



Parliamentarians for Global Action
Parlamentarios para la Acción Global
Action Mondiale des Parlementaires
برلمانيون من أجل التحرك العالمي

PACIFIC YOUTH AND PARLIAMENTARIANS REGIONAL DIALOGUE

14th – 16th October 2019, Samoa



OUTCOME REPORT

A note of thanks

To our Equality & Justice Champions

On behalf of all our partners, I'd like to thank you all for making the Equality & Justice Alliance Pacific Youth and Parliamentarians Regional Dialogue such an exciting and dynamic event. We hope you have arrived safely home feeling as inspired as we do to keep building a coalition of parliamentary and youth champions who can end discrimination based on sex, gender, sexual orientation or gender identity in the Pacific.



It was a privilege to be joined by such esteemed delegates from across the region, and I am positive that the Action Plan you created is a bold first step towards advancing equality and justice in the Commonwealth. The Royal Commonwealth Society (RCS) and our partners in the EJA stand ready to support you to implement these impressive commitments.

Having heard your inspiring discussions in Samoa, I am left feeling more confident than ever that when young people and parliamentarians work together, change is possible. What I've learned from all of you is that with political will, the fostering of sensitive dialogue, and intergenerational cooperation, we can all lead change in our own countries and beyond.

But the journey doesn't end here. The Equality & Justice Alliance has made a commitment to support reform efforts in the Commonwealth Pacific. If there's any way you think we can support those efforts, please don't hesitate to get in touch so we can explore the potential for further collaboration.

Kind regards



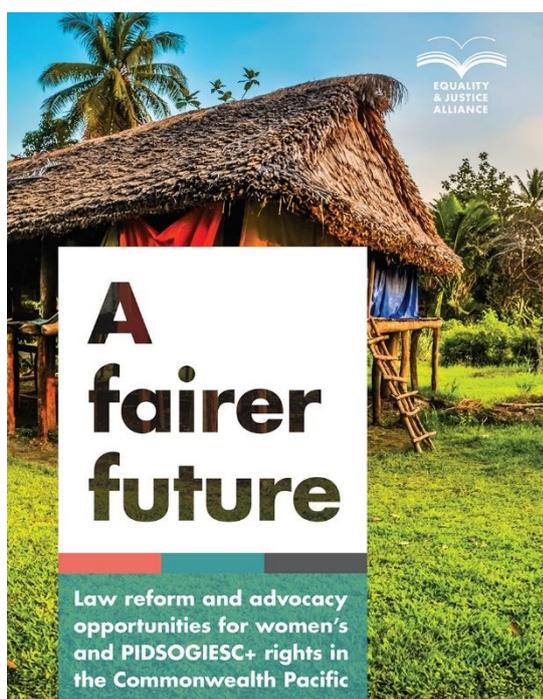
Rory Evans

Programme Lead – The Royal Commonwealth Society

Report Launch

A Fairer Future

Law reform and advocacy opportunities for women's and PIDSOGIESC+ rights in the Commonwealth Pacific



CHARMAINE RODRIGUES

At the Dialogue, the RCS was delighted to launch our new report on behalf of the EJA, *A Fairer Future: Law reform and advocacy opportunities for women's and PIDSOGIESC+ rights in the Commonwealth Pacific*.

Across the Pacific, discriminatory laws continue to undermine the human rights of women and girls and Pacific Islanders of Diverse Sexual Orientations and Gender Identities and Expressions and Sex Characteristics (PIDSOGIESC+). Despite huge progress, an enormous amount of work remains to secure equality before the law for all.

The report contains a mapping of key opportunities for government and civil society to work together to advance the reform of discriminatory laws in Commonwealth Pacific states. It also contains a legislative review of the progress that has been made, and identifies ongoing gaps in legislation that continue to leave many Pacific Islanders vulnerable to discrimination.

Speaking at the launch of the report, Tahere Siisilafia, Chair of the Pacific Youth Council and a member of the Commonwealth Youth Gender & Equality Network (CYGEN) said: "This report is a stepping stone of progress in bringing to the forefront the urgent need to vigilantly and diligently reform gender discriminatory laws embedded within justice systems."

Click [here](#) to download the report.

