



Melita



Rita and





Note to caregivers

This book is part of a set of materials for children and caregivers in Fiji to help meet psychosocial needs after a cyclone.

This set of materials was produced with a unique group of participants who came together to produce a gift for the children of Fiji. People from the Ministries of Education, Health, Social Welfare and Information, together with participants from a range of NGOs, the University of the South Pacific and some of the most creative talent in the country developed materials to help children heal and to support their courage and resiliency.

Children's difficult emotions during these difficult times are normal and they should be acknowledged and accepted. These emotions come after a disaster but they are part of everyday life as well.

Our hope is that these materials will help them to feel that they are not alone, that there are many helpers and caregivers to support them. This includes children and adults with disabilities and those from marginalized groups who have a role to play in contributing to positive change in their families and communities.

We hope that you will use these materials in many creative ways. In addition, we know that you will come up with your own excellent ideas to help and support children during and after a natural disaster and in everyday life. We welcome your feedback on the materials and your suggestions for improvements and additional needs of Fijian children.

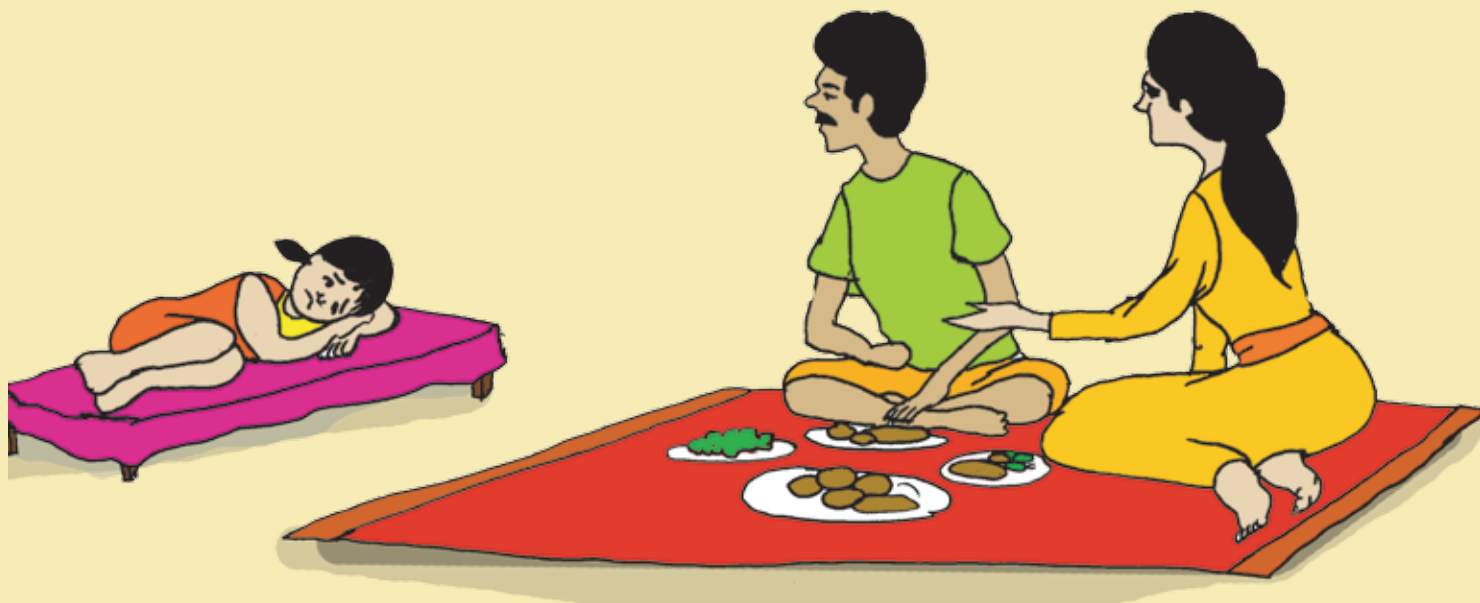
In the coastal village of Yarayara,
life is slowly returning to normal.
The storm had passed. The sun is out.
And the sea is calm again.



But for chatty Rita, so much has changed. She is no longer bubbly. She had seen the rage of the storm and seen homes ripped apart.

Her heart hurts. She says, "oohhhh, I feel sooooo sad."



