

Takitaki

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FRIEND's Stakeholders Forum on Developing Enterprises for Sustainable Income



Mr. Kaliopate Tavola

The inaugural FRIEND Stakeholder Forum on Developing Enterprises for Sustainable Income marks itself as one of the major activities of the organization this year. The two day forum was held at Kshatriya Hall in Lautoka sporting the theme 'Using Skills and Resources Creatively to Fight Poverty'.



Mr. Misaraini Raisuqe

Award winning grassroots venture from Vunidawa, Lutu Cooperative's senior advisor Misaraini Raisuqe set the tone for the forum with his keynote address on 'Disciple for Success', which saw a succession of motivational speakers speaking their hearts out to an audience keen on absorbing words of wisdom.

Our first panel focused on 'Overcoming Challenges in Developing Small Enterprises'. The Director of South Seas Orchids in Nadi, Eileen Burness spoke about her transition from being just a 'mouth' to be fed in the family to the lady of the flowers now supporting many through their backyard flower gardens. Apimeleki Vakarau, our sketch card supplier talked about his refusal to accept defeat at the hands of fate following a rugby injury 10 years ago faced that left him more or less bedridden. And Siva Naulogo of Yavusa Leweiwawuwavu Trust spoke of his highly successful vegetable growing venture in Sabeto engaging about 100 previously unemployed youths in his area.

Our second panel of the day on 'Quality and Marketability' saw FRIEND board member and FTIB General Manager West Francis Vuibau emphasized on the need to address the needs and the wants of the market encouraging the audience to think local and prioritize what is important. The session also heard of how consumers know and look for quality and how Fiji has a bad name in the market in terms of the quality of goods.

Day 2 started with the panel on 'Accessing Resources for Development of Small Enterprises'. It saw representatives from FDB, Microfinance Unit and Ministry of Youth providing information on their services.

While Abigail Chang, Manager Policy Research and Statistics from the Reserve Bank spoke on 'Small Producers Contributing to National Economy' in the language easily understood by the grassroots gathering reminding them once again of their worth in the bigger picture of the country. Our closing guest, Suva business consultant, Kaliopate Tavola proved to be a hit with the ladies from the west who seemed more than overjoyed with the presence of their 'tauvu' amongst them. Tavola encouraged the use of creativity in the nations fight against poverty and gifted the winners of the IDEA competition for their skills and efforts.

By Sandhya Narayan

IDEA Competition



Unaisi Organizing the Displays

FRIEND IDEA competition saw a reasonably wide range of entries in all the categories marked out for the competition. The main aim for this competition was to gauge the skills and talents of Individuals and helping them Develop Entrepreneurship Acumen.

The winning entries included baby summer wear made from pastel veil material, patchwork bedspread, Christmas angels and tree decorations and mouth watering marmalades.

The baby summer wear selection can already be found at our *Friends Fiji Style*® Shop in Suva. We are hopeful of having more new items resulting from IDEA available soon.

Our winners walked away with cash prizes, Vodafone mobiles, MH shopping vouchers, study lamps, *Friend's Fiji Style*® Chutney packs and good leadership books sponsored by Prouds.

By Sandhya Narayan



Handicraft Display

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Race Against Poverty



Teams assembled at Churchil Park

make aware the availability of the service providers for youths in the region. The out of classroom-outdoor activity was one of its kind as youths ran frantically around the city, in search for clues, tackling quizzes and working on challenges to overcome physical and intellectual feats. Learning about the issue of poverty was the basis of the activities but more interestingly, a fun run!! Thanks to the sponsors of the event, Fiji Water, Nestle, Coca Cola, Punjas, Eddie Hin, Jock Gilespie, Individual Sponsors and the Volunteers.

A total of more than 100 youths from business houses and communities participated in FRIEND's annual youth event called The Race Against Poverty. The event coincides with the Global Call for Action Against Poverty (GCAP) 50 Days of Action where organizations around the world campaign to achieve Millennium Development Goals. As part of FRIEND's Youth Development Programme, the Race was to



First Landing Team on the go

By Jone Nawaikula

Youth Summit Visit



Youths in front of the Card workshop

zation. Most of the youths were interested in the GCAP activities and were soon signing up as volunteers and participants for the Race Against Poverty activity.

The Western Division Youth Summit which was held on the 7th- 9th October enabled youths attending this summit to have a look at what FRIEND Youth Development program has for youths in the western region. Visiting FRIEND on the 9th the youths coming from different backgrounds in their communities was surprised at how much FRIEND Youth Program has to offer in spite of their small organization.

By Jone Nawaikula



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In-house staff training

As part of the ongoing internal trainings at FRIEND, on the 15th – 17th October, Ms. Koila Costello Olson (Director – Pacific Peace Building Center) conducted a session on Capacity Building for the staff, assisted by Vosita Lenisaurua. The 3 days training was to be on Mediation Training, which the staff were all looking forward to. The facilitators conducted needs assessment with individual staff members in terms of knowledge and skills. It was duly recognized that the FRIEND team has all the resources at hand along with people with knowledge and experience to fulfill the needs of our growing team. In house talents teamed up with external facilitators to address issues arising from individual needs assessments. A very empowering and enriching experience for all the participants .

By Ashna

Diwali Lunch

Diwali- the festival of lights was celebrated in style at FRIEND on the 27th of November. The board and staff dressed up in authentic Indian wear and “Rangoli” was made to mark this event. Director Sashi Kiran treated staff to a delicious lunch of kadhi, rice and salad which was prepared at the FRIEND kitchen, while staff brought along plates of sweets to share.

By Arti Mala

PIPSO meet in Samoa

Rural partnerships is absolutely necessary for success of sustainable projects in the Pacific. Speaking from experience Sashi Kiran, the Director of FRIEND shared with the regional participants at the Pacific Regional Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises Forum in Samoa that path way to success for FRIEND has been partnerships FRIEND developed with communities, traditional networks, development agencies, Government departments and the Corporate sector in Fiji .

The forum from 14-16th October brought participants from around the region to explore the theme “Building opportunities Together”. The Forum gave guidance to Pacific Islands Private Sector Organisation (PIPSO) on the way forward and urged the organisation to ensure that Micro enterprises do not get neglected, a very real risk in our region.

By Sashi Kiran