



# PACIFIC DISABILITY FORUM

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**PRESS RELEASE**

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## **From Recognition to Realisation of Rights: Furthering Effective Partnership for an Inclusive Pacific 2030**

### **6<sup>th</sup> Pacific Regional Conference on Disabilities – Women and Youth with Disabilities Forum Opening**

#### **PRESS RELEASE:**

“Ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities followed by a specific national law on disabilities is critical if we as a country are to give persons living with disabilities the focus, attention and credit that is due to them.”

The Minister for Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation, Mereseini Vuniwaqa in opening the Youth and Women with Disabilities Forum this morning in Nadi told delegates that since Fiji’s ratification and enactment of a specific national law, disabilities has been high on the national budget agenda - money that is provided by government to realize the aims of the Convention and the national law for our Fijians living with disabilities

“To better access to services, the Fiji Government have funded free bus fare program for persons living with disabilities. The continuation to strengthening data gathering for baseline studies and analysis of the needs of people with disabilities is ongoing and the maintaining of the National Disability Database,” said Hon Vuniwaqa.

In the Pacific Disability Forum SDG-CRPD Monitoring Report 2018, the disaggregation of data by disability regionally is crucial to enable governments to monitor the level of inclusion of persons with disabilities and inform future policies and programs. This is also an obligation under the CRPD (Article 31), as well as a global political commitment across the SDGs. Indeed, SDG target 17.18 is to, by 2020, support States to significantly increase the availability of ‘high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by gender, age, ethnicity, disability (and) geographic location’.

Under the Pacific Framework for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Goal 5: Evidence (Strengthen disability research, statistics and analysis), there is a clear regional commitment to produce disability disaggregated data in a comparable manner through the use of the Washington Group Short Set of Questions on Disability (WGSS) in censuses and surveys.

The Chief Executive Officer of the Pacific Disability Forum, Mr Setareki Macanawai in delivering

the vote of thanks, congratulated the Fiji Government for their excellent work over the years and encouraged all Pacific countries to follow suite.

“The Fijian Government has raised the standards in terms of persons with disabilities, thus they have challenged the rest of the Pacific to its policies and legislation on persons with disabilities.”

The 6<sup>th</sup> Pacific Regional Conference on Disability (PRCD) is being held at the Tanoa International Hotel, Nadi from 25<sup>th</sup> February till the 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019 with the financial support of the Australian Government through the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

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