

# Carpentry for girls at Don Bosco

BY GINA MAKA'A

About 15 girls attended the first Carpentry session at the Don Bosco Technical Institution last Saturday.

The carpentry sessions will go on for eight Saturdays.

The workshop is funded by the Australian Volunteers International (AVI) and Planet Wheeler Community Grants Scheme, to support Millennium Development Goal three, which promote Gender Equality and Empower Women.

In an interview with a Life Skills Teacher I met at the carpentry workshop, Philippa Rumanu said she is interested in doing carpentry because one of the units she teaches in Life skills is home management.



"I'm interested in doing this basic carpentry to help me when I'm teaching the unit home management," she said.

Ms Rumanu said it's good to know about the practical part rather than learning about theory all the time.

She said some of her Life skills girls are also doing carpentry so that when they come to the home management unit the girls will have a fair idea on how to build things.

Chris Yarham AVI volunteer and also one of the Instructors in Carpentry said he hoped that the girls will come back to Don Bosco next year and study carpentry.

He said from the first day of the carpentry session he is already seeing a lot of interest from women who are doing carpentry.

"Why should women be locked up in the kitchen doing house work when they could be out there doing a lot of things they are interested in," he said.

Mr. Yarham said many companies are asking for women carpenters because they are more reliable and creative than some men.

He said at the workshop the girls will learn the fundamentals of carpentry as well as undertaking projects, including the creation of a chopping board and a coconut scraper stool.

Father Ambrose Pereira Director of Don Bosco Technical Institution said he was very happy to see that girls are now doing carpentry because the Institute is striving to give equal opportunities to all.

He said he was trying to promote gender equality and empower women.

The eight Saturday week-end workshop will conclude in September and it is an opportunity for girls to explore the possibility of studying carpentry at Don Bosco in 2011.

AVI volunteers however receive significant support from AusAid, the Australian Government's overseas aid program.

The girls are assisted by four junior boys and two Carpenter teachers.