

Community Radio Times

Edition 1/2018



**WORLD
RADIO
DAY**



Here Are The Women



YOUR WOMEN'S WEATHER WATCH STATION:

**24 hours in Suva
9am to 5pm in Labasa**

**Promoting Women's Leadership in
Disaster Preparedness, Response and Resilience**

Produced with support from the Australian Government



On Our Community Radio Calendar:

International Women's Day

Observed since the early 1900s throughout Europe and North America as a day to protest wars and labour conditions, International Women's Day has since become a global event to acknowledge the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women.

In 1975, during the International Women's Year, the United Nations began celebrating IWD on the 8th of March. The day is a rallying call to celebrate extraordinary acts of courage by women and also a time to reflect on how far the women's rights movement has come and to re-examine existing commitments to advancing gender equality.

With the feminist movement gaining momentum at the international level, the support for women's rights has been strengthened by a collection of international goals such as Agenda 2030, specifically Goal 5: 'Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls'.

CSW62

Established in 1946, the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) is the UN organ that is tasked with promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women. The first session was convened a year later and since then, CSW has been instrumental in promoting women's rights, documenting the reality of women's lives throughout the world, and shaping global standards on gender equality and the empowerment of women.

The work of CSW has resulted in the use of inclusive language in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the drafting of the Convention on the Eliminations of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

The sixty-second session of the Commission on the Status of Women will take place at the United Nations Headquarters in New York from the 12th to 23rd of March, this year looking at the priority theme of 'Challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls' and review theme of 'Participation in and access of women to the media, and information and communications technologies and their impact on and use as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women'.

World Press Freedom Day

In December 1993, the United Nations General Assembly declared the 3rd of May World Press Freedom Day as a result of the Windhoek Declaration - a set of press freedom principles put together by journalists in Africa in 1991.

The purpose of World Press Freedom Day was to raise awareness of the importance of press freedom, defend the media from attacks on their independence and to assess the state of the media worldwide.

An independent media ensures that the community that it serves has the full ability to take part in democratic processes. A free press serves as the cornerstone for critical thinking and provides the platform that allows citizens an open debate and free-flow of ideas.

International Women's Day for Peace and Disarmament

Annually commemorated on the 24th of May, the International Day for Peace and Disarmament celebrates the efforts of women to lead peace building and disarmament initiatives.

Through lived experiences during times of conflict, women have often been at the forefront of conflict resolution at the community, national and even international level. These efforts often at times do not get the recognition it deserves, effectively shutting women out of formal decision making spaces.

Through its media platforms and partnerships concerned with peace building, femLINKpacific has continued to support its network of women leaders in decision-making and in the promotion of the principles of diversity and inclusivity.

femLINKpacific's Convenors and correspondents



Adi Vasulevu

Having worked with femLINKpacific since 2004, Adi Vasulevu began her journey by embracing the principle of working from a peace building perspective. Being a part of the community media platform exposed Adi Vasu to the situations that women face, not only in her community but also regionally and internationally as femLINKpacific established partnerships abroad. In

her discussions with rural women leaders, the conversation often focuses on communicating women's priority issues within a human security framework. For Adi Vasu, community radio is an important source of education because it opens learning and amplifies women's stories across the region.



Losana Derenalagi

It all began with an interview for a suitcase radio broadcast in Nadi in 2006. Derenalagi she wanted to highlight the situation of single mothers, an issue that she was well aware of as a leader of the Nadi Tikina Soqosoqo Vakamarama. In 2012, she accepted the mantle of convenor in Nadi and has since has expanded to engage with diverse rural women leaders in Lautoka

as well – a role that supports her leadership. While Derenalagi is a key focal point for femLINK in the West, she is deeply passionate about empowering the community of women she has come to know. She continues to work together with women leaders in all their diversities to strengthen the women's movement at the community level to improve the status of women throughout the country.



Fane Boseiwaqa

Fane Boseiwaqa, one of femLINKpacific's convenors in the Western Division, has been journeying with femLINK since 2005. Beginning as a volunteer, Boseiwaqa was a founding member of the Generation Next project (2007 – 2011). Twelve years later, Boseiwaqa plays a lead role in organising and facilitating safe spaces at monthly community media consultations for 99 other

rural women leaders in Ba, Tavua and Rakiraki. When the nation was in a state of emergency in the aftermath of TC Winston, she continued to communicate information to and from femLINK's Community Media Centre in Suva and the rural women leaders leading the response and recovery in their communities. As a dedicated member of femLINKpacific's field team, Boseiwaqa is working to ensure that global commitments to achieving gender equality are realised at the local level.



Frances Tawake

Tawake began her journey with femLINKpacific in 2009 when she was nominated by Susana Evening to represent the Lami Parish of the Catholic Women's League for the Generation Next project. She began as a volunteer broadcaster and grew within the organization, becoming femLINKpacific's Network Coordinator, responsible for coordinating a network

of 30 correspondents from 7 countries including Bougainville, Fiji, Marshall Islands, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. This year, Tawake has since taken a step back from the organisation to focus on school but remains committed to amplifying the voices of rural women and marginalised women through community media as the Central Division convenor.



Sokoveti Lutumailagi

Lutumailagi is a dynamic rural woman leader who documents and produces women's stories to inspire positive change in her community. Like every other woman, she wears several hats. She's the secretary of the Namotomoto Church and the Namotomoto Women's Methodist Group as well as the treasurer of Navoci Circuit Women's Methodist group – all alongside managing

her family. In 1999, she joined a community television station operating in Nadi at that time as a volunteer presenter. Soon after, the station was shut down and she ventured into the hotel industry and worked there for 9 years. For Sokoveti, community radio was a chance for women to share their ideas, views and struggles. She hopes that it is this continued broadcasting that will make a change – a change of mindset as to what a leader is as well as what is currently being done by decision makers.



Rusila Lautiki

Like many of the women in the team, Lautiki was introduced to femLINKpacific's work through her community group, the Naleba Multiracial Women's Group. Starting off as a broadcaster based at the Labasa CMC, Rusila has since joined the field team as a rural correspondent. For her, community radio is important because it deals with facts and issues faced by women of all diversities. Community radio has also been a tool to

bridge the gap between women, societies and decision makers. Her engagement with femLINKpacific's network of rural women has enabled her to learn from them and determined to create a positive change in her community.

World Radio Day Supplement: Editorial

by Sharon Bhagwan Rolls – Executive Producer-Director, femLINKpacific, and Station Manager, FemTALK89FM.



It all started in 2003. I found the 'Suitcase Radio' in Kathmandu in Nepal at my first conference of the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters. It was early days of femLINK

and we wanted to take radio to women in their communities, to link women in communities, contributing to extend the work of the Blue Ribbon Peace Vigil, as a women-led multiracial, multifaith and intercultural dialogue following the May 2000 crisis.

It was about women speaking to women for peace.

It's been a long journey since discovering the suitcase radio technology all those years ago. We started small – with monthly weekend broadcasts with a team of fifth form students from St Joseph's School at the Ecumenical Centre for Research, Education and Advocacy (ECREA) office.

This gave rise to our Generation Next Project of training young women to use the technology – to document stories with tape recorders and have those monthly radio broadcasts. From the 24th of May, 2004, we grew into what we are today – the first women-led regional community media network.

Today, 7 members of our team, including rural correspondents who create the radio programmes and convenors who bring together women leaders in all their diversities at the community media consultations held across Fiji in 10 districts a month, first joined us as members of our Generation Next Project (2005 – 2011).

You'll find them at our two Community Media Centres – a regional hub based in Suva and the only local radio station on Vanua Levu based in Labasa run by a team of young women. But while we've grown as a media network, the one thing that hasn't changed is the purpose.

The journey of the suitcase radio is literally one about taking technology to women. I remember sitting in Ba, probably about 2005, and women at the Ba Senior Citizens Centre had talked on the radio, they had sung on the radio. We always kept a little transistor radio so they could hear themselves as we operated the radio station. Two women watched me pack the radio and they said to me afterwards, "you know, we're seventy. All our lives we've listened to radio but radio was in Suva. You've brought the radio to us here in Ba."

The radio came to them and they could hear their voice, they heard their voice on the radio for the very first time in their lives, they heard themselves talking about their issues, they heard themselves singing. It was the most emotional moment ever for me as a broadcaster because I just took for granted for so many years that you have that opportunity to talk and be heard, but there they were being heard in their seventies.

As we continue to make her story, as we continue the journey of femLINKpacific, we



celebrate the achievements of the community media network this World Radio Day. Since extending the broadcast hours of FemTALK89FM Labasa and continuing to operate the 24-hour FemTALK89FM Suva, we contribute at least 800 hours of community radio a month.

That's 800 hours of women's voices that wouldn't be heard without the investment in women-led media and our own Pacific People's Communication for Development model.

