



**Pacific Disability
Forum**

A partnership of Pacific organisations
of and for persons with disabilities

Pasifika Weekly E-News Update

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‘Youth – Leaders of Tomorrow’ – 2025 Fiji Youth Parliament Opens

‘You—the youth—are our leaders of tomorrow; and you are in the periphery of that role, today. You carry with you not just energy and enthusiasm, but a sense of purpose, a commitment to service, and a bold vision for the future.’



These were the sentiments highlighted by the Speaker of Parliament the Hon. Filione Jitoko whilst opening the 2025 Fiji Youth Parliament at Holiday Inn last night. [Read More](#)

WASLI Oceania Conference 2025

The Pacific Disability Forum was honoured to attend and support the WASLI Oceania Conference 2025, held under the theme “One Ocean, Many Cultures.”



This important gathering brought together sign language interpreters, Deaf leaders, and partners from across the Pacific, Australia, and New Zealand, and the United Kingdom to strengthen regional interpreter capacity and highlight the vital role of sign language in ensuring accessibility

and inclusion.

The conference reinforced that sign language interpreters are a bridge to equality — opening access to education, healthcare, justice, and community life for Deaf persons in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

We celebrate this milestone for the Pacific and commend WASLI Oceania for leading efforts to build stronger networks, professional training opportunities, and a future where Deaf persons are fully included across our region.

Conducting access audits of churches in Vanuatu

To create more accessible and inclusive places of worship, the Pacific



Disability Forum (PDF) and the Pacific Conference of Churches (PCC) have partnered on a joint initiative. Recently, they collaborated in Espiritu Santo to provide training and support to the Vanuatu Disability Promotion & Advocacy (VDPA), a member organization of PDF.

This initiative is focused on empowering the VDPA to conduct access audits of churches identified by the Vanuatu Council of Churches (VCC) as well as tabulate reports of findings and recommendations to be shared

with PCC.

The goal is to promote disability-inclusive church practices for persons with disabilities in their communities.

This work was made possible through funding support provided by the Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

Programs to advance disability rights

The National Council for People with Disabilities (NCPD) has launched



initiatives to create clearer pathways for employment and improved accessibility for persons with disabilities. According to Nina Tokadavou, Initiative Lead for the council's job discovery program, several key programs have been introduced to advance disability

rights in Fiji. [Read More.](#)

Psychiatric Survivors Association Recognised at 21st Anniversary Celebration and Book Lunch

The Minister for Women, Children, and Social Protection, Hon. Sashi Kiran, officiated at the 21st Anniversary celebration of the Psychiatric Survivors Association (PSA) Fiji and launched two of their publications, *Expecting Mothers with Psychosocial Disabilities* and *Children Living in Psychosocially Affected Families*. [Read More](#)



Timor-Leste certified malaria-free by WHO

The World Health Organization (WHO) has certified Timor-Leste as malaria-free, a remarkable achievement for a country that prioritized the disease and embarked on a concerted, nationwide response shortly after gaining independence in 2002. [Read More](#)



Papua New Guinea eliminates trachoma as a public health problem

In a landmark public health achievement, Papua New Guinea (PNG) has been validated by the World Health Organization (WHO) for eliminating trachoma as a public health problem. Trachoma, a neglected tropical disease (NTD) and the world's leading infectious cause of blindness, no longer poses a public health threat in the country. [Read More](#)



Strengthening Vanuatu's health resilience with better data collection

Vanuatu's islands are known for their rich cultural heritage, but beneath this beauty lies a pressing challenge: the country faces persistent public health threats, exacerbated by limited infrastructure, frequent disasters, and the growing impact of climate change. As one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world, Vanuatu is highly vulnerable to disease outbreaks, which can quickly overwhelm its health-care system [Read More](#)



Have a blessed Weekly!