



**Pacific Disability
Forum**

A partnership of Pacific organisations
of and for persons with disabilities

Pasifika Weekly Update

5 September, 2025

A warm greetings from the Pacific Disability Forum.

September has just started, and with it comes responsibilities and commitments for us all within the region. We need to be ready to pitch in and work together as a team to ensure an effective and robust outcomes.

Also, it is a good time for reflections on what your organizations have done in the last 9 months and see what objectives you have covered and reflect on where you were strongest, weakest, and how best you would move forward individually or as Team.

From the PDF secretariat, we urge all our national organisation of persons with disabilities to continue to rise, as together through our strength in numbers, we will continue to advocate for and influence processes to ensure that no one is left behind.

Below are 8 updates for this week.

MSP supports Inclusive Outreach Program in Vanuabalavu



In collaboration with the [Fiji Disabled Peoples Federation](#), MSP Suva outreach supported the outreach program in Vanuabalavu by conducting awareness sessions on Child Protection and Gender-Based Violence, alongside health screening as part of the Inclusivity Program for People Living with Disability (PLWD).

The sessions engaged government stakeholders, community gatekeepers (Community Health Workers and Village Headmen) and PLWD representatives from each community.

The team also carried out scoping and community profiling and assisted with

the distribution of assistive devices from the Spinal Injury Association. In total, 156 participants accessed awareness, health screening, and related services through community hall programs and dorm visits conducted over the two-day outreach.

UN praises PNG's human rights steps, urges greater inclusion for women



The Secretary General of the United Nations His Excellency Antonio Guterres has commended Papua New Guinea for its significant progress in peacebuilding and human rights. In his address at the parliament today, H.E Guterres issue a call to action to all members of parliament to ensure women are at the heart of the nation's development. [Read More](#)

Disability is not inability” – Agriculture Minister praises physically challenged men



Peniasi Dobui (in blue t-shirt) working at a construction site. – SUPPLIED

Minister for Agriculture and Waterways, Vatimi Rayalu had heaped praise for a man who had lost both his legs in a workplace incident at the age of twenty-five and still earns a living today at the age of sixty. [Read More](#)

Understanding Disability in Papua New Guinea



In Papua New Guinea, the complex socio-economic and political landscape significantly affects disability advocacy and action across all aspects of life. Disability spans physical, mental, and trauma-induced conditions, and may often be traced back to

periods of conflict and violence. Disability inclusion in Papua New Guinea can be seen as taboo, and disability initiatives are typically poorly funded. Widespread disability compounds intergenerational disparity, constraining the country's development even further. [Read More](#)

Addressing Disability and Poverty in Fiji

Tucked away amidst [approximately 330 tropical islands](#) in the South Pacific Ocean, [Fiji saw 929,740 visitors in 2023](#), a [46.1% increase](#) from the previous year. Despite this surge, many residents' lives have not improved. A significant



portion of Fiji's population lives below the national [poverty line](#), facing considerable barriers due to disability and poverty. This highlights the urgent need for support to address the challenges faced by impoverished and disabled Fijians. Here is information about the correlation between disability and

poverty in Fiji. [Read More](#)

Disability and Poverty in Samoa: Faaolo Utumapu-Utailesolo

Growing up blind in [Samoa](#), Faaolo Utumapu-Utailesolo felt first-hand not only how hard life is living in poverty, but how much harder it is for disabled persons living in poverty. With no access to Braille, teachers trained to support



her in school, or necessary medical care and support, she struggled a lot until her family was able to find the money to support her financially. Now, with a bachelor's and master's degree, she lives as a university lecturer, working with her disability rights movement to help other people with disabilities gain a fulfilling education, to live

a fulfilling life. Here is information about disability and poverty in Samoa and what Utumapu-Utailesolo has done to address it. [Read More](#)

Making disability everyone's business in Timor-Leste



Eleven-year-old Evan was born blind. For him to learn and fulfil his dream of becoming a teacher, he has had to leave his family and take shelter at run by an organisation for people with visual impairment in Dili, Timor-Leste, which is more than 100km from his family home. It is at this community run centre,

where he is being taught basic adaptive skills such as how to use other senses to move around, and to use braille. [Read More](#)

A first of its kind database for persons with disability launched in Vanuatu



The Vanuatu database for People with Disability was officially launched and re-affirms the government's commitment to achieving sustainable development goals and ensuring no one is left behind. The Vanuatu database for People with Disability is the first of its kind in the Pacific region. The database will include the

name, location, age, sex, and clinical diagnosis of a person with a disability, and this will be accessed by essential services/ministries as required or for routine follow-ups as well as during outbreaks and natural disasters. [Read More](#)

Have a Blessed Weekend!