WFWP
OCEANIA NEWSLETTER

Issue 3 | 2020



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WFWP is committed to:

- Serving communities – Service projects within Australia & the Pacific Islands.
- Strengthening the family – Workshops, forums, seminars and conferences.
- Bridge of Peace - Reconciling differences and healing wounds of the past.
- Global Women's Peace Network (GWPN) – A network of women leaders and organisations dedicated to solving pressing social issues and securing an environment for human development.

Australia



Saturday September 21st | Australia

OVERVIEW

As international NGOs, WFWP and UPF support the realisation of the 2030 UN Sustainable Development Goals. These Global Goals encompass 6 essential elements:

Dignity: to end poverty and fight inequality
People: to ensure healthy lives, knowledge and the inclusion of women and children
Prosperity: to grow a strong, inclusive and transformative economy
Planet: to protect our ecosystems for all societies and our children
Justice: to promote safe and peaceful societies and strong institutions
Partnership: to catalyse global solidarity for sustainable development

2020 Peace Day theme: Celebrate the day by spreading compassion, kindness and hope in the face of C-19. Stand together with the UN against attempts to use the virus to promote discrimination or hatred. Join us so that we can shape peace together.

The United Nations International Day of Peace ("Peace Day") is observed annually on 21st September. This special day was established in 1981 by a unanimous resolution by the United Nations, after which the General Assembly declared this as a day devoted to "commemorating and strengthening the ideals of peace both within and among all nations and peoples." The 2019 Peace Day theme was: 'Climate Action for Peace'. The theme focuses on the need of combating climate change as a way to protect and promote peace throughout the world.

The Women's Federation for World Peace (WFWP) and the Universal Peace Federation (UPF) hold an annual 1 day conference to support and foster peacebuilding within our diverse multicultural city of Melbourne. This year, we went national to conduct a virtual conference! The event attracted 152 participants who joined via webinar or live streaming through the WFWP Oceania YouTube Channel. The organising committee were: members of the UPF Victorian Peace Council, and WFWP Victoria members.

GOALS

1. Support the realisation of the 2030 UN Sustainable Development Goals through implementing Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions and Goal 17: Partnerships for the Goals.
2. Showcase presenters from the multicultural and multi-faith Australian community to discuss current issues to acquire, understand, and implement the right values in one's life to manage human affairs towards peace-building. Representatives came from WA, VIC, ACT, NSW and QLD.
3. Honour the legacy of Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon, who encourages us to 'Live for the Sake of Others'.
4. Share insights that enrich the lives of participants.

PROGRAM



Introduction:



Mrs. Tua Manase-Ale, President of WFWP Samoa brought the speakers and hosts together eloquently and in a composed manner.

Universal Values in our Global Village by Dr. John Bellavance



Dr Bellavance spoke about one of the core peace building principles of the two host organisations, namely, universal values that transcend national and religious self-interests. As our world shrinks to a global village, people are challenged to overcome national, racial and religious barriers, and to learn to live together in harmony. Why do we need universal values in our global village? Conflicts can occur in the absence of shared values. How do we find unity of purpose when we face a crisis? We usually look for shared values. Values allow people to understand each other, stabilise human interaction. Values-driven behaviours increase cooperation and trust.

What are the obstacles that inhibit us from finding shared universal values?

- The first obstacle is selfishness. It is hard to find the common good when selfishness is the motivation. The division, corruption, injustice and conflict in the world are ultimately a conflict of values based on self-centred values.
- The second obstacle is the need to formulate a convincing values framework that will appeal to the mind and the heart.
- The third obstacle is the mindset that value-free choices exist.
- The fourth obstacle is the absence of global consciousness in minds of human beings.

Love is the basis for morality and universal values. There are several reasons for this -

- First, love serves others and has been at the forefront of human morality for millenniums.

- Second, values centred on love are broader and more enduring than value systems that focus on narrow ideologies or beliefs.
- Third, love and ethics in the family has been unchanging across culture and time. For example, one could say that parental love for a child has been the most altruistic and unchanging value in human history.
- Fourth, rationality is not enough for humans to act morally. The bound of love creates a strong incentive for people to act morally towards the other. The ethics of love established in the family sets the standard for universal values in society.
- Fifth, love is also the basis for justice and equality.

Spiritual traditions also play an important role in fostering universal values, because historically they have focused on the big questions of life, rather than just political or national interests. From a spiritual perspective, a standard of values that serves the welfare of others and is unchanging is based on God's love. Dr Moon referred to this as an "absolute value perspective".

Keynote address

Hon. Dame Annette King BIO (NZ High Commissioner)

Prior to taking up this position Dame Annette served as Deputy Leader of the New Zealand Labour Party and Deputy Leader of the Opposition. She was a Senior Cabinet Minister in the Fifth Labour Government of New Zealand and was the MP for the Rongotai electorate in Wellington, NZ.



Dame Annette King in her keynote address focused on her country's approach to peace rights and security. "New Zealand," she explained "followed a rules based approach to peace and security, one advocated by Eleanor Roosevelt and the United Nations".

She provided several examples where New Zealand has reflected their responsibility in the promotion of wider security and the protection of human rights to demonstrate practical examples for others to follow. Besides involvement in several Peace Keeping missions over the years, New Zealand has continued to oppose nuclear testing in the Pacific and the stockpiling of biological weapons even though this was diplomatically challenging. To honour their commitment to ensuring there is peace; New Zealand has also signed the Treaty on the Non Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and has declared the country to be a nuclear free zone.

Dame Annette acknowledged that while we live in what she termed "turbulent times" her advice for the audience was to redouble their efforts towards collective decision making and work towards the creation of a safe and secure world for future generations.

Presenters:

Professor Fethi Mansouri

Founding Director of the Alfred Deakin Institute for Citizenship and Globalisation, Professor Fethi is an Alfred Deakin Professor with a research chair in migration and intercultural relations, and has held since 2013, the UNESCO Chair in comparative research on 'Cultural Diversity and Social Justice'.



Dr Fethi Mansouri believes that "peace is not simply the absence of conflict, nor is it the absence of tensions across states". Global disparity, inequitable distribution of resources, injustice and intolerance of differences, he believes, all contribute to the absence of peace.

His advice was that if we seek peace, we need to work to ensuring universal values are shared with the marginalised and the disenfranchised. Working towards global justice, multilateralism and using love as a force for good would be the best recipe to create a pathway to peace.

This once in a lifetime health challenge posed by COVID 19 he commented has illustrated the magnitude of global tensions faced by the world. While the lack of progress in climate change action and the misguided reliance of some leaders on 'power' and 'might' continue to handicap the realisation of many of the United Nations SDGs. His advice was that we need to rethink our vision of peace and work towards 'interdependence' and interconnectedness' as this would be the ultimate avenue to ensuring the achievement of true peace.

Dr. Kanagaraj Noel

Dr. Noel is a philosopher, psychologist and author with an honorary Doctorate in Religion and Philosophy. He received the prestigious "Gem of India" award for his leadership in road safety for his nation in 2007.



Dr Kanagaraj Noel opened his address by reflecting on a question he feels has been posed by COVID 19 – "Can you beat me?"

One of the strategies Dr Noel suggested to answer this question is that each person could help by showing compassion and care. To support his advice, he provided examples of four individuals who exemplified these qualities and made a contribution to resolving the difficulties caused by different crises.

The four individuals were Jesus, Florence Nightingale, Mother Teresa and Princess Diana. These four individuals, he explained, demonstrated through their actions that by 'doing little things with great love', the rifts created by disease, discrimination and intolerance were healed. Following this recipe on a global scale could be one way of beating the virus. He encouraged each individual to become a peacemaker and reach out to others in compassion and care as this could be the way to reducing the impact of the virus.

Mahboba Rawi

Mahboba received the Order of Australia Medal for her international humanitarian development work in Afghanistan. Through Mahboba's Promise she has established schools, Hope Houses and health clinics across Afghanistan whilst also running a variety of sustainable development projects.



