

Pacific Women's Parliamentary Partnerships Lead to a Action on Diabetes Epidemic

[Regional Tuvalu Leadership And Decision-Making](#)

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Project name: Pacific Women's Parliamentary Partnerships (PWPP) project

Outcome area: Leadership and decision making

Project partner: International and Community Relations Office, Australian Department of the House of Representatives

Total funding: \$2,850,037*

Funding timeframe: 2013–2018

The Hon Dr Puakena Boreham, Tuvalu's only woman MP and the Hon Judi Moylan, a former member of the Australian House of Representatives, have formed a partnership that is positively influencing government action on diabetes prevention in Tuvalu.



L-R: Associate Professor Ruth Colagiuri with Hon Judi Moylan and Dr Puakena Boreham (front) at the Menzies Centre for Health Policy at Sydney University. They were part of a forum for women leaders in academia and politics supported by the PWPP project.

Photo: PWPP.

The PWPP project has offered the two women a number of opportunities to work together, learn from each other and advocate on their common goal. Non-communicable diseases (NCDs), including diabetes, account for 75 percent of deaths in the Pacific. As a medical doctor, Dr Puakena Boreham felt constrained at only being able to manage the treatment of patients with diabetes.

‘It was heart breaking seeing the consequences and complexities of diabetes in the country over the duration of my career in medicine. It was during this period that my passion to help the sick and my people as a whole, evolves from a doctor-patient relationship in closed rooms and operating theatres, to one that involves addressing it at the highest decision making table in the country. This belief for a positive change in the management of diabetes and other NCDs resulted in my running for the country’s recent election.’

Ms Moylan spent 20 years as an Australian politician and established the Parliamentary Diabetes Support Group. Parliamentarians in the Parliamentary Diabetes Support Group show leadership in promoting community education, effective policies and healthcare for sufferers of diabetes. Since retiring from parliament, Ms Moylan continues her advocacy work as the current convenor of the Parliamentarians for Diabetes Global Network.

The two women met at the Menzies Centre for Health Policy at Sydney University at a forum for women leaders in academia and politics, supported by PWPP. Later, with further support from Pacific Women, they travelled together to Canada for the Parliamentarians for Diabetes Global Network Forum.

There, Dr Boreham addressed parliamentarians from 31 nations on the challenge of diabetes in island nations. Along with parliamentarians from other countries, she signed the Vancouver Proclamation calling on governments to provide universal health coverage for everyone with diabetes. Through the PWPP project, Ms Moylan has been able to share with Dr Boreham her experience and networks as a parliamentarian advocating on the issue of diabetes for two decades. This has assisted Dr Boreham to take steps in her own parliament, including successfully establishing Tuvalu’s first Standing Committee on Health.



Dr Puakena Boreham at the Menzies Centre for Health Policy at Sydney University. She was part of a forum for women leaders in academia and politics supported by the PWPP project. Photo: PWPP.

This Story of Change was originally published in the [Pacific Women Annual Progress Report 2015-2016](#). All values are consisted with that reporting period. For the most up-to-date value of activities, visit our [interactive map](#).

*This activity is part of a larger program.