

**Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development  
Advisory Board**

**Eighth Meeting 3 September 2019 – Nuku'alofa Tonga**

**Meeting Report**

The eighth meeting of the Advisory Board for Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development (*Pacific Women*) was held in Nuku'alofa, Tonga on 2 September 2019. The meeting was chaired by Natalia Latu, World Bank Liaison Officer, Tonga and Kathy Klugman, First Assistant Secretary Pacific Strategy Division, DFAT. The meeting agenda is at [Attachment A](#).

The objectives 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](#).

Ms Latu welcomed the Board members to Tonga with a special welcome to Ms Audrey Aumua and Ms Kathy Klugman at their first meeting since being appointed to the Board. Ms Talei Tuinanuana attended the meeting on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat and apologies were received from Ms Savina Nongebatu; Mr Paki Ormsby; Dr Sharman Stone; and Ms Kymberley Kepore from the *Pacific Women* Support Unit.

The meeting commenced with an opening prayer by Board Member, Reverend Sereima Lomaloma.

**Actions Arising:**

The Board noted the actions taken since the last meeting and thanks the Secretariat, PIFS and SPC for the updates. It was agreed that the only outstanding item – to update the communications messages – would be carried over to the next meeting.

The Board discussed the need to keep visibility of the commitments made in the Pacific Leaders' Gender Equality Declaration. There are opportunities through CEDAW, SDG and Beijing 25 + year reporting for governments to showcase progress and for civil society to hold

governments accountable. Regional organisations and donor programs can provide technical support, but countries must take the lead.

There continue to be potential to better integrate gender equality discussions in regional meetings, including health, agriculture, transport and economics and through the sub-regional leaders meeting (Micronesian, Melanesian and Polynesian summits).

The Board noted the commitment made by Australia's Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Women to convene a meeting of Pacific leaders to discuss how to respond to violence against women. Details of the meeting are still be finalised, but will include meaningful involvement of civil society.

PIFS will provide information to the Board on the process and outcomes of Civil Society Forums held in conjunction with the FEMM and the PIF and DFAT will provide information on the forward program for SPC's Pacific Gender Equality Program's (PGEP) gender statistics and gender policy work.

Board members agreed to have a standing Actions Arising item for each meeting – Board members will 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.

### **Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development update**

The Board noted the variety of evaluations undertaken at different levels of *Pacific Women*, including of bilateral and regional activities; the PNG mid-term review and the evaluation of Australia's commitments to ending violence against women and girls by the Office of the Development Effectiveness.

The Board noted the range of program achievements, and the emerging evidence of program impacts. Board members noted the Women's Economic Empowerment Learning Event, including highlighting the important work of the Markets for Change program.

### ***Pacific Women* Three Year and Six Year Evaluations**

The Board noted the progress made against the recommendations from the Three Year evaluation, including additional regional funding for women's economic empowerment and leadership, efforts to clarify the *Pacific Women* model with stakeholders and clarifying and strengthening the role of the Advisory Board.

The Board discussed the proposed process for the Six Year Evaluation. The evaluation will have two components. Component one will review program achievements and outcomes, and identify challenges and areas for improvement. The second component will further examine the context in which *Pacific Women* is operating with a strong focus on understanding women's experiences. Component two will help to build the capacity of Pacific researchers. Both components will support decision-making on Australia's future support for gender equality in the Pacific.

The Board endorsed the proposed process for the Six Year Evaluation, noting the need to:

- define *Pacific Women's* contribution or attribution to change in different contexts.
- investigate sustainability including through Pacific ownerships of gender equality and Pacific governments' commitment to implementing the Pacific Leaders' Gender Equality Declaration.
- Identify Pacific appropriate ways of measuring social change.

### **Gender Equality Programs in Tonga**

The Board congratulated the Women's Affairs Division on their presentation noting in particular, the placement Church Desk Officer with the Ministry of Internal Affairs; the Family Protection Act implementation strategy and publication of three key documents: Gender Equality: Where do we stand?; Gender Mainstreaming Handbook; and National Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality Tonga Policy and Strategic Plan of Action 2019-2025. It was also noted that Australia's funding of four positions in the Ministry of Internal Affairs, had positive outcomes both in terms of policy formation and coordination of the national response.

The Australian High Commission presented an overview of work under the *Pacific Women* country plan as well as efforts to mainstream gender equality responses across the whole of DFAT's engagement in Tonga. The Board noted the strong partnerships with government and with civil society, including the long-term core support to two key women's organisations: the Women and Children's Crisis Centre and the Tonga National Centre for Women and Children. The links between bilaterally and regionally funded programs was also highlighted, for example regional funding through SPC supported development of the three key government documents, and funding for women's leadership and adolescent girls is channelled through bilateral and regional programs. The Board congratulated the DFAT team on the breadth and depth of the *Pacific Women* program as well as mainstreaming efforts through health and economic growth programs.

### ***Pacific Women* Communication Strategy**

The Board noted the additional resources committed to the Communications Strategy, supported its flexibility and the use of different modalities to convey messages.

It was suggested the Support Unit explore the expanded use of digital content on the website and contact SPC's Pacific Way unit to explore possible collaboration. It was also suggested that DFAT engage with the ABC on how gender equality is reported in the reported in the media.

The Board endorsed the Communication Strategy, but requested an addition to the principles, "use a variety of voices to deliver messages, eg male advocates, where appropriate".

