FIJI WOMEN'S RIGHTS MOVEMENT
Balance
"HELPING TO BALANCE THE SCALES"
June 2/2013

GIRLS! "Time to Tell"

By **Shazia Usman**

SINCE February, the Fiji Women's Rights Movement has been working with 27 young girls on their theatre production *Time to Tell* – holding weekend rehearsals and other fun and empowering sessions.

Undertaken in collaboration with Women's Action for Change and supported by the International Women's Development Agency, *Time to Tell* is a collection of six stories that emerged from two-days of storytelling between participants of FWRM's GIRLS project. In these stories, the young actors enact situations that many children face on a daily basis. They show the silence after abuse, the impact of abuse on children, how important parental support is and how kindness and love are the most important ingredients in everybody's lives.

GIRLS - Grow, Inspire, Relate, Lead, Succeed – is a year-long theatre programme, designed to empower 10-12-year-old girls and strengthen their knowledge on the rights of the girl child.

GIRLS promotes their empowerment and increased participation in their communities and society, in line with the recommendations of the 2011 Commission on the Status of Women's Outcome Document on the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child.

FWRM believes that it is of utmost importance to highlight issues of sexual, emotional and physical violence because they are common realities in the lives of many girls in Fiji today. With this in mind, the GIRLS held three shows in August – one public performance and two in selected schools in Suva.

When asked how they felt being part of GIRLS, the young actors shared:

Akansha Kant, 12,
"I learnt teamwork and how to be a good friend. I also learnt about FWRM and its programmes. I also learnt how to play soccer. This programme taught me how to do presentations and to express myself – I was very shy before."

Lanieta Delores, 12,
"Through GIRLS I learnt how to be confident, honest and how to stand up for myself. I learnt that we have to help each other and we need to respect each other."

Belinda Bithell, 11,
"Through GIRLS I learnt that as young girls we should inspire ourselves and work together as a group. We need to believe in ourselves and to believe that we can do anything.

Nancy Sahim, 13,
"I have learnt that we girls have the right to say what we want and not only boys. Boys need to listen to our decisions as well. We should be treated equally".

Tanya Tei, 13,
"I am more confident now. I'm not that talkative but now I'm learning how to talk. I have learnt how to succeed and how to relate to people from different cultures. My life changed when I came into this programme. Learning to talk helps me not to feel so scared at school".

Amelia Wojik, 12,
"Through GIRLS I learnt new games and how to act better – both made me more confident. All girls go through different kinds of situations in their lives and they may need someone's help and so we should all work together to help each other".

Lolene Tuiqali, 12,
"I have learnt to grow by being good to those younger than me; to relate to people from other cultures and to communicate with them better. I am hoping to succeed in everything I do".

From the Director's desk

Greetings from FWRM!

THE second quarter of this year was an exciting one for the Fiji Women's Rights Movement, as we undertook many important activities towards eliminating all forms of discrimination against women in Fiji.

As one of the co-convenors of the Fiji Women's Forum, FWRM collaborated with partner organisations, the National Council of Women, Soqosoqo Vakamarama and femLINKPACIFIC to hold the 4th Forum and a Civic Education Consultation with women leaders around Fiji. Discussions during this two events involved strategising toward next year's elections (read more on p.3, 5, 6 and 7).

On our front-page you will read about the exciting development of our GIRLS programme. After a successful six months of rehearsals and mentoring, the young girls held three performances, which was appreciated by audiences. FWRM would like to thank Women's Action for Change for working with us on this project.

FWRM continues to work in the Pacific in collaboration with other regional bodies. On p. 4 read about the work the Movement's doing with the Secretariat of the South Pacific's Regional Rights Resource Team in the area of legislative lobbying.

FWRM's proud to be secretariat of the Pacific Young Women's Leadership Alliance and is currently working with other members in organising its first project, the *Pacific Young Women's Dialogue*, which is a regional forum held as a lead up to the 12th Triennial Conference of Pacific Women in October 2013 (p.4).

As a known Women Human Rights Defender (WHRD) in Fiji and the Pacific, FWRM was asked share its work with other WHRDs at a global forum in Mexico this quarter. I represented FWRM at the forum and was delighted see how the institutionalisation of our security and self-care policy was appreciated by other organisations (p. 5).

Also in this quarter, FWRM's Programme Director Tara Chetty, represented the Movement at the inaugural State of the Pacific conference, held in Canberra. You can read more on the presentation she gave on the work of the Fiji Women's Forum entitled "Cooking up a Constitution: Women and Constitution-making in Fiji" on p.5.

We also bid farewell to one of our Human Rights Training Officer's Neomai Maravuakula this quarter and welcomed two new members to the team. We wish Neomai well in her future endeavours.

Also take some time out to read our Lookout! section (back page) where we give details on our *I am Voting* campaign.

These are just some of the stories captured in this edition. As always, if you have any feedback, send it to info@fwrm.org.fj

Enjoy this edition!

In solidarity,
Virisila Buadromo

Staff News

The Fiji Women's Rights Movement recently bid farewell to one of it's most valued team members and welcomed two new members, this quarter.

Neomai Maravuakula joined FWRM in 2009 as a Human Rights Officer and together with her colleague and fellow trainer Shabina Khan, was instrumental in undertake majority of the activity-based training with women around Fiji.

"Working at FWRM has been an enjoyable learning experience, especially being able to work with other young women, sharing and learning from each other. All the mentoring I received from FWRM provided me with the opportunity to work in the region as well as with the international women's movement", she shared.

Neomai joined one of FWRM's partner organisation's, the Secretariat of the Pacific Community's Regional Rights Resource Team, in July this year as a Resource Trainer, and continues to share passion for feminism and incorporate its feminist principles in her work around the region.

