

Climate change project validation meeting

Moving from inception phase to implementation phase



Aggie Dawainavesi (far left) and Climate Change Project Coordinator, Jyoti Naicker (middle) at the workshop on Tuesday. **Photo: PENI NAMOTU**

THE Ministry of Health and stakeholders for the Climate Change project had a validation meeting on Tuesday in preparation for the implementation of the project

Health Ministry's spokesman, Peni Namotu said the meeting's main objectives are to ensure that stakeholders have a clear understanding of what the project seeks to achieve and to review and validate the Project Framework and Multi Year Workplan

Mr Namotu said that Fiji is one of seven countries worldwide to implement the first GEF-funded climate change and health pilot project.

He said this project is an opportunity for Fiji to pave the way in terms of adapting to health impacts of climate change in an island country setting.

"This project is also an opportunity to start-off national actions to minimize the health impacts of climate change," said Mr Namotu

Mr Namotu stated that the immediate steps that will be undertaken by the Ministry are:

- Development of detailed workplan for 2011 and begin implementation;
- Collecting and analysing hydrometeorological data and climate sensitive diseases to identify trends, select project pilot sites and strengthen disease early warning systems and;
- Data sharing and analysis among stakeholders which will be facilitated through MoUs between stakeholders.

Participants at the meeting included stakeholders from International Federation of Red Crosses and Crescents Fiji Red Cross Society, Secretariat of the Pacific Communities, College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences (FNU), USP- PACE-SD, Fiji Meteorological Services, Wetlands International and Ministry of Health practitioners and managers

Also at the meeting was Consultant Dr Simon Hales, Climate Change & Health Specialist from Otago University, NZ who facilitated the meeting

Mr Namotu concluded that the project is a wonderful opportunity for improved public/environmental health in Fiji and to showcase Fiji to the world

Nutrition and oral health

The food that you eat comes in contact with the germs and bacteria that live in the mouth. If you don't brush, plaque will build up on the tooth surface. Plaque survives on starch and sugar that are found in most food. When plaque combines with sugar and starch, acid is produced that attacks the outer surface of the teeth called enamel (outer surface of crown) and cementum (outer surface of root). According to the American Dental Association, the acid attacks the teeth for 20 minutes or more

To avoid tooth decay one

should choose a healthy diet. Carbonated sodas, sweet drinks and sugary foods should be limited.

Some healthy tips for good oral health are:

- Drink plenty of water
- Eat a variety of healthy foods from the five major food groups
- Cut down on snacking in between meals
- Limit snacks and drinks that are high in sugar
- Floss daily

- Visit your dentist for regular check - ups

While eating healthy foods and avoiding snacks and drinks that are high in sugar are good ways to prevent tooth cavity, a good dental regime is essential in maintaining healthy teeth and gums. Plaque can be removed by brushing and flossing thoroughly and your dentist can detect any sign of early decay

Keep in mind that you should eat a balanced diet, brush your teeth twice a day and floss daily

Health reviews decentralization of outpatient services

THE Health Ministry is currently reviewing the decentralization of outpatients' services from CWM Hospital

Health Ministry spokesman, Peni Namotu said that corrective measures have been undertaken and similar standards will be gradually phased out for the whole of Fiji

Mr Namotu said that other developments that was part of decentralization was the installment of lab and x - ray units in health centers around the Suva area

Mr Namotu added that there are installments of air conditions and Patient Information System in all

pharmacies around the country

Meanwhile, as part of the Ministry's plan, there will be a development of dental clinic at the Raiwaqa health center, obstetrics unit at the Makoi health center and psychiatric training center at the Samabula health center for Fiji National University students

Need for research and publications in health sector: Health Minister

THE Minister for Health, Dr Neil Sharma addressed aspiring thinkers, researchers and philosophers on the importance of research and publications at the opening of the Research & Publication workshop on Monday

In his speech he quoted from Mr Maureen Yasmin's article titled "A case of moral obligation for localization" which states, "Evidence based report are contact lenses

better than eye glasses"

Dr Sharma said that 80% of our raw data are published by expatriates abroad and only 10% of the balance 20% is coming out of FSMed.

Given the above, Dr Sharma strongly recommends that local research is the way forward for Fiji

He said that this will not only improve the level of research in the country but also change our approach to

health care delivery based on the evidence provided on these publications

In closing the Minister challenged the present participants stating, "If we aspire for genuine professional credibility then all our publications from now on must be produced and delivered on time and at least "quarterly" to make any impact as a publication".

