Introducing Markets for Change

UN Women, market vendors and stakeholders in Fiji and Solomon Islands celebrated the launch of UN Women’s Markets for Change (M4C) project in April and May, officially putting the six-year, multi-country initiative into action.

Marketplaces are key to livelihoods across the Pacific and the vast majority of vendors in the region are women, making markets ideal environments to target both poverty reduction and women’s empowerment.

The M4C project will inject almost US$11 million into ensuring markets across Fiji, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu provide safe, inclusive and non-discriminatory working environments.

It provides a great platform for supporting multi-partner initiatives, bringing together local authorities, communities, rural and urban women, civil society organisations, UN agencies and the private sector.

The bulk of the M4C project’s funding has been provided by the Australian Government’s Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

UN Women is now rolling out its “Getting Started” workshops, aimed at helping market vendors organise themselves in order to work together, identify their priorities and take action to effect positive changes in their markets.

http://bit.do/pVcR

Freshening up our online presence

You may have noticed that the UN Women Asia Pacific website is looking a bit different these days.

The Pacific section in particular has had a mini makeover, making it more informative and easier to navigate.

All 14 of the Pacific Island countries and territories covered by the Fiji Multi-Country Office now have individual factsheets that provide statistics and details on women in different sectors, as well as information about the work UN Women is doing on the ground.

You can also access programme-specific information and all our latest publications, as well as archived material.

asiapacific.unwomen.org

Hello and goodbye

Welcome to the first “UN Women in the Pacific” newsletter. It’s our way of keeping in touch; spreading the word about our programmes, our staff, our partners and more.

In this issue you’ll find articles about the Markets for Change launch, our communications activities and our field work, as well as profiles of staff members, partners and events.

Unfortunately, it is both my first and last newsletter as UN Women Representative at the Fiji Multi-Country Office; from next month I will be calling Afghanistan home.

I’ve thoroughly enjoyed getting to know this culturally diverse corner of the world and, while I am sad to be leaving, I’m confident that the office and its work is in good hands.

I hope you enjoy this inaugural issue of our newsletter and I wish everyone continuing the work here in the Pacific all the best.

Elzira Sagynbaeva
UN Women Representative
Fiji Multi-Country Office
Run by the Anglican Diocese of Polynesia, the House of Sarah has been providing counselling to women survivors and community education throughout Fiji since it was established in 2011.

In 2012 and 2013 House of Sarah staff held 12 workshops in parish communities around Fiji, reaching 432 women. They covered topics including gender, domestic violence, child abuse, rape, sexual harassment and Fiji’s laws governing family issues.

House of Sarah aims to empower women with basic knowledge and skills, as well as being available at the parish level to help and support people in their communities when these issues arise.

The project has established nine referral committees and trained members to respond to survivor needs. The House of Sarah also advocates on behalf of its clients and follows up on matters that are before the court or lodged with different agencies.

www.angmissions.org.nz/?sid=120

that there is always hope. She stressed that a holistic approach to ending violence against women and girls is key to effecting change, highlighting the importance of teaching school-aged children about healthy relationships, as well as the need for on-going training for professionals such as doctors, nurses, teachers and the police.

The EViS roundtable is an informal forum to encourage discussion and sharing of ideas. It is a safe and open environment where all participants have a chance to learn and share information, as well as have access to the resources needed to support accurate and informed reporting on gender-based violence.

http://bit.do/juMH

Guests at the second UN Women Ending Violence in Samoa (EViS) roundtable event in March heard from Sina Retzlaff as she shared her personal experiences of domestic violence and offered advice to women and communities at large.

“The central element in domestic violence in intimate partner relationships is an ongoing pattern of behaviour aimed at controlling one’s partner,” Sina says. “[This comes ] through intimidation, isolation, degrading their self-esteem and physical abuse. It’s not about ‘how many times did he hit you?’”

Sina also shared advice on how to recognise the signs of a controlling relationship and what to do if you are in one, as well as her belief

Ending Violence in Samoa Roundtable

Top stories

Markets for Change Fiji Launch
Total Post Reach: 7,936
Post Clicks: 539
Likes: 232
Comments: 3
Shares: 42

Vacancy Announcement
Total Post Reach: 2,246
Post Clicks: 408
Likes: 54
Comments: 2
Shares: 6

Photo Competition
Total Post Reach: 1,730
Post Clicks: 277
Likes: 56
Comments: 12
Shares: 25

#Bringbackourgirls
Total Post Reach: 1,597
Post Clicks: 249
Likes: 104
Comments: 1
Shares: 15

Safe City Programme PNG
Total Post Reach: 1,505
Post Clicks: 70
Likes: 43
Comments: 0
Shares: 1

Partnership Profile

House of Sarah

Run by the Anglican Diocese of Polynesia, the House of Sarah has been providing counselling to women survivors and community education throughout Fiji since it was established in 2011.

In 2012 and 2013 House of Sarah staff held 12 workshops in parish communities around Fiji, reaching 432 women. They covered topics including gender, domestic violence, child abuse, rape, sexual harassment and Fiji’s laws governing family issues.

House of Sarah aims to empower women with basic knowledge and skills, as well as being available at the parish level to help and support people in their communities when these issues arise.

The project has established nine referral committees and trained members to respond to survivor needs. The House of Sarah also advocates on behalf of its clients and follows up on matters that are before the court or lodged with different agencies.

www.angmissions.org.nz/?sid=120

The number of likes on the UN Women Pacific Facebook page as at June 16, 2014.

