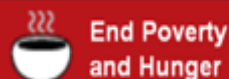




MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS



End Poverty and Hunger



Universal Education



Gender Equality



Child Health



Maternal Health



Combat HIV/AIDS



Environmental Sustainability



Global Partnership

POVERTY MOBILISATION MONTH RACE for MDG's

There was much excitement as the youths from FRIEND communities and supporting business houses gathered in Tuvu for the annual Race Against Poverty with a difference this year. Since its inception in 2006, the scavenger hunt on poverty has been conducted in the city. With FRIEND's move to Tuvu, an idyllic village around 16km towards Ba from the Sugar Capital, the race also relocated to Tuvu. The day had dawned cloudy, perfect for the racers.

Chief Guest for the Day, Mr Harry Solomon, Area Manager West for WESTPAC kicked off the day with a strong emphasis on the MDG 8, *"In working towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) we understand that it is not one individual's or one organization's task but needs the collaboration between Government, the Private sector, NGOs, Civil Society and the Media"*. The nine participating teams launched themselves fully into the challenges of the day scoping the rough terrain for clues on questions surrounding the Millennium Development Goals. This popular annual FRIEND event is loosely based on tv gameshow Amazing Race. The teams decipher clues for answers as they progress with the race.

The sponsors of the day included, WESTPAC, Fiji Water, Eddie Hin and Nestle.

There are fears in Fiji that poverty will increase as the costs of the basic necessities of life rise.

Already about fifty per cent of Fiji's population live at or below the official poverty line which is set at an income of US\$4,000 a year for a family.

The bureau of statistics says there has been a marked increase in the cost of basic food and other items and global trends are pushing these higher. *RNZI 4/10/2010*

Forty-five per cent of people in Fiji are living in poverty, this was revealed at a workshop on poverty alleviation impact assessment. The figures, derived from the yet to be released Household and Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES 2008/2009), was presented to the workshop by the Poverty Eradication Unit of the Office of the Prime Minister. This would mean that 360,000 people in Fiji are living in poverty. Also revealed was the fact that the Government, between 2000 and 2008 had spent \$1.5 billion on poverty eradication programmes but the figures from the survey had shown that instead of eradicating poverty, levels had grown since 2000. Workshop facilitator Dr Howard White of the International Initiative for Impact Evaluation told the workshop that the level

of poverty has increased from the last survey done in 2007 which showed that poverty was around 32 per cent. He said Fiji suffered from the twin paradoxes of poverty in the midst of plenty and rising poverty accompanying rising spending on poverty alleviation programmes. He said the wealth of the nation was not trickling down to the grassroots but was shared among a few. Dr White said that there was a need to promote programmes which would allow people living in poverty to have equal opportunities to goods and services enjoyed by those in the high income brackets.

Fiji Times 21/04/2010

Poverty in this country can be tackled with skill building of those in need says the founder of Foundation for Rural Integrated Enterprises & Development (FRIEND). Sashi Kiran says that's market exists for many local products. With improved skills and provision of market those in need will be able to walk out of poverty and have the capacity to provide for their families. In the last 8 years FRIEND has seen major changes in peoples lives by provision of these support. FRIEND programs currently provide income to many than 500 families.





A Motivating Letter from PRISM's new Nurse Coordinator

“As I was introduced to my colleagues on the very first day with **PRISM**, I realized that this is home, because the heart of the organization shelters and breeds the burning passion within me, which is to reach out to the unreached and unvisited communities along the Lautoka, & Ba corridors.”

*Sister Mereia Bogitini
Nurse Coordinator, PRISM*

DMO West Visits PRISM



Dr Praveena Ali with Dr Sinha and Dr Tharid Ali

A team of senior officials from the Ministry of Health in the West took time to visit PRISM Health Initiative located at Tuvu this month.

The team included the Divisional Medical Officer West Dr Tharid Ali, NCD Coordinator West Dr Praveena Ali and the Senior Dietician West.

