



# THE ONLINE MARKETPLACE

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## A digital lease application platform

CEO – Mr. Tevita Kuruvakadua



Tevita Kuruvakadua  
Chief Executive Officer

*The change has become a critical component in the structured digital journey of the organisation which is evident in the daily developments of our overall operations*

The need for change is generated by the action of internal, as well as external environments, depending on the nature, size, scope, and organisational culture. For the iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB), which has been in existence for more than 80 years, change is an unavoidable necessity.

When positive change is applied correctly, it will help to reduce wastage; hence, reducing costs increase productivity and improve efficiency overall. So TLTB embarked on this journey towards digitalisation to help streamline the Board's processes, with the aim of improving service delivery. Fortunately, the Board found favour in the Asian Development Bank's (ADB) smart cities project which provided the much needed funding.

### Brief History

In 2017, the ADB carried out a workshop to introduce smart systems in which they identified TLTB's proposal to take on the Digital Land Registry as a project concept. This was also based on TLTB's role as administrator of 91% of Fiji's land mass and its important legislative commitment in its trusteeship capacity to the landowners.

KPMG Singapore was given the funding by ADB to develop this project for TLTB. It has been a five year partnership whereby TLTB and the developers have been trying to find the ideal platform for the digital solution required by TLTB. The idea behind the project is to have a smart system that would help the Board enhance its digital infrastructure to a proactive, inclusive, and transparent platform.

The scoping exercise defined three main areas of particular interest which assured the ADB of a project that would be feasible should it be considered a smart project and meet three main objectives for the Board:

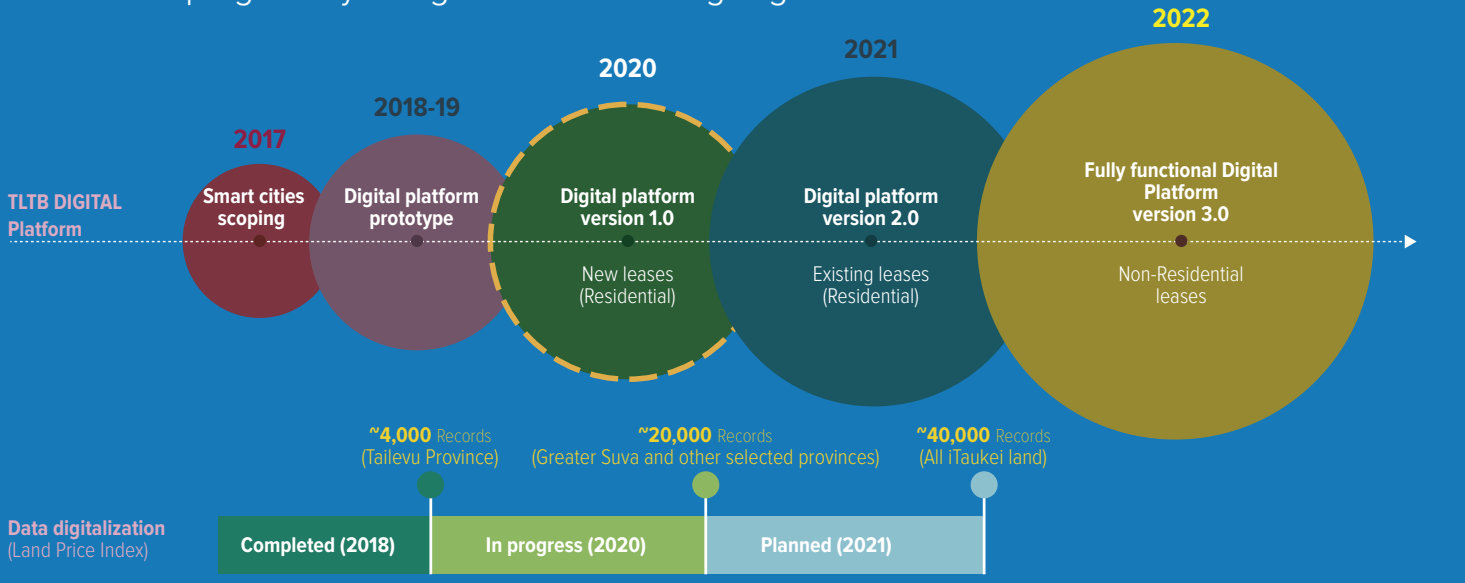
- (i) To proactively promote iTaukei land;
- (ii) To assure landowners and Investors of their investments and;
- (iii) To speed up the land leasing processes.

