



PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM SECRETARIAT

*Excelling Together for the People of the Pacific*



PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM  
*40th Anniversary* 1971-2011



# Country Updates

Thirteenth Meeting of the Washington Group  
on Disability Statistics



# Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat

- **Our mission** is to ensure the effective implementation of the Leaders' decisions for the benefit of the people of the Pacific.

**Our goals** are to stimulate economic growth and enhance political governance and security for the region, through the provision of policy advice; and to strengthen regional cooperation and integration through coordinating, monitoring and evaluating implementation of Leaders' decisions.

Pacific Islands Forum, are to provide:

- Policy advice and guidance in implementing the decisions of the Leaders
- Coordination and assistance in implementing the decisions of the Leaders
- Support to the Leaders' meetings, ministerial meetings, and associated committees and working groups

# PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM

- Disability was not on the Forum agenda until 2002 when the Honourable Prime Minister of Vanuatu raised the issue at the 2002 Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting.
- Prompted by the recommendations adopted by the UNESCAP 7 Special Body on Pacific Island Developing Countries Meeting in Bangkok in May 2002.
- Disability included in PIF Leaders Communique in 2003 and Pacific Plan, section 12.5.



# **DISABILITY WORK IN THE PACIFIC**



## **BACKGROUND**

- Persons with disabilities in Pacific island countries are among the poorest and most marginalised members of their communities.
- The struggling economies of PICs inhibit government attention to the presence, needs and concerns of Persons with Disabilities - minority group and needs are outweighed by national priority and agenda.
- Establishment of Disabled Peoples Organisations (DPOs) increased world-wide since United Nations proclaimed IYDP in 1981 – Theme “Full participation and equal opportunities for Persons With Disabilities”



- The primary catalysts for developing responses to disability issues in PICs in the last four decades have been local, national and international NGOs.
- Governments like Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand and the United Kingdom provided financial assistance to support the efforts of these NGOs which mainly target the education and rehabilitation needs of children and adults with disabilities in the Pacific.





## Cont. BACKGROUND

- Single and cross-disability NGOs were established in PICs, focused on service delivery and managed by able-bodied persons.
- Persons with disabilities were cared for, spoon-fed, protected and segregated.
- Regarded as recipients of goodwill, unable to make their own choices or determine their own destiny.
- Strong extended family system encouraged family members to look after their less fortunate relatives.
- Association of a disabling condition with ancestral curse, parental misdeeds, witchcraft, shame and fear kept persons with disabilities isolated, neglected, dependent and poor.





- UNESCAP spearheading regional efforts over three consecutive regional disability decades to forge a paradigm shift from a welfare to a human rights-based approach to disability.
- The first Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons started in 1993 and concluded in 2002.



## PACIFIC DISABILITY FORUM (PDF)

- National DPOs and disability service providers in PICs met in Fiji in December 2002 to discuss a Pacific-based regional organisation on disability.
- This meeting saw the birth of the Pacific Disability Forum (PDF).
- NZAID) reviewed its funding support to disability programme in the Pacific region in 2005.
- NZAID Pacific Regional Health Programme received clear, strategic direction for assistance in the area of disability development in the Pacific region for the next five years.
- PDF well placed as a partner to NZAID and secured funding agreement until June 2011.



## PDF VISION

- An inclusive Pacific society that is responsive, culture sensitive, gender equitable and ensures the promotion and protection of the rights of persons with disabilities



## PDF MISSION

- To improve the situations of persons with disabilities in Pacific Island Countries & Territories by developing and strengthening the capacity of member disabled persons organisations (DPOs) through advocacy and collaboration with relevant stakeholders.



# MEMBERSHIP

- PDF Membership – 58 organisations in 19 countries and territories (Australia, Cook Is, East Timor, FSM, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, PNG, Samoa, Solomon Is, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu)
- 30 Full Members – DPOs ( Australia – 5, New Zealand – 4, PICs – 21)
- 28 Associate Members with 10 Individuals, 18 Organisations



# **PACIFIC REGIONAL STRATEGY ON DISABILITY**

- The adoption of a Pacific Regional Strategy on Disability is thus a response to the directive of Leaders as well a response to the spirit and principles of the Pacific Plan on enabling Pacific people to live free and worthwhile lives in the context of increased regional integration.



A green, rectangular sign with rounded corners and a white border, mounted on two wooden posts. The sign is tilted slightly to the right. The word "Purpose" is written on the sign in a white, sans-serif font. The background is a bright blue sky with scattered white clouds. A larger, more prominent cloud is visible in the upper left quadrant of the image.

Purpose



- Support Pacific Island Forum member countries to protect and promote the rights of persons with disabilities;
- Provide a framework for the coordination of development partners, governments and civil society in building a disability inclusive Pacific; and
- Strengthen commitment of all stakeholders towards implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and other human rights instruments which/that relate to disability.



# **WHY DO WE NEED A PACIFIC REGIONAL STRATEGY ON DISABILITY? (PRSD)**

- Disability – common issue in the region
- The PRSD is designed to provide guidance on national policies.
- Lack of capacity and expertise to develop policy legislation, and programmes, thus support from regional sources is critical.

## **VISION**

- An inclusive, barrier-free, and rights-based society for people with disabilities, which embraces the diversity of all Pacific people.

## **GOAL**

- To improve the lives and status of persons with disabilities in the Pacific region.



# THEMATIC AREAS

- Strengthen Political Leadership and an Enabling Environment
- Recognition and Protection of the Human Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- Strengthen Partnerships: Coordination and Collaboration
- Disability Inclusive Development
- Enhancing the Central Role of Persons with Disabilities
- Mobilisation of Resources



# Informal Working Group

## Purpose

- Advisory committee that directs/guide the implementation of PRSD and disability coordination work in the region.
- UNESCAP, PDF, WHO, UNOCHR, SPC-RRRT, AusAID, ILO, PIFS
- Way forward – working to formalizing this as a CROP working group

# Current Progress

- 7 Pacific Island Countries have ratified the UNCRPD namely Cook Islands, Vanuatu, Kiribati, Palau and Papua New Guinea, Niue and Nauru
- Research – UNPRPD and Development of Pacific Indicators

# Next Steps

- Disability Statistics Meeting
- Baseline Survey
- Use of Short Set Questions by WG



# PARTNERSHIP WITH DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

- Australia's role in supporting the inclusion of people with disability in development processes was first defined in *Development for All: Towards a Disability-Inclusive Australian Aid Program 2009-2014*.
- One of the guiding principles underpinning this Strategy is the active central role by people with disability



**Thank You!**

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