



Report on the
PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON
**ENDING
VIOLENCE
AGAINST
CHILDREN**

18–20 May 2015
Nadi, Fiji

unite for
children

unicef 

Report on the
PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON
**ENDING
VIOLENCE
AGAINST
CHILDREN**

18–20 May 2015
Nadi, Fiji

CONTENTS

Acronyms	vi
Introduction	v
Opening speech	1
Session One: The protection of children in the Pacific: <i>Global and Pacific perspectives</i>	5
Session Two: Ensuring a protection framework for children: <i>The CRC and Optional Protocols</i>	9
Session Three: Social norms and the protection of children in the Pacific: <i>Micronesia, Polynesia and Melanesia</i>	15
Session Four: Human and financial resource allocation and capacity development in Pacific countries: <i>Ensuring adequate prevention and response to violence against children</i>	21
Session Five: Service delivery for all children: <i>Systems for child protection – justice, health, education, social welfare and community and faith-based organizations</i>	25
Session Six: Legislative reform in Pacific Island countries: <i>Changes in legislation and law enforcement that are influencing prevention and response to violence against children</i>	29
Session Seven: Education session: <i>Violence and early childhood development</i>	33
Session Eight: Child protection in emergencies: <i>Child protection minimum standards in emergencies and climate change, disaster risk reduction and protection</i>	37
Closing session	41
Concluding statement	45
Country presentations	47
Annex 1: Agenda of the Pacific conference on ending violence against children	55
Annex 2: Participants list	58

ACRONYMS

ACE IQ	Adverse Childhood Experiences International questionnaire
ASEAN	Association of the South East Asian Nations
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (US)
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSEC	Commercial and sexual exploitation of children
CYPFW Act	Children Young Persons and Family Welfare Act
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Australia)
EAP	East Asia and the Pacific
ECCD	Early childhood care and development
ECD	Early childhood development
ECE	Early childhood education
EVAC	Ending violence against children
FSM	Federated States of Micronesia
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
NAACC	National Advisory and Action Committee on Children
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OPSC	Optional Protocol (of the CRC) on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography
PIFS	Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
RMI	Republic of the Marshall Islands
RRRT	Regional Rights Resource Team
SPC	South Pacific Community
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VAC	Violence against children
VAW	Violence against women
UNFPA	United Nations Family Planning Association
UPR	Universal Periodic Review

INTRODUCTION



The Pacific Conference on Ending Violence against Children took place from 18-20 May 2015 at the Sofitel Hotel, Nadi, Fiji, with support from UNICEF Pacific.

The conference brought together high-level officials from 13 Pacific Island countries (PICs): Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, the Federated States of Micronesia (FMS), Papua New Guinea, the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga and Vanuatu, as well as experts on child protection in the Pacific. Regional partners also participated, including the South Pacific Community (SPC), the Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT), the Pacific Island Forum Secretariat (PIFS) and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) of Australia.

The purpose of the Conference was to:

- build capacity and understanding of violence against children (VAC);
- share best practices in order to strengthen responses to Ending Violence Against Children (EVAC);
- secure renewed commitment from Pacific leaders to EVAC to:
 - ratify, implement and enforce international human rights instruments such as the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography;
 - ban corporal punishment in the home, schools and community;
- contribute to the global call to end VAC and for governments to place children at the heart of the Sustainable Development Goals.



To begin the Conference, the “Sevusevu” Fijian welcome ceremony is conducted for Ms Marta Santos Pais, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children.



Official garlanding of chief guests; Ms Karen Allen, UNICEF Pacific Representative, Ms Marta Santos Pais, Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children; and His Excellency the President of Fiji Ratu Epeli Natatikau

ENDING VIOLENCE
AGAINST CHILDREN
IS EVERYONE'S
BUSINESS

OPENING SPEECH

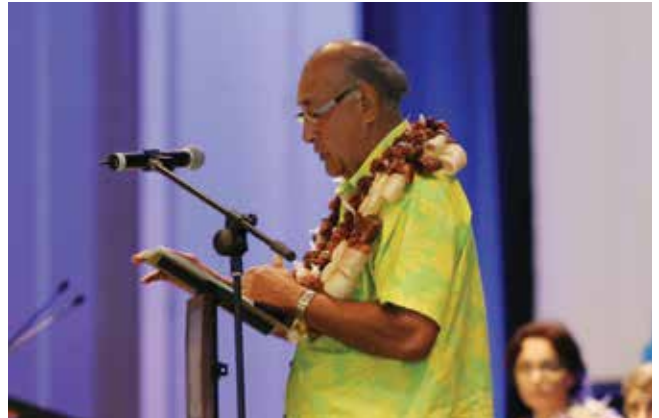
BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI,
HIS EXCELLENCY RATU EPELI NAILATIKAU

Good morning, *ni sa bula vinaka, salaam alaykum, namaste.*

On behalf of the Government and the people of Fiji, I extend to all the participants here at this Pacific Conference on Ending Violence against Children a most warm welcome. We have gathered here representatives from 13 countries, and Fiji is honoured to host such a noble forum for a very topical agenda. This is the first visit to the Pacific by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children. It is fully acknowledged and much appreciated by us all. I wish her well and trust that her visit will be educational and rewarding to all concerned. This is a historic event as countries from around the Pacific come together to acknowledge the harm caused by violence against children and to work together to find ways to prevent and address it. This is the key outcome for this regional forum and a well overdue wake-up call. We all have to rise to this rallying call.

Every child has the right to survive, grow and be protected from all forms of violence. Yet, thousands of children around the Pacific have either experienced or witnessed some form of violence. Violence cuts across boundaries of age, geography, religion, ethnicity and income. It can take many forms, including physical, sexual, emotional and verbal abuse, and may involve neglect or deprivation. Violence can also affect children in an indirect way – witnessing domestic violence between parents, for example, or between a parent and his or her partner. It often happens in the safest places for children – homes, schools, communities, and even over the Internet.

Children are our most precious gift, yet everyday they live in fear, fear for themselves, fear for their siblings, and, in too many cases, fear for their mothers' safety. We must recognize that no violence against children is justifiable and that all violence against children is preventable. Yet the evidence shows us that many children live with violence. I want to leave this statement with you as you deliberate on the proceedings at this meeting. "Children of the Pacific cannot wait to be free from violence wherever they are." You are all given the opportunity now to make a difference, and we all owe it to our beloved children.



Overall public acceptance of violence as a suitable punishment for children remains high in Pacific countries. In countries where baseline data exist, more than 70 per cent of adults admit to inflicting violent punishment on children at home. The Pacific is also home to three of the top five countries globally with the highest proportion of adolescent boys who are supportive of wife beating. Only 10 per cent of children in the Pacific are fully protected by law from corporal punishment. Children in the Pacific also experience high rates of bullying including in schools and increasingly, online. While the challenge of addressing violence against children is substantial, proven strategies exist. Essential components of any strategy to end violence against children are political will, partnership and public commitment.

Prime Minister Voreqe Bainimarama has given us the high-level mandate to end domestic violence in Fiji when he officially opened the recent Pacific Parliamentary Women's Forum, and I quote:

"because [...] the current level of domestic violence in our midst is woefully, unacceptably high. It is, in fact, cause for regional shame. And we must all do a lot more to stop it. At a Government level, we have zero tolerance for domestic violence in Fiji. Whether it is men beating women, women attacking men, or parents hitting children, it is not acceptable, full stop. And we have given instructions to all the instruments of State that the perpetrators of domestic violence are to be subject to the full force of the law."

Political will: Violence against children is a silent epidemic. There are limited data on the extent and scope of the problem – we also know that the little information we do have reflects a widespread culture of underreporting. Social stigma, lack of services and a prevailing attitude that violence is acceptable in some forms all contribute to the hidden nature of these crimes against our children. Breaking the silence on violence against children requires commitment and leadership at all levels of society – from caregivers, teachers and doctors, to media professionals and those in positions of responsibility, including all of us in this room. We need to speak out about violence and abuse, and not shy away, be afraid or decide that it is too hard [a subject] to address. We can help give voice to the thousands of children who suffer daily as a result of violence and abuse. And if we can't speak out, we have to ask ourselves who can.

A commitment to ending violence against children must be enshrined in our most basic tenants of governance. Here in Fiji, the right to a violence-free childhood is enshrined in our 2013 Constitution under the Bill of Rights. The Constitution guarantees children's protection from abuse, neglect and harmful cultural practices, any form of violence, inhumane treatment and punishment, as well as hazardous or exploitative labour. All Governments of the Pacific have signed the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Protection from violence is safeguarded under this Convention, and it is our responsibility as signatories to the Convention to ensure that we put in place legislation and resources to ensure full implementation of the Convention's provisions. Sufficient investment in child protection will result in positive outcomes for individual children as well as society as a whole. Investing in our children's health, well-being and development can only lead to exponentially greater rewards. We know this from tracking investments in the health and the education sectors; the same holds true for investing in child protection. It is encouraging to note the greater investments in child protection in a number of countries across the Pacific where we are witnessing significant reforms being undertaken in legislation and increased budget allocation to essential services. These are good beginnings, but of course, more can still be done.

Partnerships: This is a major problem that requires smart solutions. We need a strong coalition to take on the challenge of ending violence against children. Child protection is an area that requires an integrated approach across family welfare, health, education and justice. No one sector can work in isolation. A holistic approach to protecting a child requires an equally holistic coalition of partners. We may have limited resources; we may have financial challenges, limited human resources and a multitude of pressing

concerns to address; however, if we are serious about protecting our most vulnerable – the same beautiful children we hold in our arms and promise to protect on the day they come into this world – then this must be a priority. Anything else is just an excuse. All of these limitations can be overcome when we work in partnership. By pooling knowledge, expertise, resources and learning together, we are better able to come up with solutions that are sustainable.

One area that requires new thinking is in ensuring that we address both violence against women and violence against children. These two forms of violence are interlinked at all levels of family and society, and the consequences can last for generations. Where a mother is a victim of violence, her children are also more likely to be victims of violence. This includes children who are physically, sexually and emotionally abused, and children who are impacted from watching their mothers who they love and care for, being abused.

How can we address this? Appropriately specialized services that provide integrated support to women and children are most effective in providing long-term and sustainable care and support. Given limited resources, it is also a way to maximize impact. After all, the nurse who treats a woman who is abused is most likely the same nurse that treats a child that has been abused.

The role of partnerships with the non-formal sector is also crucial, and I am pleased that we have, at this Conference, representatives from faith-based organizations, civil society and non-governmental organizations. Welcome. Your ability to influence the grassroots level, reaching out to families and communities is essential in changing attitudes, behaviour and service provision. In these partnerships we must not forget to include the family, which is the first institution where these values should be taught. It is not really a matter of what we say, but of what we do, since children imitate the examples of the adults who are significant in their lives. Parents, therefore, must be assisted to know how to impart positive parenting skills because of the great influence they have in their children's lives.

Commitment: Ending violence is everyone's business. At the individual level, we must make a commitment to ensure our actions are protective of children, that we do not get carried away in anger or frustration and that we take assume personal accountability and responsibility for the impact of our actions. It starts with us. At a community level, we must commit to speaking out and ending the silence that surrounds violence and abuse of children. We need to promote tolerance, compassion and a culture of non-violence. We can work to ensure that social

norms that contradict these values are replaced by ones that nurture and support our children's well-being.

The commissioning of the first National Child Help Line has created an opportunity for children of Fiji to seek counselling, report on violence and learn of their rights, which comes with responsibilities. Their right to be heard is clearly stipulated in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and Fiji commits fully to the CRC. May I commend the work of UNICEF and the Government of Australia in this project. I am happy to share that this enterprising initiative will be scoped as Fiji perseveres to develop the domestic violence helpline.

At the political level we must commit to ensuring resources are adequate to prevent and respond to violence, including developing clear targets and integrating these into national development plans. A target to end abuse, exploitation and trafficking and all forms of violence and torture against children is likely to be included in the post-2015 Development Agenda. This will require each government of the Pacific to develop national plans to reach the targets in the Sustainable Development Goals, and robust systems to monitor progress.

Equally, if governments are to meet the post-2015 commitments on children's education, health and well-being, we must ensure that no child lives in fear and all children live free from violence.

To eliminate violence against children, there are three things we need to do as a matter of priority.

First, we need smart strong laws and the will and resources to enforce them. This is very fundamental. Second, to help families cope, we need robust social and family welfare systems that support parents to build a nurturing environment for their children. Third, we need to change harmful norms and practices so that all our communities become places where no act that endangers a child is considered acceptable.

Each one of these issues will be examined in detail over the course of the next few days.

Violence against children occurs every day, everywhere. And while it harms children the most, it has a damaging impact on society – undermining stability and progress. But violence against children is not inevitable. It is preventable if we refuse to let violence remain hidden. The evidence requires us to act – for the sake of all Pacific children.

There is much that we can do to protect our children. Let us join together to take action and to ensure that all children are safe from violence and abuse. Thank you for this opportunity to address you. I have much pleasure in declaring the meeting open.

Thank you, vinaka vakalevu, sukria and bhahoot daynavaad.

IN THE PACIFIC,
9 OUT 16 COUNTRIES
HAVE BANNED CORPORAL
PUNISHMENT IN SCHOOLS

SESSION ONE:

THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN IN THE PACIFIC: GLOBAL AND PACIFIC PERSPECTIVES

The objective of Session One was to share an overview of protection of children in the Pacific, including initiatives to address violence against children, shared challenges and progress made as well as lessons learned.

MS AMANDA BISSEX, Chief of Child Protection, UNICEF Pacific

Ms Bissex provided an overview of protection of children in the Pacific drawn from the Conference background papers. The aim of these papers was to address the status of child protection in the region, including initiatives to address violence against children and to share challenges and progress. The key issues covered were the use of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and its Optional Protocols as a framework for the protection of children; social norms and their relationship to violence against children; legislative reform to address violence against children; and service delivery for children in the region.

Ms Bissex shared the results of child protection baseline reports completed in eight Pacific Island countries. The findings revealed that, in most countries surveyed, more than 72 per cent of adult respondents admitted to physically hurting children in the household. When asked whether schools provided a safe environment for children, the children identified 'teachers hit children' as the number one reason that made them feel unsafe in schools. Moreover, 75 per cent of education informants stated that teachers practise corporal punishment. When children were questioned on how they felt about experiencing violence, 87 per cent responded that they had negative feelings about experiencing violence. When asked how aware the children were of their protection rights and protection services available to them, the results revealed that children were experiencing more violence than they were reporting. Furthermore, 43 per cent of respondents who had experienced violence within the past month told someone about it.

Ms Bissex concluded by discussing the UNICEF protective environment framework, which includes family, community, society and the state. A protective environment is one in which all of these elements individually and collectively work to secure children



from violence, abuse and neglect, exploitation and discrimination. Each element influences the environment framework and is part of a network of responsibilities that positions protection as a concept and a right, and illustrates the web of factors affecting protection. This protective environment framework is also an analytical tool for understanding what impedes child protection. It is a practical framework for identifying major barriers to protection and supports a human-rights approach to protection.

MS MAHA MUNA, Regional Gender Adviser, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

Ms Muna highlighted the key findings and evidence on violence against women based on family health and safety studies undertaken since 2000 using the World Health Organization (WHO) methodology. The Pacific has invested a great deal in research on the prevalence of violence against women in 11 out of the 14 countries in the region: Samoa, Solomon Islands, Kiribati, Tonga, Vanuatu, Fiji, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Palau, Cook Islands and Nauru. These studies have been carried out with various partners, including the Secretariat of the Pacific Commission, UNFPA and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), Australia.

Some of the key findings include:

1. A prevalent trend of lifetime physical or sexual violence against women 15-49 years of age that shows that 60-80 per cent of women are survivors of violence. But these are only highlight statistics that can mask other equally important data.
2. Solomon Islands and Kiribati: The prevalence of partner violence was much higher than that of non-partner violence: the reverse is true in Tonga and Samoa. The nature of non-partner violence is mainly physical in Tonga and Samoa, while in the other countries, sexual non-partner violence is as common as physical violence.
3. Child sexual abuse is common in the Solomon Islands and relatively uncommon in Tonga and Samoa. Furthermore, patterns in Tonga and Samoa show a high prevalence of non-partner physical violence, in contrast to what occurs in other countries of the world.
4. The context of a high prevalence of non-domestic violence does not predict a high prevalence of intimate partner violence.
5. It was noted in Fiji, Vanuatu, Kiribati and Solomon Islands that among women who had ever been pregnant, violence experienced during pregnancy was high (11-23 per cent).
6. Women who experienced violence during pregnancy were more likely to have a miscarriage than women who did not experience violence during pregnancy.
7. There are health, financial and social impacts of violence against women.
8. Violence against women affects children's emotional well-being. For example, they experienced more nightmares and bedwetting.
9. As a result of violence against women, children had more behavioural problems (e.g. becoming extremely aggressive or extremely shy); they had more problems at school and ran away from home more often.

Ms Muna outlined that responding to this issue requires the following factors: breaking the silence to improve the well-being of individuals and families; focusing on prevention programmes that include both women and men; and using research data to inform development policies and programmes.

MS BETH WOOD, Global Initiative to End Corporal Punishment



Ms Wood began by defining corporal punishment as using force and causing pain. Discipline and punishment are not the same, and children could be guided (i.e. disciplined) to behave well without the use of corporal punishment. The main settings for corporal punishment for children include homes, schools, day-care centres, alternative care locations and penal systems. According to information obtained by the Global Initiative to End Corporal Punishment in December 2014, a significant number of states in the world have prohibited corporal punishment.