The PRISM Health Community Initiative has been started in consultation and with the support of the Ministry of Health.

The senior officials had a look at the systems and procedures put in place by the PRISM team for its effective service delivery into the communities.

Dr Ali commended the initiative saying every helping hand goes a long way in the battle against the lifestyle diseases in the country.

PRISM has successfully treated a lot of newly diagnosed Diabetics and Hypertensives. Recently, a 78 year old Fijian male in one of our communities, after thorough inspection and interview by Dr. Sinha, was referred for a treadmill test at the Suva Private Hospital. Here the Specialists diagnosed him with blockage of an artery in his heart for the very first time. This is just one of many similar examples we have encountered over the months. Even though the PRISM team, led by Dr. Animesh Sinha, just started in March, I sincerely believe, that PRISM is making a tremendous difference.

I take my hat off to the pioneers of this program, who have tirelessly struggled to make a difference in their various spheres. To the Doctor who left home, friends, relatives and comfort, to serve, love, comfort and diagnose the needs of the most vulnerable communities in the West and Fiji.... Thank you! To the senior and experienced nurses, Sr. Prakash, and Sr. Sai. I believe your efforts and contributions will never go unnoticed. Thank you for all the motherly advice and support that you have given me. To the two greatest assistants ever, Basil & Babita, a big Shukriya for the great work you've done in supporting everyone.

And finally, I am indeed honored to be under the leadership of the Director of the organization, Ms. Sashi Kiran. We have heard how you started the organization from its very humble beginnings and how you have tremendously affected the lives of the people of Fiji. I believe the world, would be a much better place to live in, if it had such like-minded people who strive not for themselves, but for the general betterment of the world. It is indeed an honor to have this once in a lifetime opportunity to make a difference through

FRIEND's PRISM Health Initiative.

“Do not be afraid to chase your dreams, and remember, every setback is a learning experience” Mr William Parkinson, Founder/director FM96/Navatarang/Viti FM speaking at DESI III Conference in Tuvu, September 2010. He started his first radio station at the age of 23.



Jone Nawaikula

Poverty March Lautoka

FRIEND youths formed the tail end of the Poverty March organised by the Ministry of Social Welfare. Our youths made noise against poverty with their whistles, dholaks and tambourines. The Poverty March on the 20th of this month brought stakeholders who are involved in trying to alleviate poverty in the West including NGOs and government ministries.

The day commemorated the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty that falls on the 17th and the awareness event was made even stronger when organizations took to the podium to explain what they have to offer for to the communities that needed assistance. Youth Development Officer Jone Nawaikula spoke on FRIEND and its programs. He says that partnerships in this area of work are needed as one cannot work alone to alleviate poverty. Jone says that if all organizations concerned work together toward development achievement of MDGs by 2015 may be closer to achievement.

Jone stated that it would help if communities take ownership of what they have such as their natural resources and together with skills convert this into income generation projects.

He stressed the need to look more into the issues and needs and the plight's of youths as they will be our future mothers and fathers and leaders of our nation. During the year FRIEND reached out to around 200 youths with its social and economic empowerment.

August 2010-August 2011: The International Year of the Youth: " Dialogue and Mutual Understanding

More than 70 youths from various organizations and communities assembled at the Police Academy to discuss the future of the sector. The staging of the elections of the interim National Youth Council of Fiji, the presentation of a draft constitution of the NYC and selection of a committee to finalize the document and the National Youth Policy review and its consultation were also on the agenda.

The two day event was hosted by the Department of Youth and Sports. Opening speaker Police Commissioner Ioane Naivalurua spoke about the untapped potential of youth for economic and social growth. He recognized that youths face increasing challenges in reaching their potential as they remain the most vulnerable to crime and deviance, sexually transmitted diseases, drug and substance abuse and unemployment. Naivalurua says the challenge for decision makers is in harnessing the energy, imagination and initiative of Fiji's youth to overcome these hurdles.

