



Fiji Women's Crisis Centre

For more information, visit www.fijiwomen.com

NEWSLETTER FEB-JUNE 2014

NO-DROP POLICY REINFORCED

A SENIOR POLICE officer has reiterated that traditional ceremonies of reconciliation is not the job of the police force when it comes to cases of violence against women and children.

This was the reminder issued to 40 police officers from the Eastern Division by Assistant Commissioner of Police Rusiate Tudravu as they graduated from the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre's week long training on Gender, Violence against Women, Human Rights and Legal issues in June.

"Bulubulu or reconciliation is not your job. It's not in our processes or in our system. When someone comes to the station to report on a crime committed against women, your duty and your role is to investigate," ACP Tudravu told the graduates.

"Find out the truth and take the perpetrator to court. Let the court decide, that's their duty. Your job is to find out the facts and if there is a breach of the law, take them to court."

Tudravu told the officers they must remember the no-drop policy that is in place and treat every case of crimes against women and children as any other criminal offence and not try to act as mediators between the perpetrators and survivors.

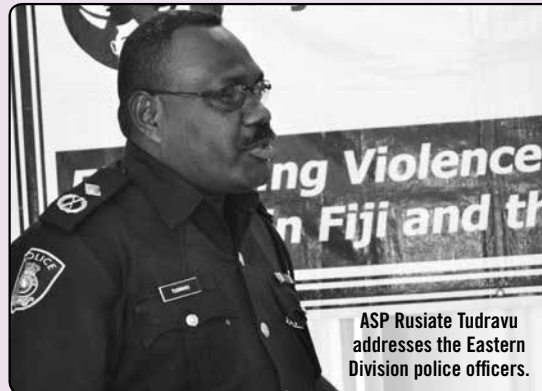
He said there had been numerous complaints about how police officers dealt with such reports and it was time these complaints stopped.

The Assistant Commissioner of Police acknowledged the FWCC for initiating the

training, calling on all participants to return to their various stations and share what they had learnt.

"One of the reasons I endorsed this training was because it is in our key performance indicators, to reduce crimes against women by 10 per cent using the budget that was given to us.

"We have to look beyond the police force to find other people out there who can help us do this rather than us trying to do so much with so little resources which hasn't



been very effective and efficient so far," he said.

"Another reason I endorsed this training was for us to become aware of what exactly is the Domestic Violence Decree because we have received a lot of reports on people calling, especially the women.

"Of all the calls I get every day, there's always one woman complaining about police actions. That's why I wanted us

to go through this course so we can now empathise with the victims, putting yourself in the shoes of those coming to the stations and use the procedures that we have and go deeper.

"I want to make it very clear, stop trying to be a 'main boy', and try to empathize with them and feel what they're feeling at that moment in time and give them the help they need," he added.

Tudravu said he strongly believes that Fiji has the experts locally to help the force with such issues, saying the FWCC is one example and this was why he did not have to look overseas for trainers.

"That's something I've always said and I'm glad that the Assistant Commissioner of Police brought that up today. We have the resources and the experts to train people on human rights issues, legal issues, the decrees and so on," Shamima Ali, FWCC Coordinator said. "We will be more than glad to continue to work with the Fiji Police in trying to get all police officers to be more efficient and knowledgeable when

dealing with cases of crimes against women and children.

"I definitely believe that this is just the beginning of a renewed relationship with the Fiji Police."

This was the fifth police training in a series facilitated by the FWCC and supported by the Australian Government's Aid Program. Negotiations are underway for more such trainings.

Fourth stage for male advocacy

THE FIJI WOMEN'S Crisis Centre's convened the fourth stage of its flagship male advocacy training programme for 27 men from around the Pacific region in February.

The men gathered at the Hexagon Hotel in Nadi from 10-18 February.

The male advocates from Tonga, Fiji, PNG, Nauru and Vanuatu were specially recruited by

the FWCC with the hope of them returning to make an impact in their communities and in their spheres of work.

FWCC Coordinator Shamima Ali says the Male Advocacy Training Program, is aimed at encouraging men to be part of the solution to violence against women and girls and most participants have been involved with the program since it started in 2002.

One such participant from Fiji is Clement Dari of the Anglican Church's Simeon Ministry, who says the training has changed him and many others in more ways than one.

