



Disability Pasifika Newsletter

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Special Point of

Interest.

- Pacific Regional Train-the-Trainer: Professional Diploma In Orientation & Mobility, Pacific Region.
- Fiji EFA –VI Forum.
- News From The Region:
 - ◆ IDPD 2008 in Vanuatu.
 - ◆ Dec 3 in Cook Islands
 - ◆ News from NOLA
- Disability & Theological Pacific Regional Workshop.
- PDF Organizational Development Regional Meeting.



Pacific Regional Train-the-Trainer: Professional Diploma In Orientation & Mobility, Pacific Region.

Country Representatives take a photo on the opening Day of the 4 weeks Training.



A four week introductory course funded by Pacific Regional Initiative on Delivery of Basic Education (PRIDE/USP) and organised by Pacific Disability Forum (PDF) in partnership with International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment (ICEVI) and the Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children (RIDBC) based in Sydney, was held at CATD, in Nadave Training Centre, Nausori, Fiji, from the 3rd - 28th of November 2008. Fiji.

16 participants attended

the 130 hour assessment-based training course from 12 Pacific Countries served by PRIDE/USP that included the Cook Islands, Federated

States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

A major objective of the training course was to provide participants with basic mobility skills to assist clients who are blind or vision impaired in their communities move about safely, confidently and independently.

To achieve this objective, participants learnt guiding techniques, long cane skills, travelling on buses,

road crossing skills, city and rural route planning and training, and major factors to be considered when working with children.

Importantly, throughout training participants worked in pairs with one participant under blindfold. In this way, the sighted participant learnt the methods and techniques of teaching a person who is blind.

Further, the participant under blindfold had the twofold experience of being without sight while understanding how instruction was tailored to meet the needs of a person who is blind. Participants also learnt the techniques of working with clients who experience low vision by undertaking route training wearing low vision simulators.

Long cane planning and training occurred in dif-



Learning to use the long cane under blindfold on buses. One participant is under blindfold, while the other is learning how to teach this skill.

difficult weather conditions in challenging city and rural environments. Moreover, being a competency-based course, participants were also required to demonstrate skills and complete challenging assignments including an in-country assignment in English which is, for the majority of participants, their second or third language.

The 16 participants and the 4 resource persons who are professional trainers in mobility from Australia, must be acknowledged for their tireless dedication, consistent enthusiasm and hard work over the four week period.

“Fiji Education for all children with vision impairments” (EFA-VI) Forum



Participants of the Fiji EFA—VI Forum at Tanoa Plaza, Fiji on the 6th—8th of October, 2008

Pacific country selected by ICEVI and WBU for implementation of the “Education for all children with vision impairments” (EFA-VI) global campaign.

The primary purpose of the Fiji EFA-VI Forum was to bring together Fiji leaders in education and services to blind and vision impaired persons to develop a National EFA-VI Plan and implementation program for the education of children with vision impairments for the period 2009-2011. The Plan will include implementation strategies, resource requirements, performance indicators, and budgetary considerations.

The International Council for People with Visual Impairment (ICEVI) in partnership with the World Blind Union (WBU) and with the assistance of PDF had hosted the Fiji EFA-VI Forum in Suva Fiji, from 6th to 8th October 2008. Fiji is the first

The Fiji National EFA-VI Task Force consists of key government and civil society stakeholders in education, health and disability services for children with vision impairments. With the

assistance of the Taskforce Members and other participants, discussions were made for the Plan which would serve as a model for strengthening capacity in education of children with other disabilities; and as a model for the development of national EFA-VI plans in other Pacific Island countries in the future.

Some of the beneficiaries of the implementation of the National EFA-VI Plan will include the following groups:

- ◆ Government education agencies, through linkages with Millennium Development Goals and EFA goals.
- ◆ Parents, carers, and extended families, through consultation and partnerships in the development of the national EFA-VI plan and provision of education services
- ◆ Children with vision impairments, including those with additional disabilities, through enhanced access to trained teachers who are knowledgeable of inclusive special education pedagogy

ICEVI and WBU's Global Task Force has established mechanisms to support countries with public media coverage in order to enhance the visibility of the EFA-VI

campaign within Fiji and the Pacific region.

