



Action Project Reference: 65-01

Organisation: Animals Fiji

### Action Project Proposal:

“Design and develop an animal welfare educational program we can propose to the Ministry of Education”

### Who Are Animals Fiji?

West Charity Trust Society (operators of Animals Fiji) was established in late 2011 in Fiji by four Trustees to support initially via fund-raising activities what was then the Nadi branch of the SPCA Fiji (based in Suva) due to the SPCA's increasingly limited resources at the time. There had been no permanent Veterinary services outside of the Capital City of Suva for over 3 years at that time; the SPCA Fiji Nadi Clinic was staffed by a Vet Nurse and a Full-time Volunteer Technician.

By June of 2012, the West Charity Trust Society now trading as Animals Fiji owned 90% of the clinic's assets, 100% of the drugs / medical supplies and was providing Veterinary services (welfare and revenue generating) via sourcing of international volunteer Vets. In July of 2012, SPCA Fiji could no longer support the Nadi clinic in any meaningful way and Animals Fiji took over operations.

Since 2012, via international volunteers and new staff, Animals Fiji has been able to provide full-time veterinary services initially just in Nadi, but now four other clinics in Fiji:

- Savusavu (since 2013 to present),
- Lautoka (since Jan 2016 to present),
- Labasa (since Jan 2016, to present) and
- Taveuni (since Jan 2016 to March 2019)

As well we have provided various other out clinics throughout Fiji, which by 2019 averaged 25 annually in various areas of Fiji.

In addition to our 2011 registration as a Fiji charity, Animals Fiji has been registered in NSW, Australia since 2012 for fund-raising activities and is operated there by two volunteers who are long-term animal welfare supporters. In early 2017, thanks to a very generous individual supporter, we were able to register as a US 501 (c) 3 charity as well.

Our charity organization has and is supported and able to operate thanks to various volunteers over the years; whom we are extremely grateful to.

### **Mission:**

Animals Fiji is a registered Fijian and US charity with a focus on animal welfare. We operate Veterinary clinics and welfare services in the Western and Northern Divisions of Fiji (a human population of over 600,000), where owners can seek treatment for their pets, livestock as well as wildlife. We operate as a welfare agency operating outreach programs and clinics throughout Fiji. One of our four clinics, Nadi, also functions a shelter taking in strays, injured and abused animals, who are treated and re-homed. Our most critical goal is to reduce the epidemic of stray and diseased roaming dog and cat populations that plague villages, towns and rural areas, through de-sexing (spay/neuter) programs. We ensure basic veterinary services and animal care education are available to as many Fijians as possible.

### **Long Term Aims & Vision:**

Mission Statement: To improve the welfare of all animals--domesticated & wildlife--resulting in better lives for both the animal and humans of Fiji, while helping to build a society without animal cruelty.

Fiji has many positive opportunities to change the lives of animals (domesticated and wildlife) and therefore humans.

For the long-term goals, we wish to not only make our own shelter obsolete, but all shelters in Fiji. Growing the proactive approach of desexing and trap-neuter-release (TNR) programs prevents unwanted puppies and kittens from being born to then live deprived lives.

We want to see more action taken by the community to help us on our animal welfare and education journey, which will be achieved through a formal education curriculum that starts in primary and is expanded to secondary. This also will go hand in hand with further legislation to protect animals.

And more education and job opportunities for the veterinary industry in Fiji, which is growing, but needs more. Animals Fiji would love to be an internationally recognized organization for tropical veterinary medicine training drawing talented veterinarians from around the world.

### **Current Challenges:**

The largest problem, as it is in most industries and causes at the moment, is the global economy and lack of disposable income for donations. Donations are what allow our organization to function. It therefore makes it difficult for us to find new markets to donate to our causes.

The second biggest issue is a shortage of veterinarians due to no qualified veterinarian schools in Fiji.

Given the above, it limits our time and effort ability to develop new concepts or programs.

### **Further Information:**

We would love an intern to help us work towards our goal of raising awareness and education around animal welfare! We need help developing animal welfare with a One-Health focus program (<https://www.oie.int/en/for-the-media/onehealth/>) we can propose to the Ministry of Education to adopt and implement into the Fiji primary (and possibly secondary) education curriculum. The ability to educate the future of Fiji will lead to more conscious citizens for the future to improve Fiji's wildlife and domesticated animals—and therefore humans.

### **Initial ideas for key topics to cover in the animal welfare curriculum:**

We would start with a focus on the younger primary age children. Specific topics for Fiji would be:

1. One-health - environmental stewardship
2. Animals are sentient beings
3. Responsible pet ownership
4. Humane farming (animals). Keeping mind that domestic violence and animal abuse is so closely linked.  
(<https://aldf.org/article/the-link-between-cruelty-to-animals-and-violence-toward-humans-2/>)

## Key Research & Discussion Areas:

Ideas to kick off your research...

### PLANNING AND DELIVERY

- Consider the Ministry of Education's curriculum, what are its main aims? What skills do they hope to teach?
- Is there anything in other curriculums e.g. Australia about animal welfare?
- What topics are covered in these programs?
- Consider your own ideas, what topics do you think would be important to cover in an animal welfare educational program? How can these link to the educational curriculum?
- Research Animal Fiji's work with young people, do they currently operate in schools? If so, in what way?
  - How can this provision be developed?
  - Will you need to persuade the Ministry of Education to see the benefits Animals Fiji can provide? If so, how?
- What elements should you focus on in order to persuade the MoE?
- Would it be useful to collaborate with other organisations on this?

### CONTENT

- How will you present your suggestions and findings?
- Create a SMART goal (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely)
- What makes this organisation unique? Why should MoE add your program to the curriculum? - think about mission, values, successes etc.
- Can you find examples of other government education partnership proposals?
  - What was good about these?
  - How could they be improved?
  - In what ways do these organisations have similar aims to Animals Fiji?

### BARRIERS

- What are the main barriers to the development and delivery of a successful animal welfare education program?
- What are the potential solutions to these problems?
  - It might be useful to identify these.

- Can you provide resources to help tackle these challenges?

## EVALUATION

- Has your project met the original objectives set out in this action project PDF?
- Are there any areas you feel it might be useful for Animals Fiji to research into further?
- How will you ensure that Animals Fiji can utilise and develop the resources you create for them?

## Useful Links and Resources:

Website: <https://www.animalsfiji.org/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/animalsfiji/>

Further Reading:

- <https://www.oie.int/en/for-the-media/onehealth/>
- <https://www.aspcapro.org/>
- <https://www.who.int/westernpacific/news/q-a-detail/one-health>
- <https://www.avma.org/resources/animal-health-welfare/animal-welfare-education>
- <https://www.worldanimalprotection.org.in/our-work/animal-welfare-education/animal-welfare-schools>
- <https://www.icam-coalition.org/>
- <https://www.alleycat.org/>

## Further Questions

Are there any questions you would like to ask Animals Fiji to assist in completing this project?

- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....