



# LIVE & LEARN

FIJI ISLANDS

## Western Pacific Sanitation Marketing & Innovation Project Fiji

### Project objectives & approaches

The project objective is: The establishment of Community-based Sanitation Enterprises in urban and peri-urban informal settlements to improve sanitation within these communities, and to create an enabling environment for these enterprises to succeed. The project objective has been achieved with the establishment of the Community-based Sanitation Market in Suva, Fiji – which is now operational and selling toilets and sanitation products, and conducting hygiene education.

### Lessons learnt

- Survey data showed that the decisions on sanitation and hygiene expenses is mostly made by females, and in some families both male and female make these decisions. Women prioritise day-to-day basic needs and also solely focus on purchase of WASH products i.e. soap and other cleaning products.
- During field observations, most of the women during the initial stage of the project were reluctant to speak and express themselves clearly due to the fear of having little understanding of sanitation needs in their respective communities. However, with training and awareness raising, women now boldly come forward and actively participate in discussions.
- Our GSI monitoring and evaluation methodologies include the Ladder of Participation tool. This tool has been used to demonstrate improvement in an individual perception of their level of participation in community decision-making. The improvements shown by the Ladder of Participation reflections were supported in Most Significant Change videos documented by the project staff.
- Participants felt that at first women attended the meetings but were not confident to speak up regarding issues that were being addressed. Now post-training monitoring shows that women actively participate in discussion and many are taking a lead role in advocating for better sanitation and hygiene needs in the target communities.

### Project challenge

The project has had to manage the dynamic in families where the women earn more money than the men through informal income generation, but the men still expect to be the primary decision-maker. The process for making sanitation and hygiene decisions is important at all stages of the process, so marketing and sales activities need to reach out to both women and men.



Team photo

### Sustainability

In terms of GSI sustainability is looked at from two perspectives:

- Increased participation of women in decision-making regarding sanitation in the operation of the sanitation enterprise
- Effective marketing and sales strategies based on understanding how financial decision making regarding sanitation is made within families.
- The project activities have been effective in increasing the participation of women in decision-making, both through appointment of women to leadership roles in the sanitation enterprise, and through active encouragement of women's voice in community meetings about improving sanitation. Sales activities are planned based on the understanding of how women and men make decisions about household expenses, including sanitation improvements.



Mural for Hygiene Education and sanitation enterprise in Fiji



Women involved in Hygiene Promotion Competition

### We are proud of:

Women in the Community-Based Sanitation Market Executive Committee hold significant roles in operation of the business. They influence the decision-making process for the business, and are always heard when making recommendations on any issues tabled for discussion.

# Australian Aid

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