The work we do with community radio in pursuit of development that's inclusive and that is breaking the silence and bridging the information-communication gap between rural communities – communities that still remain silent – particularly within that women of all diversities. So, thank you for listening to FemTALK89FM in Suva, Labasa or when the suitcase radio is out in the field.

Stay tuned!

World Radio Day for femLINKpacific

by Carolyn Kitione

The vision was simple: to provide a media platform for women across the Pacific, starting in Fiji.

"We needed to break the silence, so that's what we did," said Adi Vasulevu, convenor in the North for femLINKpacific. "We created an enabling space where women's thoughts, voices and ideas mattered."

And since 2004, what started as a mobile suitcase radio with weekend broadcasts gradually developed into 2 Community Media Centres (CMCs).

By 2010, the 'suitcase radio' had become a women's caravan of news and information – travelling out to women from Rakiraki to Sigatoka, Labasa and Savusavu producing content with women and then broadcasting these in each centre.

For the dedicated women of femLINKpacific's field and broadcast teams, the community radio is more than just a job.

"Community media, I think it's... friendly to the women in the rural community," said Losana Dermalagi, femLINKpacific's convenor for the Nadi and Lautoka districts. "It's the only media that gives them the space and the time to hear from them."

As the first, and only, women-led community media platform in the Pacific, FemTALK 89FM is the only radio station that dedicates a fifth of its on-air production to Women's Weather Watch – a model that reaffirms women's leadership in humanitarian crises including natural disaster in Fiji.

"With community radio and including the SMS Women's Weather Watch messages, we were able to be informed and I think that is something that is different from the work community radio is doing," said Fane Boseiwaqa, femLINKpacific's rural convenor for the Tavua, Rakiraki and Ba districts.

As the Women's Weather Watch campaign has illustrated, there is still a long way to go for women to be meaningfully engaged in decision making – at the detriment of resilience.

At the same time, through the 2 way communication facilitated by the community media process, rural women leaders are empowered as first responders to mobilise their communities.

About World Radio Day

World Radio Day is observed annually on February 13 and is a day to remember the importance of radio. The date was chosen to commemorate the establishing of the United Nations Radio in 1946.

As the communication medium with the widest reach, radio is a tool designed to reach people in even the most remote communities.

The day also serves as a reminder to stakeholders of the need to make information accessible and as an easier way to connect communities.

The global 2018 theme for World Day is 'Radio and Sports'. This year's theme also serves as a challenge to the media to recognise the achievements of female athletes because on a global scale, only 4% of sports stories focus primarily on women.

Our FemTALK 89FM Team

Mereani Nawadra



Host of FemTALK89FM Suva's Morning Waves show, Nawadra has been a member of femLINKpacific's Young Women Producers and Broadcasters team since 2015. A recommendation from her supervisor, she joined FemTALK89FM as a volunteer from the Communication and Overseas Mission Department of the Methodist Church in Fiji, co-hosting the Interfaith show every Monday from 2pm to 5pm. For her, community radio promotes

creativity as it allows women to come together and share solutions to issues such as dealing with poverty.

Hannah Mara



A former Adi Senikau (2016), Mara joined FemTALK89FM Suva in 2017 as the host of femTALK89FM's Rainbow Connections Show. She is also a member of the Haus of Khameleon, a social justice organization devoted to ending discrimination and violence against transgender people through education and advocacy.

Maxine Tuwila



Having joined FemTALK89FM Suva team shortly after femLINKpacific's 16 Days of Activism Consultation in 2015 as a representative from Youth Champs for Mental Health, Tuwila saw this as an opportunity to share information about mental health. A passionate advocate, she saw community radio as a chance for communities to share their issues as well as give recommendations. It was also a learning curve for her because she could

hear firsthand accounts of what was happening in communities around Fiji. At a personal level, FemTALK89FM has helped Maxine develop research and communication skills that have undoubtedly helped in her work with Youth Champs.

Kini Saratibau



Saratibau joined FemTALK89FM Suva through the Methodist Church as a volunteer in 2015. Host of the Monday and Tuesday afternoon shows from 2pm to 5pm, she is also the Communications Admin in the Communication Department of the Methodist Church in Fiji. For her, community radio is a safe space for women to share their stories and empowers women to be leaders in their community. One impact that the community media platform

has made in her life is that it has helped her broaden her mind and boosted her self-esteem to move and taken action against any injustice she comes across.

Faith Naduva



Another new addition to the FemTALK89FM Suva team, Naduva recently moved back to Fiji after having lived in England since she was 2. A gap year led to her doing charity work including raising awareness and helping to fundraise for the refugee crisis in Europe and also volunteering at a local kids living with disabilities club. Her journey so far with community radio has helped her realise that women not only empower but when they lift each other up something magical is created.

Josephine Lagivola



The newest member of FemTALK89FM Suva team has had a career in broadcasting, having worked for the Fiji Broadcasting Corporation for several years. Coming from a commercial background, the change of pace was a welcome surprise for Lagivola. Experience and a growing interest in community work led Josephine to joining FemTALK89FM Suva in late 2017. A quick learner, she understands that community radio is a safe space for women and other

members of the community to be able to express their thoughts and raise awareness on issues they face on a daily basis. At a personal level, community media has empowered her as a woman to stand up for her rights and be aware of issues that other women in the community face.

Kinisimere Ceyaqalo



Having joined the FemTALK89FM Labasa team in 2014, Kinisimere first got involved with femLINKpacific in 2012 after being interviewed for the annual 16 Days of Activism to end Gender Based Violence campaign. The exposure to the 'suitcase radio' led to her discovering the only radio station in Labasa town and left her fascinated at the fact that it was led by women. To Ceyaqalo, the community radio is the most means of

communicating information that women of all diversities, including rural and marginalised groups, can freely raise their priority issues, concerns and opinions. She credits the community media platform for bringing development changes to her village of Dogotuki, Namatakula in the province of Macuata.

Alumita Davelevu



Exposed to femLINK's work through her friendship with Lucille Chute and the Diverse Voices and Action (DIVA) for Equality Fiji network, Davelevu has since become a member of the FemTALK89FM Labasa team as well as joining other women leaders in monthly community media consultations. An active sportswoman, the native of Nasekula Village, Labasa, believes that through community radio, women have been able to promote healthy living

and the wellbeing of the family community not just through a food security lens but also through a peace building approach. As an advocate for lesbians, bisexuals and transgender women as well as peace and security, she believes in the promotion of equality and gender justice.

Listen to FemTALK89FM

in Suva, Labasa and Online



What is Women's Weather Watch?

by Carolyn Kitione

Women's Weather Watch is femLINKpacific's inter-operable communication platform has been developed initially for Women's Weather Watch.

Women's Weather Watch documents the lived experiences of women in disaster affected communities and supports the leadership of women to ensure more gender-inclusive preparedness and humanitarian response during times of disasters.

At the heart of this system is community radio, linking a network of women leaders and correspondents to real-time information via SMS alerts (mobile phone and bulk system) as well as a Viber group and Facebook.

The system is a two-way information system enabling the network members to also provide real-time situation updates which are used for media and podcast productions.

Last year in May, the Fiji Meteorological Office issued a tropical disturbance warning for TD22F which would later be upgraded to a tropical cyclone – Tropical Cyclone Ella.

During this time, femLINKpacific, through its Women's Weather Watch platform, was able to inform and amplify rural women leader's preparedness strategies.

"Women's Weather Watch has enabled rural women leaders to share and receive information that is resulting in women-led preparedness and response in Fiji," said Sharon Bhagwan-Rolls, Executive Producer-Director of femLINKpacific. "However evidence from the Women's Weather Watch campaign has highlighted the reality that - despite leading in their communities before and after the events of 20th February, 2016 (TC Winston) - women continue to be invisible – they are still under-represented in decision making despite a pre-existing commitment of 30%."

"Women leaders (can) take a leadership role in educating the women especially those (in local communities) who are most vulnerable and those who are most disadvantaged with getting (weather) information on time," highlighted Ravind Kumar, Director of the Fiji Meteorological Office during an interview with femLINKpacific in late July, 2017.

Since 2004, femLINKpacific's Women's Weather Watch has been addressing this information gap.

By providing information through accessible and appropriate information and communication channels we have been supporting and enhancing rural women's leadership before, during and after natural disasters.

Recognising this, the National Disaster Management Office is working to include a gender perspective in the draft Humanitarian and Disaster Risk Reduction Policies with contributions from women-led groups in the country.

Using Tropical Cyclone Winston as a benchmark for Fiji's preparedness and response plans, one recurring theme was the inclusion of women in decision-making spaces like the National Disaster Management Council.

As Fiji undergoes a review of the 1998 National Disaster Management Act, one recommendation that has been put forth by the International Red Cross committee overseeing the review, is the need to have more input from women.