1471
Encouraging women in parliament

From April 10-14, 30 Tongan women got a taste of being in parliament when they took part in a practice parliament aimed at encouraging women to stand in the 2014 general election.

According to the parliament’s office, the practice parliament was to “inspire and increase women’s confidence to run as candidates and become future leaders and key decision-makers”.

Participants included “nobles’ representatives” and “people’s representatives”, as well as two people selected by the Prime Minister. Seats were also reserved for youth and disabilities groups.

Representatives also took part in a three-day orientation to gain a better understanding of how parliament works, from protocol and legislative matters, to good campaigning and media relations.

The debates included an order on youth justice and youth diversion programme, as well as reserve seats in parliament for women.

A civic awareness programme ran at Civic Square, alongside the practice parliament, offering information and support for women representatives and those interested in women and leadership via a number of booths hosted by representatives from various sectors including the Office of the Tonga Electoral Commission and UN Women.

The initiative was co-funded by the Australian Government’s Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade through the United Nations Development Programme’s Tonga Good Governance Strengthening Programme and the Inter Parliamentary Union, which aims to boost female representation in politics.

http://bit.do/j2g4

Photo competition: Just days to go

You only have less than a week left to send us your photos and be in to win a DSLR camera kit.

We are looking for positive, non-discriminatory images that highlight the roles that women play in development in the Pacific.

You could win a DSLR camera kit including a wide angle lens, two tripods, a filter kit, a camera case and more goodies.

Winning photographs will be featured on the UN Women Asia Pacific Website, and the Pacific Facebook page, as well as in communication materials for UN Women in the Pacific, including a calendar. Photographs will also be featured in a photo exhibition later in 2014.

All entries will have the chance to be featured in UN Women advocacy and promotional materials, including the UN Women Asia Pacific website, Pacific Facebook page, and publications.

Contact us for more information, hints and tips.

Introducing ...

UN Women has welcomed several new employees in the Pacific over the past two months. Here’s your chance to meet them as well.

Penaia Kautia
Administrative Assistant (Procurement), Fiji Multi-Country Office

Penaia started with UN Women in April, having moved from the Secretariat of the Pacific Community where he worked as a project assistant. He is currently studying towards a Bachelor of Commerce in Finance, Project Analysis and Management.

Alicia Hilly Kenilorea
Assistant Project Officer – Advancing Gender Justice in the Pacific Programme, Honiara office, Solomon Islands.

Alicia joined the Honiara office in June having previously been the in charge of office administration at the Save the Children Australia’s Western Province office, where she supervised 23 field personnel.

Felicity Rorke
Ending Violence against Women Programme Specialist Consultant, Fiji Multi-Country Office.

Felicity is with us until October while Melissa Alvarado is on maternity leave. She has extensive experience in the areas of child protection, family support and gender-based violence, having spent 25 years in the community and government sectors.
All women, all people, all rights

Suva hosted Fiji’s first ever lesbian, bisexual and transgender workshop on gender, human rights, elections and democratisation in May, as part of the celebrations for the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia (IDAHOT).

Held on May 29 and 30 by DIVA for Equality, Fiji Women’s Rights Movement and Citizen’s Constitutional Forum, the workshop yielded a declaration which is now being circulated to key stakeholders in government, development agencies and civil society.

“It takes a strong and proactive movement led by LGBTQI groups, and strongly supported by allies, to ensure that there is full recognition of our rights as lesbian, bisexual women and trans-people,” DIVA for Equality coordinator Shirly Tagi says.

She adds that it is therefore important to speak not only of sexual rights, but also of full economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights for all people.

“All Women, All people, All Rights: that is our call for IDAHOT, and always.”

Read the declaration at www.divafiji.com

From Bangkok to Solomon Islands

Roberta Clarke, UN Women’s Regional Director at the Asia-Pacific regional office, came to visit Fiji and Solomon Islands in May. As part of the visit, Roberta attended the Markets for Change launch in Honiara.

“In Solomon Islands the [M4C] project was launched wonderfully by Alvina, Gaylyn, Marni, Preeya and team. Ethel Sigimanu, the Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs, spoke with such eloquence and insight as did Rose Starlyn, a market vendor herself.

We spoke with Solomon Islands’ Prime Minister Lilo about the ongoing deficits in women’s parliamentary participation — two women since independence in 1978. He is in favour of some kind of “appropriate measures” and UN Women is working on this issue with a coalition of partners, whom we also met.

I want to thank the entire team in the Fiji MCO and those in the office in Solomon Islands for their work and their hospitality.”

staff spotlight

Israel Abrahamson

Knowledge Management, Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator — Ending Violence against Women Programme
Fiji Multi-Country Office, Suva

Why did you want to work for UN Women?
Although I have experience across several disciplines, my knowledge in gender was rather limited. Joining UN Women was a golden opportunity to learn. Now, I see the world differently; through a gender lens.

What is the most satisfying part of your job?
I have put in a lot of work into de-mystifying monitoring and evaluation for our partners by developing a Reporting Package for the Pacific Fund. The feedback on the usefulness of this package has been overwhelming. It feels good to know that our partners on the ground are actually using our knowledge products. Even our donors have requested it!

How does your work directly impact on women?
The Pacific Fund team has worked so hard to support and build the capacity of our partners on the ground in all the countries we work in. I am enjoying my tenure at UN Women, working with highly skilled individuals in addressing and solving complex women’s issues in the Pacific.

Who is your mentor?
My mother is the biggest influence in my life; she is 70, and still writes for the university. I highly value her wisdom and creativity.