

Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development
Advisory Board

Seventh Meeting 17 July 2018
Suva, Fiji

Meeting Report

The seventh meeting of the Advisory Board for Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development (*Pacific Women*) was held in Suva, Fiji, on 17 July 2018. The meeting was chaired by Reverend Sereima Lomaloma, Ministry Officer, Anglican Diocese of Polynesia and Chairperson of House of Sarah. The meeting agenda is at [Attachment A](#).

The intended outcomes of *Pacific Women* are:

- Women, and women's interests, are increasingly and effectively represented and visible through leadership at all levels of decision-making.
- Women have expanded economic opportunities to earn income and accumulate economic assets.
- Violence against women is reduced and survivors of violence have access to support services and to justice.
- Women in the Pacific will have a stronger sense of their own agency, supported by a changing legal and social environment and through increased access to the services they need.

The Advisory Board's purpose is to provide advice on the strategic direction of *Pacific Women*. The Advisory Board reflects Australia's commitment to a Pacific-led response to improving the opportunities for political, economic and social advancement of Pacific women. The membership of the Board and attendance at the meeting is at [Attachment B](#).

The meeting commenced with an opening prayer by Board Member, Ms Jane Kesno.

The Chair welcomed the Board members to Fiji with a special welcome to Hon Niki Rattle and Mr Paki Ormsby to their first meeting since being appointed to the Board.

Actions from last meeting

The Board noted the actions taken on the issues raised at the last meeting:

The members had requested an update on the progress of the website revamp

- Website has been updated and more work planned
- 3,400 followers of the Facebook page and 58.97 per cent of the traffic to the *Pacific Women* website is directed via social media
- Considering Twitter.

Request that DFAT internally resolve the issue of whether activities are branded as funded by Pacific Women.

- Issue was discussed at the recent Pacific Heads of Mission meeting
- DFAT will develop guidance for Posts on the balance between identifying the program and activities as part of Australia's bilateral program with Pacific countries and identifying activities as part of the *Pacific Women* program
- The Support Unit will reiterate guidance for project implementers on branding.

Request that the links between bride price and violence against women be added to the list of priority research.

- Research Advisory Group recommended against this as priority, noting that extensive research has already taken place; that brideprice is only one cause of gender violence; and meaningful research would need to be lengthy and potentially expensive. The Board reiterated the importance of exploring the links between violence and brideprice, particularly when women are perceived as property and the increasing monetisation of brideprice. The Board discussed the complexity of this

issue, including differences between matrilineal and patrilineal communities. It was agreed that the research adviser should develop a concept note to scope the most appropriate research topic.

Advocacy messages be updated, and a new one developed with key messages on Pacific Women.

- The Board discussed the draft 'Pacific Women in brief' booklet and the advocacy messages that had been developed for DFAT senior managers and Board members. It was agreed that the advocacy messages should be updated and new ones on women with disabilities; women and climate change and LGBTQI communities be developed. These resources should be widely available as an advocacy resource. It was also agreed that the content and format of the booklet would be reviewed in line with program's Communications Strategy. The Board also requested a one-page summary of progress in each country.

Board members be advised of upcoming events funded by Pacific Women, including people travelling to those meetings who could be briefed by the Board on the program.

- It was noted that *Pacific Women* had not funded any events outside of design planning for Pacific Girl. It was noted that individual Board members were members of design reference groups and were consulted as part of design processes.

The Board member chair of future meetings should be involved in preparing the program for side visits.

- Confirmed that this had occurred for this meeting.

The Support Unit prepare a program pipeline which includes the start and end date of initiatives.

- The Board noted the pipeline and the level of unprogrammed funds in each year to the current end of the program.

The Board sought expanded engagement with DFAT between meetings on program issues.

- The Board expressed concern that they were sometimes not informed of all activities funded through *Pacific Women* in their countries and requested that DFAT communicate with Posts to ensure closer engagement with Board members.

Board members should be involved in planning for and delivering the country reflection workshops.

- The Board noted that country reviews were planned in Tuvalu, Tonga, FSM and Kiribati, as well as finalising the RMI country plan.

The Board recommended that research on sexual harassment in the workplace in Fiji be replicated in other Pacific countries, with a focus on the public service and tourism sectors.

- The Board noted that a concept paper is being developed by the research adviser. SPC is interested in partnering with *Pacific Women* on this research.

