

Partners in Community Development Fiji

Working to empower communities by assisting them to make informed decisions for their future development.

RA KAKA NEWSLETTER



May 2011

Issue 5/11

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Cicia book drive going strong with more than 700 donations

Suva, Fiji – **More than 700 books have been donated in response to last months' book drive for Cicia island's village schools.**

Boxes at our collection point at the Downtown Boulevard in Suva were quickly filled to the brim with story and text books as well as other useful read-



PCDF and YWCA staff after painting a banner for the Downtown Boulevard collection point.

ing material. More boxes of books have been donated by individuals and institutions around Suva.

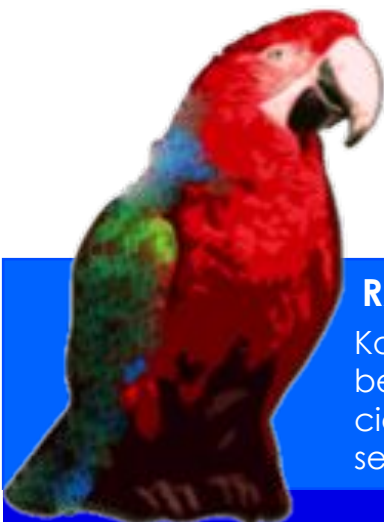
The drive has rallied support from the Federated States of Micronesia and other schools and groups outside the region - we have received positive responses from as far as New Zealand and Australia.

With the tremendous success so far, we plan to extend this support to other rural schools within PCDF's project sites that are in need of library books and educational materials to provide their children with a good standard of education.

We are grateful to the Fiji National Provident Fund for allowing the team to set up the man collection point in Downtown and also to the Young Professionals Club (YPs) of YWCA Fiji.

RA KAKA

Kaka is Kadavu for parrot. Kadavu Province is the home of the beautiful shining parrot, 'prosopiea splendens', an endemic species. The Kaka is a messenger not only on land but also on sea - it serves as a communicator for God's living creatures.



Finance and Admin update

- Funds from AusAid for Small Infrastructure received
- Funds for the EED programme received
- We are having on-going meetings with Donors on new projects
- Programme audit documentation due for six month audit
- Staff is mindful of the Health Promoting Policy, Child Policy, Gender Policy and Environmental Policy in the work place

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

Motivated volunteers wanted to raise Environmental awareness at the community level

The Natural Resource Management (NRM) team is looking for part time volunteers who are keen on raising environmental awareness at the community level.

If you are a graduate and currently job hunting, this could be an interesting break for you!

Come join our team and help facilitate awareness programs with rural schools and communities.



The NRM team with happy participants of a clean-up session in Serua

Email your details to:
admin@pcdf.org.fj

3-year MOU signed to further community training in rural areas

A milestone was reached last month, when a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between PCDF, the Center for Appropriate Technology and Development (CATD) and the Integrated Human Resources Development Program (IHRDP) to encourage training in rural communities on business literacy, leadership and capacity building over the next 3 years.

PCDF Executive Director, Tevita Ravumaidama, and Director of CATD Josefani Bola signed the MOU on May the 19th. On May the 24th PCDF and IHRDP a second MOU was signed with the Permanent Secretary of National Planning.

CATD is a semi government training institution under the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs responsible for



CATD's Josefani Bola and PCDF's Tevita Ravumaidama, after signing the MOU

facilitating technical training that ranges from Leadership to carpentry for rural communities. PCDF has been working with CATD for the past two years.

IHRDP, which is implemented by the National Planning Office will

be funding PCDF to undertake capacity building programs in rural communities from the third quarter of 2011 onwards.

The programme will support the empowerment of detached rural communities in Fiji.

MORDI NEWS

Youths dedicate their holidays to helping village school, but there is still a long way to go, says Director of Rural Development

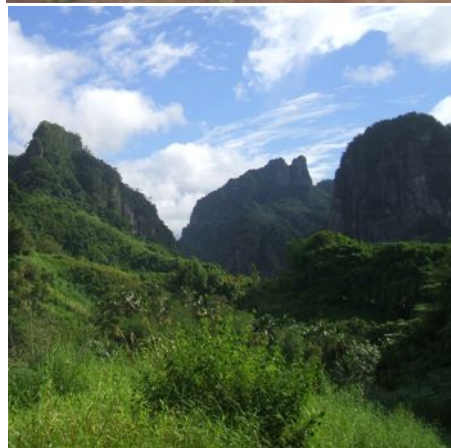
By Iliapi Tuwai

Wainiyavu Village School is located high up in the interior of Namosi and can be reached only by a steep and dangerous walk; a walk undertaken by the village children every day.

