Tourism Business Working With Remote Islands For Food Security

Through a new Food Bank project, remote island communities in Fiji's Yasawa Islands in the Western Division will be better prepared to have food supplies in times of disaster, even if their crops are destroyed.

This initiative is the result of a Private Sector Engagement partnership with the Department of Agriculture, Ba Provincial Office, Commissioner Western's Office and Vinaka Fiji, which is a volunteer programme sponsored by tourism company Awesome Adventures Fiji. It is being enabled by the Pacific Risk Resilience Programme (PRRP) in partnership with Live & Learn Environmental Education (LLEE).

The Department of Agriculture plans to use existing farmer networks to create Food Banks, and to also establish complementary agricultural Knowledge Hubs for farmers to share risk-sensitive farming information such as mixed cropping and climate resilient crops. Knowledge Hubs will assist local farmers while facilitating the growth of Food Banks and other agricultural initiatives.

To complement the initiative, the Department of Agriculture will provide the communities with agriculture training on resilient crops and food storage including traditional knowledge approaches, with PRRP's support.

**Food Banks: preparing for disasters**
The Food Banks will assist communities to better prepare and have food supplies in times of disaster, even if their crops are destroyed. The Food Bank project includes crop planting and storage so there is food during a disaster period, plus raising funds for post-disaster recovery.

The Food Banks will introduce risk-resilient crops and farming techniques to help the communities become more resilient to climate change and disasters.

The Food Banks will also help the communities generate extra income, by selling surplus crops. For example, if there have been no disasters by the end of the year, and the planting and harvest is successful, money from crop sales can be banked to create an emergency fund for any future disasters.

Planning ahead for such potential climate change and disaster related-risks is central to PRRP's work, which focuses on how communities, governments, and the private sector can all work together to help build resilience, by embedding risk into planning processes across all levels of governance.
Vinaka Fiji
The Vinaka Fiji Trust coordinates volunteer programs in Fiji’s remote Yasawa Islands to provide basic needs such as fresh water, nutrition, power supply and education to 15 remote communities in the Yasawa Islands.

Through fundraising and volunteering, Vinaka Fiji aims to improve the provision of basic needs and amenities for villages throughout the Yasawa Islands. It seeks to do this both through direct aid and by acting as a facilitator, bringing those who can help – such as the Government and PRRP – together with the landowners and residents.

Vinaka Fiji works directly with the Yasawa Island communities so that the villagers are involved in determining their needs, participate in the planning and implementation and share responsibility for completion of the projects embarked upon.

Villagers are involved in Food Bank planning and preparation. (Photo: Vinaka Fiji)