

# APPENDICES

## **Appendix One**

**Written Response by the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs**





## **ITAUKEI AFFAIRS**

### **2016 – 2017 ANNUAL REPORT RESPONSE**

#### **1. Brief the committee on the functions of the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs**

- The Ministry is responsible for developing, implementing and monitoring government programmes focused on the Good Governance and Well-being of the iTaukei people. The Ministry aims to align itself to its mandated role, which evolves to environmental changes through the provision of policy advice and the implementation of policies and programmes that will expedite sustainable development.
- Our services are targeted not only for iTaukei communities locally but to iTaukei diaspora abroad and all Fijians who wish to acquire our services.
- The organisation is mandated and shall adhere to the following legislations to carry out its responsibilities; iTaukei Affairs Act (1944), iTaukei Lands Act (1905), the iTaukei Land Trust Act (1940), iTaukei Development Fund Act (1965), iTaukei Trust Fund Act (2014) and the CATD Bylaws.

#### **2. Inform the committee members on the key challenges the Ministry faces whilst trying to achieve its strategic objectives and how it is planning to overcome these challenges?**

- Our challenge was getting the services and consultations to trickle down to our stakeholders. Public Consultations and Roadshows continued to attract other agencies and stakeholders in taking our products to the communities.
- Previously, our Media interactions was quite dormant in certain extent and the new leadership brought about changes. The Ministry's presence in the media for all the right reasons, creating an influx of requests for interviews and participation at talkback shows on the products and services we provide.
- Despite the impact of the TC Winston major milestones were achieved and this included the completion of the computerization of the *Vola ni Kawa Bula (VKB)*, smart partnerships forged with stakeholders, transforming and building innovative leaders as agents of change, continual capacity building to upgrade the professional capacity and skills ensuring robustness in the delivery of services in an integrated development environment, increased public consultations and roadshows for communities to understand government's initiatives, progress and functional roles of respective iTaukei institutions.
- Land boundary issues - Our iTaukei landowners were faced with the dilemma of uncertainty in their land boundaries and disputes emanated from this. With the assistance of the newly established Technical Unit within the iTaukei Lands and

Fisheries Commission, redefinition of surveyed lands were carried to assist landowners in understanding their boundaries.

- Learning and Development Effectiveness - The Ministry evaluates the effectiveness and efficiency of learning and development needs which are incorporated in its Workforce Training and Development Plan to address the Ministry's strategic challenges in relation to its Human resource; core competencies, and the accomplishment of its short and long term action plans for workforce members and leaders.
- The Ministry performance and capability through its planning process is indicated by the ability to review analyze and discuss external assessments. This allows for the Ministry to identify and respond to rapidly changing needs and challenges in the operating environment.
- There is Risk Management Policy for the Ministry which is a guide to identify and manage risks that maybe brought about by unforeseen factors.

**3. How does the Ministry ensure that both male and female employees are treated equally in recruitment, training, hiring and promotion?**

- The backbone of our Gender based policies is reliant on the 2011 Equal Employment Opportunity Policy and our compliance to the 2014 Fiji National Gender Policy. Our representations in forums organized by the Ministry of Women, is basis as we target to ensure that the organization is free from all forms of gender based discrimination and that both men and women participated fully in and enjoy equitably as employees.
- By August, 2017 our workforce was at a 49.2% female representation.
- On 21 April 2017, four (4) Women were Ministry nominees for the Women in Business Annual Awards in the Manager of the year category.
- 2016 was the transition year where the old Recruitment & Selection process which was based on Staff Board recommendations to Open Merit Recruitment & Selection whereby Selection Panels with gender balanced members provide their recommendations for selection of new appointments.
- The application of the OMRS guideline ensured our adherence and Ministry was recognised as the top improvers in terms of our compliance:
- Our 2015 HR Manual was revised in 2016 to inculcate these changes and our adherence to the Civil Service Reform.

**4. Provide us with the staffing complement at the Ministry 2016-2017 and the percentage of women who were in managerial positions.**

- Staff complement - 136 staffs
- 4% before OMRS 31 December 2016
- Our current rate stands at 7% and the upward trend continues.
- We hope to achieve a 10% threshold by 2021.

**5. Does the Ministry align itself to any of the Sustainable Development Goals? If so, can you further enlighten the Committee on this?**

- On the pillars of Protection and Management of our culture & heritage , the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs protects, preserve and manage Fiji's Cultural and Natural Heritage through:
  - Reviving, documenting and maintaining Traditional Knowledge & Expressions of Culture,
  - facilitate the preservation of iTaukei folklore and traditional skills through the identification of Living Human Treasures
  - Cultural Mapping Programme.
- Good Governance is also a key cornerstone for SDG's through its Strong Institutions Goal and in this scope the Ministry plays a vital role in strengthening governance through the Vanua for our iTaukei Communities:
  - its Leadership programmes;
  - Vanua Visits;
  - the existence of the iTaukei Lands and Fisheries Commission. The iTaukei Communities in the Vanua have seen more effective and efficient leadership roles.
  - The Ministry also focus on a well governed iTaukei Institutions that effectively execute their mandated role of improving the wellbeing & governance of the iTaukei.
- The Ministry also prioritizes Climatic Actions which is one of the Sustainable Development Goals:
  - making sure that our iTaukei Communities are resilient and are able to adopt measures that counter Climate Change.
  - Working with relevant stakeholders such as the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Forestry, and particularly the Ministry of Environment and the Climate Change Division within the Ministry of Economy to provide policies and programmes that strengthen Community Resilience to Climate Change and as well as Resource Management measures.

**6. Update the committee on the Ministry's future plans and initiatives.**

- In empowering the iTaukei, the Ministry is dedicated to extend our community engagement during Roadshows and Public Consultations by providing easily accessible government services to be utilized by the iTaukei Community. This is an effort to ensure that no one is left behind in alignment with Government's vision of "A Better Fiji for All".
- The Ministry's future plan is to decentralize the VKB services to all the fourteen (14) Provincial Council Offices. The iTaukei communities will easily access the services provided by the VKB Officers.
- These plans also includes the empowering of the Vanua to roll out Digitalization of its records and appointment of VKB officers to the provincial council offices.

