

APPENDICES

Appendix I

Written Response by iTaukei
Trust Fund Board



**ITAUKEI TRUST FUND BOARD
ANNUAL REPORT 2020
QUESTIONS & ANSWERS:**

1. Confirm whether the following online projects have materialized:

- a) **The Solesau**
- b) **Healing Plants of Fiji app**
- c) **Revamped website of the Fund**

(a) Solesau

The Solesau online LMS was launched on Monday 20th December 2021 by H.E the President of Fiji, Ratu Wiliame Katonivere and it is currently live on www.solesau.com

(b) Healing Plants App Update

Since 16/8/22, the Healing plants App has been live on Google Play store and Apple's App store and also on web platform for PC users.

(c) Revamp of the Website

The Revamp of the Website was launched on Monday 20th December 2021 by H.E the President of Fiji, Ratu Wiliame Katonivere and is currently live and updated.

2. Confirm whether the Healing Plants of Fiji book has been published and printed.

Healing Plants of Fiji Book

A total of 750 books were printed with Star printery on December 2021. As of 31/8/22, a total of 373 HPOF books have been sold.

3. Provide a list of the resource-owner businesses who were identified for potential partnerships under the entrepreneurship value-chain framework.

A. Advertisement of Expression of Interest (Saturday 24th October 2020)

Table 1: List of Applicants

	Name of Company	Resource Sector	Date EOI Received
1	Navunisareki Logging & Pruning Company	Forestry	Thursday, Nov 5
2	Iconsult PTE Ltd	Agro Tourism	Thursday, Nov 5
3	Wainuqa Cooperative Ltd	Agriculture	Thursday, Nov 5
4	Sunshine Aerated Waters & Manufacturing (P.W.F) Pte Ltd	Agriculture	Friday, Nov 6
5	Mataqali Nakoro Trust, Ba	Forestry	Friday, Nov 6
6	Fungs Farm	Agriculture	Friday, Nov 6
7	VitiCan Enterprise Pte Ltd	Forestry	Friday, Nov 6
8	Vanua ko Ba Holdings	Gravel etc	Friday, Nov 6
9	Blue Horizon	Property Development	Friday, Nov 6
10	Nadarivatu Mahogany Trust	Forestry	Friday, Nov 6
11	Sealink Enterprises	Agriculture	Friday, Nov 6

After 3 rounds of interview, the following top 3 applicants were shortlisted:

1. Navunisareki Logging & Pruning Company (NLPC)
2. Wainuqa Cooperative Ltd (WCL)
3. Sea Link Enterprises (SE)

Company	Support Type Recommended By TTFB Board	Status
1. NLPC	Recommended as a candidate for the “Resource Owners Credit Guarantee Scheme”	First pilot project approved under the guarantee scheme. Pilot project underway.
2. Wainuqa Cooperative Ltd	Direct support recommended towards R&D to improve product development.	After a series of meetings, WCL failed to present key financial documents and requirements from TTFB. Key governance issues was identified and WCL was given time to resolve. After 6 months, WCL did not respond and thus the support was terminated.
3. Sea Link Enterprise	Recommended as a candidate for the “Resource Owners Credit Guarantee Scheme”	SL decided to decline the offer, as COVID Affected their cash flow, hence they were not able to meet the pre requisites for the Guarantee Scheme

4. Identify the Strategic Partner with which the Fund signed an MOU in relation to the development of the Culture & Arts and Commercial Centre Project. Update us on the current status of this project and provide timelines for each phase of the project.

The Strategic Partner with whom the Fund signed an MOU with for the development of the Culture & Arts and Commercial Centre was Sunshine Aerated Water & Manufacturing Limited.

Current Status:

- a) Basic Outline drawings and concepts has been completed by an Architect appointed through a design competition in 2020.
- b) Feasibility study and due diligence in progress but was on hold from 2021 due to COVID- 19 pandemic – the Centre viability rely on locals and tourists.
- c) With now post-covid recovery period, the Fund has re-commence with the refinement of the concept. A Fund delegation recently visited the Polynesian Cultural Centre in Laie, Hawaii to learn the operation and set up of the Centre.

5. **Identify the Strategic Partner with whom negotiations were made to acquire a shopping mall complex in Suva. Provide the name of the shopping mall complex and whether the Fund was successful in its acquisition.**

The Strategic Partner with whom negotiations were made to acquire a shopping mall complex in Suva was London Guarantee Corporation Limited. The name of the Complex is Damodar City Complex. The Fund was unsuccessful in the acquisition.

