



### Defining Quality in Adult Education

Quality is a key focus for us at FRIEND as we try and develop programs and products for the communities. For the products made from the income generation programs there are set quality guidelines but it has not been so easy defining the bench marks for quality adult education programs we run in the communities. We are thankful that we have been able to engage in discussions for defining bench marks for adult education in the region since 2009.

FRIEND is a member of Asia South Pacific Bureau for Adult Education (ASPBAE). In 2009, ASPBAE had started the first initiative on deepening its understanding on what constitutes 'Quality Adult Education'. This initiative was a regional workshop on 'Building a Shared Understanding of Quality Adult Education in the Asia Pacific' organised in Jakarta, Indonesia. At this workshop the participants collectively arrived at a framework for analyzing "quality adult education" – centered in right's based, gender-just and empowerment core principles – drawn from the very diverse and rich practice of adult education in the region, including initiatives launched by ASPBAE through its thematic programmes.

This November Adult Education practitioners from around the region met again in Jakarta to see how this framework has been working in practice. Practitioners shared their experiences to build a collective and shared understanding on concepts underpinning Indigenous education and

Women's Education for Political Participation & Citizenship to better analyze quality adult education in these thematic areas.

The workshop arrived at commonly agreed set of benchmarks for quality Indigenous Education and Women's Education for Citizenship Building within the framework of empowering, pro-poor and gender just core values. These bench marks will be further validated in the region before a publication is released.



Sashi with a fellow participant

### The Indonesian Experience



Nileshni with her fellow participants in Indonesia

Taking time out from one of the busiest periods at FRIEND was a huge challenge as the orders for Christmas Cards piled in. But what has to be done, has to be done.

Confident of my team's capacity to tackle large orders I packed my bags for week-long trip to Indonesia.

The "NeXT Sharing & Learning Meet" was the concluding phase of the 18 months long learning process to build a cadre of regional trainers and facilitators to advance the adult education work in the Asia & South Pacific region held in Solo City.

I have been fortunate to be part of the program facilitated by Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE).

It was a chance to be together once again for the 16 participants from eight different countries and learn from each others challenges and experiences, look at our guiding values and explore ways of increasing our own efficiencies.

I believe the exposure itself has been an inspiring and a motivating experience



### Good Practice at FRIEND

As the month drew to an end, FRIEND received an encouraging mail from UN habitat once again informing us of yet another certification for the Good Practice

Award. This followed an initial award in the same category in 2006 for Income Generating Project. The Technical Advisory Committee of UN Habitat based in Nairobi met in Dubai, UAE in October 2010 and evaluated a total of 340 practices. Of these 100 were deemed Best Practices, 198 Good Practices, and 44 Promising Practices. The TAC process was a culmination of 12 months of receiving entries and validation by a network of institutions and partners. From the 1996 to 2010 approx 4,000 good and best practices from 140 countries have been compiled on the Habitat Best Practices database. Through its global network of partners, Best Practices are analyzed with a view to extracting lessons that others can learn from and incorporate into their own work. The Best Practices Programme and its partners also produce casebooks, engage in the transfers of best practice knowledge and expertise, and often invite good and best practices to be showcased in conferences, seminars and training workshops.



Ram Kishore of Caffe Rosa, Australia



### A Happy Customer

"Great job of replicating the logo guys, very intricate and unique." came the response from Sydney. A well known Coffee Shop in Blacktown, Caffè Rosa lent a hand across the ocean to poverty alleviation in Fiji through its order of Friend's Fiji Style® Handcrafted Christmas Cards.

The team looked at the logo of the Coffee Shop and came up with a iris folding/quill combo.

"We were not sure how it would turn out, but we really like the handcrafted cards and are thoroughly pleased with the result." says Mr Ram Kishore, a former Tuvu resident



*Kunal marks the plot for the square foot*



*The ladies take over ...*



*Plotted & Planted*

### ***Planting a Square Foot of Seedlings***

“Organic gardening was a new concept for us and very interesting as we got to learn how we can keep chemicals away from what we eat” said a participant as we wrapped up the governance session of the week with this particular community.

Members of this settlement in Lautoka have been involved in commercial farming. This session taught them basics of organic farming as well as building of square foot gardens around their homes. Despite knowing so much about farming the enthusiasm for learning in this group was very visible. They came prepared to dig their square foot gardens.

After spending an hour on discussing the advantages of organic garden the participants enthusiastically joined in and took over the practical demonstration of square foot gardening for cultivating seedlings .

Their square foot gardens now have seeds of chillies, radish, cabbage and spring onion being put into the four plots of the garden.

The group of ladies are participants of the FRIEND/USP Community Development course that is being conducted based on the Community Development Manual launched by FRIEND earlier this year.

The course is conducted by FRIEND while the tasks set in the modules are assessed by USP Lautoka. Graduating students are awarded Certificate in Community Development by FRIEND/USP.

