



FemLINKPACIFIC Women's Weather Watch Radio Documentary Series

Title: Climate Change

Producer: Lucille Chute

Technical Producer: Sulueti Waqa

Executive Producer-Director: Sharon Bhagwan Rolls

Music Bed (Enya style)

VO 1: "This segment is part of an audio series produced with support from the Global Fund for community radio of the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters, and Bread for the World."

Music bridge

VO 1 Women's Weather Watch is a media advocacy campaign that FemLINKPACIFIC initiated following Cyclone Mick in 2009, which resulted in the displacement of 2000 people. During this crisis it was evident from the accounts of women that they had not been accounted for their leadership and recommendations in the coordination of relief efforts, even though women were leading the response in their communities.

During Cyclone Mick, we heard from women that they took responsibility for ensuring their family's safety in the crisis. When communities were preparing to evacuate before the cyclone hit, women were often the last to leave the home, staying back to ensure that their family was secure. Once families had evacuated, women took responsibility for ensuring that they had what they needed at the evacuation centers.

Despite playing this leadership role in their communities, women didn't know what relief was being distributed or when it was coming. Women didn't have an

opportunity to say what they needed, and what their families needed at this time.

It was clear that women in communities needed information. It was also clear that they needed to be able to communicate about what their needs, and the needs of their communities were.

Cyclone Mick showed the vital role that community media plays to make sure that information on weather patterns and forecast are reaching remote rural communities. It also showed the importance of women's community media in ensuring women's voices were heard during emergencies.

And so, Women's Weather Watch was launched, linking women not only in Fiji but connecting through our regional network with women in Bougainville, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu. Women are supported to produce and broadcast media content to ensure that information reaches communities, before and after weather events.

This is a broadcast of voices of women from communities affected in Cyclone Winston. It is a program that looks at the realities of communities' experience of the disaster, from the perspective of women.

In mid-December 2012 when a killer tropical storm, Cyclone Evan, swept across Samoa and moved toward Fiji with winds well over 100 miles an hour, the FemLINKPACIFIC's Women's Weather Watch network got busy with e-mails and mobile-phone messages, reporting first on imminent dangers and then on cases of people who needed help during the disaster and its aftermath.

The purpose of Women's Weather Watch is to fill the gaps in information and communication through FemLINKPACIFIC's vast network of women leaders as well as advocate and campaign for humanitarian assistance must target the specific needs of girls, nursing mothers, the elderly, persons with disabilities and also those who rely on specific medication. Other messages identified power outages, food shortages, vulnerable people especially in need of help and the extent of destruction in various places scattered across islands. Some reports were very personal.

On January 1st 2016 Women's Weather Watch was back on alert tracking Tropical Cyclone Ula and providing recommendations to the National Disaster Management Office in Fiji as well as the media.

And then on 20 and 21 February 2016 Category 5 Severe Tropical Cyclone Winston cut a path of destruction across Fiji:

- *The cyclone is estimated to be one of the most severe ever to hit the South Pacific.*
- *The Fiji Government estimates almost 350,000 people living in the cyclone's path could have been affected (180,000 men and 170 000 women).*
- *44 people have been confirmed dead.*
- *1,177 schools will re-open on Monday around Fiji.*
- *Around 100 of the most badly damaged schools will remain closed for 3-6 weeks to allow for repairs.*

Cyclone Winston left 80% of the population of Fiji without power - that's approximately 900,000 people.

- *The total damage bill is now estimated at more than FJ\$1billion or almost half a billion USD.*
- *Aid, including food rations, is arriving in cyclone affected communities and assessments are now underway across the country.*
- *A 30 day State of Natural Disaster has been declared.*

5” Music bridge

SFX: Sound of Waves crashing ...

Mix through to audio inserts

Katarina – We have three main priorities we want to address. The first one is economic security. A lack of economic security leads to financial problems due to the high cost of living and lack of access to employment, particularly for school dropouts. The cost of health care is also expensive. The second one is the environment and climate change. There are many environmental factors that are causing air pollution or leading to a loss of food. Rising of sea levels, improper disposal of garbage, the cutting of mangroves, FSC polluting Qawa river. These are all problems. And thirdly, our safety is at risk. For one thing, Improper streetlights lead to high rates of violence and rape. On top of that, we're also at risk of natural disasters, like floods.

Venei – the main thing that's in my mind now is the wharf, the wharf is I know is the result of coastal erosion that has been taking place and coastal erosion can be seen all from one end of the village to the other. The coast is eating away and it's slowly reaching the road and in some cases the houses but my main concern here is the wharf. I know that once the ferry came to our village the wharf can be a good place for trading our goods when the ship comes from Suva. So if the wharf can be renovated, I think it would be a good help to the villages especially for the shops that are doing business here and the people that own them. Like we don't have things here so if the wharf is good the ships can

come so we can have those things that we can have from other places from supply from other towns and cities.

Mix through to Music Fill...