6. **Confirm whether a Fund Manager has been appointed to manage the overseas portfolio and whether buying or selling of stock has recommenced. What was the implication of halting the buying or selling of stock in 2020 on the Fund's revenue?**

A Fund Manager has yet to be appointed. A team will be travelling to Australia soon to talk to potential Fund Managers.

7. **How is the revenue derived from the Fund's investments used to preserve and nurture the traditions and culture of iTaukei communities?**

The revenue is derived from the Fund's investments in property rentals, equity and term deposits.

8. **Provide us with some key recommendations provided to the Department of Heritage and Arts and other stakeholders between 2020 up until the present time, in relation to the preservation and upkeep of historical sites in Fiji.**

The Ministry of iTaukei Affairs is the policy arm which has been providing recommendations for the Department of Heritage & Arts.

9. **Explain how participants for the Sauvaki ni Vanua programme are identified and whether this traditional leadership training is open to traditional chiefly heirs and *isausauvou* in all of the provinces in Fiji.**

Sauvaki Ni Vanua

The selection is carried out by their respective vanua (ie. Yavusa & Mataqali). The names are vetted by the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs. The training is done in provincial cohorts. The provinces that have completed the training are Rewa, Tailevu, Ba, Nadroga. Serua and Namosi which was recently completed in September this year.

10. **Was the online learning management system, Solesau, launched in the latter part of 2021 as anticipated?**

Yes – the Solesau online LMS was launched on Monday 20th December 2021 by H.E the President of Fiji, Ratu Wiliame Katonivere.

11. What other entrepreneurship trainings is TTFB intending to provide to rural women and youth?

Training

- 1. Entrepreneurship Training** - coaching and mentoring with the aim to build capacity to better develop and grow their businesses. The training is based on local and international best practices and lessons learnt from the local business accelerators programs.
 - a. Training of Trainers – 25 selected practitioners and business owners attended*
 - b. Training for Resource Owners – 33 resource owners and entrepreneurs were part of this training*

- 2. Business Continuity Training** - trained and equipped on better understanding disasters and how they can better prepare their business to withstand the impacts of such disasters.
 - a. Tikina Matailobau Womens – for the 29 cooperative members*
 - b. Navunisareki Stakeholders – 15 resource owners*

- 3. Basic Cooperative Training** - Business training on Cooperative governance, running a cooperative, and how the business is to be operated.
 - a. Tikina Matailobau Womens Cooperative – 20 cooperative members.*

- 4. Social Leadership Training** – revisiting roles and responsibilities and connecting the powers of the community to the everyday challenges of work. The training is built upon visioning, trust, humility, fairness, and kindness, but it's no soft form of power: it's a power that is earned and, because of that, it carries great weight.
 - a. Tikina Matailobau Womens Cooperative – 60 women from Nairukuruku, Taulevu, Navuniyasi , Delaitoga , Nabena and Matilobau.*
 - b. Navunisareki Stakeholders – 26 resource owners from Dreke, Nagado and Lauwaki village.*
 - c. Tutu Rural Training Centre - Capacity Building to the 32 staffs*

12. Elaborate on the Resource Owners Credit Guarantee Scheme under the Entrepreneurship project and provide us with a copy of the published EOI and detailed Terms of Reference which was given to selected candidates.

1 THE TTFB BACKED RESOURCE OWNERS LOAN GUARANTEE SCHEME (ROLGS)

- 1.1 Under the Scheme, TTFB will guarantee to pay 50 percent (50%) of the principal outstanding on defaulted SME loans up to a limit of \$500,000.
- 1.2 The ROLGS cover is limited to the principal amount only. Interest dues are not covered under the Scheme.
- 1.3 The guarantee covers lending to at least 3 (Forestry, Agriculture and Fisheries) sectors except for loans to Sugar Cane farmers and Government subsidized businesses.

2 ELIGIBILITY

- 2.1 New small and medium enterprise loan facilities approved by commercial bank that meets the joint criteria set out by TTFB and the commercial bank under the Scheme, except for the following:
 - i. Loans with interest rates above 10 percent;
 - ii. Businesses in the sugar industry;
 - iii. Businesses that already enjoy some form of Government subsidy; and
 - iv. The Scheme does not cover lending that is not directly related to SME in the Forestry, Agriculture and Fisheries sectors e.g., property investment.

3 INTEREST RATES

- 3.1 To be eligible for a SMECGS claim, interest rates on SME loans should not exceed 10 percent per annum.
- 3.2 The above rate is subject to periodic review. TTFB reserves the right to make changes in line with movements in market interest rates.

