



TUTAKA

STANDING IN SOLIDARITY एकता

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

Volume 9, Issue 5, December 2016

Annual Public Forum 2016

By Research Team

The Citizens' Constitutional Forum (CCF) organized a successful Annual Public Forum (APF) on the Fijian Bill of Rights at the Pasifika Campus, Suva on December 2, 2016. The event was co hosted with Fiji Women's Rights Movement (FWRM) and the Fiji National University (FNU).

The APF converged four panelists who deliberated on the theme "Is the Fijian Bill of Rights Divisible" and its relevant discourse. The panelists included the Director of Fiji Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Commission Mr. Ashwin Raj, prominent constitutional lawyer Mr. Richard Naidu, Executive Director of FemLINK Pacific Ms. Sharon Bhagwan Rolls and Member of Parliament Honourable Matai Akaoula. The Regional Representative of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Dr. Chitralekha Massey, moderated the session.

"The primary objective of the Annual Public Forum is to educate and empower people on their rights enshrined in the Fijian Bill of Rights under the Constitution in order to encourage active citizenry and provide the space for robust discussions on

issues of national significance," said Mr. Bulutani Mataitawakilai, the Chief Executive Officer of CCF.

Mr. Mataitawakilai highlighted that the Annual Public Forum is a major event for CCF and is a continuation of the Public Lecture series from last year. He thanked donors such as the European Union for their vital support in enabling important public forums of this nature to take shape.

The Dean of School of Business, Hospitality and Tourism Studies Professor Ram Karan thanked the CCF and FWRM for providing FNU with the opportunity to host such a great public event and looked forward to future cooperation.

The Honourable Minister for Economy and Attorney-General Mr. Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum delivered the closing remarks highlighting the Government's intent in implementing the Bill of Rights.

The Annual Public Forum had a good attendance and was attended by a diverse audience from different backgrounds.

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We have reached the end of another exciting working year -2016. Exciting in terms of the achievements of expected deliverables, some boundaries being pushed, increased in networking, strengthening of current partnerships, establishing of new partners, and most of all voicing human rights and democratic issues at national and international level. All these was in the name of promoting, strengthening the respect and protection of human rights of all Fijians, and our call for democratic spaces in a rather constricting political environment in Fiji.

The last quarter of 2016 was full of activities will all project Teams pushing each other throughout the activities implementation fostering team work in a very challenging environment and demanding period of the year.

We successfully held the Inter Tertiary Moot Court Competition between the University of the South Pacific (USP) and the Fiji National University (FNU) in September thanks to the support of the two reputable universities and their School of Law. The objective of this annual Competition was to create and encourage an interest in Human Rights Law and practices among the university law students.

It was also another year of a fruitful Annual Public Forum that was hosted by the organisation in partnership with the Fiji National University and the Fiji Women's Rights Movement. This year's topic "The Bill of Rights: Are the Fijian Bill of Rights Divisible?" brought in interesting discussions from the panelists and the public present during the panel discussion. The panelists included Human Rights and Anti Discrimination Commission (HRADC) Director Ashwin Raj, Member of Parliament Hon. Matai Akaoula, prominent solicitor Richard Naidu and Femlink Executive Director Sharon Bhagwan Rolls with closing remarks from the Attorney General Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum creating a diverse discussion on the Fijian Bill of Rights.

The Forum was a success as eminent personnel commended the robust discussions that took



Annual Public Forum 2016 at the FNU Pasifika Campus. Photo: Gregory Ravo

place at the Pasifika Campus and the outcomes, in terms of creating awareness on the Bill of Rights.

The CCF together with members of Civil Society Organizations in Fiji was also invited by the OHCHR to meet with the UN Special Rapporteur on Racism Mr. Mutuma Rutere and make submissions on issues of racial discrimination in Fiji. The meeting was an opportunity for the CCF team to highlight the progressive steps undertaken by the Fijian government in combatting racial discrimination and also outline the loopholes that exist and steps to remedy such issues.

Other events that were successfully carried out during the year 2016 included the International Anti-Corruption Day, 16 Days of Activism against Violence against Women, the Human Rights Day, various community education workshops across the country, launching of the Amnesty International Report on Human Rights Abuse in Fiji, and the CCF Annual Planning were some of the activities that enabled the organisation to continue and expand its work on Human Rights,

Good Governance, active citizenship and multiculturalism.

