

New Zealand's aid helps to eliminate poverty and create a safe and just world.

JANUARY 2009

| NZAID making a difference in Fiji

## NEW ZEALAND'S DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

### NZAID snapshot

- NZAID is the Government's international aid and development agency
- In 2008/09 NZAID will spend \$471.3 million on overseas development assistance
- Over half of NZAID's expenditure is spent in the Pacific

### Long-term partnerships

New Zealand's programme with Fiji was built on mutual recognition of development needs. The development assistance programme reflects the long and close working relationships between New Zealand and stakeholders in Fiji.

The Fiji bilateral development assistance allocation for 2008/09 is \$5 million. Forward commitments will focus on work with informal settlements and civil society.



NZAID supports early childhood education in Fiji

### The facts

- At the 2007 census, the population of Fiji was approximately 840,000 with just over half in urban areas
- Ethnic Fijians form approximately 57 percent of the population; Indo-Fijians form approximately 38 percent of the population
- Fiji has a well-developed economy - tourism, the sugar and agriculture

industry and garment exports are the primary sources of income.

### The issues

- Poverty and inequality continue to be a major challenge, with approximately 140,000 (17 percent of the population) living in informal settlements
- Tourism has also suffered a downturn since the December 2006 coup
- The sugar industry is declining, and non-renewal of farm leases is fuelling urban migration
- Land tenure issues and the expiry of land leases pose a significant social and economic challenge to development
- Migration has constrained public and private sectors.

### Fiji coup sanctions

In response to the December 2006 military coup in Fiji the New Zealand Government imposed sanctions on aspects of the aid programme. These sanctions remain, pending a firm commitment by the Fiji interim government to a credible and agreed roadmap for a return to democratic and constitutional governance. The sanctions include:

- Suspension of proposals to work with government departments and ministries, including suspension of Fiji's access to New Zealand scholarships
- Suspension of Fiji government access to regional training initiatives for public servants directly funded by NZAID
- Suspension of Fiji-specific projects and Fiji government participation in some regional projects funded by NZAID.

Karen Soanes  
Development Programme Officer  
Private Bag 18-901  
Wellington, New Zealand

Tel. +64 4 439 8866  
Email: karen.soanes@nzaid.govt.nz

...towards a safe and just world

  
**nzaid**

New Zealand's International  
Aid & Development Agency

# NEW ZEALAND'S DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

Key areas of bilateral aid are maintained, such as support for the Medical Treatment Scheme and provision for New Zealand assistance in the event of a natural disaster.

Other areas of assistance were reviewed and re-established in the interests of supporting electoral preparations and essential services for the people of Fiji.

The sanctions have resulted in a shift in the focus of the bilateral programme from direct engagement with the Fiji interim government to an increased partnership with civil society organisations.

## NZ/Fiji five-year programme strategy

The five-year programme strategy (2005-2010) is focused on assisting Fiji achieve international development targets such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The strategy is guided by NZAID's own principles and policy framework, past experience in NZ/Fiji co-operation, strategic analysis of the current Fiji situation, input from civil society organisations, and by information about other donors' activity.

The strategy's three key pillars are:

- Reducing hardship suffered by those living in informal settlements
- Strengthening governance, particularly in the areas of public service, law and justice, and human rights
- Reducing vulnerability to poverty through supporting the work of civil society organisations.

## Reducing hardship in informal settlements

With half of Fiji's population now living in the rapidly expanding urban areas, about 17% live in over 180 squatter and informal settlements, many well below the basic needs poverty line.

NZAID has recognised the critical importance of assisting those living in informal settlements and is rolling out a long-term programme of work in this area.

This programme of work will include: technical and design assistance and funding for infrastructure projects; assisting residents of informal settlements through supporting civil society organisations; and support for capability building at the local government level.

## Strengthening governance

Strengthening governance is a significant objective of the current NZAID/Fiji programme strategy.

However, New Zealand's targeted aid sanctions in response to the December 2006 coup mean that several activities in this area, for example institutional strengthening support for a number of government agencies, have been frozen.

Support will be reconsidered if and when a credible and agreed roadmap has been established for returning Fiji to democratic governance and the NZ sanctions can be lifted.

## Supporting the work of Civil Society

NZAID's work in Fiji emphasises the need to strengthen local civil society - this includes community groups, NGOs, church-based activities, the media and many others.

In November 2008 NZAID introduced a new system for engaging with civil society in Fiji. The new system aims to help build the skills within these organisations, allowing more long-term relationships to develop.

The long-term support NZAID is able to offer gives these groups and the people they support certainty, and helps to build skills within the sector as it builds strong communities.

NZAID has established relationships with civil society and is contributing to a number of civil society organisations in Fiji, including:

- **Fiji Women's Crisis Centre** - ongoing core funding of three branches of the Centre (in Ba, Nadi and Labasa) to assist women and children who are victims of abuse or face family problems
- **Save the Children Fund Fiji** - a mobile playgroup initiative aimed at improving basic education opportunities for disadvantaged pre-school pupils in Fiji.



Women at the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre in Labasa

**New Zealand Government**