

Takitaki

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 1, JANUARY 2009

FRIEND Flood Relief



Devastation all around

FRIEND was forced to take on a new role of a relief coordination agency in Ba and Nadi this month as we looked at the situation on the ground and decided that we do what we have to aid those needing assistance after the massive floods struck the western division - a flood (we are told) of proportions never experienced by anyone before. Waters reaching new levels, higher than anyone recalls from before. Everywhere that we went, the scene was the same. Although the waters had receded, most people were watching helplessly, shocked by the devastation surrounding them. In the meantime a number of agencies began sounding out flood appeal to assist victims. But while things were being collected at centres, the victims could only wait. Whatever items were being dropped off at FRIEND seemed so little when it came to the demand on the ground. Meantime we worked through contacts and built relationships with who we saw were up and about amongst the people.



Viam Pillay offloading from FRIEND truck



Ajay Kumar dealing with boxes from Suva

Items collected through FBCL/Vodafone/SCC, Hibiscus flood appeal were distributed in Nadi and Ba areas through FRIEND network. In Ba 2 container loads

were delivered to the Vatulaulau Police Post where majority of the goods were dispersed within hours according to a needs list prepared by Chairman of advisory Council Mr Viam Pil-

lay. While in Nadi a container was delivered at the Enamanu Shopping Center and distributed under the guidance of a social worker Mr Ajay Kumar.

The staff and management of Pacific Shipping Agencies contacted FRIEND for guidance into the flood affected communities so that they could deliver their goods to the affected families. The staff and management of the Pacific Shipping Agency were ready to dirty their hands and accompanied staff and volunteers into the field distributing around \$30,000 worth of flood relief supplies including mattresses and beddings.



Pacific Shipping Team at Chinatown Raviravi

The Lions Club of Lautoka lent a hand to FRIEND's drive to provide mattresses and beddings to flood affected families by forking out \$3,500 dollars to buy a hundred mattresses. Signing the cheque Lions Lautoka Representative Mr Pyush Jamnadas said it is the first time that he has written out such a big cheque for Lions for a single project. Lions Club contributed to the beddings after FRIEND raised concerns that the flood affected families did not have decent provisions for sleeping because even though they were receiving help in form of food, clothes and other relief items, no one was seen to be working on replacing the soaked and rotting mattresses that had been damaged by



Karishma and Sandhya receiving the cheque from Lautoka Lions

flood waters.

Rotary, Mrs Rajneesh Charan, Karan and staff of SPD, Soroptomist, Garden City Tenants, FSPI, Mr Jitesh Patel of CK's Bargain Center, Mr Phillip Gock, Dr Mridula Prasad and many more and last but not the least NZ AID for covering the majority of the budget of FRIEND relief work.



We would like to thank the NZAID for mobilizing funds to NGOs on the ground for speedy

relief work. FRIEND asked for \$54,000 which the agency approved. Bulk of the funds that is \$35,000 was spent on providing mattresses to a thousand households. These families were also provided with beddings and mosquito nets. 150 most needy families were also provided with stoves and kerosene. Currently FRIEND is working with Patan's Medical Clinic to set up medical camps in the affected areas. Two doctors and a retired nurse from USA are here to volunteer for this service.

Agencies that were seen out distributing supplies themselves

Sevashram from Suva and Lautoka were one of the first agencies seen distributing about 20 tonnes of food in affected Sigatoka, Nadi and Ba areas. Fiji Muslim League, Shri Santan Dharam Nadi branch and Rama Krishna Mission Nadi have also been visiting households distributing food rations in Ba and Nadi. SDA was out rebuilding homes and Rotary distributed emergency packs. Punjas has been out delivering relief items and General Machinery Lautoka management and staff have also been out delivering supplies in Ba. Sun Insurance distributed food packs in Ba and Nadi and so did Sai and AOL organisations.



A UNMC Visit...



Pimple with Sandhya, Sashi, Jone and Jia in front of the GCAP Mural @ FRIEND

FRIEND Staff heard first hand from the United Nations Millennium Campaign Deputy Director, Mr Minar Pimple about the progress different countries are making on MDGs. On his way to participate at the ACP-EU Parliamentary Assembly in PNG Mr Pimple visited Fiji and met with stakeholders in Suva on 28th November.

Mr Pimple discussed Fiji's MDGs status and progress. The discussions were aimed at exploring possibilities of potential collaborations and partnership.

SPC FACT Assistance



SPC FACT assistance to FRIEND continues. The project engaged a consultant who has just completed a feasibility study of dried fruit markets. In the meantime work continues on

sourcing the necessary equipment for trials of new products. The picture shows the construction of a drier in Hawaii, expected to be brought into the country by the end of February. FACT is the program of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community providing technical assistance to development projects.





CANADA FUND PROGRAM FOR LOCAL INITIATIVES

Do you want handmade paper? FRIEND can now make paper according to your wish. Recycled paper, flower paper, onion paper or fiber paper. Although we had trialed paper making last year, we now have the proper equipment to churn out quality recycled paper. The special equipment had to be ordered from New Zealand and the project has been funded by the Canada Fund. The paper making project involves special needs youths who are now able to supplement their incomes by working on the same.



Mala and Leonie Smiley of the Canada Fund next to the Hollander Beater



Birthday Girl flanked by two of initial volunteers of FRIEND, Kimberly and Mala

In midst of the added running around with the relief work the staff of FRIEND managed to take a break to celebrate a special birthday this month. Mereani Lomaivere is known as the face of FRIEND in the communities we work with. She is one of the initial volunteers who joined as a part time field worker in 2002.

Recipe Corner

Pineapple Rice Continental Style

Ingredients:

1 fresh pineapple – peeled and crushed in the food processor/blender
 2 Cups Basmati or fragrant rice (long grain can also be used)
 2 and a half cups water
 Curry Leaves, Mustard seeds, 2 cloves of garlic, 1 medium onion, Corriander leaves, salt to taste , 1 tbsp oil and *Friend's Fiji Style*® Chilli Chutney

Method

1. Heat oil in a pot
2. Brown chopped onions, garlic, mustard seeds and curry leaves.
3. Add crushed pineapple and sauté it till the liquids dry up.
4. Add *Friend's Fiji Style*® Chilli Chutney (to suit your taste buds).
5. Add salt.
6. Add the washed rice to the pot and heat the mixture through, stirring and mixing the pineapple and rice as it cooks.
7. Add the 2 and a half cups water to the mixture and close the pot.
8. Turn off heat when the rice is cooked.
9. Garnish with coriander leaves/Red chillies.



By Sandhya Narayan