Extracts from the Opening Address

Hon. Fiame Naomi Mata'afa MP Deputy Prime Minister of Samoa

Honourable guests, I am honoured to be invited to give this opening address at the *Pacific Youth and Parliamentarians Regional Dialogue: Reforming Laws that Discriminate*. It's a pleasure to welcome delegates from across the region and further afield to Samoa.

This is an important event, and one that I believe is timely for the region. In Samoa we believe that all people should be equal, and that all people should be treated equally. We believe that nobody should be discriminated against because of who they are. We believe that no matter who you are we all deserve to be treated the same, whether it's within our communities or through the law.

I'm delighted to see so many young female leaders here with us today – you are the future of our region and a great inspiration to those around you. I am particularly passionate about ensuring that women have equal access to jobs, to skills, and to security. That's why the Government of Samoa has made changes to legislation to protect women from harm and ensure their ability to participate equally in our society. I'm delighted that across the region most Pacific island countries have adopted legislation to protect women from violence in the home – this is an enormous achievement and one which we must all be immensely proud of. Yet even though there is now more support for victims of gender-based violence, more help is needed and national gender policies across the region remain under-resourced. There is more work to be done.

"I'm proud that our 2016 Sentencing Act includes stronger punishments if violence was committed against someone because of their sexual orientation or gender identity."

Here in Samoa, our Fa'afafine and Fafatama communities are dear to us, and we are proud of the contribution they make to Samoan society. I'm delighted that we have made steps to ensure their protection in our laws, through removing archaic legislation that criminalised female impersonation. I'm

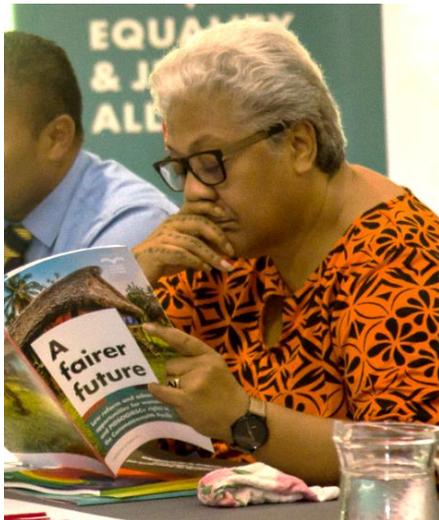


also proud that our 2016 Sentencing Act includes stronger punishments if violence was committed against someone because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. Of course there is much more work to be done, but I am delighted that the Government of Samoa is showing leadership in securing equality before the law for our citizens.

Parliamentarians, as elected representatives of their communities, have a strong role to play in fostering dialogue with their constituents about the need to reform discriminatory laws. You have the mandate and public trust to act in the interests of the communities you serve – for every single person you represent. You command the influence and resources needed to secure progress, and vote and adopt laws that promote human rights of all citizens. It is essential that parliamentarians lead by example, to show openness and commitment not just in your words but in your actions to address stigma and discrimination. By being here today, to engage in constructive dialogue with youth leaders, you are already demonstrating that commitment. For that I thank you.

“To change discriminatory laws that leadership must first come from within our communities, and as the next generation that leadership starts with you.”

And youth, with an unrivalled vision and enthusiasm for building a better world, are essential for building a positive, sustained conversation about advancing human rights. To change discriminatory laws that leadership must first come from within our communities, and as the next generation that leadership starts with you. It’s critical that the voices and opinions of young people are meaningfully included in government decision-making, and youth councils are an ideal mechanism for conducting this consultation. When young people are given the opportunity to show leadership, we know that anything is possible.



I want to welcome the fact that this event is a dialogue; a conversation. Because here in Samoa and across the Pacific we believe that the only way to move forward and build understanding is when people from different backgrounds and walks of life come together and listen to each other. This event is no different, because it allows a space for parliamentarians and youth to come together and meaningfully consult with each other, and to work together to advance the shared agenda of reforming discriminatory laws.



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This event is part of a programme of work taking place across the Commonwealth, to build a conversation about advancing fairness. In 2022, the Government of Samoa will be hosting the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, when 53 leaders from the Pacific, Asia, Africa, the Americas and Europe will come together to build consensus among equal nations to act together to

“Fairness – whether it is about climate justice, gender equality, the inclusion of youth, or ending discrimination – will be at the heart of Samoa’s agenda for the Commonwealth.”

secure a better future. I am delighted that Samoa will be hosting such a prestigious event, so we can lead a conversation about the world we all want to see. Fairness – whether that is about climate justice, gender equality, the inclusion of youth, or ending discrimination – will be at the heart of Samoa’s agenda for the Commonwealth.

