



Annual Report 2024



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VISION

Give hope and empower widows, separated, divorced and single parenting women from rural communities and informal settlements in Fiji, by helping them acquire the necessary confidence, education and skills to build self-esteem and confidence to live their lives with dignity and contribute towards nation building.

MISSION

Provide personal and economic development training programs in collaboration with Government and other Development Partners to empower these women with the necessary 'life skills' and technical knowledge to build confidence, and acquire expertise to provide leadership in their families and communities for improved livelihoods.

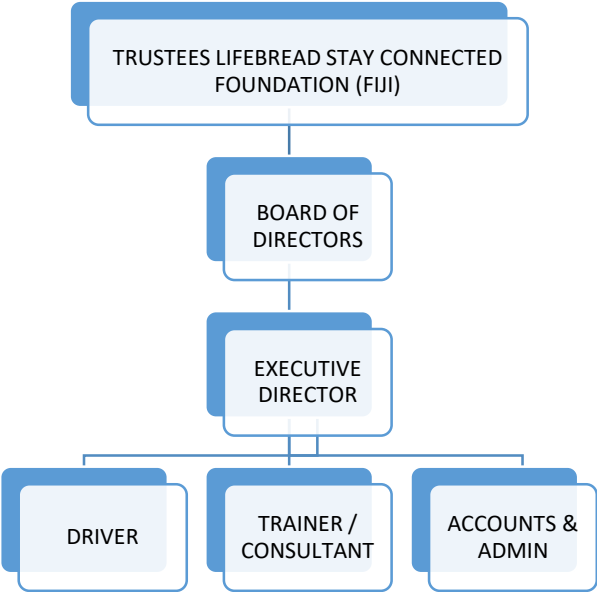
VALUES

Respect
Integrity
Compassion
Empathy
Dignity
Selflessness
Humility
Responsible Communication

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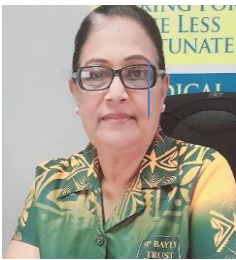
MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE



TRUSTEES



Mereseini Rakuita



Sarojani Michael



Margaret Rounds

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Deo Saran
(Chairman)



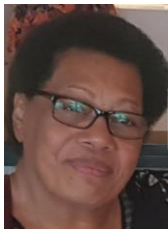
Sharon Prasad



Ua Kaisau



Titilia
Ravonociri



Frances
Ligalevu

MANAGEMENT & STAFF



Dorinda Work
Executive Director



Akeneta Waita
Accounts & Admin Officer



Albert Wise
Trainer/Facilitator

CONTRACTED STAFF

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR: GUIDING OUR MISSION

It is my pleasure to present this year's Annual Report for Lifebread Stay Connected Foundation (Fiji) (the "Foundation"). As Chair of the Board, I have had the honor of observing the remarkable strides we have made over the past year. Our organization has reached several significant milestones, including the development of a comprehensive 5-year strategic plan and the creation of our own website to enhance its online presence. The strategic plan sets a clear direction for our future growth and ensures that we align our efforts to achieve our long-term goals. Meanwhile, our new website serves as a critical platform for showcasing our programs and initiatives and providing essential information to our stakeholders. Additionally, as a training institution, these digital services have strengthened our collaborations in the online space and enhanced our outreach efforts.

We continue to focus on our strategic vision of empowering vulnerable and marginalized women from rural communities and informal settlements in Fiji. Our flagship program, 'Confident Woman,' remains the cornerstone for women seeking empowerment and positive change in their lives. This program focuses on developing essential life skills that build confidence. These foundational skills are subsequently bolstered by short technical courses aimed at women's economic empowerment, which are already making a significant impact.

Of course, this year has not been without its challenges. We encountered difficulties in securing facilitators for some of our programs; however, our staff skillfully managed the training schedules to ensure that all planned sessions were conducted. Our team's ability to navigate and thrive under these circumstances is a testament to their commitment and ingenuity.

Looking ahead, we have ambitious plans for the coming year. We aim to extend the outreach of our programs to the Northern Division, reaching even more women in need of our support. We plan to implement the first year of our strategic plan, focusing on expanding our training programs, enhancing our digital presence, and strengthening our partnerships with communities and stakeholders. Additionally, we are committed to addressing gender equality and gender-based violence by creating safe and supportive environments for our training programs.

Partnerships with stakeholders and funders, including the Government of Fiji through the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Protection and Women's Fund Fiji, have amplified our reach and effectiveness, bringing us closer to a shared vision. I acknowledge our partners, donors, and supporters and thank them for their unwavering support and contributions which have been vital to our success.

I take this opportunity to deeply acknowledge the support of my fellow board members, and thank management, staff, the trainers and resource persons for their hard work and dedication in making our training programs successful.

We are confident that with your continued support, we will achieve even greater success. Thank you for your dedication to our mission and your trust in our organization. Together, we are making a difference.



Deo Saran
BOARD CHAIR

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: REFLECTIONS AND INSIGHTS

As I reflect on this past year, I am encouraged by the amazing resilience and determination of the women in rural communities and informal settlements who have been at the forefront of our mission. Empowering these women has been central to the work of Lifebread Stay Connected Foundation (Fiji) (“the Foundation”), and we have witnessed firsthand the transformative impact of providing them with the tools, resources, and opportunities to live prosperous lives.

EMPOWERING WOMEN AND PROGRAM ACHIEVEMENTS

Women empowerment continues to be the core of our operations, and 2024 has been challenging yet rewarding for the Foundation as we actively engaged in providing a suite of programs for the women from communities in the West of Fiji.

The flagship training program, 'Confident Woman', has empowered numerous women by equipping them with the skills, confidence, and network to transform their lives and communities. In addition, integral economic empowerment courses such as Basic Business Management, Craft Skills Training, Climate Justice, and Community Volunteering were offered throughout the year, significantly enhancing the core women's empowerment training. These courses not only enhance the core life skills training program but also promote women's economic empowerment by providing participants with diverse skills and knowledge, enabling them to address a wide range of challenges and seize various opportunities. This year, we saw a significant increase in the number of trainees across all programs, with 302 trainees in 2024 compared to 139 in 2023, reflecting a remarkable 102% increase. A notable trend is for a number of graduates from the flagship program to also participate in one or two of the short technical courses for further self-development. In 2024, we introduced Climate Justice into our training programs and involved members from communities vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, with particular emphasis on women taking leadership roles in disaster risk management.