- The Ministry also aims to improve its ICT capacity through the adoption of the Global Positioning System (GPS) to assist the Demarcation & Survey Unit in traversing and documenting land issues.

**7. What smart partnerships has the Ministry developed in its pursuit to create a prosperous Vanua?**

The Ministry's overall vision and mission for the period 2016-2017 states the smart Partnership it has created in achieving through its Goal. Amongst its core roles the ministry ensures that its governed iTaukei Institutions effectively execute their mandated role of improving the wellbeing & governance of the iTaukei as key partnership or collaboration. This is well reflected in the different areas that these institutions work in. Through its programme which entails the thematic areas in good governance, wellbeing, economic, socio, cultural, education and as well as policy and research.

**8 a). What was the outcome of the Cultural Mapping Programme undertaken in the remaining 78 villages in the Nadroga/Navosa province?**

The objective of the Nadroga/Navosa cultural mapping exercise collated information on the tangible and intangible cultural heritage for the 78 communities.

The outcome of the exercise is the contribution to the Traditional Knowledge & Expression of Culture Act to protect the community traditional knowledge. At present we are still awaiting the outcome despite His Excellency, Major General (Ret'd) Jioji Konusi Konrote's mention of it in his maiden speech at the opening of Parliament in 2018.

Additional outcomes in the Nadroga/Navosa cultural mapping include;

- **Revitalization of indigenous iconic symbols like:**
- Revitalization of Vale CokoTu in Nadrau village
- Refurnishment of Valenivanua in Rukurukulevu Village
- Revitalization of Tali iTabekasare in Nabutautau village
- Revitalization of meke ni yaqona in Namatakula village

**8 b). Was the Ministry able to complete its CMP exercise in the Ba province in the 2017– 2018 fiscal year?**

No. The Province of Ba comprises 21 Districts and 106 villages. The Cultural mapping exercise in the Province of Ba was conducted within 3 fiscal year (2017 – 2018, 2018 – 2019, 2019 – 2020).

**8. c) As stated in the NDP, was the Ministry able to complete its CMP exercise in the Tailevu province in the 2018 – 2019 fiscal year?**

The province of Tailevu consists of 22 Districts with 141 villages. Of this number, 140 villages have been mapped in 2009 except Ucunivanua Village in the District of Verata. The activity was cancelled in 2018-2019 fiscal year due to Vanua issues and is rescheduled for this 2019-2020 fiscal year.

**9. What was the outcome of the 20 Public Consultations for village by laws carried out in the period under review?**

The ministry was able to facilitate 20 consultations which included the Vanua and other relevant stakeholders. The consultations aimed to hear from the Vanua and as well as the iTaukei communities, their views on the existing Village Laws stipulated in our iTaukei Acts. The Ministry was able to compile all these submissions and contributions from the Vanua and the Fijian communities on the proposed By-Laws and until such a time that Cabinet approves to lift the suspension on this exercise.

**10. How effective has the extension of the Ministry's community outreach programs for VKB services and awareness on iTaukei Language, cultural and revitalization, etc. to iTaukei diaspora abroad been?**

The outreach program has resulted in:

- The increasing numbers of overseas born iTaukei registered in their respective iVola ni Kawa Bula (VKB) as the figures show below:

Period	2016 - 2017	2017 - 2018	2018 - 2019
No. of VKB Registration	57	191	233

- Notable increase in general enquiries on VKB matters through emails and other electronic communication means from iTaukei living abroad.
- iTaukei members living overseas getting copies of their VKB and thus connecting to their kinships, Tokatoka, Mataqali, Yavusa, Vanua, Koro, District and Yasana.

b). Summarized below are the various cultural outreach programs on the iTaukei Culture and Language for 2016 – 17.

YEAR	No.	LOCAL	REGIONAL	INTERNATIONAL
2016	1.	FNU Lautoka Institutional Visit	FESTPAC GUAM	
	2.	Kumi MYF Verata	Wellington Fijian Cultural Group Trust, NZ	
	3.	Tuilovoni MYF, Davuilevu Housing		
	4.	Raiwai MYF #5, Raiwai		
	5.	UniFiji iTaukei Studies, Samabula		
	6.	Retired Fijian Teachers Association		
	7.	Pacific Conference of Peace, GPH		
	8.	Australian High Commission Staff		
YEAR	No.	LOCAL	REGIONAL	INTERNATIONAL
2017	1.	Raiwai MYF, Raiwai		ICH Safeguarding in Fiji, CRIHAP, Japan.
	2.	Sacred Heart College (Cathedral Sec)		
	3.	Forestry Training College		
	4.	CATD Nadave		
	5.	Yalobi Village, Waya		
	6.	Nabaitavo Village, Naitasiri		
	7.	Matanakilagi MYF, Waila		
	8.	John Wesley College, Suva		
	9.	Ratu Navula Sec School, Nadi		
	10.	Tukuni Reading Sessions, SCC Library		

- The content of the outreach programs are not rigid, rather they are customized to suit the requirements of each respective institution.
- On average therefore an outreach session lasts around 2 hours because each request has specific and varying needs.
- The commonality in all these sessions is this that they request basic knowledge on iTaukei culture to enhance their understanding of the complexities of the iTaukei world view and ways of doing things.
- At the end of each session, evaluation forms are completed and the effectiveness of delivery, content, etc of the session and facilitators are determined. There has not been any opportunity for a sustained approach over a longer period of time

simply because institutions cannot afford to, and the iTaukei Institute of Language & Culture conducts sessions based on invitations.

- These ad hoc outreaches in 2016-17 have not been in vain, however. Fast forward to 2019, instead of waiting for invitations on piecemeal sessions, the TILC has carried out its first ever sustained implementation of cultural sessions in 2019 at the Centre for Appropriate Technology & Development in Nadave for the trade students enrolled in it. The sustained session lasted an entire year which afforded the TILC development of structured pedagogical approaches to culture and language.
- The Nadave sustained approach enable the TILC to measure the effectiveness and impact its cultural immersions and sensitivity sessions. Overall, the impact of these sessions in the CATD Nadave students was an improvement in behavior, attitude, cohesion, listening, and articulation particularly with regards to the sessions on cultural diplomacy.
- In addition, late in 2019, the TILC, through an initiative and collaboration with the iTaukei Trust Fund, is in the final phases of an edu-kit on iTaukei culture and language for the iTaukei diaspora. The edu-kit called SOLESAU is a training of trainers manual where each community in the various diaspora designates its own facilitator who will then be immersed in the edu-kit by selected staff from the SOLESAU planning team. The contents of the SOLESAU covers four major themes – language (solevosa), protocols/customs (soleitovo), artefacts (soleiyau) and kinship (soleveiwekani). The SOLESAU is to be implemented in mid-2020.

