



Zoe Davidson (BA Geography)

Homestay and School refurbishment Fiji

1. Where did you go?

I went to Fiji, and stayed in Balenabelo Village.

I went with Vesabroad <http://www.vesabroad.co.uk/>

2. What did you do?

I went for two weeks, the first week was our volunteer week where we did a **home stay with a local family** in the village, taking part in traditional ceremonies and learning to understand their way of life. During each day we went to the local school where we were **re-decorating** by painting, sanding and building tables and chairs for the children as well as helping out in the classroom. The aim is to try and increase school attendance.

3. What was the highlight of your trip?

The highlight of my trip was being able to **understand a completely different way of life through the home stay**. It was so nice to be stripped back to basic conditions without any phones yet still have such an amazing time because all the locals were so happy and friendly.

4. What did you learn?

From volunteering overseas I have learnt that people can live in the most basic conditions and yet still be so happy, **it has changed my perspective and outlook on life**. I have also gained memories and made friends who I will never forget.

5. Has this helped boost your employability?

This experience has boosted my employability because I have gained real life experience working in challenging environments and have gained an insight to different cultures and ways of life. It has also developed my basic skills such as **teamwork, leadership, relationship building, self-awareness and resilience**, which are key for employability.

6. Are there any downsides?

Even though it is a great experience, **many volunteers can be so distant from the work they are helping with, which is why I feel like participating in the home stay gave a whole new level and understanding to the volunteer experience**.