



Turning Four in North

FRIEND celebrated its fourth year of existence in Labasa on 29 July 2013. The event was marked in the village of Nubu and presided by Tui Nubu during Festival of Sports for Health.

Director, Sashi Kiran, said when FRIEND was set up, it was focused on trying to set up office in the North and over the years FRIEND Labasa had offered many services to the Northern community that included skills training for farmers, youths and women as well as free medical clinics to better manage non communicable diseases in the communities.

“Today FRIEND has 80 poultry project holders, 200 farmers had been assisted with set up of cash crop projects, and 200 women have been trained in food processing” Ms Kiran said. “Two farmers have also been assisted with set up of livestock feed production.”

The communities now have a market for their processed food that have been introduced in the market by FRIEND.

“These include desiccated coconut and herbal teas launched recently, all of which are produced in North.



Tui Nubu cuts the
“Fourth Birthday cake

FJD\$7000 Dollars for Community Development

FRIEND has welcomed another cheque from The Asia Pacific Ladies Friendship Society in Japan. This time a cash donation of \$7000 that will be directed toward the community health program that is currently not funded.

ALFS works to strengthen understanding and friendship among women of the Asia-Pacific region and maintains a welfare fund for regular donations to institutions in each member country.

The funds are collected through an Annual Charity Bazaar.

The relations between ALFS and FRIEND was established last year when the organization brought its first donation to FRIEND through Fiji's Ambassador to Japan H E Mr Isikeli Mataitoga. Mr and Mrs Mataitoga visited FRIEND once again to hand over the donation. We express our sincere gratitude for their support toward the health program.



Participants in walk race with color coded ribbons for different categories

Mela Na Waga - A Festival of Sports

It was a day when the elders starred in sports events and younger people watched and cheered.. Mela Na Waga– festival (hindi) of Sports (Fijian) is a family sports event to encourage those above 40 to be physically fit .

The inaugural event organised in Nubu village this month saw more than 300 people from all age groups participating in walk race, sack race, volley ball and a tug of war. “As we get older our physical activity less-

ens, and we need to understand the importance of exercise to better manage NCDs like diabetes, hypertension and heart diseases,” said Dr Jone Vuli Hawea, surgical registrar at Labasa hospital and founder of the event.

The Medics team under Dr Jone's guidance conducted the event. Communities had a lot of fun as they won various sporting gear with their trophies and cash prizes.



HE Ambassador and Mrs Mataitoga with
Miss Fiji 2013 Yuko Aoki



Irrigation Fruits

His eyes glistened with excitement as he greeted us.

“Come and see,” said Abhimanyu, as he led us into the field lush with tomatoes almost ready to harvest.

“I have been growing vegetables for a number of years, but this may be the best that have come out of my efforts. My capsicums and chillies will also be ready for harvest soon. And I have already planted my second set of crops.”

Abhimanyu benefitted from the pilot irrigation project funded by the European Union.



Honey—Its Harvest Time

For Tara, it was a day that was over a year in the making.

She received her first set of debut bee hives under the GROW Beekeeping project last year, one of the 20 recipients in the first batch in Tavua Rakiraki area.

Tara says she had never had any experience with honey bees before and worked with guidance from FRIEND to keep an eye on her hives.

“I would visit them once a

month to check how the hives were building,” says Tara.

“It’s an amazing experience,” says Tara as she carefully sliced off the top layer of waxy comb.

In theory a hive should produce 22 to 59 kg of honey in one full season and Tara has 20 hives to work through.

Tara says she is thrilled with the experience and ensures the bees have enough space, a well maintained home and, mostly, are left alone.



Simple Dreams

“I want to complete the course, get a well paid job, buy a house, a car and then get married,” said Noleen emphatically as she shared her dream of her future with the class.

Noleen’s dream resonates with dreams of most of the youths in her group that undertook the YEN programme in Rakiraki.

The YEN Program focuses on upskilling disadvantaged youths in soft skills and IT to take on the challenge of la-

bour markets. “Although Rakiraki is a small town, the training has enabled us to identify potential places of employment and prepare us to make applications and prepare for interviews,” said Sailosi.

“We have also been doing volunteer work while doing the course and it has given us new found confidence to present ourselves to potential employers”.

PMU Monitoring Visit

“Meeting with end beneficiaries is an important part of our work,” says Faizal Saifi, Financial Officer of the Project Management Unit (PMU).

