



**PACIFIC
RECYCLING
FOUNDATION**
JOIN THE MOVEMENT

ANNUAL REPORT

2025



Document Control

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Cover: The cover reflects the dual approach of the Pacific Recycling Foundation, integrating advocacy with practical implementation. The primary image captures the Foundation’s roadside campaign for World Environment and Oceans Day 2025, representing collective awareness, public engagement, and growing environmental stewardship. The secondary image highlights on-the-ground implementation, featuring a community-based advocate participating in one of PRF’s recycling initiatives.

Together, these visuals illustrate PRF’s commitment to moving beyond awareness toward delivering solutions that are community-driven, inclusive, and designed to ensure that recycling and waste management systems are accessible to all.

<https://recyclingfoundation.org/>

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report has been prepared internally by the Pacific Recycling Foundation (PRF) team, drawing on our collective experience and ongoing work across communities.

It reflects a practitioner-led perspective, informed by on-the-ground experience and ongoing programme work.

Contributors



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Layout & Design

Worked on the layout and design of the report.

ACRONYMS

ANZPAC	Australian, New Zealand and Pacific Islands Plastics Pact
B2B	Business-to-Business
B2C	Business-to-Consumer
CCBO	Clean Cities, Blue Ocean
CFLI	Canada Fund for Local Initiatives
CPR	Collection Pillars of Recycling
FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
FDB	Fiji Development Bank
FNPF	Fiji National Provident Fund
FWCC	Fiji Women's Crisis Centre
IAWP	International Alliance of Waste Pickers
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
LGBTQI+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex and others
PFF	Pacific Feminist Fund
PRA	Pacific Recyclers Alliance
PRF	Pacific Recycling Foundation
ROG	Recycling on the Go
SPC	The Pacific Community
SPREP	Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNSW	University of New South Wales
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WIEGO	Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organising
WRAP	Waste and Resources Action Programme

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FOREWARD



From Amitesh Deo

PRF Founder & Director and CEO of Waste Recyclers Fiji Pte Limited

As we reflect on 2025, one thing is clear - the waste management crisis we face is not simply about waste. It is about systems, priorities, and the choices we continue to make as a society.

For too long, the narrative around waste has been dominated by reactive responses. Clean-ups, collection drives, and landfill management continue to be presented as solutions, yet they do little to address the root causes of the problem. In many cases, they simply move waste from one place to another, while the system that produces and mismanages it remains unchanged.

At Pacific Recycling Foundation, we have consistently challenged this approach.

Our work is grounded in a simple but critical principle - that real solutions must be holistic, comprehensive, inclusive, and built on lived-experiences and long-term thinking. This means moving beyond short-term visibility and investing in systems that prioritise mindset and behaviour change, recovery, and responsibility. It also means recognising that waste management is not just an environmental issue, but one that is deeply connected to livelihoods, dignity, and social justice.

At the centre of this are the grassroots recyclers and informal collectors - Collection Pillars of Recycling. For decades, they have been recovering materials, and contributing to the economy, often without recognition

or protection. Any conversation about recycling that does not place them at the forefront is incomplete.

In 2025, we continued to push this message across all levels of our work - from community programmes and sector partnerships to national and regional engagements. What is becoming increasingly evident is that there is growing awareness of the need for change, but this awareness must now translate into action.

We are also seeing a shift in how Pacific Recycling Foundation is positioned.

Our work is no longer confined to programme implementation. We are increasingly contributing to broader systems - whether through convening national dialogues, supporting regional collaboration, or strengthening emerging grassroots initiatives through mentoring and structured support. This reflects a growing level of trust in our approach, our governance, and our ability to deliver work that is grounded in both principle and practice.

At the regional level, the strengthening of collective efforts through the Pacific Recyclers Alliance signals an important step forward. For the first time, grassroots recyclers across the Pacific are coming together with a shared voice, advocating for solutions that are informed by lived realities rather than external assumptions.

At the same time, our engagement in outer islands and rural communities continues to highlight the extent of the gap that exists. Many of these communities still operate without even the most basic waste management systems. The urgency is real, and the need for inclusive, scalable solutions is only growing.

However, progress remains uneven.

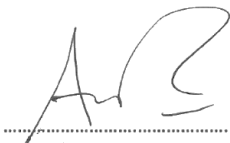
A significant challenge continues to be the way resources are allocated. Too often, investment is directed toward short-term, visible activities rather than long-term system development. There is also a growing concern around the diversion of recyclable materials away from grassroots recyclers, which directly impacts livelihoods and undermines the very systems we are trying to strengthen.

If we are serious about ending the waste crisis, we must be willing to make difficult but necessary shifts - in how we invest, how we collaborate, and how we define success.

Looking ahead, the direction is clear.

We must move toward building systems that are not only environmentally effective, but also socially just and economically inclusive. This requires stronger partnerships, deeper accountability, and a willingness to move beyond business-as-usual approaches.

Pacific Recycling Foundation remains committed to this path.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Amitesh Deo', positioned above a horizontal dotted line.

Amitesh Deo
Director/CEO
Pacific Recycling Foundation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2025, Pacific Recycling Foundation (PRF) continued to strengthen its role as a grassroots-driven practitioner advancing inclusive, rights-based, and implementable recycling solutions across Fiji and the region. Guided by its **“Look Beyond”** movement and its commitment to people before profit, PRF focused on long-term systems change - shifting attention away from reactive waste responses toward comprehensive and holistic recycling programs that prioritise mindset and behaviour change, recovery, dignity, and sustainability.

Through the combined efforts of PRF and its entrepreneurial arm, Waste Recyclers Fiji Limited, a total of **4,436 tonnes** of recyclables were diverted from the Naboro landfill, dumpsites, and the natural environment during the year. These efforts were achieved through structured recycling programs, community and sector engagement, capacity-building initiatives, and the continued involvement of the Collection Pillars of Recycling (formerly known as informal waste-pickers), who remain central to PRF’s work.

Throughout the year, PRF expanded its national footprint through strategic engagement platforms such as the **VAKA Forum series**, bringing together municipal councils, tourism sector leaders, and key stakeholders to advance holistic recycling solutions. New and strengthened partnerships across government agencies, private sector partners, academia, development organisations, and grassroots communities enabled PRF to broaden the reach of its initiatives across multiple sectors.

The tourism sector remained a significant area of growth, with the expansion of recycling programs, sector consultations through the VAKA Forum, and the continued development of collaborative frameworks such as the upcoming Tanoa Agreement in partnership with the Fiji Hotel and Tourism Association. These efforts strengthened recycling pathways within one of Fiji’s most influential industries while advocating responsible environmental practices.

PRF also advanced innovation through the launch of the Circular Pacific Plastic Project, addressing the growing challenge of soft plastic waste through a dual business-to-business and business-to-consumer collection model. Within four months, the program recovered over **2,001 kilograms of soft plastics**, demonstrating the viability of locally tailored circular solutions developed in partnership with ANZPAC, WRAP, and supported through international collaboration.

Outer island and maritime outreach remained a priority under PRF’s Look Beyond approach. Baseline assessments, stakeholder consultations, and community engagement were undertaken in locations such as Rotuma, Malolo Island, and Bekana Island, while implementation planning for Taveuni continued in partnership with development agencies and local stakeholders. These interventions highlighted the urgent need for structured recycling systems beyond urban centres and reinforced PRF’s advocacy for equitable access to waste management solutions.

Regionally, PRF strengthened its leadership role through the formal registration of the Pacific Recyclers Alliance (PRA) and the continued expansion of partnerships with grassroots recycling organisations across the Pacific. Technical exchanges, regional consultations, and collaborative projects - including engagement with Nauru and partnerships with academic and industry partners such as the University of New South Wales and ANZPAC - further advanced PRF’s long-term vision of establishing a regional recycling hub driven by local expertise and grassroots innovation.

Capacity building and research remained central pillars of PRF's work. The organisation delivered training and mentorship to recycling advocates, supported schools and community programs, contributed to national and regional research initiatives, conducted waste audits to strengthen data-driven advocacy, and undertook a Living Income Study with CPR to inform policies that advocate dignity, fair treatment, and sustainable livelihoods.

Internally, PRF continued to strengthen its organisational capacity through leadership development, including the progression of female staff into senior and strategic roles, reinforcing the Foundation's commitment to inclusive leadership and gender-responsive programming.

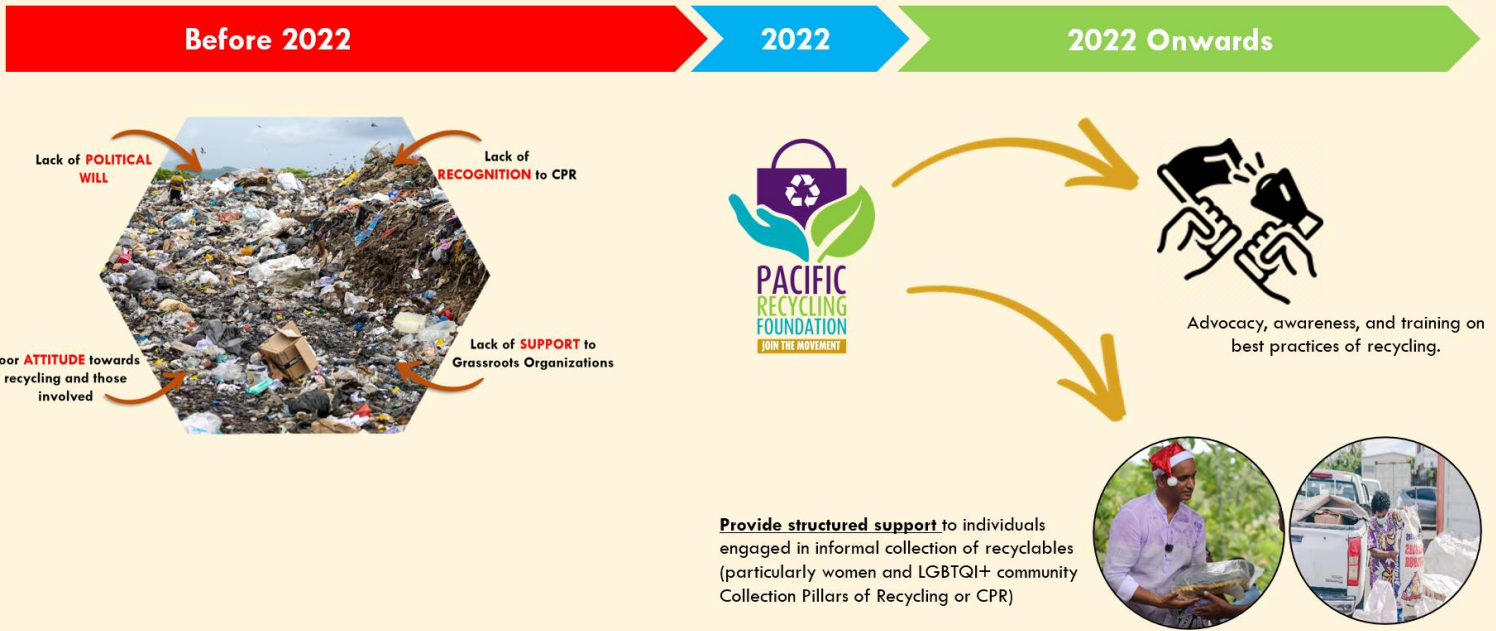
Despite significant progress, PRF continued to operate within a constrained funding landscape. Many high-impact interventions, including outer island assessments, stakeholder consultations, and advocacy initiatives, were undertaken through internal resources and partner goodwill - highlighting both the dedication of the organisation and the urgent need for sustained investment in comprehensive recycling systems.

