

Press Release

The Pacific Region's first Rehabilitation Conference Tanoa International Hotel, Nadi April 2nd-5th, 2019



Having the right mobility device, such as a wheelchair or prosthetic leg is essential for inclusion and participation for many people in our communities.

Access to these services in the Pacific Region is however limited, and addressing this situation is a priority.



Disability rights, access to rehabilitation in remote areas and the latest wheelchair technology are hot topics under discussion at the Pacific's first ever rehabilitation and mobility conference underway in Nadi this week.

Adelaide based NGO Motivation Australia and the [Pacific Disability Forum](#) have come together to host this important Conference, which follows on from the Pacific Disability Forum's successful 6th Regional Conference held one month ago, and which highlighted the need for assistive technology as one precondition for inclusion and participation for many.

His Excellency Mr John Feakes, Australian High Commissioner to Fiji when opening the First Pacific Region Rehabilitation and Mobility Conference on Tuesday evening said that the Australian Government was honoured to partner with Motivation Australia and the Pacific Disability Forum to contribute to disability rehabilitation and access assistive technology within health services in the Pacific. *"Many people with disabilities and others in our region need access to rehabilitation services and an important part of the Australian Government's work in this space is around strengthening health systems in our region and we are pleased to be able to support people to access quality rehabilitation services. Rehabilitation services also allow people access to life-changing assistive devices and products necessary to participate equally and meaningfully."*

Savina Nongebatu, the Deputy Chief Executive Officer for the Pacific Disability Forum (PDF) says that as from the PDF SDG Monitoring Report, access to assistive device is an area which would very concretely benefit from a regional approach and from a multi-stakeholders mobilisation *"PDF and its members will continue to advocate to ensure much needed services are accessible and available for all."*

Running through to Friday this week, the [this Conference](#) hosts 55 leaders from Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu. They will be joined by 20 rehabilitation and mobility device experts from Australia, New Zealand and the United States all sharing knowledge and experiences.

Kylie Mines, the Chief Executive Officer Motivation Australia highlights the purpose of this Conference *"This Conference is a timely and important opportunity to critically analyse what is working well, where are the gaps, and what we can do better. Together Conference delegates will focus on, and discuss, issues such as service equity, the products and technology being used in the region, service delivery approaches, and training opportunities; and draw together recommendations for next steps in each of these areas, which will be a guide for each of us as we play our part in creating better services for a more inclusive Pacific"*

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