"The consultations before, few men would sit in the room and they decide what happens for everybody," Bainimarama explained. "For the men it's an advantage because there are men sitting there but there's no women to sit and say, 'we women would like to see something else like this. You (women) are the spear headers of development. The men say they meet and talk and decide, but you are really the decision makers.'"



Vani Tuvuki of the Koronubu Women's Fellowship from Ba at femLINKpacific's 2nd National Women's Weather Watch Consultation in November 2017



Nirmala Sharma of the Vunucuicui Multiracial Women's Forum and Vanua Levu Arya Mahila Mandal from Labasa at femLINKpacific's 2nd National Women's Weather Watch Consultation in November 2017

Women's Weather Watch and Community Radio

by Carolyn Kitione

Community radio is powerful.

It has the ability to directly connect those at the grassroots level to policymakers - it's telling a different story: a narrative that few of us are aware even exists.

"I would like to hear my voice in the radio because I want more women like me to become a leader or can be a national leader or in the district area," explained Amra Wati, Committee member of the Labasa Market Vendors Association. "I want to learn more ideas from other women... of other people in our organisation, in our environment so that I can help them."

As a feminist media organisation, FemTALK 89FM continues to bridge the information-communication gap between the women on the ground and information providers like the Fiji Meteorological Office and the National Disaster Management Office.

"It's about... bringing in voices of women into the airwaves," said Sulueti Waqa, Programme Associate of femLINKpacific, based at the Labasa Community Media Centre (CMC). "It's trying to create the space where voices of women who are often not picked up by mainstream media, whose issues are not heard and who are often ignored are able to be visible and the issues are also known – not only at the local level, at a national level too."

The vision of the founding management collective of femLINK is to be innovative and inclusive and demonstrate the spirit of Section J of the Beijing Platform for Action, the main objective being to "increase the participation and access of women to expression and decision-making in and through the media and new technologies of communication".

"So, community media is not just who is the listener," said Sharon Bhagwan Rolls, femLINKpacific's Executive Producer-Director. "Broadcasting, particularly radio, is still the most relevant media form. We bring the issues of 20,000 women of all diversities onto the airwaves, into the public airwaves. And there are a lot more. And these women have families. So, when they are talking on behalf of their communities, that's who we're bringing out to the airwaves."

"As a leader it is very, very important," shared Inise Dawai, Secretary of the Sikituru Women's Club from Nadi, who has been part of the network of rural women leaders for almost 5 years. "In voicing my issues I feel very comfortable with the community radio media."

As a community media platform, FemTALK 89FM's most visible campaign is Women's Weather Watch - an inter-operable communication platform enabling network members to provide real-time situation updates which are used for media productions and is coordinated from femLINK's regional hub, the Suva CMC, and activated in the disaster preparedness stage.

Women's Weather Watch documents the lived experiences of women in disaster affected communities and supports the leadership of women to ensure more gender-inclusive preparedness and humanitarian response during times of disasters – storms and cyclones, droughts and floods as well as tsunamis, as well as in the recovery stages post-disaster.

"Women's Weather Watch has enabled rural women leaders to share and receive information that is resulting in women-led preparedness and response in Fiji," explained Bhagwan Rolls.

"We can pass information to our community that the disaster will be here, all the ladies in my group and in our community they were well prepared," said Jai Mati, President of the Vuqele Multiracial Women's Group in Tavua. "They are very proud that we are doing something for them in our community."

But Bhagwan Rolls added that evidence from the Women's Weather Watch campaign highlighted a grim reality.

"Despite leading in their communities before and after the events of 20th February, 2016 (TC Winston) - women continue to be invisible – they are still under-represented in decision making despite a pre-existing commitment of 30%," she explained. "Through Women's Weather Watch, we are putting the spotlight on women's leadership as peacebuilders as well as first responders in emergencies."

Which is all the more reason that community media exists: to support, strengthen and amplify the voices often left out of mainstream media.

"We don't just have the technology – radio, broadcasting – but the community media process with the rural women leaders," said Bhagwan Rolls. "This is what is possible when you invest in women-led media initiatives. It is time for government to not just commit, but highlight how they will work with women's civil society to meet the representation targets in decision making processes to ensure that women are empowered to equitably and meaningfully participate with men, their needs and interests are prioritised in strategies and responses and the human rights of women and girls are promoted and protected in all development efforts."



Mareta Tagivakatini, Secretary of the Labasa Market Vendors Association, at femLINKpacific's 2nd National Women's Weather Watch Consultation in November 2017



Kamlesh Lata, Vice President of the Varoka/Tavarau Nari Sabha, speaks during femLINKpacific's 2nd National Women's Weather Watch Consultation in November 2017.

Women as First Responders

by Carolyn Kitione

At a global level, the discourse has often featured the phrase along the lines of 'women and children are the most affected by disasters'.

"Through Women's Weather Watch, we are putting the spotlight on women's leadership as peacebuilders as well as first responders in emergencies," said Sharon Bhagwan Rolls, Executive Producer-Director of femLINKpacific.

While we continue to amplify the work of women leaders as first responders, natural disasters continue to wreak havoc.

It presents us with an opportunity to address women's role in disaster resilience, pre- and post-disaster.

"By amplifying and increasing the visibility of what women of all diversities are saying, we are demonstrating how it will bring women to the table – as a result of targeted, strengthened capacity to organise and influence decision making engage at district, sub-national and national systems," added Bhagwan Rolls.

"Women must be involved in all disaster management and responses program and committees because women knows the problems in our communities and families," said Mereisi Mara, assistant president of the Nasaulevu Women's Club.

"It is very important for us women to be (prepared) all the time, like to be up to date with the news and weather bulletin."

Advisory Councillor for Caulasi, Rakiraki, Nila Rao, is a prime example of women leading in communities, pre- and post-disasters.

After Tropical Cyclone Winston, despite facing her own challenges after the devastating event, Rao was out in the community almost immediately.

Assessing damage was no easy task with Rao having to travel on foot amongst the closed roads and fallen power lines.

"Now the ladies are coming in... we have proved to the people that no matter like how intense the cyclone was, whatever we had to go through but we did whatever we were supposed to do," she shared.

Secretary of the Soqosoqo Vakamarama Bua, Unaisi Sela, knows the challenge of recovery that is gender blind.

During TC Winston, Sela housed those living close to the coast as well as supported the community through the canteen she was running.

Since then, has continued to underscore the need for proper access to information including clear preparatory messaging ahead of natural disasters.

This was also echoed by Vani Tuvuki, President of the Koronubu Women's Fellowship in Ba:

"Disaster preparedness could be improved by giving us accurate information," she emphasised. "As women leaders, we all have to stand up - we are the first responders in most of the communities."

With disasters being the 'new normal', it has taken time for this line of thinking to reach the national level. And while the process has been a long time coming, it does bring a new level of optimism.



Inise Dawai, Secretary of the Tikina Sikituru Women's Club, speaks while Fane Boseiwaqa, convenor for femLINKpacific, looks on during femLINKpacific's 2nd National Women's Weather Watch Consultation in November, 2017.

"It's very critical... it's the network of the women (that) get the message out on a particular issue," said Minister Concetta Fierravanti-Wells, the Minister for International Development and the Pacific in the Australian Government, who spoke to femTALK89FM in July 2017. "Part of the work that we want to do is to ensure that we address those barriers and to ensure that women as much as possible are well informed and to make them stronger, to make them more resilient so when the next disaster does strike they're in a far better position for themselves and for their families to deal with that."

Today, the FemTALK 89FM network dedicates 5% of its total airtime to Women's Weather Watch updates and information. But it is more than just about the weather.

Women's Weather Watch has enabled women to highlight in national consultations and on the national television series 'Radio with Pictures' of the need for reform of disaster management practice through greater representation of local women's groups.

"Participation is vital but so is preventative action and a human security approach in the planning and delivery of immediate and long term humanitarian recovery strategies," reaffirmed Bhagwan Rolls. "A key Women's Weather Watch recommendation to the National Disaster Management Office, as it develops a National Humanitarian and Disaster Response and Recovery Policy, is to reaffirm women's roles as first responders in their homes and communities and the importance of having reliable and simple to understand information being disseminated to the public. The localisation of the outcomes of the World Humanitarian Summit, Sendai and Pacific Resilience Frameworks must take practical steps to uplift women's leadership."



L-R: Josephine Teakeni of Vois Blong Mere Solomons, Lanieta Tuimabu of the Fiji Disabled People's Federation, Agnes Titus of the Nazareth Centre for Rehabilitation in Bougainville, Sharon Bhagwan Rolls of femLINKpacific, Ann Pakoa of Vanuatu Young Women for Change and Vanessa Heleta of the Talitha Project in Tonga at an Interactive Dialogue in Suva held in April 2017.