One of our most inspiring success stories comes from Zulekha, a widow from a peri-urban community who joined our ‘Confident Woman’ program. When Zulekha first enrolled, she was uncertain about her future and lacked the confidence to pick herself up and dream again after the untimely loss of her soulmate and provider. Through the comprehensive life skills training and empowerment courses offered by the program, Zulekha gained not only valuable knowledge but also newfound confidence. With her determination and the support of our dedicated team, Zulekha was able to start her own small business. Today, she runs a small indoor hydroponic farming project and does fabric printing, which she sells to support her needs. She also mentors other women in her community and has successfully revived the crime prevention committee in her neighborhood. Zulekha's journey from uncertainty to empowerment exemplifies the transformative impact our initiatives have on individuals and communities alike.

In delivering the training programs, the Foundation remains focused on addressing Gender Equality and Gender-Based Violence, which are significant barriers to women’s empowerment. To mitigate the risk of violence against women and girls, it is crucial to design and implement programs in a safe, protective environment that is responsive to their needs. This emphasis on safety is a key reason why our training is centralized at the Foundation’s training center in Tagaloli, Lautoka, rather than being mobilized into the communities.

STRATEGIC PLANNING AND PARTNERSHIPS

The Foundation completed its 5-year Strategic Plan in August. Funded by the Government of Fiji through the Ministry of Women, Children, and Social Protection, this project facilitated reflection on the organization's humble beginnings, an evaluation of progress over the past five years, and the setting of direction for its future.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to our Chairman and board members for their invaluable guidance and unwavering support throughout the year. Your leadership has been instrumental in steering us towards our goals. My appreciation also goes out to our dedicated staff and trainers who have worked diligently to ensure the steady progress of our programs. Your hard work and commitment have not gone unnoticed, and your passion and resilience continue to drive our mission forward.

Our vision is to work with women at the grassroots level, ensuring that our initiatives remain focused and relevant in building up the lives of women and girls. We are confident that these efforts will contribute towards the social and economic development of our nation.



Dorinda Work

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

GOVERNANCE

The Foundation held quarterly board meetings throughout the year to monitor activities and provide strategic direction to management. The audited financial statements for the year ended 31st December 2023 were submitted to the Registrar of Titles in accordance with the Charitable Trust Act. Additionally, the 2023 Annual Report was provided to our development partners and stakeholders.

Acquittals were submitted to donor partners on a timely basis in accordance with requirements under the respective Memorandums of Agreement.

Board meetings were held at the end of each quarter to address issues which included -

1. Appointment of new Trustee and Board Member
2. Finalising Annual Reports, annual Financial and Audit Reports and review of the Constitution.
3. Discussions with the Consultant working on the Foundation's 5-year Strategic Plan which was completed in October.
4. The hosting of the Almanah Alumni Day in May was part of the Strategic Planning exercise and also served to commemorate the 10-year anniversary of the Foundation. The Assistant Minister for Women, Children, and Social Protection was chief guest at the event.
5. Familiarisation and monitoring visit by Global Development Group who had brokered funding to the Foundation on behalf of Australian donors, for the construction of the widows' accommodation units.
6. Visit from DFAT, a major donor for women's empowerment programs. The meeting and interviews held with management were part of the mid-term review of Women's Fund Fiji's funding assistance program to women's institutions.
7. Engaging a developer for the Foundation's website and processes including business emails, and QR code to enhance the profiling of the organization.

In addition to quarterly board meetings, management held regular meetings with the Chairman for guidance and discussing matters of strategic importance.

The year began with the untimely demise of our Trustee Mr. Pusp Raj who had been with the Foundation since its establishment in 2014. The board appointed Mrs. Margaret Rounds as Trustee to fill in the vacant position in May. Later in the year Mrs. Anita Raj resigned as board member to move to Australia and Mrs. Titilia Ravonociri replaced her on the board. The Accounts and Admin Officer resigned in January to relocate to Scotland. Miss Akeneta Waita a former Associate with Kontiki Capital Limited joined the Foundation as Accounts and Admin Officer in February.



Board members and Management during one of the strategic plan meetings

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

- During the year, we experienced a significant increase in grants and donations, totaling \$182,861 compared to \$126,615 in 2023. This increase in funding has enabled the Foundation to expand our training programs, demonstrating our capacity to enhance our offerings based on the resources available.
- This year, the total number of training programs increased to 13, from 11 in the previous year, which highlights our commitment to expanding our educational opportunities.
- Our flagship program, the 'Confident Woman,' was successfully delivered in four separate cycles this year, resulting in a total of 60 graduates, compared to 55 graduates in the previous year.
- Our economic empowerment programs covering Craft Skills and Business Management had a registered attendance of 213 individuals as compared to 84 in 2023.
- During the year we introduced Climate Justice Program into our training curriculum, focusing on Women Leadership in Disaster Risk Management.
- At the request of our graduates, we introduced Community Volunteering as part of the training program. This initiative primarily focuses on helping graduates develop leadership skills to address their community needs.
- During the year the Foundation developed its first 5-year Strategic Plan, allowing reflection of its humble beginnings, evaluation of the progress to date and setting out strategic directions for the future.
- The Foundation celebrated its first ever Alumni Day which was attended by 60 beneficiaries, to receive feedback and consultations on the training programs and the impact of these programs in their lives.
- During the year, the Foundation set up its website to enhance visibility, promote outreach programs, and improve engagement with stakeholders.

1. REPORT ON THE TRAINING PROGRAMS

1.1 LIFE SKILLS TRAINING

‘Confident Woman’ Program

The ‘Confident Woman’ program has proven to be a catalyst for ongoing personal and professional development. It has fostered a community of motivated and empowered women who continue to seek opportunities for growth, skill enhancement, and leadership. This continued participation in further training programs reflects the program’s substantial impact and its role in creating a supportive network for women’s advancement.

