



# YWAM KOHA FIJI MISSION 2022

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## IMPACT REPORT

EMPOWERING A HEALTHY FUTURE IN THE PACIFIC  
*WHAKAPIKI TE ORA*





## **Preamble:**

YWAM Ships Aotearoa (YSA) is motivated by the belief that every person deserves access to the basic necessities of life. This mission was catalysed in 2019, when a 48m container ship was gifted to YSA by Stoney Creek Shipping. YSA aspires to empower a healthy future for the Pacific, including Aotearoa, New Zealand.

YSA seeks to deliver on this aspirational purpose through:

- Delivery of free dental services to marginalised communities in New Zealand through our Trinity Koha Dental Clinics
- Through the deployment of our medical ship, *mv YWAM KOHA*, to isolated maritime islands delivering dental services, primary health services, and training to those who otherwise can not access it

There is a whakatauki (proverb) within Aotearoa that articulates the underlying goals of YSA for this year's mission and the future:

***“Nā tō rourou, nā taku rourouka ora ai te iwi.”***

Translated into English, it means, *“With your food basket and my food basket, together the people will flourish and thrive.”* This defines what YSA means when we speak of empowering a healthy future. We see our ship as a “food basket” that, when it comes together with a local basket, can empower a thriving community.

We have begun building in-country relationships that we aspire to become long-term, mutually beneficial partnerships. This impact report encapsulates the summary of the outputs and outcomes of the maiden three-month mission of our vessel into the nation of Fiji from July 21 to October 31, 2022.

## Mission goals for 2022:

Given the years of deployment delays due to COVID, we were excited at the prospect of deploying our ship. We set out the following simple goals for the 2022 mission. These goals shaped our operation and informed our metrics of success.

- **Deploy** - After three years of dreaming, planning and working, we consider it a success that the *YWAM KOHA* deployed into the Pacific. After many setbacks and challenges, seeing the ship serving as a medical-aid ship is an aspiration realised.
- **Learn** - We have been increasingly aware of our need to remain humble, to listen, observe and learn from the locals. What appears to be helping from one person's point of view may be a hindrance to others. We knew our ship's capacity but knew very little about the actual needs on the ground in Fiji or the most effective way to deliver services.
- **Partner** - We are stronger when we work together. The long-term sustainability of the mission rests on our ability to develop and work in partnership. Linking arms, with like-minded organisations, in the spirit of Duavata (Fijian for partnership), empowers effective and long-lasting change.

## Mission Overview:



Upon arrival in Fiji, the ship's crew was honoured with a welcoming ceremony at the Suva Port. We were graciously greeted by dignitaries, including:

- Rev. Vunisuwai (President of Methodist Church, Fiji)
- Ms. Dawson (Representing the New Zealand High Commission in Fiji)
- ACP. Ganivatu (Assistant Commissioner of Police)
- Dr. James Fong (Permanent Secretary of Health)

YSA's deployment involved four distinct outreaches throughout Fiji.

**The first outreach** was launched in the Suva-Nausori Corridor. YSA's Medical Team partnered with eight Ministry of Health clinics in the area. Dental services on the ship were provided solely by Suva dentists. We are thankful for the relationships established during our time in Suva. In two weeks, the Medical Team conducted 390 health screenings, and the Dental Team treated 60 patients.



**Outreach 2 and 3** focused on the northern province of Macuata. YSA's medical team partnered with the District Nurse for Namuka, centred around the Visogo Medical Clinic. The team saw patients from 12 villages, including the islands of Mali, Drua Drua and Kavewa. More than 300 people received treatment from the Dental Team, and the Medical Team screened 188 villagers.



**Outreach 4** was split between two locations, one week in each. First our team served the four villages on Totoya Island in the Southern Lau group. This outreach was coordinated in partnership with the Fiji Police. The second week was focused on providing dental care to Rabi Island in the Northern Division.

## Stories of Impact:

Our medical team learned of two village women who had been very sick. Travelling to the hospital, no one could give them a diagnosis. When the YWAM KOHA Medical Team visited the island, they quickly realised one woman had a lung issue and another a heart problem. While the team was not able to treat them, the women were able to return to the hospital with a clear diagnosis and received help.