Mahboba Ravi, the founder of "Mahboba's Promise" an NGO which supports Afghan women and children described some of the background which initially led her to pursue her mission. Her belief in God and prayer she felt were the cornerstones to building peace.

Although she has faced several traumatic experiences, she decided to deal with her suffering by looking for peace within herself. Once on the journey to self-discovery, she recognised that by helping others, she could transform her grief into something good. Using Mother Teresa as a model, she raised money and established several schools in war torn Afghanistan for 'education', she realised, is the 'best tool' to build peace.

One of the several projects she described is 'Initiatives for Change' which sponsors students from her schools in Afghanistan to travel to India where they spend 6 months participating in a course on dealing with conflict. When they return home, these students are encouraged to share their learning with other students at their school thus providing a platform to build harmony and understanding.

Mahboba concluded her presentation by encouraging the audience to work towards peace by doing just a little bit ….. for by doing a little bit at the grass roots level, she said great change can take place.

Rachel Shields

Director of Indigenous Programs - *Indigicate* Cultural Awareness Facilitator & Youth Advocate.
Rachel is a Weilwan & Gamilaray woman and founder of *Knowing In Nature*.

Rachel Shield's address filmed with a natural landscape as a backdrop helped to emphasize the message she had for procuring peace. Nature she explained is the 'greatest teacher' for within



nature can be found innumerable examples of connection and cooperation. Using these examples and building a connection with the land and with nature as Indigenous people have done for centuries could be the perfect platform for generating peace.

The Indigenous way of life created 'balance' which underpins the acquisition of peace. If we were all able to recognise our own personal responsibilities towards building peace and showed respect in our actions towards others and to the land, peace could and will be generated.

Dr Sandy Chong

Dr. Sandy is a Harvard alumnus where she earned her PhD (2003) specialising in digital commerce and global business communication. She is founder of Verity Consulting, and President of the UN Association of Western Australia.



Dr Sandy Chong opened her address by asking the audience to consider what peace meant to each of them. While most people in the West, she explained would define peace as justice and fairness, those in the East consider peace to be harmony and the avoidance of conflict at all costs. This difference in perceptions of peace would determine how people sought peace.

While there have been many universal schemes aimed at promoting peace, Dr Chong proposed that universal peace was only obtainable when social justice prevailed. Inequities in the distribution of resources, racial tension, gender inequity and rising poverty are all examples of injustice and unless these issues are resolved, universal peace cannot exist.

One of the few positive outcomes of the COVID 19 pandemic is the rise of the mantra "we are all in this together". Giving this statement precedence, she believes, may be the saving grace. Besides

seeking a vaccine to fight against the virus, governments may have to exert more efforts towards global solutions of ending inequities and poverty.

She believes that the only solution to universal peace lies in following the principle posed by Antonio Guterres – 'In an interconnected world none of us are safe, until all of us are safe'. Using the framework set by the United Nations in developing the SDGs of 'leaving no one behind' would be the ultimate pathway to follow. It is not just the work of governments, it is when ordinary people in each community take responsibility to resist difference, build understanding and show compassion to others that a culture of peace can prevail.

Reflections from Participants

Brilliant presentation! Love is the pervasive value! I also love the notion of the consequences of our behaviour are to be judged! Acts of altruism need to be a central focus driving human love! We need to be accountable to each other on the basis of love. Love for each other and our country and our environment! Foundational First Nations values! Love the basis for justice and equality!! – Louise

CONGRATULATIONS TO NEW ZEALAND for truly leading the way in global issues starting with what happens in the family! I was blessed to listen to some extraordinary strengths based programs run in New Zealand through ANZSOG webinar (ending decades of domestic abuse) working with domestic abuse perpetrators with successful results!! Bless you and the First Nations People in particular that are leading the way! Absolutely love the definition of peace being articulated! Structural reform and good ethical governance with integrity! Brilliant. – Louise

Thank you so much for today's webinar! Outstanding speakers! Congratulations everyone!

Thank you for reminding us of the amazing compassionate heart of Jesus and the miracles achieved and Florence Nightingale's acts of extraordinary love and kindness and Mother Teresa's work of grace ! The power of one person acting with God's love and grace! A massive thank you for sharing these stories of true saints, courageous leaders! Magnificent – Douglas

Thank you for highlighting the value of the individual and when working together everything can be accomplished. Building from the bottom up is safer than from the top down. – Douglas

Education is central! Excellent examples presented here starting with each school in each country!! Brilliant ideas! – Louise

Thank you to all the wonderful speakers and moderator and those behind the scene too. – Tracy

What a great line up of speakers! Pretty amazing heroes were here among us.
While listening to today's speakers I felt I was travelling many kilometres through fascinating lands.

It began with John Bellavance carefully setting the tone and parameters of peacebuilding. Dame Annette King explored the recent history of achievements in peacebuilding in New Zealand and Australia, and Professor Fethi Mansouri gave a scholarly analysis of the challenges that multicultural countries are facing in bridging diverse groups.

Tua Manase-Ale was a gracious emcee, and she managed to keep everything moving along smoothly. Dr. Noel Kanagaraj held up the highest traditions laid down in history by saints and sages who demonstrated

through their life how to give love. Sydney-based Ravi Mahboba, originally from Afghanistan, spoke eloquently of her life and the personal tragedy that gave birth to an amazing association to educate young people in Afghanistan.

Rachel Shields, indigenous Australian naturalist spoke disarmingly of nature's presence all around us. She urged us to tune into the lessons and examples of nature, and expressed that so many of us are too much in our heads and forget the heart response to human problems.

The final speaker, Dr Sandy Y L Chong, exhorted us all to practise fairness, altruism and global awareness when making relationships. It was very upbeat and inspiring, and a good way to finish this Virtual Peace Forum. Good job to all those who were involved and thank you! – Jacinta

PARTNERS and SUPPORTERS

Volunteers from UPF and WFWP brought the virtual conference together. Bravo to all our brilliant presenters. Thank you all for walking the talk!

WFWP Mission and Vision



WFWP Chapters adhere to the principle that women working together, taking initiative, and empowering one another across traditional lines of race, culture and religion to create healthy families are resolving the complex problems of our societies and world.

Vision: Women working together to realise one global family rooted in a culture of sustainable peace.

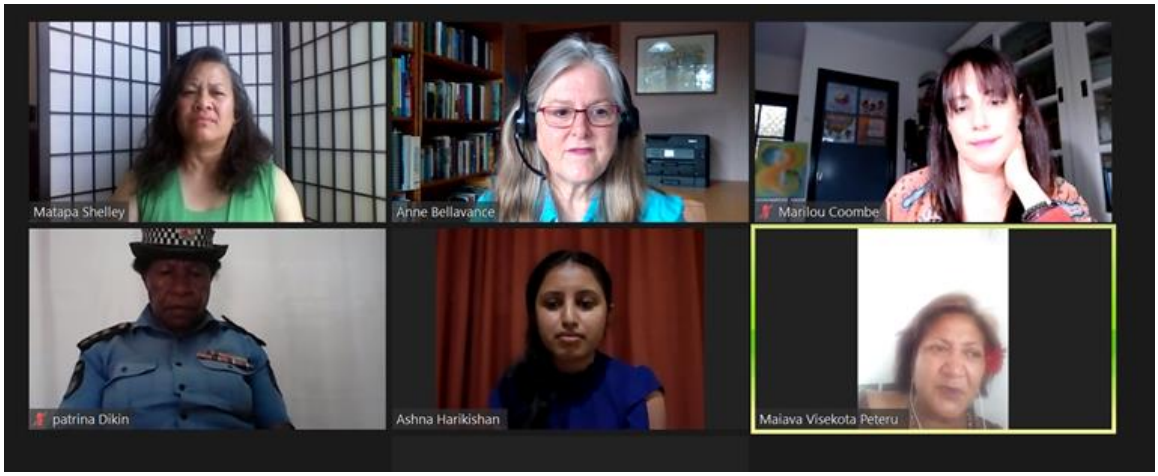
Mission: Empowering women as peace builders and leaders in the family to transform the community, nation and world. Through education, advocacy, partnership, reconciliation and humanitarian service, WFWP International aims to create an environment of peace and wellbeing for future generations and people of all races, cultures and religious creeds.



