FACT SHEET

A. WOMEN AND POVERTY

- Out of 550 million working poor in the world, it is estimated that 330 million are women, a share of 60%; and 77.8 million are unemployed.
- In Africa women contribute to 80% of food production and they only receive 10% of credit provided to farmers.

B. VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

- 1 in every 3 women suffer from violence during her life.
- As of May 14th 2004, only twenty-six UN Member States had responded to the Secretary-General's request for information on the implementation of General Assembly resolution A/RES/57/181 on the elimination of all forms of violence against women.
- 79 countries don't have any legislation against domestic violence. Marital rape is recognized specifically as a crime in only 51 countries.

C. WOMEN AND HEALTH

- Poor adolescents between the ages of 15-19 are three times more likely to give birth than wealthier adolescents of the same age.

http://www.un-instraw.org/en/index.html#beijingareas

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1 - Peter Drysdale of RotaHomes Project showing the members of Elf's around project outside Lautoka.

2 - ELF Retreat 1 in Nadave : Year 2 participants getting to know each other.

3 - FWRM members (Teresi & Raijeli) during the PEACE march.

4 - Getting to know each other during the FWRMN / DAWN training (Easter, Shivanjani).

5 - Anna at the Feminist Dialogue in Brazil.

6 - Filipo from RRRT with the ELF's during the Human Rights Session.

7 - FWRM Staff & Volunteers

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8 - Meeting of the Facilitators before the FWRM / DAWN Training (L-R: Tara, Varia, Shoma & Yvonne).

9 - Evaluation Session with the Trainersat FWRM / DAWN Training (L-R: Tara, Virisila & Claire).

10 - Group discussion (L-R: Tarusila, Ofa, Ashwini, Nani & Luisa).

11 - Susana explaing a point to the participants at FWRM / DAWN Training.

12 - Luisa, Margaret & Judith - Melanesian Spearhead group at FWRM / DAWN Training.

13 - Drama Time (Cherelle, Margaret, Shivanjani & Noleene).

14 - Claire, one of the facilitators giving an explanation on the WTO to the participants.

Feminist Dialogues

"Women's movements have waged countless struggles over one central demand the right to autonomy over our bodies. We need to examine our strategies in the light of current political realities. How have we fared in asserting our right to live with dignity and security? How have our campaigns changed? Have they lost the cutting edge? Or are we in a better position now? What are the gains? What are our losses?" (Concept Paper, Feminist Dialogues-2005)

The Feminist Dialogues brought together around 300 women from around the world to discuss the global women's movement in relation to the inter-linkages of: Neo-liberal globalization, War, conflict, militarism and militarization, and Fundamentalisms.

From the beginning emphasis was placed on the point that the Feminist Dialogues were not about coming to a consensus with discussions were to be open-ended, participatory and consultative.

Concerns raised included, lack of analysis of institutions such as the World Trade Organisation, the gap between feminists, politicians, activists, movements, not knowing the agendas of fundamentalist forces, not enough use of the media as a vehicle for change and lack of examination of the links between patriarchy and culture.

The theme of the World Social Forum 2005 *"Another World is Possible"* was raised to emphasise the point that we are not the only dreamers who want a different world.

In discussing dilemmas and sites of resistance, Joana Kerr of the Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID) spoke on her Top Ten List of things that give her hope about the women's movement . I was ready to stand up and cheer at Joana Kerr's Number One reason for hope in the global women's movement!

10. Conflict within the Movement - We are no longer afraid to name the tension.
9. That there is now a translational language that the global women's movement can understand.
8. The staying power of feminists - that feminists most often remain feminists for the rest of their lives.
7. The concept of intersectionality - the idea that everything is interconnected is being seen less as a concept and more and more as a tool.
6. That we are forward-looking as a movement we are being proactive and looking to strategies for the future.
5. The work of feminist economists - they have very comprehensive knowledge and really know what they're talking about.
4. That spaces are being made for feminists in other social movements the benefits of being loud and causing trouble.
3. The speed with which feminists organise - we have to remember that the women's movement is relatively young, and yet we have come a long way.
2. Sexual rights - compared to 10 years ago. We should acknowledge how far we've come.
1. YOUNG WOMEN! They give her hope because they bring completely new ideas and new energy into the women's movement, and as such, they should never be just the note-takers or errand runners.

The Indian women moved me with their passion and their fire, the sass and style of the Africans made me smile, the outspokenness of the Latinas had me sitting up and taking notice, the earnestness of the Filipinas and the Malaysians made me think, while the Canadians and Americans were trying to hold back, in recognition of their privilege in comparison to the rest of the world.

And the Pacific Islanders? There were only three of us there, the others being Ofa-ki-Levuka Guttenbeil from Tonga, and Raijeli Drodrolagi of Isis Manila (former FWRM Staff).