Other motivational speakers included Mr Lionel Gibson from and Jackie Koroï from the Pacific Youth Council both of whom stressed the need for youth participation in decision making.

Elections were held on the second day for the National Youth Council.

Jone Nawaikula from FRIEND has been elected from the Youth Assembly of the Fiji Islands to the NYC representing the Western Region.



Voices of Youth

Pawpaws to nourish relationships and health

More than 150 papaya plants have been distributed by the FRIEND Labasa team in their communities as part of the grow and eat fresh program. AYAD Paula Dunne says the recent rains helped in flourishing the seeds planted in the FRIEND garden from the staff meals and they were ready for distribution in time to mark the Eradication of Poverty Day that was celebrated on the 17th of October, 2010. Dunne says the women who have taken the seedlings have promised to make more seedlings and distribute them further.

FRIEND Team joined the community in Labasa to commemorate the International Day of Eradication of Poverty at the Subrail Park. The participants from FRIEND Communities brought along their handi-crafts to showcase and sell. FRIEND was acknowledged by the organizers for its work in the North.

As the group finished up at Subrail Park the ladies made their way back to FRIEND office for a shared lunch put together by one of the community groups. Programs Officer Mereani Lomavere says yet another group had volunteered to prepare juice for the group and it was a great opportunity for the women to sit down and share the experiences with each other.



Seedling Sharing



Lunch

Fiji Policing Business of the Future

A great opportunity to network and make new friends was offered by the Fiji Police Force in the form of a Consultative Forum for their 2011 –2015 Strategic Plan as around 1-hundred-and-ten youths, communities and other NGOs

gathered in Lautoka. The forum emphasized the call of the Police Commissioner Brigadier General Ioane Naivalurua that Police can no longer control crime single handedly and that policing needs to be a shared responsibility between police and the people. Communities were invited to voice their opinions on the strengths and weaknesses of the Fiji Police Force, their expectations of the Force in the future and formulate their vision statement of what the Force should look like in the coming years. The Force believes this will allow them to come up with a plan that is more widely understood, accepted and supported by both the police and the community.



A Salute to Rural Women World Rural Women's Day 15 Oct

"World Rural Women's Day" has been celebrated, primarily by civil society, across the world for over a decade. The first International Day of Rural Women was observed in New York on 15 October 2008. This day recognizes the role of rural women in enhancing agricultural and rural development, improving food security and eradicating rural poverty. *Rural women, mainly farmers, are at least 1.6 billion and represent more than a quarter of the total world population. *Women produce on average more than half of all the food that is grown *Women represent two third of all illiterate people. *The number of rural women living in poverty has doubled since 1970.

www.rural-womens-day.org

To one and all,

Good Wishes for a joyous Diwali
and a Happy New Year
with an abundance of
Peace and Prosperity.



From the Staff and Management of
the
*Foundation for Rural Integrated
Enterprises & Development*



Recycled Paper Lamp Shade

The creative team at FRIEND is excited with its new creation— A lampshade made from recycled paper and banana fibre paper.

Creative Director Nileshni Sekar says the texture of the banana fibre paper is such that it creates a unique ambience when the lamp is lit. The lamp is a result of the ongoing research and development efforts of the creative team as it strives to look into new product ideas in its quest for poverty alleviation.

The lampshade adds to the growing range of recycled paper products that have stemmed from its paper making project. The range includes recycled paper cards, photo frames, notebooks, paper jewelry, writing packs and art packs.

Meanwhile the kava paper made from leftover kava kosa is enjoying growing popularity as a unique souvenir from Fiji amongst the tourist market. The Kava paper is available from FRIEND headquarters in Lautoka, *Friend's Fiji Style®* Shop at the Garden City and at Prouds as well as Tappoos Duty Free stores at the Nadi International Airport.



