



PRESS RELEASE
29 September 2009

PARTNERS IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FIJI

**‘BOTTOM UP’
THE NEW PIONEERING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
APPROACH HELPING THOUSANDS OF FIJIANS**

Thousands of people living in Fiji’s rural areas could be struggling to cope with the changes in the economic climate – and every month this number grows. That is why the dedication of those working on the Mainstreaming of Rural Development Programmes (MORDI) is so essential to those communities.

This pioneering ‘bottom up’ approach to community development is proving to help thousands move out of the poverty cycle. It has been estimated* that 90% of the 180 million poor households in the Asian Pacific region lack access to financial services. The global economic crisis has seen a fall off in trade – causing a widening gap between the revenue they would have normally and that that they are bringing in now. It is the less fortunate people that are seeing and feeling these gaps, it is they who are affected. MORDI helps to fill these gaps.

Based in Fiji, Kiribati and Tonga, the program has an extensive and effective reach. To date, MORDI has helped 9,629 individuals and 63 communities throughout its regions.

Iliapi Tuwai, MORDI Fiji’s Project Coordinator, says: “Life changing environmental, economic or social events can cause individuals as well as whole communities to fall to their knees. It is these more vulnerable communities, especially youth and women, living in remote rural areas of Pacific Island countries, who we aim to help. Last week we held a week-long meeting to

establish our goals for 2010 and discuss the challenges faced during 2009. It was an incredibly productive week and we all feel excited about the forthcoming year ahead”.

The MORDI Fiji program, funded by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), is in its third year of operation at PCDF. It has been a unique addition to the PCDF work-plan and it has proven itself to be innovative in the ways it deals with its communities.

“We are unique in the way we have built strong partnerships with larger, established institutes such as FIT who are playing an integral role in training. Our core method of training and empowering the communities from within is known as the ‘bottom up’ approach. The community facilitators are chosen by and live in the communities which they help, it is this ‘bottom up’ approach to community development which MORDI prides itself on – helping communities to help themselves is proving to be really productive.” said Iliapi Tuwai.

In other countries micro credit programs have proved to be an effective tool in freeing people from poverty and have helped to increase their participation in the economic and political processes of society.

The MORDI Fiji program has 28 community facilitators in three districts working with 28 communities.

Programme Project Sites:



MORDI aims to contribute to sustainable, improved livelihoods of vulnerable communities, (especially youth and women) living in remote rural areas of Pacific Island countries, in line with the Millennium Development Goals. This will be achieved through four key components: community empowerment; economic empowerment; learning, sharing and upscaling; and programme management.

Ends

Editor's Notes:

* The Asian Development Bank

For further information, photos or interview contact: Iliapi Tuwai on 3300392 extension 101 or email admin@pcdf.org.fj.

About Partners in Community Development Fiji:

PCDF holds a 30 year legacy of providing valuable lessons, guidance and most importantly, inspiration for the future. PCDF aims to assist the people of Fiji in all aspects of development; environmental, infrastructural, governmental and social.

Goals:

- ✓ Protect our coral reefs
- ✓ Conserve our fresh water
- ✓ Promote good governance
- ✓ Reduce the stigma attached to mental health issues
- ✓ Support sustainable livelihood initiatives

Partners in Community Development Fiji is one of Fiji's longest established development NGO's and is completely reliant on voluntary donations to continue its work.

Mission Statement - Working in partnership with communities to empower and assist with informed decision making for their own future development.

Partners in Community Development Fiji

8 Denison Rd, Suva

Phone: (679) 3314 160