Over the span of two years, from 2023 to 2024, a total of 115 women participated in our program. This initiative has made significant strides in empowering women and fostering both their personal and professional growth. In 2024 alone, the program ran in four cohorts, one in each quarter. Sixty women registered and graduated during this period, demonstrating their strong commitment to enhancing their self-confidence and skills.

Of the 60 graduates, 9 women chose not to return for further training during the year. However, the overwhelming majority, 51 women, continued their journey of development by participating in additional training programs. This high rate of continued engagement underscores the program’s effectiveness in inspiring a lasting desire for growth and learning.

Objective: The program aims to equip participants with essential skills and knowledge for capacity building, foster self-worth, and inspire women to recognize the importance of self-care and achieve self-actualization.

Description: This year-long program consists of four individual cycles, each running for 4 weeks with 4 daily sessions per week.

Forecasted Participation: 80 trainees

Actual Participation and Graduation: 60

Key Achievements:

1. Despite falling short of the forecasted number, the program maintained a high completion rate
2. Nearly 80% of the trainees have pursued initiatives in various areas, including employment, small businesses, community volunteering, and short courses to upskill themselves for frontline roles.

Challenges and Consideration:

As the ‘Confident Woman’ program enters its second year, we have identified certain challenges that require attention to ensure its continued growth and success. One of the primary issues we are facing is the lower-than-expected registration numbers for each cycle. While the program aims to enroll 20 participants per cycle, actual enrollment has consistently fallen short of this target.

We believe this discrepancy is attributed to several key factors:

1. **Low Level of Community Awareness:** Despite the impactful nature of the program, there seems to be limited awareness within the communities regarding the opportunities it offers. Enhancing our outreach and

communication strategies is crucial to ensuring more women are informed and encouraged to participate.

2. **Program Maturity:** Being only in its second year, the ‘Confident Woman’ program is still in the process of establishing its reputation and building trust within the community. As the program evolves and success stories emerge, we anticipate that recognition and registration numbers will naturally increase.
3. **Lack of Support from Family and Spouses:** Another significant challenge is the lack of support from family members and spouses of the trainees. This lack of encouragement can hinder participants’ ability to fully engage and benefit from the program. It is essential to address this issue by engaging with the community and families to highlight the importance and benefits of the program for the women and their families.
4. **Perceived Lack of Tangible Benefits:** As the training is life skills oriented, some women may initially be hesitant to attend, not seeing the immediate tangible benefits. It is important to communicate the long-term advantages of life skills training, such as personal growth, improved self-confidence and enhanced abilities that can positively impact various areas of their lives.

To overcome this disparity between our expectations and actual achievements, we plan to implement more targeted awareness campaigns, community engagement efforts, family involvement initiatives, and emphasize the long-term benefits of life skills training. By doing so, we aim to reach our enrollment goals and continue making a meaningful impact in the lives of women.



Graduates from the 3rd cohort of the ‘Confident Woman’ program

1.2 ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT TRAINING

Craft Skills Program

The craft skills training program, an integral part of our women empowerment curriculum, has significantly expanded its reach and impact in 2024. The week-long sessions, conducted four times throughout the year, offered training in four diverse crafts: fabric art, tailoring, jewelry making, and contemporary weaving. These programs attracted a total of 154 participants and marks a substantial increase from the 63 participants in 2023. The program not only equips women with valuable craft skills but also includes basic marketing strategies to help them price and sell their products effectively. Of the 154 women who registered, 40 were graduates of the 'Confident Woman' program. Notably, 9 of these graduates attended more than one session, reflecting the high demand and the program's effectiveness in fostering a lasting interest in skill development and entrepreneurship.

Business Management Workshops

In 2024, the business management workshops became a pivotal component of our training curriculum, thanks to collaborations with the Ministry of Trade, Co-operatives, Small and Medium Enterprises (MTC SME). The program, divided into two phases—Generate Your Business Idea (GYBI) and Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB), were spaced six months apart, and provided participants with comprehensive business training. Upon completing each phase, participants received certificates and had the opportunity to access seed funds to support their ventures. The year saw a significant increase in participation, with 59 registrations across three workshops, compared to 21 in 2023. Notably, 34 of the participants were graduates from our flagship 'Confident Woman' program, making up more than 50% of the attendees. This high level of engagement underscores the program's success in fostering entrepreneurial skills and creating sustainable business opportunities for women.

1.3 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TRAINING

Climate Justice : Women Leadership In Disaster Risk Management

A new addition to the short courses in 2024 was 'Women Leadership in Disaster Risk Management,' one of the six pillars under Climate Justice. This training emphasizes the role of women at the community level and was jointly facilitated by the Adventist Disaster and Relief Agency (ADRA) and the Church Agencies Network Disaster Operations (CANDO). The program focused on women's participation in disaster preparedness, particularly in developing the Family Emergency Management Plan for communities. Open to all community members, the workshop saw an encouraging registration of 20 participants in its inaugural session, including men, women, and youth. As a point of interest, seven women who had graduated from the 'Confident Woman' program also took part in the workshop, highlighting the program's impact on empowering women to take on leadership roles in disaster risk management.

Community Volunteering

In 2024, the Foundation introduced a new short course focused on community volunteering, in response to the growing involvement of women in community work and the leadership qualities needed. Graduates of the 'Confident Woman' program felt inspired to engage with their broader communities and address critical issues affecting them. This program emphasized the importance of applying the skills they gained to foster an environment where their contributions create lasting positive change. By leveraging their unique talents and newfound confidence, these women are now equipped to take on leadership roles and drive meaningful improvements within their communities. The second phase of the workshop will be held in 2025, by which time participants are expected to have their community projects in progress or completed.



