

# STEPPING STONES

n e w s l e t t e r



Issue 2

*"keeping you in touch with the rest of the region"*

May 2010



Pacific greetings to our growing number of Stepping Stones (SS) countries, organisations and facilitators,

There is much to report in this edition of the newsletter as it has been a quarter full of SS activities. Most excitingly for us at FSPI has been the piloting of our 'engaging men in violence prevention' program. This grant, funded through the SPC Response Fund aims to strengthen the gender component of the SS program, a clear recommendation from the process evaluation completed mid last year. You'll find an article written by Tura Lewai, one of FSPI's male advocates on page 2 of the newsletter regarding this unique activity.

During this quarter I also travelled to Tonga to work with Tonga Family Health Association (TFHA) regarding the commencement of SS in-country early next year. Amelia Hoponoa, CDO Coordinator for the SPC Response Fund organised a 2-day consultation with over 25 people and 13 organisations present. This consultation gave me an

excellent opportunity to share with Tonga the successes and challenges from current countries across the Pacific. In response, Tonga are already looking at partnering with the Women and Children's Crisis Centre to build the capacity of gender awareness with SS facilitators before they undergo their first in-country training. Turn to page 3 for more information about their up-coming involvement in SS, (another country to welcome to the family).

Also in this quarter, with your assistance, the first SS Community Facilitator Journal was finalized, produced and delivered to all countries. The production of this journal again came from recommendations from the process evaluation and our desire to improve the collection of process evaluation data. I'm really excited about the journal as it is simple, clear and look's fantastic! Another great Pacific SS resource to add to the list.

Our SS yahoo group also became active this quarter. There are still a few facilitators who need to register on the forum and I'd like to encourage everyone to make sure they are a member. If you haven't already done so please go to: <http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/pacificsteppingstones> and follow the instructions to register. On this forum you'll be able to download most of the Pacific SS materials, reports and photo's along with a number of international documents. This is also a space to ask your fellow facilitators questions and post news about up and coming events in-country.

Speaking of up and coming events, preparation is underway for the first Regional SS retreat. FSPI has been given money through the SPC Response Fund to finance a retreat which will include all Pacific countries currently involved in SS. Read below for more information regarding this activity.

Thanks to everyone for their hard work this quarter, Emily

## It's Retreat Time!

Through funding made available from the SPC Response Fund, the SS project will hold its first ever regional retreat this year from the 16th-20th August 2010. Participants from all countries including the north and south Pacific will be invited to attend the five day retreat and capacity building training in Fiji. Each country is asked to start thinking about who out of their in-country SS team should be sent to Fiji to participate in this event. We are looking at funding 2-3 people from each country, although in special circumstances where there is a large pool of national facilitators or support personnel, countries are able to request funding for an additional member. Requests will be considered based on merit and budget constraints. Participants should be

experienced SS facilitators and/or support personnel who are familiar with and actively involved in their countries SS roll out. Already on the agenda for discussion and learning throughout the week include; sharing SS updates from each country, identifying ingredients to a successful SS program in the Pacific region, facilitator selection criteria, capacity development training on monitoring and evaluation and gender awareness, discussion and distribution of Pacific SS resources, cross pacific sharing and action planning for technical assistance requirements for the 2011 period. This agenda however is by no means concrete and is open to additional topics added upon request. SS facilitators are asked to nominate or suggest additional sessions for inclusion in the retreat. You can either post your suggestions on the SS e-forum or contact Emily directly on [emily.miller@fsp.org.fj](mailto:emily.miller@fsp.org.fj)

# Additional Regional Technical Assistance

*This quarter saw FSPI welcome three new members onto the Stepping Stones team.*



Leaine Robertson has come on board as the Regional Health and Gender Officer (HIV and AIDS Prevention). Leaine's background is in counseling within the community health stream, peace building/mediation and governance with an emphasis on promoting women's participation. In February of this year Leaine was involved in a month long training with the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre (FWCC) in relation to violence against women prevention and was also a participant at the April Fiji SS facilitator training. In addition to this, Leaine is taking the lead with FSPI's grant to assist network partners to design and development workplace HIV policies. With her extensive experience in participatory learning models and facilitation Leaine is an excellent addition to our regional SS team.

Albert Cerelala is currently working on FSPI's governance program coordinating the participatory budgeting project. He also has experience in sexual and reproductive health as a past peer educator with the Fiji AIDS Task Force. In addition to this, Albert has taken the lead as one of FSPI's male advocates. He was responsible for initiating activities such as the Positive Fatherhood Exhibition which was run late last year in conjunction with the Wasawasa festival and 16 Days of Activism of Violence Against Women. Albert has undergone training with FWCC and is currently on their male advocacy program. He also completed the recent SS training in Fiji and was involved in facilitating the discussions around gender violence at the Dynamic Vocals drama night.



