

NGO utilises skills, resources for products

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THE Foundation for Rural Integrated Enterprises and Development (FRIEND) is alleviating poverty one cup of tea at a time.

Operating in Tuvu, Lautoka and supplying their products across the country, director and founder Sashi Kiran said the non-governmental organisation worked with rural and marginalised communities for social and economic empowerment.

"We work with skills and resources of our local communities to develop products that can provide sustainable sources of incomes for families," Ms Kiran said.

"The first of four teas were launched in early 2013 and three more were released last year. All our teas are packed in tea bags for a perfect cup of drink whenever one wishes. These teas have featured at Sydney Fine Foods show in Australia last week and there is strong interest from the Australia market".

The foundation, which was formed in 2001, has risen from jams and pickles into a unique and ingenious blend of herbal infused tea bags.

The seven different types and flavours of tea bags range from lemon grass tea, star apple, Rosella which is made from the petals of the hibiscus Sabriffa flower, cinnamon, basil plant and even the childhood nightmare — layalaya.