A man in an island village was diagnosed with a stroke and sent home to cope. When our medical team examined him, they realised he actually had Parkinson's Disease. With the correct diagnosis, he was able to get proper treatment.

A dental patient was nervous about having three bad teeth removed. The dentist discovered that anaesthetic isn't always available, and teeth are sometimes removed without any. The patient was greatly relieved when her teeth were taken out pain-free.

A woman in her twenties with extremely high blood pressure was told by our medical team that she needed to quit smoking and change her diet. The woman immediately followed the doctor's advice, and within two weeks, her blood pressure registered at a normal level.



A village stroke patient needed dental work but was too fragile to be transported to the ship. Improvising, the dentist found a camping chair and extracted his decayed teeth under a coconut tree.

A woman in her early twenties came to the ship with a toothache. She mentioned her teeth used to cause more pain but that it had gone away. After checking her teeth, the dentist discovered that her teeth were so

badly infected that it was either going to impact her lungs or her brain. Removing these teeth saved the woman from what would have developed into life-threatening complications.

An island chief in the Macuata Province reported that ten years earlier, a YWAM team visited his island. Asked if he would like a YWAM ship to come and serve his people, the chief was eager to see that happen. After waiting ten years, the *YWAM KOHA* arrived to bring medical and dental care to his island. The next day our team treated 28 people from this island and trained their village health workers.

A member of our medical team learned that the leading cause of death by disease in Fiji is breast cancer. Being a radiologist, she taught the village women how to test themselves and the importance of reporting changes to their village health workers.



Namuka District Nurse, Filomena Biumaiwai eagerly received 42 boxes of medical and first aid supplies donated by Tauranga businessmen. These supplies furnished ten village health workers with resources enabling them, for the first time, to screen for high blood pressure and blood glucose levels.

Community health workers (CHW) are lay people who watch over the health of their village. They have no formal training. Our team developed a plan of "treatment while training." CHWs were brought on board and taught to take blood pressure readings and blood glucose checks for each dental patient. By the end of the week, the CHWs had practised these skills repetitively and were able to comfortably and competently perform tasks independently. Each CHW was given a blood glucose monitor and supplies (lancets, test strips and batteries) as well as an automatic blood pressure cuff and batteries to take back to their village.

As the *YWAM KOHA* sailed into view of Kavewa Island. Talei's four-year-old daughter saw the ship coming. Not knowing anything about the ship, she pointed and said, "Jesus is coming." Talei said, "My daughter has always been spiritually perceptive, and she was right. The ship coming was a demonstration of Jesus' care and compassion."

## Mission by numbers:

The true impact of this first mission in Fiji can not be adequately captured by numbers alone. The true impact is found in people's lives transformed by the relief of pain, increased quality of life for families, etc. There are also the indirect impacts that we witnessed during the mission, such as restoring hope in isolated islands and villages.

Here is a snapshot of the deployment numerically.

Services provided	#
Primary health appointments	578
Dental treatments	635
Teeth restored	315
Teeth extracted	998
Individuals served with oral health education	1164
Village health workers trained and resourced	10
Number of villages where services were provided	29
Toothbrushes and paste distributed	3000+
Fijian dentists who served	10
International volunteers who served on the ship	70+
Amount of fuel consumed by the ship whilst in Fiji	52,000L
Cost per unit of service	\$238



## Strategic Partners:

YSA acknowledges the support of our **New Zealand partners**. Without their trust, belief and funding, none of this would be possible. We especially want to acknowledge the support of the following organisations who have significantly funded the operations of the YWAM KOHA, especially our platinum partner, Trinity Lands:



Hundreds of volunteers and donors made it possible for the YWAM KOHA to deploy to Fiji. We have received the equivalent of millions of dollars in donated labour and services from a fantastic group of volunteer tradespeople, mariners and medical/dental professionals. We are grateful to those who have given their time to ensure the ship could deploy effectively and deliver services to the people of Fiji.