Reflecting on the year 2016, the memories will be etched in our minds. The destructions left behind by TC Winston on most parts of Fiji; the controversial suspension of two Opposition Members of Parliament; amendments of the Parliament Standing Orders; the Gold win in Rio by the Fiji 7s Team; sentencing of several police officers and a military officer on the death of Vilikesa Soko to name a few makes 2016 a year to remember, and to welcome 2017 with a much more positive and constructive energy.



Participants of the grassroots budget workshop in Kasavu Village, Naitasiri. Photo: Gregory Ravo

DUA project assists communities with a rights based approach to development

By Education Team

In an effort to create more awareness on citizenship, governance and democracy in rural communities, the Citizens' Constitutional Forum (CCF) has managed to complete at least 11 workshops on leadership and good governance along with the Bill of Rights and rights based approach to development.

The workshops were conducted at three provinces; Cakaudrove, Naitasiri and Ra covering at least 32 villages from the different provinces in 2016.

CCF imparts knowledge and skills for participants on the processes and practices of democratic participation and the importance of decision making within communities. It also aims to build capacities

and confidence to enable better engagement within the community and local authorities for proposed developments.

"The participants were taken through a needs assessment process using the rights based approach. This is important because it offers clarification to the participants especially leaders on how projects need to be consulted and endorsed for development to take place," said Education Support Officer Viniana Cakau.

Ms Cakau added that many village proposals were sent but nothing had been done because the proper processes were not followed.

"The Women's group sent a letter of request to the Ministry of Women for a Resource Center project but nothing became of it. I would think that they did not submit a proposal in the correct format; that is a project paper instead of just a letter and the importance of meeting deadlines, which they were not aware off," said Ms Cakau.

After the workshop, the participants had a fair idea about formal procedures and following them, to ensure that local authorities assist them in village development.

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Participants from USP and FNU with His Lordship Mr. Justice David Alfred shortly after the Moot Court Competition. Photo: Gregory Ravo

Annual Human Rights moot court competition

ByLegal Team

7 September 2016 marked the first Constitution Day in Fiji. To commemorate this, the Citizens' Constitutional Forum (CCF) held its inaugural Annual Human Rights Moot Court Competition on 16th September 2016, in the High Court of Suva. The event is a component of the European Union funded project "Fiji in Transition: Towards a Sustainable Democracy in Fiji."

During the 2016 Competition, students from the University of the South Pacific and the Fiji National University argued their grounds of appeal based on a fictitious case of torture in the Court of Appeal in a single round of competition. The competition was presided over by His Lordship Mr. Justice David Alfred who then at the Awards Ceremony

and dinner also awarded the Fiji National University as Winners and The University of the South Pacific as a close Runner-Up while University of the South Pacific's third year law student Ziyad Parvez was named the Best Mooter.

The purpose of the event is twofold. Firstly, the Moot Court Competition is designed to test the Bill of Rights and Constitutional Redress provisions under the Fijian Constitution. Secondly, a discussion on Human Rights Law and Practice in Fiji: Challenges and Opportunities in the Fijian jurisdiction opens up a platform for the legal fraternity and those who relate to human rights work, to consider the possible practical barriers, challenges and opportunities that human rights cases pose in the Fijian

jurisdiction and share their experience. This discussion also allows the Fiji Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Commission a space to discuss their approach to these cases providing audiences with information on the current processes and plans of the Commission.

A series of competitions in the next three years has the overall purpose of improving students' awareness and interest in human rights law and practice, and creating a demand and market for well trained human rights lawyers as the likely consequence for a healthy and robust human rights law and practice in Fiji and the Pacific Region.

Prior to the event, Fiji National University's third year law student Leona Panapasa said, "This event will

be the first ever moot court competition that we will participate in and for us this is good because we see it as an opportunity to show the people that FNU does offer law studies and also has potential students to represent anyone in court or with any legal matter."