4 Refer to Appendices 1 & 2 fo Expression of Interest (EOI) and Terms of Reference (TOR).

13. Who are the current Members of the Fund?

The current Members of the Fund are as follows:

- 1) **Mr. Pita Tagicakirewa** – Permanent Secretary Ministry of iTaukei Affairs
- 2) **Ms. Preetika Prasad** – Acting Solicitor General/ Principal Legal Officer Attorney General's Office
- 3) **Mr. Sipuriano Nemani** – Director Fiji Museum
- 4) **Ms. Elenoa Kaloumaira** – Head of Investment, Fijian Holdings Limited
- 5) **Mr. Naibuka Saune** – Chief Executive Officer, Merchant Finance Limited
- 6) **Mr. Fatiaki Misau** – retired Civil Servant (end of Term 21st September 2022)

Appendix 1 – Expression of Interest



EXPRESSION OF INTEREST for ENTREPRENEURSHIP FRAMEWORK PILOT PROJECT WITH RESOURCE OWNERS

The 'iTaukei Trust Fund Board' (TTFB) was established to advance the standards of living of iTaukei and Rotumans through better utilisation of their resources; and enhance and safeguard their cultures, traditions, norms, languages and values.

TTFB has developed an Entrepreneurship Framework with the objective to maximise the returns to Resource Owners, by working closely with an established value adding business, in the Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry sectors, through pilot initiatives that aim to address the key binding constraints which include:

- (i) Capital**
- (ii) Technical know-how**
- (iii) Business Leadership**

The objective being, to ensure the landowners actively participate in the value chain process and enjoy an increased and direct benefit, from the development of their resources. Hence, empowering them, to participate meaningfully, to the development of the Fijian economy.

TTFB now invites registered businesses that have practical experience and knowledge, on value adding in the Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Sectors and who are keen, to work closely with Resource Owners, to uplift their wellbeing, to formally submit their interest for the Pilot Project(s) detailing the following:

- (i) Brief business profile with its Vision and Mission;**
- (ii) Gross annual turnover and number of staff, employed;**
- (iii) Provide evidence of value-added products with the market secured and/or established;**
- (iv) Demonstrate how the Resource Owners will benefit from the profit of the business apart from payment of lease, royalties etc; and**
- (v) Summary of the current and future expansion plans.**

All short-listed Companies will receive a Terms of Reference (TOR) which also serves as the basis for selection of the Pilot Project(s). TTFB's decision on the shortlist will be final. EOI's are to be submitted to the address below:

"Expression of Interest – Entrepreneurship Framework Pilot Project with Resource Owners"
iTaukei Trust Fund Board
PO Box 2327
Government Buildings
Suva

Alternatively, submissions can also be emailed to james@itaukeitrustfund.com.fj.

EOI Submissions close at **4pm** on **Friday 6th November 2020**. For further information, please contact Mr. James McGoon at james@itaukeitrustfund.com.fj or 3319 637.

Appendix 2 – Terms of Reference (TOR)



TERMS OF REFERENCE for ENTREPRENEURSHIP PILOT PROJECT

A. BACKGROUND

The 'iTaukei Trust Fund Board' [TTFB] was established to advance the standards of living of iTaukei and Rotumans through better utilisation of their resources; and enhance and safeguard their cultures, traditions, norms, languages and values. One of TTFB's mandated objective is, *"To provide funding to help develop the management, leadership and entrepreneurial skills of the indigenous Fijians and Rotumans"*

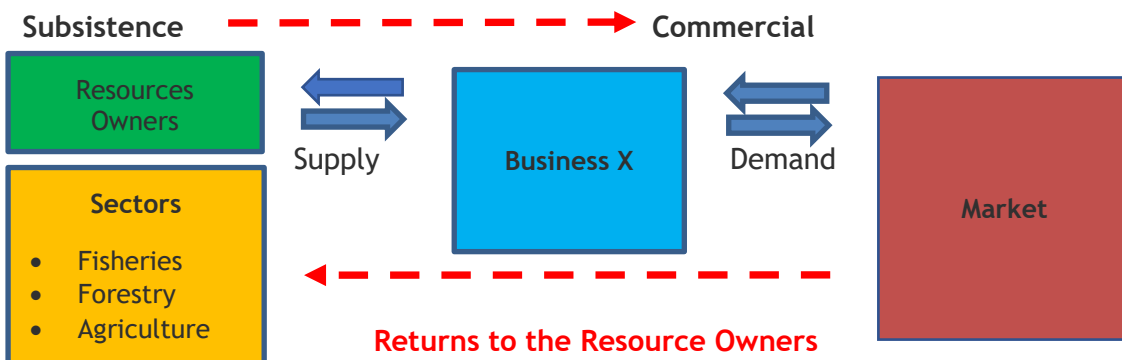
B. OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF WORK

TTFB would like to pilot a few initiatives to help meet the above objectives. The aim is to maximise the returns to resource owners by working closely with an established business in either the Agriculture, Fisheries and/or Forestry sector, who are actively involved in value adding, through pilot initiatives that aim to address the key binding constraints which include:

- (i) Capital;
- (ii) Technical know-how; and
- (iii) Business Leadership.