The meeting began with the introduction of the organising committee. Region by region large groups of women were standing in turn. Having resigned myself to the fact that the Pacific would not be called out, I was about to stand up when Asia was called. *"Pssssttt, what are you doing?"* was what I heard, with a tug on my elbow. *"We are NOT Asians! Sit down!"* hissed Ofa, and I did exactly that. Since we were sitting near the front, the organisers noticed that we hadn't stood, and the last region to be called was the Pacific. By far the smallest regional delegation finally stood to the applause and cheers of the rest of the room.

Attending the Feminist Dialogues 2005 and meeting feminists from all over the world was a privilege, a major learning experience and a networking opportunity that cannot be forgotten!

BY Anna Padarath.
Young Women Officer

Women's Access to Health

Fiji Women's Rights Movement(FWRM) is the Secretariat for the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in Fiji that prepared the Shadow report with other Non Government Organization's to balance the State report to the United Nations Committee

As a United Nations Volunteer, focusing on CEDAW, Ashwini Prasad has carried out research on Women and health. The findings of her research are as follows:

Fiji's health system is based on a (Preventative) curative medical model, a model that represents steady progress in achieving "Health for all". The aim of the research study was to review what is already in place for women's health and to determine the effectiveness of services as experienced by women.

The sexual and reproductive health of young women remain a neglected area of public health as Teenage unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted infection is a health concern and on a rise in view of health advisors of the 4 subdivisions which included Sigatoka, Labasa, Kadavu and Suva.

Reproductive health is a means to sustainable development as well as a human right and by increasing awareness of these problems and making appropriate intervention investment in reproductive health, can save and improve the chances of women's survival, infant deaths, STI, HIV problems and encourage gender equality. Some of the issues identified in this research that need attention are also the focus areas of intervention in the 8 MDG's (the Millennium Developments Goals) and the Fiji's Governments Strategic Development Plan 2005).

Therefore it can be stipulated that Health should not be seen a service but a Human Right that has to be enjoyed equally by all. As well, two areas in which the convention has particular relevance are the special support required for rural women and elimination of discrimination in inheritance laws. Changes need to be introduced to inheritance systems and additional steps taken to provide support to rural women, such as directing rural development programmes towards improving women's access to sustainable livelihoods and providing access labour saving devices to increase the time available for health care.

Figure 1.5			
Sigatoka subdivision		1.20%	27
Labasa subdivision		4.50%	99
Kadavu subdivision		1.38%	30
Suva subdivision		3.30%	74
Overall	10.38%	230	

Figure 1.5 of the pie chart represents an impression of women not having access to reproductive health pamphlets at the 4- subdivision health and nursing stations

The Peace March

The Ship of the World Youth Program which is a unique international cultural exchange program organized by the Government of Japan, brought together over 300 youths from around the world to learn about international cooperation and understanding.

It commenced in 1989, the program is run every second year. On each trip, a different mix of nations are invited by the Government of Japan to participate and different ports of call are incorporated into the itinerary.

Over a two-month period, participants are involved in a wide range of activities aimed at fostering cultural sensitivity, understanding and friendship. Most of the program is conducted on board the cruiser liner, Nippon Maru.

Some members of FWRM's Emerging leaders Forum (ELF) joined the Peace March which was held in Suva on the 24 of February 2005 in the spirit of encouraging young people to learn and appreciate other cultures and in sharing youth concerns globally.

The Ministry of Youth was responsible for organizing the activities in the Fiji Port of Call.

Members of FWRM during the Peace March In Suva.

From the Director's Desk

Happy International Women's Day and welcome to another issue of Balance.

On behalf of FWRM, we wish to apologise for not publishing Balance for the last two years. This has mainly been due to the lack of funding and resources. We were fortunate that Oxfam New Zealand was able to provide us with the funds to publish this quarter.

That aside I would also like to take this opportunity to thank our short term consultant and Emerging Leader's participant, Shoma Prasad , for making this publication a reality.

This quarter, we have stories about FWRM's inaugural regional " Feminist Advocacy and Analysis Training " held in Nadi in early February ; our research on women's access to health as well as the experience of our Young Women Officer at this year's Feminist Dialogue held in Porte Alegre , Brazil.

Other exciting news that I would like to share is that FWRM will soon be launching its official website - www.fwrm.org.fj. The website is currently under construction and will be online by the end of April 2005.

I would also like to highlight that other than Balance - FWRM will also be keeping its members informed through its email monthly newsletter. The first will be coming your way at the end of March. While we are on the subject of " staying in touch" we are looking for volunteers who would be able organize quarterly social functions. Please contact me by phone, email or just drop by the office. We would really appreciate the assistance.

