

Construction and demolition practices in Pacific Island Countries: Insights from community-led projects



ABOUT US



Our
People



Our
Environment



Our
Commitment

WRFL & PRF –WHAT WE DO?



Activism arm - provide advocacy, awareness, and training on best practices of recycling.



Provide structured support to individuals engaged in informal collection of recyclables (particularly women and LGBTQI+ community Collection Pillars of Recycling or CPR)



Vision to reduce recyclables to landfill & dumpsites



Increases recycling participation and collection



Recycling Industry with 30+ years of Experience



Recycling process - Collection, segregation, bailing, packing, and exportation of recyclables



Comprehensive Programs



Increased Recycling Rates



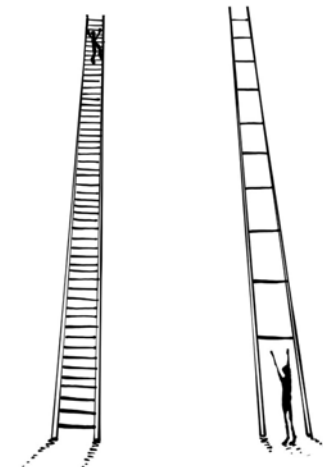
Sustainable Practices




Economic Impact



The importance of small steps





Construction: The Forgotten Industry in Circular Economy

In pursuit of sustainable development, construction continues, while demolition waste accumulates, undocumented and unmanaged.

Despite its scale, construction remains absent from Fiji's sustainability conversations.





Industry Overview: Growth Without Accountability



The construction industry in Fiji continues to expand rapidly, contributing significantly to economic development.



Despite this growth, it remains largely unregulated in terms of environmental accountability, with weak standards and limited enforcement mechanisms.

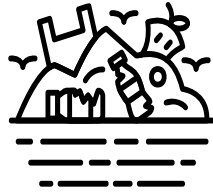


The sector lacks trust and transparency and often operates with minimal consultation on waste management or sustainability considerations.

Absence of Waste Management Frameworks



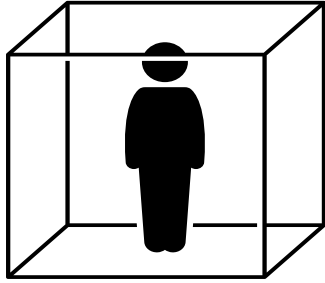
There is no adequate legal obligation and policy enforcement for construction companies to manage or report on the disposal of demolition and building waste.



Recyclable and reusable materials are routinely sent to landfills or informal dumping areas, leading to unmanaged waste accumulation.

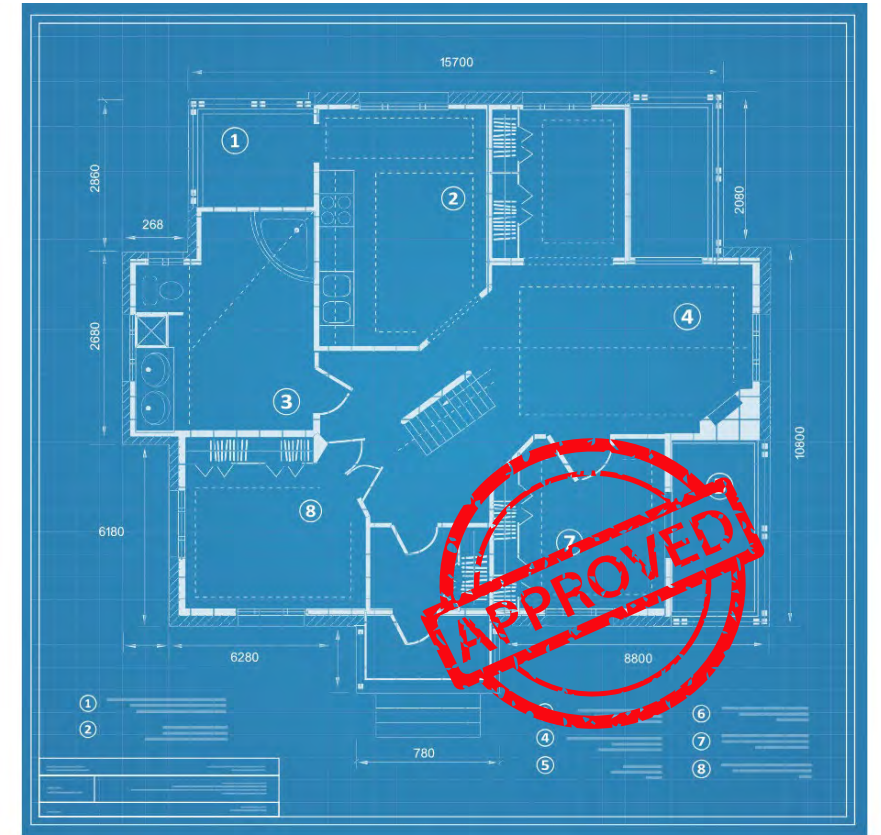


The lack of mandatory reporting, waste audits, or oversight results in missed opportunities for resource recovery.



Confined Thinking in Planning and Approval Processes

Sustainability is often treated as a checkbox, added late in the process rather than embedded from the beginning. This limited mindset leads to missed opportunities for long-term environmental accountability.



Waste Strategy?



Underrepresentation in Circular Economy Dialogues

Fiji's national circular economy frameworks have made progress in areas like packaging, organics, and plastics. However, construction and demolition waste remain significantly underrepresented both nationally and globally in policy and advocacy spaces. There is a need for clearer integration of the construction sector into 3R strategies at the national and regional levels.



Environmental Impacts and Community Implications

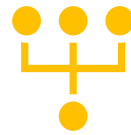
- Unregulated disposal of construction waste contributes to land degradation, loss of biodiversity, and increased pressure on landfill capacity.
- In small island states like Fiji, unmanaged debris has a direct impact on coastal ecosystems and community health.
- Without intervention, these impacts undermine broader sustainability and climate resilience goals.



Policy and Industry Reform



Accountability must begin with inclusive policy reform and sector-specific regulation



Building codes should embed waste reduction principles, including design for deconstruction, reuse of materials, and responsible sourcing.



Designers, architects, and contractors must be engaged from the project planning stages to adopt integrated waste management practices.

Role of PRF and WRFL



Although PRF and WRFL do not specialize in construction waste, we actively contribute to the development of inclusive waste management models.



Our work focuses on strengthening community-based recycling systems, advancing waste data transparency, and engaging informal sectors.



We remain committed to collaborating with industry stakeholders to improve current practices and support future policy development.




We are collaborating with academics to incorporate an academic lens into our initiatives, and conducting targeted research to develop sustainable waste management solutions for the different sectors, including the construction industry

Importance of Forums and Collaborative Dialogue

Forums like the SIDS Capacity-Building Programme play a vital role in addressing overlooked issues such as construction and demolition waste.

They provide space to share context-specific insights, raise challenges, and co-develop solutions across sectors and regions.

We welcome the opportunity to engage in these conversations and share our learnings from grassroots waste recovery efforts.

A construction site scene featuring a concrete mixer in the center, surrounded by large piles of gravel. A worker in a blue hard hat and safety gear is visible on the right. The background shows a partially constructed building with concrete walls and a red brick structure. The sky is overcast.

If it's not in the
conversation, it won't be
in the solution.