In the Pacific, nine out of 16 countries have banned corporal punishment in schools; in nine countries, corporal punishment is banned in penal institutions and in 10 countries as a sentence for committing a crime. Fifteen countries do not protect children in day care. Only 10 per cent of children are protected from all forms of corporal punishment. It was noted that there are high rates of corporal punishment in the Pacific. However, countries have also accepted Universal Periodic Review recommendations to ban corporal punishment. Ms Wood identified opportunities for law reform and programmes in the Pacific. Action was also required to achieve full prohibition.

Corporal punishment is a violation of children's rights and is linked to poor outcomes for children, including child abuse. It is also linked with domestic violence. It impacts negatively on early brain development. Some challenges to eliminating corporal punishment include that it is a long-held tradition and often causes discomfort and resentment when discussed. Some religious beliefs also have an impact on the use of corporal punishment.

Ms Wood posed the question, why do we need change? In New Zealand, which is the only country in the region to ban corporal punishment in all forms, attitudes are changing. The law can be interpreted sensibly and applied sensitively with support from parents. There are alternatives that could be introduced. Ms Wood concluded by offering support to the networks in the Pacific as and when required.

**MR PARANIALA LUI (SILAS),
PhD student, Queensland University of
Technology, Brisbane, Australia**

Mr Lui presented the methodology undertaken during the first Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) study in the Pacific. The study was conducted among Solomon Islander males. The methodology uses sequential mixed methods. Face-to-face interviews were conducted with 400 men, aged 18 to 72, from randomly selected households in Honiara. The World Health Organization's (WHO's) Adverse Childhood Experiences International Questionnaire (ACE-IQ) was used, which included questions about 12 forms of serious adversity during childhood.

The results of the research indicated that childhood adversities reported by men before the age of 18 years were as follows: 75.5 per cent of household members were treated violently, 16.5 per cent had a household member in prison, 9 per cent had single or divorced parents, 50.5 per cent were bullied, 84 per cent witnessed community violence, and 26.3 per cent were exposed to collective violence. Clearly, adversity has been common in the lives of children and young people in the Solomon Islands, especially the witnessing of violence both inside and outside the home. Most boys had multiple adverse experiences, for example: 19.8 per cent of men had experienced two or less ACEs and more than 40 per cent had experienced five or more adversities. Mr Lui emphasized that the impact of violence is lifelong and that evidence has shown its negative impact on men who had experienced it in childhood. Furthermore, violence during childhood probably sustains the cycle of violence against females and males across generations. He concluded that further research on ACEs, health and social well-being is needed in Solomon Islands and in other countries in the Pacific Islands region.

NO VIOLENCE IS
EVER JUSTIFIABLE
AND ALL VIOLENCE
CAN BE PREVENTED

SESSION TWO:

ENSURING A PROTECTION FRAMEWORK FOR CHILDREN: THE CRC AND OPTIONAL PROTOCOLS

MS MARTA SANTOS PAIS, **Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Ending Violence against Children**

Ms Marta Santos Pais presented an overview of how the CRC and Optional Protocols ensure a protection framework for children, and shared the progress on the ratification of the Optional Protocols and the results of studies undertaken globally. Ms Santos Pais congratulated the participants for the contributions delivered earlier and reaffirmed their statements and reflections. She reminded the participants that protecting children from violence was a human rights commitment that all countries around the world had made when they ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Ms Santos Pais stated that preventing violence against children is not a choice, not a favour, and not an accidental way of doing things. All governments have committed to taking it very seriously. The CRC and its three Optional Protocols provide a strong normative foundation to prevent and address violence against children in all its forms. One hundred ninety-four countries are party to the Convention, making it the most widely ratified international human rights treaty in history. The dignity and worth of all children is the starting point of the CRC. It stresses that in all circumstances the best interests of the child, meaningful participation by children in decisions that affect them, and protection from all forms of discrimination are non-negotiable rights and are indispensable in ensuring children's fullest development and well-being. These principles reflect universal values and find resonance in the traditions, cultures and religions of all societies. When they are followed, they provide a strong shield of protection for children against all forms of violence.

The CRC sends an unequivocal message condemning violence. It prohibits torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; it bans the death penalty and life imprisonment for children; it protects children from sexual abuse and sexual exploitation from harmful practices, from sale, trafficking, economic exploitation or any other form of exploitation prejudicial to the child's well-being;



it condemns forms of school discipline inconsistent with the child's human dignity; and it recognizes that children must be safeguarded from violence within the family, and while under the responsibility of other caregivers. We need to engage with children when we shape legislation and policies.

Ms Santos Pais noted that within a week of the Conference, it would be the 15th anniversary of the adoption of the first Optional Protocol of the CRC, on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography. The first Optional protocol was drafted to focus attention on these serious violations of children's rights and it provides a clear definition of these offences and creates obligations on governments to criminalize and punish perpetrators. The first Optional Protocol requires governments to provide legal, medical, psychological, logistical and financial support to child victims to aid their recovery, rehabilitation and reintegration. Ms Santos Pais encouraged governments of the Pacific region to consider the ratification of the Optional Protocols, emphasizing that through this, the Pacific region can become a strong supporter of children. Eleven countries in the region have not ratified the Optional Protocols. If all countries join, we can reach the goal of universal ratification: this would be a great gift to the children in the Pacific region.

Violence is considered to be a social taboo, essential to child discipline, or private a matter that needs to be kept within closed circles. As a result, much violence is unreported, and its true extent is not reflected in official statistics. This was why the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child asked for a Study on Violence against Children. The

Study was developed through a wide participatory process and endorsed by the UN General Assembly in 2006. The study drew a comprehensive picture of children's exposure to violence within the family, in schools, in care and justice institutions, in work settings and in the community. Guided by the principle that "no violence is ever justifiable and all violence can be prevented." The study presented recommendations to overcome the invisibility and social acceptance of violence, and to safeguard each and every child from its serious and long lasting consequences. The UN General Assembly soon recognized the critical importance of translating the findings of the Study into action, and in 2009 established a new position – the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children, in which capacity Ms Santos Pais has had the honour to serve for the past five years.

Ms Santos Pais stated that children suffer equally when they witness situations of violence or experience situations of violence. Children are exposed to violence in all contexts, including those places where they should expect to enjoy a secure environment and special protection. Younger children are at a special risk of violence, particularly when they are placed in non-family settings. Children are highly dependent on their caregivers for their development and well-being. When exposed to neglect, injury or abuse they have a limited ability to speak up and seek support. Billions of children suffer around the world. Each and every violent act against children deserves to be addressed with a sense of urgency. To understand this better, an on-line survey and more than 80 national consultations were held with children around the world on the Post-2015 Global Development Agenda. More than 800,000 children participated and gave a clear and unambiguous message: "Violence is a major obstacle to child development and it urgently needs to be brought to an end!"

Ms Santos Pais went on to highlight the economic costs of violence. Violence against children carries very serious economic costs for society, reducing human capital and compromising social development. A study in Australia in 2007 found that the annual cost of child abuse and neglect was nearly 4 billion Australian dollars, while a study in Vanuatu put the costs at nearly 4 per cent of the national budget. UNICEF estimates that in 2012 child maltreatment cost US\$206 billion in the East Asia and Pacific region. In 2014, the global think tank, the Copenhagen Consensus, estimated that the global cost of violence against children was US\$3.7 trillion, or 4.3 per cent of the global gross domestic product.

Children's protection from violence is a human right, an ethical imperative, a measure of good governance and makes good economic sense. Implementation of the CRC and its Optional Protocols at the national

level through strong political will, wide mobilization and steady action, can bring violence against children to an end. Toward realizing this vision, Ms Santos Pais highlighted four priority goals in the UN Global Study:

- The universal ratification of the Optional Protocols to the CRC, and adherence to other treaties which aim to protect children from violence.
- The development in each country of a sound national agenda to prevent and respond to all forms of violence.
- The enacting of legislation to prohibit all manifestations of violence against children.
- The consolidation of data and research to inform progress in this area.

Progress is being made in the Pacific, but many gaps remain. For example, among Pacific Island countries, only two have ratified the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.

In 2013, to assess how much the world has advanced and where action is urgently needed the Office of the United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General conducted a global survey to which more than 100 countries contributed. The analysis confirmed that national action is still largely marked by:

- Uncoordinated policy interventions, dispersed action and lack of investment in prevention.
- Fragmented and poorly enforced piecemeal legislation.
- Insufficient investment in family support, in capacity development of professionals working with children, and in safe and child-sensitive mechanisms to inform and support child victims.
- Scarce data and research to break the invisibility of this phenomenon and promote evidence-based decision-making.

While real momentum has been generated in support of children's protection from violence. In closing, Ms Santos Pais drew attention to the fact that we stand at a pivotal moment in our endeavour to eliminate violence against children. In four months' time from the Conference, the international community will agree on a new global agenda for sustainable development. As highlighted by the United Nations Secretary-General, this agenda aims at ending poverty, protecting the planet, and creating safe and peaceful societies. These are indeed essential for achieving progress in

children's standards of living and ensuring children's harmonious development in a violence free world. She emphasized that we must all begin to prepare for accelerated action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals targets on violence against children, including the identification of effective strategies and allocation of adequate resources. Truly sustainable development requires the elimination of all forms of violence against children. Ms Santos Pais concluded by stating that by joining hands together, we can give rise to a world where violence against children has no place.

MS SANDY THOMPSON, Executive Director, ECPAT (End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes) New Zealand

Ms Thompson presented the findings of a literature review on the analysis of sexual exploitation of children in the countries that have not ratified the CRC Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (OPSC). The findings revealed that within the Pacific region there is little evidence of trafficking in children, with only a few cases identified locally of the sale of girls to foreign loggers (as found, for example, in Solomon Islands). Child prostitution in the logging and fishing industries, in both urban and rural areas, received the most attention in the literature reviewed. Reporting of commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) is increasing on a few islands. In places where tourism is increasing, such as Fiji, cases of CSEC, including those with young boys, appear to have increased. There is evidence of child pornography in most of the Pacific Islands; however, the literature reviewed rarely focused on this topic separately, often addressing the issue together with the sale of children and child prostitution.

In certain circumstances, child marriage can be considered a form of CSEC and can lead to other manifestations of CSEC.

Ms Thompson described the vision of "a world where children live free from commercial sexual exploitation". Both violence against women and violence against children are interwoven. She expressed concern that around 1.8 million children worldwide have been exploited in prostitution, pornography and trafficking. Trafficking of people is a billion dollar industry. She highlighted that there are four manifestations of sexual exploitation of children:

- child prostitution;
- trafficking of children for sexual purposes;

- child pornography/child sexual abuse material; and
- sexual exploitation of children in the travel and tourism industry.

The tourism industry is common to all Pacific countries and a major source of foreign exchange for many countries. For example, in the Cook Islands, tourism produces 90 per cent of the foreign exchange earnings and 50 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP). For Samoa, Fiji and Vanuatu, tourism has now surpassed all other export industries to become the leading income earner, while in the Solomon Islands, tourism is becoming increasingly important as the country recovers from years of civil unrest. In Papua New Guinea, tourism is increasingly providing employment in many regions that host few other commercially viable activities.

It is of concern that the Pacific people have been taken advantage of, particularly their warm hospitality. While some countries are tightening up, she reported that there has been an increase in the percentage of Internet users from 2000-2012 in the Pacific region based on Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) statistics from 2013. Access to mobile phones is more prevalent.

While 169 countries have ratified the OPSC, 12 of the 27 countries that have not ratified it are in the Pacific region. Globally, it is the legal frameworks, policies and laws that protect our vulnerable citizens.

Ms Thompson highlighted some of the challenges in promoting ratification, such as limited and outdated research, and the lack of available specific figures on CSEC. Finally, there is no regional focus on the issue.

Ms Thompson concluded with some recommendations on the way forward:

- The 12 countries that have not yet ratified the OPSC must do so.
- There is a need for each country to have more and better evidence on sexual exploitation.
- Enactment of and investment in legislation are required.
- A regional approach should be developed including reliable quantitative and qualitative research on specific manifestations of CSEC in the region.
- Additional standards to the OPSC should be adopted, including stronger international and regional frameworks.

MS ETHEL SIGIMANU, Permanent Secretary for Women, Youth and Children, Solomon Islands

Ms Sigimanu explained that the CRC sets a critical benchmark for children's rights in Solomon Islands and has been used for lobbying, advocacy and budgeting. Since the country became a State party in 1995, the CRC has been used as the standard for developing protection frameworks for children and has been instrumental in Solomon Islands' own progress

The National Advisory and Action Committee on Children (NAACC) is the mechanism set up by the Government to advise and provide an oversight role on the implementation of the CRC. The NAACC is represented by stakeholders within key sectors in Government, civil society and development partners. Such an arrangement has ensured increased buy-in, effective coordination among stakeholders and the domestication of the CRC in sectorial policies, plans and resource allocation. Endorsement for possible ratification of instruments for children, which in this case is the Optional Protocols, is made by the NAACC.

In terms of ratification of the Optional Protocols, data collection, consultations and awareness raising in order to increase buy-in at the political level have been seen as crucial in the process towards ratification. Moreover, giving the Optional Protocols legitimacy is also seen as critical for both the approval and implementation process. Hence, while the United Nations can recommend the need to ratify, the endorsement by the citizens of Solomon Islands is equally important.

The role of the Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs, which is responsible for children's issues, has been critical in ensuring compliance with the CRC. Through this Ministry, facilitation and coordination of activities for children with the exception of health and education have been enhanced. This Ministry has been able to develop national policies for women, youth and children. The National Children's Policy and Action Plan is closely aligned and informed by standards set out in the CRC.

Ms Sigimanu explained that the first national policy on eliminating violence against women was adopted by the Government in 2010. The outcome of the policy was to increase budgetary support for the Ministry. In addition, the number of staff members in the Children's Division of the Ministry was increased from one officer, who was initially funded by Save the Children (because the Government could not afford salaries), to a total of seven positions today.



Partnerships matter if we are to find our strength as a force aimed at influencing change. Ms Sigimanu added that we need partnerships to help us dream together and 'walk the talk' together for child protection! Guaranteeing the CRC's influence on the promotion and protection of child rights is dependent on the strength of partnerships as effective rallying points for influencing change at the national, regional and global levels.

A 2008 baseline study on child protection, *Protect Me with Love and Care*, highlighted the gaps in child protection and determined whether or not Solomon Islands has fully complied, partially complied, or has not complied with the CRC. This study led the Government to develop its National Children's Policy and Action Plan. The Action Plan is also in line with concluding observations of the CRC's in the Initial State Report from 2003. However, capacity constraints continue to hamper implementation and progress in a number of key areas. One of the gaps that the Solomon Islands is working to address is the need for built-in monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in the Policy. A Child and Family Welfare Bill, which was developed from the baseline study, aims to provide for the protection of children. In particular, it aims to strengthen families to promote the well-being of children and to ensure that families and communities receive advice and support in caring for their children, as well as providing for children who are in need of care and protection. The Bill is likely to be tabled before Parliament in 2015.

In addition, the Family Protection Act, passed by Parliament in 2014, was informed by both the baseline study on child protection and a family health and safety study. The Family Protection Act is the first comprehensive domestic violence legislation. The Act covers physical, sexual, psychological and economic abuse. It defines 'domestic violence' as including acts such as stalking, harassment, ridicule and obsessive possessiveness, which are not provided for under the Penal Code or any other criminal legislation in Solomon Islands. The Act is designed to cover violence faced by all members

of the family including children. Together with a provision on counselling, this is a response to implement concluding observations made in the first round of reporting.

The Act criminalizes domestic violence, which is in line with international best practices, with a penalty of either a fine of \$30,000 or imprisonment for three years, or both. The Penal Code is currently being reviewed. The Law Reform Commission has carried out consultations specifically to inform the review on offences against children. Review of both legislations is influenced by CRC and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). The Police Act 2013 reiterates the duty of the Police to mainstream their responses to domestic violence.

Solomon Islands has strengthened its referral network to improve services for victims of gender-based violence, including violence experienced by children. A collaborative effort to support referral of victims with a set of standard operating procedures has been developed. Such a collaborative effort by service providers has resulted in improvement in the referral system. A Joint-UN programme for institutional strengthening has been established with the Government of Solomon Islands, and in particular, with the Ministry of Health and Medical Services and Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs to target improvement in frontline services.

The Solomon Islands population is largely rural and geographically dispersed; hence the cost of doing business is expensive. In rural areas, the illiteracy rate is high. In this respect, understanding the CRC by duty bearers, caregivers and beneficiaries, who are the children themselves, has been key among a number of priorities. Training is being provided at the provincial level to children. Awareness raising and advocacy for children and with children are also ongoing. In addition, special events for children, such as Children's International Day, have been organized annually for promoting their rights and for lobbying support on specific issues affecting them.

Ms Sigimanu explained that implementation of the CRC in Solomon Islands faces serious challenges, which affects compliance issues by the State party

and affects the guarantee that the CRC will protect the rights of children. The domestication of the CRC continues to be one of the major challenges. Human rights treaties must be incorporated into national laws to have a domestic effect. However, it is the court's responsibility to apply the principles of the CRC in domestic cases as part of its legal argument. More work is needed to align Solomon Islands' national laws with CRC standards.

In addition, reviewing laws is costly and time-consuming. The second, third and fourth draft report to the CRC Committee has been an opportunity for a thorough review of laws and practices in Solomon Islands and their compliance to standards set out in the CRC. The concluding observations from the initial report provided helpful guidelines for a way forward.

