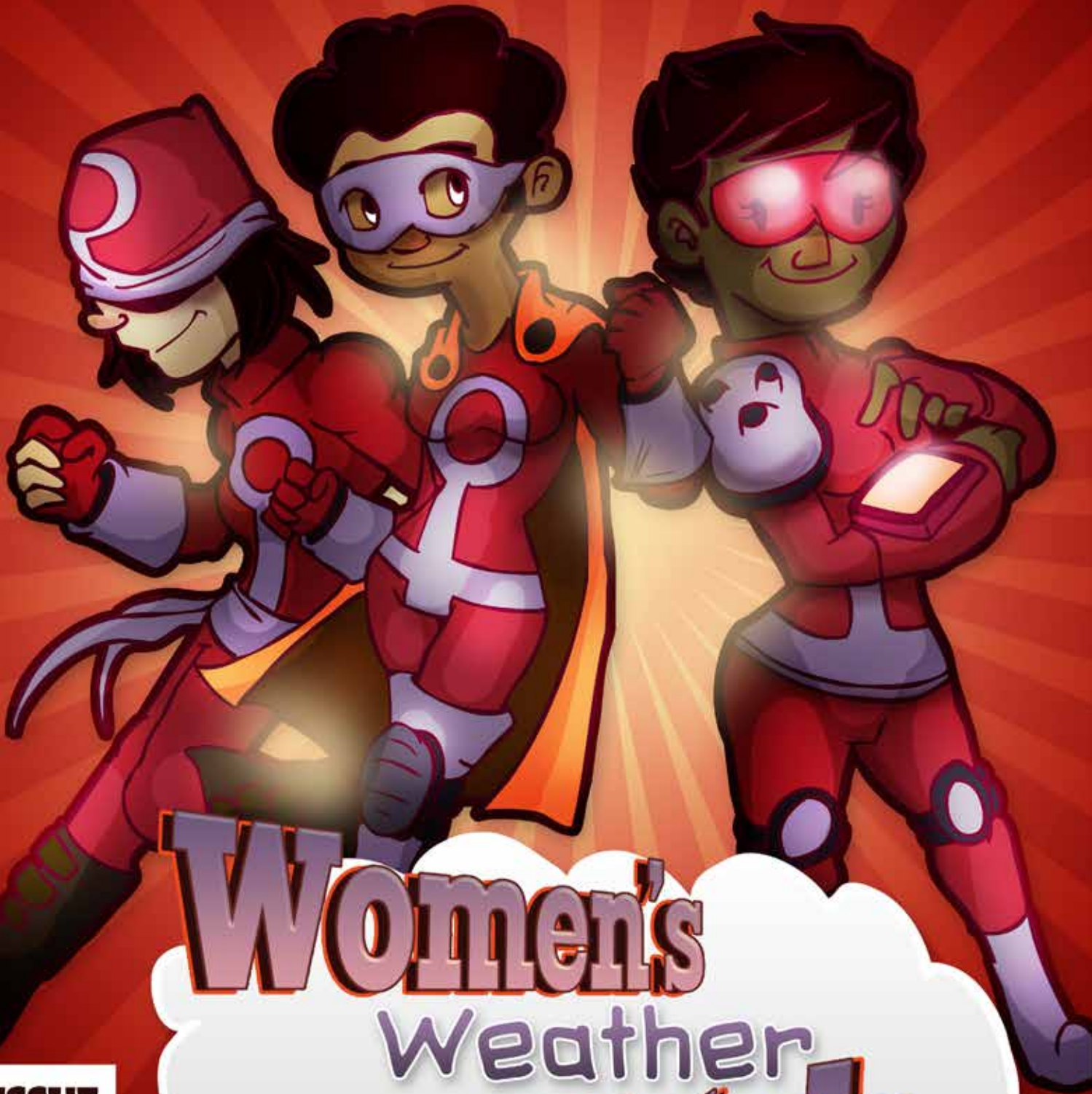


HEROWINS



Women's Weather Watch

ISSUE

2

Promoting
Equality for all!



