

## Fiji



### Habitat for Humanity in Fiji

Habitat for Humanity started working in Fiji in 1991. Since then, Habitat has helped over 70,000 people to build homes and hope through partnerships with governments, bilateral and non-profit organizations and international volunteers. Habitat works on a range of projects throughout the country including disaster response and recovery through repairs and temporary housing when needed, construction or improvement of water and sanitation systems in rural and remote areas, and disabled access housing projects. In the financial year ended June 30, 2018, Habitat for Humanity Fiji has helped more than 4,500 families through disaster response and over 2,000 families in more than 55 communities through water and sanitation improvements and built over 1,400 new houses to date.

### The housing need in Fiji

An estimated 140,000 people currently live in substandard housing conditions in informal settlements, and the number has increased by 5 percent from 2007 to 2012. Poverty and inequality continue to be a challenge. According to official statistics, 31 percent of the population lives in poverty. The rising cost of living and disasters such as 2016's Cyclone Winston increased the poor's vulnerability. The most vulnerable households also lack piped water, adequate sanitation, electricity or rubbish disposal.

### How Habitat addresses the need in Fiji

Habitat for Humanity's activities in Fiji range from new house construction to helping families rebuild after cyclones and other disasters to improving water and sanitation access in various communities. Habitat homes are typically built with a combination of locally supplied timber, concrete, and metal roofing. Families who partner with Habitat also contribute their own labor to build their new homes.



Habitat volunteers raising a wall frame during house construction.

## COUNTRY FACTS

|                                             |                             |
|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Capital</b>                              | Suva                        |
| <b>Main country facts</b>                   | Gained independence in 1970 |
| <b>Population</b>                           | Over 905,000                |
| <b>Urbanization</b>                         | 56.2 percent live in cities |
| <b>Life expectancy</b>                      | 70.3 years                  |
| <b>Unemployment rate</b>                    | 4.3 percent                 |
| <b>Population living below poverty line</b> | 34 percent                  |

Source: World Factbook

## HABITAT FACTS

**When Habitat started in Fiji**  
1991

**Individuals served in FY18**  
360\*

*\*Includes construction*

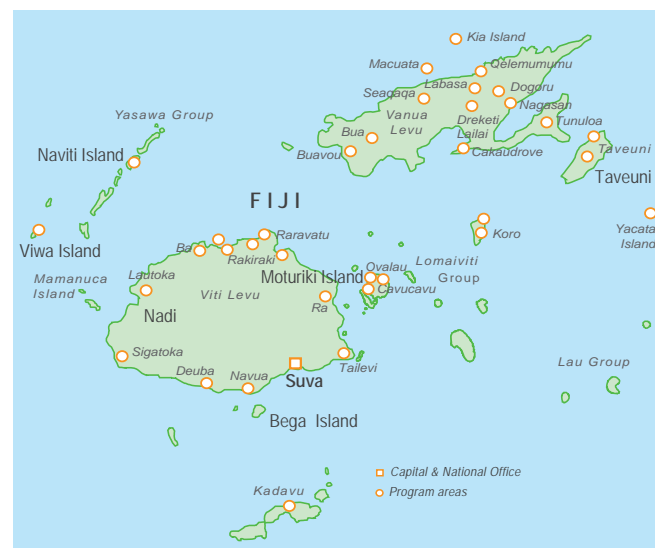
**Other interventions**  
246\*\*

*\*\*Individuals involved in training and/or community engagement*

**Volunteers engaged in FY18**  
1,161

### Housing solutions

Affordable homes and retrofits; water and sanitation facilities; disaster response; volunteer engagement "Build Back Safer" training; volunteer engagement



## Community water projects

Since 2010, its WASH program began, Habitat Fiji has been constructing or improving water and sanitation systems in rural and remote communities throughout the nation. Funding support comes from bilateral donors such as the European Union, Japanese Embassy and Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and New Zealand Aid through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Through its community water program, Habitat trains communities to manage and conserve water resources and maintain water systems that have been installed. The program has assisted more than 5,000 families in close to 100 communities to date.

## Disaster response

Habitat for Humanity Fiji forms part of the Pacific Task Force with Habitat Australia and Habitat New Zealand, helping families hit by disasters such as 2015's Cyclone Pam in Vanuatu. In responding to 2016's Cyclone Winston, Habitat exceeded its target by helping over 7,000 affected families through the distribution of emergency shelter kits. In the recovery phase, programs include community training for water, sanitation and hygiene, cyclone retrofitting for homes, repairs and construction of houses and water and sanitation facilities, and "Build Back Safer" training.

## Building resilient communities

To help disaster-hit families get back on their feet, Habitat works with donors and partners to increase local communities' resilience. More than 1,300 participants including women from over 260 communities have received Build Back Safer training, enabling them to assist other affected families to construct safer homes. Habitat Fiji's Build Back Safer program won a certificate of merit and a US\$15,000 grant at the 2017 UN Sasakawa Award for Disaster Risk Reduction. About 115 houses were constructed with the support of United Nations Development Fund, the Australian and New Zealand Governments, International Organization for Migration, Shelter Cluster Fiji, the FIJI Water Foundation, Partner Housing Australasia and Habitat for Humanity Australia.

## Volunteer engagement

In the fiscal year ended June 30, 2018, Habitat Fiji hosted more than 1,100 international volunteers under the Global Village program who helped construct 21 homes. A Canadian team kicked off the annual Habitat Young Leaders Build campaign, supported by long-term donor Aqua Pacific in Fiji, with a house build in Sabeto.

## Meet a Habitat family

Life was hard for Peni and his wife Iniveni, both 60, but neither thought of giving up. What kept them going was the determination to provide for their 27-year-old daughter Tulia who has epilepsy. The family of five including two young nieces were living in a house with a roof made of corrugated iron sheets in Tavuya village in Rewa province, central Fiji. A tarpaulin sheet served as a wall on one side of the shack. Whenever it rained, water would get in through the leaky tin roof. "Our things got wet. There was very little we could do about it," says Peni who can earn 60 Fiji dollars (over US\$28) a month from selling brooms and root crops. His prayers for a decent home were answered when he became a Habitat homeowner in May 2018 "This house looks very strong. It is the best thing anyone could give us," he adds.



Peni (back, right) with his wife Iniveni and relatives at house dedication.

## What you can do

You can help Fijian families improve their living conditions by taking one or more of the following actions:

### DONATE

USD \$: [habitat.org/donate](https://www.habitat.org/donate)

\* You can designate your donation to Habitat Fiji or a specific cause by clicking the designation option.

### VOLUNTEER

Join one of the scheduled Global Village trips to Fiji or lead your own. For more information go to: [habitat.org/gv](https://www.habitat.org/gv)

### TITHE

Establish a strong and rewarding tithe partnership to help build houses globally! Quote **FIJI** on your checks sent to: Habitat for Humanity International, Attn: Affiliate Tithe, 121 Habitat St. Americus, GA 31709

To learn more about Habitat projects in Fiji or in other parts of the region, please contact us.

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