Session 1: Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development update

The Board noted the progress of *Pacific Women*, including the increase in the number of women supported to take on leadership roles at the community, provincial and national level (11, 570); number of women who have accessed crisis support services (59,205) and number of women who have accessed financial information and services (8,317).

The Board noted the range of program achievements. The Board noted that many activities cannot be classified as a single response. For example, counselling for survivors of violence is also violence prevention and Markets for Change is a leadership as well as economic empowerment activity. The program's knowledge management database is able to classify activities by primary and secondary objectives to capture this. There was a discussion on how well the data is able to identify the program's reach to women with disabilities, given that many implementing partners do not provide disaggregated data. The Board noted a range of monitoring and evaluation approaches, including impact tracking of individuals in some programs.

The Board noted that the program is in a consolidation phase. New multi-country programs are being designed in formal political leadership; working with adolescent girls and building prosperity for women producers, processors and women owned businesses. The program continues to leverage off other DFAT investments to strengthen their approach to gender equality. There is an increasing focus

on learning across the program, including within countries and across sectors. There will be a regional learning event on women's economic empowerment in 2019.

Session 2: Women's Economic Empowerment

The Board discussed the links between violence against women and women's economic activity. The Do No Harm research in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands found that some women involved in economic programs experienced an increase in, or commencement of, domestic violence. Increasing women's earnings did not necessarily result in greater income for the household, as men might withdrawing their work and economic contribution. Toolkits to support community organisations to assess the capacity of their economic growth programs to integrate a 'do no harm' approach have been developed by the International Women's Development Agency using the research. The toolkits will be available to a range of programs and their use will be monitored to assess the usefulness of the toolkit. The Board requested an opportunity to comment on the toolkits.

The Board noted the need for economic growth programs to adopt community-based gender-transformative approaches, for example the family teams approach that has been used in Papua New Guinea.

The Board was briefed on a gender audit of DFAT's Pacific regional economic growth programs, which identified a lack of gender analysis in program designs in many programs. The audit found positive work in skills development and training for women; legislative reforms and women's access to property, assets and financial services.

The Board noted the many barriers that women face, including that many do not have birth or marriage certificates. The Board requested a brief on this issue at the next meeting.

The Board requested an update on PIFS work to cost the impact of violence against women on national economies in the Pacific.

Session 3: Presentation on the *Pacific Women* program in Fiji

The Board was briefed on the *Pacific Women* program in Fiji. The Fiji country plan, valued at \$26 million is the second largest program after PNG. There is a good enabling environment for gender equality programs in Fiji due to the high capacity of partners and strong Fiji government policy commitment. The program is focused on ending violence against women through support to the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre and increasingly with faith-based organisations such as House of Sarah; provision of gender advisory support to the Fiji Ministry of Women to assist whole of government mainstreaming efforts and women's economic empowerment. In 2017, the program established the Fiji Women's Fund to provide targeted grant and capacity building support to women's groups, networks and organisations in Fiji to expand their work on gender equality. The Fund is led by a Fund Manager and team of personnel and aims to transition to an independent entity by the end of *Pacific Women*. Detailed information about the Fiji country plan was included in the Board's reading pack.

Implementing partner Essence of Fiji presented their partnership with *Pacific Women* Fiji to deliver scholarships for women from lower socio-economic backgrounds, in rural, remote areas where there is limited training and employment opportunities. Since 2015, 61 women have graduated with a Certificate IV in Spa and Beauty therapy and all have gained employment, working at spa resorts across Fiji or establishing their own business. In addition to increased income, women report more confidence and control over their life.

The Board commended the partnership with Essence of Fiji, impressed that all women have gained employment and the positive flow on benefits to their families and communities as a result. The Board queried reach to women with disability and were informed the program does not exclude women with disabilities and has in the past, trained women with disabilities in masseur and beauty therapy. The Board welcomed the holistic approach of the program, which includes financial management training and dealing with sexual harassment in the workplace. The Board noted the potential for the program in other Pacific countries majority of which have a tourism industry and limited employment opportunities for women.

Session 4: The direction of *Pacific Women*

The Board noted that \$170 million has been spent against the commitment of \$320 million. There has been an increase in expenditure each financial year. If the current level of budget remains consistent over the last four years of the program, it is likely that expenditure will be close to \$320 million by the end of the program. DFAT will continue to monitor.