FRIEND Director Sashi Kiran says the program allows people in rural communities a certification of what they know and do best and empowers them in taking lead roles in initiatives for their own development.

Governance team takes this program to interested communities with 15-20 participants, before starting with four months program with them. Facilitators work with these communities for two hours every week over the months guiding them through the theories and practical lessons. We hope that after being with the program that long the participants are themselves able to see the difference that they have been able to bring in their own lives and are thus willing to continue implementing what they have learnt in their lives as well as inspiring those around them to make a change for the better.

The modules covered in the course include Active Citizenship, Food Security, Community Governance, Disaster Management, Income Generation Projects and Participatory Budgeting. We hope that the next award ceremony for graduating students from at least 10 different communities will be completing the modules by next year will be hosted by USP Lautoka in March 2011

### ***On the right track...***

Fiji’s newly appointed Trade Commissioner L.A. Mr Jitendra Singh took time out on his recent visit to Fiji to stop over at FRIEND and provide a feedback on his assessment of potential new US markets for FRIEND’s Fiji Style products.

Singh says he has seen **Friend’s Fiji Style®** food products in a number of shops that sell items from Fiji in LA, and he remains impressed with the quality and standard of labeling and packaging that has been development and is being maintained by FRIEND.

Singh says products from Fiji stand a better chance in the American market if they are competitively packaged and presented.

Singh added that even with the wide choice of pickles and chutneys available on shelf in the US, his family is a great fan of

**Friend’s Fiji Style®** products as for them it is a genuine taste from home.



*Sandhya Narayan, Jitendra Singh and Rakesh Prasad (FTIB)*

### ***Nurses with Passion***



*PRISM Nurses— SrSai, Nurse Babita, Sr Mereia, Sir Prakash*

To express our appreciation to the hard working nurses of the PRISM program and to mark 2010 as the Year of the Nurses, staff dug into their pockets for a small bite of tea to treat our angels of hope for many communities.

Acknowledging the gesture, Sister Dhairya Prakash spoke of nursing as a passion for those involved in it. A passion that shows clearly, as the more senior members have embraced the opportunity to continue serving those in need after their retirement after serving for years through government hospitals.

## Diwali 2010 @ FRIEND

Diwali, "the Festival of Lights" was celebrated with much fanfare and gaiety at FRIEND headquarters in Tuvalu as the team marked its first Deepavali at it's new home.

Indian Fashion was the dress code for the day and as the more creative ones got down to painting "rangoli's", others lent a hand to set up the table of treats.

The message of the day focused on the spiritual meaning of Diwali as "the awareness of the inner light" and in the "victory of good over evil", the light of higher knowledge dispelling all ignorance, that masks one's true nature.



## FARM VISITS

Farmers in Labasa have welcomed the suggestions put forward by FRIEND to look at crops that can replace the imported grains that are currently flooding the local markets.

Speaking to a group of farmers in Korotari, on a recent visit to the North, FRIEND Director Sashi Kiran reiterated that despite the wealth of resources to cultivate our own, around 80% of the food we eat as a nation comes from abroad, which in simple terms means that the wealth that can be spent locally is being sent away.

She assured the farmers that there is a market for local goods if the farmers are able to guarantee the quality and consistency of their supply.

The farmers have been asked to look at a number of produce that can be dried and have longer shelf lives rather than the easily perishable variety.

"The farmers in Labasa are hardworking. Having worked in sugar cane fields for so long, they know a lot about farming and intercropping. They have good land there as well. We are not asking them not to plant sugar, but to think for themselves about other crops that can benefit them. We have also been talking to local business houses about the possibility of markets for this crops and the response has been quite good. We are hopeful that we should soon be able to see the results of our work in this area." says Sashi.



## Handicraft from the North.

A number of women from communities around Labasa gathered at FRIEND Labasa office early this month for a discussion on livelihoods using existing skills and resources. FRIEND Director Sashi Kiran and IGP manager Nilesjni Sekar discussed various handicraft that could be marketed. The importance of quality and consistency was emphasized. Crafts made by women were looked at ideas given on how to improve marketability of these. The women are participants of the Governance program through which they were motivated to explore and use their skills.

One of the participants, Nau Liti says "Now every time I weave, new ideas keep coming, it (weaving) was something I did not take seriously until I joined the FRIEND training. Now I realise that I can use my skills with a little bit of creativity and earn some money to contribute to my household as well." Check out *Friend's Fiji Style Shop* @ Garden City for a new range of woven baskets from the North.