Women's Weather Watch Goes Regional

by Carolyn Kitione and Sian Rolls

A regional women's radio campaign has promoted gender inclusive disaster risk reduction and recovery in Fiji, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu.

It's all part of femLINKpacific's (femLINK) regional Women's Weather Watch network supported by the Australian Government, ActionAid Australia and the International Women's Development Agency.

"This campaign is bridging the gender gaps in disaster preparedness messages that are traditionally heard this time of the year," said Sharon Bhagwan Rolls, Executive Producer-Director of femLINKpacific. "It also demonstrates the vital role of radio in communicating to communities. We are also looking forward to producing our first regional HEROWINS comic book in 2018."

The messages were developed through femLINK's regional women-led community media network, including partner organisations the Talitha Project, Vanuatu Young Women for Change, Vois Blong Mere Solomons, Transcend Oceania and members of the Shifting the Power Coalition, in particular the Pacific Disability Forum.

femLINK's Women's Weather Watch is an interoperable information and communication platform that amplifies the voices of our network of women leaders, campaigning for the inclusion of women in all aspects of disaster preparation, management and rehabilitation through community media.

The implementation of the Women's Weather Watch platform at a regional level also amplifies women's humanitarian priorities through a commitment made to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security.

The radio messages are also available on femLINK's Soundcloud page.

For the annual 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, femLINK also dedicated more than 500 community radio hours in Suva and Labasa as well as produced Instagram, Twitter and SMS messages during its 2nd Women's Weather Watch National Consultation 2017.

HEROWINS



PROMOTING EQUALITY FOR ALL

"The real point is that if you really want peace and security to be a real thing that is visible in our communities or even our families we've got to get the spaces for women"



PEACE & SECURITY

"It's not just about the elimination of violence against women, it's also about looking at the root causes of violence against women in terms of women's human security first and what women have been talking about is not just being victims of violence but that opportunity for them to talk and share their story in terms of addressing the root causes"

DISABILITY RIGHTS

"Persons living with disability are sometimes...not able to express our views in front of many people and then we (feel) isolated so when we work in partnership that's where we get different people's views and ideas and by listening"

EQUALITY IN DECISION MAKING

"The inclusion of women is very important. Women need to tell their stories; they need to come out and let the government know this is what is happening in our community. These are the solutions for communities."

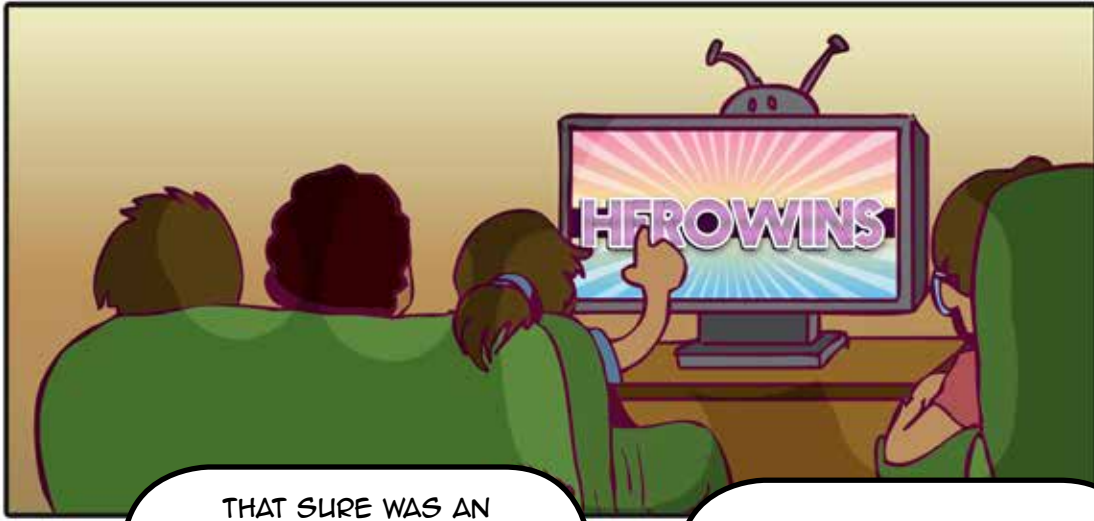


PROTECTION WITH DIGNITY

"Women do not have time to rest, especially because of natural disasters like TC Winston, floods and even drought."

ACCESSIBLE INFORMATION

"The key method of sharing information is the radio (because)... at the end of the day it is a means to reach out to communities so... it is an actual, genuine means of reaching out to people... to get the people in the community involved... And you can be part of the knowledge sharing and the voices that are heard."



IT'S TIME FOR ANOTHER EXCITING EPISODE OF HEROWINS!

THE FAMILY IS JOINED BY THEIR AUNTIES AS WELL!

THAT SURE WAS AN EXCITING EPISODE TODAY! THE HEROWINS VS THE HORRIBLE HURRICANE!

THAT'S WHY WE MOBILISE WITH WOMEN'S WEATHER WATCH!

THAT'S HOW WE GET THE INFORMATION OUT TO LOCAL NETWORKS ACROSS THE COUNTRY!



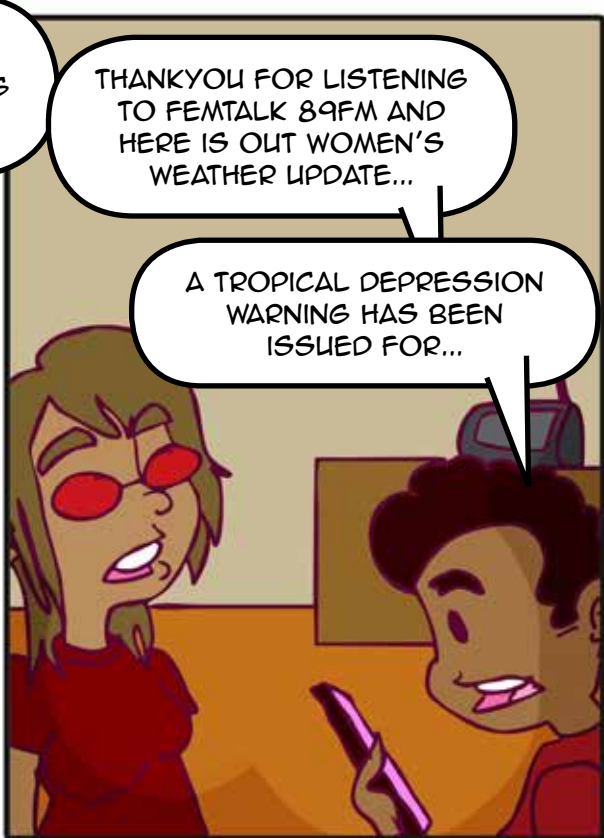
NOT AS SCARY AS THE REAL HURRICANE, THOUGH

USING COMMUNITY RADIO AND SMS ALERTS!

AND WE KEEP EVERYONE UP TO SPEED WITH OUR ASSESSMENTS AND REGULAR UPDATES



THE HEROWINS ON TV SOUND JUST AS EXCITING AS THE RADIO DRAMAS!



THANK YOU FOR LISTENING TO FEMTALK 89FM AND HERE IS OUR WOMEN'S WEATHER UPDATE...

A TROPICAL DEPRESSION WARNING HAS BEEN ISSUED FOR...



IT'S TIME TO ACTIVATE OUR WOMEN'S WEATHER WATCH EARLY WARNING AND PREPAREDNESS PLAN!

BUT THEN!



