



The New Zealand All-Party Parliamentary Group

NZPPD Secretariat
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Parliamentary Partnerships for Pacific People

New Zealand MPs are working together with their peers in the Pacific to address the critical population and development challenges in the region.

Tangata Vainerere, Coordinator of the Pacific Parliamentary Assembly on Population and Development (PPAPD), is currently in New Zealand meeting with MPs and other key partners to forge relationships for action on population and development in the Pacific.

“Population and development issues, such as sexuality, relationships, pregnancy and families, women’s rights, poverty and sustainable development are vital to address in the Pacific region. These issues are at the centre of peoples lives and require parliamentary leadership,” said Mr Vainerere.

New Zealand MP Jill Pettis, Chair of the New Zealand Parliamentarians’ Group on Population and Development (NZPPD) met with Mr Vainerere to further develop collaborative activities between both parliamentary groups. The NZPPD is calling for population and development issues to be prioritised and supported at the strategy, policy and resource level.

“New Zealand has an important role in supporting our neighbours in the Pacific on population and development. We are fundamentally linked to the Pacific. We will not achieve key international agreements we have committed to, including the Millennium Development Goals, if we do not invest in population and development,” said Mrs Pettis.

Family Planning International (FPI), Secretariat of the NZPPD, agrees that urgent action needs to be taken on population and development issues in the Pacific. “Parliamentarians, NGOs and the whole of society have a vital role to play in addressing these issues,” said Jackie Edmond, Chief Executive of New Zealand Family Planning. “There is important work being done in the Pacific to address population and

development issues, including sexual and reproductive health and rights, and New Zealand needs to support this.”

Investing in population and development means saving and improving people’s lives and respecting human rights. A recent UN report states that a woman in Papua New Guinea is 50 times more likely to die in childbirth than a woman in New Zealand. There are high rates of Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) in the Pacific and a generalised HIV epidemic continues to grow in Papua New Guinea. Violence against women is as much an issue across other Pacific countries as it is in New Zealand.

A lack of female political representation is also a key issue, with a recent study reporting that the Pacific, excluding New Zealand and Australia, has the lowest average percentage of women in parliament of any region in the world.

Contact

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Background

The New Zealand Parliamentarians’ Group on Population and Development (NZPPD) has provided a forum for New Zealand Parliamentarians to engage and act on international population and development issues for 10 years. The PPAPD is a Pacific regional body of Parliamentarians with membership from 17 Pacific Islands Nations. Family Planning International is the international unit of New Zealand Family Planning and provides Secretariat support for the NZPPD.