OVERVIEW

As a project of WFWPI, the GWPN was established in 2012 by Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon and her late husband, the Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon. The areas of impact are: Women's Leadership, Family and the Environment.

GWPN brings together leaders, organisations and governments to solve pressing social issues and secure an environment for equitable human development. Through peace leadership based on the feminine aspect of human nature, GWPN seeks to ensure lasting peace and prosperity for generations to come.





Introduction:

Matapa Shelley, Vice-President of WFWP New Zealand

As the Moderator for the event, Matapa opened the proceedings with a Maori greeting and an Acknowledgment of Country.

Presenters:

WFWPI's 'Cornerstone for Happiness' for healthy marriage and family relationships by Anne Bellavance

Anne is the President of WFWP Australia and the International Vice-President representing Oceania with WFWP International. She has volunteered in the NFP sector for 45 years within Australia, the US and Canada and works as a Math/Science teacher in secondary settings.



We believe that world peace begins within an individual, that the family is meant to be the school of love, and that parents are meant to be the primary 'educators of the heart' for their children. Family was meant to be the school of love. In other words, we were meant to grow and develop our capacity to give and receive love naturally within our families of origin.

We were meant to learn about love as we experienced different realms of heart:

- The 1st realm of heart is when we are babies and we receive the most concentrated amount of unconditional love from our parents. Why is this stage so important? We actually learn our innate value at this stage – we learn that we are loved and lovable – this knowledge and experience is essential to develop as a full human being.
- The 2nd realm of heart is the sibling realm. First, through our relationships with our siblings, and then in school, we learn to share, to wait our turn, and how to cooperate with others. We learn the joy and challenges of teamwork and the beginnings of compassion. We learn that we are not the centre of the universe, that we can't always be first, and that other people have feelings and needs as well.
- The 3rd realm of heart is that of married or conjugal love. This is where we experience living for the sake of another person, preferring the needs of our spouse over our own, and develop the virtues of lasting commitment. Marriage is a natural period that prepares us for the final realm of heart.
- The 4th realm of heart is parental love. When we become parents, we experience God's heart for us and God's unconditional love for us in a new and profound way. We are called to love our children with that same kind of love. This is the realm of heart where we experience the willingness to sacrifice ourselves completely for others, for our children.

When we feel loved, it is easy to love others. When we feel unloved, our capacity for love is stunted. We simply cannot mature emotionally unless we received unconditional love.

When that love is missing within ourselves, we become self-centred, because we are emotionally and spiritually destitute. For emotional survival, all our energy goes to trying to fill up what we feel is missing inside of us.

What are the emotional, physical, and economic benefits that marriage brings to individuals and society? Here are some statistics:

- Single men have mortality rates that are 250% higher than married men, and single women have mortality rates that are 50% higher than married women (Ross et. all, 1990)
- In a study by Smith, Mercy and Conn, it was discovered that married men are ½ as likely to commit suicide compared to single men, and one-third as likely compared to divorced men.
- Married adults are more financially secure and generally more productive in the workplace.
- Thousands of studies in the past 20 years have demonstrated overwhelmingly that children do better when they are raised in stable families with two parents who love and respect each other and stay together.
- In a study by Amato, Howard & Reeves, it was determined that children living in intact families were less likely to experience academic, social, emotional and cognitive problems. Not only in childhood but later in adulthood as well, and more likely to graduate high school and college.
- Children are growing up with confusing and mixed messages about relationships and marriage. Pop culture & media bombards them with un-healthy & destructive examples of love, sexuality, marriage & family AND offers easy access to age inappropriate TV shows, music videos & lyrics, movies & pornography itself.

From the breakdown of marriage comes family breakdown. From family breakdown comes community breakdown, and that expands to racial conflict, violence and war. What do you see as some of the consequences of family breakdown?

We can see how immature and self-centred love has undermined and twisted who we are as people. Things like hook-up and casual sex, high divorce rates, teenage pregnancy, drugs and alcohol addiction, pornography, sex-trafficking, and domestic violence ARE all misguided attempts and perversions of love that have resulted from humanity's immaturity and selfishness.

A Snapshot from PNG by Inspector Patrina Dinka

Inspector Dinka is the Officer In Charge of Crime Prevention and the Public Relations Unit in Port Moresby with forty years of experience in pro-active crime prevention and reactive police operation attached to different unites of the police department.



Sadly, many family violence cases are not reported. However, those that are have many successful end result outcomes. The reporting system in the village is not in place. Women in the villages are still victims of injustice and all forms of discrimination. A community conference approach could be the best way forward to better disseminate information about family violence. This approach empowers community involvement, where village leaders become accountable to the community. Such a community movement can be responsible and be accountable for community safety and better understand family violence, crime, justice and the law.

Many people are still ignorant of the national laws and the justice system. Many people still live in tribal situations and according to tribal customs and do not understand new laws. Therefore, community conferences held at the village level with village leaders will create massive awareness and will need to continue educating local people. Government service providers and partner agencies must reach out to the grassroots level and provide village community settlements to talk about safety, and safer community empowering involvement. Agencies cannot do it alone. Historically, our culture norms are rooted in our blood because we were conditioned to family violence. On the positive, we have much goodness in our cultural ethical behaviours and national character that can be offered.

In conclusion, the national police and justice services need to improve their performance and be held accountable to their service delivery. Otherwise, crime and family violence wars will destroy our society.

A Snapshot from Samoa by Maiava Visekota Peteru

Maiava is President of the Young Women Christian Association and works as an accredited mediator and lawyer. She is a former Member of Parliament and an advocate for the elimination of violence against Women, publishing papers on human rights, village governance and the promotion of women in decision making.



Maiava opened her presentation by describing Samoa's commitment to upholding the dignity of women. She explained that Samoa was one of the first Pacific nations to not only ratify the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Violence against Women but also established the Ministry of Women which is aimed at empowering communities. Yet, she explained, domestic violence continues to prevail.

A survey conducted only last year by the National Human Rights Commission revealed that 86% of women in Samoa had experienced some sort of violence within a family setting. In many cases, this violence was not only perpetrated by male partners but by other members of the male partners' family. Parents in-law and sisters in-law often meted out abuse too.

Maiava asserted that domestic violence was a 'national scourge' and this was an absolute disgrace given that Samoans have long been considered a loving nation whose village governance structure has traditionally been inclusive of women. As well, the nation prides itself on belonging to the Christian Faith. Indulging in Domestic violence goes against the grain of these three traits.

To counteract the impact of domestic violence, the National Human Rights Commission has made several recommendations. One of these is the establishment of Family Safety Committees whose role will involve the dissemination of information condemning violence and offering counselling to family members who have been victims of abuse. As well, the Committees will have the capacity to report incidents of violence to the appropriate authorities like the Police Force or to NGOs who have the experience and the knowledge to assist victims of violence. These Committees have been set up in 6 villages and are part of a Pilot Program to reduce domestic violence.

The National Human Rights Commission is also working together with Faith Leaders to assist them in advocating for the elimination of violence in their faith communities.
The Government has also become involved in the elimination of the scourge of violence as they are aware that violence has a negative impact on the economy. When women are harmed, they are unable to work and thus productivity falls and the economy suffers. The establishment of the Family Court in 2013 is an acknowledgement of the seriousness of this problem asserted Maiava. The advocacy of judges against violence sends a powerful message to the community that violence will not be tolerated.

Maiava was confident that as leaders across the board took on the role of speaking up against violence, members of the community would be encouraged to change their thinking and feel compelled to change their behaviour and act in ways that are respectful and inclusive. If this trend becomes popular, she observed, future generations would have good role models to follow and so will begin to treat others with dignity and thus eliminate the scourge of violence.
Maiava concluded her presentation with a description of an organisation which is driving change in Samoa. The Samoan Victim Support Group is working hard to provide support for victims of domestic violence by operating refuges and offering counselling and training to empower women. Some of the training involves providing women with skills to help them become economically independent and develop self-esteem.