So as I formally open this two-day dialogue, I want to call on each and every one of you present here to make a commitment, that you will go back to your home country, or continue your work here in Samoa, to advance equality before the law for all Pacific people.

Soifua ma ia manuia. Thank you.

Youth-led Discussion

Establishing dialogue between youth and parliamentarians to address discriminatory laws and work towards an inclusive agenda

On the first day of the convening, youth leaders representing youth councils and women's and PIDSOGIESC+ organisations from five Pacific countries led the first discussion on how to better engage young people on securing the rights of women and those of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities.

Youth activists began by addressing the need to recognise the unique movements within the Pacific context. Pacific Islanders of Diverse Sexual Orientations and Gender Identities and Expressions and Sex Characteristics (PIDSOGIESC+) is the term developed by the Pacific Sexual and Gender Diversity Network (PSGDN) to represent the diversity of those across the region.

In trying to address discriminatory laws through previous discussions with parliamentarians, delegates raised that they had attempted *talanoa*, a traditional form of participatory dialogue in the Pacific, however, progress has been limited and work remains to be done.

Three main themes emerged from these discussions:

1. Establishing spaces to engage with youth
2. Moving beyond tokenistic inclusion
3. The challenges of culture



Establishing spaces to engage with youth

Young people and civil society organisations across the Pacific are seeking ways in which they can work with Members of Parliament to achieve transformational change. The first important step in this process is to establish spaces where young people can engage with MPs.

Delegates agreed that establishing space for dialogue acts as an important first step towards creating transformational change. One youth leader suggested this has rarely happened before, and forwarded that view that to advance progressive law reform, meaningful and structured dialogue between youth and government needs to be established from the outset. It was also emphasised that dialogue should happen at a national level and not just regionally. Young people felt regional conversations often felt more progressive than national ones, because they took place outside of immediate community pressures and came without any pressure to undertake follow-up actions.

One parliamentarian flagged the lack of youth participation at the initial stages of law reform as well as during later stages when laws go out to the districts, agreeing that creating adequate space for dialogue would help remedy the issue before moving onto the practical measures. Another MP emphasised that while they spend considerable time engaging with the community, more needed to be done to encourage youth participation. Youth delegates felt that the traditional approach of organising community meetings gave an illusion of inclusivity, as they involved everyone but frequently only older men would speak on behalf of everyone. Young people can often shy away



from talking, particularly within their communities (which can be very hierarchical), which can mean that their contributions are often left undocumented, resulting in lack of information for parliamentarians when making important decisions. One parliamentarian confirmed that facilities are available for dialogue and believed that once they are put into use youth participation will increase. Parliamentarians agreed that national law reform consultations needed to create separate spaces for young people and women of all ages to ensure their views could be meaningfully included.

Examples of how spaces have already been established were presented at the talks. A representative from the Samoan National Youth Council (SNYP) expressed that they have experienced positive engagement with MPs, particularly through their interactions with the ministries of health and women, who have been supportive of the SNYC's work. By continuing this engagement, the SNYC stated that they look forward to taking partnerships forward to achieve greater outcomes. Another example was given by a female youth delegate who discussed her experience of attending a women's empowerment forum prior to the 2018 election in Fiji; the forum invited discussions on the inclusion of women in government and what can be done to improve their position. However she was disappointed that only three young women attended while the rest of the attendees were MPs. Nevertheless, the forum represented a

space to communicate in an informal setting, and her view was that more should be established as a way of forming spaces for intergenerational dialogue. Delegates stressed their desire to improve engagement and to create an ongoing momentum to ensure everyone has equal access to justice.

Moving beyond tokenistic inclusion

Youth delegates stressed that when youth are included in discussions often this is done tokenistically, and they are not listened to – but instead just talked at. Bringing young people into the room was described by one youth delegate as a ‘box-checking exercise’.

One female youth delegate stated that to address the obstacle of tokenism, there must be a complete change of mindset. Whilst she has achieved much as a young woman, including having accomplished a high level of education, she still experiences attitudes and behaviours that discriminate against her sex. In her view, tokenism cannot be addressed without working towards shifting paternalistic discriminatory attitudes that are embedded in society at a structural level. Young people want to move beyond tokenism but must feel empowered to challenge the status quo before real change can take place.

