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Power of the sun

Friend
Monday, June 05, 2017

THEIR dream to be self-sufficient started back in 2011, with the help of AUSAID they were able to set up 48 solar panels.

Foundation for Rural Integrated Enterprises & Development main office has been on solar power for more than a year — in Tuvu, outside of Lautoka .

Unfortunately Tropical Cyclone Evan wreaked havoc in the country and did not spare FRIEND causing heavy damage to their infrastructure but luckily majority of the panels were saved.

A statement in April 2016 issued by FRIEND stated the organisation in collaboration with Prasanna Krishna, a consultant from Welfare Harvesters in India, were able to utilise the remaining 45 solar panels and mounted them to the roof of the rebuilt office building.

These panels were now providing up to 62kW/h of power per day and each panel powering capacity of 275 watts.

It stated the office consisted a fully equipped kitchen, more than 20 PC workstations, electric fans, photocopier and many other electronic gadgets operated fully on solar power — backed by Fiji Electricity Authority power at night.

"This is all geared to us being environmentally conscious and friendly. We felt that we needed to spearhead this move, to engage and adopt it for ourselves first," said founder and director of FRIEND Sashi Kiran.

"The construction of a restaurant, which is to be opened soon, has also been done with this.

"FRIEND aims to adhere to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), especially number seven which covers access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy.

"The next project to use solar will be FRIEND's production facility which is also on the same site. Currently on normal electricity power, the need to go solar became apparent when constant power outages affected production.

"It's been an excellent journey so far with solar power. We are operating at maximum capacity and just knowing that we are doing our earth good is more than enough for us at FRIEND," she said".




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