We wish you all the best Neomai!

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Angelyn Singh

The latest addition to FWRM's feminist family includes Angelyn Singh and Losana Tuiraviravi who joined us from partner organisation's, the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre and the Citizens' Constitutional Forum, respectively.

Angelyn joins the Movement as its new Research Officer and among other things, will assist in conducting research on women's human rights issues in Fiji.

While undertaking a Bachelor of Arts programme (majoring in Management & Public Administration and Information Systems) at the University of the South Pacific, Angelyn undertook an elective course called Women in Society by Dr. Rae Nicholl, which made her question gender equality in everyday life.

She later joined FWRM's sister organisation, FWCC, in 2010, as an Information/Research Officer.

"Working at FWCC was a feminist dream come true and after three years working with Coordinator Shamima Ali and Deputy Edwina Kotoisuva, I understood what I wanted to do in life. The vibrant personality and feminist energy of the movement just called out to me so strongly that I took a step towards seeing feminism evolve and I wanted to participate and contribute to it. I now look forward to continuing the work at FWRM."

Angelyn joins FWRM's growing Research and Advocacy team and can be contacted via email: angelyn@fwrm.org.fj

Losana Tuiraviravi

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In her role as the Women's Forum Coordinator, Losana will be liaising with the four co-conveners of the Fiji Women's Forum – FWRM, Soqosoqo Vakamarama I-Taukei, National Council of Women and femLINKPACIFIC.

She replaces Vosita Lenisaurua, who resigned earlier this year.

Losana is a graduate of FWRM's Emerging Leader's Forum and is well-versed with women's human rights issues in Fiji.

While finishing her Bachelor of Arts degree, majoring in social work, Losana joined CCF where she worked for four years as a Youth Liaison Officer under their Youth Programme.

"Having to change to another new environment, challenges and experience is a wonderful feeling," she shares.

"The change from working specifically in the area of youth development to women's human rights work is something that I am committed to. I am really looking forward to engaging more with the women in Fiji and working alongside the Fiji Women's Forum co-convenors."

Losana can be contacted via email: losana@fwrm.org.fj

Women's Forum plans voter education

By **Shazia Usman**

THE second quarter of the year has been a busy one for the Fiji Women's Forum as the coalition held two national forums on enhancing women's political participation in the lead-up to elections in 2014.

From April 8-10, one year after the inaugural FWF, fifty-three women leaders from diverse constituencies from across Fiji gathered for the fourth time, and were joined by 440 virtual viewers via live-streaming of the discussions over the Internet.

These women's leaders' along with the Fiji Women's Rights Movement, National Council of Women, Soqosoqo Vakamarama and femLINKPACIFIC, co-convenors of the FWF, expressed deep concern with the disproportionate representation of women in parliament. Women make up 50% of Fiji's population and are leaders in every aspect of society and yet, since independence, the percentage of women in parliament has never reflected this reality.

The women gathered to create awareness on women's political participation in national democratisation processes, identify feasible, realistic and strategic approaches to increase women's participation in all electoral processes and develop a collaborative approach amongst women sharing skills, resources and building greater solidarity.

The Forum acknowledged and built on the Forum's substantive contributions to Fiji's democratisation processes to date, which have included the mobilization and delivery of over 125 rights-based civic education campaigns and programmes, the production of democratic advocacy materials and the facilitation of over 650 individual and group submissions that contributed to over 7000 submissions received by the 2012 Constitutional Commission.

In light of these efforts and successes, the FWF was deeply disappointed that the women's values and priorities which were reflected in submissions to the People's Draft Constitution 2012 was rejected resulting in the invisibility of women in the current Government Draft 2013. This contravenes the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which Fiji ratified in 1995.

The Forum heard from past Fijian women parliamentarians and election candidates who shared their experiences and expertise. In light of these interactions, the Forum encouraged aspiring women politicians to choose their political parties carefully by investigating party constitutions and manifestos, ensuring that both have women's rights and gender equality at their core. The Forum further asserted that transformative change is not just about the policies of parties but also party structures that are inclusive and human rights based.

In its Outcome Statement, the FWF condemned the State's decision to abandon the Constituent Assembly. The Women's Forum had concerns on legitimacy of the overall process but recognised the importance of including women's perspectives in a participatory, open, transparent and substantive debate on constitutional content.

During this Forum, participants also endorsed the urgent need to develop voter and civic education materials and the need to utilize alternative media, including community radio, in building public awareness around active citizenship.

As such, the co-conveners held a *Civic Education Consultation* from June 17-19 with 36 women leaders/trainers who have been part of the FWF since last year. The objective of this consultation was to:

- Gather feedback from the trainers on their experiences from previous civic education on constitution submission making and discuss the lessons learnt.
- Based on lessons learnt, discuss proposed designs of the new civic education programme.
- Provide input into the training module handbook for civic education.
- Map out the different areas and community groups that each trainer will be working with and determine if there are any groups or locations that may have been missed out.
- Develop a strategy on how the Fiji Women's Forum's civic education will work in areas and groups that are currently not covered in its civic education programme.
- Identify possible partnerships and collaboration with other community organisations that may also undertake community civic education.

Following robust discussions and planning, a civic education plan (with curriculum topics) was developed at the consultation.

The FWF is currently undertaking activities in the following thematic areas: Capacity Building and Mentoring Women Candidates; Fundraising for Women Candidates; Voter Education and Influencing Political Parties Manifestos and Constitutions.

Changing Laws in the Pacific

By **Neomai Maravuakula**

SINCE 2012, the Fiji Women's Rights Movement has been working with the Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT) a programme with the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) in the implementation of a regional *Legislative Lobbying Program (LLP)*. These trainings have shared tools included in the *Changing Laws Toolkit*, co-produced and published by the two organisations.