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Whilst progress has been made in advancing women’s rights through legislation, political representation still lags with an average of only 7.9% female MPs in parliaments across the Pacific islands. Young advocates speaking on women’s rights stressed the need for the equal representation of women in parliament, insisting that they want to have the same opportunities that men have.

In response to this discussion, one parliamentarian stated that whilst they encourage equal participation, part of the problem has been moving beyond traditional norms where men have ordinarily led. One positive action was the introduction by the government of Samoa of legislation that mandated a minimum of 10% women in parliament, and as a result of these provisions an additional woman entered parliament following the last election, bringing the total number of women in the Samoan parliament to five.

Parliamentarians from other countries expressed interest in this model and whether it could be replicated elsewhere. Tongan delegates note that there are only two female MPs in Tonga and they face huge challenges in parliament. A Kiribati delegate notes that a challenge in Kiribati is enabling women to have the confidence to put themselves forward for public office.

The challenges of culture

Youth raised the point that their lack of inclusion in important decision-making is strongly linked to social norms that are embedded in culture, which act as an obstacle to change. Culture and tradition are a highly significant aspect of everyday life across the Pacific, and youth noted that the importance of tradition and culture was that it bound together Pacific societies. Yet as one youth delegate noted, it was not part of Pacific culture to hold on to behaviours that actively harmed or discriminated against people and therefore undermined social harmony and happiness.



Arguments that stem from culture are a major challenge for youth in Pacific society and can often act as a deterrent to discussing issues that matter to young people, in fear of upsetting the traditional order and the norms and values attached to it. In order to find the solutions that bring about change, it must be assessed how culture can exist in harmony with legal reforms that benefit women and PIDSOGIESC+. Delegates noted that dialogue and discussion were a core part of the Pacific way of life that were essential

for furthering positive conversations about human rights.

As a result, there is a need for intergenerational dialogue to create a space for diverse stakeholders to understand and appreciate different perspectives. Dialogue should take into consideration the perceptions of the young and old, without judgement in either direction. Youth delegates stressed that they didn't want to dismiss traditional values, but rather that these values – including those of faith – should be evaluated to ensure they were compatible with security, prosperity and dignity for all people in the Pacific. By working together, solutions can be created through an intergenerational and inclusive

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approach so that traditional culture and progress are not viewed as incompatible or at odds with each other.

The cultural dynamics between men and women in the Pacific is also an area that requires improvement and understanding at a village level. One female parliamentarian told her story of how she was the first female MP to be accepted into a normally all-male meeting in her village. She discovered that initially men would not accept her leading a large project, and was often met with apprehension from chiefs. However, she recognised that her consistency in attending meetings, and diligence in allowing her community to become used to her leadership, meant her participation became more accepted over time. She noted that this had been difficult and showed that she faced additional barriers to men when it came to fulfilling her duties as an MP. All delegates stressed that the whole decision-making process is only complete when the contribution of women is included equally.

Delegates also discussed the role of religion, which has had an impact on women's and PIDSOGIESC+ rights. Delegates agreed that there was a need to change the perception that religion is fundamentally opposed to advancing inclusion, by highlighting the huge diversity of voices on this complex issue. Different churches, as well people of faith, did not speak with one voice on these issues, and there was an ongoing conversation happening at every level of society. One parliamentarian stressed that equality and justice are central to Pacific values, and it is therefore important that religious and cultural institutions enshrine these values when it comes to the rights and wellbeing of diverse Pacific islanders.

Dialogue between Parliamentarians and Youth

The role of parliamentarians in engaging with young people to advance reform

Parliamentarians attending the convening expressed a clear desire to establish dialogue with young people and called on youth delegates to work with them to move forward. The discussions presented a key opportunity for parliamentarians to reflect on how they have approached legislative processes in the past and how they can improve upon this in the future, particularly with regard to engaging with young people.

Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA) introduced this component of the dialogue by presenting the publication [“Advancing the Human Rights and Inclusion of LGBTI People: a Handbook for Parliamentarians,”](#) prepared by PGA and UNDP.



