FIJI, PAPUA NEW GUINEA, VANUATU, SAMOA, SOLOMONS, FSM, BOUGAINVILLE, NIUE, KANAKY ...

PACIFIC WOMEN AGAINST VIOLENCE

Pacific Women's Network Against Violence Against Women

Volume 14 Issue 2 September 2011

FWCC opens new branch

"FREEING WOMEN from all forms of violence is essential for women's empowerment in all aspects of their social, economic and political life and so the presence of the new Rakiraki Women's Crisis Centre (RWCC) will do much to increase the access for women in the Western part of Fiji and will surely make a major contribution to the peace, prosperity and economic development of the town".

These are the words of Chief Guest, UN Women Assistant Secretary General John Hendra at the opening of the RWCC in July. RWCC is the fourth branch for the FWCC.

Addressing guests and FWCC staff, Hendra stressed three important factors which would help in reducing violence against women in Fiji, " Repeal laws that discriminate against women and ensure that new laws and legislation are put in place that really protect women from violence in the home and in the workplace, second, give strong support to innovative justice services, provision of legal aid so that women can access justice, and third to affect change in what is still very unequal gender relations, especially through innovative human rights bases training and gender responsive approach like the FWCC's innovative Male Advocacy Program".

The UN Women Assistant Secretary General's presence has strengthened the relationship developed in recent years between the FWCC and UN Women and FWCC is a key partner in delivering a range of capacity development services to government, NGO and faith based organisations and more, working to end Violence Against Women in the Pacific region.

The RWCC is funded, like the Ba, Nadi and Labasa Centres, under the current six year funding agreement between NZ Aid and FWCC, totally around FJ$3.5million. It has a staff of four which may increase depending on the number of clients received.

Coordinator Shamima Ali said, "the RWCC has been a dream of the FWCC for over 15 years and this is truly a milestone in FWCC's 27 year history".

FWCC Coordinator Shamima Ali, NZ Aid Program Manager Richard Dirks, UN Women Assistant General Secretary John Hendra and RWCC Project Officer Salote Malo

Ali added "We also celebrate the fact that now women girls and children of the Ra province will have some recourse to justice, as they struggle through life, with violence being a constant in many of their lives".

Acknowledging the support the FWCC and its Centres have received, Ali said, "the Crisis Centres came from the dreams of women, was started by women and is run by women till today and we have been ably supported by external donors, development partners, AusAid, NZ Aid, UN Women and other UN agencies over the years".

NZ Aid Program Manager Richard Dirks commended the work of the crisis centre saying "Commitment, Respect, Trust and Hope are four words that embody the work and attitude of the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre and with this new branch (Rakiraki) and the ongoing work of FWCC, with the authorities and other stakeholders, is another step forward".

The RWCC will deal with issues of domestic violence, rape, child sexual abuse and sexual harassment sometimes prevalent in rural areas but whose victims do not usually report it.

KUP Women for peace was also present at the opening in the form of inspirational Mary Kini of PNG who welcomed the opening of the centre saying that women in the area would now get hands on help and a most valuable service.

RWCC is managed by Project Officer Salote Malo, whom many network members will remember as a Senior Counsellor at FWCC for many years.

Commitment, Respect, Trust and Hope are four words that embody the work and attitude of the FWCC with this new branch (Rakiraki) and the ongoing work of FWCC, with the authorities and other stakeholders, is another step forward

NZ Aid Program Manager Richard Dirks

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Greetings from FWCC!

EDITORIAL

THIS ISSUE marks the opening of another branch of the FWCC in a remote province on the western side of Viti Levu in Fiji. The increase in the number of centres should not be a cause for celebration but of sadness that the need to have the centres is increasing. But we do celebrate the fact that the women and children of Ra (Fiji) will have service provision and the existence of such institutions often strengthens human rights in the locality.

Something to celebrate also, in Fiji, is the various Provincial Councils are coming on board as partners in the work on eliminating violence against women (EVAW) and working closely with us in raising and awareness and developing prevention strategies. In Fiji, two such workshops have been held this year in Rewa and Macuata Provinces. There are indications that others will also follow suit.

