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New Boats for Ra Coast Villages

by Foundation for Rural Integrated Enterprise and Development

May 20

<http://fijisun.com.fj/2017/05/20/new-boats-for-ra-coast-villages/>



Three villages in the province of Ra are pleased with their new fishing boats.

The villages of Nabukadra, Nadogoloa and Naocobau were devastated and without any means of fishing for family consumption and for the market.

Foundation for Rural Integrated Enterprise and Development (FRIEND), through a A\$35,000 donation from Palladium's Foundation – 'Let's Make it Possible' – donated the boats following requests from communities devastated by Tropical Cyclone Winston to support their recovery.

Palladium is an Australian company working on education projects in the communities where Cyclone Winston had hit. Getting these communities back on their feet has been the aim of FRIEND since Cyclone Winston.

FRIEND director Sashi Kiran said: "We are trying to help them regain their livelihood and it's quite hard when there is hardly anything on the ground to help them begin. We are grateful to Palladium and Let's Make it Possible for their valuable assistance in making these boats possible.

"These boats will change the lives of the people in these communities.

"We carried out our own assessments, held meetings with them and we had to come to an agreement with the individual committees about the management of the boats," Ms Kiran

said.

Each committee is keeping record on usage. Women use the boats during the day while the men go fishing at night.

The three communities lie on the coast of the province and was in the direct path of the Category 5 killer cyclone. They were included in the area that was declared ground zero after Cyclone Winston .

“Nothing was spared. They lost their homes, their livelihood options, their farms were destroyed and they lost their boats.

“Being on the coast sea resources are readily available for livelihood options,” Ms Kiran said.

The boats for Nabukadra and Nadogoloa were handed over earlier this year and the final one was delivered to Naocobau on May 6 by Ms Kiran, and associate director Dr Jone Hawea.

At all three communities, the boats were received with loud cheering, dancing and celebration and the women accorded each boat a traditional iTaukei welcome of draping colourful yards of fabric over and around it.

This is called ‘cerevi’ and is done to welcome something new.

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