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CAN DO Fiji Quarterly Newsletter

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Church
Agencies
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Disaster
Operations



AHP Disaster READY

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CAN DO Fiji supports Church Youths' Climate Change Action activities in Suva

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CAN

Do Consortium

Members: Fiji Council of Churches, Methodist Church in Fiji, Fiji Baptist Convention, Seventh Day Adventist Church, Salvation Army, Caritas, ADRA Fiji and Olafou. CAN DO Fiji also recognizes the following ANGO partners: Act for peace, Uniting World, ADRA Australia & Caritas Australia



Caritas

AHP

Australian Humanitarian Partnership



Local partners meet Minister Bowen

Members of the Church Agencies Disaster Operations (CAN DO) consortium was amongst the Australian Humanitarian Partnership (AHP) local partners that met with the visiting Australian Minister for Climate Change and Energy, Honorable Chris Bowen MP on August 31.

This was an opportunity to share the activities carried out in communities across Fiji where AHP, including CAN DO Fiji, works proactively to enhance resilience, and minimise the vulnerability of people to the impacts of climate change, through preparedness, response, recovery, and adaptation. CAN DO is one of the four AHP con-

sortiums under the Disaster READY program.

Since 2017, Disaster READY is being supported by the Australian Government and implemented by CAN DO Fiji /AHP and its partners.

Presenting on behalf of the AHP partners was Plan International Pacific Disaster Risk Reduction Manager Ratu Josefa Lalabalavu in his capacity as the former Coordinator for AHP Fiji.

During the Talanoa session, the AHP partners were asked to highlight some of the significant impacts of the DR program at national level and how this has also benefited the vulnerable people & marginalized group including women,

people with disabilities, LGBTQI and children at community level.

CAN DO Fiji Manager Daniel Taufaga was able to share the success of the National Psychosocial First Aid Manual which was endorsed by the National Disaster Management and now used to train first responders across Fiji.

In terms of being inclusive, Mr. Taufaga highlighted CAN DO Fiji's Safe n Redi program and how they have worked in communities to retrofit evacuation centres to become disabled friendly while their community-based disaster management training is focused on Women Leadership.



CAN DO Fiji was largely represented by its local partners when meeting Minister Bowen.

Communications in disasters

The Church Agencies Network Disaster Operations (CAN DO) Fiji has an opportunity to conduct disaster preparedness awareness at regional level in September.

Project Manager Daniel Taufaga shared disaster preparedness messages at Trans Pacific Union - Seventh-day Adventist Church Digital Discipleship Training held at Fulton College.

CAN DO Fiji collaborated with ADRA South Pacific and ADRA Fiji to talk about

Communications in Disasters for the Hope Media & Radio Channels personnel from the region.

The "TPUM Digital Discipleship Training 2023" gathered 80 participants from across the South Pacific from September 6 - 9.

The primary goal of this special training program was to empower participants with the tools and knowledge needed to effectively share the teachings of Jesus in today's tech-driven world.



Participants take part in group work activities during the Communications in Disaster session.

Inaugural National Emergency Response Team Set Up

CAN DO Fiji is grateful to have collaborated with the Fiji National Disaster Management Office in July for the inaugural week-long induction training for the National Emergency Response Team (NERT).

The training allowed for the establishment of Fiji's NERT mechanism which was approved by Cabinet in March this year.

The induction training aimed to equip first responders with tools and methodology for the deployment of surge capacity for disaster response within and outside the country; and enhance interoperability among first respond-

ers from different agencies at all levels.

CAN DO Fiji had offered support in the provision of two screens to be used during the training. Assistant Minister for Rural and Maritime Development and Disaster Management Hon. Jovesa Vocea said the endorsement by the Cabinet was an opportunity to increase its efficiency to adequately respond to disasters and provide aid coordination.

The establishment of Fiji NERT mechanism will be responsible for providing surge capacity for the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) and Government at the sub-national

levels in managing and conducting emergency relief operations and preparedness activity.

The NERT will also serve as a mechanism for the Government of Fiji in providing humanitarian assistance to other countries.

At the end of the training, Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka acknowledged the support towards this inaugural event.