Since 2011 the two organisations have implemented the trainings in the six Pacific Island countries of Kiribati, Nauru, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu.

FWRM recently co-facilitated trainings in Nauru and Samoa, similar to the other four countries, to assist civil society and government representatives to formulate campaign plans on pertinent issues in their country towards a legislative change. FWRM has been able to share lessons learnt and experiences of lobbying for Fiji's Family Law Act and its current campaign towards women's participation in Fiji's democratisation process.

An additional key outcome of these trainings has been the establishment of campaign groups that has included civil society organisations and government ministries collaboratatively lobbying for legislative change within their countries. This has been an important part of the LLP training as many countries have previously had individual organisations and government ministries working in isolation on legislative change and have shared difficulties they have faced to effect change in legislation and national policies.

In Nauru four key campaign plans were developed on four key issues. Campaign groups would be working towards reviewing existing or lobbying for new policies and legislation. These included issues such as the lack of banking or savings facilities in Nauru; the need to review Nauru's national disability policy to incorporate the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; the need to review the country's education policy to address the high rates of truancy; the review of the Motor Traffic Act to address the high rates of trafficking offences and the need to review the Land Act to take into account the rights of landowners in Nauru.

In Samoa four campaign plans were identified by participants. They included the need to review employment policies and legislation as well as raising awareness on the rise in unemployment rates amongst young people. In addition to the review of national policies to ensure that people living with disability are able to fully and effectively participate in society. Another campaign group looked at how they could raise awareness on people's individual rights as opposed to communal rights as many of the people in Samoa are not aware of their rights protected in relevant international treaties and conventions that Samoa is a party to and also legislation that has incorporated the rights contained under these international treaties.

The regional trainings has been an opportunity for FWRM to provide its support to other campaign groups that are embarking on legislative lobbying work in the Pacific. It has been an opportunity for the organisation to also learn from some of the experiences that have been shared by the campaign groups.

FWRM, through its partnership with RRRT/SPC, will be providing mentoring support to the respective countries that have been part of the training; ensuring that campaign groups understand the time that is needed to undertake legislative lobbying and that this may require a need to evaluate the strategies undertaken and to review strategies as the campaign evolves.

Pacific Young Women Leaders

Not just the future - the present!

By **Bronwyn Tilbury**

THE Fiji Women's Rights Movement's Young Women's Leadership Programme is the secretariat of an exciting new group called the Pacific Young Women's Leadership Alliance.

The Alliance is made up of regional organisations working on young women's issues, including the Commonwealth Youth Programme South Pacific Center, femLINKPACIFIC, International Planned Parenthood Federation, Pacific Youth Council, Secretariat of the Pacific Community, Young Women's Christian Association, International Women's Development Agency, UN Women, UNFPA and UNICEF.

The PYWLA is also working in partnership with Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN) to implement it's first activity, the *Pacific Young Women's Dialogue*. It will be a regional forum held as a lead up to the 12th Triennial Conference of Pacific Women in October 2013 to support the preparation and engagement of up to 20 young women leaders.

The Dialogue will invite participants to engage in the PYWLA in order to learn, share information, connect and further develop a regional advocacy agenda for the five key themes of the PYWLA Strategy: *Safe, Respected, Included, Connected and Skilled*. In addition, the young women leaders will build the practical skills and networks necessary to lobby the delegates at the Triennial Conference on Pacific Women around the key themes of the PYWLA Strategy.

The call for applications, which have now closed, has had a remarkable response from young women and transwomen from around the Pacific, with almost 100 applications received. Although the PYWLA only has funding to send a few of these applicants to the Cook Islands, all applicants are still involved in online dialogues being held on Facebook.

The online dialogues have so far covered topics around 'transformational leadership', 'sexual and reproductive health and rights' and 'how young women can be included in decision-making arenas'. The discussions have been rich and fascinating, with young women sharing their similar and differing experiences from every corner of the Pacific. Difficult feminist topics such as abortion, gender and culture are being tackled within the group with respect and openness.

The online dialogues will be collated into discussion papers to be used as lobbying documents at the Triennial.

The PYWLA is still fundraising for this event. If you would like to help please contact the secretariat on secretariat.pywla@gmail.com

The state of democracy:

Creating democratic space in a non-democratic context

By **Tara Chetty**

DEMOCRACY, land and small island states were the hot topics at the inaugural State of the Pacific conference, held in Canberra. The conference, organised by the State, Society and Governance in Melanesia (SSGM) programme at the Australian National University (ANU), brought together academics, journalists, political leaders, writers, thinkers and even some activists, to discuss the critical issues facing our region.

The Fiji Women's Rights Movement was invited to speak on the first panel on Fiji, chaired by Professor Brij Lal, as part of the democracy thread of the conference.

The panel also included Dr Steve Ratuva, PhD candidate Jone Baledrokadroka and Professor Jon Fraenkel, who gave a perceptive presentation about Australian foreign policy towards Fiji. Fraenkel argued that far from taking a hard-line approach against Fiji, as is often portrayed in the media and other commentary, Australia has actually adopted a softer stance with continuing flows of aid, ongoing communication and a reluctance to get tough. The presentation served as a response to an earlier paper by the Lowy Institute, an influential Australian think tank, which argued that Australia's tough stance against Fiji's military government had failed.

