

10 Years



Coconut workshop inspires participants

Discarded coconut shells turned into pieces of art as carefully selected participants worked with an Indonesian trainer to hone their skills at coconut craft.

Drs. Fransiskus Xaverius Supriyono was hired by FRIEND through the Indonesian Embassy to conduct a two week workshop to develop local products for the craft market.

FRIEND IGP Manager Nileshni Sekar says there is increasing demand for genuine local handicraft as the tourism market grows.

“FRIEND’s reputation of delivering 100% local products has seen a number of dealers willing to take on merchandise of quality local products through their esteemed outlets.”

We have been researching new and sellable products and when a trainer was hired we thought it was a fantastic opportunity to upskill some of the crafts people we are working with.” said Nileshni.



*Dr Supriyono shows off the display to
HE Adil Chandra Salim*

Thirteen participants learnt how to make a number of Fiji souvenirs such as hanging lampshades, candle stands, money boxes, long handled spoons, forks and bowls, coconut jewelry and bags etc.

‘I really learnt a lot and I’m looking forward to earning more money,’ said Rajneil.

‘I make kava bowls from coconut shells, now I have a new range of products to work on,’ said Kiso Sivo

Indonesian Ambassador HE Adil Chandra Salim presented graduation certificates to the participants saying, ‘from the items I see displayed here today, I can tell that the workshop has been very successful .’

Community in Japan contributes to Development in Fiji

The Asia Pacific Ladies Friendship Society [ALFS] in Japan has contributed \$6,000 FJD for development work in Fiji through FRIEND.

ALFS comprises of spouses of ambassadors from Asia-Pacific countries based in Tokyo.

Delivering the cheque to FRIEND, Mrs Venina Mataitoga said funds were collected through a ALFS Charity Bazaar and proceeds shared amongst participating countries for ‘assistance back home.’

*Lanieta hands over a thank you present from
FRIEND to Mrs Mataitoga*



Replanting riversides



Communities mobilized in a Replanting Campaign On 5th June to mark World Environment Day

The communities drastically affected by flood waters continue to see erosion every time it rains and have expressed concern about the risk of continued flooding. Replanting to prevent erosion has been a discussion in communities since April. The World Environment day provided an opportune time to get started.

After liaising with the Turaga-Ni-Koro, a FRIEND team worked with community youths to start restoring river bank in a community not far from our office.

The young boys managed to plant 250 mangrove saplings they collected from the nearby groves.

& seashores



Another team headed towards a seaside based community to find a group of women and youths waiting to get started.

The groups followed FRIEND environmentalists into the tiritiri groves to collect the shoots. Braving the scorching sun, the villagers got down to the hard work of digging and planting. The young ones worked alongside their mothers.

Other villagers joined the planting as the day got on and by the end of the few hours, more than 300 mangrove saplings were put into the ground to reduce the effects of water damage into the community. The day left us all with a feeling that our communities were concerned about the environment sustainability and needed support in restoration. A total of 1000 fruit trees and mangroves were planted over the week.

By Aarti Mala & Nileshni Sekar

A Sweet Story

The sight once again reminded me of how lucky we are to be living in a country where our differences add to the richness of the land.

One of the participants arrived at the workshop with a decorated plate called 'aarti', a gesture that needed no words to express how much she valued the opportunity to start her new income generation project.

Veena is one of the selected candidates of GROW Beekeeping Activity at FRIEND.

The first Beekeeping Workshop under the European Union funded was held in Rakiraki with the pilot 3 participants.

GROW Beekeeping will work with 60 youths over the next three years to start up sustainable beekeeping ventures in the sugar belt areas.

The honey from these projects will be marketed under *Friend's Fiji Style* brandname.

An excerpt from Mashneel's Diary

Date 6th
June, 2012

"I arrived at the office to see fires raging in the hills across from our office. The Director arrived visibly upset at the unfolding scenario lamenting the inaction over any attempt to control the fires that were eating up greenery in the hills. After a few frantic phone calls, a group of youths who were willing to go into the hills were mobilised. Despite the best of the attempts by these youths, new uncontrolled fires were started by others in the community to create barriers to fire. The fires had enveloped most of the hills in the ranges by the end of the day.

What seems odd is that National Fire Authority was very reluctant to go and fight the fire, saying that they will put warning against bush fires in the news papers the next day. I can't help but think that if these trained firemen had even just gone to guide the community firefighters the fires could have been controlled better. They were asked by our office to go and warn those creating new fires but there was a strange reluctance. On the other hand the Ministry of Environment was at a loss as to who should be responsible for handling such incidents.

While Fiji is a signatory to all these international conventions on climate change and has made pledges for environmental protection, what I saw that day was a very sorry response overall."

Aftermath of Devastation



At first glance the scene looks quite picturesque, but a closer look tells a story that is far more scary than the scariest nightmare.

Layers and layers of rocks cover what was once a flowing river. And the water? Practically disappeared. Though the community is not considered 'flood affected', the village heavily affected by landslides has lost its food source due to loss of this river and water catchment areas.

"There must be about fifteen feet of rocks that has been deposited here," says Viniana Qati. Radini- Turaga-Ni- Koro escorted us towards the lower part of the village towards what used to be her gardens. Large ivi and mango trees stood dry all round.

She recalled what once used to be a thriving garden comprising of 200 tomato plants, 70 bongo chillies, vudi, bananas and bele, all gone due to the massive landslides.

