

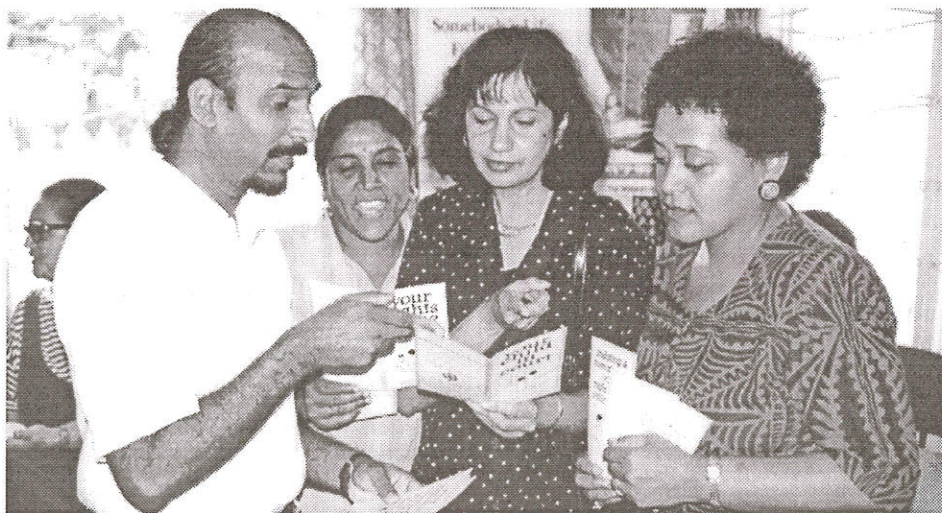
## Pamphlets explain your legal rights

Have you ever wanted to go down to your local Police Station and make a complaint and you aren't sure how to go about it? Have you ever been taken into custody and don't know what you are entitled to? What if your child is to appear in court - are you aware of correct procedures? And what about your rights in your own home?

Four pamphlets recently launched by the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre address these issues. These pamphlets are for everyone; because you never know when you or someone you know may be placed in such a situation and these pamphlets would answer any basic questions you may have.

Developed by the FWCC counsellors and the legal advisor, Vandhana Narayan, the four pamphlets are titled: Your Rights in the Home, Your Child in Court, Lodging a Complaint: your Rights and Obligations and Your Rights if Charged by the Police and are based on clients' queries over the years. These are questions often asked about these issues and the counsellors identified it as a need. After two days of workshoping, the pamphlets were drawn up by Vandhana and put around to appropriate people for comments.

The pamphlets were launched by the



At the launch: Rajend Naidu (Social Welfare), Yishu Lal (FWCC) Director Legal Aid, Aruna Prasad and Salote Malo (FWCC)

Director of the Legal Aid Commission, Ms. Aruna Prasad. While launching the pamphlets, Ms Prasad stressed the importance of people being aware of their rights and obligations under the constitution and the law and being prepared to insist upon them. She also mentioned the need for parents or guardians to accompany a child who is charged because in her experience as a magistrate, 13 and 14 year olds have

appeared to be frightened, shocked and bewildered. Providing love and support to children who have been charged will assist in their rehabilitation process.

FWCC has begun distributing the pamphlets around Fiji and they have proven very popular amongst a wide cross section of people. The pamphlets are available at all Crisis Centres - Suva, Lautoka, Ba and Labasa.

## Other Activities

**August:** AusAID conducted a review of FWCC activities and effectiveness for the last 4 years and the report should be out soon. The review involved consultation with major stakeholders and beneficiaries of FWCC's programs to address violence against women and children.

**September:** Another 6-monthly Progress Report (PR7) was completed for AusAID and a Project Coordinating Committee meeting to discuss this was held on 27 October with FWCC, AusAID, Lili King (Community member) and Bernadette Rounds-Ganilau (Trustee). The report was accepted.

**October:** Shamima Ali presented a paper on violence against women in Fiji at the historic National Congress on Women, prior to the Prime Minister launching a National Plan of Action for Women.