The Board endorsed the format for the one page progress report and requested it be developed for all 14 countries, as well as for the regional program. It was noted these

should be updated every six months, at the same time the Country Plan summaries are updated.

The Board noted the importance of communities understanding the work of the program and asked for advice on the extent to which *Pacific Women's* resources are translated into different Pacific languages.

It was agreed that Communications could be an agenda item at the next face to face meeting of the Board, with a focus on the advocacy messages.

The Board requested DFAT to explore the potential for the program to issue awards, eg for journalism.

### **Succession Planning**

The revised Board terms of reference states “beginning in 2019, approximately one third of the Board will turn over every two years.” The three retiring Board members (Jane Kesno, Maere Tekanene and Rev Sereima Lomaloma) were thanked for their service to the Board and for their contribution to the program.

Board members will suggest nominees for the vacancies, noting the Australian Foreign Minister will make the decision on the Board composition.

### **The roles and direction of the Advisory Board**

The Board considered 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.

The Board requested a schedule of regional events and an overview of how the Advisory Board has provided inputs to the program and how this has been utilised and shaped the program.

The Board agreed the next Board meeting will be held in Papua New Guinea in early February 2020. Three core agenda items will be findings of the six year evaluation; *Pacific Women's* communication messages; and influencing regional meeting discussions.

A teleconference will be held in November 2019.

**Attachment A:**

**Agenda**  
**Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development Advisory Board Meeting**  
**3 September 2019**

**Venue:** Fiefia Room, Tanoa Dateline Hotel

**Chair:** Natalia Latu and Kathy Klugman

**9:30 – 10:30 Welcome and Actions Arising**

- 9:30      1. Welcome and Introduction
- 9:40      2. Review of minutes of previous meeting, including actions arising
- 10:00     3. Review of the revised terms of reference

**10:15 Pacific Women Update**

- 10:15     4. *Pacific Women* Update

**11:00 Morning tea**

**11:15 – 12:30 Pacific Women Evaluations**

- 11:15     5. Update on progress towards the *Pacific Women* Year 3 Evaluation recommendations
6. Presentation on *Pacific Women* Year 6 Evaluation
- 12:00     Discussion by Advisory Board and endorsement

**12:30 -2:00 Lunch**

A working lunch with staff from the Women's Affairs Department

**2:00 – 3:00 Presentation on Tonga Bilateral Program**

7. An overview of *Pacific Women* in Tonga and the approach to gender mainstreaming across Australia's engagement with Tonga

**3:00 – 3:15 Afternoon tea**

**3:15 – 4:15 Pacific Women Communication Strategy**

- 3:15      8. Presentation on *Pacific Women's* Communication strategy
- 3:30      Discussion by Advisory Board and endorsement

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

- 4:00      9. Succession planning – for discussion and endorsement
- 4:30      10. Priorities for the Advisory Board for the next six months.
- 5:00      10. Advisory Board meeting decisions and recommendations, including reflections on the meeting.
- 5:15      12. Date and location for next meeting and wrap up.

## **Attachment B: Attendance**

Dr Audrey Aumua Deputy, Director-General 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 Kathy Klugman, First Assistant Secretary, Pacific Strategic Division, DFAT (Australia)

Ms Natalia Palu Latu, World Bank Liaison Officer (Tonga)

Hon Niki Rattle, Speaker, Parliament of the Cook Islands

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

Ms Maere Tekanene, former Minister for Education (Kiribati)

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

Ms Talei Tuinamuana, Policy Officer Pacific islands Forum Secretariat

## **Attachment C: Program Visits and Meetings (4 September 2019)**

### **Women in Agriculture project**

The Board visited Ha'atafu, where a women's group have developed a plantation garden. They received support through Australia's Direct Aid Program and the DFAT funded Tonga Skills program.

The Board was accompanied by Tonga's Minister for Agriculture, Food and Forestry, Hon Losaline Ma'asi, the only female Cabinet Minister, and Australia's High Commissioner, Mr Adrian Morrison.

### **Women and Children's Crisis Centre**

Staff from the Centre shared with the Board members the range of work they do including support for survivors of violence, training with new recruits of the Tonga Police; work in schools to prevent violence and outreach to rural and remote areas. The Women and Children's Crisis Centre has received direct funding from Australia for over five years.

### **Lunch with Young Tongan leaders**

The Board shared lunch with a cross-section of inspiring young Tongan leaders from different sectors, including NGO, Faith-Based, Government's Youth Division, IT, medicine and law.

### **Tonga National Centre for Women and Children**

Staff and clients from the Centre shared experiences from the Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE) pilot program. The economic empowerment program is an additional component to the centre's core work, helping communities to develop and promote a peaceful, safe and inclusive community in which the women and children of Tonga can live a healthy and happy life free of all forms of violence. The Centre's staff and Board members also shared their experiences working with the churches and the communities on their outreach programs on violence against women.

### **Family Protection Legal Aid Centre (at the Australian High Commission Office)**

Staff from the Legal Aid Centre outlined the Centre's achievements and their struggles. Following the pilot funded through RRRT, DFAT funds the extension of this project, which is being managed by Tonga's Ministry of Justice. The objectives of the centre are: to increase access to justice for survivors of domestic violence by providing free legal aid services through the Centre; and increase the capacity of survivors to effectively apply for the various protection orders through under the Family Protection Act through the provision and availability of free legal advice and assistance