The goal being to ensure the resource owners have increased and direct benefits from the development of their resources, therefore empowering them to participate and develop management and entrepreneurial skills, so that they can contribute meaningfully to the growth of the Fijian economy. (Please refer to graph 1)

Graph 1: Entrepreneurship Framework



Particular focus will be on resource owners, located in the Provinces that have successfully completed, the “Sauvaki Ni Vanua, Traditional Leadership and Good Governance” training program (training). This includes the Tailevu, Rewa, Ba, Nadroga Navosa and Serua province. Sauvaki means to ‘prosper’ or to ‘make prosper’.’ The “Sauvaki Ni Vanua training focuses on training and equipping those next in line, for traditional leadership roles, in the different provinces. The training focuses on good governance, in the traditional, social and culture and art domain. The Entrepreneurship pilot project is designed to complement and provide further avenues to build and strengthen entrepreneurship in the province.

TTFB has some funding support available to support businesses that meet the criteria set out in the scope of works below.

SCOPE OF WORKS FOR THE ENTREPRENEURSHIP PILOT PROJECT:

1. INCREASED PARTICIPATION AND CONTRIBUTION OF RESOURCE OWNERS TO THE ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE FIJIAN ECONOMY

- The Business should demonstrate its economic contribution to the Fijian economy and commitment to work closely with land/resource owners whilst clearly showing the following:
 - List of value-added products already developed and available in the market
 - Evidence and list of markets secured (local or overseas)
 - Average Turnover for at least 2 years
 - Number of workers employed both direct and indirect
 - Average amount outsourced to other companies along the supply chain (if any)
 - Sourcing locality plan showing the current and potential areas of sourcing (name of areas)

2. MAXIMUM RETURNS TO THE RESOURCE OWNERS FOR THEIR RESOURCES UTILISED

- The Business should clearly demonstrate its commitment to ensure there is maximum returns to the resource owners. The Business must clearly state the following:
 - Amount remunerated to resource owners for each commodity e.g lease, royalty, stumpage, fees etc, to be paid to landowners for each commodity, etc
 - How the resource owners are or will be involved in the value chain
 - How and the amount and/ or percentage of profit from the business to be shared with resource owners
 - Any training and capacity development planned and implemented with resource owners

3. SUSTAINABILITY AND VIABILITY OF THE BUSINESS MODEL

- The Business should clearly demonstrate its commitment to ensure the business/sourcing is viable and sustainable in the medium to long run. The Business must clearly state the following:
 - How the project will lead to improving the livelihood of resource owners
 - Sourcing plans (raw materials) for the project alongside any plans for ensuring sustainability of resources
 - Plans to ensure the sustainability of the environment.

4. SOUND UNDERSTANDING OF THE RESOURCE OWNERS/COMMUNITY DYNAMICS WITH STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS THEM

- The Business should clearly demonstrate its commitment to ensuring that the community dynamics is well understood and planned for. The Business must clearly state the following:
 - Evidence of previous or current working relationship with communities/ resource owners.
 - Recommendations on how their involvement would improve the community wellbeing.

- Show how the project will ensure that it will “Do No Harm” to the resource owners.

5. INCLUSIVITY AND IMPROVED WELLBEING

- The Business should clearly demonstrate its commitment to inclusivity. The Business must clearly state how it will ensure that the benefits of prosperity is spread as widely as possible. This may include how it plans to link resource owners to the formal economy through financial services, education and literacy, communication, basic housing, electricity and access to water infrastructure.

6. LOCATION

- This pilot project is specifically for those businesses that would closely work or source from selected provinces that have successfully completed the “Sauvaki Ni Vanua, Traditional Leadership and Good Governance” training program. This includes the Province of Tailevu, Rewa, Ba, Nadroga Navosa and Serua province.

7. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- Proper monitoring and evaluation are a key component of measuring the success of the project. The Business should be willing to share its progress reports during the project lifetime and will work closely with TTFB to provide the necessary information related specifically to the project.
- TTFB will require this information to be able to measure the impact of the project on the livelihood of the resource owners.

