



UN WOMEN IN THE PACIFIC

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Joint approach to gender programmes



Samoa's Prime Minister, Tuilaepa Aiono Sailele Malielegaoi, with UNICEF Pacific Representative Karen Allen and UN Women Deputy Representative Nicolas Burniat in Apia. Credit: UN Women/Mele Maualaivao.

Samoa's government has announced that its priority areas for implementing the SAMOA Pathway centre around gender and youth, and has asked the UN to deliver as one in these areas. The request was one of the reasons behind a joint mission to Samoa by UN Women and UNICEF.

The visit included meetings with the Prime Minister, several cabinet ministers, the Chief Justice, Attorney General, and the Ombudsman, as well as other partners such as Digicel and Samoa Victim Support Group.

It was an opportunity to offer congratulations on recent initiatives and changes and offer

further support. These changes include the constitutional amendment to reserve 10 per cent of all parliament seats for women, the establishment of the Family Court and Family Violence Court through the Family Safety Act, the establishment of the national Human Rights Institute and the recent awareness efforts around the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence campaign.

UN Women's Deputy Representative Nicolas Burniat was part of the mission.

"UN Women is working with the rest of the UN family to ensure that we better coordinate our work on gender," Mr Burniat says.

Fund reaches women in rural areas

The figures for the year to February 2014 have been collated and they show that UN Women's Pacific Regional Ending Violence Against Women Facility Fund (Pacific Fund) is reaching more women than ever.

In the year from March 2013 to February 2014 alone the Pacific Fund reached 54,395 people through its grantee organisations, more than 8,100 of whom are survivors of violence and 90% of whom are rural women.

This figure is just under half of the 120,921 reached during the Fund's first four years of operations. This means that overall the Fund has reached a total of more than 175,000 people across seven Pacific countries.

The Pacific Fund was launched in 2009 to help Pacific organisations and governments overcome two of the biggest challenges they face in scaling up their efforts to end violence against women in the region: accessing funding; and strengthening knowledge and capacity. The Fund offers grants, capacity building and technical support for specific initiatives around violence against women and girls.

The Pacific Fund receives significant support from the Australian Government, but also offers opportunities for other donor organisations looking to support efforts to end violence against women and girls in the Pacific.

Find out more: <http://bit.do/YSj6>

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Full steam ahead

Welcome to the first issue of the "UN Women in the Pacific" newsletter for 2015. It's our way of keeping in touch; spreading the word about our programmes, our staff, our partners and more.

This issue has a distinct youth focus to it with an article on our Beijing +20 training for young women in Bangkok, an interview with youth advocate Christina Ora and a profile of the Pacific Youth Council.

You'll also find articles about our Markets for Change and Pacific Fund projects, as well as our social media outreach and new staff – including myself.

2015 is a big year and one of our main focuses will be to ensure that the Pacific fully engages in the 20th anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action and that the new development agenda, which will be adopted in September, responds to the needs of the region, including through fully integrating gender equality.

In the meantime, enjoy this issue and we'll see you next month.

Nicolas Burniat
Deputy Representative
UN Women Fiji Multi-Country Office

Five minutes with ... Nicolas Burniat



Nicolas Burniat is interviewed by the Fiji Times in 2014. Credit: UN Women/Sereana Narayan.

I joined UN Women shortly after it was created as Special Assistant to the Executive Director (ED), coming from the Belgian Mission to the UN where I had co-chaired the EU’s work on gender and human rights. I was primarily attracted to UN Women by its mandate of gender equality and the fact that it was a new and innovative organisation with the potential to break away from bureaucracy.

I have had the chance to work with some amazingly inspirational people. Working side by side with UN Women’s Executive Directors, the current president of Chile and the former vice-president of South Africa, was an exceptional experience and a privilege that I will cherish my whole life.

In the three years I worked for the Executive Director I travelled a lot and I got to see

firsthand the inspiring work that UN Women is doing on the ground; the concrete difference it’s making in the lives of women and girls. I wanted to contribute to these results directly at the country level.

I think I’m privileged to arrive in the Pacific at a time of deep change for gender. The region is showing leadership and taking concrete steps to enact and implement new laws and programmes and has embraced UN Women as one of the key development partners in this process. This makes our work really fascinating.

