



Health and nutrition

Friendly food consumption app (Fiji)

Problem addressed

Results from the National Nutrition Survey of 2015 in Fiji show that more than half the population is anemic; children suffer from stunting and wasting; mothers are often deficient in very important micronutrients; and more than half of the adult population is either overweight or obese. Unhealthy dietary patterns contribute to poor nutritional outcomes in Fiji.



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Solution

A mobile app to help Fijians take ownership of their own health status. The app works by tracking dietary intake on a daily basis through a platform called “my meals” that creates specific recipes culturally familiar to the user.

Innovations and features

Although calorie counters and diet tracker apps already exist, they tend to focus on measuring or weighing the amount of food consumed, which involves the use of scales – equipment that is often unavailable to islanders of the South Pacific. This app has a hand measuring technique that allows users to estimate the size of food portions by comparing them to the user's fist, palm, and thumb.

The app also has a home gardening component to help users grow their own healthy food at home by providing planting steps and guides on organic gardening methods so that users can grow vegetables that are chemical-free and safe for them.

The app lists more than 800 commonly eaten foods in Fiji and the wider South Pacific, 100 of which are among the 100 commonly eaten foods as referenced in the consumption data of Fiji's National Nutrition Survey 2015.



Evidence and viability

- Over 50 000 downloads of the app.
- Supports organic gardening, healthy diets and food security.
- Developed solely by local expertise from USP's Centre for Flexible Learning.

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