With all these systems in place, Maiava hopes that the scourge of violence will be eliminated.



A Snapshot from the Solomon Islands by **Vaela Ms Vaela Falefehi Ngai**

Vaela is the Supervising Director for the Ministry of Women's Youth and Family Affairs. She works as the Gender Equality and Women's Development (GEWD) Policy Coordinator and is currently the Supervising Director for the Women

Development Division (WDD) for the Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs (MWYCA).

A study conducted in 2009 shows that the Solomon Islands has a high prevalence of family violence, where 2 out of every 3 women between the ages of 15 and 49 have experienced physical or sexual violence from an intimate partner. The negative impact on women is huge, especially for their health - their mental health. Let's not forget the impact on children who also experience domestic violence, or who witness domestic violence. Studies have revealed the intergenerational impact of domestic violence on children. Children who have either experienced, or witnessed domestic violence are at a heightened risk to also become perpetrators of violence in the future.

There have been some key milestones, especially the passage of the 2014 Family Protection Act, which was enforced in 2016. It's the first ever legislation that criminalises domestic violence. So it is no longer a private or family matter, BUT a national matter, and a national concern. The government has established the National Safenet Referral Network throughout the country. This is essentially a service of key providers and includes: Police, the Public Solicitors office, Family Support Centres, and Christian Care Centres that offer a safe place and safe accommodation. The program ensures that even women living in rural or remote areas can also access essential services such as counselling, legal services, and safe accommodation.

More recently, we have developed a domestic violence counselling guideline for people to know who to go to for counselling. The Individual Deprivation Measure Study was undertaken in two provinces: Guadalcanal and Central. The study shows that compared to men, women are less prepared for COVID-19 repercussions.

Just to sum up, family violence is a big concern and has horrifying statistics in the Solomon Islands. It shows that while we have instigated quite a few significant policies to address the issue, there still needs to be more done by all partners and stakeholders on all levels; national and provincial levels, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

A Snapshot from Fiji by Ashna Harikishan



Ashna is a lawyer and gained her Bachelor of Law degree and Professional Diploma in Legal Practice from the University of the South Pacific in 2017. She was admitted to the Fiji Bar in the same year and joined Munro Leys as a member of the Litigation Team.

Ashna opened her address with a traditional Fijian welcome "Ni sa bula" – Welcome to the beautiful islands of Fiji.

Unfortunately, she stated, on these beautiful islands there exists a calamity – the calamity of family violence. She believes that there are 2 main causes which lead to domestic violence – alcohol abuse and the traditional patriarchal structures which support gender inequality. This structure which subscribes to the belief that women are 'home-makers' and are only suited to the kitchen promotes the view that women have no value. This view is quite common place in Fiji and thus contributes to the spread of domestic violence.

Ashna then provided a range of statistics to highlight the magnitude of the problem during the lockdown restrictions in place during COVID 19. During this time, most workers were compelled to work from home increasing the time victims and perpetrators of violence spent with each other and thus increasing the opportunities to inflict violence. She reported that the National Domestic Violence Helpline recorded 87 calls taken in February, 187 calls taken in March and over 500 calls taken in April all relating to violence. While 66% of these callers were women, 44% were men. While comparing these figures to the number of calls taken in the first half of 2019, this year's calls show a sharp spike which is of grave concern.

To provide a picture of what is being done to respond to this problem, Ashna described the role one of the key organisations is playing in combatting the prevalence of domestic violence - The Fiji Women's Crisis Centre.
This centre offers a range of services including -
* The National Domestic Violence Helpline which is a 24 hour service and is free. This service offers counselling and emergency assistance to victims of abuse. They can be reached on 1560.
* Community Education aimed at raising community awareness of the ills of domestic violence
* Male Advocacy programs which offer training to men from key agencies aimed at raising awareness of the gender equality as a human right
* The Mobile Counselling Clinic which offers support to those living in remote areas. They move from village to village where they offer counselling services and support to victims of domestic violence.

Another resource to help eradicate domestic violence was the passing of the Domestic Violence Act in 2009 which is aimed at preventing domestic violence and provides for restraining orders to be applied for by adult victims of domestic abuse.

The presence of these services which exist to eliminate violence is important but cannot fully eradicate this insidious problem without other efforts. Ashna believes that it is the responsibility of each individual to step up and speak out against violence. As a society, she called for all Fijians to move away from the patriarchal structure and accept the changing role of women. The mind set of those in power who indulge in violence needs to be completely overhauled. Gender equality must

take prominence in every field. Only then, she suggested could the landscape change and future generations could live without violence and instead live with dignity.

A Snapshot from Australia by Marilou Coombe

Marilou is the founder and director of Orchestrate Coaching and Consulting and has written 2 books: 'Gratitude Practices' and 'Discover Joy through Gratitude' for teens and tweens. She works primarily with 4-16 year olds, parents and educators in the areas of strengthening neural pathways to promote wellbeing through gratitude practices, yoga, meditation and coaching.

Marilou expressed extreme concern not only with the widespread prevalence of domestic violence but with the rise of this violence during the lockdown restrictions to respond to COVID 19. A study conducted by the Australian Institute of Criminology revealed an increase in physical and sexual violence between partners within the home environment.

As a mother of two boys, she was appalled that male violence seems to be quite common and wanted to delve into the causes that propagate violence.



"Was it a lack of ability to express emotions which lead to suppressing these emotions and then unleashed an outburst of violence?" she asked. Perhaps, she said that men have lost their way as women are becoming more independent and are beginning to feel disempowered.

To move forward, she suggested we need to change our discourse on gender roles and work towards a shared vision where gender equality is a given. To create a scenario where dignity of all humans prevails, we need to treat each other with respect. We need to encourage our children to treat each other with respect and we need to model this behaviour ourselves for this to become a reality.

Reflections from Participants

Anne – Kiaora ... thank you the Global Women's Peace Network for bringing this zoom event. I am from Auckland, New Zealand working in injury prevention to women and children since three decades.

Alice - Thank Annie for the beautiful presentations. Participating from SI.

Penny - Love Marilou's point about the importance of language, framing our thoughts towards girls and boys/men and women in a positive way. Thank you :)

Anonymous - Thank you dear panellists and organisers. The webinar enabled further enhancement of my knowledge on domestic violence in our neighbouring countries and what best can we do in our strengths.

Anita - The presentations on the GWPN Oceanic webinar were most enlightening and challenging. Thank you for your well researched input and raising awareness of the importance of good modelling as married couples in a family. Empowered women are certainly needed in our world today. The presenters are an inspiration for action. Blessings of peace and hope!

WFWP Mission and Vision



WFWP Chapters adhere to the principle that women working together, taking initiative, and empowering one another across traditional lines of race, culture and religion to create healthy families are resolving the complex problems of our societies and world.

Ultimately 'solutions' come as true partnerships between men and women and are established in all levels of society. The beginning point is within society's most elemental level - the family.

Vision: Women working together to realise one global family rooted in a culture of sustainable peace.

Mission: Empowering women as peace builders and leaders in the family to transform the community, nation and world. Through education, advocacy, partnership, reconciliation and humanitarian service, WFWP International aims to create an environment of peace and wellbeing for future generations and people of all races, cultures and religious creeds.

Jynene - I found the WFWP webinar informative. Beginning with a presentation on the ideal goal for family relationships, the program was rounded and balanced. There was a good selection of speakers from five nations who work in different services. Each woman raised awareness to address the issue of Domestic Violence in their nation. It was interesting to get a glimpse of the situation around Oceania and hear the unique initiatives implemented to bring about change. The challenge often expressed was exposing and confronting culturally accepted behaviour. The point made that men and women need to work together is an important one.

PARTNERS and SUPPORTERS

Volunteers from WFWP Chapters in Australia, Fiji, the Solomon Islands, Samoa, PNG and New Zealand brought the virtual forum together. Bravo to our brilliant presenters and to our awesome WFWP Oceania Chapter Presidents.



