

**PRESS RELEASE**

**SPSE AND ADB HELP 25 PROFESSIONAL WOMEN PREPARE FOR LEADERSHIP**

A training programme that prepared 25 professional women from South Pacific Stock Exchange (SPSE) listed companies and from other selected corporate organisations for leadership roles concluded in Suva today.

The Women in Leadership programme was provided by SPSE and the Asian Development Bank's (ADB) Pacific Private Sector Development Initiative (PSDI). Delivered over three, two-day workshops starting in July, the programme provided training on topics such as governance, risk management and resilience, effective communication, constructing support systems, and managing the transition to leadership/directorship roles. The key objective of this training was to address the gender gap on boards and in key management positions by improving skills and fostering the leadership potential of professional women and to get more women involved in key positions to capitalise on the valuable contributions they can make to productivity, organisational performance and economic growth.

"The Exchange had taken up the opportunity to partner with ADB's PSDI for this programme with serious thoughts and an expectation of tangible results given that women's lack of representation in positions of leadership has been broadly acknowledged throughout the business world," said SPSE Chief Executive Officer, Ms Krishika Narayan. "This programme presented an opportunity for the Exchange to lead the way and set a good foresight towards mooting a platform that would provide a pathway for a change and echo the sentiments that women in leadership roles matter."

Ms Narayan added that SPSE, like its international counterparts, firmly believes in the value and associated economic benefits to companies and the Fijian economy that can be derived from progressing gender diversity in the corporate arena. She concluded by saying that SPSE will now take the lead and maintain a database that will provide information on women candidates for leadership roles.

The 25 graduates from the programme were awarded their certificates at a reception this evening at the Fiji National University's Nasese Campus, where they were congratulated for their achievement and reminded that they are now equipped with the relevant skills and tools of trade for managing leadership positions.

Ms Narayan said the Exchange would also like to show its gratitude to PSDI and the Reserve Bank of Fiji for supporting SPSE in its progress towards gender diversity. SPSE would like to specially commend the efforts of its listed companies that nominated staff to participate in the program for fully embracing the agenda for gender parity and supporting the Women in Leadership programme for 2017.

PSDI is a technical assistance facility undertaken in partnership with the Governments of Australia and New Zealand, and ADB.

For more information, please contact the SPSE on 3304130 or email [info@spse.com.fj](mailto:info@spse.com.fj)

**SOUTH PACIFIC STOCK EXCHANGE**

**ANNEXURE: Testimonials from selected 2017 Women in Leadership Programme Participants**

## TESTIMONIALS FROM SELECTED 2017 WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME PARTICIPANTS



**Ms. Sujatha Nair**  
*Consultant – Lateef & Lateef Law*

“The Women in Leadership Program has reinforced an element of courage and determination in me to reorganise my priorities in order to accomplish my goals. It has also given me an access to a plethora of likeminded women who wish to support, empower and inspire each other in different spheres of life. All individuals, more particularly women, require regular dose of energy/power booster to make them believe in themselves. The program has effectively delivered this requirement! This is a useful program for all those wanting to add new ideas, new belief and new perspectives to add more value to their own skill-set and to their organisation.”



**Ms. Rowena Taito**  
*Head of Marketing – Paradise Beverages Fiji Ltd*

“I am very grateful to have been part of this great group of women in leadership development and the biggest takeout for me was the networking in the group. We had some brilliant presenters and the course facilitators were instrumental in putting it all together and the delivery of the workshops. There were women on boards within our group and this helped bridge gaps with real life experiences and the theory covered. We were also fortunate to gain insights from specialists in the industry on various topics covered from effective communication to good governance and general leadership training. The next steps would be to apply the learnings to get onto a board. I would definitely encourage everyone who is offered to do the training to take it up as a great learning and networking opportunity.”



**Ms. Mereseini Baleilevuka**  
*Director - Free Bird Institute Ltd*

“This leadership training program has opened my eyes to see areas in which I could still contribute effectively to the operations of my business and the community in terms of capacity building. My views on the importance of business networking in order to learn skills and expert knowledge have been positively enhanced during the training. Finally, I have learnt that women are just as good as or even better than men if they are given the opportunities to grow and lead in any organization. Thank you for the opportunity to be part of this training.”



**Ms. Litiana Loabuka**  
*Director – RB Patel Group Ltd*

“This course for women in senior management positions from a cross section of organizations was a fantastic progression course orchestrated by the SPSE. I believe learning is an everyday part of life and that education never stops so this was a great opportunity for me to live out this viewpoint. Initially, I had my concerns about the length of this course but was grateful that it was split up into 3 sessions which made it easier to manage especially with respective workloads. The training group included board directors, bankers, employees and directors from public listed companies and iconic women who in their own fields were breaking barriers and going where no other woman had gone before. A good mix of professional women.”



**Ms. Sisilia Daveta**  
*Accountant – Amalgamated Telecom Holdings Ltd*

“The program is very motivating and I came to witness the passion and enthusiasm of these experienced women in the program. I am inspired by their willingness to work personally and professionally on their growth and development. I have learned a lot from them and the program has taught me to speak up, be confident in my abilities and know the importance of having a mentor and sponsor earlier in your career and networking. I encourage young women out there to make an effort to attend this program if the opportunity comes their way.”