Nicolas Burniat is UN Women’s Deputy Representative and Officer in Charge at the Fiji Multi-Country Office in Suva. He joined the office in September 2014. He is originally from Belgium

TIME CAPSULE: BRUSSELS, 1950



“This photo was taken in Brussels in 1950 at a Labour Day (May 1) social demonstration. I find it inspiring that women were leading this march. My grandmother is third from the left with my mother in a pram.

You could say I was lucky to be born into a feminist family where I learned about gender issues and social activism early. My grandparents were in the resistance and my grandmother was recognised as a Righteous Amongst the Nations for saving hundreds of children during WWII. My parents were activists: my father is a member of the IPPNW, which won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1985; my mother is a health sociologist and politician who has focused her career supporting Belgium’s most vulnerable people and is at the forefront of all the social and feminist struggles. Gender permeated our lives.”

facebook

Top posts January

Young Leaders Program!
Women deliver young leaders
 Total Post Reach: 2,398
 Post Clicks: 157
 Likes: 76
 Comments: 4
 Shares: 0

Now is your chance to get involved! Apply

Pacific climate change
 Total Post Reach: 1,155
 Post Clicks: 24
 Likes: 40
 Comments: 2
 Shares: 7

Erna Takazawa
 Total Post Reach: 949
 Post Clicks: 20
 Likes: 66
 Comments: 5
 Shares: 5

NCDs in the Pacific
 Total Post Reach: 610
 Post Clicks: 16
 Likes: 22
 Comments: 2
 Shares: 9

Knowledge Gateway
 Total Post Reach: 573
 Post Clicks: 23
 Likes: 38
 Comments: 3
 Shares: 11

12,710
 The number of likes on the UN Women Pacific Facebook page as at January 30, 2015.

Young advocate raises voice for change



Christina Ora at the UN Women youth training on Beijing +20 in Bangkok, 2014. Credit: UN Women/Olivia Owen.

"I started public speaking when I was 7 years old, but every time I stand up to talk I still get nervous. The way I see it is that you can either be nervous and have fear intervene or you can turn that nervousness into something exciting.

Women's representation in politics is not changing rapidly, but I feel that things are changing. We are slowly coming to understand that the change we want to see will only come if we stop pointing fingers and all do our small part to make that change. Whether that's the policies put forward, the kinds of politicians we put in the House, the kinds of things taught in schools or the attitudes and beliefs we have within the community. That starts with us.

I really feel passionate about leadership and I see myself as a young leader. I feel that I have a lot to give back to my country.

I want to be who I am, and if that means I have to go against certain beliefs and certain norms that society has for women, I have to do that. Not only for me, but for my siblings, for the young women who are within my age group, for the young women who are going to come after us.

Putting this into action might upset women in my family and community, but I am educating them. They would want their daughter to be confident, to be bold, to know about CEDAW and to know about her rights, her sexuality and to know about the world. In order to make that happen, in order to create that future, allow me to be who I am and be proud of me."

Christina, 20, is a youth climate change activist from Solomon Islands. She is part of the Honiara Youth Council and works closely with the Pacific Youth Council and other partners.

staff spotlight

Kepreen Ve'etutu

Project Coordinator, Pacific Regional Ending Violence Against Women Facility Fund – Ending Violence Against Women Programme, Nuku'alofa, Tonga.

What is the most satisfying part of your job?

I am meeting experienced, smart and talented women and to an extent learning about young women from different walks of life with ideas and stories to share. It is satisfying and fulfilling to hear about the NGOs able to promote gender equality and empowering women when they are provided with funds to realise their dreams.

Was there a moment where you felt your work directly impacted women?

I have met young boys and men who, through participating in trainings, have realised that they have dominated their households in terms of decision-making and the economic wellbeing



of the family. They have realised now that sharing decision-making and responsibilities can transform their lives and those of the women they are involved with for the better.

Who is your mentor?

There are a lot of people close to me who have been mentors throughout my life. My aunty encouraged me to be different and my husband constantly encourages me to strive to be the best and to believe in myself when it comes to trying things that are outside my comfort zone.

comings and goings

Introducing ...