Her eyes moistened as she told us of how she had sat down near her gardens and cried at the sight of destruction following the floods. Pointing uphill she said most of the crops in the upper area like duruka, pineapple and cassava were also destroyed along with the water catchment that was the source of water supply for the village.

The community youths are currently working hard in the hills to raise enough money to restore their water catchment. The community has been supported with planting materials for food security. A few other villages further up in the hills have lost access to markets due to landslides and have to cart everything on horsebacks. Nightmares from recent disaster are far from over in these communities.

WHY SUPPORT POVERTY ALLEVIATION?

At the heart of every human experience is the desire to survive and prosper. To live without fear, hunger or suffering. To imagine how your life could be better and then have the means to change it. Yet, every day, 1.4 billion people – nearly one fifth of the world's inhabitants – cannot fulfill their most basic needs, let alone attain their dreams or desires. The largest segment of the world's poor are the women, children and men who live in rural environments. These are the subsistence farmers and herders, the fishers and migrant workers, the artisans and indigenous peoples. Empowering rural people is an essential first step to eradicating poverty.

Community Physiotherapist makes a difference



Nurse Sili attends to a patient

This is a story about a middle age Indian man whose blood pressure was constantly high on every visit; he looked unhappy and depressed. On gentle querying by Community Health team, the man revealed that his diabetic wife's legs were amputated and he was indeed really worried and stressed."

"Two years ago her right leg was amputated below the knee and left leg has a forefoot amputation. Since then I have had to do all the house work," he cried the distraught man.

"She just sits on the couch all day and even though she has a walking frame and crutches, she crawls on her knees to get about inside the house. She has bruises and swelling on her knees and has great difficulty in moving around."

PRISM physiotherapist Maria Lal visited the couple at their home, where the two were re-educated on the importance of diet control, exercises and taking medication on time.

"At our recent follow up visit, we were pleasantly surprised to see the lady of the house coming out from the kitchen in her wheelchair and greeting us with a smile. Her husband also looked happy as he heartily thanked the team for bringing hope back to his doorstep," says Maria of PRISM Health Initiative.

Recipe Corner - JAM FILLED BUTTER COOKIES

Ingredients

3/4 cup butter, softened
1/2 cup white sugar
2 egg yolks
1 3/4 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 cup Friend's Fiji Style® Guava Jam



Directions

Preheat the oven to 190 degrees C.

In a medium bowl, cream together the butter, white sugar and egg yolks. Mix in flour a little bit at a time until a soft dough forms. Roll dough into 1 inch balls. If dough is too soft, refrigerate for 15 to 20 minutes. Place balls 2 inches apart onto ungreased cookie sheets. Use your finger or an instrument of similar size to make a well in the center of each cookie. Fill the hole with 1/2 teaspoon of preserves. Bake for 8 to 10 minutes in the preheated oven, until golden brown on the bottom. Remove from cookie sheets to cool on wire racks.



Food security project underway in communities

More than ten thousand Kumala cuttings and Yam tubers have been purchased by FRIEND and distributed in the communities to boost produce in their 'teitei's'. This was made possible through a grant from NZAID for rehabilitation of flood affected communities. The root crops, according to FRIEND's founder/director Ms Sashi Kiran was requested by the communities, after most of their crops were destroyed during the floods earlier this year.



'Many of the communities were without food as their entire gardens had been destroyed, so they had to rely on relief supplies,' said Ms Kiran.

'The food security program will ensure that the communities will be able to store root crops for a few months in case of disasters. These crops will obviously supplement the crops already grown by the villagers such as cassava and vegetables.'

One of the recipients of the seedlings, Savenaca Sanoko said 'This is a timely assistance as the people are willing to plant but don't have money to buy the planting material.'

At the Pasifika Tradeshow

FRIEND was part of the 3 day Pasifika Tradeshow held at the Sheraton Resort from 25th-27th June aimed at boosting trade between the Pacific Island countries

FRIEND teamed up with Pacific Cooperation Foundation of New Zealand to set up a colourful display at the inaugural tradeshow organized by the Pacific Islands Private Sector Association (PIPSO).

Trade Pasifika 2012 Steering Committee chairperson, Kaliopate Tavola, said through the event, the awareness of existing business opportunities in the region would hopefully contribute to advancing the process of regional integration.

Kate of PCF and Sandhya at the Trade Pasifika



Community Commendation Awards

"Be the change you want to see in this world."

- Backyard Garden Award
- Exercise for Health Award
- Food Security and Sustainability Award
- Community Service Award
- Best Community or Village Award

How to apply :

Send in your nominations with a CV detailing your activity with the names of ten others you have been assisting with their personal details including address and their phone numbers, references that could be your advisory councilor, Turaga Ni Koro, shop keeper, anyone who could verify your activity and involvement in 'bringing about change in the community'. Please send in pictures of the activity if available. Applications must be sent to FRIEND by

August 15th, 2012.

FRIEND will visit your community to see the 'change' before the award ceremony in October so there is plenty of time to start...and win.

For more information contact FRIEND on 6663181

10 Years



A blast from the past... Marie Chan & Sandhya Narayan, the founding trustees at the FDB Small Business Awards in November 2006 at the Holiday Inn in Suva.

The FDB recognition followed HRH Prince Charles visit to FRIEND. The British heir to throne's visit drew significant attention to the young NGO struggling to make ends meet.