Participants at the 'Start Your Own Business' workshop facilitated by the Ministry of Trade, Co-operatives, Small & Medium Enterprises in December

Participants at the Women Leadership in Disaster Risk Management Workshop held in November



1.4 **TRAINING PROGRAM PARTICIPATION : A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS (2024 – 2023)**

The results of the training programs held during 2024 in comparison to 2023 are shown in the table below:

Training Programs	NO. OF ATTENDEES	
	2024	2023
Life Skills Training – Confident Woman (Flagship Program)	60	55
Economic Empowerment Training 1. Craft Skills – • Screen Printing • Fabric Art • Tailoring • Jewelry Making • Contemporary Weaving • Baking & Pastry	154	63
2. Business Management - • Generate Your Business Idea (GYBI - Phase 1) • Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB - Phase 2)	59	21
Community Engagement Programs 1. Climate Justice : Women Leadership In Disaster Risk Management	20	-
2. Community Volunteering : Addressing Community Needs	9	-
Total	302	139

In 2024, the training programs experienced a remarkable surge in attendance, with a total of 302 participants registering for various sessions. This represents an impressive 117.3% increase compared to 2023, when there were 139 participants. The number of attendees grew by 163 from 2023 to 2024, reflecting the growing interest and value placed on the training programs. This success is attributed to accommodating four cycles of the flagship program, "Confident Woman," which serves as the initial learning platform for women and provides a gateway for them to participate in other training programs throughout the year.

A detailed schedule of the training programs held during the year is attached as **Appendix 1**.

2. **IMPACTFUL EXPERIENCES**

Building up self-esteem and confidence is the focal area of the Foundation's training programs. This can be captured in the following short testimonials:

Rosalia shared that participating in the 'Confident Woman' program has broadened her understanding of family values and the importance of managing personal and household finances. As a result, she and her husband have opened a savings account and have consistently been saving a portion of their small business earnings, towards a retirement plan.

Poonam, a graduate of the 2023 Confident Woman program, found inspiration to join the craft skills program in 2024. She is thrilled to have had the chance to learn contemporary weaving techniques and create earrings from 'voi voi' (pandanus) leaves. Through the Community Volunteering program she attended in December, she is now prepared to work with other women in her community outside of Nadi town. Poonam is also considering a role as a Community Health Worker with the Ministry of Health, recognizing the importance of such positions in her area. Additionally, she completed the first stage of the Business Training Program – Generate Your Business Idea (GYBI) – and is eagerly anticipating the second stage of the program in 2025.

Zulekha attended both the 'Confident Woman' and 'Community Volunteering' programs and has been empowered to join the crime prevention committee in her neighborhood. She and eight other women revived the defunct committee and are now working on installing solar lights along a pathway and collaborating with the local police to increase patrol rounds. Motivated by her own desire for growth, Zulekha participated in various training programs, including Business Management Skills, Craft Skills, Community Volunteering, and Women Leadership In Disaster Risk Management. Taking the initiative to further her own empowerment, she also completed a short course on hydroponic farming and now runs a small project at her home for subsistence. Having lost her husband two years ago, Zulekha faced the challenge of falling into depression. However, the training programs have boosted her self-esteem and provided opportunities for her to step out and enjoy life.

Mafi was part of the last cohort of the 'Confident Woman' program in 2024. Her talent in weaving and sewing had been the main source of income for her small family. However, Mafi carried dark memories of her violent past, broken relationships, and setbacks that had stolen the joy from her life. Constant disagreements with her husband and strained relationships with close family members built up anger and mistrust within her. The program provided an avenue for Mafi to reflect on life and make changes that encouraged genuine happiness in her marriage and family. After completing the program, Mafi also attended the craft skills training to enhance her knowledge in jewelry making. Today, she has gradually built up a customer base and focuses on custom orders for special events.

Elisabeta, a resident of a rural farming community outside Tavua, runs a market stall to support her small family. After hearing about the Foundation's training programs from a friend, she joined the last cycle of the Confident Woman program. Following this, Elisabeta attended craft skills training and then participated in the first phase of the Business Management program. The training has boosted her confidence to run her market business profitably and inspire other women to pursue their own small business ventures.

3. INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING AND CAPACITY BUILDING

3.1 The Foundation's First 5-Year Strategic Plan: A Milestone Achievement

In 2024, the Foundation marked a significant milestone with the development and completion of its first 5-year Strategic Plan. This comprehensive plan was crafted with the expertise of a consultant who facilitated an extensive consultation process. Meetings were held with management, various stakeholders, and program graduates, ensuring a diverse range of perspectives and insights were incorporated.

The strategic planning exercise proved invaluable, shedding light on the most relevant training programs for women from various backgrounds. It revealed a strong appetite for developing essential life skills as a precursor to other empowerment initiatives. The insights gathered highlighted the importance of tailoring programs to meet the specific needs and aspirations of women, reinforcing the relevance of our current offerings.

Moreover, the strategic plan laid out a clear vision for the future, setting strategic guidance to navigate the path ahead. It outlined key objectives and actionable steps to enhance and expand our programs, ensuring they continue to empower women effectively. This forward-looking approach aims to foster sustainable growth and innovation, positioning the Foundation as a leading force in women's empowerment.

The collaborative nature of the strategic planning process also strengthened relationships with stakeholders and program participants, fostering a sense of shared purpose and commitment. As we move forward, the strategic plan will serve as a roadmap, guiding our efforts to create lasting, positive change in the lives of women and their communities.

3.2 Alumni Day: Connecting with our Graduates

In May, 60 beneficiaries from the Foundation's Alumni Group came together to celebrate Alumni Day. This heartwarming event was a joyous reunion and a powerful testament to the enduring connections and transformative impact of the Foundation's programs. The day was filled with uplifting moments as alumni, shared their success stories, highlighting how the Foundation's initiatives had positively influenced their personal and professional lives.

The celebration offered a valuable networking platform where alumni engaged in meaningful conversations, exchanged ideas, and participated in various activities designed to inspire and empower one another. The sense of camaraderie and community spirit was palpable, underscoring the ongoing support that the Foundation fosters among its beneficiaries.

The alumni network is an invaluable asset to the Foundation, providing continuous feedback and insights that help shape and improve the training programs. By staying connected with alumni, the Foundation can track the long-term impact of its initiatives, ensuring they remain relevant and effective. Additionally, alumni often become ambassadors for the Foundation, spreading awareness and attracting new participants and supporters.