Another Regional Training Program (RTP) ended in July and 37 Pacific Islanders participated. A new session has been added on regional strategies and the first panel included the Regional Rights and Resource Team (RRRT), Pacific Prevention of Domestic Violence Program (PPDVP), UN Women and the Forum Sexual and Gender Based Violence Reference Group. The objective is to inform participants of other regional strategies in the work on EVAW and how they can access and utilise these groups.

The next RTP begins on September 26 and because of the great demand we might be holding another one early in 2012.

16 Days of Activism is coming up and please update us on your activities. This year's theme is - From Peace in the Home to Peace in the World: Let's Challenge Militarism and End Violence Against Women!

Please keep your stories coming in.

In solidarity,

Shamima

RTP PROFILES

THIS PAST four weeks has increased my knowledge of Gender Based Violence, Women's Rights and Human Rights. It's not going to be easy but we will get there.

Nanise Savoka
Taveuni Support Group
Representative, Fiji

What I have learnt will definitely assist me in my role as a counselor especially the basic counseling skills. Women, you must know that you have rights and whenever your rights are violated in whatever situation. I have been to other trainings as well but this RTP has really strengthened my knowledge about Violence Against Women.

Lola Baker Koloamatangi
Counsellor / Trainer
Tonga NCWC

THIS HAS definitely broadened my understanding of gender and has given me a better view of what it is FWCC is actually involved in and their role in society, which I have now come to realise as very important. With the basic counselling skills I have acquired, I can now help the communities that we visit. We all must work together to stop VAW, men and women must understand gender equality, the reality of gender equality, more awareness needs to be done, so women know about their rights.

THIS TRAINING has empowered me as a person on how to deal with emotional violence. At work we have a Violence Against Women program with the SICA Federation for Women which has set up networks in nine provinces and this will definitely help in our work.

Ethel Suri
Women's Desk Officer
Solomon Islands Christian Associaton (SICA)

This has helped and given me new skills to deliver information to churches and stakeholders as civil society plays a very important role and thus if we all work together, our work in Eliminating Violence Against Women will be strengthened.

There is a real need for people to understand gender equality first before real change can be brought about. Everything in this training was spot on, it's the best training for the Pacific. In eliminating violence against women, we must all be there for one another, support each other and try and have a Pacific free of violence.

THIS TRAINING has been a real eye-opener for me and I have come to learn and release that as the first line of contact for women who want to press charges against violent men, we will have to re-adjust our approach to clients and be more receptive and understanding of their problems. We must understand what women go through, what they are feeling and what courage they have to build up in order to come to the station and actually report against their husbands, boyfriends, fathers etc, this is not easy and we must understand that.

Rita Maliliu
Police Constable
Family Protection Unit

Selwyn Tavoa
Chief, Panama Provinces

WE WILL now definitely go back and help change the mindsets of our communities. We have to change men's attitudes towards women, we must stop VAW in the home and offer support to women who are experiencing this on a daily basis and let them know that there is support out there for them and that we as community leaders will definitely help and create awareness on what we have learnt wherever we go.

I HAVE learnt that people must fully understand gender equality and once people understand this, only then will they begin to understand why there is violence against women and so from this, positive solutions can be thought up, to help them. Being a part of the training has really boosted my confidence in that I can now speak and prove to men that women are just as much their equals and have rights just as much as they do.

Annie Philomen
Educator
Sanma Counselling Centre

Annie was one of the five participants at the first RTP in 1995.

Regional Training Program Participants 2011

RTP changes perspectives yet again

It's changed my whole life!"
"It's changed my outlook on women!"

"It has been an eye-opener for me!"
"It's changed my mindset!"

"There is a lot of work to be done regarding VAW and it must start now"

THESE ARE the sentiments of most of the participants on the four week Regional Training Program (RTP) in May/June this year at the Studio 6 in Suva.

The program included 37 participants from eight different countries in the Pacific - PNG, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Tonga, Kiribati, Nauru, Cook Islands and Fiji – with resource personnel from Regional Rights and Resource Team (RRRT), Forum Secretariat's Sexual and Gender Based Violence Reference Group, Pacific Prevention of Domestic Violence Program (PPDVP), Vanuatu Women's Centre (VWC), UN Women, SPC and Mai Life Magazine.

