

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **Rarawai Mill's Team Elite's wholistic approach to Quality Control Circle (QCC)**

QCC was introduced into FSC in 2005 at Ba's Rarawai Mill, followed by Labasa Mill in 2006. At its launch, QCC was only introduced to apprentices as they were an easier group to target and groom for QCC adoption.

In 2014 FSC revived its internal QCC initiative, again with the Rarawai Mill. 'Team Elite' made up of a cross-section of employees from the Rarawai mill then identified poor harvesting efforts as a key issue for the mill and targeted this area in their QCC project.

And the Team were amply rewarded at this year's National Quality Convention, at FNU Namaka, taking 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Overall and Silver Award.



**Above:** CEO Graham Clark , COO Navin Chandra and GM Rarawai Taito Kafoa with Team Elite at their celebration dinner last week

Team Leader and the group's only female Sesenieli Vualeba, who coincidentally won the Best Team Leader prize said "it was challenging working with my team, being the only female and I had to sacrifice a lot of personal time to complete this project well. But I am so grateful that we achieved what we have, as it was not easy!"

Team Elite's QCC journey started in 2014, and although they faced insurmountable challenges in 2016 due to the devastation of Tropical Cyclone Winston, hindering their efforts as they had to divert their focus on the collective rehabilitation of the mill and cane development; this year's win has been a labour of love and a testament to their persevering spirit.

Chief Executive Officer Graham Clark in thanking the team at their celebrations in Ba recently, said "he was delighted with how the team held on and kept pushing themselves to achieve high quality standards, thanking them for their cohesion, their collaboration and team work, which was very evident". And furthermore, he wanted "Team Elite of Rarawai to share their recipe of success with other areas across the company, because of their exemplary achievement".

General Manager Rarawai Mill Taito Kafoa echoed similar sentiments saying "Team Elite has set a benchmark for the mill and all their employees, for their hard work and collaborating very well throughout their Quality Circle process".

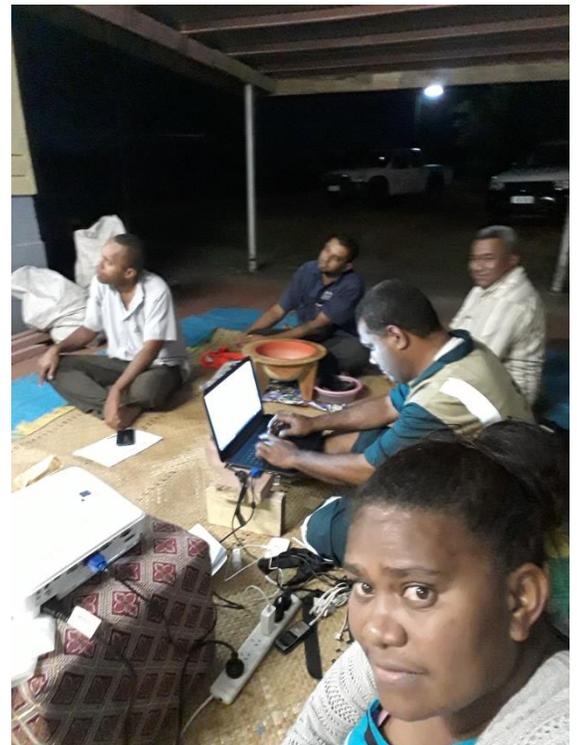
Team Elite was made up of Sesenieli Vualeba who is the Headway Bridge Clerk at Rarawai. She was also the group Team Leader, and who was awarded the 2017 Outstanding Quality Circle Team Leader Award. We had Timoci Sila – Team Leader – Veisaru, Varavu & Rarawai; Tevita Sekicolo - Cane Logistics Manager, Hasmukh Patel - Mill Sidar; Wame Bukalidi and Neori Vuidreketi, both Loco Drivers; Vinal Kumar – Fitting Shop Foreman; Viliame Osborne – Assistant Safety Officer and Chief Engineer John Danford.

The team's QCC project was on **Reducing Factory Downtime due to Poor Harvesting Effort.**

Over the years, poor harvesting efforts incurred FSC huge costs as inadequate cane supply during crushing left many trucks and rail bins idle leading to factory downtimes.

Much of this was attributed to low harvesting due by low supply of manual labourers. 84% of the total area serving Rarawai Mill is manually harvested.

Thus, to counter this issue, Team Elite mooted the idea to bring in cane labourers from the provinces of Naitasiri and Tailevu on the central-eastern part of Viti Levu. Their reasoning was two-fold; firstly, these areas were impacted



**Above:** Team Elite in one of their brainstorming sessions, after work, as they prepared their submission to the 2017 QCC Awards

by Tropical Cyclone Winston and communities in these provinces needed financial assistance to rebuild their lives. Secondly, these labourers fitted in well with the Team's objective to manually harvest cane areas. Growers for their part, billeted these labourers over the six-month harvesting season.

As a result of this initiative, harvesting improved significantly allowing cane delivery to the mill to increase by 50% for farms engaging these Naitasiri and Tailevu labourers.

This solution has been a wholistic one in that it has been a win-win situation for the mill, the growers and these labourers, some of whom have returned to their provinces, and with collective earnings of around FJD70,000. Rarawai Mill management looks to engage these labourers again in the 2018 season.

## **ENDS**

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