



Rear-Admiral (Ret'd) Hon. Josaia V. Bainimarama, CF (Mil), OSt.J, MSD, jssc, psc
Prime Minister and Minister for iTaukei Affairs, Sugar Industry, Foreign
Affairs and Forestry

**WRITTEN RESPONSE TO PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION NO:
137/2022**

Parliament of Fiji
Government Buildings, Suva

Fri. 13 May 2022
0930 Hours

Question 137/2022:

Hon. Jese Saukuru to ask the Prime Minister and Minister for iTaukei Affairs, Sugar Industry, Foreign Affairs and Forestry – Can the Prime Minister update Parliament on the lease funds held in trust by the iTaukei Land Trust Board for mataqali members below 18 years, in particular –

- a) how many were beneficiaries since 2018; and
- b) the total funds held in trust for these beneficiaries annually since 2018.

Response

Mister Speaker Sir, My Government had on 31st December 2010, amended the Native Land Trust Act (Cap 134) Section 14 which covers the provisions on the distribution of land rent and premiums (lease funds) to landowners. The amendment was:

“After deduction of any sums in accordance with section 14 of the Act, the balance of any monies received by the Board by way of rents and premiums in respect of native land, including any monies received by the Board but not yet distributed at date of commencement of the Native Land Trust (Leases and Licences) (Amendment) Regulations 2010, shall be distributed by the Board to all the living members of the proprietary unit, in equal proportion.”

Since the amendment of the Native Land Trust (Leases and Licences) (Amendment) Regulations 2010, the equal distribution system of lease monies has benefitted a greater number of landowners including those under the age of 18 years.

Once the registered Vola ni Kawa Bula Landowner turns 18, he would be entitled to his portion of lease monies that he would have been entitled to if their Mataqali Land was leased out.

From 2017, funds of members below the age of 18 years were invested with HFC Bank with an intention of earning returns. These returns (principal and interest) would then be payable to members once they turn 18 years.

The following table outlines the number of Mataqali members below 18 years as beneficiaries whose lease funds were held in Trust since 2018:

Year	Number of Minors as beneficiaries	Total Funds Held in Trust for these beneficiaries
2018	52,729	\$39,175,641
2019	54,911	\$49,416,895
2020	54,766	\$61,857,076
2021	45,703	\$52,097,815
TOTAL	208,109	\$202,547,427

- In 2018, a total of 52,729 beneficiaries had a total trust funds of \$39,175,641 that was held in trust.
- In 2019, a total of 54,911 beneficiaries had a total trust funds of \$49,416,895 that was held in trust.
- In 2020, a total of 54,766 beneficiaries had a total trust funds of \$61,857,076 that was held in trust.
- In 2021, a total of 45,703 beneficiaries with a total trust funds of \$52, 097,815 that was held in trust.
- **Since 2018, a total of 208,109 minors have benefitted from this initiative.**

The decision by my Government to introduce the Equal Distribution of lease monies (rent and premiums) to all living members of a Mataqali has been a notable initiative that has assisted a number of beneficiaries.

It has also relieved the burden from parents to fund the future educational expenses for their children.

Various investment opportunities and aspirations have also opened up for young children and youth (both girls and boys) to pursue empowerment programs for their future growth and development.

Thank You Mister Speaker Sir.
