

Search...



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



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



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



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

# Women's Weather Watch – Fiji: Update on 23rd May, 2017 (</index.php/en/actions/archive/563-women-s-weather-watch-fiji-update-on-23rd-may-2017>)

Written by **Media Advocacy**

Published: **23 May 2017** Hits: 1073



*Collated by Sian Rolls with the femLINKpacific #womensweatherwatch team: Alisia Evans, Frances Tawake and Hannah Hicks*

## Still Watching the Weather

The low pressure system currently bearing down on Fiji is expected to continue to affect the eastern half of Fiji until tonight.

Speaking to femLINKpacific this morning, Ravind Kumar, Director of the Fiji Meteorological Services, advised that a heavy rain warning remains for Kadavu, Eastern Viti Levu and Vanua Levu, Taveuni and nearby smaller islands.

Communities in those areas can expect periods of rain that can be heavy at times and may lead to localised flash flooding as well – already the case in some communities.

In Nausori, Sheleni Lata, Secretary of the Sheetal Sharda Mahila Mandal, was concerned as she reported vegetables were being drowned out by the rain due to poor drainage in the area.

Nadi and Lautoka are also experiencing flash flooding and Losana Derenalagi said that this long standing issue is continuing to put food security at risk.

In the North, according to Sulueti Waqa reported strong winds and heavy downpours made movement difficult for those travelling to and from the town.

Vegetable supply is a concern at Labasa Market as vendors face limited supply from wholesale farmers especially those who typically transport their crops from Udu Point, rural Macuata and Korotari. Many did not make it to the market today.

According to rural women leaders in Ba and Rakiraki, the rain is a welcome break from a dry spell which has resulted in higher crop and vegetable prices.

Nila Rao, advisory councillor in Rakiraki, explained that vegetables that would usually be sold for \$1.00 in the local market is sitting at \$1.50 if not \$2.00.

Rakiraki remains on flood alert and Rao hopes the rain will help the cane farms.

In Ba, Vani Tuvuki, leader of the Koronubu Women's Fellowship, shared that it has continued to rain since yesterday afternoon. She noted that creeks and drains were filling up and communities are trying to clear the drains to stop flood waters from affecting their vegetables and the sugarcane fields.

### Women are First Responders

Tuvuki added that recently planted vegetable plants - cassava, eggplant, rourou and bhindi - could be flooded if rain continues. If this source of food is destroyed women will have no choice but to buy tinned food from the supermarket – a cost that many families are not at privilege to bear.

This is a similar situation faced by women in Labasa as explained by Nirmala Sharma, Project Manager of the Vunicuicui Multiracial Women's Group. She is also the Treasurer and Secretary of the Vanua Levu Arya Mahila Mandal.

Living by a river herself in Nasoni Settlement, Vunicuicui, Sharma shared that she has seen farms and food gardens get flooded out. She added that this flooding may cause farmers to have to replant seedlings again – for the second or third time now in the last year – if they can afford to.

She added that food security is already compromised with many already unable to afford vegetables at the market.

femLINK continues to call for women to be recognised in their role as providers of food security – meaning that agricultural support programmes need to reach them in their homes and communities said Sharon Bhagwan Rolls, Executive Producer-Director.

*Listen to the full podcast: <https://soundcloud.com/femlinkpacific/womens-weather-watch-fiji-23rd-may-2017>  
(<https://soundcloud.com/femlinkpacific/womens-weather-watch-fiji-23rd-may-2017>)*