Recently, a group of youths from Naqarawai and Wainimakutu selflessly spent their two week school break building a canteen and tool room for the school after recognising the needs of the children. But there is more development to be done, as civil society leaders discovered on a recent visit to the district of Veinuqa.

From May 10th – 11th, Tevita Boseiwaqa, member of the National Advisory Committee (NAC) and Director of Rural Development from the Ministry of Provincial Development, National Disaster and Sugar accompanied MORDI programme coordinator Iliapi Tuwai to Veinuqa to examine the current development progress.

The team visited the primary school located on top of a steep hill to experience the difficulties faced by the village children at first hand. A pathway to the school has been constructed so that children can avoid the slippery surface, though the steepness of the hill requires precaution. This is the walk the children of Wainiyavu have to travel to reach school every day.



Top: Naqarawai and Wainimakutu Youths building School Canteen and Tool shed.

Left: View of the highlands Right: Tevita Boseiwaqa (left) and Iliapi Tuwai on their way to Wainiyavu village.

Until now, most children had to duplicate the walk home at lunch time. Because the walk is so difficult, there has been an urgent need for a school canteen to help with the provision of meals for the children.

The initiative of the youth group, who all have carpentry skills, is a huge step forward for Wainiyavu's development and an enormous relief for the children and their parents. The group came fully equipped with chainsaws to cut timber and cement and roofing irons to help the building. Tevita Boseiwaqa extended his support to the project by promising to supply the remaining building materials.

The income made from the village canteen will serve as a source of

funding to support the running of the school.

The school was built ten years ago and has slowly expanded ever since. Three years ago, funding support from the European Union oversaw the renovation and relocation of the school: a classroom and a quarter for the head teacher was built. Later, a second classroom was built by the villagers themselves, using material from the old site.

After speaking with the village elders of the five villages of Veinuqa, Boseiwaqa was impressed at how increasingly self-reliant the MORDI sites are becoming when it comes to developing their communities.

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However, despite all efforts, today the building looks run down. Boseiwaqa suggested repairs and renovations to a standard suitable for rural schools. He urged the school committee to submit proposals to the Ministry of Rural Development that is responsible for the funding support.

Boseiwaqa directed words of encouragement to the committee and management: "Now that I have seen how hard you are struggling to make things happen for your children with so little support, and with the remoteness of your village, I will make sure that your project for the school will be a priority to us".

The school Manager said, "the visit today was a timely one, because our prayers have been heard for someone to help us with the need of our school, thank you so much for this gesture of kindness".

The Wainiyavu school initiative sets an example for other remote rural villages in Fiji, demonstrating how difficult challenges can be overcome when communities and civil society groups work together.



Short guide to Fiji's trees

Reserved Forest – Vesi *Intsia bijuga*

Abundant in beach and coastal forests, on the edges of Mangroves and in dry forests. The trees take up to 100 years to reach maturity. Widely used as timber and for small items of carved ware such as kava and pudding bowls. Different plant parts are also used for medicine.

Vesi timber can be sold at \$800/m³ green sawn timber or at up to \$1,800/m³ when dressed as decking and flooring.

Vaivai

Grows widely across Fiji, some times considered invasive. Mostly found on agricultural land serving as nitrogen fixing trees. Can be processed as timber, to be used for carvings, furniture, paneling, veneer and also used for turnery, posts, framing in boat building and plywood.

Vaivai can be sold from \$650-\$850/m³.

Sandalwood - Yasi

Abundant in Fiji, can be found in dry open forests. Currently sells at \$15/kg. A tree of 1m³ or 1 ton is worth \$15,000 – it is the most expensive tree in Fiji. The fragrant wood is valued for incense and religious ceremonies, boxes and carved pieces, perfuming oils and for medicine.

Mahogany

Fiji Mahogany was introduced from North America in the early 60's. Its exports is forecast to contribute significantly to Fiji's economy over the next 5 years.