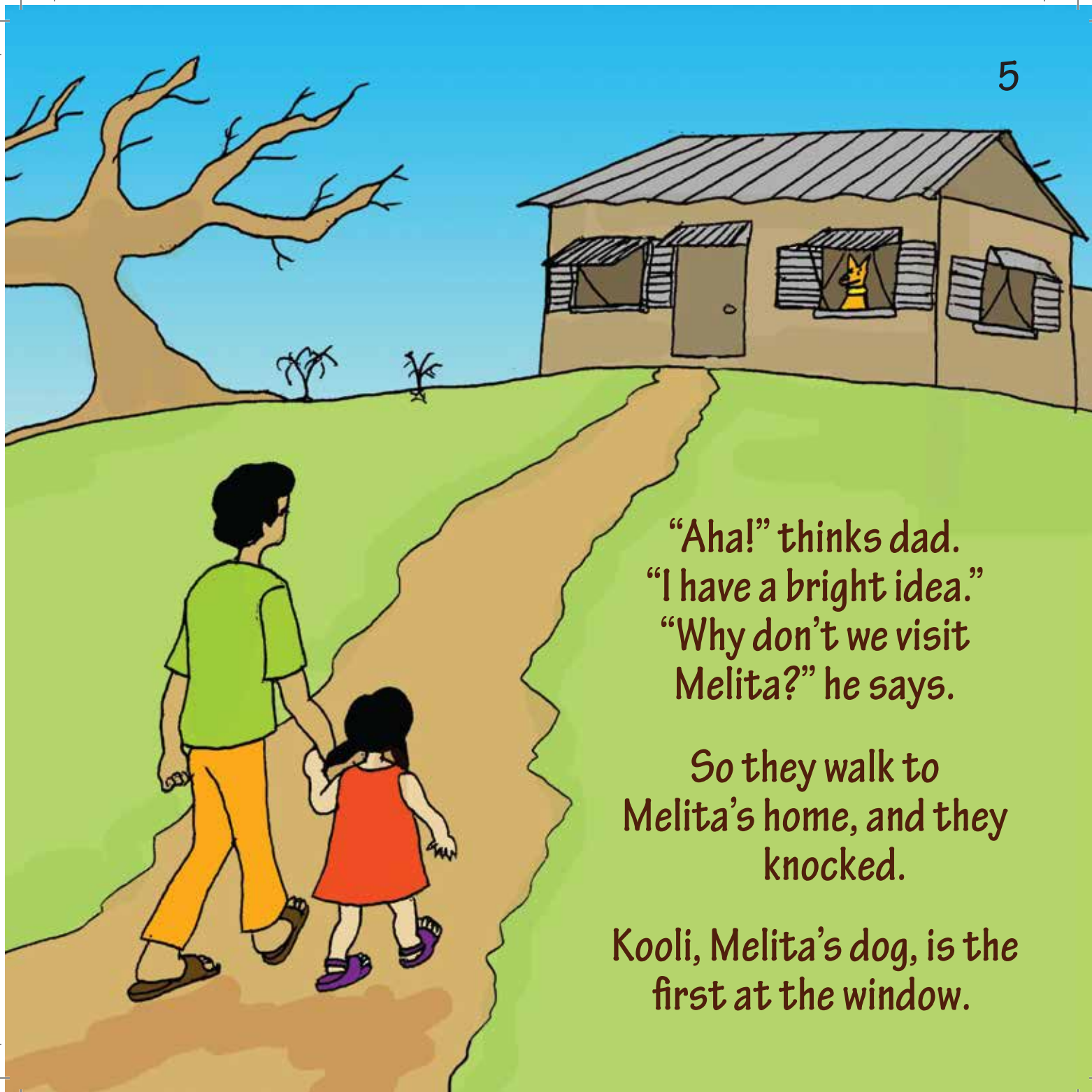


Mum and dad are worried.
Rita won't even eat her favourite food.
She hardly sleeps, she cries a lot,
and even dad's silly jokes do not make her smile.



Mum remembers how much Rita loves to draw.
“Why don’t you draw how you feel?” says Mum.

Rita does. She draws herself crying.
She even draws a picture of her best friend, Melita, and
her dog, Kooli, crying too.
It was like a cyclone of tears on paper!

