



# TUTAKA

STANDING IN SOLIDARITY एकता

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Citizens' Constitutional Forum Ltd - CCF

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## Human Rights Day

Our Rights, Our Freedoms, Always

By Communication Team

On December 10, 2015 CCF was pleased to be part of yet another World Human Rights Day celebration representing the wider civil society.

This year's theme **Our Rights, Our Freedoms, Always** especially focuses on the year long campaign to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

"Both these covenants are of importance to Fiji where much work needs to be done. The theme recognizes that since the inception of this international Bill of Rights framework, the world is still struggling to progressively achieve some of these fundamental rights," CCF Chief Executive Officer Sara Mataitawakilai said.

"Since signing onto the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1968, Fiji has witnessed a turbulent history of political instability, destabilization of governments, slow economic

growth and social injustices," he said.

The Citizens' Constitutional Forum together with other civil societies marched through the streets of Suva from the Suva bus stand to the Suva Civic Center, with over 100 participants promoting Human Rights.

"We had activities where people from all walks of life came in to write their views on human rights and distributed t-shirts as prizes for them with our publications made available to

everyone," Mr Mataitawakilai said.

He said that it was a productive day for everyone and hoped that we will continue to advocate on the principles of human rights.

"It was a good day for all civil society organizations and I urge everyone to stand in solidarity to recommit ourselves for the protection of our rights and freedoms in order to build a better Fiji," the CEO said.





## Editor's Note

Greetings to all our partners, and friends! CCF wishes to acknowledge your support, assistance, and contribution throughout 2015. CCF appreciates all the support from our CSO partners in implementing our activities in 2015. The organization had some key transitional changes which has brought in enthusiasm, experience and energy.

At a national level, 2015 has been very interesting with our new democracy rolling out lively parliamentary debates, and other events that provided a good litmus test to our newly elected government, despite some controversial issues.

The Public Lecture on Constitutional Implementation was one of our milestone for the year, giving space to citizens to discuss the implementation aspect of the Constitution. We also began with the groundwork for UPR and CERD Reports that are due in early 2016. Another highlight of the year is our partnership with Fiji Community Development Program developing community action plans and two livelihood projects. This was never a CCF area of work but a potential as we allow our target communities to put into practice and make connections between human rights and good governance trainings and their livelihood needs.

At a national level, a year after election has been very interesting with our new democracy rolling out lively parliamentary debates, and other events that provided a good litmus test to our newly elected government, despite some controversial issues.

Our Strategic Planning Meeting has helped us to look ahead to 2016 and beyond working effectively to further engage and work effectively with government and CSO partners in 2016.

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## CCF Annual General Report 2015

By CCF

The Citizens' Constitutional Forum held its 12<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting in August 2015. In attendance were the Company Directors, Board Members, CCF's current and outgoing CEO, staff and an external Auditor.

At the AGM CCF's Annual Report and audited Financial Statements for the 2014 were presented and adopted.

Accredited auditors guided those present through the Financial Statements. The Annual Report is available on the CCF website.

Tessa Mackenzie and Tara Chetty were re-elected for a term of three years as Company Directors.



CCF Staff with Professor Cheryl Saunders at the CCF office in Suva. Photo: Communication Team



# CCF commemorates Anti-Corruption Day

## Stop Corruption, It's our Duty

### By Education Team



Youth participants during the International Anti-Corruption Day at Ratu Kadavulevu School in Tailevu. Photo: Communication Team

Citizens' Constitutional Forum (CCF) was excited to contribute positively to the global commemoration of the International Anti-Corruption Day. Celebrated on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2015. The global theme was "Break the Corruption Chain".

To celebrate, CCF hosted its inaugural Anti-Corruption Awareness Youth Workshop with more than 100 youth participants at the Ratu Kadavulevu School hall with the theme **Stop Corruption, It's our Duty** addressing the worldwide need to put an end to corruption.

The issue with corruption is that it spreads and changes form which makes it difficult to identify in a plain setting. It is a crime that is not only committed by people in high positions or with power but also at the grassroots level. This phenomenon is imbedded in principles of dishonesty and fraud and includes acts of bribery. Because it is so widespread, understanding the real effect of corruption on the social, political and economic life of a country is not as simple. It undermines democratic institutions,

hinders economic development and jeopardizes good governance. There is a need to put a stop to corruption and to do this it starts with us. CCF believes that creating more awareness at all levels can greatly influence rejection and reduction of corruption in Fiji. To practice good governance means to practice good decision making processes which also means that leaders need to be accountable and transparent in all their dealings.

