



KATEP team taking part in the Australian-based program with Maria Tiimon and the Kingsford Smith election candidates

## **Leadership and skills development in the KATEP climate advocacy education program 2016**

This is the third year of the Kiribati-Australia-Tuvalu-Exchange-Program running in partnership with the Pacific Calling Partnership (PCP), Kiribati Climate Action Network (KiriCAN) and the Tuvalu Climate Action Network (TuCAN). For the first time, Uniting World became a partner and so we had six participants take part in the program: two participants from Kiribati (Mr. Kotei Temakei and Ms. Maningare Bwamatang), two participants from Tuvalu (Ms. Kuata Taumaheke and Mr. Bailey Koulapi), and two Fijian born Australians living in Sydney (Ms. Mariana Waqa and Ms. Melaia Turagaiviu). This year, the program coincided with the 2016 double dissolution election in Australia.

### **1. Three day KATEP course in Tarawa**

This year the first part of the program involved Jill Finnane and Maria Tiimon Chi-Fang from the PCP travelling to Tarawa, Kiribati, to work in cooperation with KiriCAN (Kiribati Climate Action Network) to provide a short leadership course to young people representing eleven of the member organisations of KiriCAN.

The first step in the process was to meet with KiriCAN Coordinators in order to discuss final shape, plan the process and the logistics for the course.

The second was to organise a training workshop for KiriCAN course facilitators who included KiriCAN committee members and young people who had taken part in the previous KATEP programs in Australia.

The third and major part of the program was the conducting of a 3-day training program for 26 people aged between 20 and 35 which:



- developed skills in advocacy and making presentations,
- built up their understanding of the science of climate change and of the link between human rights and climate change,
- guided the young people in the preparing and presenting of stories about I-Kiribati resilience in the face of climate change.

Group work

The course ended with a graduation ceremony that consisted of short speeches, a group photo (see opposite) with their messages for Australia, a song and the award of the certificates.

The final step in the program was a debriefing meeting with the KiriCAN coordinators at which we evaluated the achievements of the program which included:

- The participants and helpers developed strong bonds of friendship and supportive collaboration because of the interactive nature of the course.
- All participants had become more courageous and aspired to develop more as step-forward leaders by the end of the course.
- All participants were keen to learn, worked hard, sang hard, practiced speaking out in English with great courage, encouraged, supported and helped each other to learn and showed a strong desire to develop skills.
- Several applied for the two week course in Australia and two of them were eventually chosen.
- With different presenters and roles all showing different leadership styles the course provided a range of effective leadership models.
- We all learnt more about working together successfully and built closer bonds between KiriCAN and PCP.



Messages for Australia from the participants

## **2. Two week KATEP course in Sydney**

The two week educational and advocacy program took place in Sydney, Australia. It firstly provided participants with training in climate change advocacy, leadership skills, storytelling, and public speaking and secondly it was followed by an outreach program to educate, strengthen Pacific connections around climate change and lobby key members of the Australian community. At the same time it helped develop and solidify the participants' confidence and experience in being climate change activists and leaders.

**At the beginning of the program, the participants listed what they wanted to learn and what skills they wanted to develop, which included:**

- learn more about climate change issues and impacts and how to report on climate change,
- develop stronger public speaking skills and remain cool and formal when answering questions,
- develop media skills to answer questions from journalists,
- speak more effectively and confidently with politicians and other groups of people,
- improve their storytelling skills,
- become a stronger advocate,
- grow in leadership that is courageous, authentic, knowledgeable, respectful, confident, and accountable,
- develop a deeper understanding of how climate change affects people's personal and family lives through the stories and experiences from the islands,
- learn more about the Pacific, specifically what is happening in Tuvalu and Kiribati,
- improve upon listening and relational skills,
- link with Pacific communities in Australia and communicate through culture.



### **Workshop Component of the program**

The first week of the KATEP program was devoted to helping the participants

- adjust to their surroundings in Australia,
- familiarise them with the science of climate change,
- develop skills in communication across various community groups,
- best share their personal stories.