OUR JOURNEY (2022–2024)

Pacific Recycling Foundation was established in May 2022 in response to a growing recognition that effective recycling systems in Fiji and the Pacific cannot function without placing people at the centre. From its inception, PRF has been guided by a rights-based approach, with a clear focus on creating awareness of best practices in recycling and providing structured, dignified support to those involved in the collection of recyclables, now known as the Collection Pillars of Recycling (CPR).

Between 2022 and 2024, PRF operated in a formative yet highly active phase. During this period, the Foundation rolled out multiple initiatives across schools, communities, corporate and government institutions, and within the informal waste collection sector. This work was undertaken prior to the development of PRF’s Strategic Plan and was instrumental in shaping the direction, priorities, and ambition of the Strategic Plan 2025-2029.

The Journey of Recycling in Fiji



PEOPLE, SYSTEMS & ORGANIZATIONAL STRENGTHENING

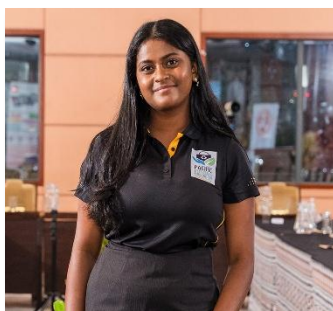
In 2025, Pacific Recycling Foundation continued to strengthen its internal systems, governance practices, and organisational capacity to support the scale and complexity of its growing work across communities, institutions, and partnerships.

As PRF's programmes expanded nationally, including government implementations, informal settlement hubs, school-based initiatives, and private sector partnerships - the organisation placed deliberate focus on building internal structures that ensure accountability, continuity, and effective delivery. This included clearer program ownership, strengthened reporting processes, and defined leadership responsibilities to manage multi-site operations and diverse funding arrangements.

Women's Leadership and Internal Progression

A key indicator of PRF's organisational maturity in 2025 was the progression of women into leadership and strategic roles within the organization, particularly in a sector that has historically been male-dominated.

PRF formally recognised and supported internal progression through:



The elevation of Shivanjali Singh from Project Officer to Assistant Project Manager, reflecting PRF's commitment to merit-based leadership development and women's representation in management roles.



The progression of Ashwarya Chand into the role of Grants and Communications Lead, strengthening PRF's capacity to engage funding partners, articulate grassroots realities, and shape grant strategies grounded in local context.



The academic achievements of Ashwarya Chand and Aliyah Valentine, reinforcing PRF's belief that education and lived experience together strengthen advocacy, programme design, and policy engagement.

These milestones reflect PRF's commitment to creating pathways for women to lead, influence decision-making, and shape the future of recycling and waste management advocacy in Fiji.

Strengthening Institutional Credibility and Partnerships

Internal capacity-building in 2025 also enabled PRF to engage more confidently with government ministries, development partners, academic institutions, and the private sector. Enhanced internal coordination and communications strengthened PRF's ability to:

Deliver structured, evidence-informed programmes;

Maintain transparency and accountability across partnerships; and

Represent the voices and rights of Collection Pillars of Recycling (CPR) in national and regional dialogues.

This focus on people and systems is central to PRF's long-term sustainability, ensuring that the organisation remains not only responsive at the grassroots level, but also institutionally strong, values-driven, and capable of scaling impact without compromising its rights-based approach.

Organisational Structure

Board of Trustees (Is composed of all women from different sectors)



Amitesh Deo
Founder & Director
Operations



Dhanjay Deo
Campaigns & Activities
Manager



Shivanjali Singh
Assistant Project
Manager



Ashwarya Chand
Grants &
Communications Lead



Aliyah Valentine
Project Officer



Ashna Prasad
Project Officer



Adi Raketekete
Finance Manager

SPECIAL FEATURE: NOTABLE MOMENTS IN PHOTOS



PRF STRATEGIC & IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (2025-2029) OVERVIEW

Pacific Recycling Foundation's Strategic Plan 2025-2029 was developed in 2024 following nearly three years of grounded implementation across Fiji. Unlike many strategic plans that precede operational work, PRF's strategy was intentionally built on lived experience, tested interventions, and evidence gathered through direct engagement with communities, institutions, and Collection Pillars of Recycling (CPR).

The Strategic Plan was designed to:



Consolidate and formalise successful initiatives implemented between 2022 and 2024	Provide a coherent framework to scale impact responsibly
Strengthen accountability, monitoring, and learning	Position PRF to engage more effectively at national, regional, and international levels

The Plan is structured around clear thematic priorities, each with defined goals, outcomes, and implementation pathways. While several strategic goals had already seen early progress prior to 2025, Year One focused on implementation, alignment, institutionalisation, and strengthening systems rather than restarting initiatives from zero.

As such, the Strategic Plan does not replace PRF's earlier work; it builds upon it, providing structure and long-term direction to ensure sustainability, replication, and deeper systems-level change.

YEAR ONE (2025) STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

Year One achievements should be viewed in the context of PRF’s pre-Strategic Plan work (2022–2024). In some areas, outputs exceeded Year One targets because programs were already established and were formally aligned under the Strategic Plan in 2025.

Strategic Priority	Year One Plan (2025)	Key Actions Undertaken	Status	Notes / Learning
Strategic Planning & Governance	Begin implementation of PRF Strategic Plan (2025–2029)	Internal alignment of programmes; use of strategy to guide annual planning and reporting	Achieved	First year operating under a formal strategic framework
Protection & Support of CPR	Strengthen recognition, dignity, and protection of CPR	CPR engagement embedded across programmes; advocacy for CPR inclusion in systems	Achieved	CPR positioned as a cross-cutting priority, not a standalone activity
Structured Recycling Programmes	Strengthen and expand structured recycling initiatives	Continued implementation of ROG and I Recycle Hub programmes (phased)	Partially Achieved	Expansion paced due to funding constraints
Recycling on the Go (ROG)	Implement ROG programme in selected schools	Continued engagement with four schools; ambassador-led recycling activities	Achieved	Programme continuity prioritised over scale
Mapping & Research	Conduct mapping to inform programme design and policy advocacy	Mapping exercises and research activities undertaken	Achieved	Data used to guide future interventions
National Campaigns & Awareness	Advance mindset and behaviour change initiatives	CPR recognition activities and public awareness engagements	Achieved	Focus on upstream messaging rather than clean-ups
High-Level Engagement & Policy Advocacy	Strengthen engagement with government and institutions	Engagement with ministries, municipal councils, and national platforms	Ongoing	Opportunity exists for deeper policy integration
Regional & International Engagement	Strengthen Pacific regional collaboration	Active role in Pacific Recyclers Alliance and regional and global forums	Achieved	PRF recognised as practitioner-led regional actor
Tourism Sector Interventions	Advance recycling partnerships within tourism sector	Continued engagement with tourism operators and partners	Achieved	Builds pathway for scalable sector-based interventions
Data, Evidence & Reporting	Strengthen monitoring and reporting systems	Programme-level data captured and consolidated	Ongoing	Systems to be further strengthened in Year Two

Key Milestones & Impact Highlights (2025)



1. 4,436 tonnes of recyclables diverted from Naboro landfill, dumpsites and the environment through PRF and WRFL recycling programs – strengthening Fiji's circular economy transition and supporting grassroots collectors and Collection Pillars of Recycling (CPR)



2. Sustained Youth Leadership through the Recycling on the Go (ROG) Ambassadors Program, operating across four schools with 196 active student ambassadors, advancing behaviour change, environmental stewardship and grassroots advocacy despite operating without dedicated program funding in 2025



3. ROG Ambassadors Recycling Output Maintained Under Constraints:
While recyclables volumes declined from 5,438.5kg in 2024 to 1,771kg in 2025 due to funding and operational limitations, PRF successfully preserved core youth engagement, training and recycling activities – ensuring continuity of behaviour change systems and school-based environmental leadership



4. Convening of the VAKA Forum Series – strengthening national systems dialogue:

- Municipal Councils Forum advancing coordinated recycling systems and local government collaboration
- Tourism Sector VAKA Forum laying groundwork for industry-wide circular economy commitments including the upcoming Tanoa Agreement (2026)



5. National advocacy through Global Recycling Day (GRD):

- Multi-sector dialogue positioning recycling within human rights, livelihoods and dignity frameworks




6. National engagement through World Environment Day:

- Public awareness platforms and policy engagement advocating community-led behaviour change



7. Launch of the Circular Pacific Plastic Project with ANZPAC, WRAP and FCDO at Extra Supermarket Lautoka – demonstrating scalable private sector collaboration models



8. 2,001kg of soft plastics recovered within four months through integrated B2B and B2C recovery systems – contributing to Extended Responsibility (EPR) dialogue and data-driven plastic recovery strategies



9. Legal registration of the Pacific Recyclers Alliance (PRA), formalising the Pacific's first grassroots recycling network and strengthening regional collaboration, advocacy and knowledge exchange




10. Strategic UNSW-ANZPAC-PRF Regional Workshop in Sydney, advancing research partnerships, innovation pathways, youth engagement models and circular economy solutions across the Pacific




11. Expansion of I Recycle Programs – Outrigger Fiji Beach Resort, Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, and Ministry of Local Government - strengthening institutional recycling leadership



12. Outer Island outreach and baseline assessments in Rotuma, Malolo and Bekana – advancing the Look Beyond movement and highlighting waste inequities across remote island communities



13. Completion of Living Income Study with CPR under SYSTEMIQ's Fair Circularity Initiative



14. Waste Audits and Plastics Data Engagement, contributing to national data systems, evidence-based policy development and Extended Producer Responsibility frameworks

HIGH-LEVEL ENGAGEMENTS

In 2025, Pacific Recycling Foundation significantly strengthened its role as a trusted grassroots voice in national, regional, and international waste management and circular economy dialogues. PRF's high-level engagements focused on influencing policy, advancing inclusive systems, and ensuring that grassroots recyclers are recognised as essential actors in sustainable development.

