

MEDIA RELEASE

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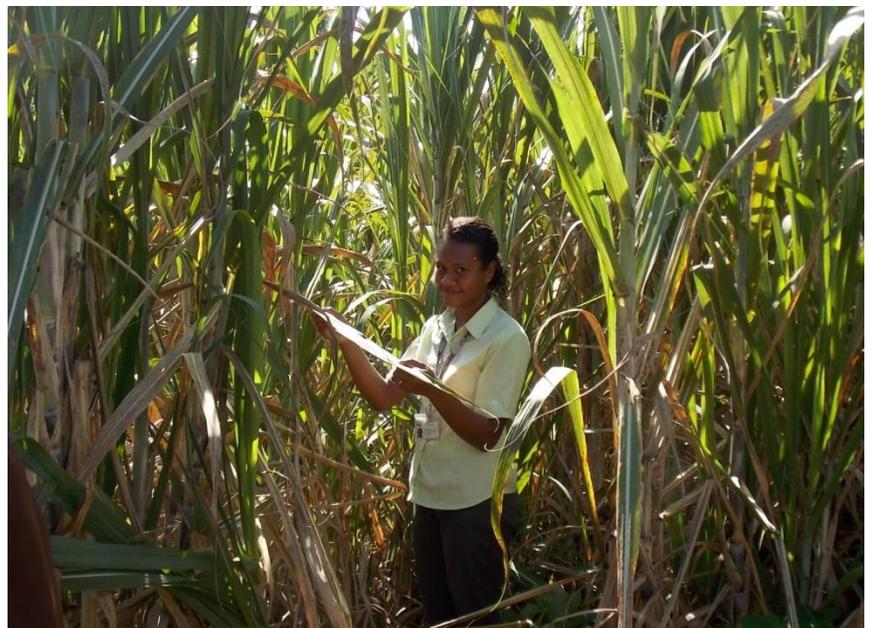
Meet Seniwaiti Ratu, FSC's first female Field Coordinator

Growing up, Seni, as she is known at FSC, has always loved the outdoors.

"We always had a backyard garden where we had a lot of different types of vegetables and I would love working on the garden after school and during any free time I had".

For someone who's always had a passion for gardening, it's no surprise that Seni has become a pioneer in the area that is mainly dominated by men - Field Extensions Services within the Fiji Sugar Corporation.

Right: Seni inspecting the sugar cane plant leaves in a farm in Buabua, Lovu sector in Lautoka.



This department services the needs of sugar cane growers around Fiji. Field Extension offices are located within the cane belt, in the interior and rural areas where sugar cane planting is a major activity.

The Nadakuni, Waimaro, Naitasiri lass now calls Lautoka home, and has been a resident of the Sugar City since 2014. She moved across from Suva to pursue work in the sugar industry.

And clearly she has enjoyed every single moment of living and working in the sugar belt. "Agriculture was always my favourite subject in school and I developed a passion for planting and working with nature from a very young age".

It's not usual that a female would pursue farming but this is something that comes as second nature to Seniwaiti Ratu, Field Coordinator for the Lautoka area.

In her current role, she looks after six hundred and seventy-three sugar cane growers within the Lovu and Lautoka sectors. Her biggest challenge is trying to get nil producing growers to start planting sugar cane again. And the encouraging thing is that growers who have not been actively farming sugar cane for sometime are slowly coming back.

"I like talking to farmers, I like to know how they are getting along and conducting their lives daily, this helps me understand their needs better, and it helps me in my job", she says.



Left: Always on the go, Seni discussing with two of her growers as they pass each other on the road

Her journey with Fiji Sugar Corporation started in October 2014 where she began on a roving three-month probation, working in all the sectors within the Lautoka area.

In June 2015, she got confirmed as Field Assistant. This role was more administrative in nature and she worked in this role till early this year

when she was promoted to Field Coordinator. At the time of her promotion, Seni was the only female employee in the company's Field division. "Working in an all-male environment was challenging at times, but I was passionate about my pursuit to be successful in this area", she said.

And passion has paid its dividends. She now looks forward to growing in the Field Extension area within the FSC, whilst aiming to further her academic studies, to add onto her Diploma in Agriculture Studies that she currently holds.

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