As FWRM's representative, I did a presentation on the work of the Fiji Women's Forum entitled "Cooking up a Constitution: Women and Constitution-making in Fiji". Women's groups were arguably the most organised constituency in the lead up to and during the consultative Constitution-making process in Fiji in 2012. These diverse groups had come together as part of the Fiji Women's Forum, a unique space that included networks lead by indigenous women, well-known human rights activists and emerging leaders, including transwomen. Despite the throwing out of the subsequent People's draft Constitution prepared by the Ghai Commission, the Fiji Women's Forum has continued to meet and mobilise around key issues of concern for Fiji's new Constitution, particularly women's political participation.

The presentation tackled the following questions: How did such a diverse group come together and agree on a common agenda? *How has the Fiji Women's Forum continued to operate despite the often-contradictory goals of the diverse grouping that comprise it? How did the women create democratic space in a non-democratic context? And given the abrupt changes to the Constitution-making process in Fiji, where to from here?* Part of the answer to that final question is, onwards to the elections. The Fiji Women's Forum is not a fixed body, and is not intended to continue forever. Rather, it serves the current needs of its constituent networks for strategic leadership and organising during the critical processes of constitution-making, elections and a transition to democracy.

The Fiji Women's Forum serves as an imperfect but largely successful platform for continuing to push the boundaries when it comes to women's political participation and redefining women's roles in shaping a nation. What's next for the Women's

Forum includes monitoring the elections, building the capacity of women candidates and lobbying for more women in Parliament and local government. There are many challenges ahead though. Where the People's Draft Constitution incorporated so many of the Fiji Women's Forum concerns, the new government draft ignores them, with very little in there for women or their families, and extensive limitations on human rights. So how will democratic space be negotiated under new constricting constitution? It will be interesting to see not just how the Fiji Women's Forum networks negotiate the transition ahead, but also what new formations emergeto take up opportunities offered in the cracks of shifting political terrain.

Women Human Rights Defenders share and reflect

"Custom and tradition count for a great deal…when a woman gets involved in defending human rights, she's regarded as defying custom and also as an opponent in the service of the West"

By **Virisila Buadromo**

This is just one of the many issues that was shared amongst a group of women human rghts defenders from around the world who converged in Mexico city at the end of June. As Executive Director of the Fiji Women's Rights Movement, I represented the Movement.

I was identified by the Association of Women in Development (AWID) in 2012 to participate in a research focused on protection for women human rights defenders (WHRDs) at risk. The interview was part of a research initiative that AWID developed in collaboration with the Women Human Rights Defender International Coalition. It explores how WHRDs define security and protection and how current national, regional and international mechanisms address WHRDs' realities and protection needs.

My experience was one of over 20 interviews with WHRDs from all over the world. The preliminary draft was the basis of sharing during the three-day meeting held between June 26th -28th. The aim of the consultation was to exchange experiences on protection measures and programmes from different countries, to discuss the findings from the interviews and to develop a set of recommendations that can support the development of effective protection measures and programmes to ensure that they respond to WHRD needs and realities. The main outcome of the consultation will include a publication that collects WHRDs experiences and needs in relation to protection.

FWRM shared its experience in providing security for the defenders who are employed at the Movement. Particular focus was centered on how the organisation has institutionalized self-care. One of the examples cited was FWRM's decision to provide staff with annual gym subscription. This is in recognition that the work we do as women human rights defenders can be

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Politics, as they see it

By **Shabina Khan**

Politics is the science of influencing civil and social matters through governance. Simply put, it is the exercise of control or authority over people. Geographically, this control is given to States and with their defined boundaries they establish governments to exert this power. Most importantly, politics has been around forever. The tribal societies had politics, through leadership and informal rules. It's all politics!

However, as it evolved, it became republics and democracies with appointed officials representing the people and they work together to underpin laws of governance so everyone can live harmoniously. Well that's the idea anyway. These laws of governance allow everyone to live and work together under a universal framework for the benefit of society. In theory, that's the way a good government works. To some, politics is merely an arena of deception and manipulation. Some see it as literally 'poly' meaning many and 'tics' which are blood thirsty insects!

Let's see what some of the schools of thoughts say about politics:

Realist, Niccolò Machiavelli (1469 – 1527) identified that the main aim of politicians is to seek power regardless of moral, religious or ethical grounds, and being feared as a leader is better than being loved. He further describes that a ruler may not feel disgraced if people refer to him as cruel as long as they are law abiding. One of his famous quotes or rather misquotes has been the "ends justify the means". Based on how it is interpreted, politicians and governments usually use this in their favour as to how the ends multiply their gains.

Marxism, the school of thought that explains how capitalism works, say that politics is about class antagonism – power struggle between the

haves and the have-nots and this struggle often leads to revolutions where the working class topple the rule by the rich.

Feminist political philosophy that is based on power structured relationships look at politics in a broader way and expands the definition from just power struggle at government level or state level to the struggle for equality at all levels. This includes power relations at work, at home, in school, in a relationship, accessing health care and in society in general. Feminist definition also challenges how the narrow definition of politics is conveniently linked to the patriarchal way of life as a norm.

In Fiji, politics is synonymous to parliament, government, elections and the civil administration of the government. Here's what the average Fijian had to say when I asked them what they thought politics was:

Emily, 66, retired school teacher,
"There's been a lot of changes, the price of things have gone higher where people's daily income is not enough to meet the price of goods.

Louise, 40, domestic duties,
Push for a democratically elected government instead of a military regime, it seems the rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer.

Eva, 18, student,
This current unelected government does not uphold democracy

Aggie, 27,
Politics in Fiji is same system, different day, different people, same agenda power-play. I think the government has made improvements in the many lives of the people but they are still not transparent and can we stop involving the Chinese government where history has proven this countless times before?

Marvi, 25, graduate,
The government is good but at most times scary.