Customary law is even more complex. Currently, the Solomon Islands National Constitution gives legal status to customary law as part of the law of Solomon Islands except where it is inconsistent with the Constitution. How can custom and formal law better co-exist with an improved compliance with CRC standards? This continues to be another challenge.

Possibly, society's expectations, norms and beliefs have been the biggest factor influencing the direction of the country with respect to improved children protection. In Solomon Islands, traditionally 'children should be seen and not heard'. Moreover, incidence of rape of young girls is a particularly sensitive matter. Reconciliation between tribes for a crime committed may never consider the situation of the victim. Beliefs and traditional practices in family life will continue to challenge child protection commitments and the promotion of child rights. It is in the community that the promise of a better future and the journey of a thousand miles begins for a child.

Ms Sigimanu concluded with a discussion on the 2008 baseline study on child protection in Solomon Islands, which looks to a way forward. "At the same time, the gains and achievements that we have made and the opportunities that arise are strengthened by our children's potential, which provides a perfect wave to ride on into the future."

CHANGING ATTITUDES
IS CENTRAL TO
CHANGING BEHAVIOUR

SESSION THREE:

SOCIAL NORMS AND THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN IN THE PACIFIC: MICRONESIA, POLYNESIA AND MELANESIA

MS LAISANI PETERSEN,
Child Protection Officer,
UNICEF Pacific

Ms Petersen presented the introduction of the session. Its objective was to inform participants that there was a growing recognition of the social norms and practices that increased the vulnerability of children to violence, and the corresponding need to put in place measures to prevent violence against children. Social norms are the standards translated into practices that each society considers as acceptable behaviour and encompasses religion, traditions and cultural practices. All of these are inter-related and difficult to differentiate. Social norms are fluid and change over time because they are influenced by new ideas, including in religion, technology and trade. Social norms in the Pacific have been influenced by the acceptance of Christianity, which has been the dominant religion in the region over the past 200 years. The Bible not only became a source on which to ground one's faith, but also an indispensable reference point for morality. Children are valued within the family as a central unit in Pacific society. This is reflected in language and cultures such as in Fiji and Samoa where children are referred to as precious gifts from God and their discipline and training is the primary responsibility of parents. Similarly, children are expected to respect their parents. It is within this context that the divine mandate imputes upon parents the responsibility to fulfil every right as stipulated in the Convention of the Rights of the Child. However, the imperative to fulfil their roles as parents does not justify the abuse of children in any form.

External influences have played a role in changing social norms in the Pacific, which in turn have altered how Pacific cultures view and protect their children. While Pacific societies are culturally diverse, a common feature is the hierarchy of social structures and the low status of women and children, which results in their increased vulnerability to violence and exploitation. As social norms predominantly determine how people interact with each other, understanding how they contribute to the protection of children and reduction of violence against children is critical.

However, progressive changes in practices have occurred throughout the region, including the communities' and caregivers' perceptions about positive discipline; community awareness of the need for child protection plans; improved legislation that protects children; and increased government services in child protection that support families and caregivers safeguarding children from violence. In summary, the social, moral and legal norms must be harmonized to achieve a society free of violence, abuse and exploitation of our children.

REVEREND JAMES BHAGWAN,
Secretary for Communications and
Overseas Mission in the Methodist
Church of Fiji and Rotuma

Reverend Bhagwan presented an overview of some of the social norms used in religious teaching and practice. He cited Proverbs 13:24 and discussed the phrase "whoever spares the rod hates their children, but those who love them are diligent to discipline them." He noted that women and men from the Pacific have this religious perspective. Some Christian groups use their religion to justify corporal punishment and may argue that it is sanctioned in scriptural texts such as the one mentioned above. The conservative theology, the faith-based organizations and the faith-based approach are foundations and platforms worth serious consideration. In practice, a clergyman is very often the first person whom women and men go to for pastoral counselling. When they turn to a clergyman to report on social issues, only the symptoms are addressed and not the root of the problems. The Reverend Bhagwan also noted that many have tried to address the prevalence of violence against women and children. "Too often, when we talk about physical and sexual violence, we forget about emotional and economic violence, etc. As a result, these social norms become engrained in our societies, for example, 'sticks and stones', the old norm of corporal punishment."

Reverend Bhagwan described the new paradigm shift by explaining that Jesus treated children with respect and placed them in the middle of the group, as in Mark 9:3:

People were bringing little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them, but the disciples rebuked them. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." And he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on them and blessed them (Mark 10:13-16).

There is a movement towards safe communities. Examples from the church perspective include the work of the Salvation Army, the Code of Conduct, the child protection policy, scripts using biblical excerpts, Sunday school classes, opportunities to allow children to talk and strengthening the integrity of the "bulubulu" (in Fiji, a village-based form of reconciliation or judgement).

In conclusion, Reverend Bhagwan emphasized that the church is becoming more child-centred and continues to be the focus for enlightening members to shift the paradigm.

MS ANNA SOLOMON, Secretary for Community Development, Papua New Guinea



Ms Solomon described how the national budget process is undertaken and the consultations conducted before its approval by the Government of Papua New Guinea. She explained that with a diverse culture with over 800 plus languages, the journey has been challenging. Papua New Guinea has acknowledged that it has been able to implement some reforms. For example, it implemented free education from elementary year 1 to year 12. The

Government has also supported the churches to help civil servants and partnered with them in areas of health and education. Many of the faith leaders have been providing counselling services.

The country has a Family Protection Act and has been consulting with other stakeholders. A gender-based strategy has been developed, and the Government is examining the Pikinini Act. One of the challenges faced is in the co-ordination of activities. The focus is on mainstreaming child protection policies. Integration is also encouraged; however, there is a need to implement appropriate strategies with the appropriate benchmarks.

MR MASINALUPE MASINALUPE, Chief Executive Officer, Samoa

Mr Masinalupe shared his personal experiences as a Samoan Chief and Matai, a father and a CEO. He explained that as parents we should speak about our children and talk about our children and issues that affect them. We have an investment, we bring together the village, chiefs and the church, the church has authority, as does the village council. There is violence against children in Samoa. And this is the reason that we were brought to this conference. He asked, "What can we do? What options are out there? We in the Pacific have very limited options of disciplining our children."

In 2007, we discussed our legislation on domestic violence in Samoa. Mr Masinalupe explained that substituting the word 'family' for 'domestic' violence would help change people's perceptions and mind-sets. This change would render everyone responsible and lead them to consider children's issues as family issues. It is everyone's business. As a result, Samoa changed the name of the former Act to the Family Safety Act 2013, which helped the country moved forward on these issues. Whether it concerns women or children, everyone must be involved – the father, mother, cousins – and this is the rationale for choosing the Family Safety Act 2013.

As a parent, he also acknowledged the difficulty of disciplining his own children. However, he reiterated that there was a serious need to care about our following Pacific traditions as in the Samoan 'extended family' concept. He concluded that "we need to promote family values when talking about protection of children".

MS CARMEL PETERU, Family Violence Project, University of Victoria, New Zealand

Ms Peteru's presentation described the collaborative efforts of the New Zealand Government and Pacific communities in developing seven conceptual frameworks¹ and subsequent documents that would inform and direct Pacific policy and the work of the sector to address violence in the Pacific. Each community has given a title to their own respective conceptual framework. As a set of publications, they are collectively known as the *Nga Vaka o Kāiāga Tapu* documents.

Pacific peoples, who belong to and identify with over 19 Pacific nations, make up 7.4 per cent² of New Zealand's population. One third of this Pacific population lives in Manukau, South Auckland. Our population is young – 45 per cent are under 20 years old. Sixty per cent were born in New Zealand. Samoans make up the largest Pacific community comprising nearly 50 per cent of the total Pacific population.

In response to high rates of violence, the Programme of Action for Pacific Peoples 2008 and Beyond identified the need for strengthening practitioner and provider capacity and capability based on effective practice approaches. In 2010, the Pacific Advisory Group to the Taskforce for Action on Violence in Families conducted a series of consultations to identify approaches to addressing family violence in their communities. Two strongly supported recommendations were:

- Pacific communities should take primary leadership in the development of a programme of action to prevent and ultimately stop family violence.
- There is a need to explore how service provision could incorporate culture as the basis for conducting new and more robust programme approaches.

Ms Peteru provided a background on the *Whanau Ora* Family Violence initiatives for the development and delivery of a family violence training programme aimed at building capacity and capability of Pacific family violence practitioners and providers. This training programme brings together cultural knowledge and evidence-based prevention and intervention delivery approaches appropriately designed to the diverse circumstances of victims, perpetrators and their families.

When working with diverse Pacific communities, naming must be meaningful; it is important in terms of community ownership and identification. *Nga Vaka o Kāiāga Tapu* (*Nga Vaka*) comprises words and concepts that have the same or similar meanings across the seven Pacific communities.

Vaka (traditional sailing vessels) symbolizes independent worldviews and the bodies of knowledge and aspirations of each Pacific community. *Vaka* are the ethical compasses that guide individuals in honouring human relationships in families and in communities of identity and belonging. They contain the core foundational values laid out in ancient days by the ancestors.

Kāiāga are past and living families inscribed in genealogies. Through genealogies, places of belonging, designations of roles and obligations to family are understood. How we live as *kāiāga* today is the heritage that we leave for tomorrow's generations. Genealogy transcends time. Its focus is to protect, preserve and give prominence to spaces that connect and relate.

Tapu is the notion and practice in which under specific situations and circumstances, people and things are forbidden to the ordinary. The protocols and etiquette of language, behaviour and ritual shift to reflect encounters with *tapu* entities.

A key message of *Nga Vaka* is that across generations and from our own knowledge pools and contemporary understanding, Pacific peoples hold the solutions to maintaining well-being and harmony in our families.

The conceptual frameworks were informed by information provided by practitioners and knowledge holders in the community. A writer was assigned to take notes and to work with the Working Group to draft their framework and to conduct a process of consultation to ensure that the knowledge was applied appropriately. A reviewer from the community was invited to give comments on the rigour and effectiveness of the conceptual framework in informing the development of a training programme for practitioners and providers from their community.

Nga Vaka takes a strengths-based approach. The term 'strengths-based':

- is premised on the belief that well-being, peace and harmony are natural states of being, to which all Pacific peoples aspire;

¹ Kiribati is the eighth conceptual framework, which was drafted in 2014 and is expected to be completed around mid-2015.

² This is about 300,000 people.

- contends that there are liberative concepts, principles and values within the indigenous philosophical worldviews of each Pacific community that define and govern all relationships between people, and in particular within close³ and extended families;
- indicates that correct interpretations and practices of these concepts and principles will safeguard well-being, prevent violence and transform it in a way that restores well-being to individuals and family collectives;
- acknowledges that there are diverse pathways to ending violence that are informed and directed by those values and beliefs that are conducive to maintaining the well-being and dignity of Pacific peoples (*Nga Vaka o Kāiga Tapu* 2012).

Prevention, the restoration of well-being and harmony to families, and the transformation of violence are key achievements sought by *Nga Vaka*. The Cook Islands conceptual framework, *Turanga Māori* (Mitaera and Rongo-Raea, 2012) notes:

The inability to translate culture and cultural practices into the New Zealand environment has escalated violence as the preferred response to alienation and the diminishment of turanga, which is in itself disempowering and feeds the opportunity for violence to be perpetuated.

Nga Vaka holds that the cultural framework that has been critically developed is transformative and restorative, and prevents violence.

There is nothing in the indigenous cultural belief systems of the Pacific communities that condones violence against family members or in communities. Violence is anathema to the cohesion and harmony of close and extended families. It violates *tapu* and social relationships.

Children, women and the elderly are the most vulnerable members of families. There are two key factors, which are common across the Pacific communities, to protect the vulnerable. The first factor is the observance and maintenance of respectful relationships. Each community has its

own protocols, etiquette and language that define how respectful relationships are to be practised. The second factor is the observance of *tapu* relationships between males and females. In some cultures such as *fa'asamoa*, the brother-sister covenant is *tapu*. There are mutual responsibilities and expectations. The Samoan conceptual framework holds that the respect that brothers and sisters have for each other extends into relationships between non-related males and females. Initiatives that are developed to protect women and children need to take into consideration that the context is family, and that restoration and transformation of the whole family needs to be attempted in order to protect the children.

Core Advisory Groups of each Pacific community were established to develop their training programme. The writer of the conceptual framework played an important role in ensuring that the work from the conceptual framework was appropriately transferred to the training programme. A pilot delivery of the seven conceptual frameworks was undertaken throughout 2013-2014 to practitioners, providers and key members of each community. An evaluation of the pilot deliveries has since been completed.

The *Nga Vaka* conceptual frameworks and training programmes are vehicles for engaging with practitioners, providers and the diverse Pacific communities, which need to include mainstream and interdisciplinary information and knowledge.

The focus on Pacific children is crucial; however, their contexts are the family and culture because these are the foundations of who they are and how they belong.

More work needs to be conducted to gather much needed evidence on the status of Pacific children in the Pacific region and in New Zealand. Social norms that adversely affect Pacific children are largely influenced by interpretations of the Bible and of culture. These need to be challenged or replaced by more liberative aspects of Biblical and cultural texts.

Changing attitudes is central to changing behaviour. Pacific children are valued in our societies. We need to understand why they are valued and why this has changed.

³ The term 'close family' is used instead of 'nuclear family' because the latter defines families primarily as economic units.

LAUNCH OF *HARMFUL CONNECTIONS*

The report *Harmful Connections: Examining the relationship between violence against women and violence against children in the South Pacific* was launched in the evening of the first day of the Conference.

The report addresses the prevalence of intimate partner violence and its association on women's physical, mental, sexual and reproductive health in six Pacific Island countries: Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu. The primary data comes from a World Health Organization study, which was carried out with a number of partners including UNFPA and DFAT, Australia. The report notes the strong correlation between violence against children and violence against women in the home. The report was published jointly between UNFPA and UNICEF.



Dr Laurent Zessler, Director and Representative of the UNFPA Pacific Sub-Regional Office (left) provided an introduction to the report followed by comments from, Dr Karen Allen, Representative, UNICEF Pacific



From left to right: Dr Laurent Zessler, Director and Representative of the UNFPA Pacific Sub-Regional Office, Dr Karen Allen, Representative, UNICEF Pacific and Ms Marta Santos Pais, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General on Violence against Children



From left to right: Rev Filifaiesea Lilo, Secretary, Tonga National Forum of Church Leaders, Ministry of Internal Affairs; Ms Maha Muna, Gender Advisor, Pacific Sub-regional Office, UNFPA; and Mr Claude Tupou, Deputy CEO for Teaching and Learning, Ministry of Education and Training, Tonga



From left to right: Ms Ethel Sigimanu, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Women, Children and Youth, Solomon Islands; Ms Amanda Bissex, Chief of Child Protection Programme, UNICEF Pacific; and Ms Maha Muna, Gender Advisor, Pacific Sub-regional Office, UNFPA

COMMUNITY FACILITATOR PACKAGE: DAY TWO FIELD TRIP

Paragraph of text on the field trip to be submitted Paragraph of text on the field trip to be submitted Paragraph of text on the field trip to be submitted Paragraph of text on the field trip to be submitted Paragraph of text on the field trip to be submitted Paragraph of text on the field trip to be submitted Paragraph of text on the field trip to be submitted Paragraph of text on the field trip to be submitted Paragraph of text on the field trip to be submitted Paragraph of text on the field trip to be submitted



Welcoming ceremony, from left to right: Ms Marta Santos Pais, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General on Violence against Children; Mr Stephen Blight, Regional Advisor, Child Protection, UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office; Mr Andrew Claypole, Advisor to Ms Santos Pais



Explanatory session with Faith Based Leaders and conference participants, including Mr Andrew Claypole, Advisor to Ms Santos Pais; Dr Karen Allen, Representative, UNICEF Pacific; Ms Marta Santos Pais, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General on Violence against Children; and Mr Stephen Blight, Regional Advisor, Child Protection, UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office



Group photograph of the Faith-Based Leaders training of trainers on the Community Facilitator Package, Social Welfare, South-West Division



Ms Marta Santos Pais, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General on Violence against Children and Faith-Based Leader Litia ???

SESSION FOUR:

HUMAN AND FINANCIAL RESOURCE ALLOCATION AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT IN PACIFIC COUNTRIES: ENSURING ADEQUATE PREVENTION AND RESPONSE TO VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

MR STEPHEN BLIGHT,
**Regional Adviser Child Protection,
UNICEF East Asia and Pacific
Regional Office**

Mr Blight highlighted the estimated annual economic loss due to child maltreatment or the costs of inaction. He conveyed how important it was to position child protection as a public policy issue critical to social and economic development. The first estimates of the costs of child maltreatment in East Asia and the Pacific have now been published in an academic journal, *Child Abuse & Neglect* (Fang et al., 2015).

The 2006 UN Secretary-General's report on violence against children presented a comprehensive case for action to address violence against children, but it was most notably rooted in moral and legal frameworks. Using the CRC as the reference point, the argument stressed legal obligations of the State to prevent violence against children, to uphold children's to protection and access to services, and to ensure accountability in every case of violence. It was underpinned by a strong moral argument:

This study should mark a turning point – an end to adult justification of violence against children, whether accepted as “tradition” or disguised as “discipline”. There can be no compromise in challenging violence against children. Children’s uniqueness – their potential and vulnerability, their dependence on adults – makes it imperative that they have more, not less, protection from violence.

As the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children, Ms Marta Santos Pais stressed, government action to prevent violence is not an option; rather it is a binding human rights commitment.