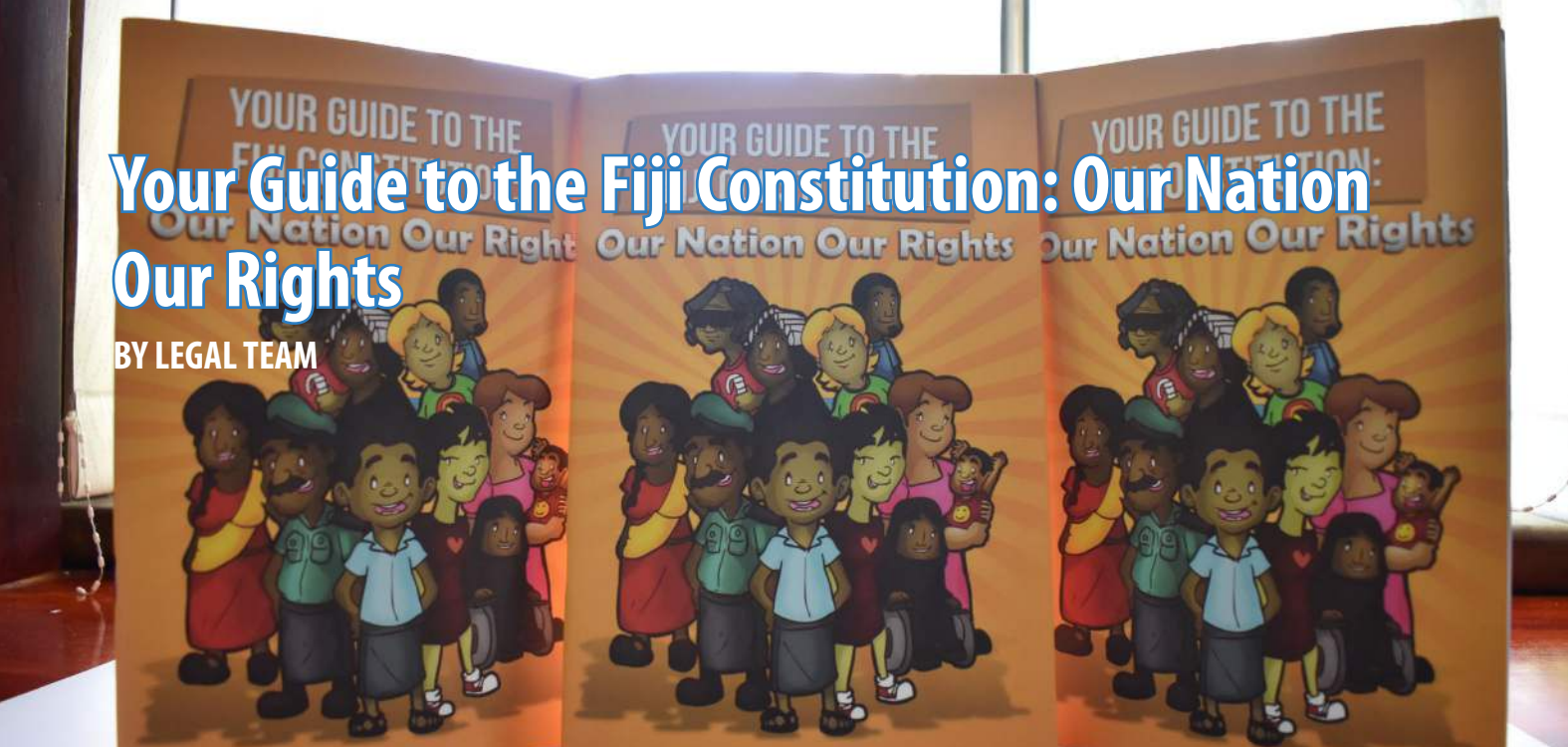
Ziyad Parvez felt that the

competition would better enhance his understanding on human rights practice in Fiji. "Apart from trying to gain experience it would be interesting to see how international conventions and constitutional provisions are applied before the court and how the limitations actually prohibit the application of human rights laws," said Mr. Parvez.



Your Guide to the Fiji Constitution: Our Nation Our Rights

BY LEGAL TEAM



Left: Secondary school students with the booklet at the USP open day. RIGHT: Mavis Gaunavou and Cheerieann Wilson take a look at the publication . Photo: Gregory Ravo

In April 2016, the Citizens' Constitutional Forum launched its latest publication Your Guide to the Fiji Constitution: Our Nation Our Rights. Intended as an advocacy resource tool for CCF's Community Education Team, the Guide is now used and distributed to the masses during outreach and awareness programs around Fiji. CCF has already distributed the Guide to its partners, networks, academic institutions, and schools, leaders, security and service providers.

