

### REGIONAL CROSS CUTTING ISSUES

Just as Pacific Forum Leaders have demonstrated a vision for a peaceful and prosperous region including the adoption of the Treaty of Rarotonga (1985) and the Gender Equality Declaration (2012), generations of Pacific civil society leaders, including young women and young men, have worked to respond to and bring to Leaders attention, a broad yet inter-linked range of social, economic and political priorities.

Building on that legacy and drawing on a range of inclusive and participatory processes, CSO's recognize and emphasize the impact of the following cross-cutting issues on sustainable development for Pacific people across and beyond the five identified regional priorities:

#### **Gender Equality**

Progressing commitments to gender equality must ensure the allocation of resources and partnerships with women-led civil society to remove the barriers to leadership and participation in economic, social and political life. Implementation must support and accelerate the adoption of gender inclusive policies and programmes.

#### **Peace and Security**

Our region has experienced a myriad of conflicts and it is vital that the broader efforts of conflict prevention and human security and security sector governance so that Pacific Governments actively work in close participation with civil society whether it is addressing disarmament and demobilization programmes or enhancing prevention through a more effective use of the Biketawa Declaration (2000).

Regional security efforts can build on the recommendations of the Pacific Regional Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (2012-2015) as well the Pacific Forum Principles on Security Sector Governance (2012).

#### **Information Communication Technology**

ICT is a cross-cutting issue that is a foundation stone for all of our issues and sectors across our communities, including the 5 key regional priorities. A vibrant ICT industry in our region is needed in order to viably build and maintain the skills capability required for Pacific Island communities to become empowered as peer participants in digital age global economic trading and social development. Other island economies, such as Mauritius in the Indian Ocean, have successfully built social and economic development by adopting ICT as a major pillar of their economy, creating more than 20,000 jobs.

CSO's are calling for a positive partnership approach between government, industry, the research community and civil society to work together within each nation and across the region to lift our ICT

literacy and productivity. A regional ICT Innovation Fund, perhaps supported by multi-lateral development banks, governments and the ICT industry would support this initiative.

### **Sport for Development and Peace**

Sport is a powerful enabler of sustainable development under the new SDG Framework and sport is a critical and cross-cutting component of the social, economic and political development of Pacific Island Countries.

CSO's recognize the importance of sport in the overall development of Forum countries and the largely un-tapped potential of sport to contribute to regional development and harmonization across health, education, gender equality, and social inclusion, peace-building and economic empowerment.

There are a number of international instruments supporting this claim including:

- UNESCO's Declaration of Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport (1978), and
- Declaration of Berlin (2013), a roadmap for sport and sustainable development agreed by Ministers responsible for sport that covers sport for all, physical education and integrity
- Olympic 2020 Agenda (2014), the strategic roadmap for the future of the Olympic Movement

Sport has undoubted health and social benefits, for the Pacific tackling the crisis of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) is of particular concern. Creating an enabling environment for the people of the Pacific move for health and move for life will require collaboration between Governments, civil society, sport organisations and communities.

A collaborative regional approach is vital to effectively measure the impact of sport across economic growth, tourism, trade, aid and development, regional mobility, youth unemployment, gender equality and health-related behaviour. CSO's also reinforce the importance of the World Anti-Doping Code across Pacific Island Countries and emphasize the obligations for Governments under the International Convention Against Doping in Sport to protect the integrity of sport across the Pacific Islands.

CSO's urge our leaders to recognise the cross-cutting roles of sport and of ICT as foundation stones for the health and prosperity of our communities.

CSO's also emphasize that achieving the goals of regional peace and security requires us to address the drivers of violence and conflict, instability and insecurity. By adopting a multi-stakeholder approach which embraces Civil Society, Pacific Governments and Communities can take a leading role in achieving the sustainable development goals and building a sustainable and prosperous future for all our peoples.