The Board noted that the six-year evaluation is due in 2019 to assess progress towards the interim objective that: 'joined by services and action, independent of but informed by *Pacific Women* will be evident in all 14 countries'. The review will:

- independently assess progress towards the intermediate objectives
- identify areas for the program strategy improvement and further development
- provide learning and commentary upon the program theory of change
- assess likely progress towards the 10-year objectives
- assess DFAT performance in delivering the program.

The Board requested an opportunity to review the terms of reference for the evaluation.

The Board noted that *Pacific Women* has four years remaining and that the six-year evaluation will help a decision on if, and how, DFAT will continue targeted gender equality work in the Pacific.

The Board will consider the following questions for a detailed discussion at the next Board meeting:

- Design options for extension/new program?
- What would we want to change?
- What is important to maintain?
- Risks for the program?

The Board requested that the next meeting focus on the program's monitoring, evaluation and learning framework.

The Board agreed that despite many positive changes towards gender equality in the Pacific, there continues to be structural, economic, social and cultural discrimination against women. The Board discussed the need to 'change the narrative' on gender equality and hold Pacific leaders accountable for meeting the commitments made in the 2012 Pacific Leaders' Gender Equality Declaration. It was noted that some of the *Pacific Women* budget is committed to national budgets and the Board would like to better understand Pacific governments' perspectives on the program and how the Board can support better traction in their countries. It was noted that engaging in the discussion on the regional security could be a good entry point for getting governments' attention on gender equality.

The PIFS representative advised that reporting on gender inequality is an annex to the SDG report to be tabled at the Forum Leaders' Meeting.

It was suggested that PIFS and SPC could work together to identify opportunities to integrate gender considerations into the agendas of relevant regional meetings. The PIFS and SPC representatives on the Board will work with DFAT and the Support Unit on this issue.

Session 5: The roles and direction of the Advisory Board

The Board considered that its role was clear and that Board members were appointed in their personal capacity and not as country representatives. However, the Board did agree that the role of Board members as advocates for the program should be better developed.

Board members agreed to meet with senior government leaders in their countries, as well as their peer networks, to discuss the work of *Pacific Women* and will report back at the next meeting.

The Board agreed that the next meeting should be for two days to allow more time for discussion.

The Board noted the next Board meeting is due to be held in Canberra in late February with other options being Papua New Guinea or Tonga.

Attachment A:

Agenda
Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development Advisory Board Meeting
17 July 2018

Venue: Pacific Women Support Unit office, Suva, Fiji

Chair: Reverend Sereima Lomaloma

9:00 – 10:30 Welcome and Update

- 9:00 Welcome and Introduction: Reverend Sereima Lomaloma
- 9:10 Summary update on implementation of the *Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development* initiative: Tracey Newbury, Director
- Discussion by Board
- 10:15 Morning tea

10:45 – 12:00 Women's Economic Empowerment

- 10:45 Presentation on current responses; new initiatives planned within Pacific Women and broader DFAT economic growth programs.
- 11:00 Discussion by Advisory Board and recommendations

12:00 - 1:00 Lunch – opportunity to meet Support Unit staff

1:00 – 2:30 Presentation on the *Pacific Women* program in Fiji

- 1:00 Presentation on the *Pacific Women* program in Fiji
- 2:30 Afternoon tea

3:00 - 4:15 The direction of Pacific Women

- 3:00 Presentation on implementing the recommendations of the three year evaluation; preparing for the six year evaluation; thinking about the future.
- 3:30 Discussion by Advisory Board and recommendations

4:15 – 5:00 The roles and direction of the Advisory Board

- 4:15 Priorities for Advisory Board for the next six months
- 4:45 Reflections on the Meeting and Agreement on the Report
- 5:00 Date and location for next meeting and Wrap Up

5:15 Meeting End

Attachment B: Attendance

Dr Audrey Aumua Deputy Director-General of the Pacific Community (SPC)

Ms Jane Kesno Founder and Chairperson of the PNG Women and Children's Rights Centre and co-founder of Coalition of Public Sector Women in Leadership

Reverend Sereima Lomaloma, Anglican Minister and Ministry Officer, Anglican Diocese of Polynesia & Chairperson of House of Sarah (Fiji)

Ms Natalia Palu Latu, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Policy and Reform Division, Ministry of Finance and National Planning

Ms Savina Nongebatu, immediate past Co-Chairperson of the Pacific Disability Forum (Solomon Islands)