Parliamentarians began by exploring their motivation for becoming elected representatives. There was a diversity of views, including to represent constituents, or to engage in public service and do the right thing for your country. More than one parliamentarian specifically mentioned helping young people as a major motivation for entering parliament; key reasons included tackling youth unemployment and increasing opportunities for young people, or inspiring more young women to enter politics or other leadership positions. All parliamentarians agreed that they were strongly motivated to improve the lives and prospects of those in their country, and that law reform was a key method of achieving this.

Three major topic areas were raised in these discussions:

1. Parliamentarians’ approach to reforming discriminatory laws
2. Ensuring equality and diverse representation in parliament
3. The role of education in advancing equality

Parliamentarians' approach to reforming discriminatory laws

One parliamentarian asked for clarity about what equality really means, as there are many different definitions. Participants discussed the difference between legal equality (where laws address all people the same) and substantive equality (where additional measures are put in place to support the advancement of traditionally marginalised groups, to enable them to participate equally). The facilitator also noted indicators that measure inequality, such as those attached to the SDGs by which states can measure progress.

Youth delegates raised the importance of reforming old colonial laws, including archaic buggery laws, a step that the governments of Fiji and Nauru have already taken. One youth leader raised the question of how they can continue to engage with parliamentarians on building further momentum on law reform around this area across the Pacific region, requesting a strategy be devised for discussions surrounding repealing these discriminatory laws.

“As the next generation of leaders, it remains important for young people to stand up and raise their voice.”

One parliamentarian emphasised that the issue is complex given that the Christian character of Pacific countries made it a difficult topic to discuss. He added that addressing sexual orientation laws requires the collective consultation of the whole nation rather than it being approached as solely a political decision. However, he did add that, as the next generation of leaders, it remains important for young people to stand up and raise their voices.

Another area discussed where law reform is urgently required are laws regarding rape. For example, one youth delegate pointed out that the definition of rape presented in the penal code of their



country only makes reference to females and not males, and also fails to criminalise marital rape, thus seriously falling short of protecting a large number of victims. Youth delegates emphasised the need for young people and women to be included in the process of legislative reviews to ensure discussion of these critical issues by those who are affected the most by them was taken into account. One MP addressed the topic by stating that the penal code of their country is

currently under review, and that parliamentarians are working to ensure that both young people and women are taking part in the consultations.

One parliamentarian admitted that getting the Council of Churches on board can be difficult when it comes to passing laws that tackle discrimination against women and girls and particularly PIDSOGIESC+. One youth delegate suggested that, given the cultural barriers making progress towards reform a challenge, supporting and mentoring initiatives should be discussed and implemented in order to encourage and develop more engagement and inclusivity. Youth delegates voiced their commitment to supporting parliamentarians to advance difficult but positive conversations with faith leaders and communities about why legal reform that tackles discrimination is important and compatible with Christian values of love, dignity and respect.



One parliamentarian raised the difficult question of same-sex marriage, saying it was a particularly controversial subject in the region that was often raised in debate around the reform of discriminatory laws. A backlash against CEDAW in Tonga was framed around an unfounded panic by conservative churches about same-sex marriage and abortion which meant the government did not sign. However, youth delegates stressed that this was not a key demand of civil society, and that

reforming existing discriminatory legislation was their overwhelming priority. They made clear that ending violence, bullying and harassment, as well as taking down barriers that prevented them from accessing jobs and other opportunities, were their biggest needs.

Policies surrounding gender recognition were also discussed. With the exception of Fiji, which has banned discrimination against those of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities, other Pacific island countries still lag behind in this area, despite many Pacific countries having long cultural histories of third gender communities. The launch of a legal gender recognition workshop in Fiji, with Kiribati following suit, was seen as a positive step. A youth delegate from Tonga expressed that repealing a discriminatory law that criminalises ‘female impersonation’ was a key priority in his country, and that he would like to learn more from the experience of Samoa having done the same.

In seeking reassurance from parliamentarians that laws would work to protect PIDSOGIESC+ and women and girls, one youth delegate asked the question of how they can be sure that national laws

would take precedence over local customary law, which can often be discriminatory. In response to this, one MP assured delegates that, in Samoa, national laws supersede village laws and that the consistency between national and village laws should be understood and enforced. One youth delegate argued that the unification of village laws and national laws is a step that should also be considered in order to ensure that laws are consistent. One parliamentarian acknowledged the issue of village chiefs creating their own discriminatory by-laws which are often tacitly accepted by the government, but affirmed that the law must always take into consideration the human rights of the individual, and that such cases where national laws aren't being respected within villages are now being taken to the courts.



