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Here Are The Women (2017): Sylvia Prasad Ali (/index.php/en/actions/here-are-the-women/507-here-are-the-women-2017-sylvia-prasad-ali)



By Frances Tawake



“We need more women to be part of the decision making process,” stressed Sylvia Prasad Ali, a pastor at the Namosau Methodist Church and member of the Namosau Women’s Fellowship in Ba.

Since 2015, Ali has participated in femLINKpacific’s consultations at district and divisional level – including providing vital insight during focus group discussions last September.

The 38 year old 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.

She herself 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 apart from her day job as an ICT Support Officer with the Fiji National University.

Ali strongly believes that educational qualifications come secondary to passion and commitment.

“Being employed, as a woman, is important,” she said. “Women are eager to learn income generating skills and through engagement and empowerment, women take up the opportunity to seek training on their own.”

It is because of this that she is driven to assist the members of her community in whatever capacity she can.

During the January 2016 Western Division Consultation, she reflected that the importance of taking care of the pastoral needs of her community and supporting them during their loss and pain. She added that getting to know the real causes of their struggles is really important when it comes to creating change.

Despite all this, she continues to look for more ways to make a difference and improve the lives of all.

“I want to learn more on how I can reach out to women in my community and help them voice their concerns,” she highlighted, certain that change is possible when women rise from their comfort zones and communicate their stories.

According to Ali, without women, development is impossible.

“We need more women to be in part of the planning for evacuation centres,” she stressed during the September focus group discussion when asked how disaster preparedness and response could be improved. “They need to be part of the decision making process where centres are prepared... to ensure that women and children are secured, their privacy is ensured and we need women to be available if there are grievances at the centres while there are evacuees.”