



Takitaki

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FAIR TRADE



Rita with our handmade
Friend's Fiji Style® cards

The Fair Trade Association of Australia and New Zealand (FTAANZ) is an incorporated, not-for-profit, member-based body for all individuals and organizations interested in, and supportive of, fair trade. Through its members and a small secretariat, the FTAANZ seeks to increase awareness of fair trade; help facilitate and coordinate fair trade activities; assist producers from developing countries, especially in the Asia-Pacific region, to access Australian and New Zealand markets; and establish a regional organization to manage Fair-trade certification and labeling. FTAANZ organized a major workshop in Deposer, Bali from 25-27 March 2007. The theme of the workshop was "Linking the producers of Asia-Pacific with markets in Australia and New Zealand". I take this opportunity to thank FTAANZ for supporting FRIEND to attend this workshop. It was a valuable learning experience about fair trade, its certification bodies and processes and toward understanding the points of view of producers and buyers from the Asia-Pacific region. It was also an excellent opportunity to link with many buyers of Australia and New Zealand and discuss the possibility of exporting the *Friend's Fiji Style*® range of products: chutneys, pickles and handmade cards. We look forward to supplying the export market in the near future with community-made food products and handicrafts, enabling the producers to earn consistent income and get out of poverty!

—Rita Vithal

DISABILITY WORKSHOP FOR COMMUNITY EDUCATION

A disability workshop organized by Continuing and Community Education at the University of the South Pacific Lautoka Campus was held from 28-30 March 2007. The goal of the workshop was to increase disability awareness in the community. I personally felt that it was a very good workshop and everyone should have the opportunity to attend such events. Every now and then when we come across people with disabilities we should be comfortable and know how to interact with them, as they are just like any other member of our community.

During the workshop, there were speakers from different institutions who deal with people with disabilities; they discussed the problems that they face at these institutions. The parents of children with disabilities were also given a chance to share about the challenges they face at home while looking after their children. Three people with disabilities were also given some time to share about the difficulties they faced, but the amazing thing was that they spoke more about their strengths than their problems. I feel we all should support the institutions and also the parents who work and care for the people with disabilities, and embrace those with disabilities as a part of our diverse community.



—Nileshni Sekar

MEDIATION TRAINING BENEFITS STAFF AND COMMUNITIES



Nai, Nileshni and Mereani

We three FRIEND staff, Nileshni, Mereani & Nai, were fortunate to be part of a mediation conference organized by The Foundation for the Peoples' of the South Pacific (FSPI) from 1-3 March 2007. The workshop was facilitated by Koila Costello-Ollson, and was also attended by representatives from Samoa, Tonga, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands and Tuvalu.

The three days of the workshop covered all the processes of carrying out mediation and the important role mediators play. It was very informative, with active participation and lots of new learning experiences for each one of us. We came to understand the ways this voluntary process can be used to solve issues, bring people to listen to each other, and help them work out their own conflicts and solutions to their problems.

During the workshop, the participants openly exchanged ideas as individuals and also formed teams for the opportunity to do role plays on how to conduct mediations for three different target groups. This was a very important process for all the participants, as we shared and gave critiques to each other on the different ways and techniques of mediation that were presented.

We want to acknowledge FSPI for giving us the opportunity to be part of this 3-day workshop, which was held at the Golf Terrace in Port Denarau, Nadi. It was a great opportunity for us, as FRIEND staff, to be invited to refresh our knowledge in mediation to uplift our skills for the betterment of our service to the communities we support. Thanks!

—Nileshni, Mereani & Nai

SAVE SCHEME'S OLDEST SAVER



Anaseini Baraki

Anaseini Baraki was born on 19 September 1924 in Rukuruku, Levuka, Ovalau. Currently she is living in Kaleli Settlement, Lautoka. She is a mother with three children whom she single-handedly raised in Rukuruku. Her children have all married and are living with their own families in Viti Levu. She moved to Kaleli to look after her newborn grandson in 1971 and has been living there ever since. Anaseini's children give her some assistance at the times when she needs it. She is grateful that God has always been by her side.

Anaseini has been saving weekly with FRIEND Save Scheme since October 2004. From the beginning of this year, she has received \$60.00 per month Social Welfare assistance. As she lives on her own, she spends the \$60.00 on food, the electricity bill, kerosene, soli to church, vanua soli and bus fares to and fro. At 83, Anaseini is still offering assistance to neighbors who sometimes need money, and she gives it with a good heart.

The only times she finds difficulty in saving is when there is heavy rain in the village, making it difficult to go to the main road to catch the bus to bank her savings at FRIEND, or when she overspends her monthly income. She hopes to save \$500.00 by the end of the year, as she wants to move back to her village. Anaseini finds the Save Scheme to be very beneficial, as she saves a lot of money. Now she is going through a Budgeting Program with FRIEND to upgrade her knowledge and skills. Through this program, she will be able to identify her priorities and what is necessary to budget for her monthly expenses.

What's Happening?

- April**
- 22 Earth Day**
- May**
- 3 World Press Freedom Day**
- 4 National Youth Day**
- 8 World Red Cross Day**
- 12 World Fair Trade Day**
- 13 Mother's Day**
- 15 International Day of Families**

GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN NGO MANAGEMENT

Pacific Islands Association of NGOs (PIANGO), in collaboration with UNITEC New Zealand, has been providing a Graduate Diploma program in Not-for-Profit Management in Fiji from the year 1999, with the intention of empowering capable leaders in the NGO sector. The Diploma program is funded by NZAID. This program is also conducted in Vanuatu, Samoa, PNG, Solomon Islands & Tonga. Last year, we had the first graduate of this program from Fiji. In 2007, there will be 11 students from the Pacific region graduating in Tonga, coordinated with the CSO forum meeting. I count myself very fortunate and thank FRIEND, PIANGO, UNITEC & NZAID for providing me and other participants the opportunity to undertake these studies. The first course was in Culture & Values of NGOs; participants were from Fiji and other Pacific Island Countries. The learning culture that pervaded the course was very dynamic. There was valuable sharing of information and experiences from different parts of the Pacific. I found the course relevant and practical and "just right" to provide the necessary foundation for the work we do in the NGO sector. I request PIANGO and UNITEC to look into providing this program in the Western Division of Fiji as well; many staff at FRIEND and other NGO partners in the West have shown keenness to undertake these studies!

—Rita Vithal



News from FRIEND's Fiji Style® Shop

If you can't come to our Toorak shop, we'll come to town!

Don't be surprised if you see a FRIEND display table outside the **Suva Post Shop**. Here's your chance to purchase FRIEND products and support the efforts of communities to get out of poverty. Our staff is there every **Thursday, Friday & Saturday**.

NEW PRODUCTS FROM THE KITCHEN!



Chilli Pickles will soon be available in a 200g jar!

Lautoka kitchen is busy with full production of chilli products at this time of the year. There is production of chilli chutney in the regular sizes of 200g and 400g, and for the first time there will be production of chilli pickles in 200g in addition to the regular 400g that we already produce.

Lautoka kitchen is always trialing with local fruits that can be produced into potential food products. After a trial period of about one year, lime pickle is now ready to be launched in the market with its proper labels and nutritional information. This product is preserved in its own natural juice with some salt and chillies and does not contain any artificial preservatives or chemicals. Lime pickle is also oil free and thus makes a nutritious and delicious accompaniment to meals. So check out for these new products in the supermarkets soon and at the FRIEND's Fiji Style® Shop in Suva.