**11. What proactive approaches to sustainable development has the Ministry embarked on in order to create more resilient iTaukei communities to climate change?**

- The Ministry of iTaukei Affairs is well aware of the need to empower our iTaukei Communities on approaches to Sustainable Development and to create a more resilient iTaukei communities to climate change. For these reasons the Ministry is committed to support the active participation and capacity building of iTaukei resource owners; policy development, planning, management and implementation of activities relating to iTaukei land and its resources.
- The establishment of the National iTaukei Resource Owners Council is a strong depiction of this which ensures the participation of iTaukei in the decision making process that affects their resources, and supports the efforts to increase the resilience of iTaukei communities against the impacts of climate change and natural disasters.
- Making sure that our iTaukei communities are resilient and are able to adopt measures that counter Climate Change,
- The Ministry of Itaukei Affairs has worked with relevant stakeholders such as the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Forestry, and particularly the Environment Ministry and the Climate Change Division within the Ministry of Economy to provide policies and Programmes that are able to strengthen Community Resilience to Climate Change and as well as Resource Management measures.
- The Cultural Mapping exercise is one such domain that identifies traditional knowledge as a toolkit for creating a resilient in indigenous communities is the "Knowledge and Practices concerning nature and the universe".



- The CMP data is in the process of verification and will be reviewed to identify more relevant intangible cultural heritages that can reduce carbon footprint, are environmental friendly and encourage resilience in iTaukei communities.
- The Ministry is also utilizing the iTaukei festival in provinces to create awareness on Climate Change issues. In 2018, with the theme "Na draki veisau" students were encouraged to use the platform to create awareness on Climate Change issues in the province. This oratory contest was spoken in the iTaukei language (more specifically the Rewan dialect).

## **12. (a) Elaborate on the three Special Revitalization Programs undertaken in 2016 – 2017 in the following Provinces**

### **i. Tali iTabekasere – Tikina o Navatusila, Nadroga/Navosa**

Traditional basketry holds important social and cultural significance in indigenous societies. The very essence of traditional basketry makes it a powerful tool in identifying identity; from techniques of weaving to the design of the baskets. Mostly across the Pacific islands, coconut leaves are used to make baskets from simple designs to complicated ones. Other island countries use reeds or vines and in rare cases, bamboo stems. The district of Navatusila in the highlands of Viti Levu, is one such community that has its traditional basket woven from bamboo stems.

Nabutautau, a village in Navatusila, possess a bearer of high knowledge and skills in weaving a traditional craft known as *itabakasere*. The knowledge and skills in weaving the *itabakasere* is only held in Nabutautau in all the Fiji Islands. This unique craft came to light post Cultural Mapping Program held in February 2016 by the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs Institute of Language and Culture. Thus, the bearer of knowledge and skills in making the *itabakasere* is recognized as a Living Human Treasure, as it was discovered at that time that a single bearer possess the knowledge and skills.

The bamboo-woven basket, *itabekasere*, is a seasonal woven basket that can only be woven once a year. This is due to the fact that the raw material, *bitu dina*, (*Schizostachyum Glaucofolium*), needed to make the basket is only available once a year. The period of the year in which the stem of the *bitu dina* is fit for the *itabekasere* be made is known in the Fijian calendar as the *Vula I kawakawa/Senidrala*, this falls in August to early September. During this period the culm of the bamboo is at the right stage (not too soft and not too rigid).

The *itabekasere* holds a true and deeper meaning to the way of life of the Navutasila people. Its meaning is not only limited to its uses (hold root crops) but the social value it carries reflects its true character. The making of the traditional basket and its uses maintain the social order that defines the people especially the women. It signifies respect for women to the *vanua* and the pristine way of life for the people of Navatusila.

### **ii. ibe vaNamuka – Tikina o Namuka, Macuata**

The role of women in a traditional society is necessary. It is the lifeline of the *vanua*, this is witnessed in ceremonies, rituals and even in mundane activities such as child rearing. In Fiji, the role of women is exemplified in the weaving of the traditional mat.

Traditional mats have differing designs but it still holds the same social and cultural importance. There are many types of mats woven in Vanua Levu; *kuta* in low-lying areas, *varinisara* in Bua (2018 SRU project) and *ibe vaNamuka* in Macuata. A similar exercise was conducted on the 3<sup>rd</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> of October, 2016 for the revitalization of the traditional mat synonymous to the *vanua* of Namuka, the *ibe vaNamuka*. As only two knew the art, Melania Tuamoto and Rokovane Caginidoi, it was identified as an ICH that needed urgent safeguarding.

Traditional Knowledge has always ensured that knowledge transmission is possible. This is evident in *ibe vaNamuka* whereby women are encouraged to only cut a few leaves from each shrub. (The belief within the *vanua* is using all the leaves from a single plant will reduce its lifespan and will eventually kill the plant).

Traditional mats is of great importance to the iTaukei community. Its value is of great importance to the Fijian culture and needs to be preserved in its uniqueness and totality for appropriate transmission of knowledge.

### **iii. Tara valevakaViti – the refurbishment of Vatanitawake, Bau**

The indigenous architectural heritage of Fiji richly shows the culture and traditions of inhabitants and mirrors their way of living.<sup>1</sup> A variety of traditionally built houses existed prior to the advent of modern materials, which were better adapted to the islands' climatic conditions<sup>2</sup>

The *Vatanitawake* is a symbol of prestige and power in the days of Ratu Seru Cakobau. It was the *burekalou* or spirit house of the Bauan chief. A remnant of pre-Christian community gathering space, it holds much power, religious and secular and played an important role in cannibalism in the years before Ratu Seru Cakobau converted to Christianity. Through personal communication, it is understood that the foundation of the *Vatanitawake* consists of left-over relics of numerous destroyed *Burekalou* in Bau. During the colonial era, the *Vatanitawake* was recognized as one of many cultural spaces for government officials and traditional leaders to interact and discuss matters of national importance.