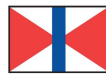
YWAM KOHA Crew with His Excellency the President of Fiji, Ratu Wiliame Katonivere



YSA, also acknowledges the **support of organisations within Fiji**. Their assistance enabled our team to provide more services to more people. We look forward to strengthening these relationships in the future based on a shared vision to empower health in the maritime Islands of Fiji. Vinaka, for your support.



*axellerate*



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## Key Learnings:

Through this deployment, we learnt many lessons, many of which the team on the ship were able to implement during this mission. But there were some lessons that will shape our future service and programs. Here is an overview of some of the more significant lessons.

- There is a need for a medical ship to work alongside national authorities and local health workers in serving isolated communities in the maritime regions of Fiji.
- Delivering services by ship to isolated villages is effective.
- The medical/dental needs are huge but not complicated.
- The need far exceeds the impact made. Seeing the need we cannot turn back. The need is ongoing. The time is now. We are more determined than ever to continue.
- This mission gave us a proof of concept. Ship-based dental containers and medical teams are an effective and efficient way to provide oral and basic healthcare to difficult-to-reach maritime locations.
- The work is made sustainable by utilising in-country medical/dental and mariner professionals that work alongside our non-Fijian volunteer professionals. This allows for both training and capacity building.

- Partnerships are the only effective way forward. With shared objectives and clear communication, we are more effective together than on our own.

## **Fijian Advisors and Stakeholders:**

YWAM Ships Aotearoa would like to make a special mention of the following leaders and stakeholders in Fiji who walked with us in our journey into their nation. Without their wisdom, input, support and endorsement of YSA and the *YWAM KOHA*, this mission would not have been possible. We want to say a huge ngā mihi and vinaka vaka levu.

- His Excellency, Ratu Wiliame Katonivere - President of Fiji
- Dr. Ifereimi Waqainabete - Minister of Health and Medical Services
- Dr. James Fong - Permanent Secretary of Health and Medical Services
- Major General (retd) Ioane Naivalurua - Former Permanent Secretary for Foreign Affairs
- Brigadier General Sitiveni Qiliho - Commissioner of Police
- Dr. Sailasa Luvunakoro - Chair, Oral Health Clinical Services Network
- Mr. Uraia Rainima - Commissioner of the Northern Division
- Mr. Josua Tuwere - 2nd Secretary, Fiji High Commission in NZ
- Mr. Josefa Matau - Axelerate Sports
- Dr. Nadeem Suttar - Northern Divisional Dental Officer
- Dr. Nosi Salababa - Oral Health Clinical Services Network
- Mrs. Losalini Tuwere - YWAM Fiji Trustee
- Mr. Sunia Ravono - YWAM Fiji Trustee
- Ms. Seria Vinakadina - YWAM Fiji Trustee
- Mr. Taubale Toki - YWAM Fiji Trustee
- Rev. Ili Vunisuwai - President of Methodist Church, Fiji
- Ms. Charlotte Darlow - New Zealand High Commissioner to Fiji
- Mr. Waqa Baravilala - Director Island Breeze Rugby Plus
- Mr. Shyam Reddy - Regional Operations Manager, Swire Shipping



## Future Plans:

YWAM Ships Aotearoa has a long-term commitment to Fiji and the Pacific. We are currently working with the Ministry of Health in Fiji to form a long-term partnership agreement. This agreement will enable us to plan our future missions with certainty.

We envision the *YWAM KOHA* serving in the maritime regions of Fiji for at least three months per year over the coming decade.

Partnerships will continue to undergird and sustain everything we do. We are looking to grow our group of partners and supporters. We recognise it is critical to have strong partnerships with organisations in New Zealand and Fiji for the long-term viability of the mission of the YWAM Ships Aotearoa.

YWAM Ships Aotearoa will continue to walk with the Ministry of Health, local health workers, district nurses, and also divisional dental and medical officers to inform and assess needs and design future services.

Moving forward, together, we will continue to empower health in isolated communities throughout the Pacific. **We will see you in 2023 Fiji!**








# YWAMSHIPS A O T E A R O A

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