Peace and
Security



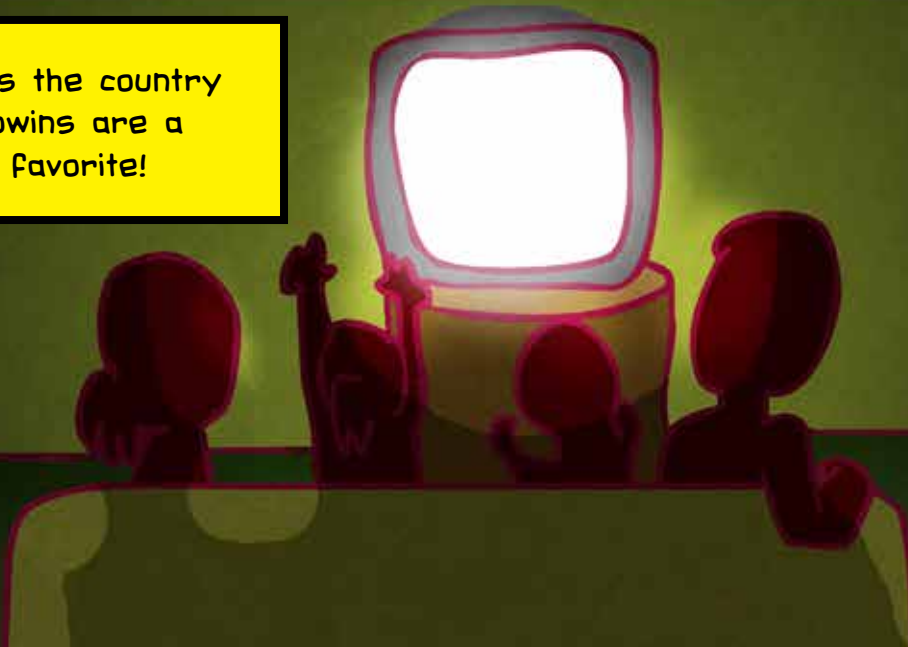
Disability
Rights



Equality in
decision making



Yes, across the country
the Herowins are a
family favorite!





Everyone at work is talking about the HEROWINS TV show these days!



And I hope they also understand that we have HEROWINS in all our communities!

Yeah! Like Aunty Vasu and Aunty Julie and Aunty Niru!



They're all HEROWINS!



Hey Vasu, we were just talking about you all! Yup, we'll be coming to the Club Meeting tomorrow, we'll leave early in the morning!

The next day, mum travels out to Aunty Vasu's house for the monthly club meeting. It's a long and bumpy ride!



The meeting starts with everyone highlighting their issues.



The road is getting worse and the children are facing problems getting to school on time...



After getting to the hospital on the weekend we couldn't get the medicine we needed for Nana!



The weather is really affecting our water supply, I don't have enough for the vegies and the goats!



As the women discuss strategies, mum gets an update on her phone!



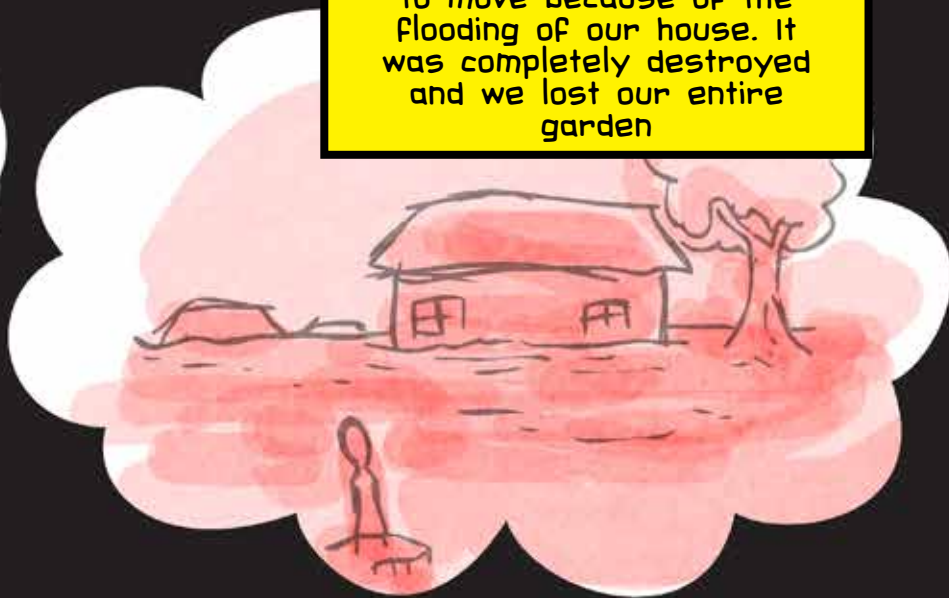
And the conversation immediately changes!