"You know, I know most of these

participants, especially the ones from Fiji because I've worked with most of them and let me tell you, these were some stubborn men. Men who were never prone to change, men who believed in only their way. And I was just like them.

"But if you talk to them today, you will notice a huge change in the way they look at things, not just issues about women but about life as a whole and I believe that this program has been a blessing for us all because if it wasn't for the Male Advocacy training, we wouldn't be where we are today in as far as our

❖ turn to page 2



Lili Vuiyasawa, FWCC's legal officer, with participants at the workshop in Nadi.

FWCC hold police training

THE FIJI WOMEN'S Crisis Centre held a series of five police trainings between March and June this year.

Focusing on gender, violence against women, human rights and legal issues, the trainings were the result of a collaboration between the FWCC and police. This was all in a bid to combat the rise in cases of violence against women and children as well as the rise in complaints against police when dealing with such cases.

The first was in Nadi from 17-21 March and involved police officers from Sigatoka, Nadi and Lautoka.

The second was from 14-17 April and involved officers from Ba, Rakiraki, Tavua and Nadi while the third was held from 20-23 May in Labasa for northern police officers including Rabi.

Officers in the Southern Division were

trained from 9-13 June in Suva which included officers also from Navua and Kadavu. The final training was held from 23-27 June in Suva for officers from the eastern division including the maritime zone.

"When I entered this training I just thought I was going to learn a little bit more on domestic violence but what I got instead was a training that helped me understand how my work as a police officer, as an investigator needs to be in compliance with the law," said police officer and participant Edward Bibi.

"The training was a good refresher from what we learnt in the Academy, but it took my understanding to another level, especially the gender training on understanding now what women go through," said another participant Varun Anand.

Plans are underway for more such trainings around the country.

Goodbye ROSEMARY

THE FIJI WOMEN'S Crisis Centre farewelled one of its employees in early March, the first staff to pass away during the FWCC's 30 years of service.

Sereana

Rosemary Harman

succumbed to a short illness and died at the CWM Hospital on 9 March 2014.

'Rosie' as she was affectionately known, worked as a data entry officer at the FWCC headquarters for the past three years. She was described as a kind and fun loving person and a good friend to everyone who knew her.

Rosemary is survived by her husband and three children.

We will miss you Rosie.



Fourth stage for male advocacy

❖ from page 1

ways are concerned in treating women," says Mr Dari.

Sharing the same sentiments is Daniele Lawakeli, a police officer in Suva, who says he is able to incorporate what he has learnt into his work as well as at home.

"Before when we had cases of domestic violence, I never really cared. I just wanted to sort the issue out as quickly as possible and most times it's reconciliation. But now, what I do, through what I have learnt is that no woman should be subjected to any form of violence so when a case comes in and we have verified the facts, the perpetrator is taken in and dealt with on the spot."

Funded by Australian Aid, the Male Advocacy training program was facilitated by masculinities expert Stephen Fisher of Australia.

"It's really great to see that these men have taken what they've learnt and are actually using it in both their personal and professional lives as police officers or as health workers or even as religious workers because at the end of the day, that's what counts. What we're doing may be seen as a drop in the ocean but even a small stone makes ripples and that's what I believe this program is doing.

"If we can make a small difference somewhere among these Pacific countries that we have invited participants from, then I am happy. But even then, our work to educate men on the effects of violence against women and girls and what they can do to help will go on," said FWCC Coordinator Shamima Ali.

Hundreds join FWCC march

THE FIJI WOMEN'S Crisis Centre and all its four branches across the country held separate events to mark International Women's Day on 8 March.

In Suva, the FWCC held its Reclaim the Night march along the capital's streets where hundreds of people from all walks of life turned up.



The Reclaim the Night march on IWD 8 March in Suva.



A forum on sexual assault was held in Labasa on 7 March.



A vigil was held in Nadi.

Take advantage of FWCC expertise, RTP graduates told

THE FIJI WOMEN'S Crisis Centre is one of the Government of Australia's key partners in efforts to address violence against women in the Pacific Region, says Nilesh Gounder, Program Manager for UN Partnerships and Gender at the Australian High Commission.

He made the comment while addressing 40 participants from 10 Pacific Island countries who graduated from the FWCC's 31st Regional Training Program (RTP) in June.

For four weeks, participants were trained on various topics relating to violence against women including domestic violence, sexual harassment and child abuse, Human Rights Laws as well as Counsellor Training, Advocacy and Lobbying to name a few.