Checklist for the family

- Property Secured
- Documents safe
- Check Gardens

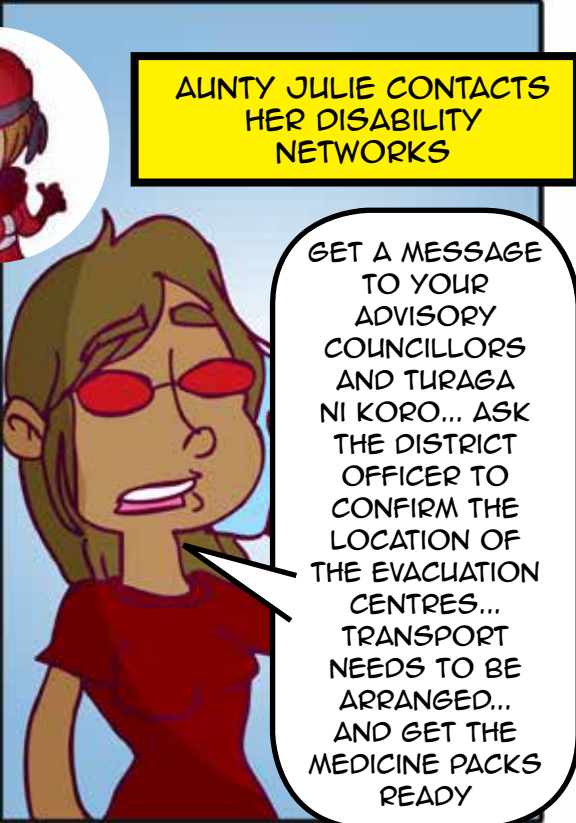
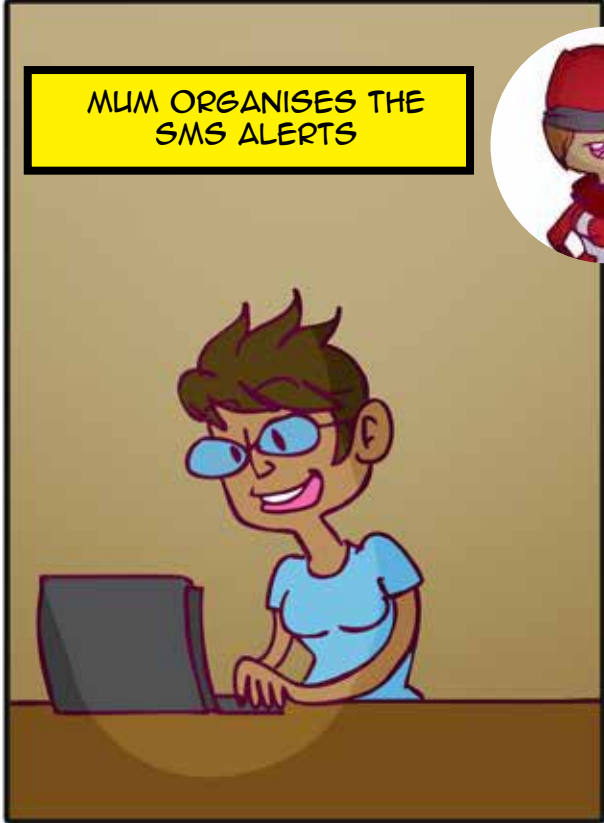
- Food and Water
- Clothes
- Radio
- Batteries and Candles

- First Aid Kit
- Medicine
- Emergency Contacts

MUM ORGANISES THE SMS ALERTS



AUNTY JULIE CONTACTS HER DISABILITY NETWORKS



GET A MESSAGE TO YOUR ADVISORY COUNCILLORS AND TURAGA NI KORO... ASK THE DISTRICT OFFICER TO CONFIRM THE LOCATION OF THE EVACUATION CENTRES... TRANSPORT NEEDS TO BE ARRANGED... AND GET THE MEDICINE PACKS READY

AND ON THE COMMUNITY RADIO STATION THE WOMEN'S WEATHER WATCH TEAM CONTINUES TO PROVIDE WEATHER ADVICE AND PREPAREDNESS MESSAGES



RISK REDUCTION & PREPAREDNESS



MEMBERS OF THE WOMEN'S WEATHER WATCH NETWORK JOIN IN THE DISASTER PLANNING COMMITTEES



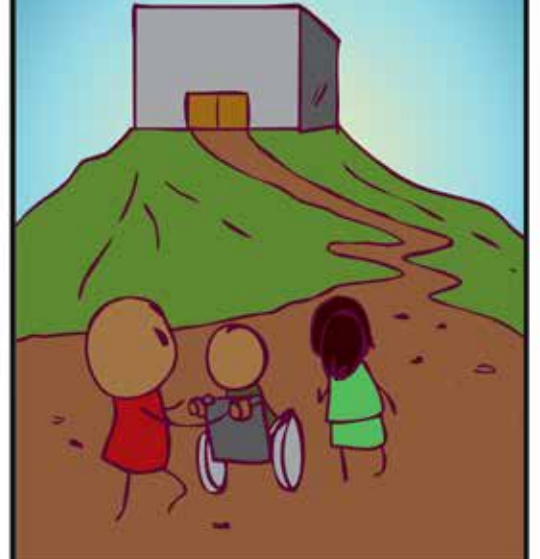
AND OTHERS CO-ORDINATE THE FOOD SECURITY AND WATER STORAGE AT LOCAL FARMS



PROTECTION WITH DIGNITY



ACCESS TO EVACUATION CENTRES ARE ORGANIZED FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES



AND WOMEN'S GROUPS CO-ORDINATE EVACUATION CENTRES TO ENSURE EVERYONE'S (ESPECIALLY CHILDREN, LGBT AND THE ELDERLY) ARE SAFE AND SECURE



AND THE WOMEN'S WEATHER WATCH TEAM, INCLUDING RURAL CORRESPONDANTS CONTINUE TO PROVIDE UPDATES!





Recommendations

Preparedness:

Women must be involved in:

All disaster management, preparedness and response programmes and committees, including determining the location, management and coordination of evacuation centres to make sure they are accessible to everyone.

Ensuring the availability and management of food rations because too often they will not eat, but store the food for their children and other family members.

Ensure the availability of sex and gender disaggregated data to prepare for natural disasters and to ensure the appropriate assistance in the immediate and long term aftermath

Recognise the reality of women-led households and their role in organising their families and communities, including the preparedness of evacuation systems, by identifying women leaders within communities and establishing strong communication links to provide them with information

Improve Public Emergency Broadcasts and early warning systems to include community media/radio models so they can provide hourly weather updates that contain vital localised information

Support FemLINKPACIFIC, as the already established and reliable information provider, in the expansion of women-led rural community media/radio hubs, operating community media centres which can also be referral points and safe spaces for women and girls.



Protection:

Integrate UNSCR1325 in the national security policy as well as National Disaster Management Strategy in order to demonstrate collaboration and model best practice

Support local women leaders to:

- a) provide and manage gender sensitization training for local committees
- b) assess and communicate family and community priorities

Ensure that:

- a) the selection of evacuation centres is done in consultation with women to ensure their safety and protection
- b) security mechanisms are established in communities and in evacuation centres.



Recovery Plans should:

Ensure agricultural extension programmes for women that allocate 30% of participant places to young women aged 18 - 35 years

Ensure women's access to land and training to establish and manage community garden projects in each district

Shelter Cluster strategies must include women in research, planning, design and construction of homes

Involve women in water harvesting and storage, including underground tanks

Establish solar power access and ICT hubs led by women in each community



the HEROWINS say be

PROTECTED

Ensure the needs of Pacific people in all their diversities are taken into account. That means men and women, boys and girls, persons with disabilities and persons of diverse sexual orientation and gender identity and expression. Everyone has the right to protection and human security with dignity

PREPARED

There should be appropriate, accessible and reliable information as well as equitable representation and active participation of women leaders in disaster management

RESILIENT

Support women's networks to organise women leaders, activists and organisations in order to devise and communicate key recommendations that will enhance women's leadership and resilience to ensure a gender inclusive humanitarian agenda

FemLINKpacific is a feminist media organisation founded on fundamental and universally recognized human rights and freedoms, specifically the principle that all persons, especially women, should be treated equally regardless of actual or supposed personal characteristics including (but not limited to) gender, age, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, primary language, disability, economic status, family status or opinion

Examining the Gap for Women in Rugby

by Carolyn Kitone

'Rugby is not really a sport for women.'

For the women rugby players in last year's Oceania 7s, this was a sentiment they heard too often growing up.

And because this is a deeply ingrained belief in most Pacific societies, challenging the 'norm' is a mammoth task in itself.

"It was pretty hard being a woman, taking up rugby - we were not given too much priority," shared Debbie Kaore, a boxer and vice-captain of the PNG Palais.

Last year's Oceania 7s saw the PNG Palais qualify for the Rugby World Cup Sevens and the Commonwealth Games this year.

And yet, for all their success, the side remains relatively unnoticed.

"There were times when we would travel without having resources," explained Kaore. "We were always looked...invisible so priority was given mostly to the boys even though we succeeded most of the times, we still were looked past."

This lack of support was echoed by some of the other women in the field.

"For us, the women's team, we have to find our own way especially our training gears - training stuff - for us girls," outlined Rusila Nagasau of the Fijiana 7s team. "We have to buy our own stuff...unlike the men who are provided with everything they want."

Nagasau, who began her sporting career playing soccer, was also a member of the Fijiana 7s Olympic team in 2016.

Despite her impressive athletic achievements, she and a number of the other players on the team are still far from getting the recognition they deserve:

"Even though we don't have any allowance (or) pay - still, we have to sacrifice even though for us...most of us don't go to work but it's the passion of rugby that carries us every single day," shared Nagasau.

And yet for all the challenges that women in rugby face, their male counterparts can be the best support unit.