### The Digital Journey

Due to the complexity of the processes involved, the whole project was divided into developmental phases. This was to enable both parties to dissect all the processes carefully and also to better monitor the progress. In addition, both KPMG and TLTB could evaluate the progress of each phase, identify gaps and apply solutions as the project develops and evolves.

## Our Digital Journey

Our journey began in 2017 and evolved from constructing the “Land Price Index” into developing a fully-fledged “Land Leasing Digital Platform”



Meeting between ADB and TLTB, from L-R: Senior Safeguards Officer Ms. Ferila Brown, Infrastructure Specialist Ms. Katherine Guy and Regional Director of the ADB Mr. Aaron Balten, joined by Manager Strategic Planning, Change Management & Innovation - Ms. Reijeli Taylor and Information Technology Co-ordinator, Special Project - Mr. Nacanieli Basacala

Due to the complexity of the project, it took a little bit more time to complete. The project focuses on developing an online platform where *itaukei land* will be sold at market value and everything else is tracked and monitored. It is a solution that TLTB has been looking for for the last decades.

Although all processes are purely owned by TLTB it is still required to work with other relevant agencies to deliver its land products and services. When ready, TLTB will also open the use of its data sets by various development agencies in Fiji. The developers have built this system in such a way that it is not static, but works for the future of the organisation.

### Communication and Awareness

The Change Management and the Communications Unit, has been regularly updating the staff on the benefits and the impacts of the change that is happening within the organisation. Effective communication plan during a change management process has proven to help in controlling the inertia or fears brought about by a change.

All stakeholders are aware of how the change has unfolded, how it affects the overall operations of the Board, and why the change had to be implemented. Similarly, the change management process has been disseminated to the general public in segments, to avoid information overload, but instill understanding and provide clarity. ■

# Aligning to the Government's digital change management process

TLTB is not adapting to a change process in isolation. The Fijian Government is also going through a digital change management process, whereby the changes filter down into statutory organisations such as TLTB.

TLTB was part of the Project, Change, & Risk Management Planning Workshop that was facilitated by the Ministry of Commerce, Trade, Tourism & Transport (MCTTT) that was held at the Holiday Inn in March, this year.

The workshop covered; Quality Management Strategies, Programme Structure, Change Management Overview, and Communications Overview and concluded with an Overview of Risk Management and mitigation strategies. The Singaporean project management company known as the Spirit of Endeavour were the main facilitators at the workshop.

The Permanent Secretary for MCTTT Mr. Shaheen Ali indicated, "our focus has remained on making our processes and systems a lot easier so that combined, it makes doing business easier. We are now looking at taking reforms to the next level that benefit businesses, bring in more investment, and future-proof our economy".

Information on processes and checklist had been gathered from development and planning agencies and local authorities over the years. The facilitators have yet to prepare a draft process flowchart based on the information received. It could be deduced from other government agencies' responses that TLTB is well in advance in its organizational frameworks and achievements, regarding the digitization journey.

The integrated digital platform is part of the next 'blockchain' for digitalizing processes by the Fijian Government. Interestingly, this is also part of TLTB's blockchain digital ambition that is already part of the current digitization plan. TLTB is well ahead in most of the processes that have been adopted by MCTTT, especially regarding the Risk Framework and digitization.

All in all, we can be proud of the fact that we are way ahead in terms of our digital journey. We must work together in accelerating this change that we are going through and work towards realizing our vision and fulfilling our core business – to sustainably develop our iTaukei landowners and maximize wealth creation opportunities.

