

Empowering Women and Girls with Disabilities

Fiji Regional Enhancing Agency

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Project name: Pacific Regional Ending Violence Against Women Facility Fund (Pacific Fund)

Project partners: UN Women and Pacific Disability Forum

Total funding: \$1,500,000*

Funding timeframe: 2014–2015

Ms Lanieta Tuimabu is the Office Manager for the Fiji Disabled People's Federation (FDPF) and a Board Member of the Pacific Disability Forum. Through a variety of projects sponsored by Pacific Women, Ms Tuimabu has been an active influencer in ensuring protection and advancement of women and girls with disabilities.



Ms Lanieta Tuimabu is a strong Pacific disability rights advocate and works with key organisations such as the FDPF and PDF, in ensuring the protection and advancement of women and girls with disabilities. Photo: Shazia Usman/ Pacific Women Support Unit.

Drafting a toolkit to assist with disability inclusive programming to end violence against women, modelling adaptive leadership for her five staff at the FDPF and representing Pacific women with disabilities at the 60th CSW in New York, are all in a day's work for Ms Tuimabu.

She has found the two adaptive leadership programs organised by Pacific Women and PLP to be 'very helpful' in her active role at the FDPF. At the training in February 2016, she explained: 'it was a new concept and I was worried, thinking how effective will it really be. But it was effective. And being part of this meeting today has enhanced my knowledge.'

Adaptive leadership skills enable individuals and groups to have the adaptability to thrive in complex environments, such as the one Ms Tuimabu works in. She has since put her adaptive leadership skills to use at the FDPF.

'After the training, it really built my personal skill in terms of managing very high-risk issues. I have also cross disability staff where I have to understand each one's ability and disability and how to effectively communicate with each one of them. I have staff with hearing impairment and one staff with physical disability and one who is in a wheelchair. I am visually impaired.'

Ms Tuimabu felt that the adaptive leadership training also prepared her for representing the Pacific Disability Forum at the 60th CSW.

'I hope my participation at the CSW would be very meaningful, ensuring that women's issues in the Pacific will be heard at the UN level. Whether it is women's empowerment, women's economic empowerment, access to health services, ending violence against women. Some women with disability have been sexually abused and have had unwanted pregnancies. This is one of my focus areas that I will lobby on.'

In addition to her leadership and advocacy roles, Ms Tuimabu supported the Pacific Disability Forum with the development of a practical, user friendly toolkit for designing and implementing successful projects to end violence against women and girls.

Global data shows that women and girls with disabilities are more vulnerable to experiencing physical or sexual violence from an intimate partner.

The toolkit was developed through support from UN Women's Pacific Fund, which is funded from Pacific Women. The toolkit contains group exercises, role plays and case studies, as well as a section on action planning for the inclusion of women and girls with disabilities.

US-based Handicap International has recognised the toolkit globally as one of the top 10 projects on good practices about the elimination, prevention and response to violence, abuse and exploitation of women and girls with disabilities.

*This activity is part of a larger program.

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