Saturday December 5th | Melbourne, Australia

Website: https://www.melbournepasifikafestival.org/

Video link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QJ7-RHj9ZTA&t=945s

Overview

The Melbourne Pasifika Festival (MPF) is an annual celebration of Pasifika culture within Australia. The 2020 Virtual Festival gave us the opportunity to enjoy Pasifika culture through modern and traditional music and dance performances and share in the stories.

The Festival promotes a culture of peace through fostering dialogue, reconciliation and conflict resolution at all levels, and celebrates and promotes the beauty and uniqueness of each Pasifika culture to provide the wider Australian and Oceania community a window into all things Pasifika.

WFWP connects with likeminded people who are dedicated to a more harmonious and peaceful world. Supporting the 2030 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, the MPF works towards:

- Goal 16: to promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies, and
- Goal 17: Partnerships for the Goal.

With an emphasis on interdependence, mutual prosperity, and universal values, WFWP Australia supports Humanitarian Projects within Australia and the Island Nations of the Oceania region. Hence, we are committed to work alongside our Pacific Island neighbours.

Government Representation



We were honoured to have a video from the Victoria Premier, Hon. Daniel Andrews MP thanking us for keeping Victoria safe by running the festival virtually. He expressed the commitment and the strength of family and community within Pasifika communities who are always supporting each other.

Being with us personally during the Festival, Hon. Natalie Suleyman MP for St Albans represented Premier Andrews and the Minister for Multi-cultural affairs, the Hon. Ros Spence MP. Hon. Suleyman thanked the Festival organisers for supporting Victoria's multi-cultural communities, and for continuing to ensure that Victoria retains its fortunate positon as one of the world's most successful multi-cultural stories. She thanked WFWP for the intuity and commitment to the Pasifika Festival in a COVID safe manner and thanked UPCOV for partnering with WFWP to hold the event.

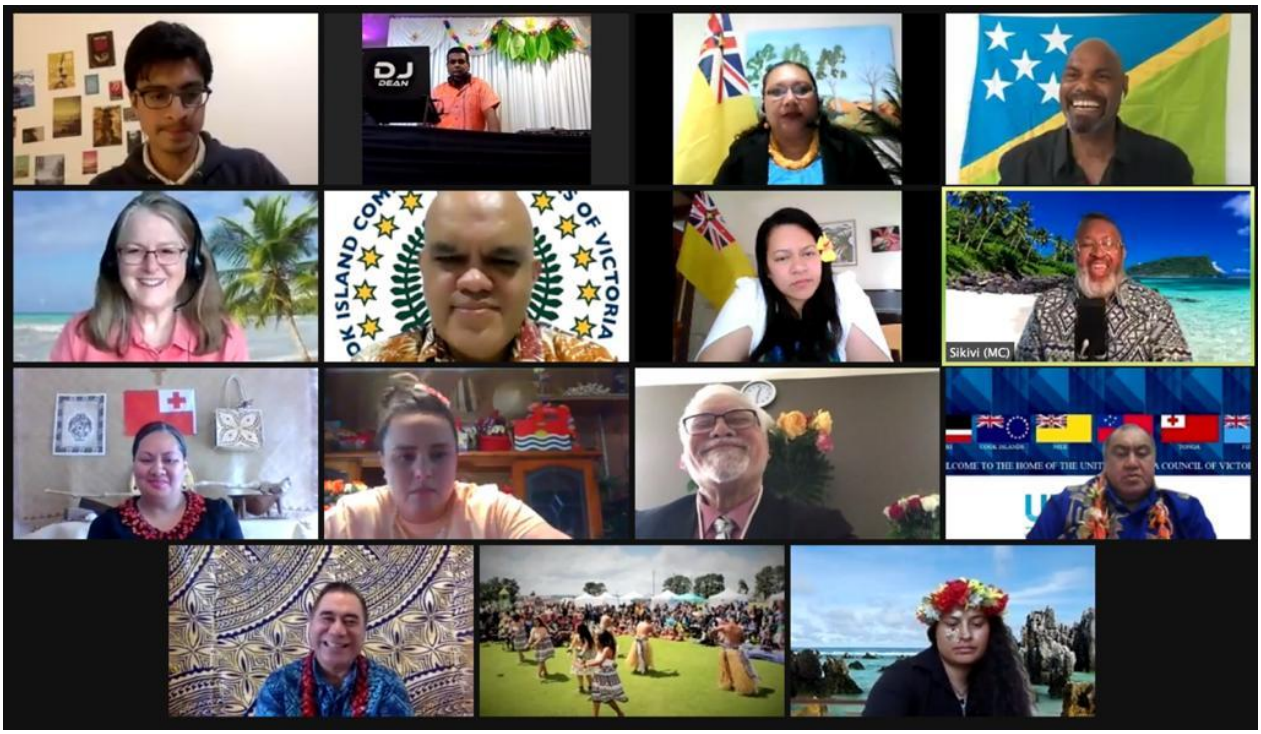


WFWP sends a big thank you to the Victorian Multi-cultural Commission (VMC) for supporting the Pasifika Festival through the state Festivals Grant scheme.

Keynote Address

James Henry, President of the United Pasifika Council of Victoria (UPCOV) and President of the Cook Island Community in Victoria shared that the Pasifika community has always been a unified community because of its great leaders who uphold the culture and traditions. James payed his respect to them and thanked them all for their sacrifices towards building that foundation.

“Where we come from we were taught how to live with our culture and how important it is. We are also reminded that Christianity is the cornerstone for our salvation where we learn how to love one another, how to unite as a community, and practically learn to forgive one other.



I would like to acknowledge the work WFWP is doing helping and supporting our Pasifika communities here and back home. WFWP saw the need and heard the cries. This festival is one way of bringing people together to connect with each other, share our experiences and stories, promote awareness, and most importantly is to have fun without being afraid. WFWP, in partnership with UPCOV will continue to reach out and support our Pasifika Communities … but we need your support.

My message to our community is this, you are not alone; WFWP with UPCOV as a Global Partner, and other services are here. The Festival is about staying connected through loving one another so we can shape the future of our Pasifika communities and remain connected to each other for as long as it takes.

I thank WFWP for putting this event together. To Anne and your team, thank you for giving UPCOV the opportunity to share the message of hope, love and unity. Let’s support WFWP for a better Pasifika community. Thank your e kia Manuia”.

Nations Represented

The Virtual Festival brought together ten Pacific Island community leaders. They shared the history, geography and interesting stories of their culture. Each expressed their love and connection to their homeland. Presenters, in no order were:

- Cook Island - Terre Brown (Secretary, Cook Island Community)
- Samoa - Lio Ale (President, Samoa Council of VIC)
- Niue - Pearl Magatogia (Executive member, Niue Community VIC)
- Solomon Islands - Allan Malatua (President, Solomon Islands VIC Association)
- New Zealand – Eva Tai Rakena (President, Maori Wardens VIC)
- Kiribati – Cassandra Walton (President, Kiribati Community VIC)
- Fiji – Sylvia Coombe (President, Fiji Association VIC)
- Nauru – Francine Audoa (Secretary, Nauru Community Australia)
- Tonga – Haitelenisia Vaotangi (Executive, Tongan Victorian Association)
- Sadly, Linda Koerner (President, PNG Wantoks Group of VIC) had internet issues and could not connect with us.

Pastor Atapana Poe opened the festival, while Reverend Molesi Tamate concluded. Both shared words of wisdom and prayer.

A big thank you to DJ Dean (Fiji) who crafted the Pasifika music, our MCs Sikivi Tafea (Samoa) and Emma Kamupala (Niue) who kept us smiling with fun facts from each culture as they paddled their way from nation to nation throughout the virtual Pacific Ocean in their ‘waka’ (Maori for canoe). Of course, a big thank you to our great tech crew.



Shell Money story told by Margaret Tadokata, Executive of the Solomon Islands VIC Association.