## Recipe Corner: Date Balls

### Ingredients:

- 1 cup raw almonds
- 1 cup dates (pits taken out)
- 1/2 cup **Friend's Fiji Style**® Desiccated Coconut flakes
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract (plus extra for the coating)



### Method:

In a food processor, first blend the almonds to a fine meal, then add the dates a few at a time. Next add the coconut flakes and vanilla extract and pulse a few times. Place the mixture in a small bowl and mix using hands. Form one inch balls and roll into the extra coconut flakes. Place container lined with lunch wrap and refrigerate!  
**DELICIOUS!**



*Impress your friends and family this Christmas with this no fail healthy delight*



## GATTA gets a new form

"I don't think so", "This candy gets hard too fast", "It can't be done",

Despite the reservations of those who surrounded her, Sashi asked the producer of Gatta in Labasa to show her how to make gatta, Sashi then concentrated on forming new shapes for xmas and voila! A 'new' product was added to the basket of the Friend's Fiji Style® goodies.



G a t t a sugar candies from Labasa has once again found a new life in the form of candy whirls for Christmas. Include some in your x-mas hampers for the true taste of Fiji. These candy whirls can be found at Friend's Fiji Style Shop at Garden City, Suva as well as few selected retail outlets in Nadi and Lautoka. Thank you for your support in our poverty alleviation initiative

**My Story—WHAT A CHANGE!**

Being a cardiac patient since birth, my mother is pleasantly shocked to see me living a healthy life with a husband and four children. She knew me as a child with a heart disorder who visited the hospital regularly.

During my youth, I was unable to carry heavy load, play sports or even sit for a long time due to pain in chest.

I had no idea about the importance of gardening or starting a small business. FRIEND visited my community and broadened my knowledge in growing my own vegetables and controlling my diet to sustain my family's health and hygiene.

Utilizing the land in my compound for farming is one of the best ways to earn income using available resources and existing skills to eradicate poverty.

Looking at my creative gardens, those living around me are motivated to utilize whatever space they have in their compounds to develop their own gardens and we are all keen to share and exchange what we grow with the others to add variety to our tables.

I encourage women who feel they cannot find ways to support their families, to start their own backyard gardens.

With subsistence farming, family members will be able to get free healthy foods, control family's health, planning, preserving and even budgeting.

My garden is giving me better food for my family and better health. I have faith in God who created me, protected me, healed my wounds enabled me to reach this far.

*Sainiana Mc Goon lives in a home just meters away from the tidal waters. Surrounded by land affected with salt water, she embraced the idea of using compost soil to build her gardens. She also has to compete with mud crabs that threaten to invade her gardens on a regular basis. Her table gardens and hanging gardens are a constant source of joy to her and her family, an area she describes as an oasis in a desert at her squatter home.*



**From the workshops this month:**

**MENTAL HEALTH, Lautoka**

I realised for the first time that mental illness is becoming so common, but hardly anyone takes notice of it. In the communities I work with I will be more observant with the new knowledge I gained from the Mental Health workshop organized by the Ministry of Health in Lautoka. We all need to be working together in making communities accept patients with mental illness without stigma and create awareness that counseling and therapy is available. It is important to know that mental illness can happen to anyone at any age.



*Babita Anjali, PRISM Health*

**LEADERSHIP NEGOTIATION SKILL, Lautoka**



*Mereia Bogitini*

The 3 day training focused the very interesting issue of advocacy; and how we, as advocates, would stand up for the marginalized, the unheard, the weak, and vulnerable people in the community. The Problem Tree approach made us realize that every given problem faced by any youth, or vulnerable group member in any given society has a root cause. We talked about how to address drug abuse, teenage pregnancy, addiction and other common problems through skits, talk back shows and presentations. We were reminded of our responsibilities as citizens in terms of rights, and our responsibilities towards each other.

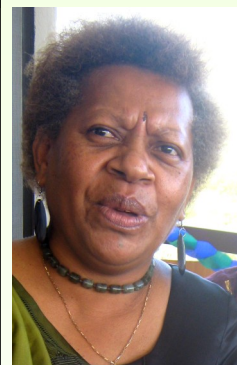
The Training also focused on keeping a focus on our target audience. The strategies in Policy Advocacy Planning was made very simple with guidelines and implementation of action.

The week long workshop was organized by NICE project in Lautoka— Jone and Mereia



*Jone Nawaikula*

**GOOD AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES—Suva**



*Vive Liutaki*

It was great to be amongst those who work in agriculture and production sector. In a video workshop involving participants from four countries, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia and Fiji we looked at agricultural production processes of the produce from before the plant is in the ground as well as animals that are bred for food. The main aim of the program is to promote Food Safety. We talked about the importance of ensuring and protecting natural resources as well as sustainability, marketing access & delivery of high quality produce. I believe I have learnt a lot more things in agriculture which is very important to my work at FRIEND. GAP training was organized by TPAF in Suva.

**Join US**

**YES!**

I want to support the **Foundation for Rural Integrated Enterprises & Development**



**Annual Fee**

Individual \$5.00 Corporate \$50  
Families \$10.00 Community Groups \$20.00

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*Riga*



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