



## 13 Years of Community Service

A celebration with a difference as the Minister for Health & Medical Services Mr Jone Usamate led doctors and other team members to plant 13 fruit trees to mark FRIEND's 13<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

FRIEND's communities and stakeholders were invited to Tuvu for the day to reflect on the journey of FRIEND so far.

29<sup>th</sup> of August marks the day FRIEND office was established in 2002. With humble beginnings from a tiny cubicle in Lautoka, the organisation currently has a 5 acre property in Tuvu and a branch office in Labasa.

"It was an idea that I believed would work in terms of improving lives of people living in rural communities. At that point I did not know how or what shape it would take. And I had thought to myself that if it doesn't then at least I would know that I have given it a try. It has been hard work, full of challenges, but once we started working with communities, before long too many people were involved and giving up was not an option," says Founder/Director Sashi Kiran.



*Staff assist guests in fruit tree planting*

"While we have come a fair distance, there is still so much more to be done," says Sashi, "for now, it's a step at a time."



*Stakeholders join in cutting cake*



*Garlanding the Chief Guest—Minister for Health Hon Jone Usamate*



*A tour of the premises*

## *A blast from the past*

### *Dutch Ambassador Visits FRIEND*

Ambassador HE Rob Zaagman from the Embassy of the Netherlands based in Wellington New Zealand visited FRIEND to see for himself our livelihood activities.

Accompanied by his wife Monique, the couple had high praise for the range and reach of programs.

The European Union has been a major donor partner in the last three years.

"We all know that economic empowerment is what is needed for poverty alleviation...but training on enterprise development is not enough! Our women and rural dwellers have the local resources, what they need is product development, value addition, assistance with packaging, market linkages to be able to earn a decent living. There is no one agency providing this support."

Sashi Kiran  
Founder/Director FRIEND  
2001



## Diabetes Research Launch

Minister for Health and Medical services Dr Jone Usamate launched a FRIEND study that is targeting 500 Diabetics in Western Viti Levu, to find the absolute risk of having a lower limb amputation.

Diabetic Lower limb amputations is one of the major contributing factors to the 'NCD crisis' state declared by the government, adding to the financial burdens of people in Fiji.

FRIEND Associate Director Dr Jone Hawea says the study aims to provide Health Care Professionals in Fiji a range of Intervention options in managing the diabetic patient's lower limb /foot and should also provide baseline data that will encourage more preventative diabetic foot care work or research.

MoH reports reveal that 1 lower limb amputation is carried out every 12.5 hours .

“Surgeons have been the scapegoat of a problem that could easily be prevented should there be knowledge of “the limbs at risk“ amongst diagnosed diabetics in Fiji,” says Dr Hawea.

The launch coincided with FRIEND's 13<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations in Tuvu. Minister Jone Usamate was the first person to ‘undergo’ research as Dr Jone explained the process of research to the Minister during the launch.

Lessons learnt from the study will be shared with stakeholders and it is hoped to benefit the wider Diabetic population in Fiji.

## International Activist @ FRIEND



Greenpeace International CEO Dr Kumi Naidoo dropped in at FRIEND to meet an 'old friend' Sashi Kiran.

Kumi said he was amazed and inspired at seeing what FRIEND has become. Kumi remembered the ideas Sashi had shared about setting up when she left the board of CIVICUS in 2001 to focus on setting up FRIEND.

Kumi was then the CEO of CIVICUS, an International NGO based in Washington DC.

## Scoping Mission To Lau with AQEP

At the request of AQEP (Access to Quality Education Program) FRIEND team made two trips to Lau this month.

The directors initially visited three villages in Kabara, one in Komo and Namuka-i-Lau to assess resources for income generating opportunities for schools being assisted by AQEP.

This trip was followed by three facilitators to conduct training with the school management on Food processing, financial literacy and record keeping.



## Sports Camp

FRIEND hosted two US professional soccer players on a Health-Day at Naviyago village.

Tracy Noonan (Goalkeeper) and Coby Jones (Midfielder) toured Fiji with the support of the Embassy of the United States to promote health and fitness.

What looked like lots of fun and games actually turned out to be playful lessons on teamwork, communication and leadership.

The youth and kids of Naviyago and surrounding villages had definitely fun and hopefully they will take some ideas home.



**Product of the Month—**  
*Friend's Fiji Style®*  
**Pure VCO**



*Friend's Fiji Style®* Virgin Coconut Oil smells and tastes of fresh green coconuts.

Known as a superfood, the oil has been used for generations on the islands.

The oil is used to boost the immune system, manage stress and weight in a way that it may improve blood cholesterol levels and it may lower your risk of Heart Disease.

It has a variety of uses as salad dressing, as premium cooking oil and for its therapeutic and beautifying property as body oil.

The flesh of coconuts are grated and sundried before the oil is cold pressed to bring you the taste of coconuts from the tropics.

**The next 15 years—SDG Panel @ USP**

Organisational heads from the civil society sector, educational institutes and university students convened in Lautoka this month to deliberate on the issue of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)s and how citizens could contribute towards a sustainable Fiji over the next 15 years.

The panel discussion was organised by the Foundation for Rural Integrated Enterprises & Development along with USP, Lautoka Campus.