National Leadership & Policy Engagement

PRF maintained strong engagement with Fiji's national leadership, including Deputy Prime Ministers, Ministers, Permanent Secretaries, and senior officials across key ministries. These engagements enabled PRF to contribute directly to national waste management priorities, including consultations on the **Fiji National Integrated Waste Management and Pollution Control Strategy (2025–2035)** and the **Cleaner Pacific Strategy**.

A major milestone was the launch of **PRF's VAKA Forum Series**, beginning with Municipal Councils and the Tourism Sector, bringing together senior decision-makers to shift Fiji's waste management approach from landfill dependency toward recovery- and circular-based systems. These forums established a national platform for shared accountability, cross-sector dialogue, and co-creation of practical solutions.



Regional & International Representation

PRF played an active and visible role in high-level regional and global forums in 2025, ensuring that Pacific grassroots recycling perspectives were represented in spaces traditionally dominated by technical and institutional actors.

Notably, PRF was invited to the **12th Regional 3R (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle) and Circular Economy Forum in Asia and the Pacific**, held in Jaipur, India. Founder Amitesh Deo moderated a country breakout session, participated in the Roundtable on Circular Economy and Plastic Waste, and advocated for the inclusion and recognition of informal recyclers in regional policy frameworks.



PRF also contributed to international platforms including:

A UNEP-hosted forum on plastic pollution challenges in the Pacific (Nadi)



The Asia Pacific Circular Economy Roundtable & Hotspot 2025 in Taiwan

A landmark three-day strategic workshop in Sydney, co-led with the University of New South Wales (UNSW)



ANZPAC, with participation and validation from senior Fijian and Australian government officials



These engagements reinforced PRF's role as a bridge between grassroots realities and global policy discussions.

Regional Leadership & Strategic Partnerships

As Secretariat of the **Pacific Recyclers Alliance (PRA)**, PRF convened and engaged with regional partners across **Fiji, Samoa, Tonga, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, and Nauru**. High-level engagements included consultations with **SPREP**, the **International Alliance of Waste Pickers (IAWP)**, and regional entities such as the **Nauru Rehabilitation Corporation**, supporting regional collaboration and shared learning.

PRF also deepened strategic relationships with international development partners and institutions, including **WRAP, JICA, GRID-Arendal**, and leading universities in **Australia, Japan, Singapore, and the Pacific**. These partnerships focused on policy alignment, research, capacity building, and the development of practical, data-driven recycling solutions tailored to Pacific contexts.



STANDING WITH COLLECTION PILLARS OF RECYCLING (CPR)

A defining feature of PRF's work from 2022 to 2024 was its direct engagement with and support for Collection Pillars of Recycling (CPR). During the COVID-19 pandemic, PRF, in collaboration with organisations such as FRIEND Fiji and the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre, provided emergency assistance to women CPR and members of the LGBTQI+ community. This support included food packs, dignity packs, and personal protective equipment, delivered in a manner that sought to respond to immediate needs without creating long-term dependency.

Through partnerships with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Fiji Women's Crisis Centre, and Lautoka City Council, PRF facilitated workshops addressing gender, human rights, legal literacy, financial literacy, and access to health care. These engagements revealed the deep stigma attached to the term "informal waste picker," leading to the adoption of the term Collection Pillars of Recycling (CPR) - a name chosen by the women collectors of Vunato, Lautoka themselves to reflect dignity, agency, and recognition of their contribution to environmental sustainability.

Structured Support for CPR

At the heart of Pacific Recycling Foundation's work is a firm belief that effective recycling systems cannot exist without protecting the people who recover recyclables every day. The CPR are central to Fiji's waste and recycling landscape, yet for decades they have operated in conditions marked by stigma, insecurity, and exclusion from formal waste management systems.

PRF's approach to CPR support is grounded in dignity, safety, and livelihoods. From its establishment in 2022, the Foundation has prioritised structured support for CPR, recognising that environmental outcomes and social outcomes are inseparable. Year One of Strategic Plan implementation in 2025 represented a consolidation and scaling of this commitment.

Evidence-Based Advocacy: Mapping the Waste Collection Sector

In 2023, PRF undertook a landmark national **Mapping Exercise of the Waste Collection Sector in Fiji**, in partnership with Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO), and with the support of partners including the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre, Asco Motors, and Tourism Fiji. The exercise captured data from 1,059 individuals across Viti Levu, Labasa, and Savusavu, providing the first comprehensive evidence base on the socioeconomic conditions, living environments, and work-related challenges faced by CPR in Fiji.

The mapping exercise revealed significant vulnerabilities, including limited access to basic services, exposure to health and safety risks, elder abuse, social isolation, and systemic discrimination. At the same time, it documented the resilience, contribution, and essential role CPR play in extending the lifespan of landfills, reducing environmental pollution, and supporting circular economy outcomes. Findings from this exercise informed immediate referrals for counselling and social support, while also shaping PRF's long-term advocacy and policy engagement.



From Immediate Support to Structured Dignity

PRF's formative years also saw a transition from emergency and ad-hoc support towards more structured, dignified interventions. In partnership with municipal councils, development partners, and the private sector, PRF supported the establishment of dignity facilities at dumpsites, providing CPR with access to washrooms, water, safe meal spaces, and storage facilities. These interventions represented a shift toward recognising CPR as essential contributors within the waste management system, deserving of safe and humane working conditions.



Laying the Groundwork for Regional Collaboration

Beyond Fiji, PRF's early work contributed to strengthening regional collaboration among grassroots recycling organisations. These efforts culminated in the Inaugural Pacific Recyclers Meeting held in Fiji in August 2024, organised in partnership with the Samoa Recycling and Waste Management Association. This meeting brought together grassroots recyclers from across the Pacific and led to the establishment of the Pacific Recyclers Alliance, marking a significant step toward coordinated regional advocacy, knowledge sharing, and collective action.

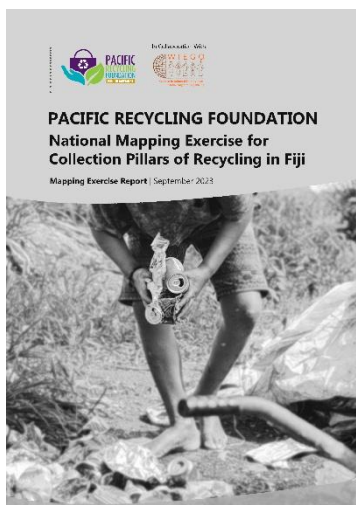
From Practice to Strategy

By the end of 2024, PRF had accumulated substantial implementation experience, partnerships, data, and community trust. The Strategic Plan 2025-2029 was therefore developed not as a starting point, but as a framework to consolidate, strengthen, and scale proven interventions. Many of the initiatives outlined in the Strategic Plan were informed by, and in some cases already underway during, this formative phase. The Strategic Plan provides structure, accountability, and long-term direction to ensure that PRF's work continues to deepen its impact, strengthen systems, and elevate the voices of those at the heart of recycling.

MAPPING EXERCISE & RESEARCH

In 2023, Pacific Recycling Foundation conducted Fiji’s most comprehensive **national mapping of the informal waste collection sector** - one of only a few such exercises undertaken globally. Implemented in partnership with **Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO)**, and supported by partners including **Fiji Women’s Crisis Centre, Tourism Fiji, Asco Motors, and municipal councils**, the mapping exercise laid a critical evidence base for PRF’s strategic direction.

A total of **1,059 individuals** involved in the collection of recyclables were interviewed across Viti Levu, Labasa, and Savusavu. The exercise captured detailed data on socioeconomic conditions, living environments, access to basic services, health and safety risks, and work-related challenges.



Re: Mapping Exercise Fiji - Draft Report

KA Kabir Arora
To Vinil

You replied to this message on 27/09/2023 2:50 pm.

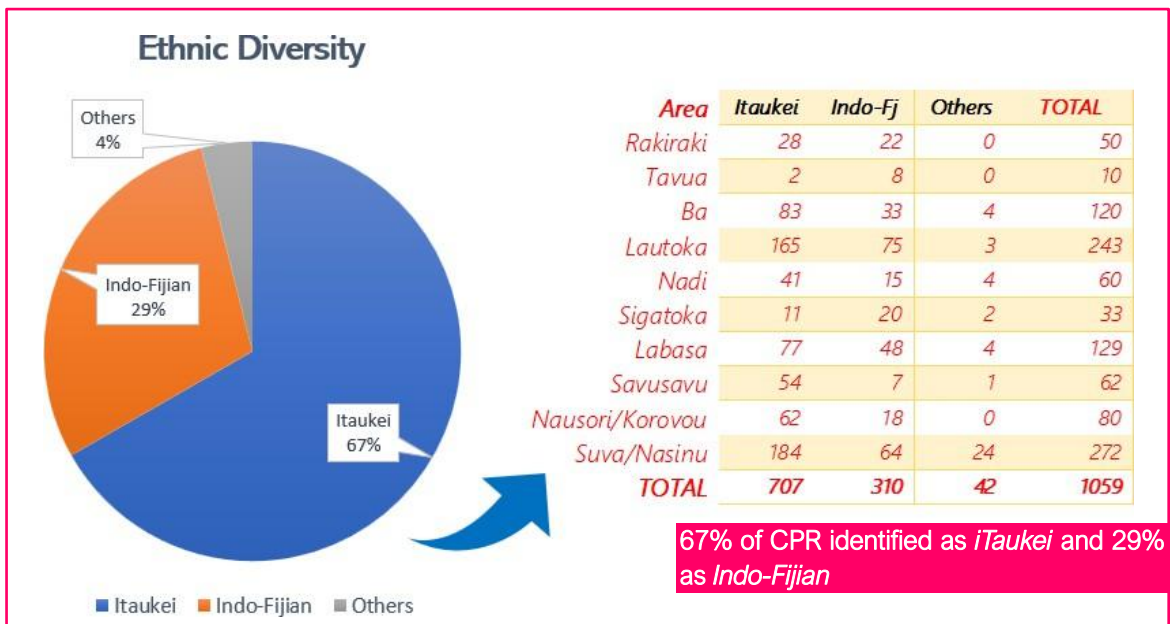
Dear Vinil and Fellow Colleagues at the Pacific Recycling Foundation,