PMU is contracted by the European Union to monitor the implementation of various programs funded by the European Union.

Faizal accompanied PMU Technical Manager Mohamed Habib to visit selected projects in the West following PMU’s tour of Northern projects last month.

“These visits enable us to see for ourselves that the assistance is reaching to those who are needing it and we are happy to see the progress of various initia-

tives undertaken by FRIEND.”

The two member team visited Cash Crop, Irrigation and poultry projects between Ba and Tavua.

The GROW project funded by the European Union was initiated in 2012 to promote livelihoods in Sugar Belt Areas.

The project targets 500 Cash Crop Farmers, 500 Women and Youth for Food Processing, 200 Poultry Projects, 60 Apiary Projects and 200 Youths getting upskilled for the labour market in three years of the project period.



All Hands on Deck

Nearly six months after the destruction caused by Tropical Cyclone Evan, July saw some semblance of normalcy at FRIEND HQ as staff shifted to the renovated front portion of the building.

This allowed more space for staff as well as resources stored off site after the cyclone to be brought back under one roof.

Completion work on site continues as FRIEND perseveres to reach out to communities and continues to meet project targets despite all the challenges.

“We are hopeful that work on the main building will be completed before the end of next month as we look forward to celebrating FRIEND’s 11th Birth Anniversary on 29 August,” says Founder/Director Sashi Kiran.



Recipe Corner - Nama Salad

Ingredients

4 cups of sea grapes/nama, 1 cup grated fresh coconut, Red chillies as per taste, 1 thinly sliced onion, juice of 1 large lemon (1-2 tablespoons)

Method

1. Finely slice the onion and chillies.
2. Clean the nama carefully washing it out of a basin of water to remove any sand particles.
3. Combine all the ingredients in a bowl,
4. Toss to mix, and eat immediately.



**July
BIRTHDAY's**



Mela Salacakau

Happy Birthday

NEW PRODUCT—Ben's Cards

Ben's Artwork on Masi distinguishes his work from other artisans who are behind the growing range of *Friend's Fiji Style®* Handmade Cards

His work ranges from tiny boots of babies to elaborate masi wedding veils to say congratulations to.

Friend's Fiji Style Handmade cards are available at selected MH Stores, Post Fiji, Jacks, Prouds, Tappoos in Suva, Nadi, Sigatoka and Lautoka and FRIEND HQ in Tuvu.



Meanwhile a recent visitor and an old friend of FRIEND Priya Dass from Sydney dropped by and as she browsed through the display on the card stand quipped, "*These cards are so beautiful. They are getting better every time I see them. In fact they are so good now that I don't know who to give them because these cards deserve to go to very special people only.*"



Aid for Trade should focus on collective marketing for the Region

The Pacific Islands could become a strong global trading partner if there is collective product development in the region. One of the solution for the Pacific livelihood maybe to evolve products that are common in all Pacific countries says FRIEND Founder/Director Sashi Kiran.

Speaking at the Global Aid for Trade meeting in Geneva, Sashi says Pacific can offer clean organic foods to the world and this could be in the form of flour made from tavioka/ dalo, sweet potato which will be gluten free.

"Often we hear about the limitations of volume, transportation and isolation as a hindrance to trade. Items like dried fruits and dried flour will keep well even if the shipping is delayed. Several countries supplying to one market will ensure volume and that some countries could cover for others in times of disaster." says Sashi.

The aim of the Fourth Global Review of Aid for Trade was to examine how to use development assistance to connect developing country and least-developed country firms to value chains.

Another key topic for debate were the development benefits of participation in value chains, notably in the context of the on-going deliberations about the post-2015 development agenda.

The high level meeting was an opportunity for international organizations, the private sector, governments, civil society and academia to discuss the changing nature of value chains and how developing countries, especially LDCs can best derive value from them.

Since its inception in 2007, the Global Review of Aid for Trade has established itself as the pre-eminent multilateral forum exploring trade and development issues.

This year's Global Review took as its theme: "Connecting to value chains".

However, many developing countries, and in particular LDCs, remain on the margins of global trade, attract limited foreign or domestic investment, and are locked into supplying a narrow range of goods or services.

The meeting also saw promotion and marketing of *Friend's Fiji Style®* Jams & Herbal Teas that were served to the delegates, winning high praise for the quality products.

