



Clearing piece by piece



Under a broken roof



Men at work - Reconstruction in progress



More funds for Cyclone Rehabilitation

The New Zealand Government has provided further assistance to those affected by cyclone Evan. A \$450,000 FJD grant contract with FRIEND will facilitate the process.

“NZAID assistance will allow us to provide additional housing material to those who had received initial assistance from us for temporary shelters immediately after the TC EVAN,” says FRIEND Founder/Director Sashi Kiran

“Our initial assistance was to enable families in need to have at least one room where they could remain dry as many homes were totally blown away while others have their roofs completely gone.”

A portion of this money will also be used for livelihoods assistance,” says Sashi.

The Slow Road to Recovery



“This is just like when FRIEND started. Each little achievement was a celebration,” recalled Sashi Kiran Founder/Director as fresh signage was put up at the headquarters in place of the blown away billboard.

Reconstruction of the main building is underway at the Tuvu site.

Work has also been initiated on the site marked for Food Processing Facility following approval from the European Union on use of contingency funds of 100,000 euro made available as part of the funding for implementation of a program aimed at improved livelihoods for Sugar Belt Areas.

The Food Production Facility will be utilized to process the various raw products from sugar communities for value addition.

“The EU money takes care of a portion of the funds required for the facility but we are hopeful of other funding avenues to see the project through,” says Sashi.

For many, the devastating cyclone that struck Fiji on 17 December 2012 has become history.

But for a large majority who fell in its path, it is still a big part of their reality as they try to pick up the pieces of their lives from the disaster.

Food, Shelter & Education

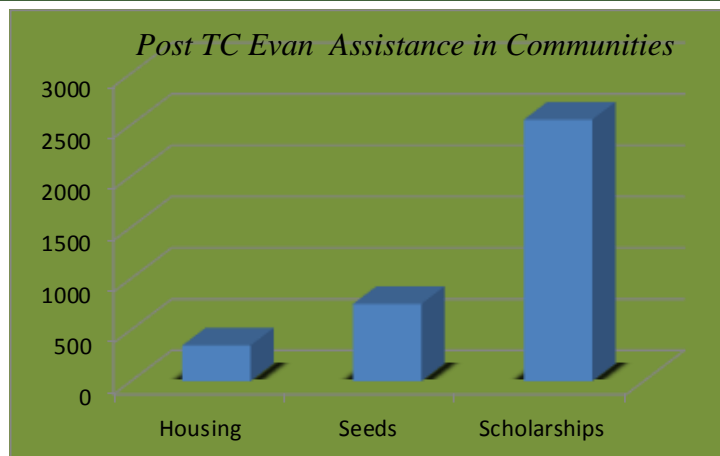
FRIEND is focusing its community rehabilitation efforts after Cyclone TC Evan in three areas.

These include emergency housing assistance for families left totally without homes or with full roofs blown

off their heads, food security gardens and fee assistance for schools. A total of 1067 families have benefited from the efforts. 15 group sessions have also been held in communities to assist those affected by the disaster in processing their ex-

periences and moving forward.

More than 300 participants reported feeling stronger in their abilities to put their bad experiences behind them and deal with the situation positively.



Coordinating Unit Field Monitoring Visit

The European Union Funded GROW program at FRIEND is on target despite adverse weather conditions affecting the implementation since the start of project period last year.

That is the feedback from the monitoring team from the Coordinating Unit based in Lautoka following a field visit exercise in the West this month.

The team visited the site of training for youths in Ba who are part of the YEN program, followed by a visit to a poultry project holder in Tavua, then on to a Cash Crop farmer who was having his irrigation system set up as well as a beekeeping project holder.

The field visits gave the opportunity to the Coordinating Unit members to meet and speak with the project holders directly.

“We would like to thank the European Union for the computers,” said 21 year old-Sainimere Vakacegu, a YEN participant. “I believe this exposure is a valuable experience for me as I prepare to seek out opportunities in the job market.”

Veena Kumar proudly showed her growing brood of chicks and ducklings saying she would never have gotten to this stage if she had not received the support of the project. Veena had started poultry project with twelve ducks last year and now has a total of 110 chicks and ducks. “The money I received from selling my ducks, I invested some of it back into the project to buy chickens. Now they are hatching eggs and I hope to expand the project to around 200 birds.”