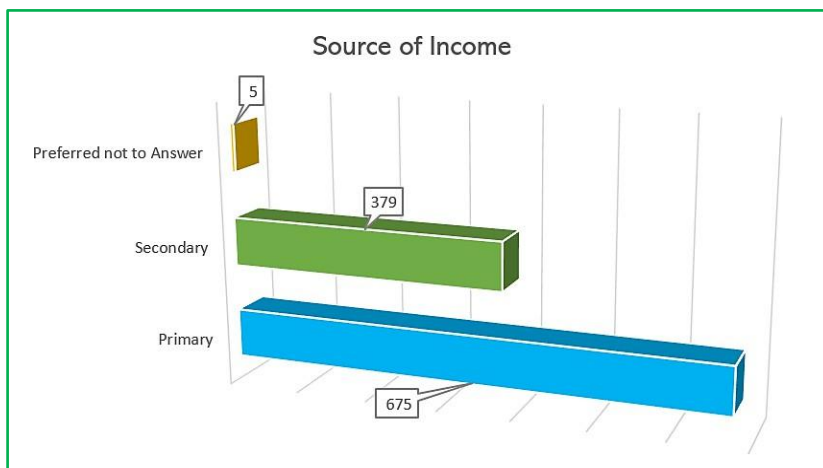
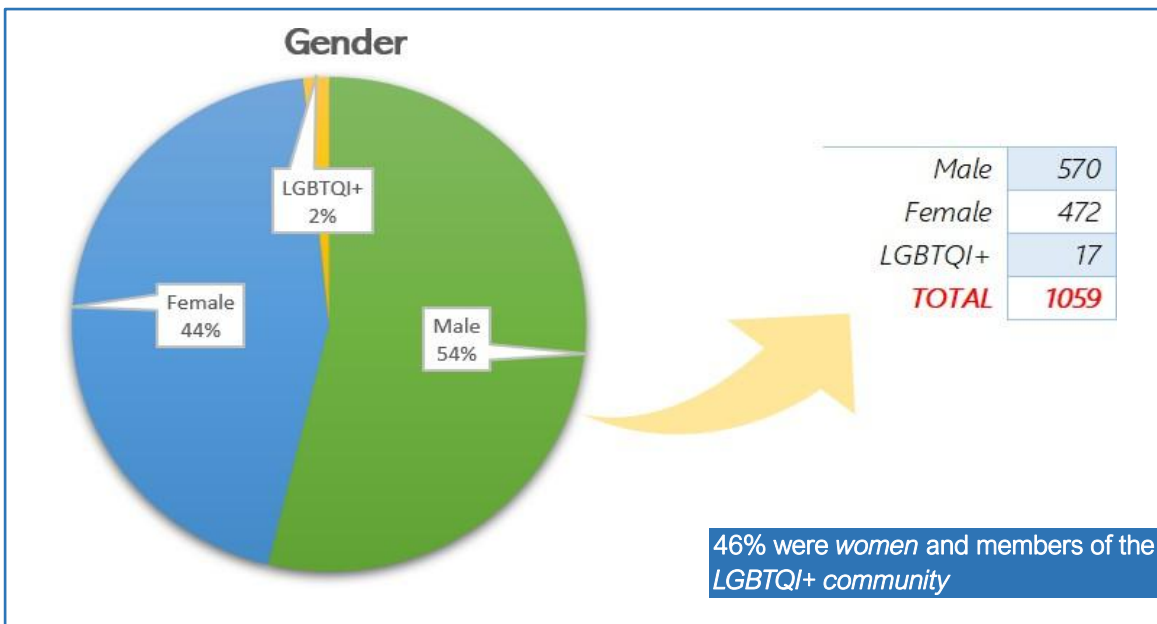
I want to express my gratitude for sharing the outstanding report. I apologize for not providing my input sooner.

Comment on our Mapping Exercise Report by a senior WIEGO official

Key Findings

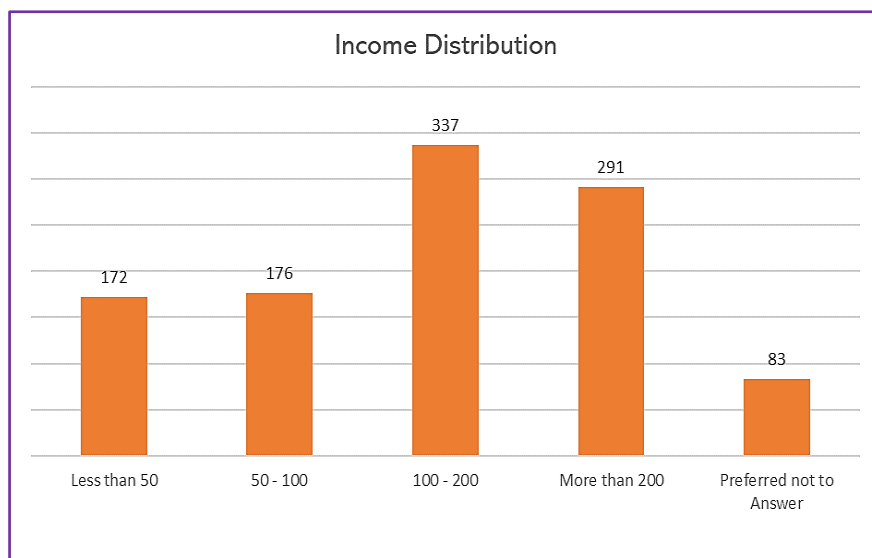
The mapping revealed that:

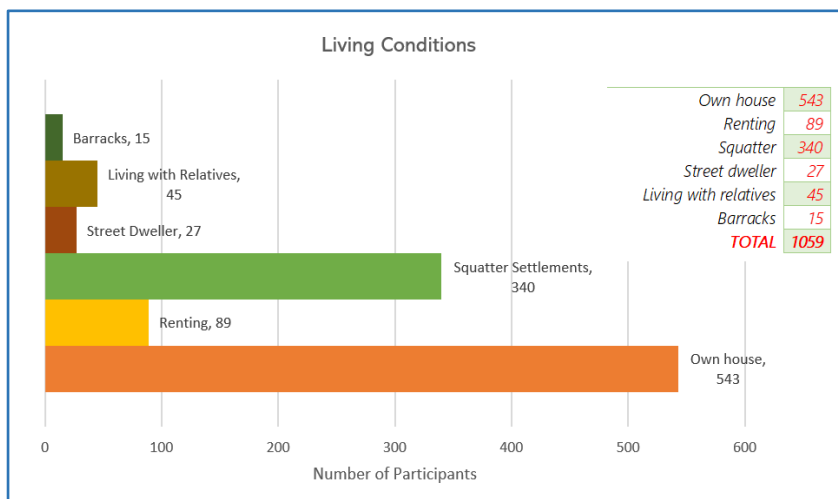




63% relied entirely on waste collection as their primary source of income

32% earned less than FJD \$100 per week





32% lived in squatter settlements

The research also uncovered severe gaps in access to water, sanitation, healthcare, and dignified working conditions. Many CPR reported harassment, verbal abuse, restricted access to dumpsites, and financial burdens through entry fees imposed by some municipalities. At the same time, the mapping documented examples of good practice, where councils demonstrated inclusive and respectful engagement with CPR.

Beyond quantitative data, the exercise revealed deeply human realities - resilience in the face of poverty, gender-based violence, elder abandonment, homelessness, and stigma - underscoring the urgent need for structured, dignified, and rights-based support.

Strategic Significance

The findings from the mapping exercise fundamentally shaped PRF's 2025–2029 Strategic Plan and directly informed Year One priorities, including:

- Formal recognition of Collection Pillars of Recycling
- Advocacy for CPR rights, protection, and inclusion in waste management systems
- Development of structured support interventions, including dignity facilities, identification systems, training, and referrals to social protection services
- Evidence-based engagement with municipal councils, government agencies, and regional partners

Knowledge Sharing and Regional Impact

The launch of the National Mapping Exercise Report in 2023 elevated CPR issues into national and regional discourse. The report's findings have since been referenced in regional platforms, including discussions under the Pacific Recyclers Alliance and the Clean Pacific Roundtable, helping to shape a broader understanding of informal and grassroots recycling across the Pacific.

The mapping exercise established PRF as a leading practitioner and knowledge-holder in grassroots recycling and informal waste systems, ensuring that policy discussions, partnerships, and programs are grounded in lived realities rather than assumptions.

The full National Mapping Exercise Report, launched in 2023, continues to serve as a key reference for policymakers, researchers, development partners, and regional institutions seeking inclusive and sustainable waste management solutions.

BUILDING AWARENESS AND CHANGING MINDSETS

PRF's early work placed strong emphasis on education, awareness, and behaviour change around recycling. The Recycling on the Go (ROG) Ambassadors Programme was piloted and implemented in secondary and primary schools, beginning with Jai Narayan College in 2022, followed by Nadi Sangam Primary School and Jasper Williams High School in 2023, and Queen Victoria School in 2024. These early interventions demonstrated the effectiveness of youth-led recycling advocacy and laid the foundation for the expansion and formalisation of the ROG programme under the Strategic Plan.

Similarly, a range of I Recycle Hub initiatives were implemented across communities, informal settlements, corporate offices, educational institutions, sports facilities, and government ministries. These included community-based programmes in Kabutri Drive, Kilikali Informal Settlement, and Bykeitou Informal Settlement; workplace programmes at the Housing Authority of Fiji, Fiji Development Bank, Fiji National Provident Fund, and Fiji National University campuses in Natabua and Derrick. Collectively, these initiatives contributed to shifting mindsets, improving recycling practices, and strengthening collaboration between formal and informal actors in the recycling value chain.

Training & Advocacy

Pacific Recycling Foundation's training and advocacy work extends far beyond technical guidance on recycling practices. In 2025, PRF continued to deliver training as a values-driven intervention, grounded in the understanding that waste management is fundamentally a human rights issue. How waste is generated, managed, and recovered has direct implications for dignity, livelihoods, environmental health, and social equity—particularly for marginalised communities such as the Collection Pillars of Recycling (CPR).

PRF's approach deliberately moves beyond the question of what can be recycled to examine why waste management systems fail and who bears the consequences of those failures. Training sessions

consistently addressed the human and social dimensions of waste, the structural invisibility of grassroots recyclers, and the shared responsibility of institutions, organisations, and individuals in shaping inclusive and accountable recycling systems. This framing aimed to shift mindsets, embed accountability, and position recycling as a pathway to environmental justice rather than a stand-alone environmental action.



