

# MY LIA EXPERIENCE IN FIJI

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This summer, I joined a six-week Community, Youth & Health project in Fiji with Think Pacific. This LiA experience provided me with the opportunity to bring sustainable impact to a Fijian village, equipped me with leadership skills, and prepared me to plan for my future leadership development.

## BUILDING A MEDICAL DISPENSARY

In less than three weeks, we built a medical dispensary from scratch together with our build manager and villagers. This facility will store basic medicines and medical facilities, host visiting medical professionals and community health workers, and allow community members to access healthcare more easily, especially for mothers to get treatment for gynecological issues.



## YOUTH CHAMP 4 MENTAL HEALTH & THINK TANK

Under the guidance of YC4MH, we engaged villagers in understanding the basics of mental health through various activities.

For Think Tank, our mental health team interviewed over 30 villagers and developed short-term and long-term action plans that could connect the village with more mental health services, such as mental health awareness workshops, community health worker training, and visiting mental health counselors.



## DIABETES FIJI & HEALTH SCREENING DAY

Collaborating with Diabetes Fiji, we led small group discussions with villagers, learning about the symptoms, dangers, preventions, and treatments to NCDs: hypertension, cancer, and diabetes. We also helped facilitate the Health Screening Day organized by Diabetes Fiji. It provided check-up services, including testing blood pressure and sugar level, checking eyes and ears, dentistry, diabetes education and lifestyle suggestions, women's breast health, and mental health counseling, for villagers living in nearby areas.

## LEADERSHIP SKILLS DEVELOPED

- Able to navigate new and foreign situations
  - Able to quickly adapt to the village life, which is very different from the city life that I'm used to
- Work collaboratively and across boundaries
  - Get to know Laidlaw scholars and villagers of different backgrounds and complete projects through teamwork
- Lead without authority and with limited resources
  - Through collective brainstorming, find out the best solution with resources on hand and divide the work according to individual strengths
- Cultural intelligence and capacity for empathy
  - Through daily observations, conversations, interactions, and surveys, learn the actual needs of the villagers and figure out what works best for them

## FUTURE PLANS

- Meet with my Think Tank groupmates on a regular basis through online meeting platforms and follow up on the mental health service application and implementation in the village
- Keep in touch with my Fijian family and plan a revisit in the next 3 or 5 years
- Initiate leadership projects focusing on communities around me
  - I'm planning to film a documentary focusing on domestic helpers in Hong Kong in my final year of undergraduate studies

