

# Faia'ai Celebrates Walkway Upgrade Project

## Faia'ai Village

Savaii Island: **Faia'ai Village**

Population and beneficiaries: 392 (195 M + 197F)

Project name: Faia'ai Walkway Upgrade

Small Grant awarded: **\$46,700.00 SAT (\$18,506.69 USD)**

Fishing is a source of livelihood for many on small islands such as Samoa. Unfortunately, going fishing on the reef could be life threatening for Leuluai Pepese, a 56 year old man of Faia'ai. This is due to the dangers posed by accumulated moss and deterioration to the walkway to the beach that is a sheer 50 meter drop from the roadside.

Leuluai is a father and also a community leader because of his role as the Village Representative (Sui o le Nuu) for Faia'ai in Savaii. He is seen as one of the many 'champions' who are working with CSSP to develop project initiatives and implement for the benefit of their village families.

With a population of 392 people and growing, Leuluai and the village council saw the need to upgrade their walkway to the beach. The walkway was dangerous and needed work so it is safer for him and his community to access the sea and village land on the coastal area. After attending the Application Workshop that was hosted by C.S.S.P in April 2017, Leuluai spearheaded the formation of a project committee under the auspice of the village council (Alii ma Faipule) of Faia'ai. This committee worked to design, submit and then implement the project to upgrade the Faia'ai Walkway.

Through Leuluai's great commitment and perseverance in his role as Faia'ai's Village Representative, communication and coordination of the project from concept to design to implementation encountered minimal issues from CSSPs viewpoint. *"It's great when we get to work with committed leaders such as Leuluai because it makes the process easier for everyone to work with. We are so happy to see the result and the creativity that Faia'ai villagers have displayed along their walkway with the paintings and outlines of sea creatures in the cement. It shows me that Faia'ai take pride and are so grateful for this help that our Development Partners are giving us"* says Theresa Masoe-Taimalelagi, Programme Manager of CSSP. The wider community of Faia'ai also came together through the provision of labour that was needed to undertake the works for building of the new walkway.

When asked about the impact of climate change on Faia'ai, Leuluai responded that *"In the past, it was difficult for our villagers to access lands in the coastal area where livelihoods of some of the villagers are situated. Access to the sea was also a problem; this is due to the walkway being very unsafe to access due to its deteriorating condition. The rain over the years has greatly affected the walkway, with moss gathering on the sidewalks causing slipperiness and with railings barely hanging by, making access un-realistic"* [Leuluai Pepese, Village Representative, Faia'ai village] Hence why Faia'ai took the initiative to put through a proposal for the Adaptation Funds Project Call for Proposal in early 2017. Faia'ai was then awarded with a grant of \$46,700.00 SAT to help with the upgrade of the walkway.

On the 9<sup>th</sup> March, 2018, Faia'ai celebrated and officially opened their project in the presence of the whole community, CSSP, MNRE, MOF and UNDP representatives. Faia'ai is one of the 12 villages from the island of Savaii that were successful applicants of the Adaptation Funds Project funded under UNDP and through the CSSP. The villagers are so grateful that they are now able to safely access the walkway to and from the beach.

Tuisalega Seleni, a high chief of Faia'ai who worked heavily with Leuluai for this project said: *"One of the benefits of the project is the accessibility for the villagers will be so much easier in terms of accessing the beach, lands where village livelihoods are at. Secondly, the safety of our community is very important, our elders, our families, young children to be able to confidently access the walkway without having the fear of falling off. Lastly, the walkway will be use as an escape route in times of natural disasters such as tsunami, cyclones etc. With future plans to use this as a tourist attraction site, where tourist will pay a minimum amount for entry to the beach as part of the maintenance and sustainability plan of the village. We would also like to acknowledge the support given through the Adaptation Fund Project funded by U.N.D.P. Thank you to all development partners that were involved in this programme. Special thanks to C.S.S.P as well for all the hard work being done"*. [Tuisalega Seleni Pepese, Village Paramount Orator, Faia'ai]

**Brief Background;**

**CSSP:** CSSP's overall purpose is to deliver sustainable social and economic benefits to the people of Samoa through strengthened CSOs and CBOs. It seeks to achieve measurable social and economic benefits from well managed projects, where CSOs play a more active role in national and community affairs. CSSP also supports opportunities for information exchange among community organisations on their projects and best practices.

"To improve the quality of life for people in Samoa through effective and sustainable civil society organisations"

**MNRE/PUMA:** The MNRE leads the management of Samoa's environment and natural resources, working across a diverse range of issues in partnership with a number of resource management Boards ( Land, PUMA, Forestry, Spatial Information & Water ) to advise, inform and support community and Government decision making and deliver services to the people and communities.

**UNDP** partners with people at all levels of society to help build nations that can withstand crisis, and drive and sustain the kind of growth that improves the quality of life for everyone. On the ground in more than 170 countries and territories, we offer global perspective and local insight to help empower lives and build resilient nations. **UNDP Climate Change Adaptation**

Established under the Kyoto Protocol of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, the **Adaptation Fund** finances projects and programmes that help vulnerable communities in developing countries adapt to climate change.

The Government-led, UNDP-supported, project, '**Enhancing Resilience of Coastal Communities of Samoa to Climate Change**', was approved in March 2012 by the Adaptation Fund Board. Its objective is to strengthen the ability of Samoan communities and public services to make informed decisions and manage climate change-driven pressures, in a pro-active, integrated and strategic way.