Training Approach

Across all training and advocacy engagements in 2025, PRF applied a consistent framework that integrated:

- Recognition of the dignity, rights, and livelihoods of CPR
- Waste management as a shared social responsibility, not an individual burden
- The relationship between recycling systems and environmental and social justice
- The limitations of clean-up-led and landfill-focused responses
- The role of institutions in enabling—or undermining—inclusive recycling systems

This approach was adapted to suit different audiences while maintaining a consistent emphasis on systems thinking and long-term change.

Institutional and Government Trainings

PRF delivered comprehensive recycling trainings following the implementation of the I Recycle program across key government and institutional settings. These sessions combined practical recycling guidance with deeper discussions on accountability, system design, and the social impacts of waste management decisions.

A significant milestone was reached when PRF conducted training for staff of the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, making it the first government agency in Fiji—and the region—to adopt PRF's I Recycle program. More than 10 staff members were trained as recycling advocates and will now lead recycling initiatives within the Ministry.

Similar trainings were delivered for staff of the Ministry of Local Government, further embedding recycling advocacy within national institutions. Additional institutional trainings were conducted for:

→ Lautoka City Council, in partnership with

- Earth Wishers Recyclers
- National Trust of Fiji Islands
- The Pacific Community (SPC)
- BSP Life

Across these engagements, participants were guided on identifying, sorting, and preparing recyclables while also engaging in discussions on the central role of CPR within the recycling system. Trainings reinforced that effective waste management is not only an environmental obligation but also a matter of fairness, inclusion, and responsibility.

Community, Youth, and Civil Society Engagement

PRF extended its training and advocacy efforts into community and civil society spaces, recognising that meaningful change requires engagement beyond formal institutions.

Training sessions were conducted with the Striders Women's Rugby Club under the Tuberi Program, focusing on recycling practices, the contribution of CPR, and the links between waste management, dignity, and social justice. These discussions highlighted how community-based organisations can play a role in challenging harmful norms and driving behaviour change.

PRF also facilitated a workshop at Nadi Sangam Sadhu Kuppuswamy Memorial College, providing

students with an overview of Fiji's waste management landscape, the challenges facing recycling systems, and the contribution of grassroots recyclers. The session encouraged critical thinking around potential school-based recycling initiatives and innovative upcycling solutions.

As part of early awareness-building efforts, Waste Recyclers Fiji Limited hosted 35 children and 5 teachers from M&M Day Care Centre at its Wailada recycling yard. The visit introduced participants to recycling processes and reinforced the importance of building understanding and responsibility from a young age.

Education Sector and Youth Leadership

PRF continued to strengthen youth leadership through refresher training sessions at two Recycling on the Go (ROG) Ambassador schools—Nadi Sangam Primary School and Jasper Williams High School. These sessions reinforced students' understanding of recycling systems while also exposing them to the daily realities faced by grassroots recyclers.

The trainings positioned young people not merely as participants, but as advocates capable of influencing long-term behaviour change within their schools, families, and communities.

National Campaigns (2025)

In 2025, Pacific Recycling Foundation (PRF) rolled out a series of coordinated national campaigns designed to shift public mindsets, influence policy conversations, and centre dignity, accountability, and inclusion in Fiji's waste management discourse. These campaigns went beyond awareness-raising, deliberately linking environmental action to human rights, social justice, and systemic reform.

PRF's national campaigns were anchored around key national and global moments, including the New Year Call to Action, International Waste Pickers Day, Global Recycling Day, World Environment Day, World Oceans Day, Earth Day, Pride Month, Fiji Day, and the year-end Christmas Gift and Stationery Drive for the children of Collection Pillars of Recycling (CPR). Each campaign reinforced PRF's core message: that waste management is not only an environmental issue, but a social, economic, and human rights issue.

Fiscal Sponsorship & Mentoring Agent Role in Rights-Based Community Support

In 2025, Pacific Recycling Foundation was approached by Chai & Chat, a community-led Indo-Fijian LGBTQI+ initiative founded by queer Indo-Fijian activists, to serve as a fiscal sponsor and mentoring partner.

Chai & Chat was established in response to critical research led by Kris Prasad, which highlighted high rates of suicide among queer Indo-Fijians in Fiji. The initiative was created as a safe and inclusive space where individuals could gather regularly to share their experiences, build meaningful connections, and access a supportive and nurturing community.

Over the past three years, Chai & Chat has operated entirely through volunteer efforts, with facilitators and coordinators dedicating their time to sustain monthly engagements. Their work has also been supported by contributions from individuals committed to advancing safe spaces for marginalised communities.

In 2025, the initiative's proposal to the **Pacific Feminist Fund (PFF)** was successfully shortlisted, subject to the completion of a due diligence process. A key requirement of this process was the identification of a credible fiscal sponsor to administer funds and ensure compliance with financial, governance, and reporting standards.

Following internal discussions, Chai & Chat approached PRF to take on this role.

After careful consideration, PRF agreed to serve as the fiscal sponsor and mentoring agency, providing financial oversight, governance support, and institutional guidance. Under this arrangement, PRF administers grant funds on behalf of Chai & Chat, with disbursements made based on approved requests, aligned activities, and compliance with donor requirements.

The acceptance of PRF in this role by the donor partner reflects a strong level of trust in the Foundation's systems, including its financial management, due diligence processes, reporting mechanisms, and organisational accountability.

This partnership represents an important evolution in PRF's work - extending beyond recycling and environmental advocacy into broader rights-based support systems for vulnerable and marginalised communities.

As a mentoring agent, PRF will support Chai & Chat not only in financial administration, but also in strengthening organisational structures, compliance frameworks, and long-term sustainability pathways.

This engagement reinforces PRF's commitment to its rights-based approach, recognising that environmental justice, social justice, and dignity are deeply interconnected. It also reflects PRF's growing role as a trusted institution capable of supporting emerging grassroots movements through structured, accountable, and inclusive systems.



Major national campaign included:



Breaking Barriers: A Revolutionary Blueprint for the Waste Management Crisis (Global Recycling Day 2025 theme)



Empower the Nation: Recycle, Curb Plastic Waste



Join the Recycling Movement (National Lapel Pin Campaign)



Stand in Solidarity to Protect Our Environment (Roadside Campaign)



Recognition, dignity, and rights of Collection Pillars of Recycling



Intersectional advocacy linking waste management with gender justice, LGBTQI+ inclusion, and climate justice

Reach

PRF's national campaigns in 2025 reached audiences across Fiji through a combination of physical mobilisation, public dialogue, media engagement, and community-level outreach.

Public Mobilisation & Community Reach

- Over 1,000 participants took part in PRF's annual Roadside Campaign along the Kings Highway between Koronivia Junction and Rewa Bridge, marking World Environment Day and World Oceans Day.
- Nationwide recognition activities were conducted for International Waste Pickers Day, including direct engagement with CPR across multiple locations.
- Community talanoa sessions were held in rural and maritime settings, including Solevu Village, Malolo Island, engaging villagers and women already practising source separation.

National Platforms & Public Dialogue

- Global Recycling Day 2025 celebrations at Churchill Park, Lautoka, brought together government leaders, municipal councils, private sector partners, development partners, grassroots recyclers, regional organisations, and international partners.
- A high-level roundtable discussion was convened as part of Global Recycling Day 2025, bringing together senior government representatives, private sector partners, development partners, grassroots recyclers, and academics to discuss accountability, systemic gaps, and the role of comprehensive recycling in addressing Fiji's waste management crisis.
- PRF delivered advocacy messages at World Consumer Rights Day, SIDS Capacity-Building Training Programme, and national stakeholder consultations linked to the Cleaner Pacific 2035 agenda.

Media & Public Messaging

- Campaign messages were amplified through national media coverage, opinion pieces, televised and radio discussions, and sustained social media engagement.
- PRF's advocacy featured prominently around sensitive but critical issues, including the misuse of school students as waste collectors at events, the over-reliance on clean-up campaigns, and the marginalisation of CPR.

Impact Stories

From Advocacy to Action

- The launch of the I Recycle Program at Churchill Park during Global Recycling Day marked Fiji's first sports facility to adopt a comprehensive recycling system, setting a national and regional benchmark.
- National recognition of CPR was strengthened through sustained advocacy, reinforcing dignity facilities at Vunato and Maururu Dumpsites as models of ethical waste management.
- Individual advocacy impact was highlighted through the AMMA Award, recognising grassroots leadership that extended recycling practices from workplaces into remote coastal villages.

OUR COMPREHENSIVE RECYCLING PROGRAMS

Overview

In 2025, Pacific Recycling Foundation significantly scaled its flagship I Recycle Program, expanding into new locations, government ministries, informal settlements, schools, sports facilities, and retail spaces. Beyond material recovery, the program continued to centre dignity, human rights, and behaviour change - recognising waste management as a social, environmental, and equity issue, not merely a technical one.

The I Recycle Program integrates infrastructure, training, advocacy, and livelihood pathways for the Collection Pillars of Recycling (CPR), ensuring recycling systems are both effective and inclusive.

New Program Launches and Major Expansions (2025)

Lautoka City - Tappoo City I Recycle Hub (USAID CCBO)



In partnership with USAID Clean Cities, Blue Ocean (CCBO), and Lautoka City Council, PRF up-scaled the I Recycle Program to Lautoka through the implementation at Tappoo City, a major shopping complex.

This tailor-made hub diverted recyclables from Vunato Dumpsite while creating structured green employment opportunities for CPR - marking the first transition of CPR from dumpsite and street collection into formalised recycling roles within a commercial complex. A CPR were employed to capture, sort, and transfer recyclables, recovering approximately 900kg of materials, primarily PET bottles, aluminium cans, and cardboard.

While operationally successful, the program concluded in July 2025 following the early closure of USAID CCBO funding and limited engagement from site management, highlighting the need for stronger long-term private sector commitments.

Circular Pacific Plastics Project - Lautoka

PRF, in partnership with ANZPAC, WRAP, and funded by the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), launched Fiji's first consumer facing soft plastics collection system at Extra Supermarket, Lautoka.

The project introduced a dual B2B and B2C collection model under the I Recycle framework, engaging businesses and consumers simultaneously. Over four months, 2,001kg of soft plastics were collected. PRF teams were stationed at the supermarket for public awareness, reinforcing participation and behaviour change.

Complementing this initiative, PRF conducted a Brand Litter Audit across 150 line transects over three weeks, collecting critical data on plastic pollution patterns across urban, suburban, remote, and coastal environments.



Informal Settlements - Kilikali and Bykeitou



Kilikali Informal Settlement (Pacific Energy funded):



15 recycling advocates trained



408kg of recyclables collected (Feb-Oct)

Demonstrated improved waste segregation and strong participation

The programme at Kilikali Informal Settlement reinforces the effectiveness of community led recycling models in underserved areas lacking formal waste services.