On her experience, Project Manager for the Mining and Petroleum Program in PNG, Lesley Bennet said the four week training program, made her realize the importance of addressing human rights, " in particular the rights of women to be recognised as an integral component of any development that takes place in a country".

Bennet went on to say the missing link was that most of the women they dealt with did not know that they had rights and if they did they would be able to speak out against the unfairness of their situations.

"You can teach economic empowerment of women but at the end of the day the man controls this aspect, so the turning point for me in this whole program was seeing things from a different perspective – giving men and women an equal say in economics / national decisions, in the community and especially in the home, where all this is supposed to start".

Bennet added that people must learn to recognise women as indispensable partners in development.

With similar sentiments and on what he learnt from the RTP, Bruno Kehma, of the Island Court Justice in Vanuatu, said the culture issue was very interesting especially how, "most if not all the decisions were made by men, and how this must now change to include women, so that they too may have input and thus have a part in the outcome or action plan that is reached".

He added that we must all work together to stop VAW, " we are equal, men and women and so it must be this way in the home, in the community, in the distribution of resources and access to and distribution of benefits".

Police Officer, David Kila of PNG said the training was a real eye-opener for him and that work with men must start now.

Kila plans to return home and start training programs on Gender Based Violence with cadet officers and constable trainers and other trainees in Police College as he maintains that police officers must know how to deal with these sorts of cases as well as know the real reason behind violence against women and how they can help in reducing these sorts of cases.

And to sum up what he learnt, Chief of Vanualava in Vanuatu, Graham Mumeg said the word must get out now that, "men must be real men, treat their women right and not with violence".

"Using what I learnt at RTP"

"BEING A part of the Regional Training Program in 2007 really empowered me to talk about women's rights and gender equality, especially with regards to my work, which includes creating awareness about family planning."

These are the words of Nana Kume Yapea of PNG who is currently a sexual health trainer with population Services International in Port Moresby.

Yapea said it is part of their work to go to remote areas and create awareness on family planning, using women's rights and gender equality platforms in most cases.

"We go out to remote villages and have trainings and workshops with the men and women and talk to them about their rights, especially the women, we inform them that it is their right to make informed decisions about family planning."

She said "Most of the women we see in these areas never knew they had rights because the men would always make decisions for them, to do with the use and distribution of resources, to do with meetings in the village, to do with food production and family planning, and this is where we emphasis a women's right and gender equality, what I learnt during the RTP."

Yapea added "Even today, in most of these areas, men maintain that it is they who are to make the decision on whether or not a woman should use family planning, on whether or not a condom should be used, on whether or not the woman have the right to tell them to use a condom, these are some of the problems facing us today."

She also said that women and men are given the same information, however in separate training sessions and it is this training where men and women come to realise what human rights is all about, what gender equality really means, that the decision to family planning is the women's right too.

Yapea said they are closely working with Law and Justice PNG and will continue their work in project impact areas, for example, where the L&G/Gas projects take place and added that they also get invites from other remote villages to give talks and create awareness.

Women of Kutubu Village at a marital workshop training by Population Services International.

WCCC works with drama group

TONGA'S WOMEN and Children's Crisis Centre (TWCCC) facilitated a week long workshop in gender and human rights for the Tonga Family Health Fili Tonu Drama group.

The week long workshop was facilitated by WCCC's Male Advocate 'Usaia Hemaloto and Community Education Trainer Lesila To'ia. It included topics such as basic rights and entitlements that men and women should have equal access to, and excuses that are used to justify behavior that violates human rights.

Tonga Women's and Children's Crisis Centre's Lesila To'ia (sitting centre), with members of the Fili Tonu Drama Group

Fili Tonu member Jimmy Ongosia attended the training and found the concept of human rights to be the most interesting part.

"Everyone has the right to information, confidentiality, access, dignity, comfort, safety privacy and an opinion. Ultimately everyone is allowed to make choices, and every choice has a consequence."

The difference between sex (which is the biological difference between men and women) and gender (the learned, behavioral differences between men and women) –was also an eye-opener.

"Sex and gender are two very deep words whose meaning I didn't really think of before. What, really, does masculinity mean? We are all born free and importantly, equal" said Ongosia, demonstrating that masculinity is a learned or gendered behavior.