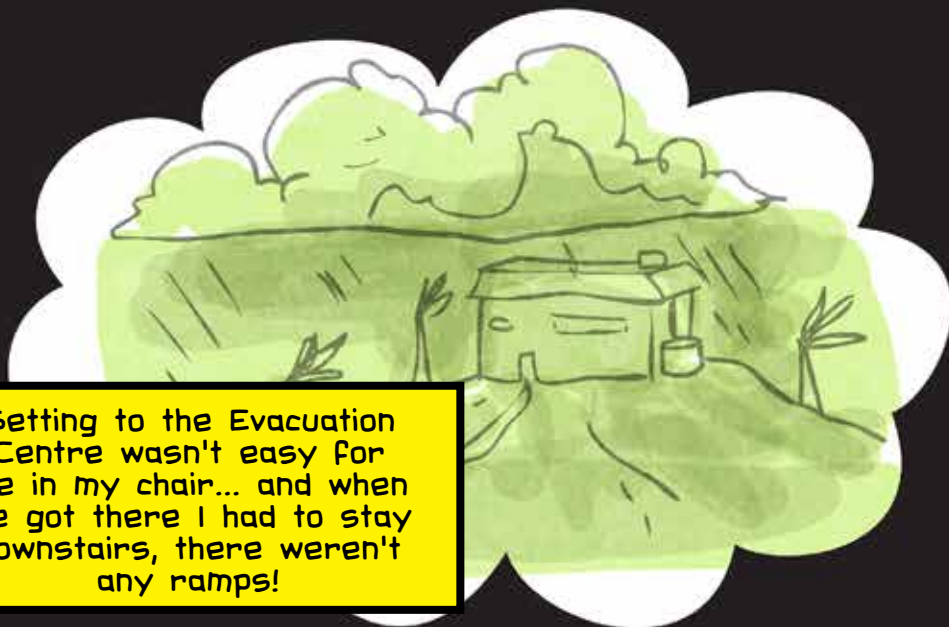
I REMEMBER...



I remember how we had to move because of the flooding of our house. It was completely destroyed and we lost our entire garden



Getting to the Evacuation Centre wasn't easy for me in my chair... and when we got there I had to stay downstairs, there weren't any ramps!



The kids were so scared, we couldn't relocate because the road was completely underwater. We ended up having to stay on the roof for hours!



But this time,
it's going to be
different!

The group decides to prepare for the worst

Okay, let's get
in touch with
everyone and
make sure we're
monitoring the
weather!



I'll call
the district office
and find out what
the evacuation
plans are, then
we can send out
texts to
everyone



And I'll put
together a
list to remind
everyone of
what to pack!





And so the women mobilise to get in touch with their club members especially those most vulnerable to flooding



Mum and Aunty Vasu quickly contact Government Officials to find out plans for Evacuation Centres and to track the path of the cyclone



Before mum has to get back home herself.



And that night as the storm intensifies the family stays in touch...

They find out from Aunty Vasu that several families have already come to her home and as they're on higher ground they aren't too worried



But Aunty Juli and her community are too close to the river and so they're already organizing the Evacuation Centre Operations



All the kids and women must be together, and the elderly need to be fed with the children!



Aunty Niru and her family have been able to gather many of their crops and are storing the vegetables and seeds.



She's already planning meals and a replanting programme for when the storm passes!

Women's Weather Watch

Recommendations

Preparedness:

- Local government planning and development committees must include equitable representation and active participation of women in decision making roles in Disaster Risk Management and Response Strategies including food security and crop rehabilitation programmes
- Empower women and other marginalized groups to build resilient communities, which respond to the impacts of climate change, resource scarcity and natural disasters
- Disaster preparation strategies to utilize media, particularly community radio to share psycho-social support and other messages including stockpiling and storage of food, medicines and water as well as evacuation processes for specific target groups including the most vulnerable and marginalized community groups

Risk Reduction:

- Resource allocation must ensure women's access to appropriate media technology including the distribution of radios in communities who are also burdened by a lack of basic services and information during natural disasters

Humanitarian Action:

- All humanitarian workers must have access to information highlighting the importance of enhancing protection and SGBV (Sexual and Gender-Based Violence) prevention strategies
- Humanitarian assistance must also be organized in line with UNSCR1325 to ensure environment security at all times
- The specific needs of women with disabilities as well as the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) community, children and elderly who face a double burden of discrimination must be addressed within disaster risk management and response strategies particularly in terms of safe access to resources including food, material, natural and access to the state infrastructure
- Post-disaster strategies to utilize media, particularly community radio to share psycho-social support and programmes designed to counsel individuals suffering from trauma

FemLINKPACIFIC continues to campaign for the inclusion of women in all aspects of disaster preparation, management and rehabilitation which requires equal participation of women.