One youth delegate called for a much deeper understanding of gender identity when it comes to discussing gender equality, emphasising that it is important to go beyond the current limited understanding under cultural norms. For example, while in Samoa *fa'afafine* are largely accepted, gender discrimination is still a prevalent part of their lives, with cultural and religious factors limiting their level of inclusivity. One young member of the *fafatama* community asked whether there was an opportunity for them to meet with any part of government. Their view was that being able to share through formal channels their daily experiences of discrimination and how that

impacts them was an important step towards the government taking action to address discrimination. One example of discrimination is gender diverse people being disallowed from wearing specific clothing in villages and churches under current rules that have been implemented by chiefs. In addition to this, they also raised the topic of combating cyberbullying and asked to be more informed by parliamentarians of what is being done to address this. More engagement with PIDSOGIESC+ is required, and to achieve this there must be better consultation practices.

Ensuring equality and diverse representation in parliament

It is difficult for new candidates to enter into a political career, not just because the field has ordinarily been dominated by men, but also because of the expense associated with running a campaign. During the discussion, one MP shared their story of how they were initially hesitant to enter politics because of the bribery culture that was once affiliated with elections. However, in 2016, anti-bribery laws were passed which enabled democracy to develop in a more progressive

direction, and, as a result, opportunities for a greater number of people have improved, including for women.

Political reforms in Samoa have paved the way for the inclusion of women. One female MP leveraged her position as a parliamentarian to champion an agenda that involves making the lives of everyone better, pushing aside practices that only meet individualistic needs. She encourages women to run for parliament, expressing that there are young women present at the dialogue who have the potential to be excellent MPs. One of the main issues that have deterred women from pursuing positions of power in politics is intimidation and being undermined by men, however, with many more women now entering politics, the landscape is changing.

Parliamentarians were asked the question of whether PIDSOGIESC+ would be accepted as candidates. While a parliamentarian argued that there were no legal barriers to women, *fa'afafine* or those of other marginalised identities from becoming parliamentarians, youth delegates protested strongly that barriers are cultural rather than legal. The ability of these groups to participate remained largely theoretical. One youth delegate emphasised that, while there are no formal barriers stopping PIDSOGIESC+ from joining parliament, social barriers prevent them from engaging or feeling safe in these spaces, highlighting the need to make adjustments to remedy these issues.



Another youth delegate pointed out that a law barring criminals from running for parliament was a barrier for PIDSOGIESC+ while consensual same-sex sexual acts remained illegal. One parliamentarian suggested this was a private matter, not one for the law, which therefore did not represent a barrier. One youth delegate responded to ask why, in this case, these laws still exist when they do not appear to serve a purpose and bolster discrimination.

The role of education in advancing equality

A key issue for young women and PIDSOGIESC+ is being able to achieve an education that would lead to their full integration and inclusion in society. One of the youngest MPs present at the talks highlighted that there are not enough official programmes in place to help youth to progress, particularly for those who have dropped out of school. Youth delegates noted that bullying in schools meant that many PIDSOGIESC+ dropped out without getting qualifications, which was a major barrier to opportunity



in later life. One MP called for more investment in education and youth programmes for those who drop out of school, so that young people could develop personal and professional skills that will help them to advance in society without the need for traditional education. More practical options for education that can help young people get into skilled trades should be a choice for all young people.

One female youth delegate emphasised the importance of education when it comes to liberating young women, particularly those who are at high risk. Some schools have implemented their own policies to support vulnerable young women such as young mothers and pregnant teens, however, state-level policies remain poor and there is a need for laws to safeguard vulnerable young women. Discrimination and stigmatisation are prevalent against young mothers and pregnant teens in particular, and, while some progress has been made through laws, in practice they are not making a difference to the many women who should be protected by legislative measures. One parliamentarian raised the need for public education, as stigmatisation stems from society.

One youth delegate engaging with MPs during discussions expressed that the challenges faced by women and PIDSOGIESC+ are particularly difficult due to the cultural context, which can be hostile towards them. Staying in school and being able to gain employment, while also not being subjected to violence (including cyber-bullying) are pressing issues that need addressing.