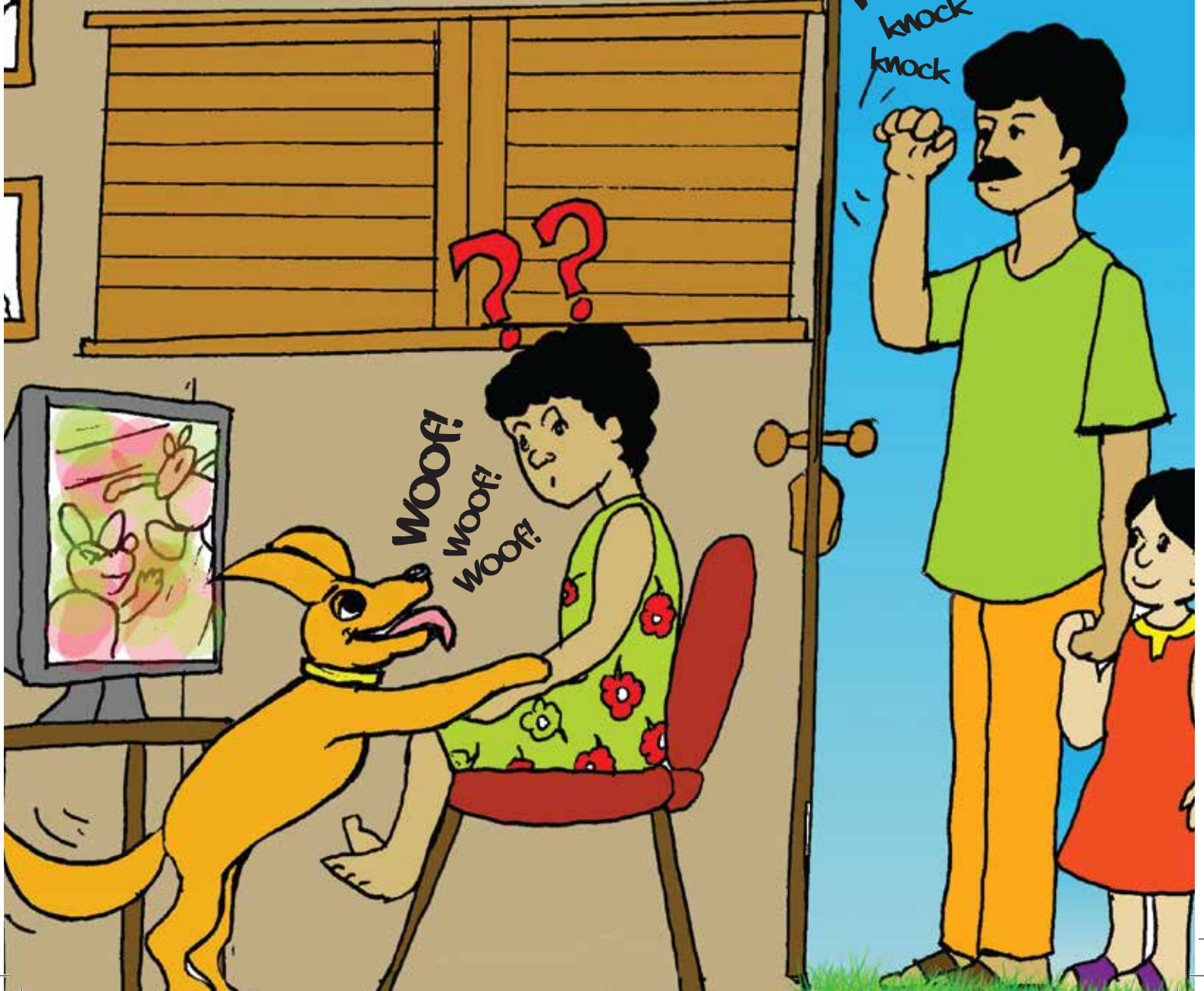


“Aha!” thinks dad.
“I have a bright idea.”
“Why don’t we visit
Melita?” he says.

So they walk to
Melita’s home, and they
knocked.

Kooli, Melita’s dog, is the
first at the window.

6 "Woof! Woof! Woof!" Kooli barks and barks and barks. He runs to Melita. She is watching her favourite cartoon show.



Kooli nudges and barks at Melita but she does not move. He runs circles around her, and even jumps and pulls on her dress.

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Melita sees Kooli's silly stunts and knows, Kooli does this when someone knocks at the door. He is Melita's ears. Melita is deaf and cannot hear.

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Melita opens the door,
and Kooli runs out
faster than lightning.
In one huge leap, he lands
in Rita's arms.

