



Foundation for Rural Integrated Enterprises & Development

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Media Release

Dutch Ambassador Arie Van der Wiel made a whirlwind tour of FRIEND this morning as part of his trip to visit European Union funded Projects in the West.

He visited the EU funded Food Production Facility in Tuvu and was given a brief on various other activities implemented by FRIEND.

The Food Production Facility was constructed after the organisation sustained major damage to its buildings in the aftermath of TC Evan in 2012.

“This devastation came as we were preparing to expand our EU funded GROW project after the piloting stages in the first year of the project. We are very grateful to The European Union for standing by and supporting us to get back on our feet by allowing us to build a facility from contingency funds where we could continue and expand production of various food products that support livelihoods of our farmers and rural communities,” says FRIEND Founder/Director Sashi Kiran.

GROW project is aimed at creating sustainable livelihoods in the Sugar Cane Belt Areas in Western Viti Levu and Vanua Levu through Cash Crop Farming, Food Processing, Poultry, Apiary and Youth Employment Network. Over the last two years more than 5000 families have been assisted under the program.

The Ambassador commended FRIEND on the integrated approach for holistic development of communities in Fiji and said it is unusual to see integrated program work so well. He said he was impressed that an organisation was able to look after the full value chain from assisting in growing to product packaging and marketing.

Ambassador Van Der Wiel was accompanied by his wife and officials from the Project Management Team based in Lautoka.

The End