Over the past few months UN Women has welcomed three new staff members in the Pacific. Here's your chance to meet them.



Ateca Raikuna Betero
ICT Assistant, Fiji Multi-Country Office

Ateca joined the MCO in September, leaving her previous position as an in-house technician at Unwired Fiji. She has also worked in various capacities for Post Fiji and the Affiliated Computer Services.

Ateca has a Diploma in IT Networking Engineering from Training and Productivity of Fiji.



Asenaca Vakacegu
Receptionist (maternity cover), Fiji Multi Country Office.

Asenaca has been the MCO's temporary/relieving receptionist since 2010 and is currently covering Mavis' maternity leave. She is also completing a Bachelors Degree in Tourism Studies and Management at the University of the South Pacific.



Betty Zinner-Toa
Country Programme Coordinator, Port Vila Office, Vanuatu.

Before Betty joined the Vanuatu office in October she was working for Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in Vanuatu. She has also worked for the World Bank and Vanuatu's government.

Betty has a Masters in International Taxation from the University of Sydney, Australia.

Empowering young women leaders



Participants and UN Women staff at the Beijing +20 Transformational Leadership Training for Pacific youth in Bangkok. Credit: UN Women/Martin Child.

From November 10-12, eight young Pacific women attended a UN Women-led Beijing +20 Transformational Leadership Training in Bangkok, Thailand.

Aimed at empowering young women to engage in advocacy around the Beijing Platform for Action and the Post-2015 agendas, the workshop was held in the lead-up to the Asia-Pacific Beijing +20 review conference. Most of the young women took part in the civil society consultation on November 14-15 and about half of them attended the ministerial meeting from November 17-20.

The women came from a range of backgrounds, including journalism, women's rights and climate change, and the workshop covered the Convention to Eliminate Discrimination Against

Women, and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, as well as communications, media, advocacy and lobbying.

The workshop gave the women a space to open up about how the agreements were applicable in their countries, as well as their own experiences, hardships and what they want to see happen. The women also gave trial interviews, presentations and advocated on specific topics.

"It's broadened my knowledge and its opened up my mind concerning my rights as a women," said Evelynna Tikau Webb from Kiribati.

On their return home, the women set up the Pacific Youth in Action Facebook Group: <http://bit.do/YPEU>

Market vendors turn theory into reality

A total of 29 market vendors from Labasa, Fiji, received certificates in January in recognition of their participation in UN Women's "Getting Started" workshop in September, 2014.

One of those women was Ana Biusavu who in October 2014 was elected President of the newly-formed Labasa Market Vendors Association.

At the ceremony Ana took her place on stage, alongside the Minister of Local Government, Housing and the Environment, and emphasised how important it is for vendors to work together.

"Vendors play a very important role in the market but many times they are never given an opportunity to be heard. I know the task ahead won't be easy but I am confident that my committee will work together with the Town Council and UN Women to bring about changes in Labasa Market."



Ana Biusavu (right) receiving her certificate from Minister for Local Government, Housing and Environment, Praveen Kumar Bala. Credit: UN Women/Vilisi Veibataki.

The "Getting Started" workshops are part of UN Women's Markets for Change project, which is principally funded by the Australian Government.

Read the full story: <http://bit.do/YU55>

partner profile

Pacific Youth Council

The Pacific Youth Council emerged as a result of a call from national youth councils in the region for a regional body that can coordinate the voices and needs of Pacific young people.

The non-governmental organisation looks to empower young people in the region to become active citizens and leaders by providing a platform for their interests, needs and development.



Photo credit: UN Women/Olivia Owen

While it was registered in 1996, the Secretariat was revived in October 2008 with the combined support of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) and the Pacific Leadership Programme (PLP). It is the umbrella organisation for 10 National Youth Councils in the Pacific region.



Tahere Si'isi'alafia at the SIDS conference, 2014. Credit: UN Women/Olivia Owen.

UN Women works with the Pacific Youth Council, especially through the Pacific Young Women's Leadership Alliance. In 2014 UN Women co-funded Pacific Youth Council Secretariat Executive Board member Tahere Si'isi'alafia in attending the Third International UN Conference on Small Island Developing States.

www.pacificyouthcouncil.com

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