A 2014 CCF led research report explored and documented citizen's perceptions and sense of ownership of the Constitution. 75% of the participants responded saying that they knew "something" about the Constitutions. This knowledge was not acquired from reading the Constitution as 64% of participants had not read it. The reasons for partial to zero attempts at reading the legal document were vast. Not having a copy, disinterest in politics, perceptions around its 'illegal' status and the legal language disconnected the supreme law from its citizens.

Since 2014 CCF's Legal Team began work on the simplification of the Constitution's language with the help of experts in politics and development, language,

and constitutional law. Simplicity in language, attractive illustrations, and demystification of concepts in FAQs, invites a reader to understand the Fijian Constitution easily. Feedback from the community confirms the success of the booklet thus far.

Apart from CCF's continuing advocacy for effective constitutional processes, and calling for a reform of certain inconsistencies between the Constitution and international law and standards as well as the implementation of comparative and fundamental best practices, we believe this Guide to the Constitution is a step forward for ongoing advocacy, public dialogue and debate. This is CCF's contribution to the full realization of active citizenry and strengthening Fiji's progression into a modern and healthy democracy that respects the supreme law.

We acknowledge the project's donor Australian Volunteer International (AVI), Professor Vijay Naidu as a Peer Reviewer, Editor Richard Naidu for, Illustrator Albert Rounds, our AVI friend and Graphic Designer Kelly Rowe, and our hard working CCF Staff.

CCF National Grassroots Budget Workshop Rakiraki

Citizens' Profile and Feedback

November 3 - 4, 2016

COMPILED BY Vilisi Gadolo (RESEARCH TEAM)

Photos: Vilisi Gadolo

Pramesh Gopal, 72

Advisor of Ra Council of Women Nadovi Community



Information from workshops like this opens the minds of people. I have taken part in many submissions and had made a submission a few years back to have a resource centre run by the elderly here in Rakiraki. There has been no outcome of that to date. We have retirees who have quite a wealth of experience. It's a good workshop because most of the Advisory Councillors don't have background to ascertain things like the budget. I hope they'll take the information and share it with members' of their communities. It's also about the consistency of them sharing information with their communities. I want to inform Advisory Councillors that they are there for the people.

Hazrat Ali, 44

Advisory Councillor Narewa and Vitawa

The workshop is helpful and I will be able to explain to members about budget processes. This has enabled me to think about projects in my areas. After Tropical Cyclone Winston, we've had assistance from NGOs like Habitat for Humanity Fiji and the Australian Muslim League. In my areas we find difficulties in transportation especially in bus services for school children. It would've been good if government departments were also part of this workshop. This is not the first time I'm taking part in budget submissions.



Sera Kinikinilau, 24

Vunitogoloa Youth Coordinator



This is my first time in a budget submissions process and has been very interesting. I now know the channels we have to follow when making submissions. I will share the information with youth members. Our youth group faces funding difficulties and proposals don't go through most times. I would have liked information from the Ministry Agriculture because most people here are farmers, also from the Ministry of Youth and Sports and the Department of Environment.

Urmila Prasad, 51

Advisory Councillor Wairuku and Docu



The workshop is very helpful and educational. It should be done a lot in Rakiraki. I'll share the information with my two communities because people don't understand budget processes. Thanks for including the Ministry of Economy to tell us more but they should have been given more time. In my areas, there are water shortages, power supply cuts and the road to Docu is gravel so it makes transportation accessibility hard especially for the school students. Lots of homes were affected during Tropical Cyclone Winston, about two thirds of each home. The government produced cards were given but there's shortage in materials. Some are still in tents. Ten homes have been built costing \$18,000 each by Habitat for Humanity Fiji. Other NGOs like Live and Learn have been very helpful providing WASH Kits and Tool Kits. We have started a nursery for vegetables because they are hard to come by in these parts. I took part in the consultations at Penang Sangam High School but we were asked to read our submissions. I still don't know where that submission went.

Malakai Waqatabu, 57

Provincial Development Board Member



Thanks to CCF for enlightening us. I will share information on budget processes with the Provincial Development Board and discuss how we can empower and enhance our development process. I was a civil servant for thirty five years and this is the first time I've come across this information. We are the arm of development in Ra and we lack budget knowledge and everything linked to the budget. We lack a financial structure regarding development and priorities of the budget to consider. This is the first time I'm part of proposal writing. The problem with our culture is that we have an attitude of not asking questions and we need to get over that. People need knowledge of the budget.

