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Praise for NGO efforts

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THE government's formal arrangements with Empower Pacific to aid marginalised low-income earners are indicative of the professionalism and commitment of NGOs.

This was the message shared by President Ratu Epeli Nailatikau at the rebranding of Pacific Counselling and Social Services to Empower Pacific in Suva recently.

"This essentially means that the government not only recognises the high level of professionalism and technical expertise offered by the organisation but that the government also fully appreciates Empower Pacific's contribution towards improvement in Fiji's health education and social service sectors," he said.

Ratu Epeli said Empower Pacific's continuous efforts to assist the vulnerable had to be commended.

"The promotion of rehabilitation and the reintegration of prisoners into society through educational and income generation projects under the Yellow Ribbon Project is another very important initiative in which Empower Pacific is involved," he said. "This program, I believe, is very successful as not only are former inmates being assisted in attaining tertiary training which should enable them to secure employment but many are also financially supported through small loans and basic management skills to help them live productive lives."

Ratu Epeli said Empower Pacific's programs with sex workers had also been successful with many slowly opting for a better life.

"Similarly, sex workers have been provided with opportunities to undertake seeking alternative livelihoods and many of them have returned to study or are going back to school or have taken up other useful employment while some have started their own businesses," he said.