Mahogany grows well in the wet side of Fiji including the Eastern Division. A tree takes 30 years to grow. In Fiji, the timber is used for building and for interior finishing.

Termed 'rich man's timber', Mahogany sells in the world market from \$800/m³ to \$3,500/m³. It is one of the most expensive timbers in the world market.



We have revitalised our YouTube channel and will continue to update videos connected to our work! Come and check it out: www.youtube.com/pcdfiji

MORDI COMMUNITY STORY

Dreams come true – musical youth help their community

By Talica Anderson

Three young boys from Natuvu in the district of Wailevu, Cakaudrove are using their singing talents to make their footmark in Fiji’s music history whilst at the same time supporting the development of their Vanua.

Natuvu village is located on the coastal side of Wailevu along the Savusavu bay. PCDF’s MORDI programme has been working in the area for the last five years to support and empower local communities to lift themselves out of poverty. Until recently, the three boys, aged between 15 – 26 years old, were busy farming the land and catching fish in their spare time, only dreaming about the prospect of becoming professional singers one day.

The idea to start up a music group came when the trio was sitting together during lunch hour, listening to the radio. In the early days, they would sing along to the music that was played. Today, they write their own songs, especially love songs, for couples, friends and other community members. The boys enjoy writing songs for other people as they can use these songs for their song books.

Natuvu has a history of great talents: the boys’ parents were also singers. In fact, the first sanitation project in the village - which brought flush toilets to the community - was financed by the money earned from their singing success. Now, the trio is planning to build on this success and go the extra mile: they are saving their earnings to contribute to



Top: The trio from Natuvu pictured here with a friend (right)

Bottom: Villagers(left) and PCDF staff (right) have a go at playing the new instruments

To date, the trio has produced three albums, which have featured on Fiji’s radio stations.

the development of youth projects for the community. Project proposals have been submitted and, if approved, the required 25% contribution will be paid for by these savings.

A lack of musical equipment such as guitars and ukuleles has hindered the development of local music in the past. However, the tale of the musical trio that is entertaining the crowds of Wailevu has travelled overseas and im-

pressed their elder brothers and sisters so much that they decided to support the group by sending brand new guitars and ukuleles.

To date, the trio has produced 3 albums of 10 songs each, which have been hosted by the Fijian radio station (Viti FM & Bula FM) and are selling their CD entitled “Na Voqa Vou ni Delai Nakorosaka”.

With the support of their elder siblings and through the power of initiative and talent, the boys have made their dreams come true. Not only have they made their passion their profession, but they have also made the name of Natuvu village known to every community in the province of Cakaudrove and the whole of Fiji.



PARTNERS IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FIJI

8 Denison Road PO Box 14447, Suva, Fiji.

Phone: (679) 330 0392/(679) 3314 160

Fax: (679) 3304 315

Email: admin@pcdf.org.fj



www.pcdf.org.fj

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Passionate about Community Development?

**We are currently looking for
motivated individuals to join
us as members of PCDF!**

A sincere interest in community
development is a must.

If you are interested in becoming
a member, please write to
the Executive Director at our
Suva office on 8 Denison Road
or email: admin@pcdf.org.fj

Join us and support our important
work with an **annual membership
fee of only \$20.00.**

*Previous members are also
encouraged to apply*

The PCDF Team

Key contacts

Press/Ra KaKa Editor & Layout.....Alexandra Schiffmann
Finance & Administration.....Annie Madden
Graphic Art.....Filipe Waqairagata
MORDI.....Iliapi Tuwai
Natural Resource Management.....Matilita Kedrayate

Ferine Bano, Sereana Rakai, Feke Serau, Ilisapeci Whippy, Tiriseyani
Naulivou, Watisoni Sokiveta, Ilisoni Tuinasavusavu, Talica Anderson,
Setefano Nauqe, Seruwaia Hoyte, Susana Lewanituva, Moala Volau,
Marika Tuvasu, Solomone Bolenaivalu

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Laitia Tamata, Tevita Ravumaidama (Executive Director).

Donors

PCDF humbly salutes the following organisations, without whom we
could not complete any of our important work:

**AUSAID, NZAID, IFAD, FSPI, EED, Rotary Water for Life,
Shangri-La's Fijian Resort, Canada Fund**

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