

Government reaffirms financial support for the Sustainable Livelihood Project

The Fijian Government has confirmed its financial support for the Sustainable Livelihood Project (SLP), which provides skills-based training to people in rural and maritime areas through the Fiji National University's (FNU), National Training and Productivity Centre (NTPC).

The announcement of the renewed support was made by the Honourable Jone Usamate, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Disaster Management and Meteorological Services while presenting graduation certificates to students at Kalabu Village last Friday.

The SLP is a government-initiated project was launched in Kadavu in 2012 with the vision to empower people in rural communities to effectively utilise their resources, generate income and improve their standard of living.

Minister Usamate praised the SLP's ability to train and empower rural communities and villages with basic practical skills and knowledge "that are relevant and necessary to their immediate and future needs".

"In doing so, it hopes to impart and address the productive use of local natural resources as a means to alleviate rural poverty situations as well as introduce business ideas to encourage entrepreneurship," he added.

Two graduation ceremonies were held on Friday at Kalabu and Waloku Villages which saw 785 students receive certificates after completing an intensive two-week competency-based training programme. Since 2012, more than 27,000 participants have successfully undertaken this course nationwide.

NTPC Director, Dr Isimeli Tagicakiverata welcomed the Fijian Governments continued support stating the training strengthens development and encourages capacity building at the grassroots level.

Since some communities have difficulty in accessing vocational skills training, the SLP assists in filling this gap. The specialised training offered by the NTPC is taught by highly trained staff with good industry experience.

The NTPC team is scheduled to undertake training sessions in 18



Ms Mereani Batimoko with her Front House Management certificate.

communities in Fiji for the period ending July 2020.

There are four main objectives of the Sustainable Livelihood Project and four expected outcomes or benefits:

- People learn a skill which they could use in their everyday life, to improve their quality of living.
- People could use their newly-acquired skill to earn an income – as in small business.
- Youths could use their skills and certificate as a pathway into FNU programmes.
- People could use their SLP certificate to find jobs.

Kalabu Village participant Mereani Batimoko said she was glad to undertake the Food and Beverage and Front Office Management course and plans use her qualification to enter the tourism industry.

"I am very pleased with the professional manner the course was presented by NTPC trainers," she said.

Batimoko is also interested in furthering her education through NTPC in the Hospitality and Tourism sector.

The SLP is open to interested individuals from the age of 15 years and above.

The Fijian Government provides around \$1.8 million annually for this project.