In solidarity,
Virisila Buadromo
Executive Director

Taking Legal Literacy to a different level.

Bula and welcome from the Legal Rights Training Officers to all our readers. As we come to the month of March we looked back through the year and can proudly say that we have achieved most of our goals.

Educating and empowering communities care still the priority objectives of the community. At the same time there is a need for the government to support and finance the developments that the women in the rural communities have identified.

It was through support we received from Oxfam NZ that enabled us to conduct six (6) workshops last year and four (4) more this year. Areas that we have covered are Nadroga, Ba, Levuka, Yasawa and Kadavu and we will be covering Seaqaqa, Taveuni and Ra.

The numbers of participants in a workshop was twenty five where fifteen were women and ten men.

These men were selected because of their role in society as chiefs, village heads, clan heads and church ministers. They were also included in these trainings in the understanding that for women to bring about changes we need the support of men. It was encouraging to note that the men realised the need to change policies and legislations which discriminated against women.

After every workshops, the participants requested if we could take this type of training to all parts of Fiji because they believe that every citizen should be informed of their rights. The topics covered in the Legal Literacy programme were about the Law, Human Rights, Democracy, Gender, Poverty Alleviation and Development, Women's Rights (CEDAW), Children's Rights (CRC), Family Law Act and Employment Relations Bill.

We hope that with the availability of funds from donors we would be able to take this training to other parts of Fiji.

Susana Naivaqa and Seema Naidu.
Legal Rights Training Officers

Being An "ELF"

Mamta and Shoma have been a member of ELF since July 2004.

Shoma: being an ELF is not an easy task. One has to be very committed to the training and all the sessions.

Military team-building exercise was one of the toughest one I have admit. Jumping up and down hills and crawling through mud wasn't what I thought an emerging leader would need to do! But at the end of the day the moral of the training was about team work and importance of physical fitness. Retreat , was on Leadership , good governance, public speaking, and critical thinking, one of my favorite topics! During the two days in Nadave, I not only got to know the other EFL's personally but had a fair bit of time reflecting on the goals of my life and what I really wanted to achieve. Although I knew what Feminism in Fiji meant as I was studying feminism as a topic in my sociology unit, it was much easier for me to contribute to this session. And after the session I was like an expert on the issue, especially during my tutorial in University where I would start explaining to my mates about feminism and interlinking it with the cycle of poverty, crime and violence.

Members of "ELF" group during Human Rights Session

The most knowledgeable of all sessions for me personally was on women and human rights laws. Knowing what your legal rights are is like having a healthy bank balance, a security which you can depend on in needy times.

Mamta : I was ignorant about FEMINISM and GOOD GOVERNANCE. But as I moved ahead with the ELF session and started working with FWRM I learnt new things that has, and, will make a positive change in my life.

If I was not able to grasp my particular goals before, I totally gave up. I never made an effort to go back and look for my mistakes or weakness. But now I am able to fight my inner-self and convince myself to stand up against my weakness.

My attitude towards certain issues and people also has changed. Taking into account AIDS. I merely thought it of as a disease. But as I learnt more about it and read a lot of articles, I came to know how AIDS affects the victims medically, sociologically and emotionally and the positive action being taken up by NGO's and other organisations to help them.

I am moving on with EMERGING LEADERS FORUM and FWRM I am learning more and everyday there is a certain positive change within myself.

Q & A With Young Women's Officer, Anna Padarath.

1. When did ELF as a programme start?
The Emerging Leaders' Forum began in mid-2003.

2. Who initiated it and how did it originate?

The ELF programme is one of three activities of FWRM's Young Women in Leadership project. It was thought up by FWRM staff and is loosely based on Leadership Fiji, a community leadership programme that in turn was drawn from Leadership Victoria.

3. What are you as the organizer hoping to achieve out of this programme?

The main objectives of the Emerging Leaders' Forum is to introduce emerging leaders to issues facing young women in Fiji and worldwide and to allow for in-depth discussion so that various important topics and current affairs may be better understood. In doing so, the overall aim is also to encourage a group of motivated young women to speak up on issues that affect them and to motivate other young women in turn to reach their potential while recognising their responsibilities to others and 'giving back' to their communities.

Celebrating Human Rights in the Land of the Long White Cloud

It was International Human Rights Day (10th December 2004) with a difference for four of the Movement's staff. The executive director, the trainers and the young women officer spent the day in the Auckland suburb of Manukau talking to Pacific Islanders residing in New Zealand on Human Rights. Virisila, Seema, Susana and Anna were invited to Auckland by Oxfam New Zealand for a three-day " Partner's Learning Workshop."

Participants and Trainers at the Training in Nadi.

