The European Union assist vulnerable populations in Fiji

Today, the European Commission approved a financing decision of EUR 8 million (approx. Fiji $ 20.29 million) for direct support to vulnerable populations affected by the fragile socio-economic situation in Fiji. Given the present political context these funds will not be channelled through the government but implemented through Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs and NSAs).

The Head of Delegation, Ambassador Wiepke van der Goot noted that while the EU suspended development assistance to Fiji since the 2006 military coup, concerns about the persistent and significant poverty levels, in particular in the rural areas, led the EU to join international partners in their efforts to support the welfare of the people of Fiji.

The project is destined to mitigate the effects of the deteriorating socio-economic situation. It will focus on the rural population dependent on the sugar sector. Some 200,000 people (a quarter of the population) are still directly or indirectly dependant on sugar. The project consequently targets with three main components: vocational training, housing and access to micro- and small credits.

The project will not be implemented through the government, but managed by the EU Delegation in Suva and implemented through local NGOs and Non state Actors.

Background

Poverty in Fiji has increased from around 25% of the population in 1990 to over 35% and this upward trend in poverty is likely to continue. In the absence of positive developments of the domestic political situation the perspectives for a resumption of development assistance to Fiji remain bleak. The EU cannot, however, ignore the adverse consequences of the political situation for the Fijian population and will provide aid channelled through NGOs to support the population.

For more information please contact:

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