

Pacific Partnerships to Advance Gender, Climate Change Response and Sustainable Development



Outcome statement

High Level Meeting, Nadi, Fiji 13 June, 2014

Equitable, Effective, and Meaningful Partnerships to Address Gender Equality and Climate Change in the Pursuit of Sustainable Development

Preamble:

Pacific women and girls as well as their communities face multiple challenges of being small, ecologically complex, and remote, and aggravated by severe negative impact of climate change, high levels of economic, social, and environmental injustice. To urgently address these life-threatening crises, we call for an inter-linkage approach that analyses the political, physical, ecological, economic, and social dimensions of these overlapping challenges through one holistic frame. The bringing together of different sectors, alliances, and government ministries will be necessary to ensure a truly transformative agenda for gender, social, ecological, and economic justice in the Pacific and globally.

We are representatives of government and diverse civil society organisations (CSOs), networks, and alliances working in partnership for gender, economic, and ecological justice and political transformation, from Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Palau, Republic of Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. In a historical gathering we met in Nadi, Fiji from the 9-13 June 2014, where we critically strategised toward a more effective advancement of Gender, Climate Change Response, and Sustainable Development in the Pacific region.

Any sustainable development framework post-2015 must be grounded in social inclusion and equity, human security and sustainable peace, the fulfilment of human rights for all and gender equality.

This transformational shift requires the redistribution of unequal and unfair burdens on women and girls in sustaining societal well-being and economies, intensified in times of violence and conflict, as well as during and after economic and ecological crises. A development model that will work for women and girls of all ages and identities must be firmly rooted in international human rights prin-

ciples and obligations¹, including non- retrogression, progressive realization, and the Rio principles, including common but differentiated responsibilities. The Pacific States have already taken steps towards gender equality and human rights commitments in legislation, policy and budget allocations. We support these actions as a foundation for future advances.

We commend our leaders for the strong positions taken in the Majuro Declaration on Climate Leadership (2013) and urge immediate national implementation. We also reaffirm the existing Pacific State commitments including the Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration (2012); the Regional Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security (2012); the Final Communiqué of the 40th Pacific Islands Forum, including the Cairns Communique recommendations on Sexual and Gender Based Violence (2010), and the Pacific Platform for Action on Advancement of Women and Gender Equality (2013).

We recognize the above guiding principles and together put forward the following points to be fully reflected in the framework for the post-2015 sustainable development agenda, the Small Islands Developing States process, Pacific Regionalism, and National Strategic Development Plans:

1. Reiterating PSIDS position on gender, we call for gender equality to be crosscutting across all sustainable development goals, strategies and objectives, as well as enshrined in a stand-alone goal to achieve gender equality, women's empowerment, and the full realisation of women's human rights, including sexual and reproductive health and rights. We call for an end to all forms of gender-based violence including early and forced marriages, further torture and extrajudicial killing of women and girls under the guise of eliminating witchcraft and sorcery, and sexual violence, especially during and after conflict and natural disasters;
2. The mainstreaming of gender as a crosscutting issue for strong action on climate change is key to sustainable development. Pacific SIDS are at the forefront of climate change impacts as a result of continued burning of fossil fuels by developed countries. These effects include sea level rise, extreme weather events, ocean acidification, and king tides, which threaten food security and health. To address needs for financing, technology transfer, and disaster response, all Pacific SIDS need urgent focus on mitigation and adaptation, based on long-agreed Agenda 21 principles.
3. Climate finance must be gender-responsive, as climate change is not gender-neutral. The financial measures that address climate action must take into account social development priorities and ensure adequate budget allocation for both national women's machineries and civil society.
4. The meaningful engagement of all sectors of society, particularly women and young people, is essential in preventing and reducing disaster risk. The skills, knowledge, experience, and creativity of women and young people must be incorporated into disaster risk management and planning, and action to ensure holistic and sustainable approaches to reducing risk and more effective response to hazards in the Pacific.

¹ The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and its Optional Protocol; the Beijing Platform for Action, the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, and the declarations adopted by the Commission on the occasion of the tenth and fifteenth anniversaries of the Fourth World Conference on Women. The Cairo Program of Action, the Yogyakarta Principles, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Security Council Resolutions 1325, 1820, 1888 and 1960, and the relevant conventions of the International Labour Organization, that obligate our States to adopt legal and policy frameworks for the elimination and prevention of all forms of sexual and gender based violence.

5. We call for the recognition, strengthening and institutionalisation of partnerships between governments and civil society, particularly with regard to priority-setting for effective partnerships founded on full transparency, meaningful accountability, and respect for human rights.

6. We support the call of the Pacific SIDS to substantially strengthen institutional and human capacities to address gender, climate change, and disaster risk reduction. This includes access to timely and regionally relevant information. We reiterate the call for increased research and data, disaggregated and analysed on the basis of gender, sex, age, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, cultural background and health status.

7. We support the stand-alone goal on Oceans as proposed by Pacific SIDS. Maintenance of healthy ocean ecosystems should be the first priority, overriding concerns to balance budgets by mining deep-sea minerals and pursuing economic growth through unsustainable practices, which threaten the basis of both artisanal fishing and commercial fisheries revenue.

8. We call for an immediate halt to the loss of global biodiversity, including habitats and forests, and to protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species.

9. Trade agreements must not supersede national constitutions and legislation, and must not allow infringement by corporate actors on human rights or on national policy space. Multilateral mechanisms must subject investors and transnational corporations to legally binding norms and standards.²

10. At the global level, a stable, multilateral and equitable financial system, with representative and participatory international institutions and systematic international financial regulation is required. Developed countries must implement their ODA commitments of 0.07% of GDP, and ensure equitable access of developing countries to environmentally sound, socially beneficial and economically productive technologies. It is also necessary to ensure debt sustainability, restructuring and relief.

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