For the alumni themselves, the network offers numerous benefits. It provides a platform for continuous learning and professional development through workshops, seminars, and mentorship opportunities. Alumni can access a wealth of resources and support, enabling them to stay updated with industry trends and best practices. The network also facilitates collaboration and partnership opportunities, allowing alumni to work together on projects and initiatives that align with their goals.

Moreover, the sense of belonging to a supportive community helps alumni navigate their careers and personal lives with confidence. They can share experiences, seek advice, and find encouragement from peers who have faced similar challenges. The alumni network fosters a sense of pride and accomplishment, reinforcing their identity as part of a successful and impactful group. One of the key aspects of the event was the opportunity for alumni to provide feedback and consultations on the training programs. They discussed how the training had impacted their lives and shared insights on potential improvements. This feedback was instrumental in shaping the Foundation's future initiatives and ensuring that the programs remain relevant and effective.

The one-day event was officially opened by the Assistant Minister for Women, Children, and Social Protection (MWCSP), who emphasized the importance of such gatherings in building a supportive network for continued growth and success. The event was facilitated by the Foundation's management staff and the Consultant who worked on the strategic plan, ensuring that the discussions were well-organized and productive. The alumni's overall discussions and program evaluations provided valuable information for developing the strategic plan. Their collective experiences and perspectives offered unique insights that helped refine the Foundation's approach and set a clear direction for future endeavours. Moreover, the alumni network serves as a testament to the Foundation's success and contributes to its credibility and reputation, reinforcing the trust and support of stakeholders and donors.

4.3 Website: Moving towards Digitalisation

The Foundation completed the development of its new website in October, which is seamlessly interlinked with business emails and integrated with social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram. This advancement marks a significant step towards digitalisation for the organisation, enhancing its online presence and accessibility.

For the organisation, the website enhances the profiling of the Foundation, showcasing the impactful work being done for women in our communities. Furthermore, the integration with social media platforms enables the Foundation to reach and engage with more people, fostering a sense of community and support.

Stakeholders, including donors, partners, and volunteers, can greatly benefit from the website. They can easily access information about the Foundation's activities, understand the impact of their contributions, and find opportunities to get involved. The website provides a transparent view of the organisation's operations, helping stakeholders stay informed and connected. Additionally,

the interlinked business emails ensure that inquiries and communications are efficiently managed, fostering strong relationships with stakeholders.

Overall, the launch of the website represents a significant milestone in the Foundation's journey towards digitalisation. It not only enhances the organisation's profile and communication capabilities but also provides valuable resources and support to stakeholders and trainees. The website stands as a testament to the Foundation's commitment to transparency, accessibility, and continuous improvement. Along with the adoption of internet banking, these advancements have significantly improved the efficiency of the organisation's services.

4.4 Capacity Building

- The Executive Director and the Accounts and Admin Officer participated in the 'Governance and Xero Application' training hosted by Women's Fund Fiji. This training encompassed principles of effective governance, the establishment of strong governance structures and practical, hands-on sessions for financial management and reporting. The primary focus was on improving reporting processes to enhance overall organizational efficiency.
- The Foundation took part in a consultative workshop co-organised by UN Women and the Ministry of Women, Children, and Social Protection, under the Women's Resilience to Disaster Program. This workshop brought together various CSOs and government agencies focused on disaster preparedness and response. By participating in this workshop, the Foundation successfully engaged relevant expertise to support the Climate Justice program in November.
- The Executive Director participated in the 4th Asia Pacific Feminist Forum held in Chiang Mai, Thailand, from September 12th to 14th. The trip was funded by Women's Fund Fiji (the "Fund"), and she was accompanied by a Program Officer from the Fund. The forum provided an opportunity to reflect on the achievements within the feminist movement, foster solidarity and connections through shared experiences, and address the critical issues women face in their pursuit of gender equality. Her presence at the forum not only underscored the Foundation's commitment to advancing gender equality but also positioned the organisation as an active participant in the broader feminist movement. This engagement is anticipated to pave the way for future collaborations and initiatives that will further amplify the impact of the Foundation's work.
- The first Ministerial Forum on Gender Equality and Empowerment of all Women and Girls in Fiji was held in Suva in September. The one-day event was hosted by the Ministry for Women, Children and Social Protection and will be an annual consultative platform for the Ministry and women's organisations. The focus areas included –
 - i) Women's Economic Empowerment (Informal Economy and Unpaid Care)
 - ii) Elimination of Violence Against Women and Girls
 - iii) Women's Participation in Leadership and Decision Making space
 - iv) Climate Change

- The Fiji Council of Social Services (the “Council”), held its annual People’s Budget Analysis and Validation Workshop at Crusoe’s Retreat in Serua. The 2-day workshop was attended by the Foundation’s Accounts and Admin Officer along with other NGOs and CSOs who are affiliated to the Council.
- Women’s Fund Fiji hosted their Annual Reflections and Learning Workshop at The Pearl, at Pacific Harbour. The theme for the workshop was “Navigating Digital Platforms: Empowering Women’s Organisations” and was held from 19 to 20 November. Discussions and information sharing from key stakeholders in the digital space highlighted the impact of digitalisation in terms of streamlining operations to increase efficiency and expanding reach to connect with a wider audience.

Alumni, Board Members, Management and Staff, with Hon. Sashi Kiran during the Alumni Day in May



Women’s Fund Reflections Workshop attended by Grantee Partners at The Pearl Resort in November

5. FINANCIAL REPORT

In the financial year ending on 31 December 2024, the organisation exhibited notable progress in its financial status compared to the previous year. As a non-profit entity, the organisation is dedicated to using the grants and funds received for its projects and programs, with no intention of generating profits. The total grants and donations received amounted to \$182,861, marking an impressive increase of \$56,246 from the \$126,615 received in 2023. This rise in grants, coupled with an increase in total revenue from \$138,953 to \$218,562, highlights the organisation's successful efforts in securing additional funding and income sources.

However, this growth in revenue was accompanied by an increase in total expenditure, which rose to \$195,203 in 2024 from \$121,084 in 2023. This increment of \$74,119 reflects the higher operational costs and investments made by the organization to support its activities and initiatives.