Action Plan

Working together, delegates crafted a series of action-oriented commitments at the national level that would bring together parliamentarians and youth leaders in the Pacific to advance the reform of discriminatory laws.

Tuvalu

1. Speaker of Parliament to support a national dialogue between MPs and youth of all diversities such as sex, age, disability, gender identity and sexual orientation. It would involve the eight different island communities as well as the Tuvalu National Youth Council. This is expected to be done by the first quarter of 2020 and funding assistance is sought.
2. Speaker of Parliament to support temporary special measures (TSM) for women and will work with women's civil society organisations, the Church and MPs. TSM was discussed during the constitutional review but people did not agree to it and more education is needed.
3. Minister of Education to support interventions through the Education Act (already under review) and national school curriculum (to commence soon):
 - a. Education Act: Incorporation of an anti-discrimination provision is possible – including based on gender (teenage pregnancy) and SOGIESC. The Attorney General's Office, the Gender Department and the Women's and Youth Councils can support this initiative and text to be provided for consideration. Timeline: December 2019-January 2020.
 - b. School curriculum (three-year project): Making it inclusive by including the issues on gender, disability and consent. Tuvalu National Youth Council (TNYC) should make a submission. TNYC can reach out to the Pacific Youth Council (PYC) by the end of October and PYC will support.
 - c. The TNYC will be provided with space in the office of the Ministry of Education and Youth to support work on this.
4. A capacity building training on governance, budget submissions and law reform for young people of all diversities to help them engage more effectively with MPs. There is budget allocation for next year and the Ministry of Education and Youth will take the lead working closely with local government as appropriate.
5. If the support of $\frac{2}{3}$ MPs is there, the new administration will set up a new Constitutional Review Commission which has potential to look into anti-discrimination provisions. The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports will convene a meeting with youth representatives

to brief on the contents of the draft Constitution and seek their input by working with TNYC. However, timing will depend on the Government as the previous draft is not accessible.

6. The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports commits to creating separate spaces for youth to engage and participate in freely. The Minister will raise it at their staff meeting and then a draft paper on this will be prepared to submit to the Cabinet for approval and for other ministries to also implement. The paper will need to have background information on why this is important and the Ministry needs help with this. TNYC to submit relevant information on safe and enabling spaces for young people to participate in.

Samoa

1. Samoa Parliamentarians and Youth Gender Equality Network (SPYGEN) to be established, led by the three MPs present at the Dialogue and the Samoa National Youth Council (SNYC), engaging with the Samoa Fa'afafine Association and the Rogers. The new network will emphasise future collaboration between MPs and youth leaders.
 - a. The first meeting will be in mid-November 2019 to determine the future course of action - objectives, governance, dialogue and shape of the network. The first meeting will be organised by the Hon. Aliimalemanu and the SNYC. Expectation is the network will participate in the law reform process underway in Samoa. The Network will use the 'A Fairer Future' report by the EJA as guidance and reference for what areas of law reform to focus on.
 - b. The Samoa Fa'afafine Association and the SNYC will have a dialogue to unpack what LGBTI means in the Samoan context and this dialogue activity will be discussed in the network. This dialogue would happen in the second half of 2020. The priority is to roll out the Network.
2. The Hon. Aliimalemanu will meet with the two female Tongan MPs in Brisbane in the first week of November 2019 to explore possibilities of engaging with Tongan youth on gender issues. The two Tongan youth delegates will follow up with the Hon. Aliimalemanu by mid November.

Kiribati

1. The Ministry of Justice will work with the Ministry of Youth to set up a working committee to formulate a budget to support a review of all discriminatory laws to ensure compliance with human rights obligations. Timeline: By March 2020.