Some Support materials provided by ICEVI and WBU include the following:

- ◆ Brochures, concept papers and media kits that explain the guiding principles and goals of the EFA-VI campaign
- ◆ Briefing notes that outline the key facts and advocacy points.
- ◆ Publicity of the links to international funding already available for EFA-VI

On Thursday 9th October, members of the Fiji EFA-VI Task Force Core committee met with Ms. Ema Rabukawaqa, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education, to inform her of the outcomes of the Forum and to present her with the draft EFA-VI Action Plan.

Attending the meeting were Ms Marenilina Tabalailai, Rev Aporosa Rageci, Ms Barbara Farouk, and Ms Anaseini Vakaidia. Frances Gentle, of ICEVI and Ms Josie Howse the Executive Member of the Australian Braille Authority also attended the meeting, and discussions included current and future options for the braille code of Fiji.

NEWS FROM THE REGION

Vanuatu International Day of Persons With Disabilities (3 Dec 2008)

3 December is commemorated every year to celebrate the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. In Vanuatu this special day has been commemorated since 1997.

In 2008 disability organizations in Vanuatu will be celebrating the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability especially because Vanuatu became the first

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Pacific Island country to ratify it.

This is an international law that was;

- passed by the United Nations on 13 December 1996
- signed by Vanuatu on 17 May 2007
- ratified by Vanuatu on 23 April 2008
- Endorsed by the President on 12 June 2008
- become part of Vanuatu's laws on 23 June 2008

December 3rd celebrations took place all over the country. In Port Vila, celebrations took place at the VSDP Office where the Keynote address was on the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: Dignity & Justice for All of Us* and was given by Mr. Joe Ligo, Director General of the Ministry of Justice & Social Welfare.

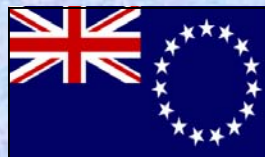
Invited guests, included people with disabilities, diplomats, government officials, members of the NGO communities and Friends.

Andy Lynch
DPA Vanuatu



Nelly Caleb and Andy Lynch at the PDF Council Meeting 2008 at Samoa.

December 3 in the Cook Islands.



On the main island of Rarotonga which is the capital of the Cook Islands the following occurred;

- ◆ 1st December 2008 - Tukiongo Wright (Mama Tuki) President of the Cook Islands National Disability Council, had an interview on the TV regarding the International Day of PWD.
- ◆ 2nd December 2008 - Mama Tuki and the Technical Officer for the Disability Council had a radio talk back on Radio Cook Islands to the nation.

3 December this was a great day for the disabled community in Rarotonga. The outer islands disabled community had their own celebrations programme for the day.

Mama Tuki.
CINDC



Mama Tuki and Talafaiva Lotolua at the PDF Workshop December 2008.

NEWS FROM THE REGION

Letter from NOLA (Samoa)



Bula PDF,

Just add to our region great developments, NOLA is kicking off with some exciting exercise since the National Disability Task Force (Government agent) was established last November 2008.

The first draft National Disability Policy has been completed, thanks to Alistair's (UNESCAP) assistance and has started a nationwide series of consultations until end of December 2008..

Many key Stakeholders are involved but we are most fortunate of the active role played by the Attorney General Office that is simultaneously taking care of the legal side i.e. Legislation and Convention CRPD.

Nofovaleane Mapusua
NOLA



Nofo and some NOLA staff at the PDF Council Meeting 2008 at Samoa.

Disability & Theological Education Pacific Regional Workshop



Disability and Theological Education – Pacific Regional Workshop

“Disability and Theological Education – Pacific Regional Workshop” was convened at the Jovili Meo Mission Centre Pacific Theological College, Fiji. 10 theological reps and 8 disability reps from across the South Pacific Region came together to discuss, collaborate, and share ways in mainstreaming disability into theological teachings.

This was a outcome an initial consultation between *Ecumenical Disability Advocacy Network of the Pacific (EDAN Pacific)* and *South Pacific Association of Theological Schools (SPATS)* held in Fiji at the same venue above in December 2006.

Members or participants of that meeting came from Fiji and other parts of the Pacific consisting of People With Disabilities from different Disable Person's Organisations in the Region and Theological educators who are part of the South Pacific Association of Theological Schools

(SPATS).