Despite the increase in revenue and grants, the total cash at the bank decreased by \$8,277, resulting in a balance of \$20,029 as at 31 December 2024. This reduction in cash reserves suggests higher cash outflows or investments during the year.

On a positive note, the total assets of the organization saw an upward trend, increasing to \$316,350 in 2024 from \$292,991 in 2023. This growth of \$23,359 indicates an overall enhancement in the organization's financial position and asset base.

In summary, the financial year 2024 demonstrated the organisation's ability to significantly boost its income through grants and revenue while managing higher expenditure levels. The increase in total assets reflects the organisation's sustained growth and improved financial health, all while effectively utilizing the resources to achieve its mission and objectives.



One of our Donors, Women's Fund Fiji with Grantee Partners during the 2024 Grant Launch in November

5. **COLLABORATING INITIATIVES**

Local Community

We strive to stay connected with our local communities through our program graduates. This connection has not only strengthened the organisation's profile but also enabled women to share information and their learning experiences with their peers.

In particular, women residing in the Koroipita Model Town and Lovu HART communities continue to be active participants in our training programs. These communities frequently welcome new families, providing a continuous opportunity for more women to join our programs. Many of our graduates from these areas have taken on active roles within their communities, applying the knowledge and experience gained from the training.

Women residents at Koroipita attend the basic business opportunities and skills session held during the 16-day Activism in December



Business Community

Punjas Group of Companies has been a steadfast provider of employment opportunities for our program graduates since 2019. Thanks to this arrangement, numerous graduates have secured employment at the company's factories in Lautoka.

Additionally, through collaborative efforts between the Foundation and ASPEN Medical, four program graduates have been employed at Lautoka Hospital. These women were hired to work in the Cleaning and Maintenance and the Security departments of the hospital.



ASPEN Medical's Manager Culture & Performance and department staff during a visit to the Training Centre at Tagaloli, Lautoka

National Organisations

Fiji Council of Social Services (FCOSS)

As an affiliate of the Fiji Council of Social Services (FCOSS), the Foundation actively collaborates with the Council to serve and support communities. Through joint workshops, they address critical issues facing communities, in particular the women. Additionally, volunteer workers from the Council in various districts participate in the empowerment programs run by the Foundation, further strengthening the bond and enhancing the effectiveness of their partnership.

J P Bayly Trust

Recipients of monthly ration packs from the J P Bayly Trust have the opportunity to join the Foundation's empowerment programs. Conversely, some women attending these programs have also been assisted with food supplies for their families. This arrangement is designed to support women who are committed to participating in the training but face difficulties. Collaborative efforts like this enable women from grassroots communities to engage in empowerment programs alongside other women, fostering community growth and support.

Local NGOs

Building Innate Resistance Through Hearts – BIRTH Fiji

The Foundation continues to network with BIRTH Fiji towards providing training opportunities for women who pass through their mental health clinics. Several of their clients have joined the women's empowerment training programs.

Fiji Cancer Society

Collaborations with the Society have been ongoing for the past two years. Apart from the annual Pinktober events raising awareness about breast cancer, there is potential for expanding our joint efforts into other health-related initiatives. By exploring these possibilities, we can look to integrate such initiatives into the Foundation's training programs, providing participants with comprehensive health education and practical skills. This collaborative vision highlights our commitment to empowering individuals to take a holistic approach to their health while benefiting from our training programs designed to enhance personal and professional development.



The annual Pinktober morning tea was organized by staff and trainees with the participation of members of the Fiji Cancer Society in Lautoka

6. DONOR PARTNERS

For the sustainability of the Foundation and its activities to provide empowerment programs to the vulnerable women in marginalized communities, we work with several donor partners. These include:

Ministry for Women, Children & Social Protection (MWCSP)

Government funding has been instrumental in sustaining our operations throughout 2024. This financial support has not only allowed us to continue providing valuable educational opportunities but has also been pivotal in the development of the Foundation's comprehensive 5-year Strategic Plan. The strategic plan will guide our future endeavors and ensure that we remain aligned with our mission to create lasting positive impacts in our communities. The funding has empowered us to sustain and enhance our training programs, through developing a strategic roadmap to expand our reach and impact. We are deeply grateful for this support and are dedicated to continuing our mission of empowerment and community support with renewed vigor and determination.

Women's Fund Fiji

The Fiji Women's Fund provided sustainability funding for two years, covering 2023 and 2024. These funds were instrumental in enabling the Foundation to launch its flagship program and expand the number of short courses available to women. The financial support from the Fund has not only ensured the continuity of our key initiatives but also allowed us to reach a broader audience, empowering more women with valuable skills and knowledge. This partnership highlights the significant impact of targeted funding in promoting women's development and enhancing their opportunities for growth and success.

Global Development Group

The Global Development Group has successfully brokered donor funds from various sources in Australia to support the establishment of accommodation units for the Foundation. Initially intended exclusively for widows, the plan has since evolved to include other women in need. These units primarily provide safe and secure accommodation for women traveling from distant communities to attend the Foundation's training programs. This financial backing is crucial in offering these women a place to stay while they participate in our training programs, allowing them to focus on their personal and professional development. The generous contributions from Australian donors have enabled the Foundation to create these vital accommodation units, furthering our mission to support vulnerable members of the community and promote their well-being.

The Foundation would like to acknowledge and thank our donors for their unwavering support towards the empowerment training programs. We would not have been able to successfully deliver these programs to our target groups without the funding provided.