C. THE BUSINESS CHECKLIST

- Brief business profile with its vision and mission
 - Valid FNPF and FRCS compliance certificate
 - Valid Business License for 2020
 - Last 2 year audited financial statements
 - Financial Cash Flow analysis for the next 3 years
 - Gross Annual turnover and number of staff employed
 - List of value-added products developed and available in the market
 - Demonstrated experience in closely working with Resource owners in their business processes.
 - Summary of the current and future expansion plans
 - Project or Business plan clearly highlighting the areas in which support would be directed to.
 - Plans for merger or collaboration with other businesses to complement and/or bring our greater synergies to strengthen the value proposition and sustainability of the business. *(Optional)*
-

(I). SUBMISSION

Submissions to include:

- Proposal including the cost of the funding support
- All requirements in the business checklist
- A capability statement
- Key resources assigned to this project
- Timeframe to begin and complete

Specifically, the proposal must contain the following:

- a. Name, address and contact of person responsible for submitting the proposal; and
- b. Detailed proposal outlining relevant project completed, its future plans incorporating the timeline and the budget.

(II). PROPOSALS ARE TO BE SUBMITTED IN THE FOLLOWING MANNER:

- i. By hand - a sealed envelope clearly marked “Application to Terms of Reference - Entrepreneurship Pilot Project” to be delivered to the:
The iTaukei Trust Fund Office
Veivueti House
87 Queen Elizabeth Drive
Draiba
Suva or;
- ii. By post - a sealed envelope clearly marked “Application to Terms of Reference- Entrepreneurship Pilot Project” mailed to:
The iTaukei Trust Fund Board
PO Box 2327
Government Buildings
Suva, or;
- iii. By email - email submissions forwarded to James McGoan via email - james@itaukeitrustfund.com.fj
- iv. Closing date - Applications to TOR Submissions close at **5pm Monday 23rd November, 2020.**
- v. For further information, please email james@itaukeitrustfund.com.fj or call 331 9637.

ENDS

Appendix II

Verbatim Report on iTaukei Trust Fund Board Public Submission

[VERBATIM REPORT]

STANDING COMMITTEE ON **SOCIAL AFFAIRS**

- 1. ITAUKEI TRUST FUND BOARD (ITTFB)
(ITTFB 2020 ANNUAL REPORT)**

SUBMITTEE: Management Teams of:

- 1) iTaukei Trust Fund Board (iTTFB)**

VENUE: Small Committee Room, Parliament

DATE: Thursday, 29th September, 2022

The Committee resumed at 11.40 a.m.

Interviewee/Submittee: iTaukei Trust Fund Board (iTTFB)

In Attendance:

1) Mr. Aisake Taito - Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you honorable Members and welcome to the third and the final inquiry for the day, we will hear evidence from the iTaukei Trust Fund Board relating to its operational and financial performance for the 2020 Financial Year.

MR. A. TAITO.- Thank you Mr. Chairman, Sir, and honourable Members of the Committee. Before I respond to the questions I thought of giving you a brief overview of our performance as an organization for 2020. I think our response to the questions has been circulated to the Committee as well.

Mr. Chairman and honourable Members, the year 2020 is going to be synonymously remembered for COVID-19 whether it was international or domestic, demand and supply trading finance was severely disrupted and this is very important in terms of how it impacts the Fund. The Fund investment in tourism, namely Raddison Blue, was severely impacted due to the closure of international borders together with travel restrictions and lockdowns, where the hotels laid off employees and they only opened for operational capacity. The local tourists in some way cushioned the impact but it was not enough to sustain our operations.

In terms of our diversified investments, especially our offshore investments, it was able to cushion the impact in terms of our finances and as you can see in our financials, our profit moved from over a million dollars to over six million dollars in that particular period. We also had serious share price in some of our major equity investments like ATH and RB Patel which dropped significantly in that year as well. Our tenants were given 25 percent consensus, especially those who rented our property during this period. So overall, our net assets decreased from around \$324 million to around \$267 million - that is in terms of the financial, and I will now touch of some issues in relation to culture and heritage.

In terms of culture and heritage we continue to progress with our *vanua* field work programme. This involves collection of video documentations of unique traditional practices and customs carried out in provinces, and we have started with the Rewa Province. These videos are important because it records and safeguards traditional knowledge and is a useful tool for academic research. Another programme that we have under 'culture' is the "*Sauvaki Ni Vanua*" programme where we train traditional leaders in good governance. We completed Serua in 2020 where 32 traditional leaders of Serua graduated with a Certificate III in Traditional Leadership and Governance at the CATD, Nadave. This programme is fully accredited by Fiji High Education Commissions.