Each morning sessions covered human rights, gender, domestic violence, and rape and child abuse. In the afternoons Australian Youth Ambassador Nathan Stoneham facilitated drama sessions to apply the learning of the session. Participants were encouraged to embody their learning. One exercise encouraged participants to take a family portrait that demonstrated the face shown to the public, and what is going on in private. It explored the impact of domestic violence on families and especially children.

"The training helped to make our dramas more realistic and focused. Now when we make dramas we think about gender equality and human rights to help audiences think more about issues and empower the rights of women and children.

We are all equal before the law, no one should be held in slavery or by force" said Ongosia.

The Fili Tonu is a health promotion drama group that promotes healthy messages through drama. They perform at schools, Churches and community events.

2011 Camp GLOW - Ha'apai

TONGA WOMEN and Children's Crisis Centre (TWCCC) were invited to and participated in the 2011 Girls Empowerment Camp GLOW (Girls Leading Our World) held recently in Ha'apai, Tonga.

Community Education Trainer, Lesila To'ia did a presentation to the girls and camp counselors on the work of the centre and said , "It was really encouraging and inspiring for me to see this group of young girls eager to hear about the centre. They asked lots of questions about the various forms of abuse, and how the centre deals with these survivors."

The girls and counselors all had similar sentiments when thanking WCCC for the presentation, "We are thankful that there is a place you can turn to for support and help if you come through or experience these types of violence. It is a pity that the centre is in Tongatapu only, but with your 24 hours phone services we know for sure we can pick up the phone and call your centre. Thank you for the empowerment of these women and children who have struggled and suffered a lot."

To'ia said the girls even expressed surprise when talking about sexual harassment, and it being a crime, as most of them said it is quite common at school and that boys usually see it as a joke and added that even they thought it was normal.

She added the girls were happy to know about the Pacific Network Against Violence Against Women and their work with various stakeholders like police and relevant ministries in trying to address the issues of abuse and violence.

To'ia said it is great to be invited to participate in such a camp especially where there is an opportunity to spread the awareness about violence against women, its root causes and ways to eliminate the problem and added that, "The camp is an important space for girls to be reminded that they are our Kingdom's future".

Camp GLOW participants

Lesila at work

From peace in the home to peace in the world: let's challenge militarism and end violence against women!

THIS IS the theme announced by the Centre for Women's Global Leadership (CWGL) for this year's 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence Campaign which formally begins on November 25 to December 10.

CWGL said their working definition outlines militarism as an ideology that creates a culture of fear and supports the use of violence, aggression, or military interventions for settling disputes and enforcing economic and political interests.

This year's 16 Days Campaign will focus on five issues identified as priorities for those working on the intersections of violence against women and militarism: Bringing together women, peace, and human rights movements to challenge militarism, Proliferation of small arms and their role in domestic violence, Sexual violence in and after conflict, Political violence against women, including Pre/During/Post-election violence, Sexual and gender-based violence committed by state agents, particularly the police or military

CWGL said the 2011 campaign is an opportunity for reflection and conversations about what the global women's rights movement can do to challenge the structures that allow violence against women to continue at all levels, from local to global. It is also a crucial time to reach out to and involve more men, boys, faith-based and traditional leaders, and other key partners in this work towards building a more just and peaceful world.

Source: http://16dayscwgl.rutgers.edu/2011-campaign/theme-announcement

FWCC Counsellor Advocates Mere Vunibaka and Lavenia Tuitabu facilitating the workshop

Reflections from the Rewa Province

THERE HAVE been reports and incidents of violence against women and children however I believe there are many incidents not being reported. Rewa is a heavily populated area and the Provincial office thought it was essential for the women (and men later) to go through FWCC training. Many times we hear about Violence Against Women but hardly do anything about it. FWCC is an organization re-known for working towards ending violence against women and children

Niko Yacalevu
Roko Tui Rewa
Rewa Provincial Office

As a result of this workshop, the provincial office will write to all the turaga ni Koro in the area to allow and provide the space for the participants to share with other women's groups like the Soqosoqo Ni Vakamarama, the youths and the village council what they have learnt from the workshop. We are also hoping for a similar kind of training for Kawea, Raviravi and Suva areas.