The day was organized by one of FWRM's longest partner's Oxfam New Zealand (ONZ). FWRM had the opportunity to talk Pacific Island organizations and leaders on its work in Fiji. Questions that were raised by those in attendance included " what were some of the challenges that we faced in the communities," " Is there support for your work?" " What has been the impact of your work?"

During the three days, FWRM staff also shared their experience in using the " Most Significant Change (MSC)" methodology. The methodology is a form of evaluation where stories are collected from those who are involved in a programme or project either as project officers, planners, participants etc.

FWRM was also exposed and learnt more another programming tool - called Programme Logic. The tool can be used for both planning and evaluation. We found this exercise extremely helpful. As a result, FWRM staff has developed its own programme logic for all its work.

Whilst in New Zealand, the Director, Virisila Buadromo also presented a paper at an event organized by the New Zealand Human Rights network. She was part of a four-member panel, which included a speaker from Bouganville, Papua New Guinea and Marshall Islands.

According to FWRM's Executive Director " the event was great because it gave New Zealanders a chance to hear first hand of the work we are doing in Fiji and it also gave FWRM the opportunity to network and strengthen both our knowledge and contacts."

FWRM Pushes for Equality in the ERB

Maternity protection, sexual harassment in the workplace, equal employment opportunities and equal pay for equal value of work were four issues that the Fiji Women's Rights Movement elaborated on at the Ministry of Labour's consultation on the present draft of the Employment Relations Bill.

The two-day meeting which was held at the Holiday Inn on 23rd and 24th February 2005, had members of the Labour Advisory Board (LAB) in attendance. These included representatives of the unions, employers, government and civil society organizations.

The first day of the consultation concentrated on the Ministry of Labour updating those who were present, on the present draft of the Employment Relations Bill, which focuses on labour reforms.

The Bill has undergone several drafts since it was mooted in 1998. The present draft is its fourth.

It is hoped that fifth and final draft will incorporate many of the recommendations that were submitted by the unions, employers and Civil Society Organizations like FWRM and Fiji Disabled People's Association.

Day two was when non-government representatives were given time to deliver their submissions. FWRM concentrated on trying to get more of its recommendations included into the draft. These recommendations were outcomes from a national consultation that FWRM held with other stakeholders in 1999.

Although many of the recommendations have been included into the present draft, there are still some that have been over-looked. For example, maternity protection to be provided to all working women for all their pregnancies; parental leave to be open to both parents etc. If you would like to get a copy of our recommendations, please contact FWRM.

The Employment Relations Bill is expected to be tabled in Parliament in September 2005.

Fiji Women's Rights Movement

BALANCE

"Helping To Balance The Scales"

Volume 1 *Jan - March 2005*

Young Feminist Advocacy Training Goes Regional

The inaugural *Feminist Advocacy Training* took place at Tanoa International Hotel in Nadi from 7 -11th February 2005. Organised by Development Alternatives for a New Era (DAWN) Pacific and Fiji Women's Rights Movement (FWRM), it was a training aimed at developing the advocacy and critical analysis skills of young female activists in the Pacific. Amongst the program facilitators were feminist scholars and activists Dr. Claire Slatter, Dr Yvonne Underhill-Sem, Seema Naidu, Virisila Buadromo, Varia Williams and Anna Padarath.

Participants and Trainers at the Training in Nadi with Chief Guest Dr. Shaista Shameem.

The event was officially opened by Dr Shaista Shameem, Director *Fiji Human Rights Commission*. In her speech, Dr Shameem spoke of her thoughts on early and modern feminism. She described the concept as a "continuing revolution" because unlike other revolutions, it "has not come to an end".

She stated that feminist concerns have changed according to times and contexts, referring to the exploitation of women's sexuality and labour in colonized countries, the loss of autonomy for women in traditional societies during colonization and the achievements of women in industrialised societies who now enjoy the right to vote, work and function outside family structures. Emphasizing on the need for protection by law she warned that the freedom of women can not be assured without adequate legal reform.

Another key topic raised by Dr Shameem was globalization and its impact on the rights of women. She described this development as "transnational feminism" (a term coined by Indian feminist Chandra Mohanty), a revolution which "assumed a global dimension in response to the global movement of capital and labour".

She provided a possible alternative to how feminists might deal with this problem stating that the real issue was in insufficient economic, social and cultural standards that was denying women basic legal rights of self-determination and development.

This was the first ever regional training by DAWN Pacific and FRWM in sharing knowledge and personal experiences with young feminist from the Pacific region. Support was provided by United Nations Development Programme, Asian Development Bank, Oxfam New Zealand and NZaid.Participants were from Fiji, Tonga, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands. Papua New Guinea, Samoa and the Cook Islands.

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