Disability and the Twin Track Approach to Disability Inclusive Disaster Preparedness & Risk Reduction Management Workshop

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The three day training on Disability Inclusive Disaster Prepared and Risk Management workshop funded by AUSAID began yesterday morning at the Friendly North Inn.

Elenoa Kaisau, Programs Officer of the Fiji Disabled Persons Federation in her welcome address emphasised to the participants the importance of envisioning a barrier free and rights based society.

“Human rights and citizen participation, capabilities and diversity of all people with disabilities are identified, developed and respected.”

“Furthermore, as per article 1 of the United Nation Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities(CRPD) States that persons with disabilities include those who have long term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others” said Ms Kaisau.

Katabwena Tawaka, Program Manager for Pacific Disability Forum in sharing the objective of the workshop and overview of the training, reiterated the importance of distinguishing the difference between impairment and disability.

“An impairment is a physical, intellectual, mental or sensory characteristic or condition, which places limitations on an individual’s personal or social functioning in comparison with someone who does not have that characteristic or condition.”

“Disability is the disadvantage and exclusion which arise as an outcome of the interactions between people who have impairments and the social and environmental barriers they face due to the failure of society to take account of their rights and needs,” said Mr Tawaka.

Mr Shane Antonio, the Disability Inclusive Development Officer, who presented this morning on the twin track approach disability and development, said that disability is an evolving concept and that disability results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinders their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

“The twin track approach will bring about empowerment to persons with disabilities and also mainstream disability by giving support on the basis of their impairment by rehabilitation, education, and healthcare”, said Mr Antonio.
20 persons with disabilities and representatives from Buca, Bua, Dreketi, Kioa Island, Labasa, Nakanacagi, Rabi Island, Savusavu, Tukavesi, Vua, Wailevu West – Cakaudrove are part of the 3 day workshop.

PRESS RELEASE