Government recognized the continuous support from CAN DO Fiji and the Australian Humanitarian Partnership.



Support for Youths Climate Change Action

Over 100 youths turned up on September 23 to clean up the Nabukalou Creek as part of the Fiji Council of Churches climate change activity supported by the Church Agencies Network Disaster Operations (CAN DO).

This is part of the celebration of the Season of Creations by the FCC members from September 1 - October 4 reminding its members on being good stewards of the environment.

CAN DO supported this important initiative by providing refreshments to the 100 plus youths.

FCC is one the 9 faith-based organisations under the CAN DO consortium membership which includes ADRA Fiji, Fiji Salvation Army, Fiji Baptist Convention, Methodist Church in Fiji and Rotuma, Anglican Church, Olafou, Seventh Day Adventist Church, Caritas and the Fiji Council of Churches (secretariat).

Only three of the CAN DO members are not part of the FCC.

Meanwhile, CAN DO Fiji was honoured to have been part of the FCC Executive Board Meeting held on September 20 at the Anglican Diocese of Polynesia headquarter at DesVouex Road, Suva.

CAN DO being a co-opted member of this August body do provide support to FCC on Disaster Ready.

The FCC member churches were celebrating the Season of Creations, reminding its members on being good stewards of the environment. This was celebrated from the 1st September to 4 October.

Mere Champions Disaster Preparedness

Taking up leadership roles and being involved in decision-making is hardly a common practice in any rural setting in Fiji taking into consideration the traditional hierarchy and protocol in place.

While this is a barrier in many rural communities, Mereani Cakacaka of Nacavanadi in Cakaudrove is now having her voice heard in her community spearheading disaster preparedness awareness and activities.

Through CAN DO's Women Leadership program under the Australian Humanitarian Partnership's Disaster READY program, Mereani revealed it has brought about many positive changes as men and women are now collaborating to ensure people in their community are prepared for any disaster.

Through the Women Leadership training, Mereani and 30 other women explored how women can be involved as leaders and decision-makers within the disasters and emergency preparedness activities in the village. They were also joined by the community leaders and men who were also educated on the important roles' women can play with full responsibility during any disasters.

"I am really grateful for the opportunity to learn disaster risk reduction through the Women Leadership program and how we can be part of the decision-making process in our communities, information sharing and also disaster risk reduction," Mereani said.

She shared an impact of the program is how women have now joined the Community Disaster Committee and it is not only advancing the rights and equality of women, but they are positively driving changes.

Mereani's role is not limited to her responsibilities within the Disaster Committee she joined last year. She also conducts awareness and training to women from the nearby communities.

During village meetings, she is also grateful to have been given the platform to conduct DRR awareness.

"I also conduct refresher training in our village which also includes our men, and we look forward to implementing what we have learnt when the next disaster hits Fiji," Mereani added.



Women Leadership Empowerment

Disaster Preparedness is one of CAN DO Fiji's main focuses ensuring that communities are ready for any disaster.

At the annual Seventh-day Adventists Women Conference held on Koro Island in August, CAN DO Fiji, through its Women Leadership program utilized the opportunity to conduct Disaster Risk Reduction awareness for close to 2000 women that converged for the week-long event on the island.

Conducted by WL Coordinator Timaleti Ratu, she shared the important roles women can play during any disasters and how women's well organized behavior and preparedness attitude could assist men in coordinating a disaster ready community in order to save properties and lives.

She collaborated with the Adventist Development and Relief

Agency (ADRA) Fiji Emergency Coordinator Samisoni Loga to reach out to as many women as possible.

While on the island, Timaleti also conducted mapping of potential evacuation centres as part of CAN DO's Safe n Redu program. A total of eight properties were mapped.

Information from the data collection were stored on our Safe n Redi app which can be accessed by the Fiji National Disaster Management Office during any disasters for possible use.

The Safe n Redi Project under the Australian Humanitarian Partnership's Disaster READY program focuses on building church preparedness capacities to complement current Geographic Information System (GIS) preparedness and response tools within the NDMO.



Women Leadership Coordinator Timaleti Ratu with ADRA Fiji Emergency Coordinator Samisoni Loga and a member of the SDA church in Koro.