Also during the year we provided funding of around \$130,000 for the upgrade of CATD, Nadave mainly in terms of their conference facilities and accommodation. Because of that, they were able to increase their revenue because a lot of training was conducted in Nadave. Our partnership with the tertiary institutions in 2020 saw the development of Post Graduate Diploma in Fijian Studies at USP, and that is the first year that we introduced the Post-Graduate Diploma.

In the same year we developed work on the online project *Solesau*, healing plants and a revamped website. The *Solesau* Online Project is a learning management programme on *itaukei* culture, tradition and language. Their deeds, Mr. Chair, has been provided in our answers to the questions.

30 | Verbatim Report - SC on Social Affairs Meeting with iTaukei Trust Fund Board (iTTFB)

(iTTFB 2020 Annual Report)

Thursday, 29th September, 2022

Also, in 2020 we embarked on our strategic focus on the island of Rotuma where the Board members and management did a scoping study on the island just to identify areas of economic intervention by the Fund. The meeting and *talanoa* sessions on the island with religious, farmers, fishermen and businesses including women and youths, gave us valuable insight into the island resources and how we can be turned into a vibrant prospect to improve the livelihood of people in Rotuma.

In 2020, we designed an entrepreneurs value-chain framework for resource owners mainly focused on primary industry, agriculture, fisheries and forests which resource owners have in abundance. These are also detailed here in terms of our response to the questions of the Committee. The development was not only limited to just financial returns which is part of the framework, but also how we can improve the standard of living especially of those in the rural community through proper sanitations, cyclone certified dwellings, upgrade utilities like access to clean water and electricity.

We look forward to progressing this in the future. One of the important projects we are embarking on, which is taking time, is to move indigenous *iTaukei* from subsistence agriculture to commercial. It is quite a huge challenge but I am hoping that in future we will be able to make it happen. We have started that process by working with the right partners, with the Ministry of Agriculture and a few private sectors with the hope of modelling and piloting it in a few areas, so that we can learn lessons from it before we embark on bigger scales.

One of the biggest challenge in embarking on this particular area especially agriculture, is the lack of capital funding to ensure that you purchase right tools because if you want to move into commercial, it has to be mechanised. There is no way you are going to continue with the spade, fork and knives for you to move from subsistence to commercial. I think there are lessons learnt from other countries who have done that, in addition to that, we need to have a capacity building in research and development especially on particular crops that are demanded by the market locally and also overseas.

Mr. Chairman, as far as the 2020 Annual Report, despite the huge challenge that was brought about by the pandemic, we still remain optimistic of the years ahead in terms of recovery and building resilience especially in terms of rural communities, and we are putting in place some smart strategies so that we can bring value and improve the livelihood of our community.

Mr. Chairman, in response to the questions being raised by the Committee - confirm whether the following online projects have materialised? Yes, the Solesau, Healing Plants of Fiji app and revamped website of the Fund. In terms of the Solesau, that was launched in December, 2021 by His Excellency the President, that is currently live. In terms of the Healing Plants of Fiji app, yes, it has been live since August this year. In terms of the revamped website, the website was also launched in December 2021 by His Excellency the President.

Question 2 - Confirm whether the Healing Plants of Fiji book has been published and printed? Yes, a total of 750 books were printed and we have sold 373 books already.

Question 3 – Provide a list of resource owner businesses who were identified for potential partnership under the entrepreneurs value chain framework. Listed in your notes is the list of applicants. We did put out an expression of interest on 24th October, 2020, and we received 11 applicants, ranging from the forestry sector, tourism, property development, agriculture and so forth. We conducted the interview on these applicants and in round three, we shortlisted three and these were Navunisareki Logging & Pruning Company from the West; Wainuqa Co-operative from Wainibuka; and Sea Link from Tailevu North. Unfortunately, there were no applicants received from other provinces nor from maritime islands. This was published

widely in both the daily newspapers, on the website and on social media as well. Just to give you an update in terms of the three short listed applicants:

- 1) Navunisareki was the first pilot project approved under the guarantee scheme.
- 2) Wainuqa Cooperative - there were issues that we wanted them to document and submit, especially in terms of governance issues which we identified as part of their due diligence. After six months they were not able to provide all the information that we required, both financial and in terms of the structure of their organisation and also in terms of the governance structure that is required by the bank for them to submit; and
- 3) Sea Link - COVID-19 affected their cash flow and also in terms of the mobilisation of their resources, they decided not to pursue further in terms of the project.