Workshops wherever possible were participatory and included lots of cultural expression, ice-breakers (*energisers*) and fun as these are important aids to learning. There was regular Reflection on learning and how the movement towards their goals was developing.

**The workshops were built around the following key themes:**

#### **Introduction and Cultural Preparation**

- Develop familiarity with Australian culture
- Explore cross-cultural communication skills

- Practice conversing about climate change in the Pacific
- Australian Indigenous history,
- Goal-setting and sharing

### **Becoming an Advocate**



- Learn and practice media and communication skills
- Understand how to lobby
- Practicing media interviews
- Understanding Australia's responses to climate change
- Relational organising

- How to connect with women

### **Climate Change and the Pacific**

- Climate Justice
- Explaining adaptation strategies using illustrations
- Learning the basics of the science behind climate change
- Visit to the see the coal industry
- Visits to sustainable food gardens
- Faith and climate change

### **Communicating about Climate Change**

- 'Rich Picture' approach
- Sharing personal experiences
- Preparing and practicing presentations

### **Sharing Stories**

- Engaging with the audience
- Preparing short stories with a message
- Personal Story-Concern-Ask
- Practice answering questions



Maningare pictured as a coal ship is loading during the visit to Newcastle.

### **Introduction to the coal industry at Newcastle**

Ellie Johnston from PCP and Su Morley from Climate Action Newcastle planned a two-day excursion to view aspects of the coal industry. PCP team members took the participants by rail bus to Newcastle, the biggest coal port in the world. The group walked around the port area where, even on a Sunday, we watched four huge ships laden with coal leave the port. A local teacher, Peta, told stories of how coal mining has helped shape the history of Newcastle.

That night, Climate Action Newcastle (CAN) members organised a dinner reception at which the KATEP participants shared their stories

and requests that CAN members strengthen their efforts to stop coal mining and exports. They also heard about the activities of CAN. CAN organised a tour the following day to see Newcastle's coal loading infrastructure and Hunter Valley mines up close.

They saw huge piles of coal stored waiting to be exported, coal loaders and the Mt Arthur open cut coal mine. After they watched an uncovered and heavily laden coal train pass through a crossing they were able to collect pieces of coal in their hands - a first for all. They also saw the CSIRO renewable energy facility - a large solar farm in Singleton, as well as meeting with other local activists and the local Federal Member of Parliament. They met an ex-coal miner who explained his change of understanding about the coal industry.

## **Outreach Component of the program**

Through the Outreach Program, the participants used their heightened understanding of the source of climate change and sharpened skills to meet with various community groups and community, church and political leaders. The participants shared their stories and advocated for EcoJustice with churches, Political parties, community groups and schools, including:

- Presentations at a schools conference organised by the Australian Youth Climate Coalition and a dinner meeting with AYCC committee members,
- Meeting with Senator Jenny McAllister,
- Meeting with John Graham Assistant General Secretary NSW Labor- and soon to become a member of the NSW Upper House,
- Meeting Sharon Claydon MP, Federal member for Newcastle,
- Meeting with Mr. Stuart McMillan, Uniting Church President, Uniting World and other key Uniting Church leaders,
- Meeting with Bishop Terry Brady,
- Women's event with One Million Women
- Men's event with NSW lawyers,
- Presentations at Santa Sabina Year 8 geography,
- Meet the candidates public event with the Reid Candidates and faith leaders,
- Meet the candidates public event with the Kingsford Smith Candidates and faith leaders.

## **Examples of Outreach Events**

### **Women's Event with 1 Million Women**

The female participants met with the 1 Million Women Organisation where they shared their stories with women acting on climate change. Natalie Isaacs, the founder of 1 Million Women, opened the conversation eloquently by calling for united action and compassion by women on the environmental emergency we are all facing.

