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# UNITED NATIONS NATIONS UNIES

U.N. IN ACTION

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Week of 23 August 2004

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## UN SUPPORTS YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS IN FIJI

### VIDEO

RAVAI AT WORK (22")

RAVAI FATIAKI ON-CAMERA  
(10")

RAVAI AND EMPLOYEES AT  
WORK (16")

### AUDIO

#### NARRATION

Until recently, Ravai Fatiaki, a Fijian national, was unsure whether she had a future as a business woman. She and her partner manufactured women's handbags. But the business wasn't doing too well. Ravai decided to attend the Young Entrepreneurs Retail Skill Workshop. It was an eye-opening experience for her.

#### FATIAKI:

"It helped to sharpen my retail skills which I did not really have and areas like how to better display the products, dealing with customers and customer service."

#### NARRATION

At the workshop, Ravai was encouraged to aim for the tourist market, experiment with colours, materials and different designs for her bags. Since then her business has taken off and she now employs 40 women.

WORKSHOP (23")

NARRATION

The UN Development Programme, UNDP, Body Shop-Australia and the Commonwealth Youth Programme conduct these workshops jointly. It is part of an effort to teach retailing skills to young entrepreneurs in Pacific Island countries. In this way, young people have a better chance of making it in business. Body Shop's Alex McDonald is an instructor at the workshop.

ALEX McDONALD ON-CAMERA (14")

MCDONALD:

"The Body Shop in Australia, acknowledged as a very good retailer, as one retailer that other people would want to emulate. So we believe that we can use that skill, we can use what we are good at to work with other people."

SUVA CITY (22")

NARRATION

The need is certainly there. In Fiji, a South Pacific nation, it's not easy to start a business. More than 2,000 laws regulate what you can or cannot do. It's also expensive to meet these legal requirements. It can take two months to create a new business. It's hard to find venture capital. And there are few specialized training opportunities.

WORKSHOP (25")

At the 1999 World Economic Forum, UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, challenged private business around the world to take greater responsibilities in society. UNDP's

NARRATION

Pacific Sustainable Livelihoods Programme is

working with socially conscious corporations in order to transfer their know-how to indigenous business in the Pacific. UNDP's Jeff Liew explains...

LIEW ON-CAMERA (14")

LIEW:

"To transfer a lot of the private sector energy, the private sector way of doing things, so that these young people have a role model, a mentor to emulate and to grow their businesses."

WORKSHOP (20")

NARRATION

These seminars have helped nurture a new generation of forward-looking business owners. Another tangible outcome of the workshops has been the creation of Fiji Islands' Young Entrepreneurs Association. Its president is Orisi Seru Qaranivalu.

QARANIVALU ON CAMERA (11")

QARANIVALU:

"Entrepreneurship is using your own strength, your own skills, your own thinking to create something of your own and in turn create employment."

MARK ONE AND BANK (26")

NARRATION

UNDP has also helped to establish a Savings and Loans scheme at Mark One Apparel, a large clothes manufacturer in Fiji. The company's 550 employees can now borrow money without having to pay commercial fees. Another nine Fijian companies joined this scheme. Together with the Fiji Colonial Bank,

UNDP has organized 12 workshops on enterprise development and banking services.

#### TOURIST PRODUCTS (22")

Small business growth is an important engine for development and for generating employment. But to grow, businesses need a predictable commercial environment. The experience brought by established companies coupled with the natural energy of young people are the keys to establishing a milieu where the private sector can flourish in Fiji.

#### UN LOGO (10")

This report was prepared by Chaim Litewski for the United Nations.