Question 4 - Identify the strategic partner in which the Fund signed an MOU relating to the development of a culture and arts and commercial centre; update us on the current status of this project and provide timelines for each phase of the project. Mr. Chairman, I have outlined the details and the strategic partner is there. The status we have outlined in terms of the basic outline drawings and concepts have been completed by the architect through a design competition, which was advertised widely in 2020. The feasibility study, due diligence and progress was on hold due to the pandemic. Recently, we commenced the refinement of the concept and we had a delegation that visited the Polynesian Cultural Centre in Hawaii. The idea was to learn the operations and set up of the Centre. The delegation visited Hawaii because it is one of the successful Cultural Centres in the world. It has been in operation for over 40 years and it is one of the major attractions as far as tourists are concerned in Hawaii.

Question 5 - Identify the strategic partner with whom negotiations were made to acquire the shopping mall complex in Suva, provide the name of the shopping mall complex and whether the Fund was successful in its acquisition. The strategic partner with whom negotiations were made to acquire the shopping mall complex in Suva was London Guarantee Corporation Limited. They own the Damodar Complex.

Unfortunately the Fund was not able to successfully finalise the deal which is beyond our control.

Question 6 – Confirm whether a Fund Manager has been appointed to manage the overseas portfolio and whether buying or selling of stock has recommenced. What were the implications of halting the buying or selling of stock in 2020 on the Fund’s revenue?

We have yet to appoint a Fund Manager basically because of restrictions in terms of travel in 2020-2021, and we were not able to meet physically with potential Fund managers. Now with the borders open, there is a delegation that will be pursuing that before the end of the year. In terms of buying and selling of stock, we continue to monitor the market overseas and when there is a potential opportunity, we do consider that opportunity. At the moment we are holding off on that basically because we are not finding the right opportunity to pursue buying or selling of stock.

Question 7 - How is the revenue derived from the Fund’s investment used to preserve and nurture the traditions and culture of iTaukei? Revenue is derived from the Fund’s investment in property rentals, equity and term deposits, and all that we earn from those investments, we set aside for our programmes in relation to traditions and culture which is one of our core mandates.

Question 8 – Provide us with some key recommendations provided to the Department of Heritage and Arts and other stakeholders between 2020 up until the present time in relation to the preservation and upkeep of historical sites in Fiji. All of our comments are submitted through the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs

which is the policy of the Ministry and they are the ones who submit those information to the Department of Heritage and Arts.

Question 9 – Explain how the participants for the *Sauvaki Ni Vanua* programme are identified and whether this traditional leadership training is open to traditional chiefs and *sausauvou* of all the provinces in Fiji. Yes, they are available to all 14 provinces. The selection is carried out by their respective *vanua* which is the *mataqali* and *yavusa*. The names are vetted by the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs. We only provide the funding. So far, the provinces that have completed the training are Rewa, Tailevu, Ba, Nadroga, Serua and the latest this year is Namosi.

Question 10 – Was the online learning management systems launched in the later part of 2021 as anticipated? Yes, I think I already responded to that question.

Question 11 – What other entrepreneurship training is TTFB intending to provide to rural women and youth? Chair, listed in there are all the trainings that we provide - entrepreneurship training especially in the areas of coaching and mentoring, building capacity so that they can develop and grow their business. These trainings are based on local and international best practices and lessons learnt from local businesses.

These programmes are linked to the Ministry of Trade and Commerce and other training being provided. In terms of other training conducted for the resource owners under the Entrepreneurs Framework are business continued training. Listed in there are the trainings that we conducted for Tikina Matailobau in Naitasiri mainly for women, and especially for cooperative members and the Navunisarakiki stakeholders which comprises of 15 resource owners. Other trainings conducted are basically basic co-operative training with the Department of Co-operatives, listed in terms of where we conducted trainings especially in Naitasiri.

Social Leadership Training is built upon listening, trust and kindness, it is a powerful way of training which we have conducted with our strategic partners - the resource owners - and we have conducted that in Nadroga, Matailobau, Nabena, Nagado in Nadi, Lawaki Village, Tutu Rural Training Centre as well, especially for the staff.

Question 12 - Elaborate on the Resource Owners Credit Grant Scheme under the entrepreneurs project and provide a copy of the published expression of interest and detailed terms of reference which was given to selected candidates. Mr. Chairman, we have attached this in terms of expression of interest and also the terms of reference that are given to those that applied for this scheme.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, just to give you background in terms of our Loan Guarantee Scheme with the Home Finance Company Bank (HFC). It is a combined SME loan of up to a limit of half a million dollars where we guarantee to pay 50 percent of the principal outstanding in case they default. There are conditions to that in relation to the conditions that are being set by the bank as well. At the moment we are targeting the resource sectors mainly forestry, agriculture and fisheries. In terms of eligibility that has also been covered quite extensively in terms of the expression of interest and also in terms of the scope of the Entrepreneurs Framework.