7. CHARTING OUR FUTURE

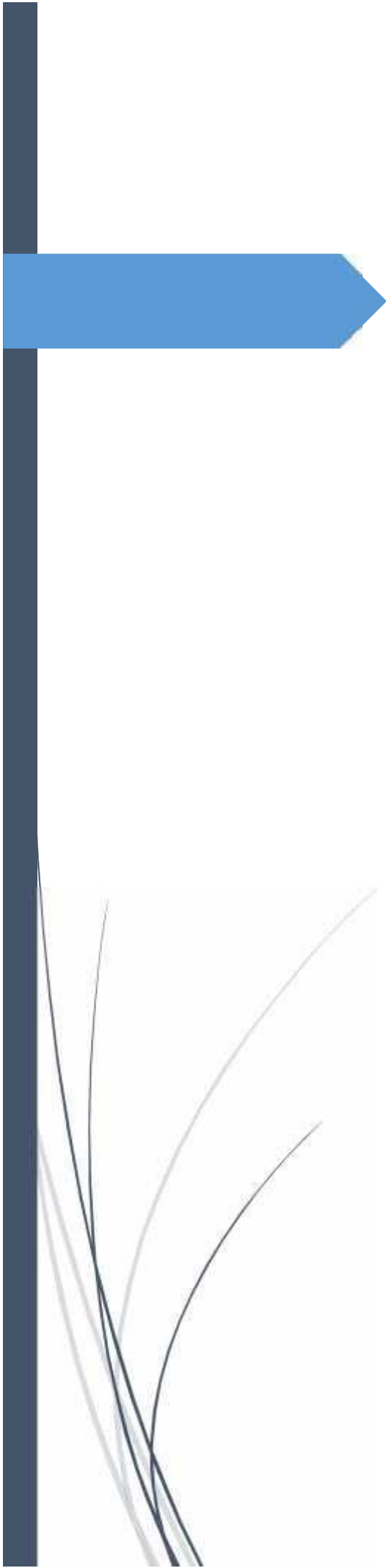
As we look ahead, the Foundation is committed to continued growth and development in several key areas. Our focus will be on institutional strengthening, program expansion, enhancing engagements, and further improving the quality of our programs. A significant part of our future plans includes extending life skills training to women and girls living with disabilities, ensuring that our efforts are inclusive and empowering for all members of the community. By building on the successes of 2024, we aim to deepen our impact and reach even more individuals and communities in need.

To achieve these ambitious goals, we recognize the necessity of securing new donor funding. Continued financial support from our existing and new contributors will be crucial in sustaining and expanding our initiatives, allowing us to maintain our commitment to empowering individuals and promoting community well-being. We are grateful for the unwavering support of our current donors, partners, and volunteers, whose contributions have been instrumental in our achievements. Together, we will strive to create a brighter and more empowered future for all those we serve.

Thank you for being part of our journey. Let's look forward to an even more impactful year ahead.

APPENDIX 1

	PROGRAM	CYCLE	DURATION	GRADUATES
1	‘Confident Woman’ – Soft Skills Development	1	26 Feb – 5 Apr	13
		2	27 May – 4 Jul	16
		3	29 Jul – 22 Aug	19
		4	30 Sep – 24 Oct	12
2	Craft Skills – Fabric Art, Tailoring, Jewelry Art and Contemporary Weaving	1	15 – 19 Apr	59
		2	8 – 12 Jul	31
		3	23 – 27 Sep	25
		4	18 – 22 Nov	39
3	Business Management – In 2 Separate Phases	Start & Improve Your Business (SIYB)	15 – 19 Jul	21
		Generate Your Business Idea (GYBI)	18 – 20 Sep	24
		Generate Your Business Idea (GYBI)	9 – 11 Dec	14
4	Climate Justice	Women Leadership In Disaster Risk Management	11 – 18 November	20
5	Community Volunteering	Addressing Community Needs	2 – 5 December	9



LIFEBREAD STAY CONNECTED FOUNDATION (FIJI)

FINANCIAL REPORT 2024

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STATEMENT BY THE TRUSTEE'S

On behalf of the Foundation of the LIFEBREAD STAY CONNECTED FOUNDATION (FIJI), we state that in our opinion

- (i) the accompanying statement of income and expenditure of the for the year ended 31 December 2024 are drawn up so as to give a true and fair view of the results of the Foundation.
- (ii) the accompanying statement of balance sheet of the Foundation for the year ended 31 December 2024 are drawn up so as to give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Foundation.

Dated this 27th day of **February** 2025.



Mereseini Rakuita



Sarojani Michael



Margaret Rounds

AUDITOR'S STATEMENT

Report on Financial Statements

We have audited the accompanying statement of financial position of LIFEBREAD STAY CONNECTED FOUNDATION (FIJI) for the year ended 31st December 2024, the related statements of income & expenditure, and the related notes to the financial statements. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the related stakeholders those matters we are required to state to them in the auditor's report and for no other purpose.

Managements and Trustees Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management and Trustees are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of consolidated financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditors Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audits. We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted Fiji. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and the disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statement.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a reasonable basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion on Financial Statements

In our opinion

- (a) proper books of account have been kept by the Foundation, so far as it appears from our examination of those books, and
- (b) The accompanying financial statements which have been prepared in accordance with Fiji Accounting Standards:
 - (i) are in agreement with the books of account.
 - (ii) to the best of our information and according to the explanations given to us:
 - a. give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the foundation for the year ended as at 31st December 2024 and of the profits, changes in accumulated funds, and cash flows of the foundation for the year ended on that date;
 - b. give the information required by Fiji Accounting Standards in the manner so required.

Dated this 3rd day of **February** 2025.



Anjay Kamal Sharma

Chartered Accountant - Fiji
CPA - Australia

CONSOLIDATED INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT

for the year ended 31 December 2024

	Notes	2024 (\$)	2023 (\$)
REVENUE			
Grants			
Government of Fiji		78,970	10,000
Global Development Group		28,291	11,315
UN Women Small Grant Fund		-	30,000
Women's Fund Fiji		75,000	75,300
Donations		600	
AHC Course Fees		-	420
Expenses Reimbursement		1,830	168
Hire - Training Hall		2,950	11,750
Motor Vehicle		7,405	-
Property Rental		22,500	-
Re-Deposit		56	-
Training Fees		960	-
Total Revenue		218,562	138,953
OPERATING EXPENSES			
Accounting and Audit Fees		1,500	2,000
Bank Fee & Charges		350	230
Board Meeting Expenses		2,008	1,487
Consultancy Fees		15,000	-
Courier Charges		132	5
Upkeep of Premises		84	358
Depreciation		10,324	8,855
Electricity		1,361	1,040
Fuel cost		2,704	2,750
Insurance		879	774
Internet & Telephone		1,680	400
Office Expenses		2,828	3,482
Professional Fees		1,946	200
Printing		1,118	-
Refreshment and toiletries		939	294
Refunds		-	100
Rental Expenses		20,500	5,000
Repairs & Maintenance - Building		5,815	3,752
Repairs & Maintenance - Motor Vehicle		8,673	1,712
Repairs & Maintenance - Office Equipment		1,428	-
Salary & Wages		63,080	37,866
Trainers'/Contractor Fees		25,242	13,317
Training Expenses - UN Women Grant		-	27,788
Training Expenses / Materials		4,080	-
Transportation costs (includes drivers cost)		3,513	3,598
Travel & Accommodation		3,645	-
Women's Empowerment Training		16,376	6,076
Total Expenses		195,203	121,084
Surplus for the year		23,359	17,869

