



AT A GLANCE

Families served to date¹

737

Families served this year²

179

¹New houses and rehabilitations

²New houses, rehabilitations and repairs
in the year to June 30, 2010

— Updated January 2011 —

FIJI is one of the first nations to see the morning sun each day. Endowed with rich forest, mineral and fish resources, Fiji is one of the most developed Pacific Island economies and serves as a hub for many small island nations. However, a chronic lack of investment and under-employment pose obstacles to sustainable and equitable economic growth.

Poverty and inequality continue to be a major challenge with 31 percent of Fiji citizens living below the basic needs poverty line between 2008 and 2009, based on the latest available data.

According to some estimates, Fiji will need an additional 30,000 houses over the next 15 years. In rural areas or villages, indigenous Fijian families have access to community-owned land on which they can build homes, provided that they can afford construction costs. In urban and suburban areas, both Indo-Fijians and indigenous Fijians have difficulty finding sufficient, affordable land with secure tenure.

It is estimated that about 140,000 people – 17 percent of Fiji's population – live in one of more than 180 squatter or informal settlements. An estimated 80 percent of those in these settlements live below the national poverty line, earning less than 90 Fiji dollars (US\$50) a week. The poorest households lack piped water, adequate sanitation, electricity or rubbish disposal.

Habitat for Humanity Fiji was founded in 1991. Today, the national office is in Suva. HFH Fiji's mission is to work in partnership with families in need to provide them with safe and decent living conditions.

Habitat also assists communities in reducing poverty by helping to build, repair or improve other community structures such as schools, water or sanitation systems, orphanages, and women's shelters.

The conventional means of acquiring land and building a home can cost about \$40,000 to 50,000 Fiji dollars (US\$22,000-27,000). As such, the state Fiji Housing Authority has found that the formal housing market caters only to upper income groups.

To meet the housing needs of low-income families, HFH Fiji helps to build simple, two-bedroom homes which cost the equivalent of about US\$12,000 each. HFH Fiji also renovates and upgrades homes at an estimated cost of US\$3,000 a unit.

Habitat homes in Fiji are typically built with a combination of locally supplied timber, concrete, and metal roofing.

Fiji is regularly affected by tropical cyclones and flooding. HFH Fiji has, for example, partnered with New Zealand Agency for International Development (NZAID) and AusAID, the Australian government aid agency, to rebuild housing and schools for low-income families and communities in the worst flood-affected areas on Vanua Levu island.

Habitat's work goes beyond construction of homes. HFH Fiji works on a range of projects throughout the country including disaster prevention and recovery, water and sanitation, and disabled access housing projects. HFH Fiji designs and builds special homes and installs home modifications for lower-income disabled persons to provide them with effective access to their living quarters.

HFH Fiji hosts up to 20 Global Village teams each year. The volunteers provide essential labor and financial assistance to families in need so that they can live in their own decent, safe, affordable home. 🏠

COUNTRY FACTS

POPULATION: 875,983 (July 2010 est.)

CAPITAL: Suva

LAND AREA: 18,274 sq. km.

ETHNIC GROUPS: Fijian 57.3% (predominantly Melanesian with a Polynesian admixture), Indian 37.6%, Rotuman 1.2%, other 3.9% (European, other Pacific Islanders, Chinese) (2007 census)

LANGUAGES: English (official), Fijian, Hindustani

RELIGIONS: Christian 64.5% (Methodist 34.6%, Roman Catholic 9.1%, Assembly of God 5.7%, Seventh Day Adventist 3.9%, Anglican 0.8%, other 10.4%), Hindu 27.9%, Muslim 6.3%, Sikh 0.3%, other or unspecified 0.3%, none 0.7% (2007 census)

LITERACY: 93.7% (2003 census)

URBANIZATION: 52% of total population (2008)

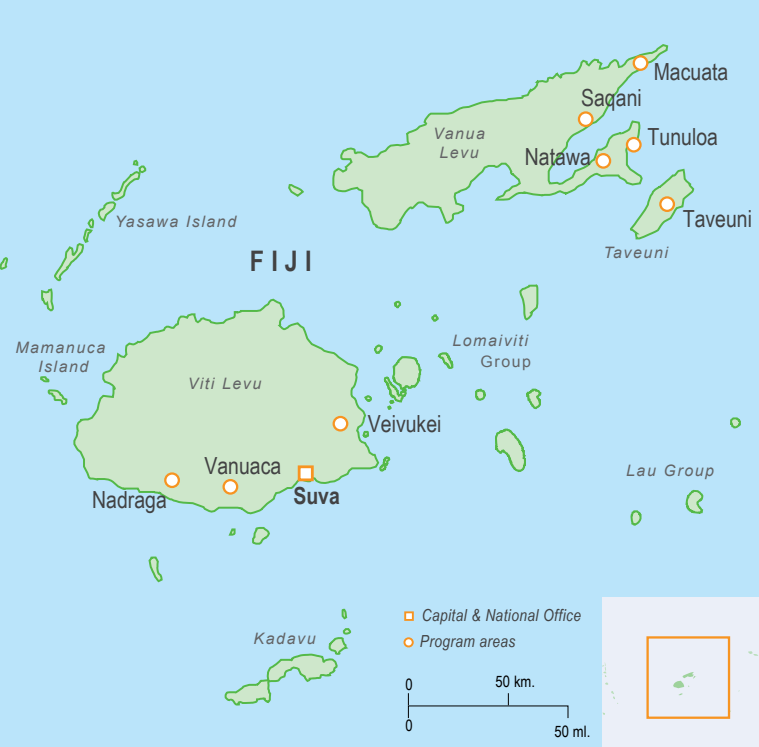
BASIC NEEDS POVERTY LEVEL*: 31% of population (2008-09)

ACCESS TO IMPROVED WATER SOURCES: 81% (2009)

ACCESS TO IMPROVED SANITATION FACILITIES: 67% (2009)

*Sources: CIA World Factbook, World Bank

*The minimum cost of living per week for a household of four adults: 175 Fiji dollars in Fiji's Household Income & Expenditure Survey 2008-09



HFH FIJI Highlights

- In January 2011, HFH Fiji completed the rehabilitation of four boarding schools on the island of Taveuni. HFH Fiji partnered with UNICEF to improve water and sanitation facilities and strengthened building structures for the schools to be used as community evacuation centers in the event of future disasters.

- In December 2010, HFH completed its first community water projects in Nakorovou village and Lawaki village, Tailevu. The Nakorovou and Lawaki projects were funded by the Australian and Japanese governments respectively. These partnerships are part of HFH Fiji's "Every Drop Counts Community Water Project" which provides safe and reliable water and sanitation systems to lower income communities.

- In partnership with NZAID, HFH Fiji has helped over 100 families to install simple measures such as window shutters as well as check roof conditions on their existing homes to make them resistant to wind damage in future hurricanes.



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