In presenting their certificates, Mr Gounder encouraged the participants to continue learning as much as they can about violence against women and ways to prevent or deal with it, adding that they must make an effort to keep in touch with the FWCC.

"For those graduating, I commend you for your commitment to tackling one of the biggest issues in Pacific communities. The challenge of what you seek to do is daunting but we must continue to advance one step at a time," Mr Gounder said.

"This training should not be the end of your learning on eliminating violence against women. We encourage you to continue to draw on FWCC's expertise in this area and other training and mentoring opportunities available."

He also reminded participants that violence against women is an abuse of fundamental human rights and that there was evidence to suggest that



Australian High Commission's Nilesh Gounder was chief guest at the graduation.

VAW negates every area of development activity which is why FWCC's work in the region is critical to the Australian Government's long-term plan to eliminate violence against women in the Pacific.

"The Australian Government is supporting an ambitious 10-year AU\$320 million program entitled Pacific Women Shaping Development (Pacific Women). This program will improve the political, economic and social opportunities of women in 14 Pacific countries.

"Between 2012 and 2022 Pacific Women will work with Pacific governments, civil society

organisations, the private sector and multilateral, regional and United Nations agencies to increase women's representation through leadership at all levels of decision making, expand women's economic opportunities and reduce violence against women and increase access to support services and to justice for survivors of violence."

The FWCC's training model is recognised regionally and globally as a best-practice example of working to eliminate violence against women.

The Regional Training Program was founded by the FWCC in 1995.



Overseas movements

- FWCC Coordinator Shamima Ali was invited to speak at the fourth session of the Gender, Voice and Agency Workshop on 2-4 June 2014, ADB Headquarters in Manila. She was also invited to speak at the 19th Biennial Conference of Clubs at the Borneo Convention Centre in Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia. The conference was from May 2 to 4.
- FWCC legal research manager Vandhna Narayan attended the regional council meeting for Asia Pacific Women, Law and Development (APWLD), in Chiangmai, Thailand from 27 to 28 May. On 29 May she attended the general assembly for APWLD. She also attended the Asia Pacific Feminist Forum, APFF, Chiangmai from 30 May to 1 June. From 2 June to 4 June Vandhna attended the UNICEF expert group meeting on HIV vulnerabilities of sexually exploited children in Asia and the Pacific in Bangkok, Thailand.
- FWCC Legal Officer Lili Vuiyasawa and RWCC Project Officer Selina Momoyalewa attended the 2nd Asia Pacific Feminists Forum in Chiangmai, Thailand from 30 May to 2 June.
- FWCC legal research officer Monica Waqanisau attended a one week training in Phnom Penh, Cambodia on Feminist Legal Theory and Practice from 24 June to 28 April. The training was conducted by APWLD.
- FWCC counsellor supervisor Farzana Gulista and counsellor advocates Iisapece Maria and Shobna Devi held trainings on sexual gender based violence and essential crisis services in Tarawa from 28 April to 2 May.



Some of the 40 participants at the 31st Regional Training Programme in Suva.

Thumbs Up



↑ We commend High Court judge Justice Salesi Temo for his consistency in dealing with cases of rape and sexual assault. Justice Temo has made it clear that those appearing before him convicted of sexual offences will not be spared a jail term. He has consistently jailed rapists for no less than 10 years sending a clear message that such offenders are a menace to society. In April, he jailed a Kadavu school teacher for 13 years for raping a student. In June, Justice Temo sentenced a man to 14 years' in jail for raping his stepdaughter.

↑ We welcome comments by Voreqe Bainimarama while opening the new Tavuki Women's Centre in February regarding the alarming levels of sexual and physical violence against women in Fiji. He called recent reports a national disgrace and one that should shame every Fijian. Bainimarama also said the days of any lenient attitude to raping, demeaning, mistreating and exploiting women were over and that he was issuing instructions to the police to adopt a policy of zero tolerance of all violence against women.

Thumbs Down



↓ We give a thumbs-down to the Permanent Secretary for Women Dr Joe Koroiueta who while declaring Nawailevu in Bua a violence-free zone in February, said women should always obey and submit to their husbands. He added that God had made women as helpers to their husbands, from which it can be inferred that women should not question their husbands. It was an unfortunate remark coming from a person who is expected to be aware of the dynamics of violence against women and who should have refrained from making comments that help perpetuate it.

