Every little girl growing up in the village will never forget the memory of returning home to their mothers and grandparents bustling over mats with sounds of the kettle boiling and grandmothers busily weaving. Pandanus leaves, the steps to acquiring the right colour and texture takes quite a lot of time from harvesting to cutting off the sharp edges, then coiled and boiled for a day before it is placed outside to dry in the sun. After this step then only can weaving start. Drying it out in the sun can take about three days or a week, if the weather is raining.

Because of her experience, Anisi willingly shares her knowledge to nearby women’s group such as those from Vugalei, Tailevu. She would always invite her daughter in law and other women to her home to develop the talent you just might have,” she said.

A THIN LINE AGAINST EROSION-VETIVER

Vetiver is a perennial bunchgrass of the family Poaceae. It can grow to up to 150 centimeters (5 ft.) high and forms clumps as wide. The stems are tall and leaves long, thin, and rather rigid with brownish-purple flowers. It helps to stabilize soil and protect it against erosion, as well as safeguards fields against pests and weeds.

Vetiver has favorable qualities for animal feed, from its roots oil is extracted and used for manufacturing cosmetics while its fibrous properties make it useful for handicrafts and weaving ropes.

Vetiver compared to pandanus takes only two days to dry and another two days to wrap well before it is ready for use for weaving.

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DESCRIPTION OF VETIVER

The plants grow in large dumps from a much branched “spongy” root stock with erect 0.5 - 1.5m high. Leaf blades are relatively stiff, long and narrow up to 75cm long, less than 8mm wide.

**HISTORY**

Soil conservation practices are used to prevent soil degradation and maintain good soil health. It is to prevent soil erosion, soil overuse and water contamination. There are various measures that are used to maintain soil health, and prevent the above harms to soil. These practices include: mulching, contour farming, Agro-forestry, intercropping, alley cropping, and vetiver hegadrows.

**PLANT?**

• It will not become a weed
• Protects the plant against fire and overgrowing because crown is below the surface.
• Maintain soil fertility

**OTHER PRACTICAL USES FOR VETIVER GRASS**

- Protecting riverbanks
- Nurseries trees
- Stabilizing tree crops
- Vetiver as a mulch
- Protecting roadsides
- Stabilizing gullies
- Stabilizing waste land areas
- Hedges
- Protecting irrigation canals
- Protecting dams

**REQUIREMENTS**

- Primary School.
- Training for the Girl Guide camp at Viria Primary School.
- In Logani, Sote, and also conducts training for the Girl Guide camp at Viria Primary School.
- “As beautiful as the end result could be, there are factors that also needs to be considered. We spend long hours sitting and weaving and sometimes this results in back and knee complications,” she said.

**As a little girl aged around nine-years, I would arrive home to the familiar smells of Pandanus leaves either hanging to be dried or coiled and piled at the corner ready for weaving,” she said.”

“Mainly I become interested in weaving when I was in the mood or when I was tired of playing with my friends. When I reached Form 3, I decided to commit myself to the art of weaving.”

Anisi was a young girl attending Ratu Sukuna Memorial School in Nabua, who apart from being educated in the academia was also knowledgeable in the art of weaving.

“As the only girl in a family of three boys, it occurred to me one day, if my mother was to pass on, no one would teach me how to weave,” she said.

“Vetiver is her hobby and her finished products would warm the floor of our home and a treasured possession during traditional functions,” said Anisi.

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