Serua Island, Fiji

Serua Island is a very small but beautiful island located off the south coast of Viti Levu between Pacific Harbour and the Coral Coast. The island has about 30 homes and almost everyone fishes for a living. Because it was low tide, we were able to walk from the mainland to Serua Island. The chief, Ratu Peni Latianara, gladly received us and gave us permission to explore the island. The villagers of Serua welcomed us with a hearty lunch. Our guide - Master Navosa - told us stories of how Serua Island used to be and how it is now being affected by climate change.

The island is gradually losing land. The sea has slowly claimed 20 feet of the island for the past decade or so, and the villagers with houses near the coastline have moved to Viti Levu on the mainland. On the south coast of the island a small dyke had been built to keep the sea from eroding the land. Unfortunately this is not enough to keep the sea from the land, so the men of the village brought huge boulders and left them on the shore to act as wave breakers. Promised help to supply sand and gravel to extend island boundaries has not come. An elder said very little assistance is given to climate-change affected villages.

The chief of the village and its people appreciated our visit hoping that their problems would be noticed and they would receive help.

— Jeremy Kuinikoro

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