Humanitarian assistance must also be organised in line with UNSCR1325 to ensure environment security at all times. The Women's Weather Watch campaign also demonstrates the vital role that community media, in particular community radio plays to ensure information on weather patterns and forecasts are reaching communities away from main centres and because the women are often responsible for the management of their families, evacuation strategies must be gender inclusive, particularly to ensure the safety and protection of women, children, persons with disabilities and the elderly.



1. Women are often responsible for the management of their families and communities. Disaster preparedness including information on evacuation strategies must be gender inclusive, particularly to ensure the safety and protection of women, children, persons with disabilities and the elderly.

2. Disaster preparedness relies on accurate information which must be understood by all communities. Community media, in particular community radio plays a key role to ensure information on weather patterns and forecasts are reaching communities away from main centres

3. Humanitarian assistance must be organised in line with UNSCR1325 to ensure environment security at all times and ensuring participation of women in all aspects of disaster preparation, management and rehabilitation.

4. Local government planning and development committees must include equitable representation and active participation of women in decision making roles in Disaster Risk Management and Response Strategies including food security and crop rehabilitation programmes

5. Empower women and other marginalized groups to build resilient communities, which respond to the impacts of climate change, resource scarcity and natural disasters

6. The specific needs of women with disabilities as well as the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) community and elderly who face a double burden of discrimination must be addressed within disaster risk management and response strategies

7. Non-discrimination in access to evacuation centres (eg nearest evacuation centre available to all,

regardless of the community or religious/ethnic groups that you are from) o Non-discrimination in delivery of assistance/relief except based on need

8. Identifying the most vulnerable and assessing their specific needs according to age and sex: Develop standardised process/form to support consistent age and sex disaggregated data collection; Identify specific vulnerable individuals/groups (including injured, sick, people with disabilities, minority groups, older people, unaccompanied children etc); Link identified vulnerable individuals with appropriate care and support services (through information-sharing and referral with relevant actors)

9. Resource allocation must ensure women's access to appropriate media technology especially for women in rural and remote communities who are also burdened by a lack of basic services

10. All humanitarian workers must have access to information highlighting the importance of enhancing protection and SGBV (Sexual and Gender-Based Violence) prevention strategies

11. Development partners should support women's networks to organise consultations among women leaders and activist and organisations in order to devise key recommendations from women to enhance women's leadership and resilience within affected populations and as active agents to ensure a gender inclusive humanitarian agenda

12. Safety and security is paramount:

- In selecting evacuation centres, ensure that basic facilities and safety measures are in place (eg lighting, separate secure bathing/toilet

facilities for men and women, safe access to centres and facilities for all evacuees including children/older people/people with disabilities)

- Clarify police presence, roles and responsibilities in evacuation centres (eg which evacuation centres have 24 hour police presence / is there consistent guidance regarding the role of police in these centres / advocate for male and female police presence in evacuation centres)

- Clarify processes for managing evacuation centres (eg is there consistent guidance for NGOs, school administrators, police and other managers of evacuation centres regarding their roles and responsibilities / are managers aware of protection risks and ways to prevent and respond to them)

- Develop key communication messages regarding safety in evacuation centres and disaster affected/prone areas (eg protection messages targeting affected population and highlighting risks for key vulnerable groups such as women, children, people with disabilities etc)

13. Identify key government and non-government local referral agencies for a range of protection concerns including: Mental health & psychosocial support for distressed disaster-affected individuals/families; Safe shelter, medical and psychosocial support for survivors of violence and abuse; Access to assistive devices and support for disaster-affected people with disabilities

14. Check capacity of identified referral agencies to engage in activities targeting the disaster-affected population. Disseminate information on referral options to first responders and to disaster-affected people

15. Child Protection: Ensure psychological first aid and psychosocial support for disaster-affected children/parents/families.