Samu, 20, student,
Politics in Fiji is corrupt because of the military regime instilling fear in the lives of everyone in Fiji

Jordeena, 17, student,
Politically Fiji is a bit under the radar. Its like slack with how the government deal with a few situations and how its politically run.

Lasarusa, 18, student,
Fiji politics has a lot of corruption. No democracy.

Miliana, 24, graduate,
Politics is a cheating game where the players would do anything to get to the top. You would need to be a good liar and not have a conscience to get into politics because once you do get in the game, the only way you get out is either by death or some form of humiliation. As far as Fiji politics is concerned, I don't think we have any at the moment since there has been no election as yet.

Finah, 28, hotel worker,
Have the citizens of Fiji elect a new government instead of the military regime.

FWRM has been working with women's networks towards increasing women's political participation in Fiji. This coalition, known as the Women's Forum, is a space specifically for empowering and strategizing with women to take steps towards leadership roles at various levels.

What gives the women's forum such significance and credibility? There are a number of reasons:

One is timing. It is a crucial moment in Fiji now as it moves towards democratisation – began with the drafting the new constitution and now moving towards the 2014 elections.

Politics has always been about power. This power is often misused, abused and sometimes used for the good of the country.

Second is the mobilizing of women. This unique coalition stands up in solidarity with one voice. The voice which echoes for Temporary Special Measures at all levels of leadership – be it selection of members at boards, provincial offices, advisory councilors or local/central government.

Third is for its inclusive representatives. The women's forum is inclusive and representative of all women in Fiji. This includes geographical representation, ethnic balance, and inclusion of sexual minorities, women living with HIV/AIDS, women with disabilities, young women and rural women.

Politics has always been about power. This power is often misused, abused and sometimes used for the good of the country. This power can be legitimate where majority of the people agree to handing that power of being ruled by another to a person or group. This is often misunderstood as ultimate control by the group to do as they wish to do, failing to realize that that power can also be taken away by the majority. That's democracy.

Women Human Rights Defenders share and reflect

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consuming (physically, mentally and emotionally) and we often tend to pay little attention to our own well-being. FWRM was also able to share the challenges of institutionalizing self-care as well as the successes.

One of the interesting concepts that I took away from the meeting was the idea of integrated security frameworks. According to AWID, "the idea is about the importance of designing responses around a concept of security defined by WHRDs themselves. Security for many WHRDs does not mean police or armed presence at their home or place of work, but that the environment in which they live and carry out their work is one that does not generate fear for own safety and well being or for that of their children and family members. The concept of integrated security incorporates concern for the well being of the WHRD and her family and recognizes the gender specific nature of violence. Integrated security measures thus offer a range of support including childcare and healthcare – not traditionally considered in security measures. Integrated security also entails addressing the context that enables violations of human rights to take place in the first place, and promotes the realization of women rights to sustain WHRDs, their organisations".[1]

Hearing and learning about integrated security framework resonated with me and it made me proud because this concept is something that FWRM has been working toward for many years. Much of our work culture and organisational policies are centered on having an integrated security approach.

AWID and the Coalition on Women Human Rights Defenders expect to launch their report at the end of 2013.

1 Barcia Immaculada and Penchaszadeh Analia, " *Ten insights to strengthen responses for women human rights defenders at Risk*" Janury 2012.

Support for women in sports

WOMEN athletes in Fiji and around the world are still trying to find their place in the typically masculine domain of sport. Without funding support, political will and solidarity from all stakeholders, it is nearly impossible for women to take part and progress in any sport.

These sentiments were expressed by the Fiji Women's Rights Movement and Diverse Voices and Action (DIVA) for Equality, as they proudly presented jerseys to the Central Chiefs Women's Rugby Club in May

"We know it has been a hard journey for the club and we commend the team and its management for continuing to persevere. There is a huge disparity in the treatment of female and male athletes, especially when it comes to contact sports like rugby, but we cannot let that stop us from resisting inequality", said FWRM Executive Director Virisila Buadromo.

Coordinator of DIVA Shirley Tagi, congratulated the Central Chiefs for their commitment to excellence and development of women's rugby in Fiji and recognising the importance of working on wider issues of gender equality and social justice for diverse women and girls.

"There is very important work to be done by all in Fiji, not just women's NGO's and the State. DIVA really values our growing partnerships with Central Chiefs and other women's sports groups, and also FWRM as feminist allies in this ongoing work. We also look forward to many young women joining us in our upcoming 2013-2014 sports programme '*Come out & Play*'", she said.

Around five months ago, FWRM held a brief awareness session for members of the club, on promoting women's political participation in Fiji through Temporary Special Measures (TSM).

According to longtime club supporter and member Arietta Tuitoga, the athletes and the rest of the club members could clearly draw linkages of this into the sporting area. They understood how TSMs could possibly be used as a measure to counter the current power imbalance between female and male athletes.

Both FWRM and DIVA were delighted to hear later that two members of the club were selected to represent Fiji in the national women's team, *Fijiana*.

The feminist movement also thanks Australian AID for their assistance in funding the production of the rugby jerseys.

Team Angry Birds

Image courtesy of: Tavai Bale

THIS quarter, in line with the Movement's self-care policy, FWRM, along with a few staff from partner organisations, the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre and the Citizens' Constitutional Forum formed a paddling team to take part in two Business House Regatta's organised by Fiji Outrigger.

Team Angry Birds enjoyed taking part in the regattas despite some of the early morning training sessions. Teamwork is a key element in paddling and all team members enjoyed bonding with each and learning the mechanics of paddling.

Competing with more experienced teams at the regatta was challenging but fun for the majority women-led team, many of who were also first-time paddlers. But it was all worth it when Team Angry Birds won 'Best Team Player Award' in the end and qualified for the bowl semi-finals!