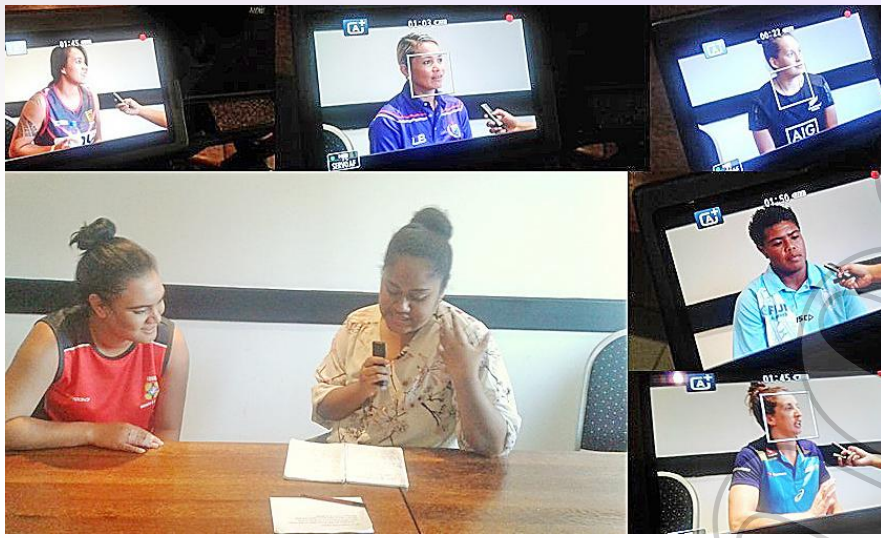
"The boys (in the Manu Samoa team) are very supportive," said Sui Pauaraisa of the Manusina 7s team, Samoa's national women's team. "They're always around the girls in pushing us even though we've only just met them."

Pauaraisa is just one of the many women in rugby who understands that passion for the game requires sacrifice.

"I've got two little girls so the more they grow up, the more I miss them when I travel but they do understand," Pauaraisa reflected. "But the support from my husband and my family really helps."

For Cook Islands' Chantelle Schofield, despite coming from a country where rugby isn't even a major sport, the chance to represent her own country has been rewarding:

"I feel amazing," she smiled. "To represent our little nation, being able to play in the Oceania Cup to show the world pretty much that we can do this, we can come from a background



Carolyn Kitone interviews various members of the women's teams that competed in the Oceania 7s last year.

where this isn't our sport but we can have opportunities for ourselves to play with it."

With women continuing to challenge age-old stereotypes, the fight for equal gender recognition in rugby becomes even more important:

"We can become role models," stated Manutala'aho Havili of the Tonga Women's 7s team. "Being that person to step up and play

rugby so that people back home, the locals can see and say, 'I wanna be like her, I wanna play rugby...and if she can do it, I can do it.'"

Last year's Oceania 7s fielded a record number of 8 women's teams and the message to other young women and girls is clear:

"If you really have the passion for the game... just play," Pauaraisa concluded. "It takes a while but you've got to take it step by step."

Breaking barriers through Sports

by Carolyn Kitone

"Lord, I want to be a champion in this sport."

This was the thought running through Mere Roden's head when she first tried table tennis in 2014 after being introduced to it by a friend.

"I was looking around, hoping that I will fit into one sport and then the news came up through another colleague of mine who's also a wheelchair user, Sainimili Naivalu," explained Roden, who is the President of the Fiji Disabled People's Federation's Women's Network. "She (Naivalu) came and she had invited the women with disabilities back in September 2014. I've always had an interest in sports back in my school time and then being a person, a wheelchair user, I thought, 'yeah I still can be part of something that's happening.'"

Since then, she has been steadily climbing the ladder to sporting glory.

It began with a silver medal at the Oceania Table Tennis Championships in Australia, quickly followed by a gold medal at the 2015 Pacific Games.

In 2016, her success in table tennis led to her being named Fiji Sportswoman of the Year. More recently, Roden had won gold at the Pacific Mini Games held in Vanuatu late last year, in the Para-table tennis event.

A leading disability advocate, Roden joined the Fiji Disabled People's Federation in 2010, advocating and raising awareness on issues about women with disabilities.

"We (are) raising issues and we want everyone out there, those in authority to look into it and those that can deal with them, have an answer to what we want," she explained.

With sports being a unifying force, it has also become a platform to amplify the voices and profiles of disability advocates.

"Sports is pretty much one of the sectors too that's involved and there's been sporting activities that's come up since the rising of our super star Iliesa Delana and they were involving women in sports," said Roden.



L-R: Anaseini Vakaidia, the Project Officer of United Blind Persons of Fiji, and Mere Roden, President of the Fiji Disabled People's Federation's Women's Network.

Another advocate making waves in the sporting field is FemTALK 89FM's Look At My Abilities (LAMA) co-host, Laniana Serukalou, who during femLINKpacific's latest 'Radio With Pictures' series declared:

"I want to be the number one world table tennis player."

Lani, as she is known to the rest of the broadcast team, also won gold at the Vanuatu Mini Games, her first for the country in the Para-table tennis event.

Having faced discrimination for her disability, she has learned not to let the negativity get to her. In fact, she is now using the experience to uplift other people living with disabilities.

"One of my favourite quotes used to be 'Do Not Be Afraid to Dream Big,'" Lani shared. "For person with disability out there, if you are interested in playing you should come over...just join in."

For Lani and Mere Roden, the message is clear:

"Please don't see our disability," said Lani.

"I would like to encourage all women with disabilities in particular this is for women with disabilities, young women, older women, not to look down at themselves, to stand strong, be firm and voice your issues, communicate, talk about it, don't hide it within," added Roden. "Come out, come alive, come out of your comfort zone, be part of what's happening."

Look At My Abilities (LAMA)

Meet your LAMA Show (Suva) Hosts:



Laniana Serukalou



Sudeshna Singh

Amplifying the Visibility of People Living with Disabilities

by Carolyn Kitone

"I think violence against women is a growing issue nowadays," said Laniana Tuimabu, of the Fiji Disabled People's Federation. "We cannot laugh about it – it's in the everyday news, you can hear there's cases of violence not only for women but also girls. But for women with disabilities sadly for me I feel that this is still a growing issue."

Ahead of International Day for Persons with Disabilities last year, commemorated annually on the 3rd of December, Look At My Abilities (LAMA) co-hosts Laniana Serukalou and Sudeshna Singh with assistance from Stacey Perkett, an attachee from the University of Western Sydney, produced a radio podcast examining the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

In the research of their podcast, they found little information regarding the number of persons with disabilities in Fiji.

However, according to the 2009 National Baseline Survey, there were 11,402 persons with a disability in Fiji of which, 54% were male and 46% were female. More recent figures, namely the 2017 National Census, has found that a total of 113,595 persons aged 3 and above were reported to have at least one functioning challenge or disability.

In Fiji, disability was previously perceived as a punishment for familial misdeeds, or was a result of witchcraft or bad luck.

This perception has now been altered to offer a more humane perspective on persons with disabilities.

Raising public awareness and advocating for persons with disabilities is a priority of disabled people's organisations to ensure their rights are being met.

"Sometimes it's still difficult to find the right people to go and advocate on issues," admitted Anaseini Vakaidia of the United Blind Persons of Fiji. "Some of our members, they know the issues but then they still face fear in trying to speak out on the different issues and also how they can go out into the communities and talk about it."

With the CRPD having been ratified by the Fijian Government last year, there is room to improve on the visibility of people living with disabilities.

"Consult persons with disability or, better yet work with Disabled Peoples Organisations," stressed Luisa Mana of the Pacific Disability Forum. "Because having persons with disabilities voices heard is the only way you could see or you could get great ideas of how things can be better."

Changing mindsets and challenging attitudes

by Carolyn Kitone

For women living with disabilities, meaningful participation means listening to what they have to say.

"We can't be saying things about a person with disability if we don't go to them and ask them 'what do they want' - what are some of their perspective of their point of view in some other areas."

This was shared by Jay Nasilasila during an interview with disability advocates from the Fiji National Council for Disabled Person at the Labasa CMC for the Look At My Abilities show on FemTALK 89FM.

"For me personally especially here in the Northern Division one of my passion is to make sure that all the government, whatever government implemented all other service provider are disability friendly," said Nasilasila.

"People (don't) know what we go through," shared Devia Swamy. "Some might think we are very happy in this life but we go through challenges that people don't know."

In this case, the power of information is intensified.

"Information is critical to support our meaningful participation of young persons with disability," outlined Nasilasila. "No-one else can speak of your narrative if it's not their narrative."

And there is a call to make public services more accessible for people living with disability and it's not just about infrastructure.

"Because if a hearing impaired is sick and if he goes to the hospital, he'll just do his own sign language thing but how will the medical officers know?" questioned Marica Samanunu. "So that's why it is important for government to also include disability officers in different ministries to take into account information that has been taken across by a person with disability."