Monitor coping mechanisms and risks associated with distress and frustration, including increase in family stress, violence and resort to negative coping mechanisms. Prevention and response activities are needed including: Child-friendly spaces and recreational activities for children in evacuation centres

16. Share key communication messages for parents and children to promote positive coping strategies and provide referral options for incidents of violence/abuse

17. Opening/Re-opening of evacuation centres: Use of schools as evacuation centres should be

a last resort - where possible, alternative locations should be used to avoid interfering with children's access to education. Clearly identify who is responsible for registration, management and coordination of relief in evacuation centres

18. Evacuation/relocation of disaster-affected/prone individuals and communities must ensure respect for human rights in the process of relocating/evacuating people from disaster affected areas to evacuation centres (eg. if there are people refusing to leave high risk areas - why are they refusing to leave, and what happens to them if they refuse to leave?)

19. Closure of evacuation centres: Ensure that clear and timely information is provided to evacuees regarding closure of centre. Before

closing evacuation centres, it is essential to check that evacuees are relocating/returning to safe locations with adequate shelter, access to potable water and other basic services. Assess/monitor conditions for disaster-affected population in areas of relocation/return following closure of evacuation centres.

20. Monitor coping strategies/mechanisms for disaster-affected population on return (eg. how are people coping? Are there indicators of increase in substance misuse, family violence, crime, exploitation or abuse?). Consider long-term options for land allocation where displaced families are not able to safely return to their places of previous residence

About FemLINKPACIFIC's Women's Weather Watch:

This is a media advocacy campaign that FemLINKPACIFIC initiated following Cyclone Mick in 2009, which resulted in the displacement of 2000 people. During this crisis it was evident from the accounts of women that they had not been accounted for their leadership and recommendations in the coordination of relief efforts, even though women were leading the response in their communities.

During Cyclone Mick, we heard from women that they took responsibility for ensuring their family's safety in the crisis. When communities were preparing to evacuate before the cyclone hit, women were often the last to leave the home, staying back to ensure that their family was secure. Once families had evacuated, women took responsibility for ensuring that they had what they needed at the evacuation centers. It was clear that women in communities needed information. It was also clear that they needed to be able to communicate about what their needs, and the needs of their communities were. Cyclone Mick showed the vital role that community media plays to make sure that information on weather patterns and forecast are reaching remote rural communities. It also showed the importance of women's community media in ensuring women's voices were heard during emergencies.

And so, Women's Weather Watch was launched, linking women not only in Fiji but connecting through our regional network with women in Bougainville, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu. Women are supported to produce and broadcast

media content to ensure that information reaches communities, before and after weather events.

In mid-December 2012 when a killer tropical storm, Cyclone Evan, swept across Samoa and moved toward Fiji with winds well over 100 miles an hour, the FemLINKPACIFIC's Women's Weather Watch network got busy with e-mails and mobile-phone messages, reporting first on imminent dangers and then on cases of people who needed help during the disaster and its aftermath.

The purpose of Women's Weather Watch is to fill the gaps in information and communication through FemLINKPACIFIC's vast network of women leaders as well as advocate and campaign for humanitarian assistance must target the specific needs of girls, nursing mothers, the elderly, persons with disabilities and also those who rely on specific medication. Other messages identified power outages, food shortages, vulnerable people especially in need of help and the extent of destruction in various places scattered across islands. Some reports were very personal.

On January 1st 2016 Women's Weather Watch was back on alert tracking Tropical Cyclone Ula and providing recommendations to the National Disaster Management Office in Fiji as well as the media. In the midst and aftermath of TC Winston we mobilised Women's Weather Watch again see <http://www.femlinkpacific.org.fj/index.php/en/actions/archive/426-women-s-weather-watch-updates-tc-winston>

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About FemLINKPACIFIC

FemLINKPACIFIC is a regional feminist community media network working so that women in all her diversities can claim their communication rights to define their peace, human security and development priorities. We are the regional secretariat of the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) and members of WACC – the World Association of Christian Communications and AMARC – the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters. We believe Peace, Human Security and Sustainable Development is possible when women in all our diversities are equal partners within civil society, and with governments and international organisations. Women's participation is key from the local to the national level and must be supported with an inclusive and creative information and communication system by amplifying women's knowledge and voices a shift from reaction to prevention is possible. In Fiji our women-led community radio network "FemTALK 89FM" enables the production of a range of innovative media and communication initiatives to inform media and policy action.

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