Fiji dance group

Reflections from Participants

Thank you one and all for the wonderful coming together to heal the world and create peace. We are dancing to the beautiful sounds of Pacific Island music. Such beautiful traditions and big hearts! So much love and powerful energy from the Pacific Islands, I hope we can connect again soooon. - Daniella

God bless everyone. Thank you for your message of love, peace, and harmony – Pastor Nelson



PARTNERS and SUPPORTERS

Hosted by:

The **Women's Federation for World Peace** is an international NGO in General Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. WFWP adheres to the principle that women working together, taking initiative and empowering one another across traditional lines of race, culture and religion to create healthy families can resolve the complex problems of our societies and world.

As a Global Partner with:

The United Pasifika Council of Victoria (UPCOV) is a platform for all Pacific Island Communities living in Victoria to come together with a shared mission to support each other and advocate community issues. http://unitedpasifikacouncilofvictoria.com/

With Support from:

Multicultural Commission of Victoria



Art Kits for Local School Children

Melbourne, Australia | November 2020



Students at Kallista PS examining the contents of the Art Kits

WFWP Victoria in their quest for serving the local community were recently able to provide a range of art kits to the children in three local schools – Yarra Ranges Special Developmental School in Mount Evelyn, Monbulk Primary School and Kallista Primary School. This venture would not have been possible without the assistance of a COVID Relief Grant from the Shire of Yarra Ranges and a set of 26 ArtBcause designs in PDF format generously donated by an art teacher in the United States of America through WFWP USA.





While assembling the art kits, many of the items were purchased from local businesses with a focus on selecting items that were natural and/or recycled. Other items were sourced from personal collections. The purpose of the kits was to encourage the children to be creative while producing works of art which would instill a love of beauty.





While the students at Monbulk PS and Kallista PS have been using these kits at school, the children at the Yarra Ranges Special Developmental School have been given the kits as Christmas gifts for them to craft their own creations at home.



Handing the kits to the Principal of Monbulk PS



Presenting the kits to the Art Teacher at Kallista PS



Carmel handing the kits to the Principal of Yarra Ranges Special Developmental School in Mount Evelyn

Written by Jacinta Darbishire

New Zealand

Celebrating Sisterhood

Auckland, New Zealand | December 2020



WFWP NZ held a Sisterhood Circle on Saturday 5th December 2020 from 2pm – 4.30 pm at the Parnell Peace Embassy, Auckland, New Zealand. The event was attended by twenty five women from WFWP NZ and other women's organisations including the Ahmadiyyan Women's Association and the EthNix Links and Advocacy Group.



Participants were welcomed with a special treat of Korean Tea prepared and served by Sami Lee who is an executive committee member of WFWP NZ.

The Sisterhood Circle provides an opportunity for women to get in touch with their authentic selves in a safe, sacred and non-judgmental space. It is a space where women are in the company of others who hold each other in sisterhood and honour and support each other's stories and gifts. It provides women with the opportunity to explore the external and internal aspects of their life's journey with others. As the principles of the Circle entails that whatever is shared in the Circle stays in the Circle, trust is built between the participants and they feel encouraged to share freely.







Keitha Browning who is an accredited Facilitator of Women's Circles guided the event which was based on the theme of "The Heroine's Journey". This was the second Sisterhood Circle organised by WFWP NZ and drew a much larger audience reflecting the growing interest women have in the Circle.

For many of the women who attended the event this was a totally new experience. Kept busy with looking after their families and home, they often don't have time for themselves. Taking the time to share their stories and gifts with other women would have generated some feelings of vulnerability but they all joined in with enthusiasm and bonded well with the others.



Feedback from the participants suggested that the event was well received and provided a wonderful opportunity to build a closer connection with other women.

The event concluded with participants sharing refreshments and wishing each other well for the coming festive season.

Written by Felicity Cairns and Lia Goijarts

Solomon Islands

Pasifika Scholarship Report

Solomon Islands | June 2020



My name is Monica Longanimala Ilala. I am from the Solomon Islands, Central Islands Province. I have been studying at the University of the South Pacific [USP] Solomon Islands Campus trying to complete my Master of Business Administration [MBA]. This program consists of 12 courses which can be completed over a year or by studying part time. The program is organised in Trimesters. Having completed 2 courses, I applied to do the third course in December 2019. Unfortunately, the course fees were so high; I was struggling to pay for them.

Even though I was working, I found it impossible to find enough money to cover the cost of the fees and at the same time, meet the costs involved in managing a family. I was so disappointed that I could not complete this course. I kept hoping in my heart that I would find someone who would sponsor me and help me to complete my course. Even though I felt so helpless, I prayed that someone would give me some support.

In December 2019, I sent a scholarship request to the Victorian Chapter of WFWP Australia hoping that they would be able to help me achieve my dream through the Pasifika Scholarship program. Luckily, they were able to assist me and I have been able to continue my academic journey.

I am both blessed and humbled by their generosity and I wish to thank them for their assistance. I feel so privileged to be one of the recipients of the Pasifika Scholarship Fund. The people who have provided donations for this fund have been so generous and kind and I am truly grateful to them and offer them my heartfelt thanks. WFWP Victoria has given me so much love and I will be forever grateful to you. May God bless you and your families for your generous support and for your contributions to ensure that others can live better lives.

My Semester One Report at SINU University

Honiara, Solomon Islands | June 2020

Selina Galokaniki



While studying for my Bachelor of Education (Primary), I have completed the following units during Semester One 2020 – Enterprise, Science, Social Science and Children's Literacy all of which have provided me with knowledge and skills to help me while I am a teacher at the New Hope Academy. It is my hope that New Hope Academy will benefit from my education to become a Pilot School where students are encouraged to develop a strong character and an ability to contribute to the progress of our country.

My studies have not only helped me to understand the Education System in the Solomon Islands, they have empowered me to reach out and network with the stakeholders involved in New Hope Academy especially with the City Council Education Authority in Honiara. Ultimately, this will be of great benefit to New Hope Academy as it evolves into one of the best schools in the country. I am happy to report that there are already changes taking place in the school which reflect the progress the school is making. It is beginning to shine, and this is heart warming.

The generosity of WFWP Victoria in providing me with a scholarship as part of the Pasifika Scholarship Fund project is truly appreciated. It is through their assistance that I have been able to build my knowledge and in turn contribute positively to the future of my students and the school. I intend to put my heart and soul into making this investment a worthwhile one. Thank you very much.



Teachers' Appraisal

Savings Club – Pasifika Micro Financing

Honiara, Solomon Islands | October 2020



Dr. Alice Pollard Representative for Solomon Islands Women Economic and Empowerment and Freda a Representative from the Central Bank of Solomon Islands



WFWP Solomon Islands organised a three-day workshop conducted by Dr Alice Pollard and Freda from the Central Bank of Solomon Islands for its members. The workshop which ran from October 16th to the 18th, provided participants with information to build their financial literacy and to assist them in setting up a Savings Club. The Savings Club is an initiative offering women and children an opportunity to save their money in a safe and secure place.

After establishing a Savings Club Committee, two members were elected to collect the deposits on a regular basis. Altogether, 53 members registered to set up personal accounts with the Saving Club. Each of these members was provided with a passbook and a starting deposit of $12.00 SBD. Total deposits made at this initial meeting totaled $720.00 SBD. There was a lot of excitement as the women present registered with the Savings Club and they are certainly looking forward with enthusiasm to the opportunities provided by such a scheme in building their confidence in becoming financially skilled.



Attendees at the workshop

Written by Selina Galokaniki

Papua New Guinea

PNG National Developments

Papua New Guinea | October 2020



WFWP PNG members

Introduction

WFWP Papua New Guinea has held two meetings in October which have been extremely productive in gaining a clearer perspective of the role WFWP plays in contributing to global peace. The goals and the values of WFWP have been discussed at length to ensure we are able to comprehend the role we have in working with women in PNG. With the assistance of our leaders in Oceania, we have reviewed the Constitution to ensure we are accountable and are able to support and serve our members with confidence and respect.



Signing up for the Meeting



Meeting held at 14 Mile

Executive Board of Directors of the WFWP Papua New Guinea.