The blockchain process is now in progress. Mr. Kim Soon (Singapore consultant), agreed for the Board to meet with the MCTTT for improved clarity and understanding of the platform, the risks and concerns to the Board, TLTB's role and responsibilities that need to be considered in this Project, as well as to update and share experiences and knowledge on TLTB's digital transformation journey that will assist MCTTT and other government agencies.

Yet the good news is that TLTB's change management journey is certainly in line with the government's digital journey. Some working groups have been formed where TLTB can provide clarity on the technological enhancements that have been made and how our digital platform connects with other stakeholders outside of the organisation. ■



The Working Committee meeting undertaken at the Ministry of Economy where the iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB), the Ministry of Lands & Mineral Resources (MLMR), Ministry of Environment (MOE) and the Ministry of Commerce Trade, Tourism and Transport (MCTTT) were part of a Government initiative to cut "red tapes" in our processes especially where land and development in general is concerned

# Features of the portals on the



## 1. Online Marketplace

- ⊙ There is an advanced search filter where you can filter by land type, land area
- ⊙ Click on the land and see different images
- ⊙ See the location on the map
- ⊙ See the surrounding communities and what is available
- ⊙ See the price, and eventually
- ⊙ Apply for a lease
- ⊙ Pay the application fee online

The Online Marketplace is not only convenient and transparent but it is linked with Google Maps so viewers can view what is on and around the subject land. It is also linked to ArcGIS to help the viewers or applicants see the boundaries of their land.

### *Where did all this information come from?*

Everything that is displayed on this online marketplace is real, based on the data available at TLTB as there is a direct link between this portal and Landsoft. Landsoft is the system that TLTB uses for its lease-related applications. Additionally, staff is specifically assigned to prepare land information before it is made available on the portal.

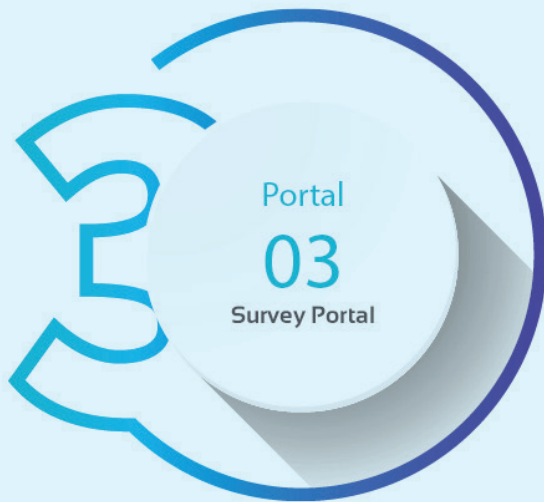
## 2. Admin Portal

- ⊙ Basically, this portal can only be viewed by TLTB staff.
- ⊙ It is quite a complex engine because it has multiple users.
- ⊙ Each user will have different access levels and there are different features in each of these levels.
- ⊙ There are certain tasks that the staff can execute from this portal.
- ⊙ Gives staff quick access as there are self-explanatory notes to the processes.

It is a dashboard with all land information in it. There is transparency as each staff can know who is doing what – right from lease application status to when the approval is granted.