Unlike other SRU projects, the refurbishment of the *Vatanitawake* was poorly researched and undertook unconventional means in its revitalization. For example, traditional craftsmen of Bau, the Matapule known today as Daunakamakama, were not properly consulted instead a neighboring tribe in Kaba was invited to refurbish the traditional house. As most youths were unskilled in this, the villagers had identified Mesulame Vuloko to impart knowledge as he participated in the renovation of the Waimaro, Vunirara and the Vatanitawake.

The *Vatanitawake* is a magnificent structure, an iconic heritage symbolizing the identity of the people that is always revered and sanctified. An in-depth reflection of the processes involved, including the rituals, the language used, and the skills and knowledge required shows the significance of the structure as a cultural space that promotes harmonious living, legitimacy of the *vanua*, solidarity and wellbeing.

---

<sup>1</sup> U. Herbig, G. Zohrer and F. Zamolyi, "Recording the cultural heritages of Samoa and the Fiji Islands" *The International Archives of the Photogrammetry, Remote Sensing and Spatial Information Sciences* XXXIV-5/C15 (2003): 1682-1777

<sup>2</sup> S. Nemani "Valenivanua: A communal cultural space, the pinnacle of indigenous values, peace and mana" Available on [www.unesco-ichcap.org](http://www.unesco-ichcap.org)

**(b) How successful were these programs**

- *Very successful*
  - Many participants attended the workshops. Each workshop there were more than 20 in attendance. This is evident in the number of certificates issued during the close of the workshop.
  - Provincial festivals now recognize the value of intangible cultural heritage and have incorporated this into a category in the overall competition e.g. 2019 iYaubula day, Namuka included *veisisivi ibe vaNamuka*
  - Recognition from private organization such as Rise beyond the Reefs. TILC has received interests from a renowned western based NGO requesting additional information on traditional crafts. The *iTabekasere* was one such craft that was identified.
- *Not a success*
  - The *Vatanitawake* project did not follow the proper identification and selection process. For previous SRU projects, identification and selection of the ICH is compiled by the CMP offices with recommendation from the *vanua*. This is stringent process that requires thorough research from the CMP and SRU officers.

**(c) What plans are in place to extend them to other Provinces?**

Projects identified for SRU is on cultural heritages in urgent need of safeguarding. Due to limited funding this is restricted to exceptional cultural heritage. Hence, for sustainability and to celebrate uniqueness, revitalization workshops are only conducted in its traditional setting, discouraging the use of foreign materials but reveling in the environment friendly know-how of our ancestors.

Thus, plans to extend this to other province is greatly discouraged as the cultural heritage will lose its cultural significance and greater risk in loss of knowledge due to undervalue in other provinces. For instance, the *bexabexa* is a traditional plate that is woven by women married into Nalovani tribe in Nasegai, Kadavu. Its sole purpose is to carry root crops to the chief, and back in the day, food for returning warriors. (The men of Nalovani are traditional warriors for the Chief in Tavuki). In total there are seven weaving techniques, each with own story and taboo, when this is observed the product is easy to learn and understood. Hence, it is advisable to limit the knowledge of such crafts to its rightful traditional knowledge holders. This not only transmits the tangible knowledge to the younger clans folk but also lets the intangible knowledge thrive in its original form.

**13. What are the different policies and programs of the Ministry which are used to promote the wellbeing and good governance of iTaukei communities? How effectively have these programs contributed to the welfare of iTaukei communities both locally and abroad?**

- In the period under review which is from 2016-2017, the Ministry has had a number of initiatives implemented through its policies and programmes targeted at the iTaukei People of this country. These Programmes and Policies ranged from economic empowerment, social programmes, good governance and most importantly issues on environment with regards to Climate Change.

- The Ministry saw the need to equip our iTaukei Leaders within the Vanua with Leadership values and as well as the fulfilment of their roles and titles, hence facilitating the Traditional Leadership Forum.
- In area of Environment and Climate Change the Ministry of Itaukei Affairs had collaborated with NDMO and the Climate Change Division in raising pertinent issues that might affect the iTaukei People.
- The Ministry of iTaukei Affairs also provided framework through the iTaukei Affairs Board in facilitating village Profile out of which their Village Development Plans had come out of.
- The Ministry also works in strong partnership with NGOs and International Donors in assisting iTaukei Villages and communities in their area of expertise.

#### **14. Inform us on the progress made in digitizing the Native Register of ITaukei Land and the Challenges encountered during the digitization process.**

##### **A. Progress**

- 2014 – Digitization process began
- 2016 – Completion of VKB records digitization – Tokatoka, Mataqali, Yavusa and Tokatoka Members.
- 2017 – VKB Computerization piloted in five Provinces of Tailevu, Rewa, Lau, Serua & Namosi.
- 2018 – VKB Computerization rolled out to the 14 provinces with 13 new staffs deployed to these provinces.  
**Note:** Serua & Namosi provinces are jointly served by one staff- thus total of 13 staffs against 14 provinces.

- The VKB Services that were once centralized in Suva are now available in the 14 Provincial Council Offices
- An increase in number registrations from 2017 to 2018 was noted;

<b>Year</b>	<b>Registration</b>	<b>Death</b>	<b>Death by oath</b>	<b>Modification</b>	<b>Transfer</b>
<b>2017</b>	2643	84	697	551	116
<b>2018</b>	9784	966	2687	2351	339

##### **B. CHALLENGES**

###### **• Duplicate Registrations**

The introduction of the VKB system has enabled the detection of double and multiple registrations into the VKB which was not being able to be traced during the manual registration.

###### **• Updating Death Registrations**

This applies to those who are over 100 years of age who obviously have passed away but their names are still marked alive in the system. This question that reliability and the timeliness of the data recorded into the VKB systems.



- **VKB Application System Downtime**

Access to VKB system is affected and service disrupted during downtime.