Finally, we'd like to introduce Tura Lewai, another FWCC male advocate. Tura first started working with FSPI as part of the Youth Champs for Mental Health project run with our network partner, Partners in Community Development Fiji. He was responsible for writing the scripts that were presented at the drama night on the second week of the April Fiji facilitator training. Tura did an outstanding job at creating scenarios which were relevant, realistic and emotive. He also completed the April Fiji SS facilitator training and is an excellent activist and role model for young men in the field of violence against women prevention.

## Acting for a Cause



Finding from the recent SS process evaluation found that countries involved in current implementation need to strengthen facilitator's ability to promote and support discussions around sensitive issues such as domestic violence. In response to this, FSPI was successful in obtaining an SPC grant to train a number of male advocates to work alongside the SS program and build capacity around the issues of violence against women. Albert Cerelala and Tura Lewai were the first of two young men who have begun the male advocacy training run by the FWCC. This activity, which commenced with a month's training in February, will continue throughout the year building their capacity as regional male advocates on the issues of gender equality.

The male advocacy grant also allowed FSPI to pilot a drama night at the recent Fiji SS facilitator training in April. Participants at this training underwent the usual 10-day training methodology with

the addition of two extra evening sessions. To begin with, in the first week of training, Shamima Ali Coordinator of FWCC ran a session with the future facilitators. This session concentrated on gender, male privilege and roles and responsibilities of men and women in a typical Fijian community setting. In the second week of the training participants were presented with two drama scenario's on gender based violence.

Everyone involved in SS is already very familiar with the power of drama and role play as a tool for learning and discussion. The arts have for many years been used as a tool for social change, creating a medium where by one is entertained and also educated on pressing social issues; this is indeed the cornerstone of which SS is built. This was also the idea behind the engagement of Dynamic Vocals, a group of young men that came together primarily for their love of music. Currently, they use this as a medium to reach out to young people as a tool for empowerment and inspiration. The SS program approached Dynamic Voices to dramatize scenarios of gender based violence as a catalyst for discussion at the recent Fiji SS training. The group decided to dramatize scenarios of domestic violence, rape and sexual assault. After presentation of each drama time was given to participants to reflect upon and identify the many factors and themes that came through in the scenario's. Albert Cerelala, FSPI's male advocate then facilitated the group discussion around these issues.

The dramas were powerfully portrayed and were very successful in creating some heated and necessary conversations around the topic of violence against women and gender inequity. The night was seen as such a success that FSPI is already looking into ways to include the extra sessions and gender work into future SS facilitator trainings. Those present at the August retreat will see for themselves just how good the drama's are as we are planning to have Dynamic Vocals perform on one of the evenings.

## Laying the Ground Work in Tonga



Consultation with organisations in Tonga began this May. Amelia Hoponoo from the Tonga Family Health Association organised a 2-day event with representation from Tonga Leitis Association, Red Cross, Ministry of Health, Women and Children's Crisis Centre (WCCC), Tonga National Youth Congress (TNYC), Peace Corps, Tonga Community Development Trust, Salvation Army, and Tonga Football Association being amongst some of the participants present. Important SS lessons and challenges from across the

region along with an in-depth look at the methodologies of the SS approach were shared with participants.

The consultation was an important event with everyone speaking honestly about their activity plans and organisational objectives. The organisations nominating interest for SS implementation included; Tonga Family Health, Tonga Leitis Association, Red Cross, TNYC, Peace Corps, WCCC, Taliitha Project and the Ministry of Health. Tonga would like to take an approach similar to the Solomon

Islands which will include nominating a number of national SS facilitators from each organisation to be trained. These facilitators will then create SS teams who will outreach to a piloted 5 communities across Tonga in the first year. Once organisations have nominated these facilitators, capacity development trainings in the area of gender will commence in the latter half of this year. WCCC has already nominated their organisation to carry out this ground work with facilitators prior to the first in-country training. WCCC who is also involved in the FWCC male advocacy program will work with SS facilitators to ensure that everyone has the same level of knowledge and understanding regarding the many impacts and influences of violence against women and gender inequality.

Organisations present at the consultation agreed that March 2011 would be a realistic and sensible timeframe to organise their first in-country facilitator training. Organisations wish to begin capacity development with facilitators this year along with funding resourcing to ensure a well mapped out country program.

## Regional Partners attend Training of Trainers for HIV and AIDS Policy Development



A joint initiative from the FSPI Regional Health team, the Ministry of Labour and other agencies saw the first Training of Trainers in the National Code of Practice for HIV and AIDS in the workplace take place on the 26<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> of April in Suva. The FSPI Regional Health team along with 3 of its Network Partners, PCDF (Fiji), SIDT (Solomon Islands) and TCDT (Tonga) attended the training.

The training kicks off the SPC Rapid Response grant that will work with FSPI Network Partners to support, design and implement a comprehensive HIV strategy thus enhancing the capacity

of network partners to respond to HIV across development program areas. This in turn will ensure that all organisations have access to SS as a community HIV prevention approach.

