

Search...



(<https://www.facebook.com/femlinkpacific>)



(<https://twitter.com/femlinkpacific>)



(<https://www.youtube.com/user/femlinkpac>)



(<https://soundcloud.com/femlinkpacific>)

# Here are the Women (2017): Sokoveti Lutumailagi (/index.php/en/actions/here-are-the-women/483-here-are-the-women-2017-sokoveti-lutumailagi)



By Frances Tawake



“In my own little way, I try and create the best through my leadership at home and in my community.”

Meet 37 year old Sokoveti Lutumailagi, a dynamic rural woman leader, she documents and produces women’s stories to inspire positive change in her community.

Like every other woman, Lutumailagi 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.

Waking at 4.30am is the norm as she has seven children and a husband to get out the door on time to school and work respectively.

“Being a mother and a leader is a huge task as I have to juggle my responsibilities and manage my time wisely,” she shared.

Lutumailagi finished secondary school in 1998 with a dream of becoming a teacher; dreams that were shattered when her father told her that he could not afford to pay for her tertiary education.

“I attained good marks in school and even scooped the first prize for the Nadi oratory contest but (I knew that) if we are not supported financially it will be a challenge to achieve our dreams,” she said.

A year later, 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.

It was after her fourth child was born that Lutumailagi decided that it would be best for her to stay home and look after her children. With whatever little spare time she had, she got involved with working with the women in her community.

Seeing this, her mother-in-law, Sereima Lutumailagi, introduced her to femLINKpacific’s regular district consultations and, since 2015, has been supported to continue leading as a correspondent.

“It has given me so much experience and it has inspired me,” said Lutumailagi. “I have seen and heard the challenges these women face every day.”

“Women have raised their needs and have been empowered to speak confidently in our community radio space. With the use of the radio, it has bridged the gap and has allowed audience participation (and) engagement.”

At the same time, through femLINKpacific Women’s Weather Watch campaign, she has been actively engaged in disseminating and collating stories from the women.

“The text messages that were sent around to our network was a great help to the women and they tend to quickly share the information to other women in their community,” explained Lutumailagi. “The women were also encouraged to prepare ahead of time.”

It is the provision of such information that reaffirms women as leaders and first responders in their communities, including to disaster - women who continue working despite going mostly unrecognised.

“(But) the community radio is making quite a lot of difference since we are voicing out the women’s issues,” she reflected. “Community radio is broadcasting women sharing their ideas and views and struggles.”

Lutumailagi 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.

“Leadership comes with responsibilities and listening and working with your community is very important especially when it comes to the different needs of the people living in our community,” she said. “We have to increase women’s participation in all levels of decision making and we have to include women in all development projects activities from planning to implementation.”