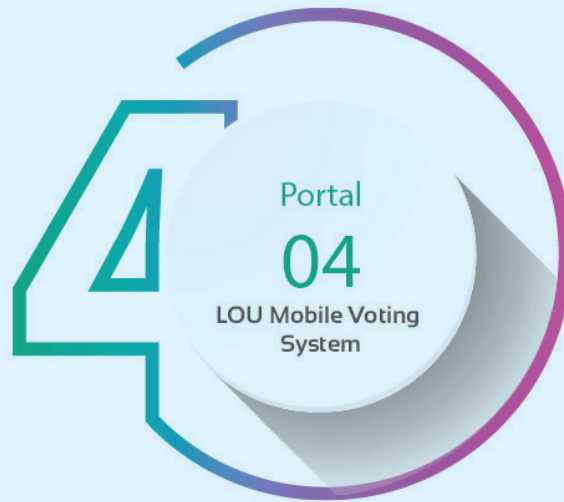
# Online Marketplace Platform



### 3. Surveyor Portal

- ⊙ The list of the Board's registered surveyors.
- ⊙ They will receive a notification whenever there is land in need of survey.
- ⊙ Surveyors can submit their quotation and their proposed timeline.
- ⊙ Applicant gets to choose the surveyor according to his/her budget because the applicant will get to know the cost in advance.
- ⊙ Applicant gets to select the surveyor and have the budget ready at the time he/she applies for the lease and can even pay upfront.

Because the survey plays a critical role in the whole process, the developer (KPMG Singapore) has seen it fit to create a portal for this purpose. For any land to be legally registered to the owner, it must be surveyed. Currently, a good number of land lots are unsurveyed because the applicants do not see the urgency in the need for it, as well as the inability to meet subsequent cost.



### 4. Mobile Voting System

- ⊙ A dynamic system that can be accessed from a PC, laptop, and even a mobile phone.
- ⊙ System is for the convenience of the landowners.
- ⊙ This system does not eliminate the process of consultation but just makes the collection of signatures easier, faster, and more convenient.
- ⊙ Ensures that all landowners are on the same platform, regardless of where they are based.
- ⊙ Landowners can give their consent from wherever they are.

Although the shift is going online, we are not eliminating the manual or paper system. For senior citizens, people living with disabilities, and others who are not able to access any online system, TLTB officers are still required to go around, collect their votes (consent), and upload them online. Applications cannot be processed further if 60% consent from the landowners is not achieved. Change is imminent for the organisation. It helps promote skills growth and develops people in the process and opens up new business opportunities. ■



Global navigation satellite system (GNSS) exercise conducted by staff from the Northern Region in Labasa. GNSS is a general term describing any satellite constellation that provides positioning, navigation, and timing data to GNSS receiver. The receivers then use this data to determine location.

# Processes when identifying available land for the Online Platform

When identifying land for the online digital platform, it is important to consider the application of relevant laws such as the Agricultural Landlord & Tenants Act (ALTA) and iTaukei Land Trust Act (TLTA) in the process and assessment of premium and rental.

These Acts then form the basis of internal manuals, that guide the integration of stand-alone systems together with processes and procedures to enable the successful facilitation of the online marketplace platform.

## Land Sources

Land that could be uploaded onto the online digital platform could be reserved, outside reserve, surveyed, or unsurveyed. These land parcels could be made available from three sources:

- 1) **Vacant and untouched land with ready access**  
These are either vacant expiry leases; or virgin land (greenfield) that has never been leased or developed but has proper access in place. Large parcels of vacant land without access will have to go through the process of scheming and land development before they can be ready for loading onto the online platform.
- 2) **Re-entry land that is accessible**  
All re-entry leases registered at the Registrar of Titles will be verified and assessed before feeding onto the online platform. Large parcels of agricultural re-entry lands will go through rezoning and scheming to ensure alignment with TLTB's Greater Land Use Master Plan.
- 3) **Pre-scheme subdivision with formed access in place**  
All large parcels of land; either vacant, virgin, or re-entered will go through the process of scheming and land development. TLTB will ensure that the draft scheme is forwarded to the Land Use Planning Unit for vetting, then submitted to Department for Town & Country Planning (DTCP) for approval.

## LOU Consultation

Whether the land is outside or within the reserve, there still needs to be consultation with the landowners about the Board's proposed development concept. The meeting needs to be facilitated through the respective provincial council offices. The landowners must also participate in the planning process and must indicate the area(s) to be preserved for future use, maintenance, and support, of the future generation.

For reserved land, the majority of the landowners, above the age of 18, will need to give their consent for the de-reservation process to take place. When the voting system is later introduced, the landowners can then vote using their mobile phones.