The National Chapter of WFWP PNG is located in Port Moresby. Currently, there are 2 Advisory Committees which are in the process of being reorganized after the Provincial Advisory Committees have been established.



Two meetings have been held to establish the Executive Board of Directors for WFWP PNG. Some roles on the Board are being shared by two members to allow for skill development and to provide an opportunity for shared expertise.

Planning Committees

To conduct events, it was felt that a Planning Committee would be of great benefit. Two Planning Committees have been established so far and members have been invited to submit ideas for events at the next meeting.

Proposed Projects

Sewing Centre's

Two Sewing Centres are being organized - one in Taurama Valley in the National Central District and another in 14 Mile in the Central Province. Both these Centres offer the potential for 30 to 40 members to participate in each Centre. An initial meeting has been held with members on August 30th, 2020.



People living with special needs

One of our members Marieanne Vera lives in Taurama Valley and works with people who have special needs. Besides asking for our assistance in acquiring wheel chairs for some of her clients, she has also asked if we can support her to start up market stalls where some of her clients who are living with leprosy could become involved. An interest in both these projects has been expressed by our members.

Distance Education, Sogeri

One of our members from Sogeri Valley initiated this school with 30 students and has requested our assistance seeing many of us are teachers. An interest in becoming involved with this project has been expressed and the possibility of operating this venture as part of the Federation is to be raised with the Executive Board of Directors.



Partnership with UN Women Safe Cities Program

Many of the women who trade in Gordon's Market in Port Moresby have experienced violence and have had their human rights abused by the police over the years. Through the UN Women Safe Cities Program, the Market has now been redesigned to make it safe for all women to trade. Two of our members have been involved in assisting these women traders to have their rights upheld in the legal system and to help them to acquire funding to train the women to broaden their skills.

The women traders administer an elementary school, a safe house for women and they offer training in floristry, sewing and other skills. They have invested the income they raise from trading to support these projects. They have approached us for support and it is envisaged that in the future, WFWP may be able to partner with them and offer support in management and organisation – skills which many of their members have requested.

Fund Raising

Fund raising is critical for WFWP to organize different programs, events or projects. A series of fund-raising events are being planned by the Advisory Committee in the National Central District and the first event is the Sogeri Pineapple Festival to be held in mid-November where we hope to run a stall selling a range of different items.

Written by Prisca Mauve (Interim National President)

National Report

Port Moresby, PNG | 30th November 2020

1. Introduction

As an organisation which focuses on 'empowering women as peacebuilders and leaders in the family to transform the community, nation and the world', WFWP PNG aims to provide Value and Character Development Education to the women in our organisation. This will provide our members with an opportunity to develop a mindset that enables them to bring about change within themselves and others.



A Leader's Retreat was held at Sogeri on the 7th and 8th of November. The purpose of this retreat was to assist the WFWP Central Chapter organize the Advisory Committee and to have an opportunity to plan activities for 2021. The time spent at the retreat was very productive as executives were appointed for the Sogeri Chapter who will be provided with guidance from the WFWP NCD Chapter.

While at Sogeri, the WFWP leaders from both the Chapters visited the Flexible Open Distance Education Centre (FODE) and the Koiari Women's Resource Centre. Besides being able to disseminate information about WFAP, these visits were an opportunity to network with members of other organisations including the Country Women's Association. It is intended to investigate the possibilities of using the hall at the Koiari Resource Centre for WFWP meetings.



The Pineapple Festival was held at Sogeri on the 21st and 22nd of November. This event offered an ideal opportunity to network with members of other organisations besides encouraging women to become members of WFWP. There is a possibility that the membership of WFWP in PNG will exceed 400 members. The Pineapple Festival offered a chance to develop a connection with the Office of the Governor of the Central Province which could offer the possibility of building connections through partnerships with them.







2. The Executive Board of Directors of the Women's Federation for World Peace Papua New Guinea

WFWP Papua New Guinea currently has the National and the National Capital District Chapter located in Port Moresby and the Sogeri Local Chapter located in the Central Province. To enable the Sogeri Chapter to function effectively, members of the Port Moresby Chapter will be providing support and guidance to them.

3. WFWP PNG Planning and Way Forward

The Planning Committee with members from the NCD Chapter Advisory Committee and the Sogeri Local Advisory Committee met on the 27th and 30th of October to discuss a range of projects and programs WFWP PNG could arrange in the near future. These plans will be discussed further at the Executive Board Meeting.

4. Feasibility and Assessment of Sogeri WFWP Local Chapter

Sogeri FODE Centre The Centre was established by Mary Muru to offer classes to students from Grades 7 to 12. While the Centre has 15 students enrolled now, there are several students who are interested in being part of the Centre but are financially unable to attend. Mary has requested the assistance of WFWP PNG and after a decision was passed by the Executive Board, management of the Centre will be a part of the Activity Plan for 2021. As many of the members of WFWP PNG are teachers, this will be helpful in supporting the Centre and providing opportunities for students in Sogeri to gain a secondary education.



As the Centre is keen to acquire a computer with access to online learning programs, WFWP PNG is planning on raising funds to purchase this resource.

Koiari Resource Centre

The Koiari Resource Centre is a state-of-the-art facility for Training and Meetings. It has 30 sewing machines and 4 well-built ovens for baking. Currently, as the Centre is not being used, WFWP PNG is in the process of investigating the possibility of using this space for supporting the community.

5. Proposed Projects

Sewing Centers

To assist local women, it is planned to set up two sewing centres – one in Taurama Valley and the other in 14 Mile. While the Centre in Taurama Valley has the potential to assist 40 women, the Centre in 14 Mile has the potential to assist 30 women. Meetings have been held with leaders from these areas where considerable interest has been displayed with regards to their involvement. Sewing machines for these centres are still at the wharf where it is hoped they can be collected shortly.

Assistance for people with special needs

One of the WFWP members Marieanne Vera who lives in the Taurama Valley provides assistance to people with special needs within her community and in the Port Moresby South Electorate. It is hoped that with the support of other WFWP Chapters in Oceania Anne Bellevance (Vice President for Oceania) we will be able to provide specialized equipment including wheelchairs to our community in Taurama Valley.

Partnership with UN Safe Market Women's Association



Many of the women who trade in Gordon's Market in Port Moresby have experienced violence and have had their human rights abused by the police over the years. Through the UN Women Safe Cities Program, the Market has now been redesigned to make it safe for all women to trade. Two of our members have been involved in assisting these women traders to have their rights upheld in the legal system and to help them to acquire funding to train the women to broaden their skills.

The women traders administer an elementary school, a safe house for women and they offer training in floristry, sewing and other skills. They have invested the income they have earned from trading to support these projects. They have approached us for support, and it is envisaged that in the future, WFWP may be able to partner with them and offer support in management and organisation – skills which many of their members have requested.

Women's Health

Cervical cancer is a major health risk for many women. To ensure our women have access to early detection of this risk, WFWP PNG is organizing Pap Smear Testing sessions for our members.

Written by Prisca Mauve
(Interim President, WFWP PNG)

Fiji

My Semester One Journey

University of the South Pacific

Suva, Fiji | June 2020

Natalie Kua – Year 1 LLB



My first semester at Laucala Campus at the University of the South Pacific in Fiji has been an interesting and challenging one. As this was the first time I had been away from my parents, I found it quite difficult to settle in as I was missing them. Something else I struggled with was completing university assignments as they relied on managing my own learning. This was totally different to the style of learning practised in secondary school and it took some time to develop the skills required for change. Although times were tough, I slowly began to accept the challenges and adjusted to the differences. I was determined to keep going and not give up.

A few weeks into the semester, the University had to shut down as a result of COVID-19 which was a blow to all my colleagues. We were concerned that we may never be able to continue with our studies or achieve our dreams. My dream of becoming the first female lawyer in Santa Ana – my birthplace in the Solomon Islands seemed likely to disappear.

The lockdown was a terrifying experience for me as I was alone and had no family to give me refuge or support. While we were living on campus, we had to face many restrictions. Unless we needed groceries, medical supplies or there was an emergency, we were not permitted to leave the campus premises. Many shops and businesses were closed and there were curfews in place. I was disheartened and almost ready to give up.