According to the report on the cost of violence in the East Asia and Pacific region, the incidence rate for child abuse and neglect is around ten times higher than the incidence rate for all forms of cancer. While there is a multi-billion-dollar research base reliably



renewed on an annual basis for cancer treatment and prevention, nothing remotely similar to this exists for the prevention of and response to child abuse and neglect.

The methodology for the study comprised five steps:

- Systematic Reviews: n = 364.
- Prevalence studies: physical, sexual, emotional abuse, neglect and witnessing domestic violence.
- Consequence studies: mental health and behaviour; physical and sexual health; and violence and criminality.
- Population-attributable fractions: relative risk of a health outcome given exposure to a type of violence.
- Disability – adjusted life years; one lost year of healthy life.

Some limitations reported were the different methodologies of the various studies reviewed, limited data for the Pacific and the real cost of maltreatment could be more than reported.

The prevalence of child maltreatment in the East Asian and the Pacific region is of concern. Between 14 and 37 per cent of children experience at least one form of abuse. The estimated annual economic loss due to child maltreatment is US\$209 billion, accounting for approximately 2 per cent of the regions' GDP.

Six strategies for action are:

- supporting parents, caregivers and families;
- helping children and adolescents manage risks and challenges;
- changing attitude and social norms;
- promoting and providing support services for children;
- implementing laws and policies that protect children;
- carrying out evidence-based research.

Mr Blight highlighted areas where the UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office in collaboration with the UNICEF Pacific Office can provide support to partners including the development of a toolkit to analyse the cost of violence against children. This covers an analysis of current expenditure, costing of scaling-up services, and development of budget scenarios based on the prioritization of services.

MS ANDIE FONG TOY, Deputy Secretary-General, Pacific Island Forum Secretariat (PIFS)



Ms Fong Toy stated that the leaders of the PIFS had made a commitment to eradicate sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and ensure that all Pacific peoples have equal protection of the law and equal access to justice. In 2010, a high-level PIFS Reference Group to Address SGBV was established to guide PIFS and support Members in meeting leaders' commitment. The Reference Group includes Ms Ethel Sigimanu, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs in Solomon Islands; Mr Aminiasi Kefu, Acting Attorney General of Tonga; and Ms Anne Kautu, Senior Women's Development Division Officer from Kiribati. There is also a representative from each of the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP) agencies represented by the South Pacific Community (SPC), from UN Women and from civil society, represented by Ms Shamima Ali of the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre.

The Reference Group has undertaken a series of country consultations, including meetings with a wide range of stakeholders, conducting high-level advocacy and fact-finding missions to better inform support for national efforts to address SGBV, and country visits to Tonga (2011), Solomon Islands (2011), Kiribati (2012), the Republic of the Marshall Islands (2012) and the Federated States of Micronesia (2012).

Some of the key findings from country visits are that there is a general lack of awareness of SGBV and related issues in non-line ministries, outdated or inadequate legislation and limited capacity in almost all relevant government departments. There are also difficulties in attracting (and retaining) qualified personnel as well as difficulties associated with accessing justice and police services in rural areas and outer islands. Further, there are resource and budgetary constraints and a general shortage of country-specific, evidence-based data.

In 2003, the US Center for Disease Control estimated that violence against women cost the Government US\$5.8 billion per year (\$4.8 billion in direct medical and health care, and \$1.8 billion due to productivity costs). A 2009 Australia National Council to Reduce Violence and KPMG study forecast that in 2021-2022, violence against women would cost AUS\$15.6 billion if there were no interventions to address the issue (\$7.5 billion on pain and suffering; \$3.5 billion on consumption-related costs; \$1.2 billion on production and the rest on administrative and other costs). In 2003, according to the Reserve Bank of Fiji research, violence against women cost the economy FJD300-500 million/year (in direct medical and services costs and productivity costs), around 12 per cent of GDP for that year.

The rationale for the project design at the local level was that using local researchers would help build local capacities to undertake research in general and contribute to raising awareness and understanding of gender research in particular. Local researchers would be cognizant of cultural and local sensitivities.

However, we learned that we made several wrong assumptions and errors from the start:

- We overestimated the size of the pool of available researchers in the region.
- We underestimated the amount of work required.
- We under-budgeted the project and did not provide for equipment for local researchers or research costs (e.g. transportation, Internet), nor adequate remuneration to local researchers.
- We chose to use local researchers but forgot to factor in the local realities of the researchers.

Key lessons learned from the experience were the need for a country-led process and the need for investment in local researchers' ability to participate. Another key lesson learned was that if violence against women is not taken seriously by governments, it will have a long-term impact on society and long-term costs.

**MR JOSEFA KOROIVUETA,
Permanent Secretary for the Ministry
of Women, Children and Poverty
Alleviation, Fiji**



Mr Koroivueta explained the five priority areas that his Ministry is mandated to perform and the process to be followed in the implementation of the CRC process. This included descriptions of the following:

- Poverty reduction
- Gender equality and women's development
- Children and youth
- Social justice
- Public sector reform.

Resource capture and mobilization are carried out through the National Coordinating Committee for Children, which is a forum to identify gaps and map strategies to address these gaps effectively, and to ensure accountability and best practices. Resources are also mobilized by making the business case for policy development, high-level support and endorsement. In this regard, Mr Koroivueta stressed the need for evidence-based policy making. In addition, the Ministry manages the Annual Corporate Planning process through stakeholder consultation and mapping the way forward. This report is not only for international use, but also for local use since it informs policy making and child protection policies.

The next steps are to conduct fiscal-year budgeting of both operational and human resource costs and to mobilize external resources to fill gaps, with one option being to build public private sector partnerships.

The social landscape for children is different now than what it was before. A new initiative for the Government is the Fiji National Child Help Line. It is a work in progress and a creative solution for providing a means to hear children's voices.

**MS MARIA WAU,
Ministry of National Planning,
Papua New Guinea**



Ms Wau explained the four phases of the Policy Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework currently used by the Government of Papua New Guinea. She also elaborated on how the provincial plans would inform the Strategic Development Plans at the national level.

The Policy M&E Framework includes the following:

1. Planning for M&E: clarifying desired outcomes and targets, and a framework for ensuring results.
2. Implementing M&E: undertaking monitoring, review and evaluation activities.
3. Collecting information on results: coordinated and strategic collection of results data.
4. Reflecting on results and taking action: establishing trend analyses and drawing lessons for evidence-based decision-making.

The Government provides direct intervention through funding for health, education, internal affairs and the police.

Recommendations for programming are:

- Provide evidence-based budget proposals.
- Provide a clear picture by reviewing and reporting on activities. It is important provide the best policy results and show evidence.
- State one's cases and budget for preventing violence against women and children, and show commitment.

PREVENTION OF
VIOLENCE AGAINST
CHILDREN THROUGH
EARLY CHILDHOOD
DEVELOPMENTS IS
FAR LESS EXPENSIVE
THAN TREATMENT

SESSION FIVE:

SERVICE DELIVERY FOR ALL CHILDREN: SYSTEMS FOR CHILD PROTECTION – JUSTICE, HEALTH, EDUCATION, SOCIAL WELFARE AND COMMUNITY AND FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

MS ELIZABETH GOODWIN,
Manager, Social Change for Children,
Ministry of Social Development,
New Zealand

Ms Goodwin presented the Strategies for Kids – Information for Parents (SKIP) programme, which builds community support for parents to keep children safe. This is an evidence-based programme that was originally set up to prevent the physical punishment of children. It works towards changing the social norm around physical punishment to move from hitting children to a more positive approach to raising children. SKIP carried out in-depth work to address child maltreatment, drawing from lessons learned over the past 12 years and deepening and expanding on it to reach parents who do not engage with conventional support, who are isolated and disconnected, and whose children are at risk.

SKIP works in three main ways:

- It builds community capability by jointly creating projects that have parents at the centre. SKIP listens to parents' stories and experiences, and works with communities and parents to design supports that will make a difference to their parenting. Previously in SKIP, there were many workshops, events and posters, but today the aim is to create connections – with each other, with cultures, and with communities.
- It collaborates with national NGOs to deliver consistent messages so that every parent receives the same messages about parenting wherever they go.
- It distributes information to parents with strategies to help them in their parenting and to manage their own behaviour.



From left to right: Ms Elizabeth Goodwin, Team Leader Social Action, Community Investment, Ministry of Social Development, New Zealand; Mr Titabu Tabane, Attorney General, Kiribati; Ms Leah George, Consular Chief, US Embassy, Fiji; Ms Ethel Sigimanu, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Women, Children and Youth, Solomon Islands; Judge Leilani Tuala-Warren, Judicial Department, Samoa

Two key elements underpin this work:

- the belief that all parents love their children and all communities want to be safe and to thrive; and
- the refusal to blame, judge or shame.

There is no such thing as a perfect parent; all parents struggle at times. However, the more people understand how to support parents and their children, the more conscious parents will be about the effects of their parenting on their children; and the more strategies parents have, the safer their children will be.

SKIP promotes six principles of effective parenting, derived from research carried out by the Children's Issues Centre at the University of Otago, New Zealand. The principles have been translated into many languages, used to inform conversations, workshops, training, human resources policies in NGOs and the SKIP team's behaviour. While a powerful tool for social change, the approach is deceptively simple. Many examples of positive social change were cited. In addition, SKIP worked with a very committed Samoan Minister in Auckland who spoke to his congregation about his own family. He had hit his older children and recognized the damage this caused to his relationship with them. He then replaced punishment with discipline when bringing up his younger children and delighted in the relationship he had with them.

During the Rugby World Cup, SKIP worked to bring hundreds of people together to watch the games on a big screen. At half-time, the children performed skits about how they wanted to be brought up, and afterwards adults were given packs of parenting information. The conversations that began at these events were continued in the churches.

Ms Goodwin explained that SKIP is continually challenging themselves to do better, to reach more parents, to influence them in ways that keep their children safe. This focus has led to innovative projects to reach communities that have no services or where community attitudes are not supportive of parents. SKIP has learned that telling parents they are wrong does not work. People who feel shame do not ask for help; they do not feel confident to try new things. Rather, SKIP tries to truly understand the challenges parents have and to figure out what can be done to positively influence parenting experiences.

Support for parents does not have to be intensive, social-work based, or even programmatic. It can be as simple as a neighbour having the confidence to

say, "Why don't you leave the kids with me for a couple of hours while you take a nap." That's social change, that's a connected community – and that's what we work to achieve.

REVEREND JAMES BHAGWAN, Secretary for Communications and Overseas Mission in the Methodist Church of Fiji and Rotuma

Reverend Bhagwan explained that the Methodist Church in Fiji and many other churches are the largest NGOs in Fiji. They have 56 divisions and approximately 300,000 followers with a talatala (church pastor) or church leader in every location in Fiji. He explained the shared vision and the social structure of the Church. The Church is headed by the conference; below the conference there are divisions, villages and cell groups. They have families for each of the cell groups. They have a theological college, divisional schools and circuit schools. The churches have a Department of Social Services, addressing violence, social services and education. They also have a non-formal education department, the Dilute Home and the Veilomani Boys Home. In sum, they have systems that work in terms of service delivery.

The Church is targeting men and young boys for the integration of social services. The Church no longer wants to be just part of programme. They no longer want to be used as a training venue, but to be part of the development of programme implementations. A study carried out with UNAIDS five years ago identified the challenges as follows:

- The rights-based approach has always been the best approach. There is a strong connection between this and the church-based approach.
- The Pastoral cycle is situation, analysis, action and evaluation. At the juncture of action and evaluation (this is part of the journey), buy-in from the communities is important.
- We also identified the people in the theological colleges through training for support,
- We have dedicated two Sundays to children.

Reverend Bhagwan highlighted that we often talk about partnership and share the same vision with government agencies or NGOs. The issue of child protection needs to be openly discussed because the ministers or reverends have limited knowledge on abuse or do not know how to refer child abuse to the appropriate authorities.

**MS MARIE FATIAKI,
National Programme Coordinator,
International Labour Organization (ILO)
Country Office for South Pacific Island
Countries**

Ms Fatiaki presented the International Labour Organization (ILO) project Tackling child labour through education (TACKLE). She explained the legal framework that supported the TACKLE project. The ILO Minimum Age Convention No. 138 (1973) specifies that the minimum age of employment is 15 years old. It prohibits work that is hazardous (likely to harm health, safety or morals) for children under 18 years old. It also determines permissible activities for light work for children from 13 years old. The ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (No. 182) defines the worst forms of child labour to include: all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage, and forced labour including using children in armed conflict; child prostitution and pornography; using children for illicit activities such as for trafficking of drugs, begging and work which is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children.

Child labour in the Pacific ranges from working in agriculture and fishing, to working in the informal sector as street market vendors, beggars or drug sellers. Children are also involved in organized crime and are victims of commercial sexual exploitation. Studies undertaken in Fiji at the University of the South Pacific have found that many of the children engaged in child labour are exposed to drugs, verbal abuse, alcohol abuse and domestic violence.

In terms of enforcement and monitoring, the State must take urgent action, for example, rescuing, rehabilitating and educating children and communities, punishing offenders and developing child labour inspection systems and processes. There is a need to build capacities of service providers, develop policies, establish a centralized child labour database and continue to collect additional data. There is also a need to conduct community awareness, to document processes and requirements, and to create a step-by-step guide for employers on how to eradicate child labour. Labour officers also need to be guided in their actions. The Ministry of Labour of Fiji has prosecuted 12 employers through the Employers Tribunal.

Challenges and gaps in the process of eradicating child labour include: limited referral, counselling and monitoring; getting children back to school; services for working children and/or children at risk of dropping out of school; providing education and skills training for out-of-school children as well

as decent jobs; the Bridging Programme for out-of-school children to enrol in formal school; and services to effectively tackle the commercial sexual exploitation of children.

**DR REAPI MATAIKA,
Paediatric Consultant,
Ministry of Health and Medical Services,
Fiji**

Dr Mataika explained that traditional medicine is acknowledged in Fiji; however, it remains a grey and contentious area. In the medical profession, medicines are promoted that are already proven scientifically to cure patients. In cases where parents insist on the use of traditional healing, we then encourage conversations and dialogue with them.

Her challenges in dealing with cases of violence against children from the perspective of a medical professional include:

- determining social changes – it is difficult to measure impacts of programmes and whether children abuse has been reduced;
- placing parents at the centre of children's lives despite the many outside influences on children;
- ensuring that parenting is not overly complicated but simply requires love and care;
- putting parents and children at the focus of discussions.

Dr Mataika mentioned that the medical officers are now more informed to identify and ask the right questions to the assessed victims. Their training was beneficial. They can now identify, for example, the fractures that might be the result of abuse.

**MS LINA CHANG,
Chief Executive Officer,
Samoa Victim Support Group**

The Samoa Victim Support Group (SVSG), a small NGO in Samoa, operates free shelters for children. The Government of Samoa provided the land where the shelter, the House of Hope, was built. SVSG also has a house for single mothers (under 12 years). We ensure that perpetrators are put to justice. SVSG started the lifeline in 2013 but funding ends in June 2015.

The support provided to children includes lifeline telephone services. The SVSG also has billboards

displaying its phone number, which is easily accessible to children. There are a total of 700 groups in the villages. Their role is to advocate and to counsel victims. The most recent victim that a village-based group supported was an 11-year-old girl. Some of these children are victims of incest. SVSG has currently implemented a child protection policy, which will be reviewed every three years. SVSG's motto is 'victim support', yet it does need financial support to expand its programmes.

MR SETAREKI MACANAWAI, Executive Director, Pacific Disability Forum

The objective of the presentation was to inform the participants of the services that the Pacific Disability Forum provides. He encouraged the participants to engage with people living with disabilities when discussing violence against children, and to be inclusive. He made reference to a 2005 report that stated that 1.5 per cent of disabled children, for example deaf and blind children, were targets of abuse. Also, citing a 2010 report, he explained that this trend was increasing. Mr Macanawai asked

participants to consider children with disabilities in their planning processes because of their vulnerability. He questioned the kind of support that was given to parents whose children were born with disabilities. He also explained that sometimes parents of children with disabilities have difficulty coping with caregiving, which often results in divorce and separation.

At times, children with disabilities are left at home and do not attend school because their parents do not know what to do with them. Mr Macanawai questioned the how parents and authorities can ensure that children with disabilities are referred to schools. How are governments considering people with disabilities in their budgets? Macanawai acknowledged UN Women and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) of Australia for supporting a research project that reported on violence against women and violence against children with disabilities.

Currently, 13 out of 15 countries in the Pacific have ratified the Convention on the Rights of People with Disability (CRPD). The remaining countries should be encouraged to ratify this Convention.



SESSION SIX:

LEGISLATIVE REFORM IN PACIFIC ISLAND COUNTRIES: CHANGES IN LEGISLATION AND LAW ENFORCEMENT THAT ARE INFLUENCING PREVENTION AND RESPONSE TO VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

MS SALOTE KAIMACUATA,
Child Protection Specialist,
UNICEF Pacific

The objective of this session was to describe the legislative reform in the Pacific Island countries and identify at least a few countries with best practices and benchmarks that are effectively implementing the laws. The presentation also noted some substantive evidence of changes in children's lives in the region. Ms Kaimacuata included some of her own observations on issues that have become systemic and add to the social norms that often put children at risk of abuse and violence. To conclude, Ms Kaimacuata reminded participants that, as duty bearers of the legal, moral, and social obligation, children's interest are at the hearts of policy development.