## Field Inspection & GPS

- i) Thorough inspection must be carried out with landowners to record all features on the land which includes infrastructural development, utilities, neighboring development, old village sites, burial grounds, or archaeological sites that need to be excluded from the area for land available.
- ii) Access must be provided for the land that has been identified. Otherwise, large parcels of land will require prior scheming and development of access to be created.
- iii) Proper marking of boundaries must be done on the ground using a GPS machine.
- iv) A 360 degrees video of the site and the vicinity must be shot and included in the land package that is uploaded onto the platform.
- v) Large parcels of land to a scheme in alignment with the DTCP guideline and our Land Use Policy for standardization and compliance.

Change information needs to be communicated to all TLTB stakeholders to prepare us as we work towards aligning ourselves to the demands and requirements of the change. Therefore, there is no need to be resistant to the change. The more open we are to the change knowledge and resources for change management, the quicker will be our acceptance of the change. ■

# IT System Rollout – Hardware and Network

Over the years, our TLTB had been doing the best it can to provide its customers with the best uninterrupted IT service, though this was more so a wish than a reality. Nonetheless, the employees of the Board are grateful for the improvement so far. There are several notable changes that may just be the solution that TLTB has been searching for.

## Some of the new things that TLTB can now expect are:

- i) Currently, each floor in Head Office and each regional office have their servers. When one of the servers at Head Office fails, the impact(s) spills over to the other floors. This will not be the case anymore.
- ii) The use of fiber optic cable will provide a better connection from regions to the Head office.
- iii) Links are performing much better than before
- iv) All networks can centrally be managed from the Head Office and the IT Team does not need to be physically present in the regional offices to fix a problem.

- v) The entire server does not need to be switched off when there is a problem but we can just switch off the port that is causing the traffic.

It is imperative that we keep up with the changes, be informed, and work ourselves up to the timelines these changes have put in place. There will be changes to the entire IT system. One of which is the enhancement or probably an extreme makeover of the Board's IT system. Below are some detailed updates to the progress so far:

### 1. Server, Storage & Processing

- ⊙ The first draft of TOR was completed and circulated for review
- ⊙ Tender for vendor was put out in May
- ⊙ Vendor was selected by July
- ⊙ System specification by Vendor to be completed by November 2022.

### 2. System and its Application

#### NETWORK BACKBONE

- All new switches in Head Office installed as a stack
- Fiber optic network connections between all switches within Head Office installed.
- Completed.

#### OFFICE NETWORK REHAB

- Rehab on all Offices sites

#### TFL FIBRE

- Installed on all Office sites

#### SDWAN

- Installed on all Office sites

#### ALL MANAGED SWITCHES

- Installed on all Office sites

For the system to be enhanced, some things needed to be changed first, before it is factored onto the IT systems. Some of these include:

- ⊙ Estate Operations Manual (EOM) Review – all To Be processes were documented and ready before the system specifications were drawn up.
- ⊙ After the vendor completes its assigned task, the implementation is anticipated to be carried out from July 2022 to December 2023.



Few of the IT Staff from Head Office in Suva attended the National Conference on Information Technology which was hosted by the Fiji National University

### 3. Online Marketplace

- ⊙ TLTB is currently opening up lease types and this is not restricted to residential leases only, but rather; for all lease types.
- ⊙ Uploading is not confined to the Tailevu/Naitasiri provinces but is open to other regions as well.
- ⊙ Payment gateway has been finalized.
- ⊙ User acceptance has already been tested.
- ⊙ Videos of land lots have been created and the IT team has uploaded them onto the Online Marketplace.
- ⊙ Advertisement of the platform will also be put on social media to attract more buyers and investors.

### 4. Online Marketing

- ⊙ Videos and photos had been captured by the drone and uploaded accordingly.
- ⊙ A high specification machine will be acquired for editing purposes.
- ⊙ Key staff have been identified and trained as drone pilots.
- ⊙ Drone License to be acquired.
- ⊙ More drones have been purchased for the Board's use.