Weeklong celebrations to mark IDAHOT

By **Kris Prasad**

FROM rainbow-chalking driveways to peace vigils to Facebook campaigns, there was a whole week of events this year to mark International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia (IDAHOT).

IDAHOT is the commemoration of the May 17, 1992 decision by the World Health Organisation to de-pathologize homosexuality.

The main purpose of the Day is to create a moment, a space that local groups can use as an opportunity to take action to engage in dialogue with the media, policy makers, public opinion, NGOs, civil society and religious groups..

This year local-based groups and collectives, the Emerging Leaders Forum Alumni, Drodrolagi Movement, Haus of Khameleon and Oceania Pride joined tens of thousands of activists from Fiji and around the world to mark the event.

The Drodrolagi Movement (droMo) started off IDAHOT week by rainbow-chalking popular locations around Suva in the build-up to the Day. Rainbow drawings and IDAHOT messages were creatively drawn at the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre, University of the South Pacific's Laucala Campus' School of Governance, O'Reilly's Bar and Fiji School of Medicine's footpath at the Pasifika Campus.

droMo also partnered with femLINKPACIFIC and had an IDAHOT theme for their weekly Suva Peace Vigil. Members of the LGBTIQ community, friends and families gathered at Holy Trinity Cathedral to remember the lives lost due to homophobia and transphobia.

On IDAHOT evening, droMo screened *Call Me Kuchu* an award-winning documentary filmed in Uganda that examines the astounding courage and determination required to battle immense opposition in the fight for LGBTIQ rights.

Around 170 supporters came out to watch the film screening and members of the LGBTIQ community in the audience shared their own reflections of growing up queer in Fiji.

A Pride Party at Shenanigans followed the screening and droMo members, friends and families joined in on the free party to let their 'hair down' and celebrate the end of the IDAHOT week.

Oceania Pride in partnership with Haus of Khameleon and Emerging Leaders Forum Alumni organised "A Day in Hand" picture campaign to mark IDAHOT.

Members and supporters were encouraged to find someone of the same sex and take a picture holding their hand and share a message. Pictures were then uploaded on Oceania Pride's social media pages. At last count almost 60 images were uploaded on Oceania Pride's Facebook page.

This was the third year that groups in Fiji commemorated IDAHOT and future campaigns look set to go bigger and better as the struggle for LGBTI rights in Fiji continue.

One day a little girl asked me...

By **Peter Keane**

One day a little girl asked
me if I believed in monsters,
I smiled,
I then grabbed the truth by its collar wrestled it
to the ground, tucked it deep beneath my arms and
said:
Love, you know monsters aren't real.
And its times like this,
where I wish that my sentences came with receipts so I can
take back my words.
See I wasn't being completely honest.
When I spoke to her, I damn near choked on a secret that has
been stapled to the inside of my throat for longer than I can
remember.
Not only do I believe in monsters but I have actually seen them.
I've seen them whisper themselves into existence.

Yo, I heard, that they carve nightmares on the eyelids of the
innocent and then linger into dark corners preying on the
unsuspecting…somehow…
…somehow they've figured how to crawl through 8 millimetre films
and walks backwards straight into the dreams of those who have
never been scared to sleep.
I believe in monsters – like I believe [in] oxygen.
So tell me, how big is your closet,
Ayo how much space is really underneath the beds that you shake in the
middle of the night, you are a vampire, a werewolf in sheep's clothing…
…you swallow halos and spit out nooses, HOW
HOW can I not believe in monsters when I see men like you walking with
your knuckles scrapping against the concrete walls you stand perched on
the screams of assaulted women and then squeeze yourself into costumes
that fool the public into thinking that you are human…HOW
Yo, how dare you have the audacity to impersonate me
how dare you pretend as though there wasn't a woman out there scrubbing
the inside of her thighs until they turn stop signs red trying to erase your finger
prints from her skin
how can you even start to believe that your blood is just as blue as mine?
When you speak
I can smell dantes inferno on your breath.

Now I have spent the last 5 years of my life just wondering how you escaped from
hell and wasted far too many nights thinking of painful ways I can send you back
I've carved galaxies on the inside of my throat just to make your world a little
easier for me to swallow, but I can't stand.
I can't stand the taste of your behaviour.
Honestly every time you cross my path, I get this sudden urge,
to just tie you to a chair,
Cover you in gasoline and set your body on fire.
Granted I am no Van helsing
but I have seen enough horror movies to know how to get rid of (curse
word) like you
But what hurts me the most, is that I know that even if I killed you
there are still millions of monsters walking this earth
PRETENDING TO BE MEN.

Peter Keane is 24 years old and is from Suva, Fiji. He is currently a part-time Psychology and Social Policy student at the University of the South Pacific and also works part-time with the Citizens' Constitutional Forum's Youth Advocacy Programme. This poem was the winning piece at the recent 'Big Slam' – part of the regular poetry slams organised by local poets and artists.

Lean In: Women, Work, and the Will To Lead by Sheryl Sandberg

Book Review by **Nisha Chittal**
Excerpted from http://msmagazine.com/blog

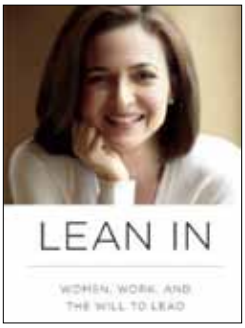

Image courtesy of: http://wellreadhostess.com

Facebook CEO Sheryl Sandberg's new book, *Lean In: Women, Work, and the Will To Lead*, has come out accompanied by a blizzard of discussion, even among those who haven't read it. I did read it, and found it to be a thoughtful, heavily researched and detailed book that will no doubt inspire countless young women to aim higher in their careers.