Bykeitou Informal Settlement (Re-launch)

In July 2025, PRF re-launched the I Recycle Program at Bykeitou Informal Settlement, following its initial launch in 2023. Supported by Pacific Energy and Nasinu Town Council, the re launch reaffirmed PRF's commitment to communities without access to formal waste services. 24 advocates were trained, and 188 kg of recyclables were recovered between August and October. Importantly, recycling activities continued even during funding gaps, highlighting strong community ownership and long-term behaviour change.

Together, these launches reflect PRF's deliberate strategy in 2025: to embed recycling across government institutions, public spaces, and underserved communities, while centering dignity, accountability, and practical action. They also reinforce the I Recycle Program's adaptability across diverse settings, from ministries and stadiums to informal settlements.



Government and Institutional Implementations

Ministry of Environment and Climate Change



15

recycling advocates

608kg

collected (Jan-Oct)

First government ministry in Fiji and the region to implement I Recycle programme

No general waste recorded, reflecting strong compliance and institutional behaviour change

In 2025, the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change became the first government ministry in Fiji and the region to implement PRF's I Recycle Program. The launch set a national benchmark for accountability and action in waste management. Fifteen recycling advocates were trained, and between January and October, 608kg of recyclables were recovered. The program recorded zero general waste, demonstrating strong behaviour change and internal ownership.

Ministry of Local Government

10

recycling advocates

472kg

collected (Feb–Oct)

Second government implementation

Demonstrated leadership by example from the Ministry overseeing national waste management

Launched on 7 February 2025, the Ministry of Local Government became the second government agency to look inward and implement structured recycling within its own operations. Ten recycling advocates were trained, and 472kg of recyclables were collected between February and October, with no waste recorded. This implementation sent a strong message that ministries responsible for waste oversight must also lead by example, while recognising the dignity and contribution of the CPR.



Churchill Park, Lautoka



9

recycling advocates

733kg

of recyclables collected (Apr–Dec)






First sports facility in Fiji and the region to implement a comprehensive recycling system

Successfully launched during Global Recycling Day 2025

The official launch of the I Recycle Program at Churchill Park during Global Recycling Day marked the first recycling implementation at a sports facility in Fiji and the Pacific. Officiated by the Deputy Prime Minister, Hon. Manoa Kamikamica, the program engaged nine recycling advocates and recovered 733kg of recyclables between April and December. The initiative demonstrated that large public venues can successfully integrate recycling into daily operations with strong compliance and no waste recorded.

Education Sector - School Composting & I Recycle Integration

In partnership with Recycle Organics, Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI), and the Ministry of Education, PRF expanded I Recycle into organic waste management through a school based composting program.

				
<p>Official launch at Nadi Sangam Primary School</p>	<p>Expanded to 9 additional schools across Nadi and Lautoka</p>	<p>Engaged 8,000+ students and staff</p>	<p>200+ teachers trained</p>	<p>Indirectly benefiting 10,000+ community members</p>

Recycling on the Go (ROG) Ambassadors received specialised training to lead composting centres, linking climate action, methane reduction, and long-term sustainability within schools and surrounding communities.

Other I Recycle Programme Sites (Launched 2023, Active 2025)

		
<p>FANPF: 1,276kg recyclables - 28 advocates</p>	<p>FDB: 2,829kg recyclables - 24 advocates</p>	<p>Housing Authority: 529kg recyclables - 14 advocates</p>

While the Housing Authority program concluded in the third quarter of 2025, due to limited management support, the advocacy impact remained visible, with an advocate, Litia Matia, receiving the **A.M.M.A Award at Global Recycling Day 2025**.

Recycling on the Go (ROG) Ambassadors Program

The Recycling on the Go (ROG) Ambassadors Program remained a cornerstone of Pacific Recycling Foundation's youth-focused interventions in 2025, empowering young leaders to drive recycling behaviour change within schools and communities. Operating across four schools (Jai Narayan College, Jasper Williams High School, Nadi Sangam Primary School and Queen Victoria School) with 196 active student ambassadors, the program continued to advocate practical recycling solutions, environmental responsibility, and leadership development despite facing significant financial constraints.

Key Outcomes and Lessons

Demonstrated that recycling systems succeed when dignity, inclusion, and accountability are prioritised.

CPR transition into green jobs remains one of the program's most transformative outcomes.	Funding continuity and leadership buy-in are critical for long-term sustainability.	Informal settlement and school-based models offer strong scalability across Fiji.
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The I Recycle Program in 2025 reaffirmed PRF's belief that waste management is a human rights issue, and that sustainable systems must uplift people while protecting the environment.

A Challenging Year - Sustaining Impact Without Dedicated Funding

In 2025, PRF did not receive dedicated funding for the ROG program, resulting in major operational challenges and requiring significant adjustments to the planned annual workplan. Despite these limitations, PRF ensured the continuity of essential program elements including recycling pick-ups, refresher trainings, and ambassador engagement activities.

While program expansion was paused, PRF maintained its commitment to nurturing youth leadership and sustaining behaviour change already established within participating schools. However, the impact of reduced resources was evident in recyclables collection volumes. In 2024, the annual recyclables volume reached an impressive 5,438.5kg, a clear reflection of strong participation and effective waste management practices. By contrast, in 2025, this figure dropped to 1,771kg, representing a significant decline in overall recycling output due to the lack of dedicated operational funding and program support.

Recycling Activities and Environmental Outcomes

Recyclable collection activities continued throughout the year, reinforcing hands-on learning and practical engagement with waste recovery systems. Materials collected included paper, cardboard, PET bottles, soft plastics, and mixed recyclables. While overall volumes decreased in 2025, these activities remained crucial in keeping students engaged and fostering an understanding of practical recycling practices.

Training and Leadership Development

PRF conducted refresher training sessions aimed at deepening student understanding of:

- Human rights-based waste management
- Grassroots recycling systems
- Environmental responsibility
- Leadership and advocacy skills

Students demonstrated increased ownership of recycling activities, including school-led initiatives such as ambassador badging ceremonies that strengthened morale and recognition of student leaders.

ROG Ambassadors Leadership Forum - Youth Voices Driving Change

The second ROG Ambassadors Leadership Forum was convened at Tanoa International Hotel, Nadi, bringing together students, partners, policymakers, and youth role models.

Key Outcomes:

- 57 participants including 20 ROG Ambassadors
- Presence of Swire Shipping Fijian Drua and Fijiana Drua players
- Government representation through Minister for Education, Hon. Aseri Radrodoro, and Deputy Speaker of Parliament and Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs, Hon. Lenora Qereqeretabua
- Student-led presentations on waste challenges and innovative solutions
- Strong calls for improved government policy, funding, and stakeholder collaboration

The forum demonstrated clear evidence of:

- Behaviour change
- Increased leadership confidence
- Critical engagement by youth with national waste management systems

Impact Beyond Schools

The program continues to influence broader community attitudes toward recycling by positioning youth as catalysts for behaviour change and sustainability advocacy. While the decline in recyclables volume in 2025 highlighted funding and operational constraints, the program's influence on youth leadership and environmental awareness remains strong.

Looking Ahead - Regional Youth Leadership

Despite operational challenges, the ROG Ambassadors Program continues to build a strong foundation for a future Pacific youth recycling leadership network. This evolving model aligns with PRF's broader vision of establishing a Pacific Regional Recycling Hub that integrates education, grassroots action, and regional collaboration.

From Informal Waste Pickers to Collection Pillars of Recycling

One of PRF's most significant work has been the reframing of identity. Through workshops conducted in partnership with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Fiji Women's Crisis Centre (FWCC), and Lautoka City Council, women involved in waste collection identified the term "informal waste picker" as a source of stigma and harm. The term Collection Pillars of Recycling (CPR) emerged from these discussions, reflecting both the essential role these individuals play and the dignity they deserve.

This terminology, first adopted locally in 2022, has since gained national and regional recognition, culminating in its inclusion in regional policy discourse through the Pacific Recyclers Alliance and outcomes of the Clean Pacific Roundtable. This shift represents more than semantics; it signals a move toward recognition, respect, and accountability.

Structured Support and Dignity-Centered Interventions

PRF's CPR support goes beyond short-term assistance. It is designed to address systemic gaps in working and living conditions that directly affect safety, health, and livelihood sustainability.

In partnership with municipal councils, development partners, and the private sector, PRF has delivered tangible infrastructure support, including dignity facilities at major dumpsites. The completion and handover of washroom, kitchen, and storage facilities at Vunato Dumpsite and the opening of a dignity facility at the Maururu Dumpsite in Ba marked significant milestones. These facilities provide CPR with access to clean water, hygienic toilets, safe spaces to rest and eat, and secure storage — basic necessities that had long been absent.

These interventions have reduced health risks, improved daily working conditions, and sent a powerful signal that CPR are valued contributors to environmental sustainability rather than individuals to be hidden or marginalised.

Protection, Referrals, and Crisis Support

PRF's work with CPR also recognises the complex social realities faced by many individuals involved in waste collection. During the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond, PRF, in collaboration with civil society partners such as FRIEND Fiji and the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre, provided food packs, dignity packs, personal protective equipment, and crisis support to women CPR and members of the LGBTQI+ community.

Through its Mapping Exercise and field engagement, PRF has identified cases of domestic violence, elder abuse, homelessness, health neglect, and extreme poverty. Where immediate risks were identified, PRF facilitated referrals for counselling, legal support, healthcare access, and social protection assistance. This referral-based approach is intentional - designed to provide support without creating dependency, while ensuring individuals are not left without assistance in moments of crisis.

Advocacy for Rights and Fair Treatment

A key finding emerging from PRF's engagement with CPR is the inconsistent treatment they receive across municipalities. While some councils have demonstrated progressive practices - registering CPR, allowing access to water and sanitation, providing PPE, and waiving fees - others continue to impose access restrictions, collection fees, and, in some cases, verbal harassment and exclusion.

PRF has actively raised these concerns through dialogue with municipal councils, government agencies, and regional platforms. Advocacy efforts focus on:

- Recognition of CPR as essential contributors within the waste management system
- Fair and consistent access to dumpsites and recovery spaces
- Elimination of exploitative or punitive access fees
- Safeguards to ensure CPR are not displaced or undermined by competing interests

These advocacy efforts aim to shift mindsets from tolerance to recognition, and from ad hoc arrangements to structured inclusion.

Impact and Strategic Learning

Year One reinforced a critical lesson: supporting CPR is not a welfare exercise, but a systems intervention. When CPR are protected, supported, and respected, recycling outcomes improve, landfill pressure is reduced, and environmental leakage is minimised.