Besan ka Halwa (a Diwali treat)

Ingredients

1 cup besan, 1 cup ghee, 1 cup sugar, 1/4 cup *Friend's Fiji Style*® Dessicated Coconut, 1 cup water

Method

Heat a wide pan on medium heat. Dry roast the besan in it

for 2-3 minutes, till it has changed color to brown and just begins to smell fragrant. Make a well in the besan and add the ghee. Continue to cook the besan in it for 5-7 minutes.

When the besan becomes dark brown, add sugar and most of the dessicated coconut.. Cook for another minute or so. Turn up the heat. Add water. Besan will start boiling right away. Stir vigorously or lumps can form. After the boil, reduce heat, keep stirring. When the water evaporates and besan achieves the consistency of a smooth, flexible paste, halwa is ready. Garnish with dessicated coconut or other nuts of choice and serve.

Besan is the Indian name for gram flour. I prefer to use 'chickpea' besan for this recipe.
- Sandhya Narayan



MY FRIEND & ME

For a constant supply of fresh and nutritious food for my family for the past 20 years I had relied heavily on the market. I usually spent 20 to 30 dollars on vegetables and fruits every week. But this all came to an end when a friend of mine invited me to a workshop conducted by FRIEND. I went along not because I was interested but because of my inquisitiveness.

I did not think or dream that this workshop was going to change me and my family lifestyle for the better. Vive and Arti conducted the workshop that day and on the very next day, my two nephews and I cleaned up my backyard and made 4 plots of eggplants, dhanian, cabbage and long beans. I worked on the 4 plots the whole week. I was excited and could hardly wait for the following Wednesday for the next training.

Laisa Baleikasavu was declared the "Top Participant" of the first batch of Graduates of the Governance Community Development Module.

In May I had my first harvest which I took along to my church pastor. Since then, I have not gone to the market to buy our vegetables. I have been putting everything I learn at the workshop into practice and have seen the changes it has done to my life and family as a whole. The changes in my family's health and weight have been tremendous. Before I learnt budgeting, I did not understand the importance of saving little coins. In saving just 10 cents a day, it could count to a \$50 note in future. I have extended my backyard garden to 21 plots of carrots, cabbage, pumpkin, raddish, cabbage, capsicum, potatoes long beans and borah. I have started my own income generating project by selling my produce from my backyard garden. Cooking, packaging and selling popcorn is also one of the things that I have started doing twice a week. I make \$40.00 from this and I use the money for my soli (Christmas club) money box saving and house hold expenses. I am able to minimize waste by doing my composting and at the same time it is very useful to my garden as I produce my own top soil. I also go to the market and collect vegetable waste for my compost heap. I help my husband with the family's income. I am now using my talents that I once had ignored and had never thought of utilizing it. I have started sewing pillow cases and doing patch work in my spare time and selling it for additional income. I would like to thank FRIEND for helping me change my family's lifestyle and my family and I have become healthier, wiser and smarter.

Youths Take Lead in Keeping their River Clean

As we got ready to start off the Clean Up activity for the day, the question put out to the community was, "What does the river mean to you?". The response was anything but expected, "**cause for diseases, floods and a barrier to some good things that we want happening in our communities**". The answers were enough to shock the youths in the community to appoint themselves as River Patrol Officers. After a day spent cleaning up the settlement, the youths of the two squatter settlements that sit next to each other, have taken it on themselves to ensure that the river next to their settlement remains clean. And the group has pitched in to put up a sign warning the potential offenders, "LITTERING THE RIVER IS \$5.00 FINE". Apart from appointing people to keep an eye on the cleanliness of the river the youths have also appointed a Health team to ensure the general hygiene of the two neighbouring squatter communities on the outskirts of Lautoka.

Activity coordinator Vive Liutaki says it was encouraging to see other members of the community coming out in numbers to lend a hand to the campaigners and clean up their surroundings.

The Lautoka City Council once again played an important role in providing a truck to cart the rubbish away.



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