

Fiery Canoe Foundation



This past year the Fiery Canoe Foundation has grown and has officially begun its mission. Over the course of 2022, we received 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status, published our website, and held our first major fundraising event: our benefit launch dinner.

Thank you to all of our generous donors this past year. With your help and through a sit-down dinner with speeches, videos, merchandise, and a silent auction, we were able to raise over \$23,000 USD (about \$50,000 FJD) for the Banaban community. We have begun donating to projects as you will find below with a big thanks to Rae Bainteiti & Krissta Krischenheiter.

PROJECTS FCF HAS FUNDED

- Re-engaging & empowering Banaban/Rabian youths, through sports
- Revival of the Banaban Cultural Dancing Group through the provision of musical instruments

Re-engaging & empowering Banaban/Rabian youths, through sports

Category: Health and well-being, sports, youth projects

Description

Over the years, financial support for youth empowerment programs has decreased dramatically for many reasons including a lack of sustainable funding and partnership. At the village level, youths have resorted to kava and substance abuse creating a myriad of social issues on the island. The youth population of Rabi comprises over 50% of the island's 5,000 people from the four villages namely – Tabwewa, Uma, Tabiang, and Buakonikai. Therefore, this is a very important target group of this project.

This project aims to actively re-engage the island's youthful population, using sports as a tool for empowerment and development. This project is also a response to the request submitted by the Rabi Council of Leaders in a letter annexed to this project proposal to support the purchase of sporting equipment, coaching fees, prizes, and revival of traditional sports like weaving and husking of coconut during the 77th Anniversary to remember the first arrival on Rabi.

The project was implemented from the 15th to the 17th of December 2022 in Nuku, Rabi, and engaged all youth clubs from all four villages. Beyond the week of the celebrations, village youth sports associations were empowered to reengage their youth constituencies.

This project was crucial to address the disengagement of youths on Rabi at this present time as the lack of sustainable funding and partnership has led to the withdrawal of funding to support youth-led initiatives on the island including financing of sports initiatives. Lack of engagement with youths at the island level through the Rabi Youth Association and the Rabi Council of Leaders has also become an issue because of resource and capacity constraints.

On Rabi, sport is an effective tool to bring the youths and the communities together. This project, therefore, touched the lives of the people and communities in many ways. More youth sports clubs were engaged throughout the week of the fifteens on Rabi thus increasing the number of youths engaged. Youths were diverted to sports and continued to be engaged during the school break because the project supported them through provision of sports equipment. This project enabled village youth sports associations to continue engaging their young people. The longer-term outcome of the project is to minimize youth social issues using sports as an intervention.

The Fiery Canoe Foundation donated \$9,500 FJD to help facilitate this project.

Revival of the Banaban Cultural Dancing Group through the provision of musical instruments

Category: Culture & heritage, dance & music

Description

This project aimed to help revive the defunct Banaban Cultural Dancing Group on Rabi through the provision of musical instruments including drums, guitars, and ukulele. Since 2021, there have been discussions by former members of the Banaban Dancing Cultural Group to revive the dancing group and recruit new members. This year, the members have volunteered their time towards reviving the cultural dancing group with the hope to continue dancing lessons and costume-making in 2023.

Dangers of not reviving the Banaban Cultural Dancing Group

The lack of support for maintaining and sustainability of the Banaban Cultural dancing group in Rabi may result in the extinction of Banaban dance. Because of financial constraints, the Rabi Council of Leaders can no longer support cultural teachers being stationed in all the schools on Rabi for over a decade now. There is a lack of advocacy and lobbying to national, regional, and global partners to contribute to the preservation of Banaban indigenus. This project helped to revitalize Banaban dance with the hope to strengthen it so that it can expand its program to all schools on Rabi.

The Fiery Canoe Foundation donated \$4,360 FJD to provide a drum kit, ukelele, semi-acoustic guitar, acoustic guitar, transport, stipend, and promotional materials for teachers along with food and transport.

PRESS RELEASE

US-based Banaban-led NGO awarded \$9,500 to the Rabi Council of Leaders

14th December 2022 --- The official handing over of the Fiery Canoe Foundation Inc grant was completed between the representatives of the Rabi Council of Leader, Frank Sigrah, and NGO enabler and advocate, Rae Bainteiti.

The grant is targeted at re-engaging and empowering Banaban and Rabian youths through sport during the 77th Anniversary to remember the first arrival of the Banabans on Rabi. Furthermore, the project also envisions addressing the lack of sustainable funding, and resource and capacity constraints to promote the positive well-being of the island's population.

For the first time in the history of the Banabans, this is the first time that a US-registered Banaban-led NGO founded in 2021 by Kea Rutherford with the help of her mother Maria Teaiwa, and Aunt Katerina Teaiwa are contributing back to the island to implement the organization's mission which is to support, safeguard, and promote Banaban culture, promote positive wellbeing and heritage.

Ko bati n rabwa Fiery Canoe Foundation and we are looking forward to more positive initiatives in the future.

You can learn more about the work of the Fiery Canoe Foundation on their official website <https://www.fierycanoefoundation.org/>

