interim National Director, Habitat for Humanity Fiji.

Some highlights from our first Global Village build this year





VINAKA & THANK YOU



VINAKA & THANK YOU TO
OUR TITHE PARTNERS

- Austin Hfh (Tx)
- Los Angeles Hfh Of Greater (Ca)
- Kershaw County Hfh Of (Sc)
- Ulster County Hfh (Ny)
- Hawaii Hfh Association
- Lawton-Ft. Sill Hfh (Ok)



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