**15. Enlighten the committee on a.) usefulness of the iTaukei Dictionary to iTaukei Communities and b.) how it has assisted in the preservation and promotion of the iTaukei Vernacular.**

- a. The dictionary has enabled us to attend to public requests for clarification and indirectly it has assisted as to create new words or terms to meet emerging needs e.g. Climate Change glossary, Child Protection Manual and the 2013 Constitution. It is also used as a reference tool for primary, secondary and tertiary education.
- b. We have also established iVolavosa App with the assistance of iTaukei Trust Fund which has interactive components in relation to plants, animals, and marine species. Another initiative in preservation and promotion of the iTaukei Vernacular is the development and the publication of "iDusidusi ni Volavosa Vakaviti" – a booklet. This establishes a guideline for all vosa vakaViti translations.

**16. What services and products of the Ministry are specifically targeted to the iTaukei diaspora abroad?**

Officers accompany the Minister during his overseas tours and provide the following services:

- To enlighten the iTaukei on Land Ownership/Fishing Rights and its status are safe.
- the importance of being registered in VKB to confirm status of land ownership;
- The procedures encompassing children born overseas to be registered in VKB
- Registration of overseas births
- Issuing of VKB copies

**17. We note that the iTaukei Institute of Language and Culture (TILC) assists Provincial Council Offices during the organization of iTaukei Festivals at Provincial and District level. As such, provide further clarification on the following:**

The iTaukei Festivals celebrated in the provinces and districts are voluntarily initiated by the iTaukei communities with the assistance of the Provincial Council, this festival is held in conjunction with their annual fundraising event on the Provincial level. (Attached 2010 National iTaukei Festival Policy)

The concept of the National iTaukei Festival was initiated in 2010 and was established on the premise that it would encourage the communities to actively safeguard their language and culture.

The Ministry provides prizes for *veisisivi vosanivanua*, *meke*, *cakacakaniliga*, *sulusulu*, *buiniga*, *serenivanua* and *ukutaki ni vatunuloa*. The benefits are it reinforces their identity, creates awareness on cultural heritage and appreciation for their language and culture. It also allows us the opportunity to identify traditional groups or individuals to represent Fiji in regional cultural festivals e.g. 2016 Festival of Pacific Arts.

**18. The following questions pertain to the works of the iTaukei Lands Appeals Tribunal in making ruling on Appeal Cases.**

**a. Provide data on the following:**

- **Pending appeal cases before the Tribunal.**

As of 2016, there were no pending cases before the Appeals Tribunal.

- **Number of ruling made on Appeal cases from 2016 to date. What were the nature of these cases?**

From 2016 to date, the Appeals Tribunal received and attended to 7 appeal cases on chiefly titles. There were 5 cases from the Western Division and 2 cases from the North.

**Detailed information:**

On the 18<sup>th</sup> of January 2017 the Appeals Tribunal made ruling on the chiefly title of the **Vunivalu of Natewa** in the Cakaudrove Province. On the 7<sup>th</sup> of November 2017, the Appeals Tribunal made ruling on the chiefly title of **Tui Nalolo** in the Nadroga/Navosa Province.

On the 11<sup>th</sup> of January 2018, the Appeals Tribunal made ruling on the chiefly title of **Tui Nawaka**, in the province of Ba. On the 1<sup>st</sup> of June the 2018, the Appeals Tribunal made ruling on the chiefly title of **Tui Nadi** in the Ba Province. On the 7<sup>th</sup> of December 2018, the Appeals Tribunal made ruling on the chiefly title of **Turaga ni Mataqali Darata/Turaga ni Yavusa Vunataqa** in the village of Vatutu in the province of Ba.

On the 15<sup>th</sup> of May 2019, the Appeals Tribunal made ruling on the chiefly title of **Tui Labasa** in the Macuata Province. On the 20<sup>th</sup> of June 2019, the Appeals Tribunal made ruling on the chiefly title of **Taukei Naua** in the village of Saunaka in the Province of Ba.

As of today, there is no appeal case with the Appeals Tribunal.

**b. Does the Tribunal maintain a database on the above information?**

There is no database within the Appeals Tribunal but all information are recorded in the **Appeals Tribunal Register on Disputes from 1999**. The idea for a database will be way forward for the Appeals Tribunal.

**19. Page 10 of the Annual Report (Table on Highlights and Achievements of the Vanua Unit for 2016 -2017):**

**a. Clarify whether institutional strengthening in the following areas has been completed:**

- Typing of tribal statements (Tukutuku Raraba or TTR) and Evidence Book
- Indexing of records
- Scanning of records

We can confirm that the institutional strengthening has been completed in this financial year 2019-2020 due to all vacant positions being filled.

**b). Provide further information on the partnership between the Vanua Unit and the Fiji National Provident Fund and Immigration Department.**

Land ownership confirmations are required by the Embassies or High Commissions for visa applications and also required by Fiji National Provident Fund for Village Housing Assistance programme. Therefore letters of confirmation of land ownership are issued by the iTaukei Lands and Fisheries Commission to assist applicants.

**c). Elaborate on the following sub-outputs and the reasons for the non – achievements of the annual targets.**

The achievement of the above sub outputs were affected in the Vanua Section's 2016-2017 financial year is result of 3 vacant positions not being filled due to:

- retirement of its Senior Administrative Officer
- death of a Clerical Officer
- and another Clerical Officer position was substantively vacant

**20. What were the challenges encountered whilst undertaking the following activities in 2016**

- **Demarcation of Un-surveyed Land**
- **Survey of Un-Survey Land**
- **Demarcation of Village Boundaries**

**What are the benefits of undertaking the above exercises?**

Challenges of Demarcation and survey of un-surveyed Land

- Rugged and inaccessibility terrain
- Land Owning unit lack of knowledge of boundaries and descriptions on the ground.
- Dispute of land boundaries between landowners
- Lack of Manpower due to vacant positions
- Engagement of landowners to assist and identify boundaries
- Unfavourable Weather conditions
- Development of skills and training for project officers
- Origin of Surveys: Establishment of controls and old marks to derive the commencement of the surveys works.

- Adhoc Request: Core responsibility of the unit is to survey Un-surveyed ITaukei land. Project officers deployed to undertake redefinition survey and Village relocation during Cyclone Winston

### **Benefits**

- Confirmation and awareness of demarcated boundaries to the present generation.
- Confirmation of LOU Ownership on issuance of RTL
- Promote development and utilization of land
- Reduce and Resolve land disputes
- Plotting and Mapping of Surveyed Boundaries: Drawing up of Maps known as Tittle plans handed to Landowners and also investors for leasing purpose, kept as Survey evidence for future references and information.