THE TRAINING was very useful and comes at a right time as we are hearing many reports of VAW. This training has really awakened us and our perceptions on the VAW. This is the first workshop on the issue of VAW for the island and we all know that this is a major problem affecting women, children and the country. Many times we point fingers at the victims but this workshop has really opened our eyes. There only person to blame is the perpetrator. I have also learnt that we should always be ready to provide the right kind of support to survivors.

Kalesi Qiolevu
(Participant)
Staff
Rewa Provincial Office

I will share with my family and children what I've learnt about gender equality and elimination VAW and will also create awareness at the provincial level. And I will work tirelessly to follow up on the action plans which were drawn up by the participants at the workshop with the different tikinas.

FWCC has done a lot of things for women and children and I hope that it will continue to expand its reach here in Rewa.

Lanieta Tubuna of
Muanira, Vutia, Rewa
(Participant)
President of Vutia
Mother's Club

BEFORE I used to think that culture and religion was a barrier to women's rights but now I've learnt that it's about the way it has been interpreted over the years. I've now come to know that religion is about us, women, men and children treating each other with equality, dignity and respect. This training has really shown me the truth about the bible and I will try to share it with as many people as possible. After this workshop, I will sit and talk with my husband about equality and equal responsibilities. It's about him and I talking and listening to each other and looking at each other as equal individuals. I will also influence my grandchildren (whom I'm looking after) in the way I bring them up. After the first day, I went back home and told my granddaughter to sit at the head of the table and for my grandson to wash the dishes. I'll try to teach them that girls and boys can do the same things. On a village level I will try and take what I've leant to the Bose Ni Koro, the SSV, the church, school committees and to the youths. Of course I can't do it all at once but I'll try slowly.

IT HAS been an eye-opening experience. What I've learnt from the training will be very useful in my work with the church and I can incorporate it by working together with human rights organizations to promote and preach about equality, respect, love and peace – a better way of living for everyone. Many people don't like human rights, especially women's rights. Now we know the truth and that we women should be treated equally. Equality is strongly supported by the message of love in the bible.

Nunia Rabalenare
(Participant)
Nasali Circuit School
Deaconess

The training has really enlightened my thoughts about the bible and human rights. I will take this message to my students. I will try and put together what I've learnt in the week and put the similar message through my sermons and sharing with as many women (and men) as I can. If equality is preached from the pulpit, it can really support the work of FWCC and help make a difference in the lives of so many women and children in Fiji. This workshop is a great indication of that and I hope this sought of training will continue for the province.

24 May 2011, Open Democracy

RAPE IS certainly the worst crime that any woman can endure. If she survives, the trauma stays with her for her lifetime. Nightmares, likely ostracism from the community, her husband will throw her out, and fear of sex will probably prevent her from a normal new life with a partner. This list goes on with possible STD's, HIV/Aids, and whatever other medical and emotional ailments develop. To say nothing about social and emotional effects on her children.

Rape is war's cheapest weapon. We can not pluck rape out of war and let the war go on. It is time to abolish war. The campaigns against rape are numerous and important.

Even the UN has a resolution, SCR 1960, targeting rape, abuse and violence against women. It was introduced on the 10th anniversary celebrating, or rather, honouring SCR 1325 on women and peace and security, which calls for the participation of women at all levels of decision making and protection of women during conflict.

Instead of reinforcing that foundational and historic resolution which still cries for full implementation, 1960, put forward by US Ambassador Susan Rice at the behest of Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, spoke of abuse and rape and ignored the "shoulders on which it stood" - UN SCR 1325.

UN SCR 1325 was drafted and vetted by civil society women around the world. It was based on local needs and values. Subsequent Security Council resolutions including 1960 on sexual abuse, were headquarters written and driven. Sexual abuse is a real and enormously serious issue, no question.

But had the language been vetted by women on the ground they would have included a call for implementation of 1325 as one tool for reducing sexual violence, as they have indicated to us time and again.

I hate rape. I have enormous empathy for any woman who has suffered the physical and emotional effects. I am not a big fan of prisons (that subject for another day) but I certainly think rapists deserve serious punishment, and rehabilitation.

As long as women are not full and equal participants in governance, as long as we are considered the weaker sex, we will be vulnerable to abuses of unimaginable brutality. But, as long as we continue to resolve differences and conflicts with weapons, battalions, mercenary armies, and brutal force, we will continue to suffer the horrors of war which include rape. Small arms are frequently present in rape situations.