Earlier this month, the world took a momentous step forward: the 193 member states of the UN reached an agreement on the new sustainable development agenda that will be adopted this September by world leaders at the Sustainable Development Summit in New York.

Concluding a negotiating process that spanned more than two years, the agenda features 17 new sustainable development goals (SDGs) aim to end poverty, promote prosperity and people's wellbeing while protecting the envi-

ronment by 2030.

“Through this event we wish to explore how each citizen could get engaged in sustainable development of Fiji, civil society and governments as well as international agencies like the UNDP could engage meaningfully enabling spaces for each citizen to take ownership and engage. We plan many more events to take this to grassroots says FRIEND Founder/Director Sashi Kiran.

The panelists included Ms Mehazabeen Khan, UNDP, sharing about the 17 SDGs and its processes, Mr Nitesh Prakash, Chief Economist from the the Strategic Planning Department of the Ministry of Finance talking about Fiji Government's Green Framework and USP youth representative Lepani Naqarese speaking on the concerns of youths of the day.

Youths at USP formed groups to work on three different issues of organic farming, recycling and creating awareness on the SDGs.



*Dr Pramila Devi, Sonja Brachman & Sashi*



*UNDP & National Planning representatives*



*Community representatives*



*A full house*

**Recipe Corner — Toasted Fresh Cassava Poppadom**



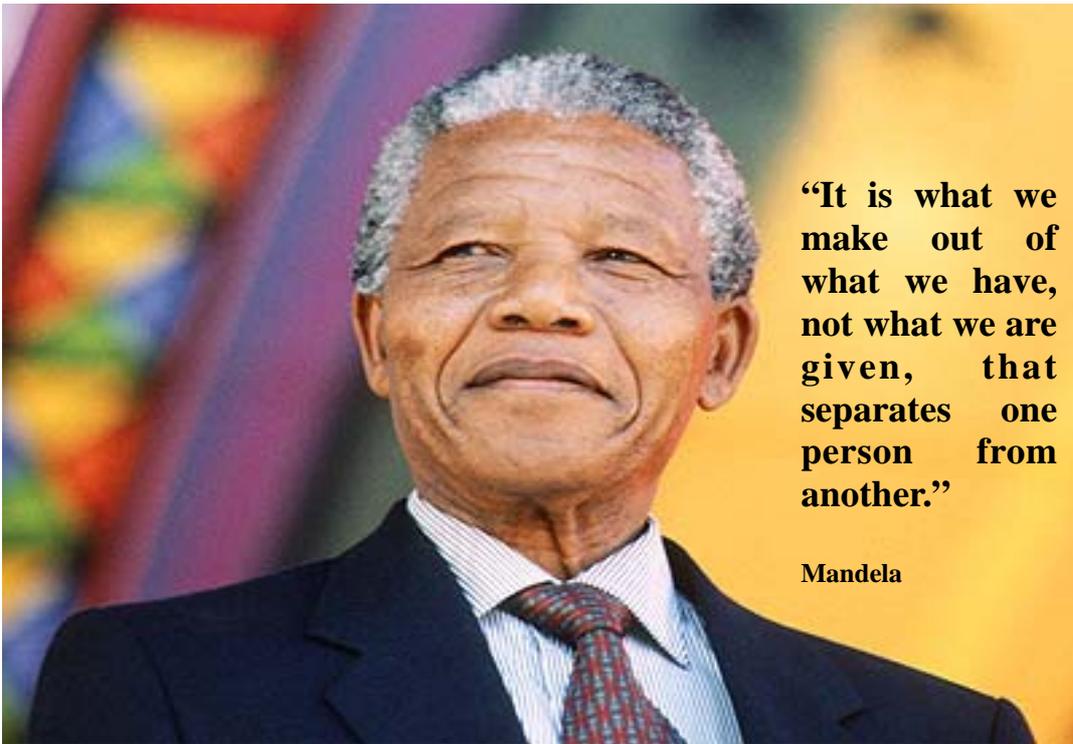
**Ingredients** (Makes approx 24pc)  
 4 cups *Friend's Fiji Style®* Grated Cassava  
 6 cups Water  
 1 tspn Black Pepper  
 Salt to taste

**Method**

1. Boil cassava and water for about 10–15 minutes stirring the pot constantly.
2. Once the mixture thickens, remove from heat and add salt and black pepper.
3. Pour the mixture into flat discs and leave in the sun for drying. This normally takes 3 days.
4. Store crisps in an air tight container. Toast without oil for serving.



*Poppadom making demonstration*



“It is what we make out of what we have, not what we are given, that separates one person from another.”

Mandela



Amareeta

Take A Pledge—Eat Right, Go Organic



Take a pick—A heap of beans with a worm or two happily weaving in and out of the pile or a worm free looking heap that just invites you saying “choose me”?

I bet most of us would reach out for the worm free heap.

But STOP! Is the worm free heap really a better deal?

Before I was aware of the health risks associated with use of pesticides, I would happily buy the worm free beans, but now when I go to the market, I find myself looking at fruits and vegetables closer to determine what I put in my bag.

Glysohate, Roundup, Orthene.— I don’t want them near my food, so the message is clear. Grow Organic, Buy Organic and Eat Organic.



By Sandhya Narayan

Anish attends to the organic gardens @ FRIEND

People behind successful FRIEND's 13<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations