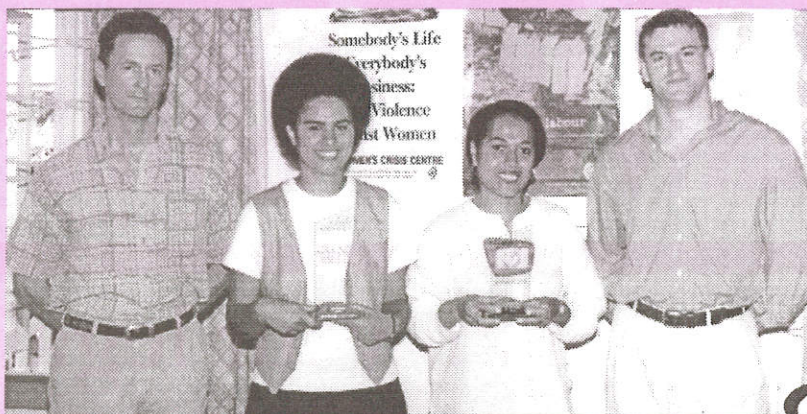
**celebrate & demand  
 women's  
 human  
 rights  
 1998 global campaign**



# FWCC commercial stands out on TV

Each day we are bombarded with various images on our TV screens competing for customers in this world governed by the market economy. "Hi, I'm Rebecca Wilson ... There's heaps of steel at Manubhai ... We do it right .... Give me a cookie..Tuck into it"-children recite the jingles and adults hum along.

It is amongst such images and advertisements that FWCC entered the Fiji Television Awards. It was the hard-hitting images of the Domestic Violence advertisement which touched the

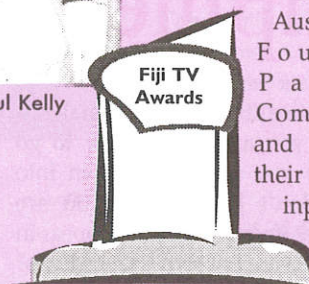


Dale Hermanson (Pasifika Communication), Edwina, Adelle and Paul Kelly (Aus AID) with the Awards

judges and enabled FWCC to scoop the major awards at the inaugural Fiji Television Awards Night on 7 August 1998. This advertisement which featured during

the 1996 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence Campaign picked up the; Grand Award, Public Service Award, Excellence in Soundtrack, Excellence in Performance and Creative Excellence. The Grand Award is worth \$10,000 in free advertising.

For this achievement, the FWCC thanks AusAID, Asia Foundation, Pasifika Communications and TV One for their support and input.



## Meet our Trustees

The Fiji Women's Crisis Centre as a registered charitable trust is required to have four Trustees. It is important that an organisation like the FWCC has trustees who are committed to supporting it. The four trustees of FWCC were chosen after a lot of discussion and contemplation. So it was with unanimity that Ruth Lechte, Bernadette Rounds-Ganilau, Cema Bolabola and Miles Young were chosen.

### Miles Young :

A lawyer and partner with the law firm of Howard & Associates. He is also a member of the Fiji Young Lawyers Association and currently serves as a board member of the Fiji Red Cross and a trustee of the Aids Task Force.

### Cema Bolabola :

An academic and lecturer, currently on leave from USP while undertaking post-graduate studies at the University. She was the former co-ordinator of the Continuing Education program with USP Extension and the former Pacific contact person with ISIS International.

Cema has and is involved with a number of NGOs and has carried out studies and research on issues relating to women, which included Fijian culture and land rights, women & agriculture, women & health and women in decision-making. She was a former vice-president of the YWCA and a former chairperson of the Soqosoqo Vakamarama - Lomaiviti Branch, Suva. She was a founding member of the Fiji Association of Women Graduates (FAWG). She is also a member of the Fiji Women's

Rights Movement, Ecowomen/Spachee and a supporter of the Soqosoqo Vakamarama.

### Ruth Lechte :

A renowned figure both locally and internationally for her work in advocating for women's issues and the environment. She arrived in Fiji in 1962 and was the founding General Secretary for the YWCA in Fiji. In 1973, she joined the World YWCA as the Pacific Area Director in Geneva where she spent a lot of time travelling the Pacific. In 1983 she became the Director of Energy, Environment and Applied Technology for the World YWCA. She helped to organise the Applied Technology Fair for the Nairobi Women's Conference in 1985. In 1994, Ruth retired but she did not stop there, she travelled around the world as an environmental educator and developing village Applied Technology Systems. During the Beijing Conference, she organised the Women's Science and Technology pavilion and later in 1997 she assisted with the organising of the Pacific Science Congress at USP. She is a member of Wainimate-the Regional Traditional Healers Association, a vice-president of Fiji Amateur Sports Association and the Fiji National Youth Council.



FWCC Trustees... Bernadette Rounds-Ganilau, Ruth Lechte, Miles Young, Cema Bolabola

### Bernadette Rounds - Ganilau :

She has been involved with the media since the early 70's and used her time on radio to highlight women's issues that were emerging in the newly independent Fiji. She has worked on radio, television and the press and was editor and publisher of Fiji Women, the first newspaper in the Pacific touching on women's issues and concerns. She is the Pacific Advisor for the Global Fund for Women. A media consultant since 1990, she has since worked regionally and internationally facilitating workshops and conferences and of late has been involved in marketing the Pacific Region's Millennium activities around the world.

FWCC is restructuring its management system and the Trustees will play active roles in the management. They bring to FWCC a diverse and rich blend of perspectives and we welcome them on board.



# A well-fed child does well at school

Every year schools in Fiji celebrate various days along with the rest of the world. There are days allocated for the environment, for teachers, for children, for peace and various other things. While these celebrations are enjoyable and educational for children, they also cut into the formal educational programs of students. With this in mind, the staff of Penang Primary School decided to have a three-in-one celebration. FWCC's co-ordinator, Shamima Ali was asked to be the chief guest and to give a twenty minute speech on "Women feed the World, Stand up for your Library and Children Join Hands - working towards a multicultural Fiji". These were the themes for World Food Day, Library Week and Children's Day respectively.

Shamima made the following points as she attempted to draw together the three themes.

"Women feed the World: what does this mean? It means women planting, women harvesting and women deciding what their families eat and feeding them. Therefore, it is important that women have access to information that educates them about the nutritional aspect of food. Women should also be part of any decision-making regarding land use; access to land and about appropriate crops for planting. She must also share control of finances to make decisions about buying the right food for the family. When women are given access to all these then they are in a better position to promote better health for

their children. Traditionally, this important role has been for mothers but with better understanding of these issues, it is important for men or fathers to share the role of feeding the family.

When we have healthy children, their minds are prepared for a healthy education and a good and productive life. Good health creates a healthy mind and children will be able to study and later have greater productivity in the workforce or elsewhere. To achieve this, good nutritional food is



Students enjoying food supplied by school

important but other resources are also necessary.

One of these resources is a well-supplied and well-looked after library. Reading opens a whole new world to us. Most of us might not be able to travel too much but reading enables us to learn a lot about other countries; about animals and plants and lots of other things. It is important for us to

utilise our libraries and to take care of our books.

With our new constitution in place, Fiji is on the threshold of carving out a new and better future for us. The Constitution promotes multi-culturalism, non-discrimination and a lot of other issues that should protect our human rights. Join Hands for Fiji - children play an important role in creating and promoting multi-culturalism. This can be done by learning each other's language because being able to speak each other's language removes a lot of barriers. The responsibility is for parents and teachers to educate and teach values promoting peace, justice, non-violence and non-racism. If we are genuine and committed to Fiji then the way forward is understanding and respecting the human rights of all citizens of this country."

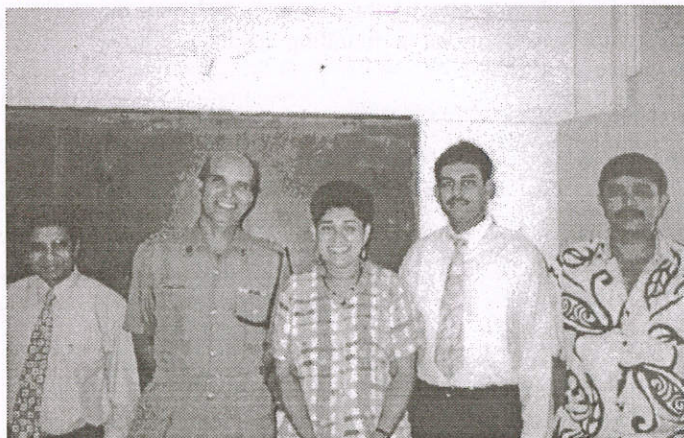
The essence of this speech was exemplified in the items presented by the students of Penang Primary School. The opening prayers in Hindu, Christian and Muslim by 3 young girls represented the dominant religions in Fiji. Through parades, various book characters were portrayed and the combinations of dances by the students epitomised the appreciation of each others cultures by the students. Most of all we were happy to see a lot of empowered and confident young people, in particular the young girls who presented and guided us through the days program.

## Taking violence against women issues to the community

Over the past few months, the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre has been busy with various community education activities. Awareness raising in the community is a very important aspect of our work because it stimulates discussion and debate on women's issues. Sessions conducted at the Fiji Institute of Technology and Fiji College of Advanced Education have been most enjoyable for FWCC staff especially being presented with the opportunity of challenging the ideologies of the young and passionate scholars at these institutions. It is also good to see that major institutions in Fiji are including such pertinent issues in their curriculum. The YMCA of Fiji invited FWCC to present to young leaders

from around Fiji at their Leadership Development Workshop. The *Leadership in the Home* discussions with Shamima began at

11am and did not finish until after 4pm. The Newtown Police Post organised a Family Fun Day which had the theme of *Working in Partnership with the Community*. It was a day of fun and games, and FWCC was privileged to be a part of the day's activity and share with the community its materials and information and learn about the history of the close-knit community of Newtown.



Shamima with NFP MP Saiyad Khayum, Inspector Shameen, Mohammed Tazim (Newtown Police) Shafiqe (Valelevu)





## Ba centre women reach out to the community

The women at the Ba Women's Crisis Centre have been extremely busy with their community education outreach program. An issue which is becoming of increasing concern is Child Sexual Abuse and the Ba Centre received requests from a whole range of groups to speak on this subject.

During the month of July, there was a week dedicated to preschools for the whole nation. As part of activities organised, various kindergartens and preschools included presentations and video sessions run by the Ba Women's Crisis Centre in their program.

Participants at these sessions included parents, teachers and children. Some of the

kindergartens visited in July included: Korowere kindergarten in Vatukoula, Naisiri kindergarten, Rabulu kindergarten, Moto Saratan kindergarten, Fiji Sugar Corporation kindergarten, Bulu kindergarten in Sorokoba. Vasemaca and Fareeda also addressed the Mataniwai Women's Club and the Balata Daitiri Women's club.

The Ba Women's Crisis Centre maintains this hectic schedule for community education along with their counselling service.



The women at the Ba Centre - Va, Filo and Farida

## Lautoka Centre's services in demand

The Lautoka Women's Crisis Centre provides counselling and support to the women and children from the greater Lautoka area and the Nadi, Sigatoka region. From December 1996 to August 1998, they have seen a total of 865 clients. Of these, 408 were new clients and 457 were repeat or old clients. They have varied from Domestic Violence, Rape and Child Abuse, to those seeking information and advice on divorce, child custody, child maintenance and other legal matters.

Many students have called in to access information in the Centre's resource room from primary level through to tertiary levels on issues of domestic violence, rape, child abuse, teenage pregnancy and gender issues for their assignments. Other people from various community/church groups and organisations have also used information

from the resource room for presentations or talks given to their groups.

The Centre has also been involved in community education. Some of the groups they have addressed included; the Lautoka Zanana Muslim League and the Red Cross kindergarten for pre-school week. An interesting educational and discussion session was held with a women's group from the Methodist church circuit in Namoli. For many of the participants in the group, it was a very informative and educational session, particularly on the issues of domestic violence, rape and child abuse. We hope that more groups will take the initiative to call upon the Lautoka Centre for educational and awareness sessions on the issues of violence that concerns us all.

## Happy 14th Birthday FWCC

On 13 August 1998, the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre turned 14. Therefore, it was appropriate that members of FWCC were able to share another year of hardwork and happiness with friends and supporters. On August 15, FWCC met with its Trustees, AusAID and friends to share its past, hardships and highlights over the years and its future programs. After the meeting, a hearty lunch was prepared by staff members and a cake donated by Sunflower

Airlines (thank you Desmond!) was enjoyed by all. Making the day more rich was the presence of a founding member, Carole Carter.



Cema, Ruth, Miles, Carole, Bernadette and Paul Kelly (AusAid)

## World Human Rights Day December 10

*The NGO Coalition on Human Rights would like to invite you to be a part of activities to mark the celebrations of the 50th Anniversary of World Human Rights Day. The Concert and Rally will feature entertainment by*

*Laisa Vulakoro, empowering speeches by well-known activists, drama, exhibitions and lots more. So come and join and celebrate.*

*Date: December 10*

*Time: 10am - 2pm*

*Venue: Ratu Sukuna Park*