Why don't resolutions and campaigns targeting rape also call for support for the Arms Trade Treaty, and control the production and trade in guns.

Domestic violence rises at the end of violent conflicts, we are told, so why aren't we more proactive about preventing violent conflicts.

I am not a Gandhian (although coincidentally our birthdays fall on the same day of the same month) but his theory that an eye for an eye makes the whole world blind, is not so far fetched. War and the weapons needed to carry them out is the currency of the day

We have even figured out how to avoid body bags from showing up on our televisions and you tubes... hire mercenary armies, and private contractors. No accountability.

> **"We can not pluck rape out of war and let the war go on. We must not make war safe for women. It is time to abolish war,"**
>
> Cora Weiss on the Nobel Women's Initiative conference on ending sexual violence in conflict

We, the world, have all learned more and know more about conflict prevention, conflict resolution, mediation, and negotiation, to ignore their values.

We are even incorporating peace education in curricula in many parts of the world, which includes teaching for and about gender equality, human rights, disarmament, social and economic justice, traditional peace practices.

If a fraction of bloated military budgets were instead invested in training students in schools of education in peace education, and if practising teachers were given stipends to take a summer course in peace education, wouldn't that contribute to a less violent world?

It's a new century. We have successfully stopped (of course not entirely) many institutions we once took for granted: smoking, prohibition of women voting, racial discrimination, hate crimes, etc.

No reason we can't stop the institution of war. It's time to stop rape and time to abolish war".

Source: http://www.opendemocracy.net/cora-weiss/we-must-not-make-war-safe-for-womenhttp://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/

First successful use of CEDAW in rape case

IN THE Philippines, women won a historic victory when they successfully used the Optional Protocol of CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women) to appeal a rape case. In the first rape case ever to be decided under CEDAW, a United Nations committee ruled that the Philippines government violated the rights of Karen Vertido, a female rape survivor, when a local court dismissed her rape allegations due to "gender-based myths and stereotypes." The Women's Legal Bureau of the Philippines, a longtime GFW grantee partner, appealed to CEDAW, and in collaboration with several other grantee partners in the Philippines and across the Asia Pacific region, secured this historic verdict for the survivor.

The Phillipine Government must now implement the recommendations made by CEDAW, including ensuring immediate measures in rape cases and impartial and fair legal procedures.

CEDAW also urged the government to review its definition of rape and to train its judges, lawyers, law enforcement officers and medical personnel in a gender-sensitive manner to understand the crimes of rape and other sexual offences.

Source: Global Fund for Women

Poem

Make up, high heels, hair done
Eyebrows shaped, lip hair gone
Can't cry can't let my emotions show
Have to be what men want, smile
Have to be a little girl's role model, wave
Fake smile can't frown
forced smile
Tears sequins stress anxiety
What if I don't win?
Will people laugh at me?
Will my family be ashamed?
Will it mean I'm ugly?
What did I do wrong?
Did I laugh too loud?
Is my dress too tight?
Is it not tight enough?
Regret, eating disorders, self doubt
Sweat, heartbreak and tears
To be a queen is my dream
Passionate about community work
I've never volunteered before
I am the perfect example of
Modernity education and culture
And traditional morals
My religion and culture is dear to me
That is why I've reinvented my image

And socialise with married men twice my age
As the crowning night nears
Regrets set in, I question my self-worth
When I lose do I get an expiry date?
How will I live with failure in front of a nation
My expression of loss on front pages of newspapers
My anguish is your entertainment
You've asked me questions and ridiculed my answers
I have questions for you:
Who are YOU to judge me?
Can you walk in my shoes?
Can you slide into my dress?
Why do I have to prove my worth?
Is it just what I look like?
Is that all I am worth to you?
Why must I compete?
With those who I may call friends?
Have I nothing to offer but my face and body?
This queen you are here to see
She's not real
This whole culture alienates me

© **Angelyn Singh, April 2011** *Inspired by the Fiji hibiscus contestants who didn't win and FWCC's Gender ToT workshop.*

Wala CAVAW members during a Community Education training facilitated by the Vanuatu Women's Centre.
Photo courtesy: Vanuatu Women's Centre

Local Wala CAVAW committed to making a change

"The societal attitude towards females is that males are the overall authority and leader of the family, tribe, community, church groups, government & parliament".