And it's getting clearer and clearer that mindsets and attitudes need to change.

"It is very important for us to be in all spaces, in different spaces to ensure that our voice are being heard," said Marica Samanunu. "Also the reason why. To ensure that the service delivery that they (service providers) offered are much more inclusive and the approach that they use in terms of any initiated programme are very friendly for a person with disability."



Marica and Jay at femLINKpacific's Labasa Community Media Consultation in January 2018.



Jay speaks during a community radio interview at femLINKpacific's Labasa Community Media Consultation in January 2018.

Here Are The Women

Rohini Nadan



For more than nine years, Rohini Nadan has served the Bau and Namata communities in Nausori as its district advisory councillor. As one of the few female district advisory councillors in the country, Nadan is a passionate advocate for the inclusion of women in leadership positions. Acknowledging that women often bring up issues that the rest of the

community overlooks, Nadan strongly feels that women need to be recognised for the different roles they play in society and be given a chance to engage effectively in all development processes. At the end of the day, Nadan is looking forward to a Fiji that has gender equality as a lived reality.

Vilomena Koroi



Vilomena Koroi understands just how important it is to foster and support women in leadership positions. As the senior Circuit Steward of the Dilkusha Methodist Women's Fellowship in Nausori and manager of the Dilkusha Methodist High School, Koroi knows from experience the responsibilities that women shoulder in the community and the lack of recognition

that comes with it. But this has not stopped her from leading the women in her care to take charge of financial and personal security for their families. Having had the support of women in her fellowship in her role as a leader, Koroi has called for support for women's groups on the ground and for women's efforts in the community to be recognised at the national level.

Ana Ramatai



A former civil servant, Ana Ramatai retired to Nabouwalu 5 years ago and has since been instrumental in her community and the ongoing work to address the issue of women's participation as President for the Soqosoqo Vakamarama (SSV) Bua province. Struck by the lack of women's participation in village meetings, Ramatai has stressed the need to

empower women with information and this means overcoming the culture of silence and the generational information gap. She also believes that investment is needed to enhance women's participation in Disaster Risk Management - reaffirming their role as first responders, taking charge of evacuations and doing all they can to assure their families, and their children in particular, are feeling safe at all times.

Manjula Devi Ram



Manjula Devi Ram knows from experience that rural women leaders do not have the same level of visibility in community and district meetings. This is because women don't have enough time in the day to leave their homes, farms or businesses. On any given day Ram must manage the ins and outs of her family home alongside their family-run store – and as if that wasn't enough,

there is always the 41 acres of sugar cane farm to keep track of. This is why Ram has continued to call for the support of rural women in all levels of decision making. And as a founding member of the Vunimoli Arya Mahila Mandal in Labasa, Ram is challenging the norm and forging a new path for rural women as leaders in her community.

Titaku Tabuariki



In 2015, from the isolated island of Rabi, Titaku Tabuariki reached out to femLINKpacific to find information to uplift the women of her community and her island. The President of the Buakonikai Women's Group has since broken the mould as a leader from her community – giving visibility not just to the women of Rabi but to her whole community. Now connected

to more women through femLINKpacific's Women's Weather Watch network, this has also enhanced Tabuariki's access to information in general as well as in times of disaster and a chance to provide spaces for intergenerational learning and sharing.

Amra Wati



Amra Wati is a vendor and one of the committee members of the Labasa Market Vendors Association who believes that skills should not just be learned, but shared. She feels that a leader needs to have confidence in standing up and taking that step forward no matter what the challenge in life may be – including actively looking for opportunities

to learn and grow. While there have been successes for herself and other vendors, Wati still sees the need for a more resilient marketplace to support those who depend on it as a source of income. She hopes to see change not just in the environment for herself, but for other vendors – including the 80% of whom are women at the Labasa market.

Here Are The Women

Urmila Prasad



According to Urmila Prasad, peace and security means ensuring there's food on the table, proper shelter to house your family – and not living in tents. She is the advisory councillor for the communities of Wairuku, Cuicui, Narewa and Vitawa in Rakiraki and for over 22 years, has been an active contributor to her community including as a member of the Wairuku Mothers Club and a volunteer as the country coordinator for 'A Girl and

Her World' – which has helped support 76 girls access and complete their schooling. A dedicated first-responder, Prasad believes that there must be equality in representation in all decision making levels.

Sylvia Prasad Ali



Sylvia Prasad Ali is a pastor at the Namosau Methodist Church and member of the Namosau Women's Fellowship in Ba. Since 2015, the 38-year-old has participated in femLINKpacific's consultations at district and divisional levels and strongly believes that when women are empowered, they are capable of many other things in life – including and especially when making informed choices and communicating their ideas. Ali has been working to foster

a community of informed and empowered women, working closely with young women including young mothers in skills training around her communities.

Salome Raqiyawa



A member of the Nalalawa Women's Club in Rakiraki, Salome Raqiyawa is an articulate and passionate rural woman leader that has been actively motivated to raise the issues that her community faces. Since first appearing in Radio with Pictures in the Field in early 2016, she has been an active player and mobiliser – especially since Tropical Cyclone (TC) Winston. As Raqiyawa looks to the future of the country, she sees the need for increased

investment in youth, especially young women. She also believes that when women are able to support themselves, the community and country will further develop.

Unaisi Bakewa Sadranu



Unaisi Bakewa Sadranu wants to see inclusive representation in decision making spaces – particularly the representation of persons living with disabilities. While working with 150 members in the disability network, Sadranu is also a member of the Tavua Soqosoqo Vakamarama, the Tavua Women's Methodist Fellowship, the Tavua DISCOM (Disaster Committee) and the Tavua Market Vendors Association. From a very

young age, she would witness how the women in the village would get together especially during their club meetings to share skills and this was what drove her to join the women's movement. For Sadranu, stakeholders need to ensure that women have access to information. Inclusive decision making means ensuring that the needs of persons, especially women living with disabilities, are reflected in national and local budget allocations.

Our Partners

We Rise Coalition



A Feminist Coalition in the Pacific

The We Rise Coalition is a feminist partnership that is committed to building and sustaining the collective power

of women in all their diversities. The coalition became a reality when a Memorandum of Understanding was signed by four independent feminist organisations in April, 2016:

femLINKpacific is a women-led feminist media organization that places priority in providing women with information and in advocating and raising awareness on women, peace and human security issues.

The Fiji Women's Rights Movement (FWRM) is a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural organization committed to removing discrimination against women through institutional reforms and attitudinal changes. Its core function is to promote feminism, democracy, the rule of law, good governance and human rights from a feminist perspective.

Diverse Voice for Action or DIVA for Equality is a collective and peer support group of lesbian, bisexual and trans masculine people and other marginalized women in non-traditional employment and sports. Areas of concern for DIVA for Equality include women's/youths/human rights, ecological and climate justice, sustainable development and peace-building. Its network creates diverse opportunities and safe spaces for its members to fully participate in all areas of life and community in Fiji.

International Women's Development Agency (IWDA) is an Australian organisation with a clear vision to achieve gender equality for all. Its core values include promoting women's leadership and participation, strengthening women's safety and security and accelerating women's economic empowerment. Founded in 1985 and based in Melbourne, the IWDA works with other sister organisations within the feminist movement throughout the Asia-Pacific region.

Through the individual organisations, the coalition has established links and built networks with diverse women in rural and urban centres throughout Fiji.

But as femLINKpacific's Executive Producer-Director puts it, "a coalition is more than just a project activity."

At the centre of the We Rise Coalition is a commitment to building and sustaining the collective power of women in all their diversities. This includes building a movement to demand that women are able to realise their full human rights, equality and justice, and creating a political force for change that cannot be ignored by families, communities, governments, or society at large.

As each organization has its own clear feminist direction, the hope is to continue to develop, demonstrate and strengthen feminist coalitions and partnerships in order to grow and uphold inclusive governance, equality, diversity, justice and women's human rights.



Members of We Rise Coalition partner organisations

Our Partners

The Fiji Women's Forum



The Fiji Women's Forum's first national consultation on women's participation in national democratic processes 12th April 2012 was a historical moment in Fiji bringing together women from rich and diverse backgrounds – women living with disabilities and living with HIV, as well as different faiths, cultures, sexualities, gender identities, ages, demographics and opinions.

While The Fiji Women's Forum was initially formed to bring together diverse women's groups towards the shared aim of increasing women's participation in leadership - in particular focusing on women's participation in Fiji's national elections - which was held in September 2014, the co-conveners have since convened four more forums with the purpose of:

- Securing and supporting the full participation of women in all levels of decision-making
- Engaging more women in the development and political processes of Fiji
- Bringing attention to the diverse needs and concerns of women by facilitating appropriate responses and communicating this to a wider audience.