Over the past decade, CCF's education team conducted workshops in several provinces around Fiji on good governance, democracy and human rights. Their experience with communities revealed that there is a need for citizens to have meaningful participation in political affairs whereby people were informed about government processes. There is a common understanding that to have a proper check and balance system all people must be aware of development or any sort of activity that is happening around them.

"People need to understand the importance of not having corrupt practices in their community or in

their country for that matter. We have chosen to work with youth groups as it can greatly contribute to moulding our future leaders who will continue to fight corruption," said Chief Executive Officer, Sara Bulutani Mataitawakilai.

There was also an expressed need to have leaders to account for decisions made and transparency within related processes. Since leaders are accountable to the people they are also responsible for the overall public good.

For example the release of the Auditor-General's Reports this year after a lapse of eight years indicated positive signs to keep citizens informed about the use, expenditure and control of public monies and public properties. However, there is still room for improvement in making this information accessible and simplified for all Fijians to understand.

CCF calls on the government, private sectors, civil society, media and the citizens of Fiji to join hands and fight corruption. Corruption is the absolute theft of democracy.

# Korova receives first ever awareness

By Communication Team



Participants from Korova during the workshop. Photo: Education Team

Residents of Korova settlement along the Laucala corridor in Suva received their first ever workshop from any organisation regarding ways to improve their standard of living.

The Citizens' Constitutional Forum (CCF) made the initiative to conduct their awareness program on Human Rights and Good Governance only to discover that the community had not received any form of awareness program on the topic.

CCF Education Officer Viniana Cakau said that they were glad to have chosen Korova settlement as a community to participate in FCDP's Community Action Plan as it will assist the community to identify their

essential need and work towards them. This included discussions with the participants on ways to seek assistance to meet their needs.

"Despite living near the city Korova surprised us when they mentioned that we were the first NGO to visit their community. Working with them was a real privilege. We managed to come up with an action plan to assist the community to identify their everyday need like water," she said.

After consecutive trips to the settlement CCF's Community Education Team realised the much needed awareness to the community.

"Whilst conducting our workshop we

were very happy with the turnout of participants and the fact that they were very interested in the workshop and now the women and youth group are trying to register with the Ministry of Youth and Sports and the Ministry of Women and Poverty Alleviation," said Cakau.

The project is a CCF initiative that was funded by Australian Aid through the Fiji Community Development Program (FCDP).

## PEOPLES DIPLOMACY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

### "Building the capacity of civil society leaders"

By Communication Team

The Diplomacy Training Program (DTP) Fellows Program took place from the 7th till 25th of September 2015, at the University of New South Wales followed by a week in Canberra and finally returning to Sydney for a week.

DTP marked its 25-year anniversary since its foundation, which saw a congregation of 17 DTP Fellows from Nepal, Myanmar, Bangladesh, India and Fiji. The Australian Federal Government

under its Australian Awards program funded the 3 week training program.

The theme Human rights and the private sector focused on new global policies and frameworks based on human rights responsibilities for businesses, and the related challenges in holding corporations and the private sector accountable for their actions.

The program included comprehensive

and specialised training that matched the needs and experiences of participants, building skills and specialist knowledge necessary to engage with government and the private sector more effectively. It recognised the key role that enables civil society advocates to play.

Participants shared their experiences, building the capacity to engage effectively with the private sector.



DTP's selected program trainers were all highly experienced experts in civil society who were passionate in their respective human rights areas of work relating to the global policies and frameworks on human rights responsibilities for businesses. These involved discussions around national human rights institutions, the United Nations (UN) Human Rights Framework, the UN Guidelines of

Business and Human Rights, the Global Compact Network, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Guidelines on Multi-National Enterprises, Human Rights, Business and Trade Unions: Workers Rights are human rights: Approaches to Organizing and Mobilizing.

The program provided an exposure to Australia's broader social change

and development constituency. There were engagements with members of civil society, the private sector and government representatives in Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne, which helped expand networks for longer-term support, developing valuable links with Australian NGOs, academia and the private sector.

