

10 Years

PRISM Health Initiative turns 3

FRIEND's holistic community health initiative officially marked its three years of existence this month.

"It has been an uphill battle to start and sustain the program, however seeing the hundreds of people benefitting every week makes it worth the effort." says Sashi Kiran, the Director FRIEND.

Dr Animesh Sinha, a US based General Practitioner volunteered with FRIEND to develop the program that aims to provide medical care to better manage non communicable diseases in the communities. The program serves 36 communities between Ra and Nadi. Doctors, registered nurses, physiotherapist and exercise trainers reach out to 6 communities each week to screen and provide after care management for diagnosed patients. Each of the community also benefits from garden project to encourage healthy eating.



W E A R B L U E



Maria & Atelaite at the launch of Blue Ribbon Campaign in Tuvu

Someone loses a part of their body to amputation from diabetes every 12 hours in Fiji! Of the 16% known diabetics in Fiji around (50%) or at least 64,000 did not know they were carrying the disease until a traumatic event occurred in their life.

The youngest known victim of this lifestyle disease in Fiji is a 13 year old.

The disease is becoming one of the largest silent killers in Fiji and the World. Fiji and the Pacific have been declared in NCD crisis by Forum island Leaders last year and it calls for

action from every quarter of our society.

FRIEND has been seeing the burden of the disease in the communities since its inception and started PRISM Health Initiative, a clinical program that provides screening and medical care to the under-served communities.

FRIEND director Sashi Kiran says, the situation in communities is alarming as PRISM Medical Team finds more and more new cases of diabetes each week. Lack of understanding of the disease by patients forms a barrier for proper management.

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Recipe for Development

AUSAID has commended the recipients of the inaugural Commendation Awards for Community Development announced this month. Along with the Best Community Award, BILA Community in Lautoka won four other awards in various categories.

AUSAID First Secretary TIMOTHY GILL says this is what donors expect when they give the aid money for community development work to Non Government Organisations.

"Congratulations to all of the winners! But my warmest congratulations are to the Bila community who have not only survived a major natural disaster wiping out their community, but are now far more resilient than they have probably ever been before. The willingness of

the community to try planting new varieties and to alter their livelihoods should be truly inspiring for all i-taukei communities in Fiji. And having seen the 'before and after' with my own eyes, I want to congratulate you and to thank FRIEND for its successful and hard and satisfying work with this community over a long period of time. ***When aid dollars, a quality partner and an amazing community come together, we have a real recipe for development!***"

FRIEND's Commendation Awards for Community Development are designed to encourage individuals and groups to be rewarded for their reach out to motivate and empower more individuals /families/ communities and to recognize the efforts of individuals and groups towards our vision of alleviating poverty in the country.

Cont'd from pg 1 "A number of patients screened seemed to have been carrying the disease for years without knowing."

To create awareness and encourage everyone above the age of 18 years to get screened for their blood sugar levels FRIEND has launched a blue ribbon campaign as a lead up to the World diabetes day on November 14th.

"We are distributing blue ribbons and bro-

chures with diabetes information in our communities and amongst our stakeholders. We are hoping that through awareness more people will come to our free clinics to get screened." It is also hoped that as we spread the message of eating right, exercising and taking medications on time, the family members of the diagnosed patients will also know more about the disease and provide necessary care and support. "Patients need support and awareness in their homes so their meals are prepared according to the medical advise. We

hope people will talk about the disease, will start to take care to prevent the disease and will encourage each other to get screened for early detection."

FRIEND's PRISM Health Initiatives aims to optimize the management of Non Communicable Diseases and reduce morbidity and mortality in the most underserved sectors of Fiji.



Diabetes is a lifestyle disease that can be prevented.

Senior Health Official for Blue Ribbon Campaign Launch



Blue Ribbon Campaign at FRIEND with a simple and a powerful message for the communities.

Dr Tukana emphasized the need to keep a healthy body, mind and spirit if one hopes to avoid the clutches of lifestyle diseases.

"Eat right, exercise and avoid unnecessary stress, this is the message that came out loud and clear," says Sandhya Narayan, Manager GROW. "And he spoke in language that was easy to understand for most people gathered at the forum."



National Advisor for Non Communicable Diseases, Dr Isimeli Tukana launched the Diabetes Awareness

20 Nadi Youths Focus on Job Skills Training

20 Youths from Nadi are learning new employment skills through a two month training provided by USP Lautoka Campus. Each of the student is also doing volunteer work to gain work experience. The Youth Employment Network training is funded by the European Union.

Program Manager Sandhya Narayan says youths from as far as Suva had applied to be part of this program, however the selection of participants had to fulfill the EU requirement of students coming from families who are or have been dependent on the Sugar Industry. The trainees will serve six months of attachments with business mentors before they will qualify for Completion certificates.

Meanwhile YEN Lautoka mentees who completed their course earlier this year are currently serving their attachments with business houses around Lautoka and Ba.



