



**Partners in Aid**

AUSTRALIA

**Backyard Gardening and Healthy Cooking for Improved Nutrition in Bila Settlement and Koroqaqa Village Project**

**Reporting Period:** 1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025

**Project Director:** Silvia Hope

**Summary:**

During 2024–2025, Partners in Aid successfully scoped, assessed, and formalised a new partnership with **FRIEND Fiji**, establishing the groundwork for the *Backyard Gardening and Healthy Cooking* project. Implementation will take place over 2025–2026, supporting families in Bila Settlement and Koroqaqa Village to grow nutritious food, improve diets, and strengthen community resilience through sustainable gardening and cooking education.

**Local Context**

Food insecurity and poor nutrition remain significant issues in parts of Fiji, particularly in rural and peri-urban communities where families rely heavily on imported and processed foods. The Foundation for Rural Integrated Enterprises & Development (FRIEND Fiji) works to address these challenges through community-based programs that promote food security, nutrition, and sustainable livelihoods.

During 2024–2025, Partners in Aid explored the opportunity to establish a new Pacific Islands partnership following the non-implementation of a project in Kiribati. Fiji was identified as a strong regional focus, and FRIEND Fiji emerged as an excellent potential partner due to its alignment with Partners in Aid's values and its track record in sustainable, community-driven development.

**Goals**

To establish a partnership with FRIEND Fiji and co-design a sustainable development initiative that improves household nutrition, food security, and livelihoods through backyard gardening and healthy cooking.

## Expenditure

The first instalment of \$4368 was made on the 30<sup>th</sup> of June 2025 with activities commencing in the following month.

During the reporting period, time was spent on project scoping, due diligence, and partnership establishment activities. No implementation expenditure occurred within the reporting year, as the project officially commenced on 1 July 2025.

## Intended and Achieved Actions (2024-25)

Intended Actions	Achievements
Explore a new project and partner in the Pacific region	Conducted research and outreach to multiple NGOs across Fiji
Assess potential partners against PIA's development principles	FRIEND Fiji identified as a highly aligned partner
Develop and refine project proposal and budget	Worked closely with FRIEND to ensure the project met international development standards and sustainability objectives
Undertake field visit to confirm partnership viability	Field visit to Fiji in January 2025 confirmed strong alignment and operational capacity
Complete due diligence and formalise partnership	FRIEND completed PIA's partnership templates (NGO Background, Contextual Information, Financial Management Assessment)
Obtain Board approval at key stages	Board approved project exploration, proposal, MOU, and release of first funding instalment

## Risks and Management Action

<i>Identified Risk</i>	<i>Likelihood (Low/ Medium/ High)</i>	<i>Impact (Strong/ Moderate/ Weak)</i>	<i>Action taken to Mitigate Risk</i>
Partnership not aligned with PIA's development principles	Low	Strong	Comprehensive proposal review and field visit before MOU
Limited partner financial management capacity	Low	Moderate	Financial Management Assessment completed; oversight by PIA during first reporting cycle
External factors affecting implementation (weather,	Medium	Moderate	Flexible project design and regular monitoring built into agreement

logistics, health emergencies)			
Currency fluctuations or remittance delays	Medium	Weak	New currency fluctuation policy developed for PIA
Low community participation	Moderate	High	Conduct thorough community mobilization and awareness campaigns; ensure project activities are aligned with community needs and priorities; empower the Committee to play an active role in project implementation.
Natural disasters (cyclones, floods) impacting gardens	High	High	Promote climate-resilient gardening techniques (e.g., raised beds, drought-tolerant crops); provide support for garden rehabilitation after natural disasters; explore options for crop insurance.

**Silvia, Project Director**

**November 2025**