Pacific societies and communities have always placed great value on the care and nurturing of children, and the bonds between them and their families are strong. Responsibility for the care and upbringing of young children is often shared by all adults within the extended Pacific families and communities, with aunts, uncles, grandparents, siblings, cousins, local community chiefs, church leaders and other community members all playing significant roles in a child's upbringing. These strong, extended family networks serve as an essential social safety net for ensuring that children's development is nurtured, supported and sustained through tried and true social norms of culture and traditions to keep them safe and protected.

However, these traditional support systems are coming under increasing strain as a result of social and economic changes. Common examples include the rural to urban drift from communal collective lifestyles by families in search of better education and opportunities for their children. In addition, there is the need for both parents to work in order to sustain the urban lifestyle with its costs for high-tech

gadgets for work and school for themselves and their children, rent, transport and supermarket grocery shopping, among other necessary expenses.

Ms Kaimacuata said that this was a contrast to the rural semi-subsistence living, eating from one's backyard garden, which was the norm when she was growing up but which her children will never know. "My children are city kids who will probably create, what I used to think was a strange phenomenon, the nuclear family. The breakdown of family support structures and tensions between traditional values and modern or Western ways are causing numerous social problems. Poor economic conditions result in many children living away from their families in areas that have better schooling and work opportunities but that are also overcrowded and dangerous."

These factors increase children's vulnerability to violence, abuse and exploitation. It has been known and is not unique to Fiji alone that extended families living in towns and urban areas work shifts: those who work day shifts and children who go to school leave the home, while the nightshifts sleep and the shift changes at the end of the day. Studies conducted by UNICEF found a widespread use of physical violence against children in homes and schools, as well as growing concern about child sexual abuse, exploitation and neglect.

Families, communities and governments all have a role to play in creating a protective environment for children and keeping them safe from abuse and exploitation. A key component of this protective environment is having strong national laws in place to define roles and responsibilities for promoting children's well-being and protecting them from abuse, as well as guiding authorities and duty bearers on actions to take when a child is being abused. Most countries in the Pacific have laws that have some basic provisions on court actions when a child is being abused; however, there are no detailed laws or policies specifying roles and

responsibilities of government services, traditional authorities, parents and community members. Laws defining crimes against children are outdated in most of our Pacific Island countries; they were drafted and enacted long before the CRC in the early 1990s. They do not reflect the current problems facing our children. New emerging issues for the Pacific region include cross-border regional custody battles and traditional non-documented family adoption, which today, in the absence of any legal documentation, has implications and may be investigated as trafficking cases. In the Pacific tradition, for instance, in attempting to save the family's reputation, the brother may offer to take the illegitimate child of his youngest sister as his own across to a country such as New Zealand or Australia and apply for permanent residency. However, the more developed host country has legal frameworks that require identification documents to show evidence that the child is indeed related to him and was legitimately given in the traditional adoption process, through a verbal and oral promise to take care of the child as his own. But what if such traditional family adoption channels are opening up opportunities for trafficking of our children out of the Pacific?

What about the teachers who, when the Ministry of Education in Fiji implemented the Child Protection Policy, asked, "So what will we do now that we cannot smack the children to discipline them? The child protection policy is denying us our authority to discipline our students."

All of the PICs ratified the CRC in the early 1990s. Child protection started with the Pacific Children's Programme in around 2003 and with UNICEF in 2008.

Some of the governments of the Pacific, with the support of UNICEF, have launched legislative reform initiatives in order to address child protection. Kiribati made the first break-through with their Children, Young Persons and Family Welfare Act 2013, aligned to the CRC. Solomon Islands and Samoa are in the process of enacting their child protection-related laws, and Fiji has CRC-aligned draft laws in the pipeline.

There are emerging issues of child trafficking in the Pacific. "As a Legal Aid Adviser in the mid-1990s, together with Department of Social Welfare, we served Care Orders on a few women living along our Coral Coast processing adoption of the children born of teenage mothers. Our private counsels were bypassing the Department of Social Welfare screening, the institution with the legal mandate and oversight with respect to adoption matters at the national level." She also stated that teenage

pregnancy continues to be an issue for our Pacific Island nations, prematurely limiting young lives from reaching their full potential. Children have babies as a result of being subject to incest and sexual offences. How can we strengthen our laws to mitigate the risk against these young lives?

His Excellency the President of Fiji said, "Violence against children (VAC) is unacceptable. All VAC is preventable". The Secretary-General on Violence Against Children added, "Violent response is not necessary", but rather, sound explicit strong laws to end VAC are.

Neglecting to act with a vision to protect our children arguably makes us, as duty bearers, leaders and decision-makers, party to the offences of abuse perpetrated against our innocent and vulnerable children.

Ms Kaimacuata mentioned being inspired when she heard Dr Vita Skilling from the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) talk about using the strength-based approach to engage decision makers in FSM to endorse the new law against domestic violence, the Family Safety and Protection Act. In Vanuatu, the Family Protection Act 2008 was also endorsed because of the replacement of the term 'domestic violence' with 'family protection'. The CEO of Samoa's Ministry of Justice Courts Administration, Masinalupe, echoed the same sentiments that our Pacific Island countries lean towards an inclusive and holistic approach to ending violence against women and children based on love. In his opinion, the greatest set of laws, even greater than the Magna Carta, was the Ten Commandments. In Kiribati, the equivalent is the Family Peace Bill.

The opportunity emerges for a collaborative approach within the Pacific region to continue to share experiences and strategies that best provide meaningful, relevant laws that are contextual and support our communities. Such laws should incorporate what is already working well within our social norms to protect children and to end violence against children, while at the same time challenging the social norms and traditions that no longer serve a meaningful, protective purpose in the changing social and economic landscape.

Ms Kaimacuata stressed, "We have a legal, moral, social obligation and duty to protect our children. Echoing the Secretary-General on Violence against Children, it is a human rights imperative, a governance issue, and an economic sound investment with positive returns for our children to reach their full potential."

In the Pacific region, she noted, there is an opportunity right now for a regional strategic approach to think globally, collaborate regionally and act nationally to enact sound legislation that explicitly work towards ending VAC.

As also stated by the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children, data and research are better at informing government than assumptions and fears. Ms Kaimacuata emphasized that Pacific storytelling must incorporate good quantitative data to persuade and mobilize real action to enacting strong legal frameworks. Sound legal frameworks are an imperative in our Small Island States.

We must invest in evidence-based approaches through wide consultations of key stakeholders with Government – women, children, families, faith-based organizations, civil society organizations.

MS LEILANI TUALA-WARREN, Family Court Judge, Samoa

The objective of this session was to inform the participants about the changes in legislation and law enforcement in Samoa and its impacts on prevention or responses to violence against children. Ms Warren

presented a brief overview on the different legislation that are relevant to child protection. She noted that family reform is a critical area for the protection of children, since the family remains the primary unit of social and personal identity in the Pacific. She explained the following legislation:

- Family Safety Act of 2013: She shared her experiences on the implementation of this Act, noting that it was passed around two years ago and systems and processes have been established to facilitate efficient social service delivery.
- Family Court Act 2014 with Family Court Rules in the finalization process. She shared her experiences in establishing the Family Court in Samoa and highlighted that the Samoa Court uses alternative forms of dispute resolution, which also puts the best interests of the child at the centre of its response.
- Family Violence Court: She said that judges' responses to family violence without legislation continues to pose a challenge in Samoa.

She also discussed the importance of monitoring and evaluation for understanding the effectiveness of legislative changes in tackling violence against children and women.



Honourable Titabu Tabane, Attorney General, Kiribati

The Honourable Tabane discussed the progress made in the implementation of the legislative reforms in Kiribati. He also noted the barriers and challenges during the implementation. His conclusion included the priorities on child protection programmes in Kiribati and the way forward.

Unlike in other Pacific Islands countries, in Kiribati it only took three to five years to reform child protection legislation. Kiribati was able to achieve the following: Children, Young People and Family Welfare Act 2013 and Policy; implementation manual of the Children, Young Persons and Family Welfare Act (the CYPFW Act); an increased number of reported cases on violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation of children. In addition, through the law reform, Welfare Officers have been given the mandate to intervene, and the public is also mandated and/or protected when reporting such cases.

Other relevant stakeholders including the police, health, magistrates and court officials are well aware of their legal responsibility under the Act. More directly involved service providers (e.g. counselling services and temporary shelters) have expressed their interest in assisting. Neighbouring countries such as Nauru visited Kiribati to study its child protection programmes.

The Juvenile Justice Bill is ready to be read by Parliament and will be passed during the upcoming session [note: this has been passed by Parliament in August 2015]. Capacity of key child protection service providers has been improved by maintaining strong collative partnerships among relevant key stakeholders. Further, a 24/7 helpline for survivors of violence has been installed and SAFENET has been established to address gender-based violence and

child abuse. Kiribati also has implemented the Social Welfare School Fee Support Scheme; continued its planning of the set-up of a One-Stop Shop to assist children and women survivors; provided training to *Unimwane* (community leaders) and Church leaders on child protection; collected data on child protection; raised awareness on child protection through school visits; and used drama aimed at youth to convey messages.

In addition, Kiribati is supporting a combined community and an outer islands child protection training visit for highly effective use of time and resources. Eight islands have been visited to date. Civil registration officers were trained; routine civil registration services were monitored; an e-database was set up; and training was provided on process and management with computers and e-data bases on births, deaths and marriages on the islands. There has been a teachers' workshop on non-violent discipline.

Some of the barriers in Kiribati include the need for capacity building for welfare officers, police and judges; and the lack of technical skills, proper storage and collection of child protection data. Resistance to changing traditions, customs, social behaviour, and mind-set also continues to pose a challenge.

Kiribati's priorities in child protection programmes are to continue training and awareness raising of professionals on the CYPFW Act in Kiribati Group and the Line Groups by 2015-2016; incorporate training on and awareness raising of the Juvenile Justice Bill (to be enacted in August 2015) with the CYPFW Act training; conduct training on the Implementation Plan and Implementation Manual of both the CYPFW Act and the Juvenile Justice Bill by 2015-2016; and build capacities, including overseas attachment/training, with relevant agencies and service providers by 2015-2017.



SESSION SEVEN:

EDUCATION SESSION: VIOLENCE AND EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

MS WENDY RICH-ORLOFF, Early Childhood Education Specialist, UNICEF Pacific

Ms Rich-Orloff presented an overview of the development of the human brain to show the importance of understanding early childhood education and the development of the brain of children between the ages of 0 and 6. She explained the development of the cognitive functions of the brain and how they affect the language of the child. The scientific evidence confirmed the need to develop the language skills of children before the higher cognitive skills could be developed. Research in neural development shows that the environment experienced by children between conception and six years of age will set the agenda for outcomes throughout the lifespan. Brain research suggests, and cost-benefit analysis confirms, that rates of return through support for development, education, health and environmental improvements are greatest when made early in life.

Ms Rich-Orloff provided some current statistics on early childhood in the Pacific region. During July-August 2014, UNICEF supported a study, “Parental Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) Related to Early Childhood Development”, in Maewo Island, Vanuatu and Ghaobata Ward, Solomon Islands. The purpose was to learn about parents’ perceptions of early childhood. Most children do not have a sufficiently diverse diet for healthy development. Findings of the research in Vanuatu revealed that only 36 per cent of infants/toddlers and 26 per cent of kindergarten-aged children met the minimum requirement of four or more food categories, compared to 19 per cent and 8 per cent in Solomon Islands, respectively. Fathers did not engage in a single early learning activity in the past three days with their child in 29 per cent of households in Vanuatu and 53 per cent of households in Solomon Islands. Reading or looking at picture books was the least common activity that fathers engaged in with their child. Playing was the most common activity that fathers engaged in with their child in Vanuatu, and storytelling in Solomon Islands, but only a minority of fathers engaged in these



activities. Furthermore, the most common discipline strategy was to spank or whip a child and then explain to the children what she/he did wrong. Very few children had been disciplined using only non-violent discipline. The use of physical violence as a disciplinary measure was high even among parents of infants/toddlers. In addition, it was found that 94 per cent of mothers in Vanuatu and 73 per cent in Solomon Islands reported that their child hits, kicks or bites other children and/or adults.

Ms Rich-Orloff proposed some successful models already in practice in some countries in the Pacific, for example, staff have a caseload of children/families they visit in the home on a rotating basis. Other parenting support options are Mobile Kindy (an NGO providing quality early childhood education to the most disadvantaged children in Suva, Fiji), Questions and Answers (Q&A) in newspapers; radio broadcasts on childhood development; books for children with key parenting messages; group play opportunities; and monthly parenting groups through churches, local health clinics, village meetings. Issues on health, nutrition, the importance of immunization, child protection, positive parenting, and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), among other topics are all incorporated into the above models.

The participants were encouraged to discuss the following in their country groups: what is currently in place to support early childhood and parenting?; what systems are currently in place to support parenting?; what programmes are already being implemented?; and how is the Ministry of Education and other ministries working on child protection coordination and collaboration in their country? They were asked to identify gaps in systems and services in their country.

Some participants suggested that action steps be proposed for young children to be included in child protection policies, addressing home, day-care settings, pre-schools, kindergarten, etc. Parenting programmes use an inclusive approach that addresses the most disadvantaged families, including families with children with disabilities as well as parents with disabled children.

MS UFEMIA CAMAITOGA, Early Childhood Education and Development Specialist, Fiji National University

This presentation aimed to highlight the importance of early childhood development and its impacts on young children. Ms Camaitoga started with a discussion on where we are and what we have learned, highlighting the unique culture and diversity of the Pacific Island countries. She stressed the importance of being equipped with the latest information, research, data on development and wiring of the brain from birth to three years of age, which is the most critical time of human development.

She stated:

We, as Pacific Island nations, must work towards the goals of these documents, CRC, CEDAW, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and collect data for national monitoring. We need evidence-based studies to inform our practices and policies, and a process of improving one's practices/decisions in early childhood education. Terminology varies but means the same thing. Assessment tools and techniques for young children should be clear for the users and beneficiaries sharing best practices and information.

Economic benefits for PICs. There is increased productivity in the schools and workplace of children who attend early childhood centres. Children perform better in school, showing lower rates of both repetition and dropping out of school. Early childhood education interventions play a major role in poverty alleviation, especially with urbanization and globalization. Prevention of violence against children through early childhood development interventions is far less expensive than treatment.

Projected cost-effectiveness of this approach.

Ms Camaitoga concluded by saying that early childhood education was a vehicle for social mobilization. Strategies for action include parent education programmes, which are essential to meet changing needs or demands of parents and caregivers. Early childhood education programmes are an ideal entry point for generating community processes. Children are the future: change them and the world changes.



Speaker Ms Ufemia Camaitoga, Independent Advisor, ECE; seated left to right: Ms Niki Abrishamian, Chief of Education Programme, UNICEF Pacific, Fiji; Mr Saytendra Singh, Senior Education Officer, Policy unit, Ministry of Education, Heritage, Arts and Library Services & National Archives of Fiji; Ms Analesi Tuicaumia, Little Ones and Mobile Kindy, ECED, Fiji; Ms Wendy Rich-Orloff, Early Childhood Education Specialist, UNICEF Pacific, Fiji



MR SATYENDRA SINGH,
Senior Policy Officer,
Ministry of Education,
Fiji

The objective of the presentation was to inform the participants on the progress of various initiatives were implemented by the Ministry of Education of Fiji, which includes the Year 1 Milk Initiative; Tuition Fee Free Grant to all early childhood, primary and secondary children; salary grants for early childhood education (ECE) teachers; school transport assistance; creating grants for schools; grants for boarding facilities; establishment of infant schools; establishment of technical colleges; one electronic device per child; decrease in the teacher-to-student

ratio; free text books Y1-Y13; child protection training and awareness programmes at all schools; mainstreaming of children with special needs and provision of relevant resources; and zero tolerance to corporal punishment in schools.

Various challenges faced by the Ministry of Education were as follows: limited data were available for all stakeholders; there was resistance from some communities to the implementation; and there was poor coordination among the partners. Some further steps and commitment from the Ministry of Education include the employment of a full-time officer to capture and record the annual progress of the CRC recommendations, the enhancement of private-sector partnerships, and the provision of quality education to all children in Fiji.

VIOLENCE AGAINST
CHILDREN IS
UNACCEPTABLE;
ALL VIOLENCE
AGAINST CHILDREN
IS PREVENTABLE

SESSION EIGHT:

CHILD PROTECTION IN EMERGENCIES: CHILD PROTECTION MINIMUM STANDARDS IN EMERGENCIES AND CLIMATE CHANGE, DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND PROTECTION

MR PER BECKER, Risk Reduction and Preparedness Specialist, UNICEF Pacific

Mr Becker discussed the importance and possibility of pro-active activities to reduce child protection risks in future disasters. He highlighted that the Pacific was prone to many disasters, such as earthquakes, tsunamis, cyclones, floods and drought.

Disasters may increase the vulnerability of children, increasing the risk of:

- Neglect
- Separation
- Abandonment
- Abuse
- Economic exploitation
- Illegal adoption and trafficking
- Physical, sexual and other forms of violence.

A universal truth in child protection is that prevention is better than cure. Ways to address child protection issues in disasters can include:

- Be proactive, not reactive.
- Consider children in all risk assessments.
- Construct risk scenarios for the main hazards.
- Integrate child protection risks in each risk scenario.
- Implement activities that reduce each child protection risk before a disaster occurs:
 - reduce the likelihood (prevention);
 - reduce the consequences (mitigation);
 - prepare effective responses (preparedness).

MS FLOREEN TIKAU, Youth Activist on Climate Change, Kiribati

Climate change is the changing of climatic weather patterns, increasing the temperature and also the sea level. It is curious how the sun is our hero, lighting our surroundings, but it is also a villain, being the core cause of climate change. We, the people, have exacerbated the issue, through activities including deforestation, the burning of rubbish as well as the burning of factory wastes.