Milk for Food Security

A 38 year old farmer from Ba who lost 2 acres of his 7 acre vegetable farm land to the river during last floods says provision of cow will help feed the 7 dependents in his family. A 69 year old Tavua social welfare recipient with a grandchild to support shed tears of joy after receiving a cow to supplement family meal and income.



A total of 43 cows have been distributed to flood affected households between Sigatoka and Tavua funded by the New Zealand AID.

FRIEND Director Sashi Kiran says "We are grateful that NZAID accepted an unusual request from us to provide cows for the flood affected families who had small children in their homes. Some farmers had lost large chunks of their useable land during the floods affecting their livelihoods and ability to provide nutritious meals."

With the support from the NZAID Flood rehabilitation grant, 1000 households in 55 flood affected communities were provided with seeds for their backyard gardens. 40 poultry projects have also been set up for flood affected families. The entire focus of the project was to ensure food security for those affected by the floods.

Our Resources, Our Future

We are blessed with many resources around us— both natural and human.... How do we sustainably use these to ensure that our future is protected ?

How do we ensure food security, environmental sustainability and protect our health ?

These have been crucial issues of discussion at the forefront as disasters struck early this year contributing to rise in poverty as food security and environmental erosion has affected the communities FRIEND has been working with .

The 2012 Stakeholders Forum attended by around 200 people focussed on the theme of **Our Resources, Our Future**.

People of many backgrounds came together to discuss an important aspect that we all are working towards. A key focus has been re- looking at traditional practices to learn from them.

Ram Narayan a farmer from Ba wowed the participants with his revelation that for more than 40years he has never had to buy rice since he plants the crop in his four acre land alongside other crops every year and shared his traditional practices of farming. Mr Narayan says there is always more than enough to feed his family.

Asena Gukirewa of Vitogo village also motivated the participants with her story of how she has taken it on herself to ensure that ladies in her village get their weekly exercise. Gukirewa says she goes house to house visiting those who find it difficult to join others for exercise in the village hall for various reasons.



Glimpses of the day

Participants agreed that sustainable practices are the only way.

Marking World Rural Women's Day on 15th October and World Food Day on 16th October, FRIEND field officers visited communities to judge backyard gardens and food security initiatives to give out Community Commendation awards on 17th October which is the **International Day for Eradication of Poverty**.

The awards are aimed at creating sustainable models of development in each community ensuring safe communities with enhanced food security , sustainable livelihoods and disaster preparedness.

The theme will be reflected in all our programs over the next year to remain focused on sustainable development.

Recipe Corner: Roti Upma

Ingredients

Roti 10 slices
Onion
Dry red chilli
Black gram dal: ¾ spoon
Mustard : ½ tsp
Pinch or turmeric
Salt : as needed
Oil : 2 spoon



Method

Heat oil in a frying pan.
Add chilli, black gram dal and mustard.
When mustard splutters, add onion and fry.
Add water and salt. When water starts boiling, add crumbled roti slices and stir well.
Remove the pan from the stove after 3 minutes.

New Product—Tomato Pickle

“The first sensation that hits you is of course the aroma of fresh spices, then you bite into it and mouth watering tanginess fills your mouth, the verdict—I love it,” were the words of FRIEND Operations Manager Mohinesh Reddy when asked to describe the latest trial product from the FRIEND kitchen.



“We have had an abundance of tomatoes this season as almost everyone planted tomatoes after the floods at the beginning of this year. The kitchen ladies trialled a few recipes and now we have a new addition to the ongoing trials at our quality controlled center,” says Mohinesh.



The trial pickles are available from FRIEND's front office shop in Tuvu.



A Reflection...

His bright smile across the room revealed the changed personality of the man. It had been more than 6 weeks since I had last seen him. And since then he had been through a lot.

Not long ago, we had to prepare ourselves mentally before reaching his community after a 2 hour road trip for our scheduled medical visit to be able to take on his distressed view of life. The man was loud and boisterous and inappropriately interjected his own issues making it difficult for the team to properly listen to whatever his fellow villagers would have had to say. We could see he was always frustrated as he had to crawl around to get anywhere.

Awaiting his turn he came across the room and we moved quickly from the opening pleasantries to heavier issues of village life, illness, relatives, his below knee amputation and his new prosthetic limb.

He was delighted about his "new" leg and has been out to the plantation everyday to plant cassava. During our last visit we had facilitated his travel to Tamavua to get the limb. He said the limb has greatly helped his come out of his depressed state of mind.

Putting aside this need to wrap up the conversation, I sat there and just listened. And listened. And listened some more.

After about 15 minutes watching him walk away from the 'clinic' I reflected deeply on the importance of lending an ear to someone.

His goodbye smile spoke a million words to say that by just having taking time to listen I had made his day.

By Nurse Jonetani Heilala



Nurse Jonetani monitors blood sugar for a patient as Physiotherapist Maria takes notes

Commendation Awards for Community Development - CCA Awards 2012