These are the sentiments of Vanuatu Women's Centre (VWC) Coordinator Merilyn Tahi who said this is the feedback she gets from most Committees Against Violence Against Women (CAVAW) which VWC has set up in different areas in Vanuatu.

Tahi said this also leaves no place for women and added that these committees have been a 'thorn' in the communities attempting to redirect the men and women who view females as properties of men, telling men to respect women.

She said up North in Vanuatu, the Wala CAVAW has struggled through the dark societal attitudes to make small changes in their families and communities on the island of Wala and the nearby Wala main land community.

She added, "The members of this CAVAW are young women who are committed to making a difference to their families and who preach respect for women and the eradication of domestic violence in the families and communities".

Tahi said recently they have been relieved that there is increasing request from their leaders to visit communities and talk about domestic violence.

Invisible Women

Women
You are supposed to be there at the call of a man
Without contest
Without freedom of opinion

Women
You are expected to be
Tolerant
Patience
Submissive
Obedient
Loving
Forgiving
Without freedom of choice
Men
You are expected to be
Head of the house
Role models
Leaders
Providers
Protector
Without being questioned
Men
You are supposed to be
Decision makers
Strong
Powerful
Controlling
Without being opposed

Then where does respect fit in?
When men are given all the best of everything
Prioritized in all decisions
Acknowledged and respected in every way
Anything and everything done for them
Have all the privileges
While women have none at all
Women
Do you really exist?
When your life is pre-determined before you were born.
Women
Do you really exist?
When your life is programmed throughout.
Women
Do you really exist?
When you are to be seen and not heard
Women
Do you really exist?
When you are isolated from the rest of the world
Women, do you really exist?
When all is against your will
Women
Do you really exist?

By Jasmina Giouba
Nauru

POEMS INSPIRED BY GENDER ToT

Who Am I?

I know my rights
Yet must adhere to my elders
It is my duty
I am not the eldest

I know my rights
Yet must perform my motherly roles
It is a norm
I must not question

I know my rights
Yet treated as inferior and sub-ordinate
Because, I am a woman

Practising the same law
Yet I am told
Get out! There are better opportunities for your
Because I am standing for Women's Human Rights

Empowered
I will show them
The other side of the coin
I will show them
What is right
I will show them
Who I am

By Vola Matas
Studio 6 on the Lake, Pacific Harbour, Fiji
April 2011

O Gender

O Gender
O gender, who are you?
You help to get us
Men and Women together
In equal opportunities
In equal treatment
In equal sharing

I admire to see you bring equality
If you wish to walk alone for your own benefits
How could it be??
2 healthy legs come bring you to your success

Disabilities are friends of inequality
Sharing, unequal benefits, and
Burdens on another person

Simply, gender speaks out in a SOFT voice
Know who I am
I promote peace, unity, equal sharing, equal opportunities
I remove heavy burdens from women and girls
I am Human Rights
For all women and men

By Kaloka Naung Wilfred
Vanuatu, 2/4/2011

Fiji Women's Crisis Centre

APPLICATION FORM FOR REGIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMME

Name: .....

Home Address: .....

Phone: .....

Fax: .....

Postal Address: .....

Type of training desired: .....

☐ Training by attachment (4 weeks)

☐ Short course (3 weeks)

Sending organisation: .....

Postal Address: .....

Phone: .....

Fax: .....

Applicant's position in organisation: .....

Endorsed by: 1. Name: .....

Position: .....

2. Name: .....

Position: .....

Sponsoring organisation: .....

Contact person: .....

Address: .....

Phone: .....

Fax: .....

List any requirements of trainee regarding health, diet, language, etc. Please attach one page summary with more details of your work and interest in working on violence against women, include brief statement on your position on women's rights.

Yes, I would like to subscribe to the regional newsletter

☐ 4 issues (1 year) ☐ 8 issues (2 years) ☐ 12 issues (3 years)

Payment details: I enclose my bankdraft for $..... made payable to **FWCC**.

Name: .....

Home Address: .....

This subscription form is only for those outside the South Pacific region and is for postage and handling.

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