Military officers donates blood



Phlebotomist, Ilaisa Kurimavua Dinono attends to a military officer at the blood drive last Friday. **Photo: PENI NAMOTU**

A total of 46 military officers going for peacekeeping duties in MFO Sinai donated blood in a blood drive on Friday last week.

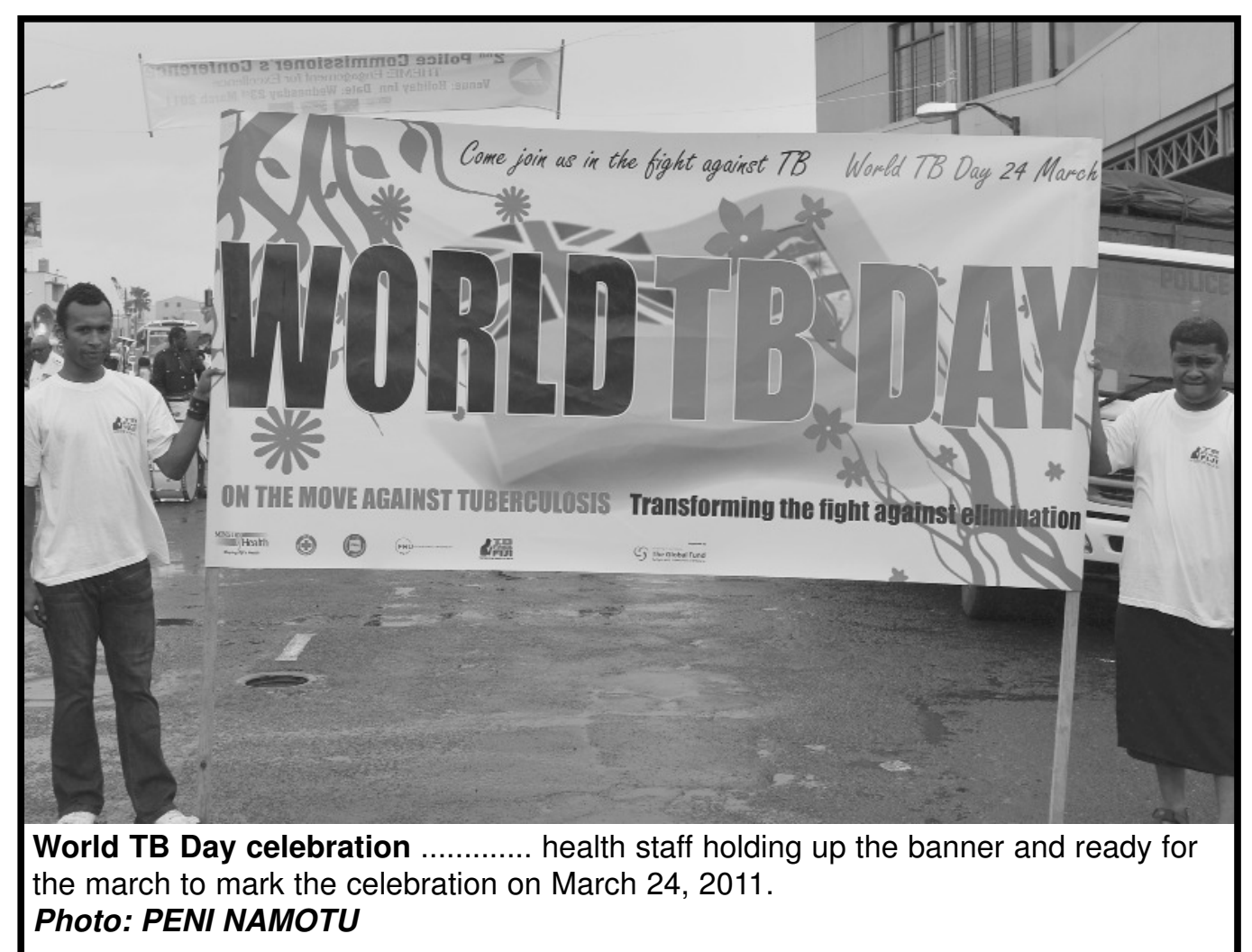
This is part of the Ministry of Health's agreement with the Royal Fiji Military Forces

(RFMF) for all officers going for peacekeeping duties to donate blood

This is the second blood drive for RFMF this year with the first one in February in which 30 officers donated blood

As part of the agreement the RFMF also agreed on emergency blood drive in times of shortage

The blood team has also conducted blood drives in corporate organizations such as Fiji Times, Motibhai, Westpac Bank, Lyndhurst Apparel and ANZ Quest



World TB Day celebration health staff holding up the banner and ready for the march to mark the celebration on March 24, 2011. **Photo: PENI NAMOTU**