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LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Keynote speaker:

Hon. Fiame Naomi Mataafa MP – Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Natural Resources and Environment of Samoa

List of participants:

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Bioua Tokaiti - Kiribati

Birimaka Tekanene – Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Justice, Kiribati

Hon. Salausa Dr. John Ah-Ching MP – Parliament of Samoa; Associate Minister of Ministry of Women, Community & Social Development

Ivy Toro – Pacific Youth Council, Fiji

Jennifer McCarthy – Deputy Secretary-General, Parliamentarians for Global Action

Kevin Lucky – President, Samoa National Youth Council

Hon. Laauli Polataivo MP – Parliament of Samoa

Hon. Maluelue Tafua Tafua MP – Parliament of Samoa

Meleane Finau – Talitah Project, Tonga

Miki Wali – Haus of Khameleon, Fiji

Moeli Homasi – Tuvalu Youth Council

Hon. Natan Teewe Brechtefeld MP – Minister of Justice, Kiribati

Nathan McKenzie – Head of Public Affairs, The Royal Commonwealth Society

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Rory Evans – Programme Lead, The Royal Commonwealth Society



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Roshika Deo – Facilitator and Gender Expert, Fiji

Ryan Masinalupe – Samoan National Youth Council

Hon. Samuelu Penitala Teo MP – Speaker of the House, Tuvalu

Setaisu Tiatia – Vice President, The Rogers, Samoa

Hon. Soalo Mene MP – Parliament of Samoa; Associate Minister of Ministry of Education, Sports & Culture

Tahere Siisiialafia – Chair, Pacific Youth Council; Member of the Commonwealth Youth Gender & Equality Network (CYGEN)

Tebeio Tamton – BIMBA, Kiribati

Temetiu Maliga – Senior Officer, Ministry of Education, Youth & Sports, Tuvalu

Tilesa Penielu – Tuvalu Youth Council

Timani Hafoka – Tonga Leitis Association

Hon. Timi Melei MP – Minister for Education, Youth & Sports, Tuvalu



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ABOUT THE CO-ORGANISERS

The Royal Commonwealth Society (RCS) is a network of individuals and organisations committed to improving the lives and prospects of Commonwealth citizens across the world. Through youth empowerment, education and high-level advocacy, the Society champions the importance of literacy, equality, the environment and connected communities across the Commonwealth's 53 member nations. The Society's unique position within the Commonwealth family allows it to play a pivotal role in convening and connecting the Commonwealth's political and diplomatic representatives, as well as industry, civil society, academic and business leaders, on a wide range of issues. Founded in 1868, the RCS is non-partisan, independent of governments and relies on public generosity to achieve its mission. Since 2018 the Society has been working alongside the Kaleidoscope Trust, the Human Dignity Trust and Sisters For Change as a member of the [Equality & Justice Alliance](#), a major partnership programme supporting Commonwealth governments and civil society organisations to reform laws that discriminate against women and girls and LGBT people.

Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA) is a non-governmental, multi-party, international network of legislators acting in their individual capacity that informs and mobilises parliamentarians in all regions of the world to advocate for human rights and the Rule of Law, democracy, human security, inclusion and gender equality. [PGA's Global Campaign against Discrimination based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity](#) (SOGI Campaign) seeks to educate, sensitise, build the technical capacity and strengthen the political will of parliamentarians in order to take ownership, concrete initiatives and legislative actions that achieve equality and inclusion of LGBTI people. Since its inception in 2013, PGA has positioned itself as the parliamentary partner of LGBTI civil society organisations around the world, facilitating collaboration and encouraging its member parliamentarians to support/champion LGBTI-affirming legislative reforms, including decriminalisation of consensual same-sex conduct, in Angola, Bolivia, Chile, El Salvador, Mozambique, Nepal, Pakistan, Seychelles and Uruguay. For more information about PGA and its SOGI Campaign, please contact: Mónica Adame, Director of PGA's Gender, Equality and Inclusion Programme (monica.adame@pgaction.org, +1 646 762 7295) and Alex Roche, Senior Programme Officer of PGA's Gender, Equality and Inclusion Programme (alejandro.roche@pgaction.org, +1 646 762 7318).

The Pacific Youth Council (PYC) is a non-governmental regional youth organisation, and is an umbrella body for national youth councils (NYC) spanning ten countries. PYC is nationally, regionally, and internationally recognised as an advocate for youth in Pacific island countries and territories, as a capacity-building provider, and a key link in a network of development organisations. Its vision is to empower young people to become active citizens and leaders, and its strategic plan identified three complementary focus areas: capacity-building, networking and advocacy.

The Samoa National Youth Council (SNYC) is an independent youth-led organisation that works towards enhancing youth development for the social, economic and political stability of Samoa.

HUMAN DIGNITY TRUST + KALEIDOSCOPE TRUST + SISTERS FOR CHANGE + THE ROYAL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY

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