Bimlesh Deo Sharma, 27

Disability Treasurer | Volivoli Community

I've learnt about budget proposal writing and about good governance practices. If anyone cheats us, they have to answer to us. People in my community need social welfare information. I would like Ministry of Economy to come and speak to us again so we can ask more questions. This is my first time in submissions. This workshop has taught me to ask questions and not be afraid of anyone.



Participants of the Open Budget Survey (OBS) Researchers' Training Workshop in Bangkok, Thailand Photo: Supplied

OBS Researchers' Training workshop

BY RESEARCH TEAM

Citizens' Constitutional Forum (CCF) Research Officer Aman Nath attended the Open Budget Survey (OBS) Researchers' Training Workshop in Bangkok, Thailand from August 30 to September 1, 2016. The workshop was organized and sponsored by the International Budget Partnership (IBP).

"The fundamental objective of the workshop was to empower researchers on the revised model of the Open Budget Survey for 2017 and the preparatory discussions on the questionnaires for tracker work," said Nath.

The OBS is a civil society led process which assesses and monitors the transparency and effectiveness of Government's budgets and its impact on the lives of citizens. Fiji is one of the 113 countries which is ranked under the Open Budget Index (OBI).

Nath highlighted that improvement in Fiji's rankings under the OBI is one of the main priorities of OBS and

advocacy work would subsequently follow in 2017 after the completion of the OBS questionnaires. One of the notable features of the new OBS questionnaires is its key focus on public participation in the national budget processes and the role of the Supreme Audit Institutions.

The training workshop also gave an opportunity for Fiji to comprehend and learn other countries' experiences in the Open Budget Survey. Nath thanks the IBP for this opportunity to learn the fundamentals of the budget processes and enhance its application in research work via budget consultations in the grassroots communities.

A total of 20 countries attended the Researchers Training Workshop in Bangkok, Thailand.

ADVOCACY GALLERY

Human Rights presentation | 30 November, 2016.
DAV College, Nabua



Photo: Varanise Bolatagane

Holiday Awareness for DAV By Communications Team

The Citizen's Constitutional Forum was fortunate to be invited to present on Human Rights topic to school students that were on school break at the DAV College in Nabua on 30th November, 2016.

Hosted by the Arya Pratindhi Sabha Fiji, CCF took the opportunity to advocate and create a better understanding to the students about their rights.

Conducting an interactive session, there was a great response from the participants as they brought up their views and understanding of human rights especially their right to education and living in a safe environment.

The CGS booklet was also distributed to them for a clear understanding of the Constitution that we hope will be used for their reference.

