Itaukei Institute Of Language And Culture
Safeguard, Protect, Revitalise
The Itaukei Language And Culture
The institute was established as the Fijian Dictionary Project funded by Mr. Raymond Burr in 1974. The government later funded the project.

In 1986, the Great council of Chiefs, with Cabinet’s endorsement renamed the Fijian Dictionary project as the Institute of Fijian Language and Culture.

**Aim**

To compile the iTaukei Monolingual Dictionary. To encourage and facilitate the use and study of iTaukei Language and Culture.

**The Work Of The Institute**

To carry out the above aims, the work programme of the Institute is divided up as follows:

**Resource Centre**

In carrying out the wishes of the Great Council of Chiefs, the Institute continues to build up archives of relevant materials such as books and other printed matter, photographs, and audio and video tapes, with detailed indexes on computer in both English and Fijian to ensure that the material is easily accessible.

**Research**

The Institute undertakes research, both in archival and field. The range of topics covered is enormous, including traditional religious beliefs, knowledge of the environment, natural history, social structure, kinship; music, dance, and games; traditional technologies such as agriculture, fishing, house-building, pottery, canoe construction and sailing, bark—cloth manufacture, costume and ornament, food preparation, and medicine; and oral traditions, including fables, legends, and historical accounts.

**Broadcasting**

Currently, the major medium through which the results of this research are disseminated are the popular half-hour weekly radio programme Na Noda Vosa on Radio Fiji One. It provides its radio audience with thirty minutes of telecasted information, typically including segments on the traditional calendar, historical events, customs, natural history, herbal medicine, handicrafts, legends, and languages of iTaukei.

**Video Shooting**

Another important research activity undertaken by the Institute includes the filming or video shooting of iTaukei ceremonies associated with the installation of chiefs, solemnity and funeral proceeding of the death of a chief, presentation of the first born and other customary rituals. Sometimes, the Institute is not fully aware of occurrences and instances as such, thus the general public is advised to inform the Institute prior to any traditional undertakings.

**Publication**

The Institute has been preparing to initiate a publication programme, and a large number of works are in the final stages of editing, including books on legends, local history, traditional medicine, translation techni ques, and translations from English to valuable historical material.

**Itaukei Monolingual Dictionary**

The iTaukei monolingual Dictionary was launched on the 29th of June 2007 by his Excellency the President of the Republic of Fiji Isalnds, Ratu Josefa Iloilovatu Uliviudua. The dictionary contains approximately 24,783 words. Cabinet has endorsed the publication especially the new spelling and grammar system used in iTaukei writing embraced by the dictionary. The book is sold at the Institute at $40 for the hard cover and $15 for the soft cover edition.

**Facilitation**

The Institute plays an important role as a resource centre for local and overseas researchers. The Institute’s services are used by government departments, private organizations, and researchers at all levels, ranging from primary school children to representatives of the vanua to university professors. The Institute has played an important role in the production of a number of documentary and promotional films, mostly notably the BBC Natural History Units ‘Nomads of the Wind’ series on the history of man and the environment on the Pacific, which has been enjoyed by millions in Britain, Europe, and North America. It constantly liaises with local broadcasters and publishers in improving translation and coining new words that are needed for the iTaukei language to function in today’s world.

**Cultural Mapping Programme**

The Cultural Mapping Programme (CMP) is an information gathering exercise to facilitate the enactment of a legislation to protect iTaukei intellectual property rights. CMP involves the collection, recording and documentation of iTaukei tangible and intangible cultural heritage in all the fourteen (14) provinces in Fiji. Information collected will be stored in the National Inventory for Traditional Knowledge and Expressions of Culture and protected under the legislation on the protection of Traditional Knowledge and Expressions of Culture (TK&EC). The Institute’s Special Revival Unit (SRU) facilitate workshop on the revival of TK&EC through the transmission of knowledge and know-how related to cultural expressions by the identified Living Human Treasures, particularly those in danger of disappearing. CMP also identifies Heritage sites.