In *Lean In*, Sandberg publicly embraces feminism in a way that few corporate leaders do—and now she is sharing with other women the lessons she's learned on her way up. Her message is reminiscent of Betty Friedan's in *The Feminine Mystique*, adapted for the modern corporate world.

In the opening chapter, Sandberg writes:

From an early age, girls get the message that they will have to choose between succeeding at work and being a good mother. By the time they are in college, women are already thinking about the trade-offs they will make between professional and personal goals. We internalize the negative messages we get throughout our lives—the messages that say it's wrong to be outspoken, aggressive, more powerful than men. We lower our own expectations of what we can achieve. We continue to do the majority of the housework and childcare. We compromise our career goals to make room for partners and children who may not even exist yet.

While Sandberg acknowledges that there are systemic barriers for women that need to be changed in our workplaces to allow more women to make it to the top, she posits that there are still some things women can do to take charge and get further in their careers right now. It could be years, even decades, before Congress passes legislation mandating more family-friendly policies at work—but you could ask for a raise or take a risk on a new project tomorrow. The power of Sandberg's message lies in the fact that personal career success is not entirely reliant on waiting for the system to change, which could take years: it empowers women to begin changing their own lives right now.

Sandberg's "lean in" philosophy has been the subject of much controversy. Is she blaming women for not trying hard enough? Far from it. Sandberg argues that the reason women hold themselves back in their careers is because of those messages they've received their entire lives: that it's not very feminine to be aggressive or ambitious; that as a woman it's nearly impossible to have both a career and a family. Her point isn't that women aren't ambitious, but rather that women are afraid to fully embrace their ambitions because they've been convinced of those two messages their entire lives.

In *Lean In*, Sandberg sets out to shatter these myths and liberate women at all stages of their careers from their grasp. She doles out advice peppered with her own stories of mistakes and lessons learned, from the story of how she passed on a job offer to be CEO of LinkedIn because she was pregnant, to how she demanded pregnancy parking from her bosses at Google during her difficult pregnancy, to her admission that she still feels self-doubt daily. In sharing her own mistakes, fears and lessons learned, she avoids coming off as a rich woman talking down to women who are less fortunate. Rather, she comes off as self-effacing, relatable and a mentor to women in the workplace. She encourages women to embrace their ambitions rather than downplay them, to seek partners who will support their careers and help lessen the burden at home, to let go of perfectionism and guilt, to believe in themselves fully and to reach for their goals in life.

Sandberg does not claim to be representative of or speaking to all women, and she is cognizant of the fact that her message is directed to a specific group of women, but she does not judge the choices of others. She writes:

While I believe that increasing the number of women in positions of power is a necessary element of true equality, I do not believe there is one definition of success or happiness. Not all women want careers. Not all women want children. Not all women want both. I would never advocate that we should all have the same objectives. We each have to chart our own unique course and define what goals fit our lives, values and dreams.

Lean In is not all encompassing; it is specifically a manual for how women can further their careers. It is not, nor does it claim to be, the complete solution to the problem gender of inequality in the workforce. Sandberg acknowledges several times throughout the book that she is well aware that there are external systemic barriers holding women back at work, and that she is only tackling one part of the problem, but she makes a compelling argument that getting more women in leadership roles will help to dismantle external barriers as well. Writes Sandberg:

My argument is that tearing down these internal barriers is critical to gaining power. Others have argued that women can get to the top only when the institutional barriers are gone. This is the ultimate chicken-and-the-egg situation. The chicken: Women will get rid of the external barriers once we achieve leadership roles. We will march into our bosses' offices and demand what we need, including pregnancy parking. Or better yet, we'll become bosses and make sure all women have what they need. The egg: we need to eliminate the external barriers to get women into those roles in the first place. Both sides are right. So rather than engage in philosophical arguments over which comes first, let's agree to wage battles on both fronts. They are equally important. I am encouraging women to address the chicken, but I fully support those who are focusing on the egg.

As far as career advice books go, it is difficult to read Lean In and not come away from it feeling inspired to begin applying Sandberg's advice to one's own career. Society constantly tells women that we can't juggle both a career and family. No one ever wonders how a man "has it all," yet a woman possessing both a flourishing career and happy family life is still treated as a rarity. Last summer, Anne-Marie Slaughter made waves with her cover story in The Atlantic, "Why Women Still Can't Have It All," but I found Slaughter's message problematic: Her prognosis on the status of women is bleak and offers women little in terms of concrete advice for how they can, in fact, "have it all," or whatever their version of "it all" is.

Sandberg's message is a welcome departure from that oft-repeated message that women can't have both a career and a family. Instead, Sandberg is saying to women: You can achieve all the things you want in life, and here's how to start achieving those goals now.

E u le Ina'ilau a Tama'ita'I - exploring gender equality issues in Samoa

Interview by **Neomai Maravuakula**
Duration : Three-part series with each around 26 minutes

The Fiji Women's Rights Movement speaks to independent filmmaker Galumalemana Steven Percival on the production of his three-part documentary film series exploring issues of gender equality in Samoa through a culture and faith lens.

Tell us how this project came about?

The idea of producing "E u le Ina'ilau a Tama'ita'i,"a documentary film exploring where there may be cultural or faith-based barriers to gender equality, was first conceived in 2011 when only two out of nine women candidates successfully competed for seats in Samoa's parliament. In the previous elections, 18 women had competed and 4 women were elected as members of parliament. In a global era of advancing the status of women, it seemed to me that this adverse trend needed to be examined through the lenses of culture and faith, two powerful forces that shape attitudes and behaviour.