Question 13 - Who are the current members of the Fund? Listed there are the current Board members chaired by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs and under the Act there are specific skill sets that are required to be a Board member. One has to be a legal practitioner, hence we have the Acting Solicitor-General, the Director Museum in relation to culture and arts, and the Head of Investments, Fijian Holdings which is a requirement under the Act as well. In terms of finance we have the Chief Executive Officer for Merchant Finance Limited and the last is a retired civil servant who was selected basically because of his knowledge in relation to the community of Rotuma.

Mr. Chairman, and honourable Members, that is our response to the questions raised by the Committee and I thank you for giving me this opportunity to say a few words in terms of what was requested by the Committee. *Vinaka*.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you very much CEO for the presentation and the response to the questions that were sent. Honourable Members, the floor is open if you have any questions?

HON. DR. RATU A.R. LALABALAVU.- Mr. Chair, through you, I want to thank the CEO of the *iTaukei* Trust Fund Board, Mr. Aisake Taito and just want to note that I appreciate the entrepreneurship projects that you have mentioned - that is indeed good news for the *iTaukei* in terms of going to entrepreneurship in regards to whatever needs that they will want to put out, also that the *iTaukei* Trust Fund is engaged with them. I do agree with you that it needs to be piloted well, tested and approved for any deficiencies and also corrected before it is rolled out.

My question is on the sixth item of your Terms of Reference, which mentions that the pilot project is specifically for those businesses that would closely work or sourced from selected promises that have successfully completed the *Sauvaki Ni Vanua* Traditional Leadership and Good Governance training programme. It includes those provinces that have done the programme. The question is, is this a pre-requirement going forward after the pilot programme?

MR. A. TAITO.- One of the issues that we faced especially when we embarked on this entrepreneurship framework, and moving communities from subsistence to commercial, is that you need to have the right platform. For us, we thought that given that we have the *Sauvaki Ni Vanua* programme where leaders from all the provinces are taught in terms of governance, planning, mobilising their people, how they carry out their functions to ensure that their communities are able to work together to be able to improve their livelihood. We thought that this pilot project will be used by those that are being trained so they will be able to manage and also guide the province in terms of specific sector where these pilot programmes are carried out.

Basically, for the training that was conducted in Nadave, you need to test it on the ground, so when they go back unless they have a programme and project in line for them, then what they learned for a couple of weeks and months in Nadave is not going to be used. You need to make sure that you have a project that they are going to implement. So we thought of starting with those provinces that already went through the trainings, so when they submit their applications we can guide them in terms of moving forward especially on those. I think honourable Member that is really the reason why we thought that we start with those that have already been trained because when you try to mobilise the number of villages in a *tikina* and so on, you need leadership. One of the key ingredients to a successful community development is good leadership - good leadership with governance; good leadership and planning; good leadership with vision; and good leadership especially at the local level. I think that is the reason why we decided that, that will be one of the criteria so that we can pilot it.

HON. RATU T. NAVURELEVU.- *Vinaka* Mr. Chairman, a supplementary on question 8 in regards to the preservation and upkeep of historical sites in Fiji. Apart from those sites funded by the Trust, are there any others being recommended by the *iTaukei* Affairs to the Trust?

MR. A. TAITO.- At the moment there are not many because it is not in our mandate. We only support those that are recommended by the Ministry and also those recommended by the Department of Heritage - those are the only ones. The reason is that we want to make sure that we work within what is in our mandate and we do not overlap into other institutions that are directly responsible in terms of heritage.

HON. A.T. NAGATA.- Thank you Mr. Chairman and thank you CEO. With the preservation and nurturing of the tradition and culture of *iTaukei* communities, is the Fund looking at developing a partnership with the indigenous communities who are willing to record their respective cultural activity under a cost-sharing agreement?

MR. A. TAITO.- In terms of our mandate, we get our cue from the Ministry of *iTaukei* Affairs especially on those particular areas. Those that they recommend for us to consider, those are the ones that we pursue in terms of trying to protect and we also allocate funds if our budget allows for those, especially in any fiscal year.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you, that concludes our scrutiny of Mr. Aisake Taito, the Chief Executive Officer of *iTaukei* Trust Fund Board as witness. On behalf of the Committee, I thank you for your presence here and express my appreciation for the assistance provided towards the Committee's scrutiny. Should we have any further queries, the secretariat will get in touch with you. Do you have any final remarks to make?

MR. A. TAITO.- Mr. Chairman and honourable Members, I just want to thank you for having me.

MR. CHAIRMAN.- Thank you honourable Members, this completes our evidence session for today and we will now suspend proceedings until Tuesday 4th October at 9 a.m.

The Committee adjourned at 12.18 p.m.