Mr Paki Ormsby, Director Policy, Pacific islands Forum Secretariat

Hon Niki Rattle, Speaker, Parliament of the Cook Islands

Ms Marilyn Tahu, Coordinator of the Vanuatu Women's Centre (Vanuatu)

Ms Lesieli Taviri, Chairperson of the PNG Business Coalition for Women and CEO Origin Energy

Ms Maere Tekanene, former Minister for Education (Kiribati)

Ms Yoshiko Yamaguchi-Capelle, Pacific Young Women's Leadership Alliance (Republic of Marshall Islands)

Ms Sharman Stone (Observer), Australia's Ambassador for Women and Girls

Dr Lawrence Kalinoe and Dr Colin Tukuitonga, sent their apologies for this meeting.

Attachment C

Roundtable meeting with partners on gender responsive disaster planning and management

Participants:

Fiji Women's Crisis Centre; International Planned Parenthood Federation; Femlink Pacific; SPC; Adventist Development Relief Agency/Australian Humanitarian Partnership; International Federation of the Red Cross; RedR

Key Messages:

What are we doing well?

- The Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific (FRDP), the world's first integrated regional framework to build resilience to climate change and disasters
- The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (Sendai Framework)
- Pacific Resilience Partnership Taskforce is in place
- Countries are adapting the UN cluster system to their own contexts and needs
- More awareness of the importance of involving women in planning and responses
- More expertise is available in the region
- Locally-driven responses, including at community and provincial levels
- Use of radio campaigns to help communities prepare for emergencies
- Pre-positioning supplies
- Greater focus on preparedness and not just response

What do we need to do better?

- Still an ad hoc approach to involving women and people with disability
- Gender expertise often brought in too late
- Not just communicate with heads of households
- Need wider pre-positioning of supplies, including dignity kits and disability assisted devices, eg wheelchairs
- Plan for long-term responses after the state of emergency
- Understand and utilise indigenous knowledge
- Respond to slow-onset emergencies, eg droughts
- Ensure accessibility to shelters and facilities for people with disability
- Ensure shelters and facilities are safe places for everyone, including women with disability
- Ensure safety of communities (particularly women and children) from first responders
- Ensure that national disaster response plans address gender based violence
- A fuller social inclusion approach, including for the LGBTQI population and people with disability in planning
- Collect information for better planning and decision-making
- Better gender and social inclusion in recovery processes

What are the challenges?

- Coordination among increasing number of organisations
- National capacity to absorb inputs from multiple donors
- Access to disaggregated data of affected populations (eg sex, age, disability) to effectively plan response
- Understanding how people receive information
- Understanding and being involved in the cluster system
- Limited analysis on the effectiveness of preparedness
- Increases in gender violence during emergencies
- Some NDMOs need more capacity development to coordinate responses

Roundtable on effective disability inclusion approaches

Participants:

Pacific Disability Forum; Fiji Disabled People's Federation/Spinal Injury Association of Fiji; UN Women; Oxfam Fiji; Youth Champs 4 Mental Health; OCHA; Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat

Key Messages

What are we doing well?

- Pacific Framework for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2016 – 2025
- 15 Pacific countries have signed or ratified The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) – including Australia and New Zealand
- 12 Pacific countries have disability policies or legislation - including Australia and New Zealand
- Greater awareness of disability inclusion, including in disaster risk reduction
- Organisations working better together

What do we need to do better?

- Building codes need to ensure accessibility for all persons
- Ensuring accessibility to transport options
- Ensuring access to education for all children with disabilities
- Being inclusive of all people with disabilities, including people with psychiatric disorders and learning difficulties
- Development organisations need to strengthen their links with Disabled Peoples' Organisations
- South-South learning
- Understand the links between the care economy, violence against women and people with disabilities
- Churches could play a stronger role in educating communities about the importance of disability inclusion
- Pay for time/expertise of people with disabilities when they are invited to participate in meetings, research etc
- Lack of Pacific government funding for disability services and disability prevention

What are the challenges?

- Reaching people with disabilities in remote areas, including outer islands
- Public perceptions of people with disabilities
- Need to tailor programs to people with different disabilities
- Increasing levels of physical disabilities due to non-communicable diseases
- DPOs not always included in consultations and decision-making
- DPOs have limited resources and can be over-burdened with demands from other groups
- Barriers to women's full economic participation
- Lack of data on people with disabilities to assist government planning and budgeting