### **Demarcation of Village Boundaries**

#### **Challenges**

- Village mindset- Village boundary project was a Political agenda.
- Approval of land owning unit for confirmation of village boundary
- ITaukei village located on state and freehold land e.g Galoa and Vusama Village
- Unfavorable weather conditions
- Vanua obligations and events –deferement of undertaking the demarcation of the village boundaries due to Village committment.`

#### **Benefits**

- Preserve, safeguard and strengthen leadership, culture,tradition and encourage community responsibility.
- Awareness of community members of Village boundaries and protocols.
- Goverment incentives and economic benefits to the people in the communities through sustainable development. E.g. FNPf, NDMO, Social welfare schemes and NGO programs.
- Assist in future planning such as Climate change impact and working with various stakeholders in-terms of the relocation of Village sites.
- Maintains law & order and peaceful living in the village.
- Improve customer service within the government machinaries and NGOs' in terms of queries from community members.

## **21. Child Protection**

### **a). Provide further on the Child Protection Contextualized package and whether its review has been completed. What aspects of the Child Protection Contextualized package does the Commission intend to review?**

The Child Protection Contextualised Package stems from the community need to formulate a programme that best suit the iTaukei Community Framework. From the initial concept of the "Na gone nai solisoli ni Kalou, which was developed by UNICEF, the Ministry of ITaukei Affairs through its Awareness programmes, saw it fitting to design a contextualised Package that could assist local communities in the general welfare and protection of our Children. In this regard the Ministry through consultations with other relevant authorities designed a package centred on cultural values and iTaukei Principles on child rearing and Protection. 2016-2017 saw a number



of consultations with stakeholders such as UNICEF, Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare, and the iTaukei Communities through the Provincial councils on their input into the contextualised package. By the end of 2017, the Package was ready to be rolled out to the communities.

**b). How effective is this package to the iTaukei communities?**

The communities are seen to have taken ownership of the Programme as it revolves around the iTaukei Culture and Tradition of children upbringing. At its second piloting at Nabalili in Rewa, the Ministry witnessed a more coordinated effort from parents as they spent more time with their children at Home. The communities initiated their Rewa Care Project which was an initiative to further enhance the protection and safety of our children.

**22. Provide details on the success of the Leadership Awareness Programme, its beneficiaries and the number of participants from 2016 to date.**

1. Enlighten the Vanua with their records kept by the iTaukei Lands and Fisheries Commission such as:
  - Tribal statement (TTR)
  - Role and identity e.g. Totems
  - Land boundary and land ownership
  - Fishing rights boundaries
  - Vola ni Kawa Bula
2. Registrations of new births in VKB
3. Deletion of death in VKB
4. Transfer of names in VKB
5. The Vanua are also enlightened with the role of Commission as mandated by the iTaukei Lands Act 1905 and Fisheries Act 1924
6. Filling of Traditional positions'
7. Dispute process on customary titles and land boundary

Benefits

- Increase in birth registrations
- Increase in deletion of death
- Increase in confirmation of customary titles
- Decrease in customary dispute
- Strengthen leadership role
- Increase knowledge on land boundaries, fishing rights boundaries and recognize their identity.

23. Provided below is an extract from the NDP in respect of the restoration and digitization of national records. Inform us on whether the annual targets for the following years were achieved:

- 2017-2018 financial year
- 2018-2019 financial year
- 2019-2020 financial year (progress made thus far)

PROGRAMME	ANNUAL TARGET					TOTAL OUTPUT EXPECTED	LEAD AGENCIES
	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022		
Restoration and digitization of national records	4500	5000	200	2000	250	15,000	7, 10, 11, 15

### Restoration and Digitization of Records:

#### a). 2017 – 2018 financial year (Targets achieved)

No.	KPI's	ACP Target	Targets Achieved
1.	Digitize registration	4500	14,338
2.	Digitize deletion of oaths in VKB	2000	7336
3.	Digitize transfer of names in VKB	200	234
4.	Verification/approval of digitized BDT	13,400	58,413

#### b). 2018 – 2019 financial year (Targets Achieved)

No.	KPI's	ACP Target	Targets Achieved
1.	Digitize registration	5000	11,220
2.	Digitize deletion of oaths in VKB	3000	4,213
3.	Digitize transfer of names in VKB	300	394
4.	Verification/approval of digitized BDT	13,400	37,016

#### c). 2019 – 2020 Financial Year

No.	KPI's	AOP Target	Targets Achieved (Aug – Feb)
1.	Digitized registration	6000	5445
2.	Digitized amendment of names & other details of members	2000	2300
3.	Digitized deletion of names (Death Certificate)	200	229
4.	Digitized deletion of names through oaths	2000	1532
5.	Digitized transfer of names	250	203
6.	Verification/approval of digitized BDT	13,450	12,393

## **Appendix Two**

### **Supplementary Response**

## MINISTRY OF ITAUKEI AFFAIRS



---

# STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL AFFAIRS

---

### **SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS - MTA 2016 – 2017 ANNUAL REPORT**



## **STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL AFFAIRS**

### **Explanations to the Supplementary Questions**

#### **Question 1**

The Ministry does not collect levies from the iTaukei diaspora residing abroad. The Ministry through iTaukei Lands & Fisheries Commission (TLFC) provide levies **or** charges through the following services provided to individuals;

1. Printing of Green Certificates
2. Printing of Vola ni Kawa Bula Copies.

The Soli obtained annually from individuals is through Provincial Levies paid to Provincial Office. This is the Annual Operation Budget of each Provincial Office.

#### **Question 2**

The cultural mapping program framework follows the Vanua Approach which comprises the following eight steps:

##### **Na navunavuci (conception)**

This stage involves the theorizing and conceptualizing of the research. This includes the consideration of appropriate framing which will ensure that all peoples that are needed in the research are identified, and appropriate gifts, plans, schedules and timelines are mapped out.

This also includes the permission to be sought from various chiefs, leaders of the researched community.

##### **Na Vakavakarau (Preparation and Planning)**

Research needs to be prepared well and the budget must reflect this. The Vanua ceremonies and activities need preparation, physical, psychological, methodological and spiritual. A research in the Vanua needs to have all important chiefs, leaders, elders consulted and approached beforehand.