Mariana, Mela, Kuata, and Meningare spoke with passion and strength on how climate change directly affects their family, land, and future urging women everywhere to realise that their environmental impacts

have severe consequences. Mariana discussed the privilege she has living in Australia and how that privilege (environmental, economic, behavioural) is related to the environmental degradation in Fiji, Kiribati, Tuvalu, and Australia. This resonated with One Million Women's goal to unite women in reducing their carbon usage. Kuata's touching concern for her children's future resonated with the audience. 1 Million Women live-streamed the powerful event worldwide so that some 200,000 viewers heard their stories and calls for action.

### **Meeting with Uniting World**

In the second week of the program, Tuesday June 14th, the KATEP participants journeyed into the city to meet with Uniting World and speak with the President of the Uniting Church Australia, Mr. Stuart McMillan. Each of the participants was granted another opportunity to share their personal stories regarding climate change, and to engage in conversation with Mr. McMillan along with other leaders of the Uniting World community.

Connecting climate change in the Pacific with faith helped the participants put climate change into a context that their friends and families back in the islands will better understand.

At this point in the program, the participants were getting accustomed to speaking in front of community leaders and telling their stories, and the improvements began to show. Their confidence and demeanour changed as they began to look like true climate justice advocates and leaders.



Kuata and Melaia with Rev. Seforosa Carroll from Uniting World

### **Presentations at Schools Event for Australian Youth Climate Coalition (AYCC)**

During the first week of the KATEP program, the AYCC invited the participants to speak at their Switched on Schools event, which promoted sustainable practices within Australian schools. Three of the participants, Bailey, Melaia and Meningare spoke to about 100 high schoolers. After only a couple of days of the program and very few practice workshops under their belts, the three brave volunteers took to the stage and told their stories to the youth at the event. The students were all very attentive and appeared to really connect with the KATEP participants' messages. The event concluded with a touching climate change song by Meningare that left the crowd feeling very emotional.



The participants were very nervous prior to this event because it was their first time telling their stories in front of a large audience. However, it was a very positive experience for them and helped to build their confidence and public speaking skills. Another successful outcome of this event was that nearly 100 high schoolers were educated on the climate change impacts being felt in Kiribati, Tuvalu and Fiji.

Bailey speaking to AYCC gathering

### **Meeting with the Kingsford Smith and Reid Candidates**

PCP organised two 'Meet the Candidate' events in conjunction with Caritas and Micah. Just over 70 people attended the Reid event held at the Edmund Rice Centre, including the local Greens and Labor

candidates. At the Kingsford Smith event at Coogee Catholic parish there were about 40 people with candidates from local Labor, Greens and the Science parties.

People attending showed exceptional fervour in supporting the calls for increased aid and finance for adaptation. They included Hindu leaders, Catholic priests, Protestant ministers, senior students and teachers from Catholic schools, nuns and brothers from several congregations, lay leaders from a variety of organisations and parishes along with people from the general community and supporters of the Edmund Rice Centre.

A view of the Kingsford Smith Meet the Candidates gathering at Coogee Catholic Parish Hall



At the Reid event Micah filmed interviews with the Pacific Islanders and with a few of the faith leaders and also some of the cultural presentation. See link below. People and candidates were very moved by the stories, song and dance from the Pacific Islanders with poignant examples of Australia's role in climate change. Their strength and authenticity came across and touched the audience in truly moving ways.

The Reid gathering at the Edmund Rice Centre



Online videos

Australian Aid YouTube video

- <https://www.dropbox.com/s/w5leptkcx1u13y/Edmund%20draft%205.mp4?dl=0>

### Media coverage

- The 1 Million Women livestream footage can be accessed at: <https://www.facebook.com/1MillionWomen/videos/vb.211657000392/10157160285770393/?type=2&theater>
- Blog written by attendee at the Reid forum <https://tobeadecentperson.wordpress.com/>
- The article published by The Newcastle Herald can be accessed at: <http://www.theherald.com.au/story/3964563/pacific-visitors-see-coal-port-up-close/>

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## Outcomes

The KATEP program is truly an exchange program. The PCP team gained invaluable insights and relationships through the course of the program growing in understanding and solidarity. It was incredible to witness the participants develop into strong impassioned leaders and speakers capable of making an impact. With each story, they moved their audiences and became more confident and powerful. Their personal accounts and experience with climate change highlight the true human impact and consequences we all face with climate change. The immense and current need for climate action is understood through these young leaders. The emotional relationship each participant brought forth opened our hearts and minds. They give us hope.