Here is the important question: what ways are children in the Pacific affected by this global issue? A child is an immature person today, but tomorrow, he or she will be among the leaders of our countries. These children will take your place; this is their destiny. We were also children once. But what if they live in an unhealthy environment? Do you think that they will be able to establish their dreams and goals? Here are some of the effects that climate change has on children:

- physical harm through the increase of storm surges;
- loss of a healthy diet due to environmental degradation;
- increased health issues;
- decrease availability of drinking water; and
- an uncertain future filled with dread and disasters.

Kiribati is known by some as the 'sinking Islands' because it is one of the most vulnerable countries in the entire world to climate change. It consists of low-lying coral atolls (310 square miles) around 2 meters above sea level and is surrounded by a vast ocean (1.3 million square miles). Climate change is causing such major environmental degradation that even the scientists predict that in 30-60 years, the islands might sink underwater.

President Mr Anote Tong of Kiribati stated, “They don’t have the resources to deal with things that will not directly affect them in their lifetime. We are very vulnerable. We are on the front line.” President Ratu Epeli Nailatikau of Fiji made a mind-opening statement during the opening ceremony, “We may have limited resources, but if we are serious about protecting our most vulnerable, then it must be our priority. Anything else is an excuse.”

Some of the actions that Kiribati has taken to reduce the effects of climate change on the children are:

- It signed the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1995.
- It supported a child baseline study conducted by the Task Force established by the Cabinet. The study, which took four years to complete, concluded with a recommendation for a law for the protection of children from violence to be enacted.
- It implemented public awareness programmes on climate change in communities through NGOs, including Kiribati Family Health Association (KFHA) and UNICEF, through such activities as role-play, rallies, and public speeches.
- It integrated climate change into a school curriculum programme called ‘Youth Parliament’, whereby the students act as leaders of parliament and debate on important issues in the country including climate change and gender equality.
- It set up the Adolescent Girls Initiatives (AGI) Committee, which focuses on boys as well as girls, chaired by our own First Lady, Madam Meme Tong. It will have five focus areas, which will include climate change, women’s leadership and domestic violence.

Ms Tikau emphasized that, “Globally, it has been discovered that it is actually the countries outside of the Pacific region that have contributed most to climate change: 15-20 countries are responsible for

roughly 75 per cent of global warming. Remember that it is not overseas countries that will be affected by climate change. It is us, the vulnerable Islands of the Pacific. Therefore, it is the children, our children, your children, who will be most affected because they will be the leaders.

“If not us, then who?” This question has been repeated through this Conference, and I am in a very appropriate room to ask it because I am positive that my message will be received by passionate people. Help us reduce greenhouse gas emissions. I do not want my children to turn into mermaids. So please, demand partnerships with overseas countries. We require actions instead of sweet promises and words because ‘actions speak louder than words’.

I therefore recommend that you all search for an empty space back in your countries, maybe your backyard, where we can migrate to before going underwater. But for now, let us all hold hands! We may not be able to prevent climate change, but we can reduce its effects. This is easier said than done, but we can slowly but continuously aim to create a healthy environment, for healthy children, for a healthy future!

I also call on the Kiribati Government to launch a climate change programme especially for children and even a guidebook on what to do when a natural disaster occurs. Why am I insisting? I can still remember the unbelievable sight when a cyclone warning was announced; children actually went to swim and were excited. Even the adults were parked by the beach waiting for something to happen. What were they waiting for?

I therefore speak for the entire children of the Pacific to you, their parents and idols. Teach us, love us and protect us.”

Ms Tikau concluded her presentation by performing a Kiribati Traditional Dance that was related to her topic and the many stories about women, men and boys and girls in Kiribati. She told a story of how women and men fish.



MR MARK BEBE,
Director General, Ministry of
Justice and Community Services,
Vanuatu

This presentation aimed to inform the participants about the responses to Cyclone Pam that had just hit Vanuatu a month ago, in particular to share the experiences and lessons learned during and after the cyclone.

Mr Bebe described the intensity of the Category 5 cyclone and said that this was the first time that Vanuatu had experienced such a cyclone, which affected all provinces of Vanuatu. The most affected areas were in the central Provinces and the Southern Province, and those living in slums around Port. Despite the drastic effects and damaged properties and homes, 13 adults and one child died.

Effective actions of the Government were as follows:

- The Government established formal systems, at the national, provincial and community levels. For example through the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO), the early light warning system, the Blue, Yellow and Red light system, with highly precise messages of actions to be taken according to each colour, was broadcast over the radio (three stations) and the television. Through SMS, the two mobile phone services providers, Digicel and Telecom Vanuatu Limited.
- NDMO also identified and established Evacuation Centres in Towns, and in the villages, community halls, churches and classrooms.

- The Ministry of Education activated the Disaster Risk Management (DRM) Policy manual where teachers, staff and students are guided on safety procedures and steps to take during times of disasters, particularly during earthquakes, tsunamis and cyclones. The police also have a Response Unit that provided the emergency services at hospitals and health centres.

Mr Bebe explained the various challenges they faced, which included the poor coordination of the donor partners and NGO community. There were some operational challenges, which included the uneven distribution of food items resulting in frustrated women and men in communities. Furthermore, expired or contaminated food was distributed, which could not be eaten by Ni Vanuatu. Finally, around 500 generators were distributed to communities by a donor community without prior consultation of the appropriate authorities.

Despite the challenges, useful lessons were learned, which included the importance of improving coordination mechanisms with national agencies. Also, local resilience mechanisms in communities need to be strengthened, particularly with respect to food security issues and disaster preparedness. It has become increasingly necessary to develop and amend the building code so that houses are safe and resilient. Legislative changes in the NDMO Act should be added to improve coordination mechanisms for better service delivery to vulnerable groups and rural areas.

Mr Bebe acknowledged the countries that had provided support after the cyclone – Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Tonga and Solomon Islands – and the UNICEF and donor agencies.

VIOLENCE AGAINST
CHILDREN IS NEITHER
INEVITABLE NOR
AUTOMATICALLY
CONDONED BY
SOCIAL NORMS

CLOSING SESSION

MR SAVENACA KAUNISELA,
Permanent Secretary, Ministry of iTaukei Affairs, Fiji

A very good afternoon.

I am indeed honoured to be given a few minutes this afternoon to provide the closing remarks on behalf of the host country, Fiji.

First, I must say that Fiji is fortunate to have this important international conference convened here at the Sofitel Hotel. I hope all of you have had the chance to do a bit of sightseeing as well as shopping around Nadi in the last few days.

Ladies and gentlemen, we are all privy to the statement that “[a]ll children have the right to protection. They have the right to survive, to be safe, to belong, to be heard, to receive adequate care and to grow up in a protective environment.”

This Conference, Pacific Islands End-Violence against Children, is indeed a very important and timely one for all our Pacific Islands countries.

You will agree with me that violence against children is a matter of concern that we may have not considered seriously due to many factors within our island nations.

It is now time that we be serious in our approaches to curtail violence against children in our communities around the Pacific, for the sake of our children’s welfare and well-being.

We are all aware that the family is the first line of protection for children.

Parents or other caregivers are responsible for building a protective and loving home environment. Schools and communities are responsible for building a safe and child-friendly environment outside the child’s home.

In the family, school and community, children should be fully protected so they can survive, grow, learn and develop to their fullest potential.

Any child can be vulnerable to violations in many places, including the home. The actual number of children experiencing violence in any form is not easy to determine. But we all know this is happening around our communities.

Ladies and gentlemen, our various governments, communities, local authorities and non-governmental organizations, including faith-based and community-based organizations, should work together and strengthen partnerships to ensure that our children grow up in a family environment without fear.

Their well-coordinated efforts will ensure that all citizens, schools and communities protect all children and prevent child maltreatment in many facets such as such as abuse, sexual exploitation, trafficking and work in hazardous conditions, as well as harmful practices.

Our children, girls and boys, should be encouraged and supported to speak up for their rights and to take an active role in their own protection against abuse, violence, exploitation and discrimination.

During the last three days, a great deal of information has been disseminated to us, which covers a vast range of stories, issues, positive ideas and arguments on ending violence against children that we all have to consider when we return to our countries.

We have heard about different forms of violence against children such as physical abuse, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, child labour and corporal punishment.

There have been calls for:

- *sustainable solutions in our efforts and legal frameworks put in place, which are considered Government priorities;*
- *the allocation of resources, integrated support and partnership arrangement made;*
- *development of new policies to address violence against children*
- *better data collection systems and research;*
- *a change in mind-sets and attitudes including through awareness programmes;*
- *ratification of the CRC.*

The President of the Republic of Fiji also stated that we need to:

- *press for political commitment;*
- *enact smart and strong laws on violence against children;*
- *implement a robust Family Welfare System;*
- *carry out monitoring and evaluation;*
- *change harmful practices.*

Dear friends, all the above require commitment from all of us here. We have been hearing that ending violence against children is everyone's business. This is a challenge to all of us. It is time to act now and implement appropriate solutions.

I understand that we come from different communities in the Pacific with diverse traditional customs and values – we have religious beliefs, VANUA and government systems, but we are now encountering a common issue.

There might not be a model that fits us all, but if we seriously commit ourselves to ending violence against children, we must be practical and put in

place strategies that we will implement sooner rather than later.

To all the participants I thank you all for sharing your views and participation in the last three days. I am sure you have all learned a great deal and made friends with whom you will network as we implement our various policies in our countries.

I need to also acknowledge the Resources Persons [presenters] who have provided us in-depth insights on violence against children. Many thanks for this. I thank UNICEF for its commitment to ending violence against children in the Pacific, in particular, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children, Ms Marta Santos Pais, for making it to Fiji for the first time. Many thanks to the organizers and the Ministry of Women (Fiji) for their dedication.

To all our dear friends from the Pacific Region leaving Fiji in the next few days, I hope you enjoyed your stay in Fiji.

I wish you well and a happy and safe journey back home. Vinaka Vakalevu.

MR DAN TOOLE, UNICEF Regional Director for East Asia and the Pacific

Permanent Secretary of iTaukei Affairs Fiji,

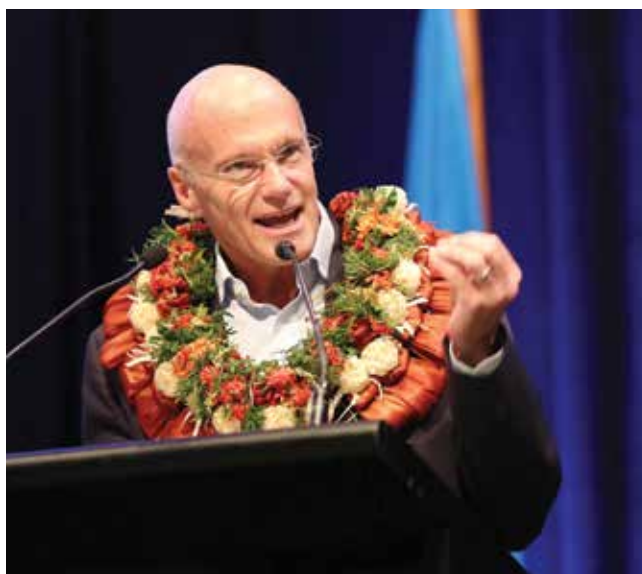
Secretary of the Ministry of Health Federal States of Micronesia,

Government Representatives from the Pacific Countries,

Representatives from civil society organizations, non-government organizations, faith-based organizations and sister United Nations agencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Let me start by congratulating the 13 countries of the Pacific that have shown commitment to ending violence against children by being here at the Conference. I recognize the commitment of the Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, FSM, Nauru, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga and Vanuatu. I also recognize the commitment of our partners from Australia and New Zealand who are supporting this Conference. This is the first time that the countries of the Pacific have come together to address this important issue. I am greatly encouraged by the commitments you have made today.



When His Excellency the President of the Republic of Fiji opened this Conference on Monday, he gave us guidance that ending violence against children is not only desirable but also possible. The President challenged us when he stated that children of the Pacific cannot wait to be freed from violence; we owe it to the children to ensure they grow up free from violence. He asked, "If not us, then who?"

We have heard over the course of the past few days about the devastating impact that violence has on children. It leaves deep and long-lasting physical, emotional and psychological scars; it affects a child's educational attainment and learning outcomes: and as we heard this morning, impacts development. At the societal level, it impacts on social well-being and on the cohesion of communities, and places a strain on social services and economic growth.

*There is a strong correlation between violence against children and violence against women. Children who grow up in violent households are more likely to be victims of child abuse themselves; girls are more likely to grow up to become victims of sexual and domestic violence as adults, and boys are more likely to grow up and perpetrate violence in their relationships. Health, education and well-being are all compromised for children growing up in violent households. The launch of the UNICEF and UNFPA's joint publication *Harmful Connections: examining the relationship between violence against women and violence against children in the South Pacific* provides us with the evidence we need for policies, legislation and services that address all forms of family violence.*

In addition to the consequences of violence at the individual level, we also learned that violence has a direct impact on economic and social development of a country. The cost of violence against children is estimated at 2 per cent of GDP. In countries with developing economies, these are costs that we simply cannot afford.

We have heard from many eminent speakers from the Pacific Island countries represented here on what actions can and are been taken to address violence against children. We have also heard that proven strategies against violence against children exist. Throughout the three days of this historic conference, we have many initiatives and good practices are being undertaken and that are showing progress.

There are actions that we can take to both prevent and address violence, for example: the work being undertaken by churches to counsel couples and parents on positive relationships free from violence; parenting programmes that are providing vulnerable families with stress relief and guidance on positive discipline; and the promotion of positive cultural and traditional values that foster nurturing families and communities.

There is already much work being undertaken in the Pacific in strengthening laws and policy, and it is heartening to hear how many countries have laws on family safety that include protection of children from domestic violence. Family courts are being established

in some countries of the Pacific, and networks of referral and response are being strengthened in health, education and social welfare sectors.

We also heard this morning about the importance of protecting our children from violence in situations of disaster, the long-term impact of climate change, and the importance of strengthening resiliency.

There are some key actions we can take to promote a violence-free world for children of the Pacific.

Ending violence against children requires a committed partnership between government, civil society, faith-based organizations, communities and ultimately, families. No one partner or government ministry can do it alone; we need to work together to find structured forums for partnership and to recognize the importance and value that each of us brings to addressing the issues. We have seen many good examples of this partnership during this Conference and recognize that we need to work further to ensure that multi-sectorial partnerships are functional and are accessible to children and families in need of support. We recognize the great strength and importance of Pacific family networks and resilient communities, which are key to partnerships. Families need to be respected and promoted to ensure that they take the responsibility for ensuring safe and protective environments for children.

This Conference has offered an opportunity for strengthening partnerships within and between countries of the Pacific, and we need to improve the quality and increase the frequency of peer exchange and cooperation.

There is a deep and abiding culture of respect and caring in the Pacific Island countries. Social norms that promote this culture deserve to be encouraged and promoted. We also need to recognize those social norms that are harmful to children. We have heard from traditional and religious leaders at this Conference about how they are working to promote the values, cultural practices and traditions that respect children; we have heard that violence against children is neither inevitable nor automatically condoned by social norms. We are encouraged by these voices and will continue to support you in promoting positive values that ensure that children are raised with respect and wisely and in nurturing environments.

Raising awareness about violence is not about blame; it is about healing the whole family, encouraging mutual respect between children and adults, and building stronger families and ultimately stronger communities.

I encourage you to keep children's safety and protection high on the political agenda, and to translate this commitment at the policy level into strengthened services for children who are victims of violence, with a particular focus on prevention of and response to child sexual abuse, extreme physical abuse, and on greater awareness of the harmful impact of emotional abuse.

There is an opportunity for each country of the Pacific to leverage the upcoming Sustainable Development Goals on peaceful and inclusive societies, and to adopt national targets on ending violence against children. As we review achievements towards the Millennium Development Goals as an international community, we have recognized the importance of addressing violence for future progress, The Sustainable Development Goals will include a target to address violence against children, and countries are encouraged to include targets on ending violence in their national development plans.

In addition to setting national targets in line with the Sustainable Development Goals, one highly practical step that countries can take to address violence against children is to ratify the Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Hague Convention. The benefits of governments ratifying these instruments on child rights are long-lasting and are a commitment we can make to children of today and children of tomorrow.

The Pacific, like many parts of the world, unfortunately experiences high rates of violence. And as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General said, all violence is harmful and all violence is preventable.

Finally, after three days of discussions and deliberations, we can provide the question of his Excellency the President of Fiji with a positive answer – it is us, gathered here today, who can make a difference towards ending violence against children

Thank you.



CONCLUDING STATEMENT

We the representatives from governments, community- and faith-based organizations of the Pacific Island nations, gathered here for the Pacific Conference on Ending Violence against Children, Nadi, Fiji, to promote prevention and response to ending violence.

We welcome the support and expert advice of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children.

The Conference highlighted the current situation on violence against children in the Pacific Island nations, provided an opportunity to exchange views, and reviewed strategies and programmes to prevent and respond to violence against children.

Recognizing the valuable cultural, social and religious practices that promote respect, love and nurturing of our children,

Recognizing the increased protection for children through strengthened legal and policy frameworks, and the many good practices in service delivery and increased resources allocation taking place in countries throughout the Pacific, and

Recognizing that the Pacific Islands are particularly vulnerable to natural disasters and climate change.

[We] are committed to promote violence-free families, communities and societies for the children of the Pacific Island nations.

