

OUTCOMES STATEMENT

REGIONAL CONSULTATION ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LEGISLATION – FROM LAW TO PRACTICE

NADI, 23-25 OCTOBER, 2018

The Pacific Community's Regional Rights Resource Team (SPC RRRT) with support from UN Women, and the governments of Sweden and Australia, convened a regional consultation on the implementation of domestic violence legislation.

Participants at the consultation comprised senior government officials from the 11 Pacific Island Countries with domestic violence legislation.¹

The consultation enabled participants to reflect on common challenges affecting the implementation of domestic violence legislation in the areas of justice, health, social services, interagency coordination and governance. Although the enactment of legislation is a first step to combating domestic violence, there are significant barriers to implementation which require coordinated actions to overcome. Constructive dialogue amongst a range of service providers, including from government and NGOs, at the consultation provided a strong platform for deeper understanding of the enablers of and barriers to the effective implementation of domestic violence legislation.

1. Participants recognize that domestic violence poses a serious threat to Pacific Islands, affecting more than half of Pacific Island women. There is an urgent need to continue working on ending violence against women in order to ensure that women can participate fully within society and communities.
2. Participants emphasised the need to ensure that governments are working across all sectors to guarantee better outcomes for women. All services are interlinked and need to be available for all survivors of violence, regardless of age, geographical location, disability, or economic means.
3. Participants recognise there are several priorities in relation to the implementation of domestic violence legislation in the Pacific, including raising awareness on domestic violence with the public and service providers, ensuring good governance and coordination of all mechanisms linked to domestic violence, and collecting data in a systemic way to inform policy and practice.
4. Participants agreed to set up a regional working group to ensure on-going dialogue, the sharing of good practices and (recognising national sovereignty) the implementation of regional strategies, by and between governments in the region. Fiji was elected chair of this working group with Samoa as the deputy chair. The working group will convene year. SPC RRRT was invited to act as the secretariat for the working group.

¹ Participants were from: Federated States of Micronesia (Pohnpei & Kosrae), Fiji, Cook Islands, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.