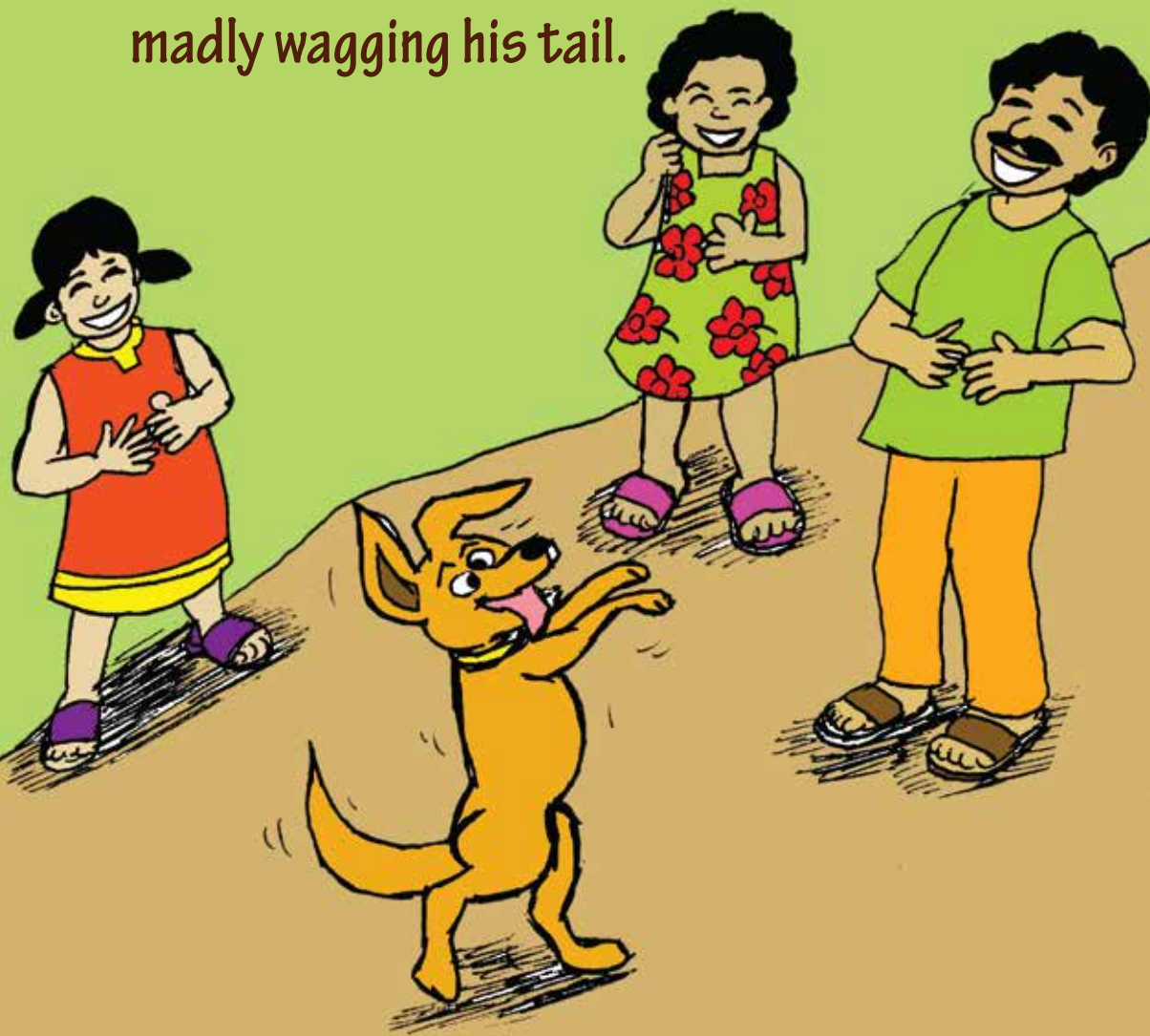
CRASH!

They both fall to the
ground.

Kooli licks Rita's face.
SLURRRP, SLURRRP,
SLURRRP.



Ha! Ha! Ha! It's such a silly sight!
Dad, Rita and Melita laugh and laugh.
They laugh until their tummies hurt.
Even Kooli does a silly dance,
madly wagging his tail.





“BULA!” says Melita with her hands.

“It’s my best friend Rita!”

She gives her a BIG, warm hug.

They talk and sing and play fairy steps all day.

Jump, jump, jump.

Run, run, run.

Rita has so much fun.



They teach Kooli a few new tricks.
One trick was to even say 'hello' in sign language!
When Rita returned home, her mum asked,
"How was your day?"
Rita's face lights up with a big, wide smile.

“Oh mum it was the best day ever!”



Good friends can help chase your sadness away!

How do you and your friends help each other?



This book is an educational resource for children in the aftermath of cyclones
and other natural disasters.
It has been put together to encourage resilience in young children.
We hope you enjoy these material.

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