The two main purposes of the meeting then in 2006 were:-

- The formation of what is now called the Ecumenical Disability Advocacy Network of the Pacific (EDAN Pacific) and Mr. Setareki Macanawai was given the task to head the Network.

- The formation of a Disability Curriculum to be taught in SPATS member schools in the Pacific region.

Even though the meeting was obstructed by a hurricane that affected the Fiji Islands, it did not stop the above purposes to be realized. The messages and all other documentations of this meeting was undertaken by the then WCC Office in the Pacific and it is believed that the World Council of Churches was made aware of the outcome and the planned road map that the two organisations would follow. Members of the meeting went away with new excitement that they will try and do their best to realized the dream that was shared during the meeting.

A follow-up meeting was part of the plan and that follow-up meeting was the one that was held from September 13th - 20th 2008.

The *Disability and Theological Education*



Participants: - Lt - Rt: Mrs. Celina Tahuaitu, Ms. Tukiongo Wright, Mrs. Janet Selwyn, Mrs. Margaret Seka, Mrs. Tars Lucy Glennis and Mr. George Tapo.

– *Pacific Regional Workshop* meeting was aimed at:-

- The formation of EDAN groups in the various islands of the Region and also the affirmation and strengthening of the stand that was taken in 2006. The programme that was sent committed the first two days of the meeting to this affirmation and strengthening purposes.

- The Curriculum that was talked about and worked upon in between 2006 and now would be taught to the selected group from theological colleges who would be part of the meeting. (Training of Trainers). The second two days of the programme will cover this part of the meeting.

The final day of the meeting, i.e. the 5th day brought the two together; where it was hoped that both the disability community and the theological institutions that attended the meeting were expected to spend the whole of that day in talking on implementations and applications of the first four days of the meeting as in the programme.

The overall aim of this meeting was to enable the Pacific churches through theological schools to have an awareness of the presence and also the treasures that we have in its association with People With Disabilities in the region.

PDF Organizational Development Regional Meeting.



The PDF Workshop participants with Mr. Kevin Clark, the workshop Consultant .

The PDF Regional Meeting on Organisational Development and the Small Grant Scheme Training was held at the Tokatoka Resort Hotel, Nadi, Fiji from 15-19 December 2008. This regional meeting was attended by 15 country representatives and focused on the following objectives:

1. 15 -17 December 2008 - developing an appropriate Monitoring and Evaluation framework for PDF including the updating of the PDF Strategic Plan.
2. 18 -19 December 2008 - finalization of the Pacific DPO Fund (small grants scheme).

PDF with the financial support of NZAID intends to roll out this new and exciting scheme by 2009, and the work on these two days focused on finalizing the Pacific DPO Fund documents as well as familiarizing the participants with the processes involved.

The exercise provided the participants

with useful experience, knowledge and skills on M & E as well as strategic planning which the participants found relevant and applicable to their own work with their respective organisations. This activity was built on the initial work on this scheme undertaken during the PDF Council Meeting in Apia last April 2008.

PDF was also able to invite 5 women (*Pictured right*) from Fiji, Federated States of Micronesia, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Tuvalu to participate at its week long institutional strengthening workshop. Their participation was possible through the financial contribution from Global Fund for Women (GFW).



The 5 women expressed that the training provided them with new skills and knowledge which they believed would be able to share with their organizations when they returned.

They also had the opportunity to meet and learn about the activities and programmes of other DPO'S. The 5 women also attended the WWD Committee meeting as observers.

PDF was requested to provide on going support to these women to enable them to establish WWD group/programmes in their countries to address the issues of women and girls with disabilities.



PACIFIC DISABILITY FORUM

"A PARTNERSHIP OF PACIFIC ORGANIZATIONS OF AND FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES"

UPCOMING EVENTS



- ◆ Pacific Regional Forum on Women with Disabilities; 20 April 2009 - Vanuatu
- ◆ Pacific Regional Disability Conference; 21-22 Apr, 2009 - Vanuatu
- ◆ PDF General & Council Meeting; 23 April 009 - Vanuatu
- ◆ Disability Studies Conference; 26 - 27 June, 2009 - NSW, Sydney, Australia.



INVITATION OF ARTICLES FOR 2009

If you wish to place any articles in the upcoming Disability Pasifika newsletters, please do so before the end of April 2009 and please contact:

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