**International Day of Persons with Disabilities 2024 – Regional Celebration.**

**Thursday, 4th December 2024**

**PIFS Conference Room, Suva**

**Theme: “Amplifying the Leadership of Persons with Disabilities for an Inclusive and Sustainable Future”**

**Hybrid Event: In-person & Virtual (****Join Here****)**

**Concept Note**

**Background**

The International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) is annually observed on 3 December to promote the full and equal participation of persons with disabilities and to take action for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in all aspects of society and development. The observance of the Day aims to promote an understanding of the [Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html) and disability issues and mobilize support for the dignity, rights and well-being of persons with disabilities. It also seeks to increase awareness of gains to be derived from the integration of persons with disabilities in every aspect of political, social, economic and cultural life.

Since the international day for persons with disabilities (IDPD) falls within the 16 days of activism, the programme for this year will combine activities to observe both these events.

**Objectives**

* Provide an opportunity for OPDs in the region to amplify the work that they are doing in terms of gender equality, political participation, DRR and climate change
* launch and highlight regional reports and strategies with partners that will lead to meaningful engagements in progressing the inclusion of persons with disabilities by Pacific Disability Forum.
* Highlight the achievements of persons with disabilities in forums and spaces to encourage and empower others like themselves to excel.

This year’s regional celebration is planned from the 2nd to the 4th of December with a series of online and in person activities aimed at amplifying how OPDs and partners have collaborated in innovative ways to encourage inclusive development for persons with disabilities and fostering an inclusive and equitable society for all.

**Planned Activities**

1. On the 2nd of December, the program will commence with the launching of the new HRDU Strategy.
2. The 3rd of December will be dedicated to the national OPD and supporting them with their celebrations.
3. The PDF celebration is planned for the 4th of December as a half day program involving partners and OPDs highlighting successful OPD leaders and successful partnerships that have progressed the work of the realization of rights for persons with disabilities in the region.

**Session 1:**

**11.00 -11.45pm Panel Session for OPD**

*(The intent is to highlight the experiences of leadership of persons with disabilities, their challenges and how they have overcome them with the intent of empowering emerging and upcoming potential youths who will be leaders of tomorrow).*

**Objective**

To highlight the lived experiences of OPD leaders in the Pacific, demonstrating how strong leadership skills have contributed to progressing inclusive development of persons with disability in the region**.**

**Questions:**

1. ***Share some highlights of your leadership experiences in the local to global spheres of influence you were engaged in and what are some of your perspectives as a person with disability to thrive in such leadership roles?***
2. ***What are some ways your OPDs have benefited through working together with PDF and partners in terms of progressing the rights of marginalized groups, social protection and accessibility?***
3. ***What were some challenges you faced and how did you overcome them?***
4. ***What are some advice to the future generation of leaders with Disabilities in the Pacific.***

***Session 1. 11:00am – 11:45am***

* ***Rhema – CEO - Lata - Tonga***
* ***Mr. Eddie Babanisi –Blind and Visually Impaired Solomon Islands***
* ***MS Sera Osborne – Programme officer – psychiatric Survivors Association – Fiji***
* ***Ms. Ketia Toakarawa– Kiribati Deaf Association – Kiribati***

**Session 2:11:45am – 12.30pm**

**This session will be an interactive session between OPDs and partners exploring the real-life personal experiences of persons with disabilities pre, during and post disasters highlighting the difference leaders with disabilities have made in the DRR**

**Space. In addition, partners will be able to highlight successful collaborations that have resulted from past cooperations with OPDs**

**Vote of Thanks:**

**Followed by Lunch at 1:00pm.**

**END.**