The four national forums enabled a diversity of women to mobilize in large numbers and implement civic education in collaboration with other women. Women participated in the constitution making process at different levels and degrees allowing for their voices and experiences to be included in the democratization process and the 5th Women's Forum held in April 2015.

Fiji Young Women's Forum (FYWF)



FYWF builds on the intergenerational The Fiji Women's Forum, which was first convened in 2012, as well as the rich tradition of activism and feminism by Fijian women throughout our national her'story. The mission of FYWF is to increase and progress young women's political leadership in an effective, meaningful and inclusive participation in Fiji's communities, legislative bodies and national process. FYWF is built on the guiding principles of mutual respect, active participation, transparency and good governance, accountability, gender sensitivity, respect and appreciation for human rights and diversity.

FYWF has successfully convened three national forums with a combined total of over 100 young diverse women. These young women actively participated in the lead up to Fiji's 2014 national elections in their local communities. These included nationwide distribution and awareness of the My Guide to Voting (young women's voter guide) and the forum declaration to political parties and other stakeholders. Following the first national forum (November 2013), FYWF noted the importance of State obligation and accountability to translate gender equality, transparency and human rights into legislation, policy and budget allocations. This process is critical for young women to be able to not only understand their needs reflected in the policies but at the same time the State is fulfilling its responsibilities.

Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC)



A Network of People Building Peace

What began as an ambitious idea of a few people to enhance and structure civil society's efforts to prevent violent conflict and strengthen peace building efforts has since become a global network encompassing 15 regions.

The Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) is a network of hundreds of civil society organisations (CSOs) committed to conflict prevention through peaceful means.

By connecting several CSOs together to influence policy at the national, regional and global level, the objective of GPPAC is to analyse conflicts from a human security perspective and develop ways to prevent violent conflicts.

GPPAC enables collaboration between CSOs to examine trends and improve existing strategies to foster joint action. Or in other words, creating a shift from reaction to prevention.

Since 2011, GPPAC has been a strong advocate for increasing cooperation between CSOs, regional intergovernmental organisations (RIGOs), governments and the UN to foster greater understanding of the relationship between peace, security and development.

As the regional secretariat for the Pacific region, femLINKpacific works across a range of Pacific Island countries and territories linking peacebuilders in Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu as well as in Maohi Nui.

GPPAC Pacific works to foster collaboration on gender, preventive action and human security in and security forums in the region.

The emphasis on gender inclusive conflict prevention in the work of GPPAC Pacific network reaffirms commitments made to United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1325 (Women, Peace and Security) and subsequent resolutions.

One of the key objectives of the GPPAC Pacific network is to amplify the voice and visibility of network members through a range of media initiatives, most notably through community media.

This can be achieved through various activities which include staging peace educations to promote awareness of principles of the network.

Support for the work may also come in the form of support for existing movements like the Pacific feminist movement, Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific and the on-going awareness of a disarmament approach to peacebuilding.

The point is, for peace and security to be realised, there needs to be spaces available for women at the decision and policy making table.

The adoption, ratification and application of UNSCR 1325, CEDAW and other human rights obligations supports the inclusion of women in the peace and security agenda.

Of course, the agenda of peace and security must also take into consideration the role that youth play in conflict prevention.

UNSCR 2250 on Youth, Peace and Conflict reaffirms that commitment and recognizes that youth should actively be engaged in shaping lasting peace and contributing to justice and reconciliation.

But of course, to successfully integrate UNSCR 2250 into the peace and security agenda, lessons must be learnt from the implementation of UNSCR 1325.

Again, this comes back to the inclusion of women of all diversities in decision making processes.

This is why the work of GPPAC Pacific is important: because it enables young women in particular an opportunity to learn, communicate and engage not only with other peace builders in the network but also with policy makers.



Representatives of the GPPAC Pacific network members at the Regional Steering Group Meeting, July 2017.

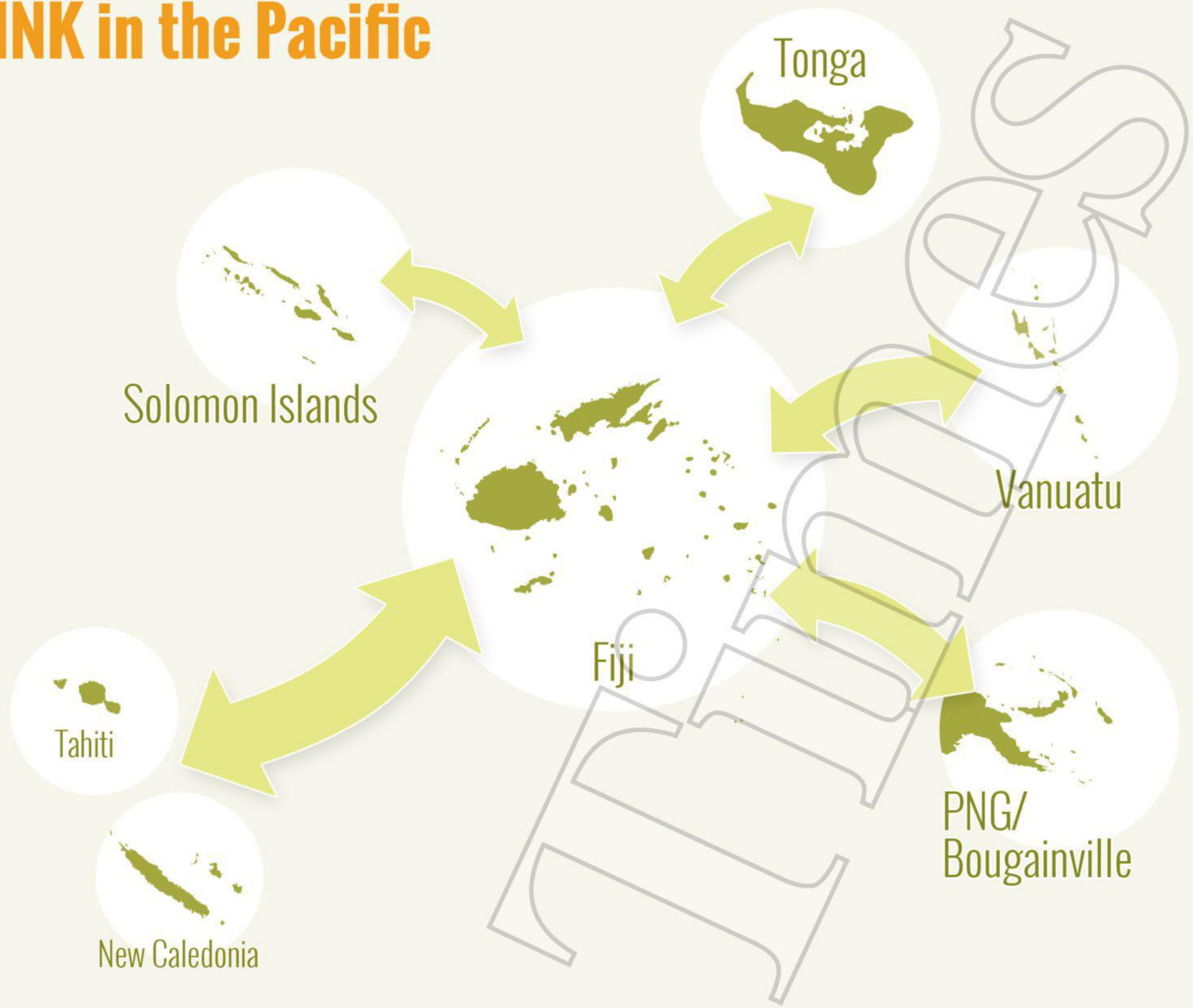
The World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters - AMARC



In 1983, it started off as a movement made up of community radio fans who met in Montreal; three years later the movement turned into an association. By 1988, the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters [French:

Association Mondiale Des Radiodiffuseurs Communautaires - AMARC] became an international NGO serving the community radio movement and to date AMARC has almost 4,000 members and associates in 150 countries. Its goal is to support and contribute to the development of community and participatory radio along with the principals of solidarity and international cooperation. The Pacific's first and only women-led community radio station, femLINKpacific is a member of AMARC. femLINKpacific's Executive Producer-Director, Sharon Bhagwan Rolls is also a founding board member of AMARC Asia-Pacific.

femLINK in the Pacific



Visit our Community Media Centres!

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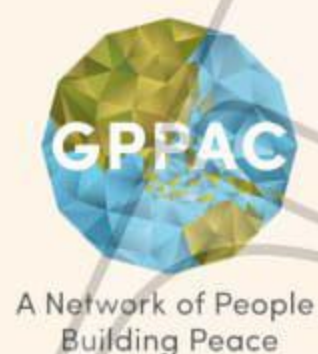
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