Her husband ,Sanjay Kumar also spoke of his cash crop farming project and counted off the number and variety of trees he has planted for his fruit orchard.

“The project has brought new hope to my family,” says Veena.

At Qalela, the team met with 19 year old school leaver Sumeet Reddy. Sumeet was working as a casual labourer at a supermarket in Tavua till recently. “Now I will work with my father on the farm. With the irrigation system being set up through the EU Funding my father will require some help with farming. And I am sure we will be able to make a decent livelihood off the farm.”

Sumeet’s father was a cane farmer in Tagitagi who had to resettle in Qalela on a 3 acre piece of land after his lease expired.

“We have been planting some vegetables but with fluctuation weather conditions in this area, this has been difficult.”

The team reached Suliasi Vata’s village to find him and a friend busy planting hedging around the bee boxes. “This will mark the boundary for my bee farm. I am also working on planting a whole lot of flowering plants to serve as food for my bees,” told Suliasi.

“I also want to plant cash crop in the vacant land around the beehives. I have recently got the lease for this farm and plan to work the fields as soon as the weather clears, says Suliasi.



Ba YEN in class @ Xavier College



Faizal Khan of CU looks through logbooks



Agronomist Egberto Soto explains Irrigation



Suliasi’s hive set up gets the board of approval



Chef Seeto @ FRIEND



Friend's Fiji shared a link.
March 4

Award winning [Chef Lance Seeto](#) has been using and promoting Friend's Fiji Style products for sometime now. Thank you Lance!



Homegrown food make their mark - Fiji Times Online
www.fijitimes.com

FOR the first time at last week's AON Fiji Excellence in Tourism awards, local food was highlighted as an important part of the tourist experience. Nearly one

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Bucece Karo, Makereta Tawa, Jaswanti Patel and 17 others like this.



Chef Lance Seeto Vinaka Friend's Fiji! When I first came to Fiji 4 year ago, I was given a jar of your tamarind chutney which blew me away! I love your use of so many local ingredients and complex spices that make your recipes truly local. The NGO project is also helping the community and I am happy to spread the word on your great work for charity!

March 6 at 6:36pm · Unlike · 2

Our New Spice Jars

These attractive spice bottles are the latest products to hit the market from the Friend's Fiji Style® Range.

These include Turmeric Powder, Tomato Powder, Ginger Powder, Chilli Flakes and Curry Leaves.

"My favourite is the Tomato Powder," says Darrel Raj Charan, Lautoka businessman and foodie. "I have used it with my pasta and the taste is just amazing. Pasta will never taste the same without it".

"I keep a bottle of Ginger Powder with me at all times to add to my tea," says Sashi Kiran, founder/Director FRIEND. "Apart from taste, Ginger is a handy ingredient to boost the im-



une system, especially for those on the run all the time."

"I love chillies with my food, and the taste of sundried chilli flakes is perfect for any dish," says Sandhya Narayan, GROW Manager at

FRIEND. "You can actually taste the freshness of the sun in it."

The handy sizes are small enough to pack away in handbags for those on the move or packaged as giftpacks for genuine Fiji products looking for authentic local selections.

Recipe Corner - Pumpkin/Coconut Soup

A warming soup with a kick of ginger and chilli, against the soothing coconut milk.

Ingredients

- 1 medium pumpkin, preferably organic
- 1 large white onion, chopped
- 2.5cm/1in piece of root ginger, finely chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- Chillies to taste - chopped
- 400ml coconut milk
- salt and freshly ground black pepper
- breadfruit or sweet potato chunks, to taste (optional)

Preparation method

Cut pumpkin into small cubes. Put the pumpkin in a large pan with the onion, ginger, garlic and chilli. Pour in about 400ml of water, bring to the boil and cook until the pumpkin has turned to a pulp.

Add the coconut milk and season to taste with salt, then reduce the heat and leave the soup to simmer for another 5–10 minutes. Garnish with fresh corriander leaves.



March BIRTHDAYS



Seka



Paula

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this year.

Planting Fruit Trees for Income

Hi! My name is Mela and I am a Forestry Officer at FRIEND.

One of my major aim is to help set up at least ten large scale fruit orchards in communities

We believe that fruit orchards are a great investment for income as well as environmental sustainability.

The trees we are looking at include banana, paw-paw, lime, pomegranate and soursop.

Interested farmers can contact me for more details on 6663181.



FRIEND Team in Labasa show their new colours