Human Rights Day march | 10 December, 2016.
In the streets of Suva



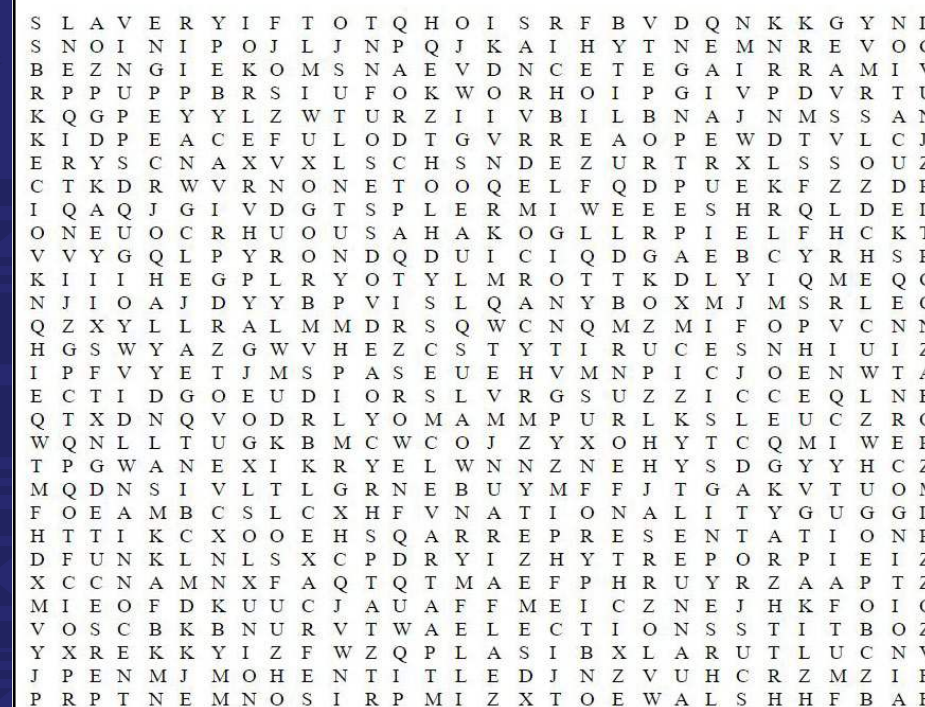
Photo: Gregory Ravo

International Anti-Corruption Day | 9 December, 2016.
Main Street Nausori



Photo: Gregory Ravo

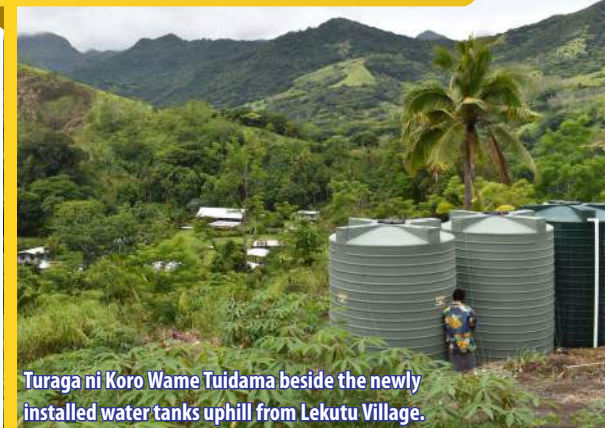
TUTAKA WORD SEARCH



HUMAN RIGHTS
SLAVERY
RECOGNITION
EQUALITY
LAW
PROTECTION
VIOLATED
IMPRISONMENT
FAIR
FREE
INNOCENT
PRIVACY
TRAVEL
ASYLUM
PERSECUTED
NATIONALITY
MARRIAGE
PROPERTY
RELIGION
FREEDOM
EXPRESSION
THOUGHT
VOICE
OPINIONS
PEACEFUL
ASSEMBLY
ELECTIONS
REPRESENTATION
DEMOCRACY

SOCIAL SECURITY
ENTITLED
ECONOMIC
CULTURAL
GOVERNMENT
WAGE
UNION
LEISURE
REST
ADEQUATE
EDUCATION
INTELLECTUAL
ORDER
HARMONY

Opening of new water project | 10 November, 2016.
Lekutulevu Village, Vaturova, Cakaudrove, Fiji



Turaga ni Koro Wame Tuidama beside the newly installed water tanks uphill from Lekutu Village.



Villagers of Lekutulevu pose for a photo shortly after the opening of the Lekutulevu Water Project.

Human Rights Day | 10 December, 2016.
Sukuna Park, Suva City



Photos: Gregory Ravo





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.



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

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Finance and Administration officer, Navinsh Yenkan, thanks each and every individual who has been a part of this great CCF family for the past 16 months. He says that it has indeed been an honor and a great privilege working at CCF. "I believe that the knowledge and experience that I have attained while working at CCF would have been unmatched had I chosen to work elsewhere, and for this I am thankful for being given the opportunity. I can honestly say that there was not a dull day while working at CCF – be it because of the work or just the crazy moments we had. Yenkan joined CCF in September, 2015 and would serve his final month with CCF in January, 2017 before leaving the organisation. CCF wishes Yenkan all the best in his future.

Legal Research Officer, Payal Reddy, recently joined CCF in September 2016, after graduating with Bachelors of Law and Professional Diploma in Legal Practice from USP. Reddy says she is enthusiastic to be part of CCF and looks forward to expanding her knowledge and skills in the human rights framework.



Communications Officer, Gregory Ravoi, is another new addition to the CCF family. Ravoi joined CCF in May 2016 from Dialogue Fiji, with extensive experience in multimedia and communications. Ravoi says he is glad to be part of CCF and is excited to gain more experience in human rights, multiculturalism and good governance.

Project Support Officer Louchrisha Hussain, recently rejoined CCF in October, 2016. With Bachelors of Arts in Political Science from BYU in Hawaii, Hussain also has extensive experience in similar roles with other NGO's. She says that it feels good to be back and she looks forward in continuing her work for CCF.



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