



# Takitaki

## AN EYE-OPENING JOURNEY AROUND THE WORLD

Konnichiwa, hola guey, privet and allo! The 19<sup>th</sup> Ship for World Youth program has come to an end. This journey has been a life-changing experience for me and the 255 participating youths from all 14 countries. It was an eye-opener for most of us to experience new cultures and to bond beyond our own borders with youths from different countries.

We shared and exchanged ideas on projects being undertaken in our countries. We also took advantage of this opportunity to build our confidence. We presented seminars and workshops and simply interacted with people from all backgrounds and professions, such as the United Nations, the legal sector, NGOs and many others.

I thank the Japanese government for their generosity. I will contribute the knowledge I have gained from the trip to youth empowerment and the various projects undertaken at FRIEND for the benefit of our greater society. Thanks to FRIEND for allowing me to be part of this wonderful journey. I have not only gained knowledge, but acquired many new friends, networks and families all over the world.

—Devina Devi



Devina (left) and fellow Fiji delegates with the Captain of the ship, Nippon Maru on Japan night

## “EMPOWERING THE GIRL CHILD” ON INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY



Ba “Girl Child”, Atasi, with femLink Correspondent, Mereani

To commemorate International Women’s Day on 8 March, femLINK Pacific set up their community mobile suitcase radio at the Ba Senior Citizens Centre. This was part of a three-day visit to the West to talk with women in FRIEND communities.

People started arriving at the Senior Centre by 8 a.m. for the festivities. There were about twenty-five women present at the centre to celebrate this occasion. Some of them heard about the live broadcasting from friends or neighbors, others saw the ad on TV. The women, young and old, were wearing sulu chamba, saris and salwaar kameez—making the day a colorful one. It was beautiful to see women from different cultures, ethnicities, religions and backgrounds gathering together. This year’s theme was “Empowering the Girl Child through Education and Building a Supportive Environment”. The day was celebrated with stories, songs, peace messages and the cutting of the cake by the Ba “Girl Child”, sixteen month-old Atasi Valesasa, and three other young women.

As rural women, this was the first time for many of the participants to celebrate International Women’s Day. The femLINK broadcast on 98.2 FM allowed the concerns of the women at the centre to be heard. It also gave all of those present—and listening—the opportunity to understand why women celebrate this day: to share, remember and acknowledge what courageous women have done in the past to make positive changes in the world for all women.

## A CONTAINER FOR OUR KITCHEN

FRIEND’s Lautoka kitchen purchased a much-awaited shipping container. Nestle (Fiji) Limited assisted financially to get the 20-foot container that will be used for the storage of finished food products. The container was one of the priorities for the kitchen for a long time as there was a great shortage of storage space in the building. This was due to the increase in production scale as well as in the range of products. Finished products will be stored in the container once maintenance work on the container is completed.

The new storage space will also create more production space in the kitchen for our line of products.

Nestle Marketing Manager, Fitzroy Kennedy, presents a check to FRIEND QC Officer, Zeenat



## FROM THE VISITORS’ BOOK



Commissioner of Prisons, Iowane Naivalurua (left), and staff view handmade cards by Deaf Youths while visiting FRIEND.

Australian High Commissioner, James Batley, purchases Friend’s Fiji Style™ products during his visit to the FRIEND office.



**THE YOUTH EMPLOYMENT NETWORK**

The Youth Employment Network (YEN) is one of our new pilot projects within the Youth Development Program. Through YEN, we work closely with interested organizations in the recruitment and training of youths in the Western Division for part-time work.

This project helps to increase the confidence of our youth in public speaking and provide them with practical work experience. It aims to conduct further training in personal development and job application skills, hence empowering youths socially and economically.

Nestle (Fiji) Limited has taken the initial step in recruiting unemployed youth and university students working with our program. The youths have been trained and are now promoting products from Nestle at various locations in the West. While doing so, the youths are also building presentation, report writing and critical thinking skills. All of these are required as they carry out their responsibilities: interacting with the public and providing information, compiling feedback, making recommendations and offering suggestions to Nestle about the promotions. This is a great method for Nestle to evaluate their products and promotions and valuable work experience for the youth.



*Enthusiastic participants in the YEN project with Nestle promote products at MH in Lautoka*

**What's Happening?**

**March**

**21** International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

**22** World Day for Water



**April**

**7** World Health Day

**TRAUMA HEALING & MANAGING STRESS IN VATUKOULA**

FRIEND saw the need for this workshop after a few visits to Vatukoula. In talking to the people and hearing stories of the difficulties they are facing since the closure of the Emperor Goldmine, FRIEND decided to invite Koila Costello-Ollson to conduct and facilitate this 3-day workshop held at Loloma Hall. The purpose was to create a space for sharing about their families, their hard work, some of the challenges in their lives, and the dreams they have for themselves and their families.

In day one, 19 participants (4 males, 15 females) attended, and on the second and last days 7 more participants joined in, as the word spread about the workshop and what good it did for their lives individually. Storytelling was the most moving and emotional chapter of their lives. There were moments of tears, laughter, frustration and anger shown during the sessions, but they were all moments of truth and the reality of what is going on with every individual that was present throughout the workshop.

FRIEND is going to do follow up workshops in Vatukoula. And, at the participants' request, FRIEND will introduce the Income Generating Program for women who are doing handicrafts, cooking and sewing, but have no markets for their products.



*Workshop participants and facilitators in Vatukoula*

**ANALYZING CONFLICT TO PROMOTE PEACE**

FRIEND staff recently attended a two-part workshop on conflict and peace building supported by ECREA and Oxfam (Australia), held at the St Luke's Anglican Church Hall in Suva. The workshop focused on the analysis of conflict, justice, violence and society.

The objectives of the course were to understand why there is conflict and violence and why people act as they do in times of conflict; explore the roots of conflict and violence and the issue of justice in our society; and develop and apply practical tools for analyzing a range of interpersonal and community conflicts.

The first part of the course covered a variety of tools to "map" and describe society as we experience it. Participants gained confidence in talking about issues of conflict, violence and injustice in our society from the work done in this portion of the course. The second part focused on understanding the roots of conflict and injustice. Participants explored together how the structures of society contribute to conflict and peace. The importance of being aware of human rights and needs when examining the causes of conflict was emphasized. Contributing factors to conflict such as the roles of identity, shame and humiliation in the cycle of violence and the impact of violence were also discussed. From this, participants gained skills in power and cultural analysis and the psychological analysis of conflict.

With the knowledge and new skills gained from this workshop, FRIEND staff will have many more resources at their disposal when dealing with conflicts that occur in their work and supporting communities as they work toward peaceful resolutions.