PRF's CPR support work has also highlighted the need for:

- Stronger policy alignment at national and municipal levels
- Sustainable funding for infrastructure and support services
- Greater integration of CPR perspectives into waste management planning

As PRF moves into subsequent years of Strategic Plan implementation, CPR support will remain a non-negotiable pillar of its work - informing program design, advocacy priorities, and partnerships at both national and regional levels.

PARTNERSHIPS & LONG-TERM COLLABORATIONS

Partnerships remained central to Pacific Recycling Foundation's work in 2025, enabling PRF to deliver grassroots recycling interventions, influence policy conversations, strengthen systems, and amplify public awareness. Our approach to partnerships is guided by shared values, mutual accountability, and a commitment to placing people - particularly Collection Pillars of Recycling at the centre of waste management solutions.

Government & Statutory Partnerships

In 2025, PRF continued to engage closely with government ministries and statutory bodies to support policy dialogue, pilot practical interventions, and ensure grassroots perspectives informed national waste management conversations.

Key government and statutory partners included the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, Ministry of Local Government, Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation, Ministry of Cooperatives, and local municipal councils. These engagements ranged from participation in consultations and technical discussions to on-the-ground collaboration supporting CPR inclusion, training, and awareness activities.

PRF also worked alongside government partners during national and international observance days, workshops, and stakeholder forums, reinforcing the need for inclusive, rights-based waste management approaches.



Tourism, Industry & Corporate Partners

The tourism and corporate sectors continued to play a critical role in advancing practical recycling solutions. Tourism Fiji remained a key strategic partner, supporting industry engagement, advocacy, and dialogue around sustainable tourism practices.

Long-term collaboration with Tanoa International Hotel continued in 2025, building on earlier recycling initiatives and positioning hospitality operators as active participants in responsible waste management. Other industry and commercial partners, including Pacific Energy, Nestlé Fiji, supported national campaigns and awareness initiatives.

PRF also partnered with Lautoka City Council - venue operators of Churchill Park and community spaces including Bykeitou, demonstrating how recycling can be integrated into public, sporting, and commercial environments.



Academic & Knowledge Partnerships

Academic partnerships played a critical role in strengthening Pacific Recycling Foundation's research, evidence-building, and systems-oriented work in 2025. These collaborations helped bridge grassroots realities with academic analysis.

Fiji National University collaborated with PRF through the GRD engagement, supporting dialogue and learning around waste management systems and behavioural change. FNU also implemented PRF's I Recycle Hub Program at its Natabua and Derrick campuses, integrating recycling infrastructure, awareness, and student engagement within tertiary education settings.

International collaboration with the University of New South Wales (UNSW) extended beyond research dialogue.

UNSW provided a strong academic and technical lens to PRF's grassroots work, contributing to:

- deeper analysis of informal and grassroots-based recycling systems
- technical insights to improve recycling rates
- exploration of solutions for hard-to-recycle materials
- reflection on labour dignity, human rights, and inclusive waste governance in Pacific Island contexts

This partnership strengthened PRF's ability to connect lived experience with evidence-based solutions and long-term systems thinking. The University of the South Pacific (USP) engaged with PRF primarily through student engagement, knowledge exchange, and participation in training and awareness activities, supporting learning around waste management, recycling practices, and the social dimensions of waste within the Pacific context.

Community, Civil Society & Grassroots Partnerships



PRF continued to work closely with community groups, faith-based organisations, civil society actors, and informal sector networks to deliver training, advocacy, and awareness activities. These partnerships ensured that messaging and interventions were grounded in lived realities and culturally relevant approaches.

Grassroots collaborations were particularly important in CPR-focused activities, including identification support, capacity building, commemorations such as the International Day of Waste Pickers, and sessions facilitated in collaboration with government and community partners.

Regional & International Collaborations



At the regional and international level, PRF strengthened its role as a Pacific voice on inclusive recycling and waste management. Engagements through regional forums, dialogues, and partnerships allowed PRF to share lessons from Fiji while learning from counterparts across the Pacific and beyond.

These collaborations supported PRF's broader objective of contributing to systems change, advocating for container deposit systems, inclusive policy frameworks, and recognition of informal recyclers across the region. As PRF looks ahead, partnerships will continue to be nurtured as long-term collaborations that support both immediate impact and structural change in Fiji's recycling and waste management landscape.

TOURISM SECTOR INTERVENTION



In 2025, Pacific Recycling Foundation strengthened its engagement with Fiji's tourism industry through a combination of operational program delivery, high-level sector dialogue, and strategic partnerships aimed at embedding structured recycling practices within one of the country's most influential economic sectors.

A major highlight during the year was the **VAKA Tourism Forum**, which brought together resort operators, sustainability leaders, industry associations, and the government to examine practical recycling solutions and the role of tourism in addressing Fiji's growing waste management crisis. The forum created a platform for honest discussions around industry accountability, operational challenges, and the need for structured collaboration between tourism operators and grassroots recycling organisations.

Outcomes from the VAKA Forum laid the groundwork for the development of the Tanoa Agreement, a sector-driven sustainability commitment expected to be formally launched in 2026 in collaboration with the Fiji Hotel and Tourism Association (FHTA) and industry partners. The agreement aims to establish a unified framework for resorts and hotels to work alongside grassroots recyclers, creating practical pathways for improved recycling systems, responsible waste management, and inclusive environmental action across the tourism sector. Operationally, PRF continued to expand structured recycling programs across resorts. The launch of the I Recycle Program at Outrigger Fiji Beach Resort marked another important milestone, reinforcing the industry's growing willingness to adopt structured recycling systems that improve segregation practices and increase landfill diversion.



PRF's tourism engagement also advanced through the Lase Vou initiative, which advocates the recovery and recycling of used Paradise Beverage glass bottles from hotels and resorts.



Tanoa Hotel Group continued to play a leadership role as one of the first implementing advocate partners, supporting industry-wide discussions and demonstrating practical on-the-ground commitment to sustainable recycling practices.



In partnership with Tourism Fiji, PRF continued to align sustainability efforts with national tourism objectives, ensuring that recycling, environmental protection, and social inclusion remain integral to the sector’s long-term development. Tourism partnerships also extended beyond environmental work, supporting PRF’s grassroots mission to uplift the Collection Pillars of Recycling and advocate dignified, inclusive participation in the recycling ecosystem.



Through these combined efforts - from sector-wide dialogue and formal agreements to operational program implementation - PRF is helping position Fiji’s tourism industry as a critical partner in advancing a circular economy. The work carried out in 2025 demonstrates that meaningful collaboration between grassroots recyclers and tourism operators can deliver practical, scalable solutions that benefit the environment, communities, and the sustainability of the industry itself.

OUTER ISLAND OUTREACH

Expanding recycling and waste management solutions beyond urban centres remained a major priority for Pacific Recycling Foundation (PRF) in 2025. Through its Look Beyond movement, PRF intensified outreach to outer islands and maritime communities where structured waste management systems remain limited or non-existent.

These engagements focused on baseline assessments, stakeholder consultations, and community-driven planning processes to ensure that future interventions are practical, inclusive, and locally led.

Rotuma - Baseline Assessment and Stakeholder Engagement



Responding to urgent calls from community leaders, PRF conducted an extensive baseline assessment and stakeholder consultation in Rotuma. The team engaged with the Council of Rotuma, District Office, Health Inspector, schools, women’s groups, and community leaders to assess waste challenges and explore practical recycling solutions. School visits and district-level discussions provided insights into current waste practices and highlighted the growing environmental and health risks associated with uncontrolled dumping. The consultations laid the groundwork for future interventions while reinforcing PRF’s commitment to ensuring that outer island voices shape proposed solutions.

Malolo Island - Community and School Engagement

In partnership with Six Senses Fiji, PRF conducted waste management assessments in Solevu Village and surrounding schools on Malolo Island. Engagements with village leaders, women’s groups, and school heads revealed urgent challenges, including the absence of structured disposal systems and increasing reliance on burning or burying waste. Through talanoa sessions, villagers shared local initiatives such as early efforts to separate recyclables at source. PRF emphasised that any future solutions must be community-led and responsive to local realities.



Bekana Island - Initial Baseline Engagement



PRF initiated discussions on Bekana Island through a baseline assessment and stakeholder meeting with Belo Vula Resort Fiji and supporting partners. The visit focused on understanding existing waste practices, identifying gaps, and exploring potential pathways toward sustainable recycling systems that balance tourism operations with community needs.

Levuka and Ovalau - Early Planning Discussions

PRF also progressed early discussions with Levuka Town Council regarding potential recycling initiatives for rollout in 2026. These conversations reflect growing interest from outer island municipalities seeking structured waste solutions and demonstrate PRF's expanding advisory role in outer island waste management planning.



Taveuni - Continuing Outer Island Strategy Development



Work in Taveuni, initiated through extensive stakeholder consultations and strategy development in 2024, continued to shape PRF's outer island outreach in 2025. While implementation timelines were affected by external project delays, PRF maintained engagement with partners including government ministries, Tourism Fiji, and GIZ to ensure the island's recycling initiative remains a central part of PRF's outer island vision.

A Growing Call for Support

Throughout 2025, PRF received increasing requests for assistance from outer island communities including Ovalau, Kadavu, Taveuni, Rotuma, the Lau Group, and Malolo. These calls highlight the widening gap in access to structured waste services beyond Viti Levu. Despite limited funding dedicated to outer island programs, PRF continued to respond through consultations, advocacy, and strategic groundwork aimed at building sustainable, inclusive recycling systems.

Through these outreach efforts, PRF strengthened relationships with remote communities while reinforcing its belief that sustainable waste management must extend beyond urban centres. The work undertaken in 2025 laid critical foundations for future implementation, ensuring that outer island solutions are developed with dignity, participation, and long-term sustainability at their core.

REGIONAL NETWORK/PACIFIC RECYCLERS ALLIANCE



In 2025, Pacific Recycling Foundation significantly strengthened its regional presence through the continued growth and operationalisation of the Pacific Recyclers Alliance (PRA), bringing together grassroots recycling organisations from Fiji, Samoa, Tonga, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, and Papua New Guinea. A major milestone was the official legal registration of PRA in Fiji, positioning the Alliance as a unified regional platform advocating for recognition, fair treatment, and inclusion of grassroots recyclers in policy and development discussions across the Pacific. PRF continued to serve as the Secretariat of PRA from its office in Koronivia, coordinating regional dialogue, governance development, and strategic direction alongside the Alliance’s Board of Trustees.

