

300 farms flourish - Fiji Times Online



The new infrastructure development at FRIEND Fiji's headquarters in Tuvu, Ba. Picture: SHAYAL DEVI

THE Foundation for Rural Integrated Enterprises and Development (FRIEND) Fiji has successfully helped establish 300 free range poultry farms in the West.

FRIEND Fiji director Shashi Kiran said families were now able to sell meat and eggs.

"About 53 per cent project holders are women," she said.

"An unexpected outcome was setting up feed projects using available local materials. Currently, 80 per cent of all livestock feed in the country is imported.

"Our attempt was to reduce the cost so farmers do not have to purchase feed and could use local resources around them."

Apart from setting up poultry farms, FRIEND Fiji has also invested in helping women set up beekeeping projects.

Ms Kiran said 17 per cent of them were women.

"At the end of the project, we have been monitoring and farmers are all active. Now, we have started purchasing all the honey they produce.

"Some by-products like propolis and honey will also add to their income source. All honey farmers were requested to plant food for the bees and farmers are now reporting increased sales from their fruits and vegetables."

FRIEND Fiji is also monitoring the sustainability of such projects.