



**MINISTER FOR WOMEN, CHILDREN AND SOCIAL
PROTECTION HON. SASHI KIRAN**

Date: Thursday 20th August 2026

**Written Question 176/2026: Hon. Inosi Kuridrani to ask
the Minister for Women, Children and Social Protection
– Can the Minister inform Parliament on the following:**

- (a) how is the Ministry conducting street sweeps in the
main urban areas;**
- (b) how many people have been assisted; and**
- (c) what is the Ministry doing to ensure that they do not
return to the streets?**

**Question: (a) how is the Ministry conducting street
sweeps in the main urban areas**

Response:

1. The Ministry of Women, Children and Social Protection in Fiji conducts regular, multi-agency operations to provide outreach, protection, and rehabilitation for people living,

begging, or sleeping on the streets, focusing on addressing the root causes of family breakdown and complex social issues . The ministry profiles individuals to offer tailored interventions, including family reunification, medical care, vocational training, and securing alternative accommodation, while treating children in need of care rather than as offenders .

2. Recent operations in July and August 2026, including in Suva, Nausori, Lautoka, Nadi, Sigatoka and Labasa, have successfully reintegrated individuals, placed others in residential facilities (such as the Kauwai Restoration Home), and provided support to young men through the Blue Light Training Program.
3. The Ministry conducts these operations through a coordinated, multi-agency approach on a regular base. Our partners include municipal councils, the Fiji Police Force, Medical Services Pacific, Empower Pacific, city and town rangers, the Ministry of Health and Medical Services, Ministry of Itaukei Affairs, District Officers, faith-based organisations, civil society organisations and other relevant agencies. The approach may differ from one urban centre to another

because the circumstances and needs of those found on the streets are not always the same.

4. The Ministry's team and partner agencies conduct awareness, identify and profile people living, sleeping or begging on the streets, and assess the circumstances of each person. These have included outreach to those sleeping under bridges in Suva and Nausori, at bus shelters and in other public places.
5. Where possible, the profiling teams also visit the homes of relatives. This allows the Ministry to verify information, assess whether family reintegration is safe and explore suitable accommodation or care arrangements. The interventions include:
 - a. Profiling of the individual to determine personal details.
 - b. Ascertaining of identification and access to social protection services.
 - c. Exploring of options to temporary accommodation or placement in an appropriate residential facility.
 - d. referrals for education, vocational training, employment or substance-abuse rehabilitation; and

- e. specialised protection and care for children found on the streets.
- 6. People requiring urgent medical assistance are referred for treatment. Older persons requiring residential care may be referred, following an assessment, to an appropriate aged-care institution or partner facility like St Vincent's Home. The facilities are informed of any continuing medical, counselling or welfare needs and provided with clothing, food and other needed supplies.
- 7. In Suva and Nausori, interventions focused particularly on people found sleeping under bridges and those requiring medical assistance. Relatives were identified in some cases, and family reintegration was explored. However, some individuals chose to remain on the streets. Adults sleeping at bus shelters were also offered alternative accommodation, but some declined placement in residential institutions.
- 8. Children found on the streets in circumstances that place their safety and wellbeing at risk are treated as children in need of care and protection—not as offenders. The Ministry's immediate priority is to ensure their safety and wellbeing. They are provided with food, clothing, safe shelter and other

necessary assistance while our officers undertake appropriate assessment and case management. Where it is safe and in the best interests of the child, we work with the family towards reunification and strengthening the family environment. Where this is not possible, appropriate alternative care is arranged to ensure the child remains protected.

9. The Ministry also works with the Police on targeted operations. In Nasinu, for example, teams monitor areas around Vivrass and Nayan Supermarket following concerns about children selling roti parcels and puddings late at night. Families are visited and if in hardship are provided with livelihood option with warning and action taken against repeat offenders. These operations are intended to protect children from exploitation, abuse and other dangers associated with being on the streets at night.

(b) How many people have been assisted?

10. The recent Lautoka operation in July profiled 56 people, comprising 20 people engaged in begging and 36 street dwellers. Out of 8 senior citizens, five chose to return home assisted by our team and 3 were taken into age care

facilities. 12 Youths including 4 girls were taken into care facilities. It was found that beggars are on social protection support and have been offered livelihood programs. They have been warned by Lautoka City Council and action will be taken against repeat offenders.

11. Approximately 75 per cent of those profiled were young people between the ages of 15 and 35. This highlights the need for active parenting and family support for prevention, education, rehabilitation, skills training and employment opportunities for young people.
12. As part of the wider intervention for children removed from unsafe street situations, nine boys are currently being supported at Kauwai Restoration Home in Raiwaqa. Most are between 14 and 17 years of age.
13. Of these nine boys, six have been enrolled in and are attending secondary school, while three are being assisted to enrol in vocational education and skills training. Because they are below 18, Care orders are necessary and have been secured for seven of the boys, while the Ministry is working to finalise the remaining two care orders.