PRF’s regional leadership was further demonstrated through international collaboration and knowledge exchange initiatives. In February, PRF co-led a landmark strategic workshop in Sydney with the University of New South Wales (UNSW) and the Australian, New Zealand and Pacific Islands Plastics Pact (ANZPAC), bringing together regional and international partners to develop practical solutions for waste recovery, upcycling, kerbside collection pilots, and capacity building tailored to Pacific realities. The partnership strengthened PRF’s role in connecting grassroots recyclers with academic institutions, governments, and industry partners to drive regionally relevant innovation.

Regional collaboration expanded through engagement with Nauru, where PRF provided technical guidance, consultations, and baseline

assessments at the request of the Nauru Rehabilitation Corporation. Activities included site visits, community outreach, stakeholder consultations, and discussions with organisations such as Nauru Plastics Free, government departments, tourism stakeholders, and private collectors to explore practical recycling and landfill diversion solutions. Delegations from Nauru also visited PRF in Fiji to exchange learning and explore inclusive waste management approaches grounded in behaviour change and grassroots engagement.

PRF also supported regional networking through strategic meetings with partners including the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), where updates on PRA’s regional outlook and collaboration opportunities were discussed ahead of the Clean Pacific Roundtable 2026. Additional exchanges with organisations such as Nauru Plastic Free created pathways for ongoing technical support, awareness initiatives, and shared learning across Pacific island communities facing similar waste management challenges.

Through governance meetings, trustee consultations, technical exchanges, and regional missions, PRF and the Pacific Recyclers Alliance continued to build a strong, unified grassroots recycling movement across the Pacific — one that promotes inclusive systems, elevates the voices of informal recyclers, and advances practical, locally led solutions to the region’s growing waste crisis.

KNOWLEDGE SHARING WITH THE INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS

In 2025, Pacific Recycling Foundation significantly strengthened its role as a regional and international voice for grassroots recycling organisations, ensuring that Pacific perspectives - particularly those of recyclers and Collection Pillars of Recycling were represented in global waste management and circular economy discussions.

Regional & Global Platforms

India - 12th Regional 3R and Circular Economy Forum (Jaipur)

PRF was invited to the 12th Regional 3R (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle) and Circular Economy Forum for Asia and the Pacific, convened under the theme “Realising Circular Societies Towards Achieving SDGs and Carbon Neutrality.”

Founder and Director of Operations, Amitesh Deo, represented grassroots recycling organisations from Fiji and the Pacific, ensuring that informal recyclers were recognised as central to circular economy systems.



PRF’s engagement went beyond participation:

Deo moderated a high-level Country Breakout Session, bringing together representatives from Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Singapore, Timor-Leste, Niue, and Tokelau

He contributed to a Round Table on Circular Economy and Plastic Waste, advocating for people-centred waste governance

PRF challenged development partners and governments to move beyond technical solutions and place dignity, labour rights, and lived realities at the centre of sustainability policies

These engagements elevated Pacific grassroots voices within policy-shaping regional forums that have historically excluded informal recyclers.

Australia - Strategic Workshop with UNSW & ANZPAC (Sydney)





PRF co-led a landmark three-day strategic workshop at the University of New South Wales (UNSW) in partnership with the Australian, New Zealand and Pacific Islands Plastics Pact (ANZPAC).

This collaboration marked a turning point in PRF's international knowledge exchange, bringing together grassroots implementation experience and academic research to develop actionable solutions for Fiji and the wider Pacific.

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The workshop focused on:

 Increasing recycling and recovery rates	 Developing solutions for hard-to-recycle materials	 Strengthening dignity-centred support for CPR	 Designing scalable, community-based recycling systems
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Outcomes from the workshop will guide implementation activities between 2025-2027, including pilot kerbside collection models, upcycling initiatives, and capacity-building programmes. Proposed actions received validation from senior Fijian and Australian government representatives, reinforcing PRF's credibility as a regional implementing partner.

Taiwan - Asia Pacific Circular Economy Roundtable & Hotspot

Pacific Recycling Foundation and its entrepreneurial arm, Waste Recyclers Fiji Limited (WRFL), were represented at the **Asia Pacific Circular Economy Roundtable & Hotspot in Taiwan**.

The delegation shared Fiji's recycling journey, highlighting challenges faced by Small Island Developing States, market access constraints, and the role of grassroots organisations in driving system change.

This platform enabled PRF and WRFL to:



Explore international market linkages

Strengthen partnerships with circular economy actors

Advocate for inclusive regional cooperation tailored to island contexts

Pacific Region - Nauru Stakeholder Consultation



PRF led a high-level stakeholder consultation in Nauru, engaging government agencies, private collectors, civil society groups, and tourism representatives.

The consultation marked the beginning of PRF's groundwork in Nauru, aligned with the broader vision of the Pacific Recyclers Alliance, to support locally driven recycling and resource recovery solutions across the Pacific.

Strategic Value of International Engagement

Across all international engagements, PRF's message remained consistent: Effective waste management solutions must be grounded in the lived realities of grassroots recyclers and communities.



Through these platforms, PRF:

- Shared Pacific-led implementation experiences
- Influenced policy conversations beyond Fiji
- Strengthened cross-border collaborations
- Positioned grassroots recycling organisations as credible partners in global sustainability efforts

These knowledge-sharing engagements reinforced PRF's growing role as a bridge between international policy spaces and on-the-ground recycling realities in Fiji and the Pacific.

ACADEMIC RESEARCH ENGAGEMENT ON PLASTIC WASTE SYSTEMS

PRF also hosted researchers working on plastic waste management in Pacific Small Island Developing States, including a PhD researcher from Nanyang Technological University in Singapore in collaboration with Fiji National University.

These engagements provided:

- Real-world insights into community-based recycling systems
- Opportunities to document grassroots waste management practices
- Contributions to regional research on plastic waste dynamics in Pacific contexts

The collaboration ensured that academic research reflected practical realities faced by informal recyclers and communities.

Living Income Study for Collection Pillars of Recycling



With support from **SYSTEMIQ** under the **Fair Circularity Initiative**, PRF conducted a Living Income Study involving more than 40 CPR at the Vunato Dumpsite in Lautoka.

The study examined:

- Income stability and earning conditions
- Cost-of-living pressures
- Work environments and challenges faced by informal recyclers
- Systemic barriers affecting dignified livelihoods

Findings from the study reinforced PRF's advocacy for:

- Fair policies and recognition of CPR within the national recycling system
- Improved working conditions
- Inclusive circular economy strategies that prioritise people before profit

The research emphasised that sustainable waste management solutions must integrate social justice, labour dignity, and economic inclusion.

KNOWLEDGE & EVIDENCE

Evidence Generation, Waste Audits & Socio-Economic Research

In 2025, Pacific Recycling Foundation strengthened its evidence-based approach to waste management through targeted waste audits, technical research collaborations, and socio-economic studies focused on the Collection Pillars of Recycling (CPR). These initiatives ensured that PRF's programmes, advocacy efforts, and policy engagement were grounded in real data and lived experiences from the field.

Waste Audits & Circular Economy Evidence

As part of the Circular Pacific Plastics (CPP) Project supported by ANZPAC, PRF collaborated with Lautoka City Council to conduct a detailed waste audit across residential and commercial areas in Lautoka. The audit assessed litter composition with a particular focus on soft plastics commonly disposed of as general waste.

Findings from the audit contributed to:

- Strengthening advocacy for circular economy solutions
- Identifying key soft plastic waste streams entering the landfill and dumpsites
- Supporting discussions around Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)
- Encouraging manufacturers and waste producers to adopt more sustainable packaging and engage with grassroots recycling systems

The audit provided practical evidence to inform programme design, industry engagement, and national conversations on plastic waste reduction.

National Plastics Data & Research Collaboration

PRF contributed to national-level evidence building through engagement with the University of New South Wales' Centre for Sustainable Development Reform, which is supporting the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change in developing Fiji's national plastics data inventory.

The initiative aims to:

- Strengthen national plastics data collection and monitoring
- Support evidence-based policymaking
- Improve stakeholder coordination
- Enhance Fiji's ability to track progress on plastic reduction targets
- Increase access to international support and climate finance

PRF's grassroots knowledge and operational experience added practical insights into data gaps and on-the-ground waste realities.

LOOKING FORWARD

As Pacific Recycling Foundation moves into 2026, the focus will be on holistic, structured, scaled, and system-driven implementation across Fiji and connecting our work to the region.

A key milestone for the year will be the commencement of PRF's first full outer island recycling programmes in Taveuni, Malolo, and Rotuma. These interventions will mark a significant shift from assessment and consultation to implementation, delivering practical and inclusive recycling solutions tailored to the unique challenges of maritime communities.

At the regional level, 2026 will also see a historic first - the implementation of a comprehensive recycling programme in Nauru, in partnership with the Nauru Rehabilitation Corporation. This initiative will go beyond awareness and engagement, encompassing the establishment of recycling infrastructure, capacity building, collection systems, and the movement of recyclables for processing. It will also include data monitoring and reporting systems to support evidence-based decision-making.

This work is expected to generate environmental, economic, and social benefits, while supporting Nauru in addressing its growing waste management challenges. Importantly, it will serve as a test case for PRF's recycling enhancement model, paving the way for future expansion into other Pacific Island countries.

Another major focus for 2026 will be the development of a feasibility study on proposed recycling enhancement plans for Fiji, with linkages to regional implementation. This work will be undertaken in close collaboration with academic partners, including the University of New South Wales, and will provide a strategic framework to guide long-term investment, infrastructure development, and system strengthening.

PRF will continue to strengthen national engagement through the expansion of its VAKA Forum series, bringing together a broader coalition of stakeholders. This will include academic institutions, Collection Pillars of Recycling, Members of Parliament and Permanent Secretaries, regional leaders, faith-based organisations, the Great Council of Chiefs, media organisations, sports federations, and members of the diplomatic community. These forums will play a critical role in driving dialogue, strengthening partnerships, and aligning efforts toward comprehensive recycling solutions.

Within the tourism sector, the anticipated launch of the Tanoa Agreement, in partnership with the Fiji Hotel and Tourism Association, is expected to formalise commitments and strengthen accountability in recycling practices across the industry.

PRF will also continue to build on its work in soft plastics, scaling the Circular Pacific Plastics Project and exploring opportunities for local processing and upcycling solutions, while strengthening engagement with businesses and consumers.

At an organisational level, PRF's role will continue to evolve - not only as an implementing agency, but also as a convener, technical partner, and mentoring institution. This includes expanding support for emerging grassroots initiatives and strengthening governance, systems, and accountability across its operations.

While these priorities mark an ambitious path forward, their success will depend on strengthened partnerships and sustained investment in comprehensive recycling systems.

As PRF looks ahead, the direction remains clear - to build holistic, inclusive, and scalable solutions aimed at ending the waste crisis, while ensuring that no community and no contributor is left behind.



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