Narrator

Bula Si'a, my name is Lucille Chute, I'm 25 years of age and I come from the Province of Cakaudrove, District of Tawake, Nakula Estate. Climate Change is a reality my village is facing. The rising of sea level has damaged our livelihoods. What saddens me is that women see their traditional fishing grounds disappear or notice the nature of the rainy seasons increase.

Mix through to audio inserts

Nirmala: Because of this drought we being farmers we could not supply our vegetables the demand was there we could not supply because of the drought so we couldn't take the amount of vegetables to the market vendor to buy from us and some of the vegetables dried out because of this drought I'm a florist as well so because of the drought we couldn't have our flowers and vegetables grow well in our garden. This drought has affected us not only our vegetable farm, but our sugarcane farm even our cattle don't have a good grazing area everything dried out.

Narration: That was Nirmala Sharma of the Vunicui in Labasa.

Climate Change is experienced by women of the Pacific regardless of where they live.

In rural farms or coastal communities women are not just experiencing rising the sea level, soil erosion or drought BUT they also have solutions as we hear from Esita in Tuvalu and Adi Naomi and Adi Vasu in Vanua Levu

Mix through to audio inserts

Tuvalu [39:36] Well climate change impacts everybody - men and women and the impacts are different on men and women. For women, it will mean our food security where women everyday has to cope to make sure there's food on the table. This will mean that it will be very difficult to get the nutritious values where their family garden is affected; the water as well will be affected. With the recent drought in Tuvalu, especially cyclone Pam - we could actually see that it gives women to work three times harder than the normal lives that we had. There is soil erosion, there is relocation if it's possible - especially our people living on the shores because we have nowhere to run, we have limited land. So it means everything, Climate Change is actually giving women more time to work harder than before and sometimes it's beyond our control. [40:42]

Adi Naomi – As in environment rising in sea level in Mataniwai they need sea wall so that they won't be any flooding as Mataniwai kindergarten near to the seashore.

Tuvalu 42:40 Climate Change is really making a lot of changes to the women's lives whereas before, women can actually make handicrafts, today they really have to subsidies meaning they won't use the leaves of the trees, the pandanus treesalso trying to make sure that we also care about the environment. So all of this is putting our woman in a very difficult situation because handicrafts making is their source of income -it's their everyday life. So, for woman who live in the outer islands, this climate change things are making their whole of their lives much harder and even today, handicraft making is a source of income women depend on to educate, to send their children to school and so this means hardships for some women out there.

Adivasu - It is evident in most of these coastal communities that adaptation is urgently needed in process of sustainable development in climate change.

For example in the case of Tawake district which is inclusive of 6 villages, in all of these villages they experience sea water rising to their doorsteps or part of some houses during king tide. The best option I see is the village should seriously look into re- settling into higher grounds.

The challenge I find in talking with village elders is first of the re-structuring a new village and coming to a consensus agreement. Secondly is the costs and sentimental values attached to the homes or villages that was founded by their ancestors and how can they shift this or how would this look like.

At the end of the day they need to be educated about the reality and seriousness of the situation and the importance of their decisions and its impacts to the next generation.

I think adaptation resettling to new location and mangrove planting should all happen at the same time. The time beautiful beaches for our villages is no more attractive.

Closing Narration:

In the Pacific, women and girls are disproportionately affected by natural disasters but have demonstrated leadership in preparing for, and responding to these events. However, we are not equal partners in decision-making at all levels on disaster risk reduction and environmental issues, and too often our distinct needs and capacities are overlooked or ignored. The persistent marginalization continues despite the commitments to gender equality and women's human rights, which must be addressed within governance and coordination structures including those with responsibilities over humanitarian response.

The effects of climate change will be most acutely felt by those sections of the population whose human rights protections are already uncertain due to factors such as recognise the different needs and experiences of diverse groups of women which include, but are not limited to: the elderly, women with disabilities, LGBTIQ, landless, female headed households, women living with HIV/AIDS, as well as girls and young women.

Women, including those from climate-change and disaster-affected communities must be equal partners in designing strategies and agreements on climate change and natural disasters, which are consistent with the needs and rights of all. As women remain the central providers of food, fuel, and water in rural communities, they remain acutely aware of techniques to adapt to climate change and mitigate the effects of disaster. It is crucial that we look deeper into what these women are doing on the front lines—to not only help them, but to learn from them; women’s knowledge is often undervalued, but it needs to be understood and shared.

As Esita explains/Audio insert:

Tuvalu [41:12] we really have to put in place systems and mechanisms and measures that will actually help, to assist with their everyday lives - meaning we have to cater our people to know, to share the responsibilities and make ourselves ready and get ready for the situations. Because there would be more droughts coming, there will be stronger winds, and so we really need to educate our women and also the men to know that we have to relook into how we are going to work together to make sure that the burden is not only on one gender - meaning that women don't have to suffer more in this. We have to work together as men and women to make sure that we're trying to adapt together to this climate change impacts. [42:08]

Music Fill

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Music fade out.