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT – A/c No: 80239828
for the year ended 31 December 2024

	Notes	2024	2023
		\$	\$
REVENUE			
Grant			
Government of Fiji		78,970	10,000
UN Women Small Grants Fund		-	30,000
Women's Fund Fiji		75,000	75,300
Expenses Reimbursement		1,830	168
Total Revenue		155,800	115,468
OPERATING EXPENSES			
Accounting and Audit Fees		1,500	2,000
Bank Fee & Charges		262	138
Board Meeting Expenses		2,008	1,487
Consultancy Fees		15,000	-
Courier Charges		132	5
Depreciation		10,324	8,855
Electricity		1,361	1,040
Fuel cost		2,704	2,750
Internet & Telephone		1,680	400
Insurance		879	-
Office Expenses		2,828	3,482
Printing		1,118	
Professional Fees		1,946	200
Refreshment and toiletries		939	294
Rental Expenses		20,500	5,000
Repairs & Maintenance - Building		5,421	3,752
Repairs & Maintenance - Motor Vehicle		7,820	1,712
Salary & Wages		63,080	37,866
Trainers'/Contractor Fees		25,242	13,317
Training Expenses - UN Women Grant		-	27,788
Transportation costs (includes drivers cost)		7,593	3,598
Travel & Accommodation		3,645	-
Women's Empowerment Training		16,376	6,076
Total Expenses		192,357	119,759
(Deficit) for the year		(36,557)	(4,291)

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT – A/c No: 82594167

for the year ended 31 December 2024

	Notes	2024	2023
		\$	\$
REVENUE			
Global Development Group		28,291	11,315
Donations		600	-
AHC Course Fees		-	420
Hire - Training Hall		2,950	11,750
Motor Vehicle		7,405	-
Property Rental		22,500	-
Re-Deposit		56	-
Training Fees		960	-
Total Revenue		62,762	23,485
OPERATING EXPENSES			
Bank Fee & Charges		87	92
Insurance		-	774
Repairs & Maintenance - Building		393	-
Repairs & Maintenance - Motor Vehicle		853	-
Repairs & Maintenance - Office Equipment		1,428	-
Upkeep of Premises		84	358
Total Expenses		2,845	1,224
Surplus for the year		59,917	22,261

BALANCE SHEET

as at 31 December 2024

	Notes	2024 \$	2023 \$
Current Assets			
Cash at Bank	3	20,029	28,306
Total Current Assets		20,029	28,306
Non - Current Assets			
Property, Plant & Equipment	5	296,321	264,685
Total Assets		316,350	292,991
Total Liabilities		-	-
Net Assets		316,350	292,991
Accumulated Funds			
Opening Balance - Accumulated Funds		292,991	275,122
Surplus for the year		23,359	17,869
Total Accumulated Funds		316,350	292,991

NOTES TO AND FORMING INTEGRAL PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**1. PRINCIPAL ACTIVITY**

The principal activity of the organization is to provide empowerment training to disadvantaged widows and women, providing temporary accommodation for widows attending the training programs.

Provide personal and economic development training programs in collaboration with Government and other Development Partners to empower these women with the necessary 'life skills' and technical knowledge to build confidence and acquire expertise to provide leadership in their families and communities for improved livelihoods.

2. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES**(a) Basis of preparation of financial statements**

The financial statement has been prepared in accordance with the historical cost convention.

Using the accounting policies described below and except where stated do not take into account changing.

(b) Property, Plant and Equipment

Property, plant and equipment are depreciated on the basis of the estimated useful lives of the relative assets. Straight Line method of depreciation was used.

(c) Income Tax

By virtue of section 17 (22) of the Income Tax of Fiji, the Association is exempt from Income tax.

(d) Grants

Grants from donor organization are recognized in the Statement of Income & Expenditure over the periods necessary to match them with the related cost which the grants are intended or when the right to receive payment is established.

(e) Cash and Cash Equivalent

Cash and cash equivalent are carried in the balance sheet at cost. For the purposes of a cashflow statement, cash and cash equivalent comprise cash on hand, cash at bank and short-term liquid investments.

(f) Reporting currency

All figures are reported in Fiji currency.

**NOTES TO AND FORMING INTEGRAL PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
(cont'd)**

Cash at Bank	2024	2023
	\$	\$
A/c No: 80239828	4,096	16,894
A/c No: 82594167	15,698	11,412
A/c No: 86626776	235	-
Total	20,029	28,306

3. CONTINGENT LIABILITIES

There are no contingent liabilities as at balance date.

4. PROPERTY, PLANT & EQUIPMENT**(a) Property, Plant & Equipment**

	\$	\$
	2024	2023
Building - at cost	263,634	242,106
Addition	33,028	21,528
Accumulated Depreciation	(20,061)	(12,643)
	276,601	250,991
Furniture, Fittings and Equipment	17,952	15,680
Addition	8,933	2,271
Accumulated depreciation	(7,165)	(4,257)
	19,719	13,694
Total Written Down Value - 31 December	296,321	264,685

(b) Movement in Carrying Amount**Building**

Opening Carrying amount	250,990	236,053
Addition	33,028	21,528
Disposal	-	-
Depreciation Expense	(7,417)	(6,591)
	276,601	250,990

Furniture, Fittings and Equipment

Opening Carrying amount	13,695	13,688
Addition	8,932	2,271
Depreciation Expense	(2,908)	(2,264)
	19,719	13,695

Balance as 31 December

296,321	264,685
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