14. To give an example of support provided - A 16-year-old girl picked from streets of Lautoka is being supported in a safe residential facility. She is under an interim care order and is receiving appropriate healthcare and welfare support. She is also attending sewing classes to develop practical skills. Family tracing and reintegration efforts have been undertaken; however, reintegration has not yet been successful. The Ministry is therefore continuing to ensure her safety and make the necessary care arrangements.
15. This case show that the Ministry's interventions go beyond removing children from the streets. They include securing legal protection, providing safe accommodation, returning children to school, arranging vocational training, addressing their health needs and working towards safe and sustainable family reintegration.
16. In Nadi, operations conducted in the last month identified a total of 12 individuals. (8 street dwellers and 4 beggars). 4 needed medical interventions, 5 was reintegrated with family 3 were placed at a shelter.

17. The Ministry's recent street outreach and profiling exercise in Labasa included an evening operation conducted on 7 August 2026.
18. The exercise identified and profiled four male street dwellers and persons engaged in begging. While the number may appear small, the individual circumstances identified demonstrate that street dwelling is often the visible result of much more complex social issues of family break down and neglect.
19. In Sigatoka, the streets are currently clear of identified street dwellers and persons engaged in begging. Our officers will continue to monitor the situation and maintain regular engagement with relevant stakeholders so that any emerging cases can be identified and addressed early.

(c) What is the Ministry doing to ensure that they do not return to the streets?

20. Removing a person from the street and placing that person in a home or shelter does not, by itself, resolve the circumstances that led the person to the streets.

21. The Ministry therefore undertakes individual assessments and case management to determine the specific needs of each person.
22. Support may include family tracing and mediation, medical treatment, counselling, safe accommodation, education, vocational training, rehabilitation and access to social protection assistance.
23. When people are reintegrated with their families, the Ministry may provide further support based on an assessment of need. This can include social protection assistance, livelihood options, clothing and referrals to other Government or partner services.
24. A total of 28 young men successfully completed the Blue Light Training Program in partnership with Fiji Police Force. The Program promoted discipline, responsibility, respect, and positive decision making. They took part in teamwork, life skills training, mentoring and self-awareness abilities. Educational and employment pathways were identified as part of this program.

25. It is worth noting that no individual found on the street is homeless. Everyone comes from a family/ community. Many have disconnected from their family because of disagreements, abandonment, addiction or desire to live free from family obligations.
26. It is also important to recognise that adults cannot be compelled to remain with their families or in residential institutions. Some people decline the accommodation offered or later choose to return to the streets. This is why continuing outreach, counselling, family engagement and follow-up support are essential. Most are able to get back to education or employment only after rehabilitation support.
27. The Ministry is building a Recovery facility especially for vulnerable children as a transitional facility and strengthening its response through partnerships with different organisations. In partnership with Empower Pacific we have established Na Salavou, a drug rehabilitation facility for children. We support Salvation Army Kauwai Restoration facility which is a transitional facility for children found on streets. Salvation Army has established Drug Rehabilitation facility in Suva and we support their facility providing shelter for girls. These initiatives help address existing gaps and

provide more specialised care and rehabilitation services, particularly for children and young people with complex needs.

28. Once children are in these facilities we then try and match their interest with opportunities and enrol them in different educational facilities. We have placed children in Chevalier Homes including their vocational facility as well as CATD Nadave facility. We are grateful to Vocational facilities and employers who have create opportunities after rehabilitation efforts.

29. We work with Medical Services Pacific for the medical needs of those identified on streets to ensure timely medical support. We also work with the Ministry of Health and Medical Services for those identified with mental health challenges. Ministry of Health takes responsibility for treatment and support integration in their families.

30. We have found that many young people who loiter in towns are from nearby settlements and return home so there has been a lot of effort to reach out to these settlements offering support, educational, sport and livelihood opportunities in partnership with Ministry of Youth, Ministry of Employment,

Ministry of Local Government and Faith based organisations including Inspire Pacific.

31. Preventing people from returning to the streets is the responsibility of whole of Society. It requires the cooperation of families, the Police, health services, municipal councils, faith-based institutions, civil society organisations, employers, training providers and local communities. The Ministry therefore invites agencies and development partners wishing to support this work to engage with us. We welcome discussions on the services already available and the remaining gaps in accommodation, specialised care, rehabilitation, skills development and sustainable reintegration.

32. The goal is not merely to move people from public spaces. Our goal is to restore their safety and dignity, address the causes that brought them to the streets, and give them the support and opportunities needed to rebuild their lives.

Thank you Honorable Speaker.