What is the PIF Women Leaders Meeting?

Pacific Islands Forum Leaders, at their 3rd February 2021 Special Leaders Retreat, endorsed an annual standing Pacific Islands Forum Women Leaders Meeting (PIFWLM) to be held ahead of the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting to ensure an enduring focus on the critical role gender has on issues in the Pacific. The inaugural virtual meeting will be chaired by Fiji’s Minister for Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation, Honorable Rosy Sofia Akbar.

Why is the PIFWLM important for the Pacific Region?

The meeting of Forum Women Leaders is the first of its kind and aims to keep the gender agenda front of mind at the highest levels of political leadership—the Forum Leaders meeting. This group will now meet annually to promote and progress gender issues within our region.

Delegates will also strengthen regional efforts to advance gender equality and women’s empowerment and will also amplify the work of the Triennial Conference of Pacific Women and Meeting of Ministers for Women hosted by the Pacific Community (SPC) every three years.

The meeting will also discuss relevant issues to support Member countries in ensuring COVID-19 Response and Recovery Plans respond to the specific needs of women and girls.

Who will attend this meeting?

The meeting will be attended mainly by high-level political women in leadership across the Forum Member countries, or their representatives, and is not limited to Ministers responsible for Women’s Affairs. Representatives of associated PIF members and the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP) will also attend.

What are the priority issues at PIFWLM?

- The role of women and girls, in all their diversity, in our region within the context of the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific, economic and socio-economic Impact Assessment on COVID-19, climate change. Resilience (inclusive of Pacific Resilience Facility).

- Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration review and revitalization process to progress gender equality across the region. The review recommended specific actions around the thematic areas of governance, relevance, effectiveness and impact, collaboration, and sustainability. The revitalization process will involve extensive consultations with national governments, civil society, regional and partner organisations to ensure ownership of the next iteration of the PLGED.

- The Outcomes of the Pacific Women’s Triennial Conference and Pacific Ministers for Women Meeting and the recommended actions for PIF Leaders’ attention. These specific actions include women in leadership and decision-making, crises and disasters, sex-, age- and disability-disaggregated data (SADDD) and statistics, intergenerational dialogue and marginalized groups dialogue and perspectives, and collaboration and communication.

- The strengthening of collective voice and action as one Blue Pacific Continent on gender equality on mainstream and gender specific issues for greater visibility and advocacy in intergovernmental processes.