##### **Na icurucuru/ na isevusevu (Entry)**

Amongst Fijians (and people in Fiji generally now) the Fijian customary process of a iSevusevu (the presentation of yaqona 'piper methysticum'), is a norm to request from entry into a vanua, a home, village, community. Entry is not negotiated once only. It is done on a continuous basis and at all levels of the research exercise. The isevusevu can begin with gifting depending on appropriateness of circumstance.

##### **Na Talanoa/ Veitalanoa (Multilogue/Dialogue/ Monologue/ story collection)**

The appropriate method or tool for collecting information is through talanoa. All the types, rules of engagement in the talanoa and the protocols are determined by Vanua and contextual realities.

##### **Na iTukutuku (Reporting/ Analysis/ Writing)**

Like the other aspects of the process, this should be guided closely by vanua values as well and protocols of knowledge.

##### **Na Vakavinavinaka (Gifting/ Thank yous)**

This is reciprocal behaviour; it is not a one off event as it will involve a continuous and ongoing relationship between the researcher and the researched.

### **iTatau/ (departure)**

In indigenous research this is only temporary, particularly if the researcher is an insider. ***There is no closure*** as the research relationship is one of continuous engagement with people. Researchers are often reminded just like other visitors that relationships once established are (usually) for life, a lifelong association is forged. This is a Vanua or Fijian customary behaviour.

### **Vakarogotaki lesu tale/ Taleva lesu**

Reporting back, re visiting site for the purposes of presentation /informing chiefs and people researched of completion. This should be thought out carefully and if budget allowed, this needs to be appropriately carried out in phases and with carefully thought out ways.

### **Me Vakilai/ me na ivurevure ni veisau se na veika e vou ka na kauta mai na bula e sautu (Transformative processes/ change as a result of research reports)**

Transformation may take place straight away for example in the lives and skills of local co-opted researchers. At times transformation may come in indirect ways and benefits the researched community at various points of the research and in various ways. Whatever the case, research needs to inform practice and lives of people, especially the researched community when and where appropriate.

The process in the undertaking of the cultural mapping program in the navunavuci and vakavakarau steps include:

- Letters the relevant Rokotui office;
- Preliminary awareness with Rokotui and Senior assistant rokotui, district reps and turaganikoro;

The actual visit to conduct the cultural mapping follows two weeks after the awareness. This is when our field officers enter into step three of the vanua approach – na icurucuru. Again, awareness sessions are held with the leaders of the yavusa, mataqali, tokatoka and the knowledge holders. The elders then designate which knowledge holder is to be interviewed.

Free prior informed consent is obtained via traditional means and captured either on camera or on paper – whichever is appropriate for the knowledge holders.

The next step in the vanua approach – na talanoa/veitalanoa are actually semi-structured interviews which are recorded. An entire village can take a week to capture the interviews.

When the interviews are over, the vakavinavinaka and tatau are observed. The Tukutuku (writing/analysis) stage is carried out back at the office where recordings are transcribed and edited. The final stage – vakarogotaki lesu is the final step which is called the verification program. This is where the edited scripts are taken back to each community for verification.

To date verification is still underway. Verified scripts, videos, and interviews will form the content of the database that is also in process of being negotiated with the iTaukei Trust Fund Board

### **Question 3**

The Establishment of the Itaukei Executive Forum (TEF) which consisted of all the Itaukei Institutions namely the Itaukei Lands Trust Board (TLTB), The Itaukei Trust Fund (TTFB), The Itaukei Affairs Board (TAB), The Centre for Appropriate training (CATD) in Nadave and as well as the Ministry of Itaukei Affairs (MTA) in its 2016-2017 Annual Plan, was a reflection of a smart partnership within the iTaukei Institutions. The Council provided an innovative yet robust platform where issues concerning the social, economic and as well as the education of the Itaukei were addressed and Policies were tabled. Issues of good governance at both the institutional and at the workforce level were also addressed at this council, to help shape the effectiveness of their services to the grassroot communities.

#### **Question 4**

Outreach programs to the diaspora community is facilitated mainly through written invitations from the communities concerned. For 2016 -17, there were two invitations – one from the Wellington Fijian Cultural Group Trust in New Zealand and the other was from the High Commission in London. For the former, there was cost sharing with the Ministry iTaukei and the Wellington Trust. For the latter, resources were sent. Both these communities had written in as part of their preparations for their Fiji Day celebrations.

In Wellington, the Ministry iTaukei personnel were involved in the community's Fijian Language Week program which led to the Fiji Day celebration.

These were the only two undertakings in 2016 – 17.

#### **Question 5**

The National iTaukei Resource Owners Council (NTROC) is aligned to the principles embodied in the; United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP), the ILO Convention 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), regarding the respect for indigenous rights and self-determination. That right is extended to the management of their natural resources and environment. These principles are embodied in the preamble of the 2013 Constitution; and reinforced in Section 28, which provides for iTaukei ownership of land, including the rights of Fijians to a clean and healthy environment. These principles are further embodied in the iTaukei Affairs Act 1944 which relates to the good governance and wellbeing of the iTaukei. Establishment of a resource owners committee are also reflected in the Environment Management Act 2005.

The National iTaukei Resource Owners Council was established in 2015. The objective is to support the active participation and capacity building of iTaukei resource owners; policy development, planning, management and implementation of activities relating to iTaukei land and its resources. The Council ensures the participation of iTaukei in the decision making process that affects their resources, and supports the efforts to increase the resilience of iTaukei communities against the impacts of climate change and natural disasters.

The objective of the NTROC is to:

- promote the capacity development of the iTaukei to make informed decisions on the sustainable management of their natural sources;
- ensure the participation of the iTaukei in decision-making processes that affect their resources; and
- Support efforts to increase the resiliency of the local iTaukei communities against the impacts of climate change and natural disasters.

## **MEMBERS**

The Permanent Secretary is chairman of the Council, and the members are representatives from the iYaubula Committees within the provinces. Members are endorsed by the Council and serve a term of 3 years. The 14 Roko Tui's are also members of the Council; however they have no veto powers within the Council.