↓ Thumbs down to Minister for Women Dr Jiko Luveni for saying that women should dress modestly and help men in the national campaign to cut down sex crimes. She warned them that what they wore could be misconstrued and send out the wrong signal to sexual predators. She said, "In my opinion if a girl is going out to drink with guys in an isolated area wearing shorts or clothes showing off her body, she is inviting trouble. We women have rights but we would not want to get into trouble by exposing ourselves and arousing the opposite sex." The statements amount to victim blaming at its worst and are contrary to all accepted knowledge on the causes of rape and are frankly outrageous and unacceptable.

Politicians' promises

Biman Prasad, NFP Leader - NFP will encourage women candidates in this election and our manifesto will contain policies towards gender equality and empowerment of women.

Roshika Deo, aspiring politician (Independent) - I come with a feminist way of thinking, a youthful perspective and a different way of looking at things. I believe in consultative approaches instead of adversarial-like approaches; we have to create a culture of independent individuals. In an authoritative government it's also difficult to be able to be independent, assertive, free-thinking individuals but it is so important to do that.

Ro Teimumu Kepa SODELPA Leader - SODELPA believes in a proactive approach where we encourage women to participate at grassroots level while providing active support to assist women's upward mobility to the highest levels of the party.

Aman Ravindra Singh, General Secretary PDP - The PDP believes in the dignity, freedom and equality of all individuals founded on the core values of human rights (including the rights of workers, women, youth and other marginalised groups), non-discrimination, and social and economic justice.

Kini Maraiwai, Assistant General Secretary, Fiji Labour Party - Our commitment is not only to encouraging women in politics. FLP record shows that it has always stood against gender discrimination, and been sympathetic to the plight of women struggling as single wage earners to provide for their families.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

FROM JANUARY to June this year the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre and all its branches held close to 90 workshops around the country reaching an average of 4,600 people. The workshops focused on gender, domestic violence, rape, sexual harassment, child sexual abuse and the role of the centre. Workshops were held in the following places:

FWCC

- Nadelei,
- Galoa Rugby League
- Fiji Teachers Union
- Galoa's Women Group
- Tamavua Village
- Nadawa Muslim League
- Nainikuniku Women's Group, Naitasiri
- Junior MYF, Davuilevu
- Vatukoula Women's Group
- Marceline Champaign
- ACS Girls School
- Navuniyesi Women's Group, Naitasiri
- Rabulu Women's Group, Tavua
- Bau Grant Women's Rally

BWCC

- Koronubu Sanatan Primary
- Vatukoula Women's Group
- Tauvegavega Women's Club
- Rabulu Village, Tavua
- Gujrati Grounds, Ba
- Talaiya Muslim Primary School, Ba
- Vatulaulau Sanatan Primary School, Ba
- Balata High School, Tavua

LWCC

- Labasa Women's Forum, Labasa
- Ponsami's Place, Vunika, Labasa
- Korocau Women's Group, Nakobo Village, Cakaudrove
- Children of Korocau, Nakobo Village, Cakaudrove
- Namoli, Labasa
- Yasawa, Cakaudrove
- USP Student's Association, Labasa
- Yasawa Children, Cakaudrove
- Corrections services, Taveuni
- Qeleni Village, Taveuni
- Qarawalu Village Community, Taveuni

- Nalayala Community, Taveuni
- Naqara Women's Group
- Bua Lomanikoro Villagers
- Duavata Crime Prevention Committee
- Tukavesi Women's Group
- Kama District School, Tukavesi
- Tukavesi Men's Group

NWCC

- Sigatoka Indo Fijian Women
- Nasivikosa
- Sanasana Village, Sigatoka
- Sigatoka Village combined
- Vagadra Youth, Nadi
- Narewa Village, Nadi
- Tau Village
- Sigatoka Soroptomist Group, Sigatoka
- Kulukulu Settlement, Sigatoka
- Navakai Community, Nadi
- Tikina Mosisoqosoqo vakamarama

RWCC

- Penang Sangam High School, Rakiraki
- Wairuku Primary School
- Penang Sangam Kindergarten



More than 40 women attended a three-day workshop on gender, domestic violence, child abuse, sexual assault and the law in Tukavesi Village in Cakaudrove from 23-25 June.