### 5. Land Available Process

- ⊙ Land Owning Units (LOUs) are urged to prepare their Land Use Plans (LUP) which will guide them in their land development purposes, especially for release onto the online marketplace platform.
- ⊙ A sustainable approach that aims to empower LOU's to realise the market value of their asset (land).
- ⊙ This is a positive change to TLTB's business approach – now and beyond.

Although technology can be an important component in organisational change management, it typically is not enough by itself. Another greater concern is that technology can change a lot faster than people do. Contrastingly, organisations absorb the change much more slowly than the technology itself. However, the Board is capitalizing on the learning needs and learning capacity of the staff and anticipates that adapting to, and adopting the changes will ease the burden of transition created by change. ■



Senior Lands Officer, Acquisition & Property - Mr Pio Raitoni in motion while conducting land use training to Land Owning Units (LOUs)





The MCTTT, the DTCP, TLTB and the Ministry of Economy met with AG and Surveyors to discuss backlogs in the surveying processes and its way forward

## Enhancements to the LDVC Portal

The initiative to further enhance TLTB's current Land Development Vetting Committee's (LDVC) portal came about as a result of the meeting with the Minister of Economy Hon. Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum during the budget revision consultation process. The idea was to implement procedures to streamline survey and subdivision, as well as related developmental processes to support the recovery of the Fijian economy by removing hurdles and bureaucratic processes.

Several stakeholders had come together to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to facilitate this initiative. The key stakeholders include the Ministry of Commerce Trade, Tourism & Transport (MCTTT), the Department of Town & Country Planning (DTCP), TLTB, and the Ministry of Economy.

In their first meeting, the Terms of Reference (TOR) were endorsed. TLTB is to take the lead role in consolidating all updates on its LDVC cases, including factoring in updates from the Department of Town & Country Planning (DTCP) and Surveyor General (SG) for ease of reference and monitoring.

For this, DTCP and SG's Office had forwarded all applications received (including status updates for all applications) for the past three years (2019-current) to the Secretariat. The Secretariat then forward all these to TLTB so that all LDVC applications on iTaukei land can be accurately tracked and monitored.

TLTB had also conducted awareness to DTCP and SG's Office regarding the LDVC portal. A brief demonstration of the LDVC portal was presented to the Joint Working Group who have also been informed of a \$500 per annum fee proposed for the use of this portal - payable to TLTB.

In view of the new automated process, it was also noted that DTCP could automatically process all subdivision applications using the LDVC portal and there would be no need for surveyors to re-lodge (seven) physical copies of the applications to DTCP. This would mean that TLTB can charge DTCP fees up

front, and discussion will be made later on, as to how the payment can be paid to DTCP.

This would reduce the delay and the turn-around time from when the surveyor receives approval from LDVC, and when he actually lodges the scheme plan with DTCP. Basically, once LDVC endorses and closes a case, a notification will be made to DTCP to open the case and process it.

### In the best interest of all stakeholders; the following are to be undertaken:

- i) DTCP to properly mention in their approval conditions that certain conditions are to be deferred to the building stage,
- ii) Surveyors to properly incorporate noting within the Survey Plan on the same.
- iii) During registration of lease at TLTB, our lease conditions incorporate the deferred conditions to be monitored in our dealing(s). This is to ensure that tenants get to comply with carrying out the physical work prior to any selling and/or transfer.

Overall, it was a good move and already there have been positive discussions around the challenges that all stakeholders have been facing, and how best they can holistically address these concerns and issues.

TLTB has advised that it has completed the enhancements and now awaits the web application (source code) from the external developer before this digital application could be rolled out.