IT IS NOW TIME
WE BE SERIOUS IN
OUR APPROACHES
TO CURTAIL VIOLENCE
AGAINST CHILDREN

COUNTRY PRESENTATIONS

COOK ISLANDS



Background

According to limited data on violence against children, around 25 per cent of people aged 15-24 experienced forced sex in their lifetime, 80 per cent of whom knew the perpetrator. Forty-four per cent of men having sex with men aged 15-24 had experienced forced sex in the last six months, one third of the women experienced physical/sexual violence in their lifetime, and 8 per cent of women experienced violence in the past 12 months.

Achievements

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) are ratified.

National Policy on Children, 2012-2016; National Policy on Gender Equity and Women's Empowerment, 2011-2016; Child Referral Process, 2012; weekly stakeholder meetings held; 2012, *Te Koro Akaau*; 2014, Family Group Conferences held; Family Law Bill, Mock Women's Parliament, March 2015; Members of Parliament Workshop held in March 2015.

The Violence Against Women Project commenced.

Major challenges

Social norms and culturally accepted practices are entrenched, for example: "It's not violence, it's discipline". One quarter of the women agreed that "a good wife obeys her husband even if she disagrees with him"; one quarter of the women agreed that "a man should show he is the boss". There is a culture of silence: one third of those who

had experience violence never told anyone about it and only one tenth told health professionals.

There are limited resources. The Child and Family Division, which only has two staff members, the Ministry of Education, which only has two guidance counsellors, and Punganga Tauturu counselling services. There is limited data collection and data sharing; and limited collaboration/partnerships – too many organizations are working on their own.

Expectations for collaboration

Technical support in using the CRC as a UNICEF framework for monitoring; a greater movement towards a joint approach with social sector agencies: linking violence against children and violence against woman; and linking gender, disability, youth, mental health, children, the elderly, non-communicable diseases (NCDs), nutrition, education, outer islands, etc.

Priorities

- Eliminating violence against children and women through the enactment of the Family Law Bill and other relevant laws; development of appropriate child protection processes and positive parenting programmes, such as pre-natal, early childhood and adolescent, as well as programmes aimed at mothers, fathers, including teen parents; a positive-parenting communication campaign; informed decision-making on policy designs; and counselling and support services.
- Child Protection Guidelines, including guidelines for medical professionals; and ratification of the CRC Optional Protocols on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.

FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA



Background

This country has more than 500 islands spread over approximately 1 million square miles of the Pacific. Islands consist of varying sizes and geology, both high volcanic and low coral. The population is 102,000 (2010 Census); more than 30 per cent of children are under 15 years of age; the Ministry of Health takes care of children 0-3 years of age; compulsory education is provided for children 4-18 years of age (21 years for children with special healthcare needs).

Services dedicated to ending violence against children

There are no conventional child protection services but there are 'social homes'. There is no social welfare system except for free education and the government-subsidized health system. There are no social workers (i.e. mental health workers, school counsellors, health workers or Church counsellors). The Government ratified the CRC and the two Optional Protocols as well as the Convention on the

Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW); there is a no-drop policy; and court cases are tried based on criminal laws.

Priorities

- Focusing on nutrition and community education and on the results and identified gaps in the Child Protection Baseline Report (Family Health and Safety Study has been already completed);
- preparing the CRC Report (CEDAW already completed); ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD);
- submitting pending bills to Congress and Family Court;
- reviewing international adoption procedures;
- addressing child abuse and neglect; and
- developing of new legislation on right to information and Food/Feeding Bill.

FIJI



Achievements

Presentation of the 2nd, 3rd and 4th Reports to the CRC; implementation of the CRC recommendations; specific budget allocation for child protection, Ministry for Children and the Child Helpline; new initiatives such as the Bus Fare and Milk Programme; free education including kindergarten; the Child Welfare Decree on Mandatory Reporting; the Crimes Decree on child trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC); and Zero Tolerance Violence-Free Communities.

Major challenges

Archaic legislations; limited resources, technical capacity, and reliable and available data; community mindsets; and lack of coordination; and duplications of services.

Expectations for collaboration

Strengthening of the National Coordinating Committee for Children (NCCC) and of the District

Inter-agency Committees; outsourcing of services to reliable service providers; and engagement of faith-based organizations in child protection awareness.

Priorities

- Engaging all stakeholders in child protection awareness; child protection awareness programmes in all provinces and divisions; amendment of current national legislations to be in line with international law; and the establishment of services (specialized services);
- developing policies to address violence against children; and
- employing a full-time officer to capture and record the annual progress of the CRC recommendations; provision of quality education to **all** children in Fiji; and the enhancement private-sector partnerships.



Achievements

Children Young People and Family Welfare Act (CYPFW) and Policy; unlike other Pacific Island countries (PICs), Kiribati only took 3-5 years for legislation reform on child protection.

Implementation manual of the CYPFW Act has led to an increased number of reported cases on violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation of children; mandates given to Welfare Officers to intervene and the public is also mandated and protected when reporting such cases; other relevant stakeholders (The Police, Health, Magistrates Courts) are well aware of their legal responsibility under the Act; more directly involved service providers (counselling services, temporary shelters, etc.) have expressed their interest in assisting; neighbouring countries such as Nauru visited Kiribati to study child protection programmes.

The Juvenile Justice Bill is ready to be read and passed in the next session [note: this was passed in August 2015] – capacity building of child protection key service providers; strong collaborative partnerships maintained among relevant key stakeholders; 24/7 helpline set up for survivors of violence – VEL 188; SAFENET set up to address gender-based violence and child abuse; the Social Welfare School Fee Support Scheme; ongoing planning to set up the one-stop shop to assist children and women survivors; training of *Unimane* (community leaders) and Church leaders on child protection; data have been collected on child protection issues; school visits; child protection awareness raising using drama aimed at youth to convey messages; combined community and outer islands child protection training visits for the most effective use of time and resources (eight islands were visited for this training); training of civil registration officers and monitoring of the routine civil registration services; installations of the e-database and training on process and

management; 12 islands having computers and e-database on births, marriages and deaths; continued refresher training provided on the techniques of birth notification to nurses and traditional birth attendants (TBAs); placement of Civil Registration officer at the main hospital to register and issue births, deaths and marriages; and teachers' workshop on non-violent discipline.

Challenges

There is a need to provide capacity building for Welfare Officers, the police, judges, etc.; a lack of technical skills, proper storage and collection of child protection data; and resistance to change due to traditions and customs, social behaviour and mindsets.

Priorities

- Continuing training and awareness raising of the magistrates and police officers;
- Social sectors on the Children Young People and Family Welfare Act (CYP&FW Act) in Kiribati Group and the Line Groups by 2015-2016;
- incorporating training and awareness raising of the Juvenile Justice Bill (passed Parliament but awaiting signature of the President) with the CYP&FW Act 2013 Training by 2015-2016;
- providing training on the Implementation Plan and Implementation Manual of both the CYP&FW Act 2013 and the Juvenile Justice Bill by 2015-2016; and
- building capacity (overseas attachment/training of Welfare Officers, the police, medical staff, protection providers) with relevant agencies/providers by 2015-2017.



Statement

We the representatives of the Government of Nauru recognize the need for increased protection for children through strengthened legal and policy frameworks. We acknowledge and support the many good practices in service delivery provided by Pacific Governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) towards the protection of children in our region. Additionally, we call for more support by governments and partners for UNICEF-led initiatives with regard to the protection of our children through the ratification of the CRC Optional Protocols.

Achievements

- Statistics on violence against women and children – judiciary;
- application of the CRC – courts and law officers;
- legal reforms such as the Cyber Crime Act 2015 and Amendments to the Citizenship Act;
- establishment of the Division of Children's Services consisting in a Director, a Senior Child Protection Officer, a Child Protection Officer, a Children's Counsellor, a Child and Family Welfare Officer and an Administrative Officer;
- establishment of the 'Safe House' in 2008, and in 2013, moved to a bigger space with improved services; and

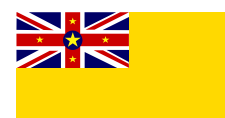
- set up of a Case Coordination Committee (ICCC) to address case management and systematic family violence issues and other child protection issues.

Challenges

Enforcement, capacity, resources, legislation and/or policies.

Priorities

- Child protection policy (baseline study);
- conducting a review of the current situation in legislation/policy, services, and community attitudes and knowledge about child protection;
- developing recommendations to help shape Government plans, in particular in regards to policy response;
- further promoting capacity building, networking and interagency collaboration;
- developing legislative and policy frameworks that provide important social protection, particularly in relation to children;
- ratifying the Optional Protocol to the CRC on the sale of children child prostitution and pornography (OP CRC), signed 8 September 2001; and
- completing the CRC Report.



Achievements

- Disability policy;
- work on other policies;
- work with teaching graduates;
- formulation of the Family Law Bill;
- review of Social Welfare in consultation with the New Zealand Social Welfare Department;

- review of pension; and
- Disability benefit: \$100-150 fortnight

Challenges

- Violence against children including violence at home.
- very limited data collection and inaccurate data.



REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS

Statement

In the 20 years since ratifying the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) has made important strides. But it is also clear that RMI has fallen far short in ensuring that our children are protected through the right kinds of policy and services.

Our own national story is like that of many others in this room – we do and must continue policy improvements – and our own success is encouraging.

Achievements

In 1993, the Republic of the Marshall Islands ratified the CRC and is a signatory to two of the subsequent Optional Protocols. The Committee on the Rights of the Child reviewed the initial report, CRC/C/28/Add.12, in 2000. The second periodic report (CRC/C/93/Add.8) was submitted in 2005 and considered by the Committee in 2007. A combined 3rd and 4th report is currently in its final draft and being reviewed by the RMI Resource Development Committee, to be submitted to the Committee on the Rights of the Child later this year.

Progressive steps have been taken in improving legislation and policy for the protection and advancement of women and girls. The National Gender Equality Policy, which was endorsed by Cabinet in February of 2015, is the most recent on the list of RMI gender-sensitive governing frameworks. The policy was developed in line with the CRC, the Pacific Plan, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and the 2012 Pacific Islands Forum Leaders' Gender Equality Declaration, among many others. In addition, RMI recently adopted a number of important national policies, including the National Strategic Plan, the National Climate Change Policy Framework and the National Energy Policy, among others. All of these incorporate goals and outcomes to further the advancement of women and children.

In September 2014, Parliament, the *Nitijela*, approved the RMI National Policy on Disability Inclusive Development. This Policy was developed in line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), the Pacific Regional Strategy on Disability (PRSD) and the Incheon Strategy for

Persons with Disabilities in Asia and Pacific. In February of this year, the *Nitijela* passed a Disability Bill that sets out the rights of persons with disabilities in areas such as education, employment, health, and access to buildings and facilities.

Two Bills, one on child protection and the other to set up the Human Rights Commission were also introduced to the *Nitijela*, in addition to the Bill on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Human Rights Commission will be set up to codify the Resource Development Committee and its monitoring and implementation responsibilities with respect to human rights. The *Nitijela* also enacted a number of legislations that support the Bill of Rights and criminalize any violations thereto, particularly the Domestic Violence Prevention and Protection Act 2011, an updated Criminal Code 2011 and the Marshall Islands Public School System Act 2013.

Challenges

Since the ratification of the CRC over the two decades ago, challenges still remain. There are reports highlighting that there are gaps to be addressed for the protection of children.

Ajiri in Ibunini, a Child Protection Baseline Research (CPBR) report, was conducted in 2010 and launched in 2013. This comprehensive report provides an analysis of legal frameworks, formal social service structures and various environments provided by communities and families, and also reviews how effectively each promotes the protection of children. It includes 109 recommendations to address family separation, violence against children, trafficking, child labour, poverty and school dropout, among many other issues.

The country still remains isolated from adequate access to services such as health and education. Impacts in the local communities continue to worsen due to natural disasters and climate change, thus changing the course on children's right to their own cultural identity and national sovereignty. There is a high unemployment rate among youth, the highest teenage pregnancy rate and second-youngest population in the Pacific. A high dropout rate and a high number of out-of-school children continue to be major issues. There are growing constraints in health issues, such as non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and other emerging diseases.

Priorities

- Protection of children through legislation and in compliance to the CRC;
- improved social services/programmes in education, health; and
- a healthy environment for our children – free from domestic violence, abuse and exploitation.

The support of key partners at the national, regional and international levels is needed, not only with broad policy tools, but for small-scale partnerships at the local level, which would immediately address the realization of the rights of the child and call for a Pacific Regional Framework of Action for children in the Pacific.



PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Achievements

- The Child Protection Act has been passed.
- The Child Protection Act and Bill have been reviewed and gaps identified (2013).
- The Juvenile Justice Act has been passed.
- The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) ratified.
- The Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) was ratified in 1993.
- The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) was ratified in 2014.
- Early childhood care and development (ECCD) policy was implemented.

Challenges

- Capacity gaps, i.e. qualified child protection officers;
- poor coordination at provincial level and limited budget; and
- legal support needed for children.

Priorities

- Collaboration with health and education sectors, the Police, NGOs and churches;
- National Executive Council (NEC) to endorse family services policy including the Family Protection Act (FPA) 2013;
- drafting of regulations for FPA and Lukautim Pikinini (Child Welfare) Act (LPA); and
- all of the Government plans on child protection are endorsed.



SAMOA

Background

The protection of children is prioritized in the following areas of the Samoa Development Strategy (SDS) 2012-2016:

- **Key Outcome 6:** A Healthy Samoa – increased immunization rates.
- **Key Outcome 8:** Social Cohesion – reduced child abuse and child re-offending rates.

- The Samoa Development Strategy also acknowledges the existence of a national policy to support and monitor provision of services for protection and well-being of children. Samoa has four national priority areas for children.

Achievements

Progress has been made in the areas of healthy living, education, legal and human rights, access to services and reduction of abuse and exploitation. Key highlights presented are:

- Key legislations in place include the Young Offenders Act, which establishes a youth court and rehabilitation centre; the Family Safety Act 2013; Family Court Act 2014; and the Community Justice Act, which involves community leaders in the rehabilitation of young people in contact with the law.
- The Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development (MWCSO) provides awareness raising on the CRC and child protection through a number of forums.
- The Samoa Victim Support Group, *Nuanua o le Alofa*, and other similar groups provide information, increase awareness and provide services for vulnerable children. There is also a helpline.
- Education Act 2009 enforces compulsory education.
- The national violence-free school policy was drafted, which would ensure that all schools are free from all forms of violence, and that corporal punishment is eliminated and replaced by positive behaviour and non-violent discipline methods.

Priorities

Setting up mechanisms to enable healthy living

Baby-friendly care facilities; immunization outreach; hygiene and health in the households; increase in breastfeeding and young child feeding practices;

access to safe drinking water/ nutrition/sanitation by promoting environmental and social factors; professional counselling for mental health; increased safeguarding through public transport; and birth registration in rural areas.

Applying legal and human rights

Alignment of national laws with CEDAW and CRC; principles for justice cases addressing children; social reintegration for children under the law; access for children with disabilities through the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD); increased budget allocation; and MWCSO policy service.

Providing access to services

Livelihood skills; access to knowledge and information; focus on early childhood education; adequate education, service and infrastructure.

Providing quality education

Setting up of a formal and mandated social protection service, a data system, child centres and national response systems.

Providing protection against exploitation and violence

Commitment and cooperation across all sectors; prioritization of the best interests of the child in situations of emergency, conflict, dire poverty, domestic dysfunction, civil disorder, etc.; and strengthening of data collection to monitor sexual abuse and the exploitation of children.

SOLOMON ISLANDS



Background

Constraints include the disbursement of the Islands and limited funds.

Priorities

Capacity building for Protection Cluster Members; extending and advocating child protection to Provincial Disaster Committees; and integrating child protection and gender issues into disaster management action plans at the community and provincial levels.

TONGA



Background

Ratification of the CRC in 1995 and reporting of obligations: preliminary report on the CRC expected in 1997 but completed in 2006; need to draft an updated report; subsequent changes to policies, the Education Act and the Nationality Act.

Priorities

- Updating the report on the CRC and identifying the current situation and the direction to take;

- addressing cyber challenges: protection of children from cyber abuse and bullying; limitation of external influences and intrusion into the family home.

The Government shall approve recommendations from the delegations on national urgent actions; Ministry of Education shall take the lead on the CRC report and Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) to take the lead on cyber challenges, subject to Government endorsement.

VANUATU



Vanuatu recognizes the importance of ending violence against children and has established systems to strengthen institutions to effectively work towards a child-safe environment. However, there are gaps in the established systems, and the Government is committed to engage its partners to effectively strengthen the systems towards ensuring a protective and safe environment for all children in the country.

Priorities

Key Priority 1:

- Coordinating an increase in resource allocation to responsible agencies;
- establishing separate child-friendly investigation and medical examination rooms at the Police Family Protection Unit and Health Centres;
- establishing clear procedures and processes when dealing with child protection cases or issues;
- developing training packages to better train and refresh the skills of personnel concerned with child protection issues;

- developing the National Child Protection Policy;
- coordinating the review and strengthening of the National Youth Policy;
- establishing a proper Family Court infrastructure; and
- establishing and strengthening proper Family Court procedures and processes.

Key Priority 2:

- Rolling out the End Violence School Pilot Project to all schools;
- raising awareness among Ministry of Education and Training Senior Management and staff on ending violence in schools;
- training all teachers on the use of the project materials;
- organizing training and awareness raising for all Parent Teachers Associations; and
- engaging all children in painting pictures on ending violence in schools.