## **LINKAGES TO NATIONAL FORUMS**

Through the Permanent Secretary of iTaukei Affairs, the Council is linked to other relevant Boards, Councils and Committees regarding issues arising from the NTROC. These bodies include the National Environment Council (NEC), the National Climate Change Coordinating Committee (NCCCC) and the National REDD+ Steering Committee.

### **Question 6**

The Ministry of iTaukei Affairs works with the iTaukei Affairs Board to implement environment conservation projects at grass root level. Important to note is the establishment of relevant forums at village, district and provincial level dedicated to conservation. These are known as Yaubula Management Support Teams (YMST's) who then link directly to the National iTaukei Resource Owners Council. The establishment of these forums in all our 1172 villages have empowered and increased community understanding on climate change, disaster management, food security, biodiversity and on sustainable development. To successfully implement projects with iTaukei communities we work with line ministries and NGOS. Projects are focused around the following areas:

1. Climate change adaptation and mitigation
2. Food Security
3. Natural Resource Management
4. Disaster Risk Management
5. Reforestation
6. Fisheries Management
7. Traditional Environment Knowledge

### **Question 7**

This question is already answered in the response detailing the Vanua approach and the cultural mapping program

### **Question 8**

There is no sustained collaboration with the iTaukei Trust Fund Board with regards to safeguarding projects and revitalization. The limited funding the Ministry is allocated for revitalization is sufficient given its current context. Revitalization of cultural practices requires the initial invitation of the communities because it guarantees its ownership, collaboration and sustainability. These invitations are far and between and come through the cultural mapping program reports. The limited funding is suitable in the 2016-17 phase



### **Question 9**

The Ministry is not against extending revitalization in other provinces. Rather it has experienced that when a top-down approach is imposed on communities, there is no ownership and sustainability. When a top-down approach is initiated, after the completion of the project, the viability and sustainability diminishes gradually because the community did not initiate it and were not involved from the beginning. This stance is adopted from the UNESCO 2003 Convention that gave rise to the cultural mapping and revitalization project – community focus, community based, community involvement. Funding partnerships on revitalization and other cultural projects on the other hand, are more than welcomed.

### **Question 10**

The Government, in 2017 had introduced a digital platform through a VKB Application Software, to register all iTaukei landowners, who were manually recorded in the TLFC registers (VKB). Moreover, government then recently lodged the Digital Fiji Government Transformation Programme, which is a bilateral collaboration with the Singaporean Government for the implementation of online services across line Ministries and Agencies. With the introduction of this programme, the TLFC had worked in partnership with the Office of the Registrar of Birth, Deaths and Marriages by sharing its data with them (BDM) so that information is correct, hence eliminating the possibilities of duplicate registrations. Extract of Birth Certificates are used as documentary evidences for registration where the unique BC Registration Numbers are used by VKB System to easily identify duplicate registration in the VKB.

### **Question 11**

The Ministry of Itaukei Affairs with collaboration with the Itaukei Affairs Board have initiated economic literacy Programmes and as well as develop entrepreneurship skills through its training Programmes that are facilitated at the Community level. Findings from the Ministry saw that a number of Itaukei Resource Owners resource owners lacked some basic literacy and financial management skills prompted an inclusion into these activities to assist the sustenance of economic sustainability.

### **Question 12:**

Yes. The Child Protection Manual is available in the vernacular (Itaukei Version). Given the targeted audience and the approaches on which this programme is centred, the manual contains a very comprehensive and reviewed Itaukei Version. In the same token, the English version is also available which has also been part of the Child Protection Package.

### **Question 13**

YEAR	PROVINCE
	NAMOSI
	BUA

<b>2016</b>	NAITASIRI
	REWA
<b>2017</b>	BUA
	TIKINA NAVUAKECE, NAITASIRI
	LAU
	TIKINA NAWAIDINA, NAITASIRI
	SERUA
	TAILEVU
	REWA

#### **Question 14**

This is one of the requirements by foreign countries for visa applications probably for confirmation that the applicant will return before the expiry of his/her visa.

#### **Question 15**

The Ministry in 2018 had regularized project officers into established positions (Technical officers) and formation of a Technical Unit. The regularizing process have proven to be positive in terms of permitting and recognizing the officers to develop skills and aspirations in the demarcation and survey profession.

Ministry had facilitated the release of Project officers to enroll in the Fiji Public Survey Draughting Examination offered by the Ministry of Lands for Technical officers to broaden their knowledge on land mechanics and administration. Currently they are 10 officers who are enrolled in this program to up skill their practical understanding on land tenure and best survey practices.

Successively 2 officers have completed their Bachelor in Land management/GIS and Certification in Climate change respectively from the University of the South Pacific in March 2020. The knowledge and skill obtained from the courses will address the inconsistency in mapping and provide the necessary accuracy that will guarantee the protection of iTaukei interests.

Currently 3 officers are pursuing Diploma in Land Surveying at the Fiji National University (FNU) on extension studies. In addition an officer have been granted approval by the Ministry to undertake fulltime studies on the same program.

Furthermore an officer from the Survey unit have completed 3 out of the 4 projects for the Fiji Surveyors Registration board process. Recently Approval have been granted by the Ministry for the completion of the last project on attachment with an engineering firm for the next 3 months. Upon completion of the above project the officer shall be recognized as a Registered Surveyor within the ministry.

**Question 16**

In its Annual operation Plan for 2016-2017, the Ministry of Itaukei Affairs was focused on developing the package and Piloting it on designated Province in Viti Levu and Vanua Levu. The Review placed emphasis on the content of the Manual and as well as the Approaches taken. However in this annual Period there was no Review of the Impacts of the Programme on communities. It is anticipated the UNDP will hire local and overseas based consultant to assess the Impacts of the Programme.

**Question 17**

In order to comply with the Government's 5 Year Development Plan, the Ministry developed the VKB Application Software, hence engaged in the digitization of VKB records. The period 2016/2017 was used as preliminary phase for business process engineering, consisted of cataloguing, verification and approval processes. The KPIs for the above period were the submission of quarterly reports entailing the implementation process for the Senior Management's information. These targets (4 reports) were fully met during the period 2016/2017. The actual rollout of the VKB Digitization Programme commenced in and as of to date, all VKB records are digitized and are accessible through the VKB Application Software.