This new LDVC portal has been developed to cater to the entire survey process – from survey agreement to the approval of the survey plan. It is TLTB's first fully web-based platform – having internal and external interphases and linked to our internal Landsoft system as well. How fascinating this move is. Once the enhanced portal is rolled out, it solidifies the move in our "TO BE" journey with the shift in focus to having all iTaukei leases fully surveyed and registered. ■



Training facilitator of the Land Price Index and Land Rent Index from KPMG in Suva, Mr Ryan

## How the LPI and LRI came to be?

The Land Price Index (LPI) is an index or a measure of a piece of land that is averaged from the value of the development surrounding the subject land. Objectively, this LPI will cut out the over-valuing and the under-valuing of land when leased out. It will also bring to a minimum the numerous problems faced by the Board in terms of double leasing, incorrect calculation of Premiums, and other related issues.

The objective of the Land Price Index (LPI) study is to:

- ⦿ Construct the land price and rent indexes based on the TLTB dataset.
- ⦿ Update the LPI with the additional lease records.
- ⦿ Build a dashboard to retrieve price and rent information for surrounding areas.

### Land Price Index & Land Rent Index

When we refer to the Land Price Index, we are mainly referring to the premium or the initial price for which land was bought or sold. At first, the pilot project had only dealt with Residential leases in the Tailevu and Naitasiri provinces. But, now it engages all lease types, all over Fiji; segmented into provincial levels. Land Rent, on the other hand, is determined according to the developments in the area surrounding the subject land.



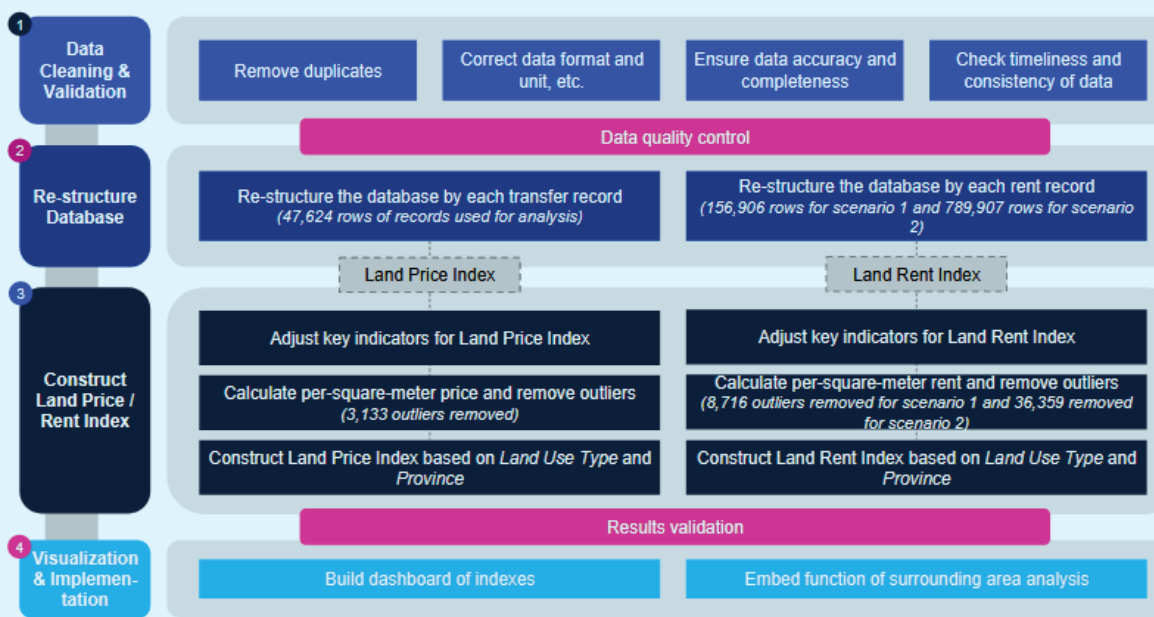
Champions of the TLTB Online Marketplace



From left: representatives from KPMG Mr Ryan and Ron as main facilitators of the LPI & LRI and 3rd from left is Manager Information Technology & Special Project - Epele Ravula and other champions of the Online Marketplace

### How was the LPI constructed?

The following steps were taken to construct the LPI and LRI to ensure data quality.