Fortunately, the restrictions were eased and classes resumed but these were delivered online which meant I had to face another challenge. I had never before studied online but as time went by, I became used to this style of learning and I realized how this would be valuable in preparing me for the workplace.

The challenges I have faced this semester have provided me with an opportunity to reflect on myself and to understand who I am and what my aspirations are. I have had a chance to adjust and adapt and have managed to achieve good results in all the four units I studied this semester.




In my traditional dancing costume – For the USP Cultural show

Semester Two started on August 4th and I am happy to say that I have managed to settle into University life and now have the determination and courage to work hard and achieve better results than I received in Semester One. I wish to thank WFWP Oceania for their support in covering my tuition fees for without their assistance, I would not be able to pursue my dreams. I would be grateful if WFWP Oceania continues their support and helps me to keep attending University.

The Units

The following units were completed in Semester One:

1. **LW 110 (Law & Society):** This course considers, among other things, the question of what is law and the difference between law, justice, ethics and morality. It also looks at the different types of legal systems including the criminal and civil justice systems. The question of who decides law and justice issues, the sources of law and the historical development of law in the South Pacific is also considered as well as current issues for law and lawmakers.

2. **LW111 (Courts and Dispute Resolutions I):** This course introduces first-year students to the skills essential to the practice of law: analysis, writing, and oral advocacy. Study of the court structure, process and personnel, the nature of legal reasoning and the doctrine of precedent. It establishes the framework through which students will learn to draft clear and concise predictive legal analysis using grammatical English. Students are shown how to develop oral advocacy skills through presentations in tutorials.



Group Photo of SO100 Student (Semester 1 2020)

3. **SO100 (Themes and Perspectives in Society:** Students gain some initial understanding of the development and structure of society as viewed by sociologists, together with a preliminary understanding of sociological approaches and concepts. There is a special, but not exclusive, attention to Pacific societies.

4. **UU100 (Communications and Information Literacy):** This is one of the four compulsory generic courses being offered by USP and is to be taken in the first year of full-time study and before enrolling in 200 and 300 level courses. The aim of this course is to ensure that all incoming students develop knowledge and competence in the use of computers and information resources. The course covers fundamental concepts of computers and their applications and addresses the broader imperative for students to develop the capacity to effectively locate, access, evaluate and use information effectively.

For Semester Two, I have enrolled in another 4 units. These are:

1. **LW112 (Legislation):** This course considers how Parliaments work as law-making bodies. It looks at the history of Parliaments in the South Pacific and the operation of South Pacific, United Kingdom and other statutes. Other matters to be considered include the Constitution and statutes as sources of law; types of legislation; reporting legislation; introduction to the rules concerning statutory interpretation; legal language.

2. **LW113 (Courts and Dispute Resolution II):** This course builds on the skills developed in LW111 Courts and Dispute Resolution I and introduces students to legal research. The nature of legal reasoning will be examined in greater depth, particularly with respect to the

determination of issues and the resolution of legal complexities. The focus writing exercises will shift from predictive to persuasive legal analysis, with continued emphasis on the importance of grammatical English expression. Finally, students enrolled in face-to-face mode will continue to develop their oral advocacy skills through the presentation of longer and more formal arguments in court settings.

3. **PS102 (Development Psychology):** Developmental psychology covers life-span development from conception to end-of-life and aims to facilitate a better-informed understanding of oneself and those around us by drawing on Pacific and Euro-Western perspectives. Topics include cognitive and social development, language acquisition, and the interplay between physiological characteristics and the environmental factors that impact development. The course is relevant for those wishing to undertake a wide range of professions: from teaching and counselling, to human resource management, law, social welfare and the helping professions in general.

4. **UU114 (English for Academic Purposes):** By the end of this course, students will have achieved a sufficient level of proficiency in academic writing, reading, and speaking to support their learning in the various programs offered at the university. The course is designed to address the academic English needs of students studying at the tertiary level. UU114 is a core course for undergraduate students and is to be taken before enrolling in any 200 level courses.



Celebrating UN International Day of the Girl Child

Suva, Fiji | October 2020





WFWP Fiji members distributing packs to students

October 11th the day observed all over the world as International Day of the Girl Child was an opportunity for WFWP Fiji to celebrate this day by doing something special for the young girls in our community. We strongly believe that contributing to the health and wellbeing of girls is important if we are to secure the future of humanity.

One of the ways of doing this is to ensure girls are provided with access to products to help them manage menstrual hygiene.

With this goal in mind, several members of WFWP Fiji visited a secondary school in suburban Suva where we were met with a warm welcome by the students and teachers. After a short presentation about the role of WFWP in empowering women to be peacebuilders and the significance of the International Day

of the Girl Child, each of the 101 girl students and the female teachers at the school were presented with sanitary packs.



WFWP Fiji President with one of the students who received a package

To conclude the event, there was a photographic session with all the attendees. WFWP Fiji sincerely hopes that their visit to the school has left a positive imprint on the lives of these women.

Written by Sharila Lazarus



Vanuatu

Shipments for Vanuatu

Port Vila - Vanuatu

WFWP Australia NSW Chapter



Boxes of books destined for Port Vila Public Library

To continue to honour and support a long-term partnership with WFWP Vanuatu, members of the WFWP NSW Chapter in conjunction with UPF arranged 3 shipments of different items for Vanuatu in the last few months. All these items have been donated by residents in Sydney in response to a campaign run by the NSW Chapter.



The shipments include over 10 000 books, clothing, fabric, and several sewing machines. While many of the books have been donated to the Public Library in Port Vila, other books have found a home in the French Language School there.



One of the newest ventures whose aim is to empower members of WFWP Vanuatu to become more independent and self-sufficient has been the opening of an Opportunity Shop.



Boxes of clothes and other second hand items were provided to this Shop while the fabric and sewing machines will come in handy for the women who work in the Sewing Centre in Port Vila. The Sewing Centre offers many young women the opportunity to learn how to sew so they are able to create their own clothing.



The members of WFWP NSW have continued to meet with each other via zoom during the restrictions imposed because of COVID-19.

Contact Us

WFWP Oceania, Australia and Victoria Office
42-46 Bartley Rd., Belgrave Heights, VIC 3160
T: +61 3 5968 2664
E-mail: contact@wfwpaustralia.org
Australian website: www.wfwpaustralia.org
International website: www.wfwp.org
Oceania Facebook: www.facebook.com/wfwpoceania

New South Wales
Oceania Peace Embassy
824 - 826 George St, Chippendale, NSW 2008
E-mail: wfwp.nsw@gmail.com

Queensland
60 Furore St, Sunnybank Hills, QLD 4019
E-mail: susi.evans57@yahoo.com

WFWP New Zealand
NZ Peace Embassy
24 St. Stephens Ave, Parnell, Auckland, 1052
Tel: + 649 263 6984
E-mail:wfwpnz@gmail.com
Website: www.wfwp.org.nz/

WFWP Solomon Islands
P.O. Box 1603, Honiara, SI | Tel: +677 779 8483
E-mail: selinagalo@gmail.com

WFWP Fiji
GPO Box 13186, Suva, Fiji | Tel: +679 9271 875
E-mail: sharila2011@gmail.com

WFWP Papua New Guinea
PO Box 1127 Vision City, Waigani, National Capital District, PNG | Tel: +675 7537 0608
E-mail: prismauve@gmail.com

WFWP Vanuatu
P.O. Box 1145, Port Vila, Vanuatu | Tel: +678 777 4517
E-mail: malereaclaude@gmail.com

WFWP Samoa
Federal Pacific House, Vaea St. Saleufi
P.O. Box 814, Apia | Tel: +61 452 561 811
E-mail: wfwpsamoa685@gmail.com

Newsletter Team
Editor in Chief: Anne Bellavance
Co-editor and Proofreading: Joan D'Abreo and Cathy Bishop
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Contact us to organise a pick-up or drop off time.