The major components of the training highlighted existing Fijian laws on HIV and AIDS, the National Fijian Code of Practice for HIV/AIDS in the Workplace and the development of a workplace policy for HIV and AIDS in the workplace. Participants at the training became accredited (in line with Fiji MoL) to carry out a policy development process in their respective organisations. Participants explored the impact of HIV and AIDS on the workplace, the different elements of the Code of Practice and its application in detail, the existing laws, and the 10 key principles of the ILO Code of Practice (of which the Fiji National Code of Practice is grounded on). The training culminated with participants working in their individual organizations to develop their own workplace policy.

The training provided an ideal opportunity for the FSPI Regional Health Programme and Network Partners to sit and begin discussion on the development of a HIV strategy and what a HIV and AIDS friendly workplace would look like. This enabled the team to begin to think about workplace policies that ensure tangible activities are developed to implement a HIV workplace policy, for example, the availability of condoms at the reception area of an organization, conducting HIV and AIDS awareness trainings twice a year with employees and their families and engaging positive people in in-house and programme HIV and AIDS related work. Feedback from the regional participants to the training was encouraging in that it enabled them to start their policy development process with more knowledge and confidence on HIV and AIDS and its impact on the world of work.

FSPI will now start the important work of drafting their own HIV workplace policy and assisting in the development of a policy with staff and their families for the Solomon Islands and Tonga FSPI network partners throughout 2010.

## Fiji Holds its 3rd Facilitator Training

This quarter saw Fiji hold its 3<sup>rd</sup> SS facilitator training from the 12<sup>th</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> April 2010. This training was a result of extensive consultation with the Fijian Ministry of Health (MoH) who had identified five HIV project assistants to be trained as SS support personnel. Each project assistant came to the training with 4 SS community facilitators from the western, northern, central and eastern division of Fiji. Importantly for this training, SS became part of the job description of the MoH support personnel who participated in the training. Also present at the training were two Peace Corps villages from Daria and Mail village and an urban FJN+ community from Delainavesi. In addition to our Fijian participants this training also saw two participants from Guam attend. There was a total 42 participants from eight communities present at the 10-day training held out at the Nadave Training Institute.



The facilitation of the training was a joint effort with Emosi Ratini from FJN+, Tomasi Matamasuka, community SS facilitator from Tacilevu in savusavu, Peace Corps volunteer leader Niko Turrentine and Henry Oti, National SS facilitator from the Solomon Islands facilitating the male SS sessions. The female sessions were facilitated by Lorraine Satorara, experienced SS facilitator from the Solomon Islands who is currently attending university in Fiji, Emily Miller, Health Promotion Adviser with FSPI and Sala Tupou from SPC.

As already mentioned, this training was also used as an opportunity for FSPI to pilot the

'engaging men in violence prevention' project (see article on page 2). As part of the monitoring and evaluation of the facilitator training participants completed a pre and post Gender Scale Assessment. The training saw an overall average seven point increase in gender equitable attitudes amongst female participants and a five point improvement amongst male participants.

Most Significant Change Stories collected on the final day of the training found a number of positive outcomes as a result of the training. Let's hear what some of the participants had to say about the training.

*"I wish I was a young girl again, not an old woman so that I could start to begin a new kind of relationship and really enjoy my life with my husband. I will speak with the young girls in my village and tell them not to have early marriage because the more you plan the better the marriage will be".*



*"Before, I normally solve problems with church members using my title as the vakatawa (church pastor). I thought that using spiritual standards would automatically solve the problems... Now or future problem solving strategies will be more to the SS problem solving sequence. I will practice with the negotiating skills but also encourage the community to be involved in the process together".*

*"I usually think that experts or people from outside our family can solve our problems or issues in the village, like teenage pregnancy and community fighting. SS showed me that it's people within the family and village members who are the experts to solve the problems not people from the outside".*

## Solomon Islands National Facilitator Helps Build Capacity Across the Region



Henry Oti, a Solomon Islands National Facilitator and Ministry of Health employee added tremendous value to the recent SS training in Fiji this quarter. Funded through the Response Fund, Henry travelled to Fiji to take the lead in facilitating the male sessions at the 2 week training. Henry was able to add stories from first-hand experience as he has been involved in SS since one of the regions first trainings in 2006.

In Henry's own words, he found the experience both rewarding and challenging, and an excellent opportunity to strengthen his own skills as a regional facilitator and also contribute to the ongoing expansion of SS.

This was Henry's second opportunity to participate in the cross pacific sharing. His first was late last year when he travelled to Chuuk in the Federated States of Micronesia.

"To begin, when I went to Chuuk I was very nervous about my ability to facilitate SS on my own in another country. I had all sorts of concerns about would the participants understand me and would I be able to answer all their questions. Straight away, after the first day I felt all these fears lift. It was actually really good to get the opportunity to see how much I knew about SS but also how far the Solomon Islands had come in the implementation."

Henry traveled to Fiji with even more confidence as this was his second opportunity to be involved in regional SS training. "I can say the opportunity to travel and carry out SS in another country has done a lot for my skills as a facilitator and my confidence in SS delivery. It's a great way for experienced SS facilitators to continue to build their skills and contribute to SS for their Pacific".

Thanks for all your hard work Henry!



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