### Testimonies from the participants

*“We were able to bring forth our experiences, which was, for me the most important thing to come out of the presentations. Melaia and I did our introductions with our own understanding of climate change as Fijian-Australians living away from the islands. But I think the most significant part of the experience was that our friends from Kiribati and Tuvalu could really put forth their experiences so that these Politicians are able to understand that there is a human impact to what Australia does politically and economically.” - Mariana Waqa*



Mariana receiving her graduation certificate from Phil Glendenning, Director, Edmund Rice Centre

*“I am so glad that I am representing my people back home. Climate change is Tuvalu’s worst enemy. I am here on behalf of my people and especially for my four children because they deserve a future. After Tropical Cyclone Pam, entire islands just vanished. The hungry sea took it away and I believe that in years to come more islands will vanish. Where I live, if you stand in the middle of the island you can see both sides- the ocean and the lagoon side. During a strong wind or strong surge a wave can come from the ocean side all the way to the lagoon side, which is very dangerous. Last week we went to Newcastle and it was so sad to see four ships within one hour leaving with coal making thousands of dollars, when we in the Pacific are paying the ultimate price but hardly contribute to greenhouse gases. Use your vote and tell you government that you have other resources other than coal. Climate change affects all of us and will catch up with us.” - Kuata Taumaheke*

*“I migrated from Fiji when I was young. But as I’ve gotten older, that yearning to reconnect with my culture, my country of birth, has gotten stronger. And it was through that, that I’ve come to care about climate change and what’s happening in the Pacific. A couple of years ago I starting learning about the Pacific and what’s happening in Fiji and it really opened my eyes. I started to feel a sense of guilt that I am living in this country enjoying all of these privileges, and yet my family back home is struggling and suffering as a result. My grandfather in Fiji had trouble growing his crops because of floods and storm damage. As a Fijian-Australian we are in a position to do more and speak up as our country contributes*

*a lot to climate change and it affects our families back home. This made me want to do more and be more active on climate change.” - Melaia Turagaiviu*

*“My name is Meningare and I am from Kiribati. Kiribati is an island made of coral atolls just 3 meters above sea level. Most of the islands are very narrow. The future for the children of Kiribati is threatened by climate change. It makes me sad that my country is very poor while Australia enjoys the benefits of coal mines. I want a future and I still want to have children, so I ask all of you to save our future.” -*

**Maningare Bwamatang**

*“In Kiribati coastal erosion is getting worse. We’re losing our land and people have to move closer and closer together. As an I-Kiribati, I don’t want to lose our islands to climate change. I fear that we will lose our culture alongside our islands. Our culture is our identity and that is what we treasure. Music, dancing, and storytelling are part of us and we don’t want to lose that.”* **Kotei Temakei**

Kotei speaking



*“My name is Bailey and I am from the island nation of Tuvalu. Tuvalu is so vulnerable to climate change that causes cyclones and other problems to our islands. With the KATEP program I’ve learned more about advocating to people, lobbying to the government, and talking to the media. I’ve also learned how to be a good speaker and relay my message to different audiences. Together we have learned how to become great leaders, stepping forward to lead our people into this issue of climate change. I hope that the Australian government will minimize their coal exports and help fund adaptations in the Pacific Islands so that my people in Tuvalu can have a better future.” - Bailey*