### Four main dashboards

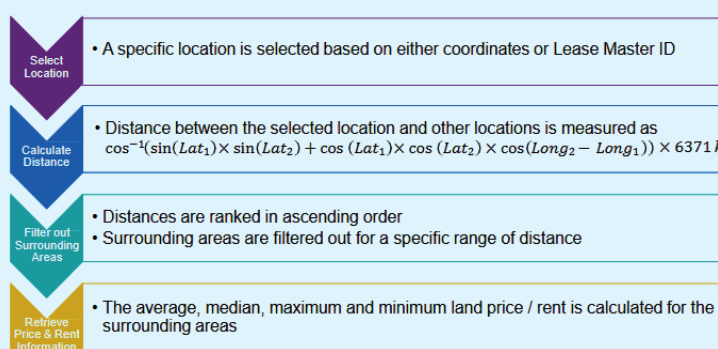
Four main dashboards were built respectively:

- ⊙ LPI Dashboard – to view the average price, year-on-year growth, and the number of records with filters on land use type and province.
- ⊙ LRI Dashboard – to view average rent, year-on-year growth, and number of records with filters on land use type and province.
- ⊙ Surrounding Area Price Dashboard - select a specific location and distance to view the price information of surrounding areas.
- ⊙ Surrounding Area Rent Dashboard – select a specific location and distance to view the rent information of surrounding areas.

### The detailed methodology to retrieve Land Price/Land Rent of Surrounding Areas

A dashboard has been built to allow users to retrieve land price and land rent information for the surrounding areas of specific land. To locate land, the location coordinates are obtained for all records.

The change journey here at TLTB did not just start recently. It had started many years back with a strategic vision of innovative improvements through the use of modern technology. This dream has thus provided a structured, consistent and measurable change environment that has slowly been utilised within the Board; in recent years. ■



# A culmination of all our efforts

One of the key benefits of adequate, well-planned change management is the assurance of consistency and integrity. Our ability to embrace change has helped the organisation find and nurture new business ideas and opportunities, just as we have witnessed. Having strategic change strategies has helped TLTB to move forward into new areas brought about by the new ways of doing things.

A culmination of all our combined efforts in recent years was brought to fruition with the successful launch of the Online Marketplace. It is a moment of celebration. Although not everything has exactly fallen into place, the staff led by an able Board of Trustees and Senior Management Team at least deserved a pat on the back to see how far the project has positively progressed.

We have created an awakening in us to be able to manage the change. Managing change has assisted in minimizing resistance to change, improved morale, and productivity, and most certainly, improved the quality of work. It has also helped improve cooperation, collaboration, and communication.

TLTB has taken the risk to bring this change on board; for all our stakeholders. The more adaptable we become, the better we will be able to handle adversity and risks brought by the change.

This is the culmination of all our efforts – the Board of Trustees and employees of the Board.

TLTB is a President's Award winner. Hence, we are mandated to be selling a product that is benchmarked to international standards. Right now, the majority of our products only go as far as Agreement for Leases (AFLs), which most banks do not accept. Yet, we are required to support Fiji's economic development. For this reason, we are supposed to be selling products that can quickly allow our tenants to develop the product further.

TLTB has foreseen that if the Board provides pre-packaged, pre-access, pre-valued products then

we will cut out most of the problems that we currently go through on a daily basis. It is only proper that the leaders constantly evaluate productivity, wastage, and gaps. Why we are giving out leases for 99 years without proper land use planning and maximising opportunities for more wealth? As an organisation, we do not want to waste our time on old businesses, and on things not being done correctly.

Hence the introduction of this structured and advanced way of doing business. It is not going to be used straight away but we are first testing it with 20% of our target. Then we will progressively increase our target percentage, based on the success of the project's implementation. The Board also hopes that the new structure will help improve our income collection.

TLTB is therefore encouraging all staff to work smarter together in adopting and adapting to the changes. We are also giving ourselves time to adjust and be flexible. We are working with an open mind and are always looking on the positive side. This way, we are able to embrace the change and always be prepared for upcoming changes. ■



## Our Locations

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