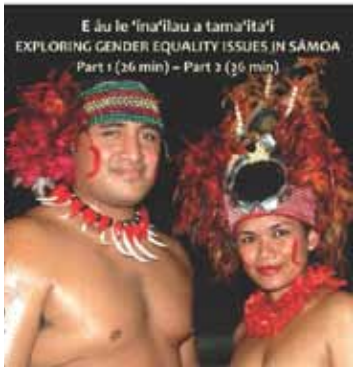

Image courtesy of: Steven Percival

Who funds it?

The documentary film was produced with the support of the Pacific Media Assistance Scheme (PACMAS), a regional media development programme funded by AusAID and managed by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) International Development.

What's the overall objective – is it awareness, educational, investigative?

I personally believe the equality of men and women is one of the most important challenges of the 21st century and that all countries must achieve equality for progress and peace to be realized at the family, community, national and international levels. The overall objective of the documentary is educational, raising awareness as a tool to generate conversations on the subject that may help viewers re-examine where there may be barriers to equality and leading hopefully to a consideration of how these barriers may be demolished.

What are some of the challenges you faced in making the documentary – how hard/easy was it to secure interviews?

Surprisingly, the main challenges I faced in producing the documentary came from the very people and organisations I thought were key advocates for the equality of men and women in Samoa. These "proponents" for gender equality were skeptical that I could produce a film that would approach the subject in a manner that would assist the cause. I had wanted to interview some of these advocates from the very beginning but it took months and the production of Part One to be completed before my request was considered and eventually granted. It was because of this difficulty that I decided to expand the scope of the project from a single film to a three-part documentary film series. Another challenge related to the research I conducted to build a statistical profile of gender in Samoa. This profile would provide me with a strong evidence base of where gender inequalities may be occurring. Briefly, it took many months and considerable effort to convince some government departments to release gender-disaggregated data that I could then analyze. Indeed, I am still waiting for health officials to provide me with gender-disaggregated health data.

How receptive have people been of the project after watching the documentary, especially Samoans? I was met with a degree of skepticism by a number of people and organisations. However, after completing part one, there seemed to be a change of heart with almost all who were earlier critical seeming to be genuinely pleased with the story I was telling through the documentary. People I wanted to interview in Part Two were much easier to bring on board, as they were able to watch part one first and understand more how the films were being shaped. The reactions of Samoan viewers have been very encouraging and there have been many interesting conversations among viewers following the screenings. This has also been true of Samoan overseas who have viewed the films. Non- Samoans have also seen value in the film as an educational tool. I was invited by UNESCO to show the films at the Pacific Women's Empowerment Workshop held in Nadi, Fiji, from June 13-15 this year and following this event, a request was made for the film to be used in a paper at the University of the South Pacific. I was also able to show the films at the inaugural State of the Pacific Conference organis ed by the Australia National University and held in Canberra June 25-26, 2013. A conversation I had with a Caucasian woman following the screening revealed that the films, as she put it, "did not speak to her", that she could not understand what I was trying to achieve with the films or how they could generate meaningful conversations. She was the second Caucasian woman to feel this way but my response to her was that the films were not designed to "speak" to her but to a Samoan .

Tell us a bit about yourself…

Despite my personal interest in the arts, I graduated from Massey University in New Zealand in 1980 to fulfill to my late father's wishes for me to hold a Bachelor of Business Studies. Unable to suppress my interests in the art I eventually established, together with my wife Wendy, the Tiapapata Art Centre Inc., a charitable trust promoting traditional and contemporary arts and crafts in Samoa. I am a keen photographer and videographer and have particular interests in Samoa's rich natural and cultural heritage, the indigenous ecological knowledge of the Samoans, human rights issues in the context of Samoa's communal society, and religious freedom. In 2002, I received my first grant to produce a documentary film from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in Geneva. That film explores perceptions to human rights in Samoa. I went on to produce two more human rights films: on the rights issues facing disabled persons (2004) and on religious freedom (2005). Over 30 productions are currently listed in my Multimedia Productions Catalogue.

Galumalemana Steven Percival can be contacted via email on steven.percival@gmail.com

For more information on the Tiapapata Art Centre Inc., visit www.creativesamoa.com

About us

The Fiji Women's Rights Movement is a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural non-governmental organisation committed to removing discrimination against women through institutional reforms and attitudinal changes.

By means of core programmes and innovative approaches, FWRM practices and promotes feminism, democracy, good governance and human rights. We strive to empower, unite and provide leadership opportunities for women in Fiji, especially for emerging young leaders in Fiji, indigenous and locally-born women. The FWRM vision is for the women of Fiji to be free from all forms of discrimination, have equal access to opportunities and to live in a healthy environment where the principles of feminism, democracy, good governance, multiculturalism and human rights prevail.

Join us

YES! I want to support the Fiji Women's Rights Movement

ANNUAL FEE:

Waged - $10 • Organisation - $30

Non-waged/Student - $5

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

Ph: _____

Email: _____

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Facebook - www.facebook.com/FWRM1
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LOOKOUT!

I am Voting

Elections are next year and the Fiji Women's Rights Movement will soon be starting its media campaign to encourage women to take part in the electoral process. Aside from radio, television, online and newspaper outreach, FWRM will also be holding training for women leaders who want more in-depth knowledge on voting. These women will then pass on the information to other women within their network.

Also part of the campaign will be promotional items such as t-shirts, caps, bandanas, stickers and pins. These items will be given out to participants of the trainings, as well as participants of FWRM's promotional events (see design below).

If you're interested to know more, contact FWRM Communications Officer Shazia Usman on shazia@fwrm.org.fj and/or 3312711