**Koulapi**

**Evaluation comments from participants:**

*Achieving goals in development as a leader:*

- *‘My development as a leader has grown in terms of being able to make concrete some of my theoretical engagement with the climate change conversation. This has broadened my thinking and learning capabilities when it comes to bringing together thought and practice.’*
- *‘networking and building relationships.’*
- *‘Working together as a team to achieve common goals is very important.’*
- *‘Looking after each other, treat your colleagues as your own brothers and sisters.’*
- *‘Honesty in a way I tell my personal story on the impact of climate change on my families in Tuvalu.’*

*Still want to learn:*

- *‘To always be willing to learn as well as to acknowledge that there will always be differing opinions, what’s important that you remain true to your story, your experience, and the passion which brought you to the conversation in the first place.’*
- *‘Media – how to respond to journalists.’*
- *‘Being more organised.’*
- *‘I’ve really enjoyed the program and have learnt a lot.’*

- *'More about funds for the countries (frontline) and how are they using it and what for, is it enough or what?'*
- *'What better ways can be done to protect our island.s'*
- *'relation-organising to develop my skills because something that I fine very important to have a good relation with other stakeholders and the community to achieve your goals.'*
- *'I want to know the reality of politicians, their opinion and their action on climate change affecting the low-lying islands in the Pacific region.'*
- *'I want to learn about my people's life why they didn't know what climate change is and I want them to learn on climate change issues.'*

## **Comments from Community groups**

### **Message from KiriCAN**

*Mauri,*

*On Behalf of Kiribati, I want to thank PCP for organizing this training and we know that we will all benefit from this training. We are looking forward for their return so that we can listen to their wonderful experience in Australia. I wish all our young Leaders for their successful time with our brothers and Sisters in Australia. Clarie Anterea Kiribati*

*Mauri Jill and team at PCP*

*Thank you for the training and the support given to our youth from Kiribati. Yes, they do need opportunities to advocate locally and there is no problem with that. We are working on our Strategic Plan right now for 2016-2018 and have included their participation in this. We have many community engagements coming up and we will definitely get them to speak and advocate.*

*The first opportunity is coming in July when the 16 Good Samaritans will be visiting Kiribati and we have been invited for a dinner with them and the Australian High Commissioner. We will get Kotei to give a speech then. Maningare will join us much later after her training in Fiji and we will of course find opportunities for her to continue to be an ambassador for Kiribati.*

*On behalf of KiriCAN's Board and its members, we thank you again for the training you have given our youth from Kiribati.*

*We will stay in touch, Pelenise Alofa National Coordinator - KiriCAN*

### **Message from TuCAN**

*Talofa Jill,*

*Thank you for keeping us posted. The local radio station here has picked some stories of the KATEP training. I am very happy that our participants are doing good over there.*

*Best Regards, Pepe*



KATEP participants with their certificates

## Acknowledgements

1. **Accommodation:** women - Dominican Sisters, Strathfield; men – Jill and Michael Finnane at Lewisham, all - Maria Tiimon ChiFang at Merrylands
2. **Administration/travel arrangements etc:** Marita McInerney
3. **Course Coordinator:** Jill Finnane
4. **Cultural Broker:** Maria Tiimon Chi-Fang
5. **Institutions and community organisations that took part in the program:** CLRI (NSW), ARRC, Good Samaritan Sisters, Presentation Sisters, OXFAM, OLSH Sisters, Christian Brothers, Marist Missionary Sisters, Caritas Australia, Micah, Uniting World, Dominican Sisters, One Million Women
6. **Event catering:** all PCP team
7. **Home meals:** Chi-Fang Namakaina and Maria Tiimon Chi-Fang, Dominican Sisters Strathfield, Vincent and Rosie Sicari, Michael and Jill Finnane
8. **Members of Parliament** and election candidates who involved: Matt Thistlethwaite,
9. **Schools involved in the program:** Waverley College, St Patricks College Strathfield, Santa Sabina College Strathfield, Domremi College Fivedock, plus a large number of state schools from the Parramatta region
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