## Lekutulevu undergo Community Action Plan Training

By Communications Team



Participants from Lekutulevu during the CDP training. Photo: Education Team

Community Action Plan training had an immense positive impact in communities that were identified by CCF in partnership with the Fiji Community Development Program. One such community is Lekutulevu village, Tikina Vaturova, Cakaudrove Province in Vanua Levu.

The Citizens' Constitutional Forum Education Team together with the Cakaudrove Provincial Office representative's made a site visit for scoping and community profiling.

"The presence of the Cakaudrove Provincial Office representatives played a vital role

because it gave people assurance that they also had Government support, it was good to see how the village members valued this trip by making time to attend the workshop and participating in activities," said Education Support Officer, Viniana Cakau.

Seasonal diagrams along with several activities were conducted for the participants to appreciate the importance of understanding the principles of good governance and human rights. The CCF team also clarified their role as an organisation to the people, which is creating more awareness on daily issues.

"We were able to complete all our activities as planned and gathered all the desired information and now we look forward to the implementation phase which we hope to complete soon," said Viniana.

This project was a CCF initiative funded by the Australian Aid through the Fiji Community Development Program (FCDP). The project phase will be completed in April, 2016.

# ICERD BUILD UP

## BY ICERD WORKING GROUP

In preparation for the International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) the CCF ICERD working group interviewed university students to market vendors on their views of eliminating racial discrimination. Building up for the global celebration on 21<sup>st</sup> March, the team also gathered video recordings that will be uploaded on our Facebook page: **Citizens' Constitutional Forum.**









# The Welagi WASH Project

## By Research Team

The Right to Water and Sanitation was recognized by the United Nations General Assembly on 28<sup>th</sup> July, 2010. In order to live a life in dignity while upholding human rights, access to clean drinking water and sanitation is central.

The villagers of Welagi on the Island of Taveuni have a reason to smile as they are now the beneficiaries of a Water and Sanitation Project initiated by the Citizens' Constitutional Forum.

55 year old village plumber Lote Duna said that they were very happy with the project.

"We are very happy that we now have a new water system. It is a relief for those of us living on the hilly region of the village. We used to face difficulties with the old water source especially during the dry season when the source would dry up and we would face water shortages. That would no longer be happening with this new water system in place," says Mr Duna.

Mr Duna is the village plumber and a member of the water committee.

Also grateful for the project was 63-year-old Sakaraia Dusutoka, who is one among the 16 families benefitting from the project.

"When there is water shortage in the village, we would have to go to the river to get water. For the 17 years we have lived here, our toilet can now flush. With two families



Residents of Welagi try out their new water project . Photo: Research Team

in our household this project has made things easier for us," Mr Dusutoka said.

CCF Research Support Officer, Vilisi Gadolo said that the project has met a very important need for the villagers. She added that the project was conducted in three phases. The first phase was doing a Community Profile or Needs Assessment. The second phase was designing a Community Development Plan with the villagers and the final phase was the implementation of the project. The implementation phase also included Water And Sanitation Hygiene and Good

Governance Trainings. All these phases ensured that all the villagers participated in the process especially the marginalized groups in the community.

"We managed to install two 10, 000 liter tanks and water pumped into these two tanks are from a new spring source called Korovou. This water source now feeds water to 11 households with 16 families," said Vilisi.

Australian Aid through the Fiji Community Development Program (FCDP) funded the project. The CCF worked in partnership with Habitat for Humanity Fiji (HFHF) for the technical aspects of the project.



## About CCF

The Citizens' Constitutional Forum (CCF) is a non-government organization based in Suva with more than 20 years of experience in community education and advocacy on Fiji's Constitution, democracy, human rights and multiculturalism.

## Our Vision

To build a nation in which people live together in equality, justice and peace, respecting the rule of law under the Constitution that guarantees democracy and human rights.

## Our Purpose

To empower the people of Fiji to participate in and demand good governance, democracy, human rights and multiculturalism.

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Thank you for reading the Tutaka. We would like to hear from you.  
Send us your feedback or comments to [media1@ccf.org.fj](mailto:media1@ccf.org.fj)

## Citizen's Constitutional Forum

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