

Briefs on the Pacific Plan for the Hon Prime Minister for the Forum Heads of Government Meeting in Tonga, October 2007

This brief address reporting requirement Under the Good Governance component of the Pacific Plan, Strategic Objective 12 on “Improved transparency, accountability, equity and efficiency in the management and use of resources in the Pacific.”

Strategic Objective 12.5 states that “Where appropriate, ratify and implement international and regional human rights conventions, covenants and agreements and support for reporting and other requirement” and regional support mechanisms should be established by the 2006 Forum” and (coverage to include the drafting, harmonization and promotion of awareness of rights-based domestic legislation within the Pacific, including CEDAW on gender; CRC on children; CERD (Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination); ILO Convention 169 on rights of indigenous peoples; Article 50 of the Cotonou Agreement on labour rights; 1990 International Convention on the Rights of Migrant Workers and their families; the Biwako Millennium Framework for people with disabilities; UNSC Resolution 1325 involving men and women in conflict resolution; human rights and reciprocal enforcement).

Full implementation by end of 2008 with progress reports to Forum in 2007 and 2007.

1. Persons with Disabilities

- Signed Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities on 17 May 2007;
- Drafting of National Disability Policy and Plan of Action 2008-2015 to go before Council of Ministers by December 2007. Incorporates provisions articulated in the BMF and the Convention in the Plan and will incorporate the additional recommendations from the BMF Plus 5 including disaster management programmes and accessible tourism;
- National Disability Committee established by Council of Ministers in February 2006 which monitors the implementation of regional and international commitments;
- Policy on Inclusive Education currently being drafted.
- Ministry of Health revising the Mental Health Act

Recommendation:

- i) Vanuatu to **recommend** that all Forum members to sign and ratify the Disability Convention and its Optional Protocol by 2008;
- ii) Vanuatu to **support** the Forum initiative to hold the Regional Forum Ministers on Disability Meeting in 2008.

2. Children

Strategic Objective 12.5 states that “Where appropriate, ratify and implement international and regional human rights conventions, covenants and agreements and support for reporting and other requirement”.

- Ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Children in 1993. First report presented in 1998.
- Both Optional Protocols to the CRD signed on 17 May 2007;
- National Children’s Policy 2007-2011 approved in 2006. Included in the Policy are moves toward the implementation of the BMF and support for Inclusive Education
- Policy on Inclusive Education being drafted
- Inclusion in the PAA on inclusive education

Recommendation:

- i) Vanuatu to recommend that the Forum Secretariat in collaboration with PRIDE to hold a special Education Ministers Meeting on Inclusive Education
- ii) Vanuatu to recommend the development of a data base on statistics on children with disabilities in the education sector, including policies, programmes and best practices in its regional statistics strategy (if it has one. Otherwise, develop one)

3. Women

Strategic Objective 8: Improved gender equality

Other regional initiatives to improving gender equity which contribute to achieving this Strategic Objective is contained under Strategic Objective 12.5 which states that “Where appropriate, ratify and implement international and regional human rights conventions, covenants and agreements and support for reporting and other requirement”.

- Ratification of CEDAW in 1995. Initial, 2nd and 3rd report presented to UN CEDAW Committee on 14 March 2007. Now working on Concluding Comments. Recommendation from UN CEDAW Committee to combine 4th and 5th report and submit in 2010.
- Signing of Optional Protocol to CEDAW on 17 May 2007. Working on its ratification.
- National Women’s Plan of Action 2007-2011 approved by Council of Ministers in 2007. Included in this Plan are recommendations to support the signing and ratification of the UN Disability Convention; ILO Convention No. 159; implementation of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action towards an Inclusive, Barrier-free and Rights-based Society for Persons with Disabilities 2003-2012.
- National Disability Policy and Plan of Action 2008-2015 drafted and will go before the Council of Ministers for approval by December 2007. Included in the Plan are provisions for achieving gender equity and equality for women and girls with disabilities.