

**FAMILY PLANNING INTERNATIONAL (previously FPAID)
SUPPLEMENTARY SUBMISSION
To the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Select Committee
On the Inquiry into New Zealand's Relationship with South Pacific
Island Countries**

Introduction

This supplementary submission is an accompaniment to New Zealand Family Planning International's¹ submission on the Select Committee's Inquiry into New Zealand's Relationship with South Pacific Island Countries. We would like to put forward five key recommendations that we believe would contribute markedly to sustainable economic development throughout the South Pacific region, and to New Zealand's relationship with Pacific Island Forum countries. The background information and evidence supporting these recommendations are contained in our original submission, and will not be re-visited here.

Recommendations

1. Sexual and reproductive health lies at the core of what it means to be human. It is vital to address when working to improve health, education, economic growth, women's empowerment and sustainable environments. We recommend that sexual and reproductive health is prioritized in Official Development Assistance strategy, policy and funding, recognizing its importance in advancing broad development goals (such as economic growth, poverty alleviation and environmental sustainability).
2. Across Pacific Island Forum countries, 98.9% of HIV infections are contracted through sexual connections, pregnancy, childbirth and breastfeeding. HIV in the Pacific is a sexual and reproductive health issue. Addressing HIV as such would also ensure that the broader issues of sexuality and relationships, gender inequality, unwanted teenage pregnancies and other Sexually Transmissible Infections (STIs) are simultaneously addressed. It would provide an opportunity for improved coordination and decreased duplication between the wide range of multilateral, governmental, private sector and civil society organizations that work in sexual and reproductive health, including HIV, across the region. We recommend that the upcoming 2009-2013 Pacific Regional Strategy for HIV and other STIs is revised to become a Pacific Regional Strategy for Sexual and Reproductive Health.

¹ The New Zealand Family Planning Association has recently been rebranded. It is now called Family Planning. In line with this, what was previously Family Planning Association International Development (FPAID) is now Family Planning International.

3. Supplies of health commodities, including sexual and reproductive health commodities, remain inconsistent and poorly managed across Pacific Island Forum countries. There are activities within the Pacific Plan for regional procurement processes and there is also a 2003 Reproductive Health Commodity Security (supplies) Pacific Plan of Action. We recommend that these Plans and processes are coordinated to avoid duplication and that the Reproductive Health Commodity Security Pacific Plan of Action is revisited with the resultant updated plan to be endorsed by the Pacific Island Forum.
4. Gender inequality is pervasive across the region and is a large hindrance to achieving sustainable economic development. We recommend that the empowerment of women and involvement of men to reduce gender inequality is prioritized in strategies, policies and funding related to Pacific Island Forum countries.
5. Many Pacific Island Forum countries have large youth populations who are entering their reproductive years. We recommend that young people are engaged in decisions that impact on them, and that their needs are prioritized in all strategies, policies and funding related to Pacific Island Forum countries. This will contribute to bright futures for Pacific Island Forum countries.

We thank the Select Committee for this opportunity and wish members well in writing their report.