ANNEX 1: AGENDA OF THE PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

18-20 MAY 2015, NADI, FIJI

DAY 1 Monday, 18 May 2015		
Time	Session	Speakers
8:30 a.m.	Formal opening <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garlanding of Chief Guests • National Anthem • Traditional Fijian Welcome and <i>sevusevu</i> 	President of the Republic of Fiji, His Excellency Ratu Epeli Nailatikau Ms Karen Allen, UNICEF Pacific Representative Ms Marta Santos Pais, Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children
11:15 a.m.	Session One: The protection of children in the Pacific: <i>Global and Pacific perspectives</i>	Ms Amanda Bissex, Chief of Child Protection, UNICEF Pacific – presentation of an overview of the Pacific context Ms Maha Muna, Regional Gender Adviser, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) – presentation on the findings of the report on the links between violence against women and violence against children in the South Pacific Ms Beth Wood, Global Initiative to End Corporal Punishment – presentation on the violence against children (VAC)/violence against women (VAW) study Mr Paraniata Lui (Silas), PhD student, Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane, Australia – presentation of a study on the exposure to violence in childhood among men in Solomon Islands
2:00 p.m.	Voices of Pacific Children: short video	UNICEF
2:15 p.m.	Session Two: Ensuring a protection framework for children: <i>The CRC and Optional Protocols</i>	Ms Marta Santos Pais, Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children – presentation of an overview of how the CRC and Optional Protocols ensure a protection framework for children Ms Sandra Thompson, Executive Director, ECPAT (End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes) New Zealand – presentation on findings of a literature review on an analysis of the commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) in the countries that have not ratified the Optional Protocol to the CRC on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography Panel discussion with country representatives
3:30 p.m.	Session Three: Social norms and the protection of children in the Pacific: <i>Micronesia, Polynesia and Melanesia</i>	UNICEF – presentation of overview of the Pacific context Panel discussion with country, academic, civil society and faith-based organization representatives

DAY 2
Tuesday, 19 May 2015

Time	Session	Speakers
8:30 a.m.	Session Four: Human and financial resource allocation and capacity development in Pacific countries: <i>Ensuring adequate prevention and response to violence against children</i>	Mr Stephen Blight, Regional Adviser Child Protection, UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office – presentation on UNICEF’s experience in approaches to and methods of costing child protection A panel discussion with country representatives from Fiji, Marshall Islands and Papua New Guinea and Ms Andie Fong Toy, Deputy Secretary-General, Pacific Island Forum Secretariat
10:30 a.m.	Session Five: Service Delivery for all children: <i>Systems for child protection – justice, health, education, social welfare and community and faith-based organizations</i>	UNICEF – Overview on service delivery for children A panel discussion with country and organizational representatives including Ms Elizabeth Goodwin, Manager, Social Change for Children, Ministry of Social Development, New Zealand; and Ms Marie Fatiaki, ILO’s Tackling child labour through education (TACKLE) project. Ms Elizabeth Goodwin , Manager, Social Change for Children, Ministry of Social Development, New Zealand
2:00 p.m.	Session Six: Legislative Reform in Pacific Island countries: <i>Changes in legislation and law enforcement that is influencing prevention and response to violence against children.</i>	UNICEF – overview on legislative reform in the Pacific A panel discussion on the Hague Convention, adoption and abduction with country representatives including the Hon. Judge Leilani Tuala-Warren of the Family Court of Samoa and Ms Leah George of the US Embassy
3:30 p.m.	Mapping our services: <i>Country groups map out responses in child protection in health, education and justice</i>	Country Groups – interactive session. Session closed to the media
5:00 p.m.– 6:30 p.m.	Country meetings	Country group meetings and meetings with the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children

DAY 3
Wednesday, 20 May 2015

Time	Session	Speakers
8:30 a.m.	Session Seven: Education session: <i>Violence and early childhood development</i>	UNICEF – Presentation by on violence and early childhood education. A panel discussion of early childhood education representatives
12:00 a.m.	Session Eight: Child protection in emergencies: <i>Child protection minimum standards in emergencies and climate change, disaster risk reduction (DRR) and protection</i>	Mr Per Becker, Risk Reduction and Preparedness Specialist, UNICEF Pacific – presentation of an overview on child protection in emergencies. Ms Floreen Tikau – presentation on climate change and youth Mr Mark Bebe, Director General for the Ministry of Justice and Community Services, Vanuatu – discussion on impacts of and response to Cyclone Pam
2:00 p.m.	Country commitments: <i>top priorities for 2015 country plans</i>	Closed session Country Groups interactive session
3:30 p.m.	Country presentations	
4:30 p.m.	Closing session	Mr Savenaca Kaunisela, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of iTaukei Affairs, Fiji Mr Dan Toole, UNICEF Regional Director for East Asia and the Pacific – Closing remarks

ANNEX 2: PARTICIPANTS LIST

No.	Participant	Designation	Ministry	Email Address
Cook Islands				
1	Mr John Kenning	Senior Magistrate	Judiciary	johnk@oyster.net.ck
2	Ms Bredina Drollet	Secretary	Internal Affairs	bredina.drollet@cookislands.gov.ck
Federated States of Micronesia				
3	Hon. Ms Vita Skilling	Secretary	Department of Health and Social Affairs	fsolomon@fsmhealth.fm
Fiji				
4	Mr Josefa Koroivueta	Permanent Secretary	Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation	Minister's PA: Asenaca Qiolevu Email: asenaca.qiolevu@govnet.gov.fj
5	Mr Rupeni Fatiaki	Director	Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation	rupeni.fatiaki@govnet.gov.fj
6	Ms Ela Tukutukulevu	Assistant Director	Child Services, Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation	ela.tukutukulevu@govnet.gov.fj
7	Ms Jaspreet Kaur	AVID Volunteer	Child Services Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation	jaspreet.kaur@govnet.gov.fj
8	Ms Kelera Taloga	Permanent Secretary	Ministry of Education, Heritage, Arts and Library Services and National Archives of Fiji	kelera.taloga@govnet.gov.fj
9	Mr Satyendra Singh	Senior Education Officer Policy unit	Ministry of Education, Heritage, Arts and Library Services and National Archives of Fiji	satyendra.singh@govnet.gov.fj
10	Ms Unaisi Vuniwaqa	Acting Additional Commissioner of Police (A/ACP)	Fiji Police Force	unavuniwaqa@yahoo.com
11	Inspector Shalen Kumar	Intelligence Bureau Officer	Intelligence Bureau, Fiji	shalenkumar@ymail.com
12	Mr Savenaca Kaunisela	Permanent Secretary	Ministry of I-Taukei Affairs	savenaca.kaunisela@govnet.gov.fj

13	Ms Reapi Mataika	Paediatric Consultant	Ministry of Health and Medical Services	rlmataika@gmail.com
14	Mr Setareki Tale	Permanent Secretary	Ministry of Rural and Maritime Development and National Disaster Management	elomalagi@govnet.gov.fj
15	Rev James Bhagwan	Communications Secretary	Methodist Church, Fiji	padrejames@gmail.com
16	Ms Analesi Tuicaumia	Little Ones and Mobile Kindy	Early Childhood Education (ECED)	littleones@connect.com.fj
17	Ms Ufemia Camaitoga	FNU Early Childhood Education (ECD) Section	ECED	ufemia.camaitoga@gmail.com
Kiribati				
18	Mr Titabu Tabane	The Attorney General	Attorney General's Office	lucy@legal.gov.ki
19	Ms Tinia Rakenang	Child Protection Officer	UNICEF	tinia.rakenang913@gmail.com
20	Ms Floreen Tikua	Youth Activist	Climate change, Kiribati	floreentikau@gmail.com
Republic of the Marshall Islands				
21	Ms Sally Ann Debrum	Director research, evaluation and standards	Republic of the Marshall Islands public schools	sallyanndebrum@gmail.com
Republic of Nauru				
22	Ms Alina Amwano	Human Rights intern	Department of Justice and Border Control	alina.amwano@naurugov.nr
23	Ms Joy Heine	Director of Women	Directorate of Women and Children	joy.heine@naurugov.nr
24	Mr Filipo Masaurua	Senior Government lawyer	Human Rights and Gender	filipo.masaurua@naurugov.nr
Niue				
25	Ms Diamond Tauevihi	Community Development Manager	Ministry of Social Services. (Responsible for Social Welfare including Disability, Village Councils, NGOs and Religion)	Diamond.Tauevihi@mail.gov.nu

Solomon Islands

26	Mr Brian Tom	Principal Programme Officer for the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO)	Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management & Meteorology	programsndc@ndmo.gov.sb
27	Ms Ethel Sigimanu	Permanent Secretary	Ministry of Women, Children and Youth	

Samoa

28	Mr Faafetai Koria	ACEO Division for Research, Policy and Information	Ministry of Women, Community, Social Development	lapelu@mwcsd.gov.ws
29	Mr Masinalupe Tusipa Masinalupe	Chief Executive Officer	Ministry of Justice and Courts Administration	masinalupe@mjca.gov.ws
30	Ms Vitolina Chang	Samoa Support Victims Group	Chief Executive Officer	svsginsamoa@gmail.com
31	Ms Leilani Tuala-Warren	Family Court Judge	Judicial Department	l.tualawarren@mjca.gov.ws

Tonga

32	Mr Claude Tupou	Deputy CEO for Teaching and Learning	Ministry of Education and Training	ester_hills@yahoo.com
33	Mrs Pisila Otunuku	Deputy CEO	Ministry of Finance and National Planning	potunuku@finance.gov.to
34	Ms Ofa-Ki-Levuka Guttenbeil-Likiliki	Director	Women and Children's Crisis Centre	ofa.guttenbeil@gmail.com
35	Rev Filifa'esea Lilo	Secretary	Tonga National Forum of Church Leaders; Ministry of Internal Affairs	fililo.fwc@gmail.com

Vanuatu

36	Mr Mark Bebe	Director General	Ministry of Justice and Community Services	mbebe@vanuatu.gov.vu
37	Mr George Bogiri	Director General	Ministry of Internal Affairs	gbogiri@vanuatu.gov.vu
38	Mr Pakoa Samuel Willie	Assistant Commissioner & Commander North	Vanuatu Police Force	swillie@vanuatu.gov.vu

39	Mr William Nasak	Director General	Ministry of Youth, Development & Training	wnasak@vanuatu.gov.vu
40	Ms Liku Jimmy	Principal	Education Policy and Planning Officer	ljimmy@vanuatu.gov.vu
Papua New Guinea				
41	Mrs Maria Wau	First Assistant Secretary Policy and Budget	Department of National Planning and Monitoring	Maria_wau@planning.gov.pg
42	Mrs Anna Solomon	Secretary	Community Development	
43	Ms Josephine Mills	Child Protection Officer	UNICEF, Papua New Guinea	jmill@unicef.org
44	Mr Asefa Dano	Child Protection Officer	UNICEF, Papua New Guinea	atdano@unicef.org
45	Mr Leo Lulumbu	Government of Papua New Guinea	Government of Papua New Guinea	
46	Ms Nancy Taule	Government of Papua New Guinea	Government of Papua New Guinea	
Non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, faith-based organizations				
47	Ms Andie Fong Toy	Deputy Secretary-General; Economic Governance and Political and Security Programmes	Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat	Minister's PA: Angela Thomas Email: angelat@forumsec.org
48	Ms Beth Wood		Global Initiative to End Corporal Punishment, New Zealand	bethwood@xtra.co.nz
49	Ms Elizabeth Goodwin	Ministry of Social Development, NZ	Elizabeth. Goodwin004@msd.govt.nz	Elizabeth.Goodwin004@msd.govt.nz
50	Ms Sandy Thompson	CEO	ECPAT NZ	sthompson@unitec.ac.nz
51	Ms Dorothy Rozga	Executive Director	ECPAT International	Dorothyrozga@ecpat.net
52	Mr Mark Atterton	Deputy Director	South Pacific Community (SPC) – Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT)	marka@spc.int

53	Ms Jan Duffy	Child Protection Specialist	Save the Children Fiji	jan@savethechildren.org.fj
54	Mr Nicol Cave	Team Leader	SPC – Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT)	NicolC@spc.int
55	Ms Ruby Awa	Senior Trainer	SPC – Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT)	RubyA@spc.int
56	Mr Paraniala Lui (Silas)	PhD student at the School of Public Health	School of Public Health & Social Work, Queensland University of Technology	paraniala@gmail.com
57	Mr Setareki Macanawai	Executive Director	Pacific Disability Forum	pdfsec@unwired.com.fj ; admin@pacificdisability.org
58	Ms Carmel Peteru (nominated by Dr Teresia Teaiwa, Programme Director, Pacific Studies)	Lead consultant on the Ministry's Family Violence project	University Victoria, Wellington	Teresia.teaiwa@vuw.ac.nz

United Nations Agencies

59	Ms Roshika Deo	Pacific Fund Manager	UN Women	roshika.deo@unwomen.org
60	Ms Marie Jane Fatiaki	National Programme Coordinator	ILO Country Office for South Pacific Island Countries	fatiaki@ilo.org
61	Dr Laurent Zessler	Representative	United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)	Minister's PA: Rachael Managreve Email: managreve@unfpa.org
62	Ms Maha Muna	Gender Adviser	UNFPA	elmuna@unfpa.org
63	Ms Catherine Phuong	Deputy Regional Representative; Officer in Charge	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)	Minister's PA: Sesania Taukeve Email: sesania.taukeve@one.un.org
64	Ms Sarah Morris	Representing	UNICEF New Zealand	sarah@unicef.org.nz

Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children

65	Ms Marta Santos Pais	Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children	Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children	msantopais@unicef.org
----	----------------------	--	--	--

66	Mr Andrew Claypole	Senior Adviser	Office of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children	aclaypole@unicef.org
Embassies				
67	Ms Nilesh Goundar	Programme Manager	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade	Nilesh.Goundar@dfat.gov.au
68	Ms Iris Mackenzie	Programme Manager Community Development	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade	Iris.Low-McKenzie@dfat.gov.au
69	Ms Leah George	Consular Chief	US Embassy	GeorgeL2@state.gov
70	Ms Justine Mar	US Consular Affairs	US Embassy	MarJM@state.gov
UNICEF				
71	Mr Dan Toole	Regional Director	Asia and Pacific Regional Office (EAPRO)	dtoole@unicef.org
72	Mr Stephen Blight	Regional Adviser, Child Protection	Asia and Pacific Regional Office (EAPRO)	sblight@unicef.org
73	Ms Karen Allen	Representative	UNICEF Pacific	kallen@unicef.org
74	Ms Isabelle Austin	Deputy Representative	UNICEF Pacific	iaustin@unicef.org
75	Ms Amanda Bissex	Chief of Child Protection	UNICEF Pacific	abissex@unicef.org
76	Ms Laisani Petersen	Child Protection Officer	UNICEF Pacific	lpetersen@unicef.org
77	Ms Wendy Rich-Orloff	Early Childhood Education Specialist	UNICEF Pacific	wrichorloff@unicef.org
78	Ms Salote Kaimacuata	Child Protection Specialist	UNICEF Pacific	skaimacuata@unicef.org
79	Ms Tupepepa Aumua	Child Protection Officer	UNICEF Samoa	elsa711@gmail.com
80	Mr Joemela Simeon	Child Protection Officer	UNICEF Vanuatu	teseraaumua@unicef.org
81	Ms Donna Hoerder	Communication Specialist – External Relations	UNICEF Pacific	dhoerder@unicef.org

82	Ms Alice Clements	Communications Specialist	UNICEF Pacific	aclements@unicef.org
83	Ms Julie-Anne Driso	Child Protection Programme Assistant	UNICEF Pacific	jbuwawadriso@unicef.org
84	Mr Malvin Simmons	Child Protection Admin Assistant	UNICEF Pacific	legacephas@gmail.com
85	Mr Joseph Hing	Communications Assistant	UNICEF Pacific	jhing@unicef.org
86	Mr Per Becker	Risk Reduction and Preparedness Specialist	UNICEF Pacific	pbecker@unicef.org
87	Ms Sainimili Nabou	Rapporteur	UNICEF Pacific	sainimili.nabou@yahoo.com
88	Ms Sandra Bernklau	Child Protection	UNICEF Pacific	sandra_bernklau@hotmail.com

OBSERVERS

89	Ms Isora Dobashi	Early childhood education (ECE) student, University of the Nations, Hawaii	The Little-ones: Early Childhood Centre and Mobile kindy Fiji	dobakun@yahoo.co.jp
90	Ms Jenna Callaway	ECE students, University of the Nations, Hawaii	The Little-ones: Early Childhood Centre and Mobile Kindy Fiji	Callawayjenna23@gmail.com
91	Mr Kevin Nguyen	ECE students, University of the Nations, Hawaii	The Little-ones: Early Childhood Centre and Mobile Kindy Fiji	Kevintnguyen64@gmail.com
92	Mr Temesia Tuicaumia	ECE students, University of the Nations, Hawaii	The Little-ones: Early Childhood Centre and Mobile Kindy Fiji	temesiam@gmail.com

JOURNALISTS

93	Ms Renate Rivers	Samoa	Press Secretariat	renate.rivers@gmail.com
94	Ms Heather Sarur Maraki	Vanuatu	Capital FM107	h.s.maraki@gmail.com
95	Mr Mike Puia	Solomon Islands	The Island Sun	maungasua@gmail.com
96	Ms Monica Iotebwa	Kiribati	Broadcasting and Publications Authority	kanrunga.bio@gmail.com



UNICEF Office for Pacific Island Countries

3rd Floor, FDB Building,
360 Victoria Parade,
Suva, FIJI

Email: suva@unicef.org
www.unicefpacific.org