



Co-conveners of the
2nd Fiji Consultation on Women's Participation in National Democratic Processes
The Women's Forum
5th – 6th June, 2012.
Venue: Lali Room, Holiday Inn, Suva.

Wednesday 06 June 2012

Time to Enhance Women's Equal Participation in Fiji's Democratization Processes

Sixty two women leaders representing women and their communities from all across the country came together for the **2nd Fiji Consultation on Women's Participation in National Democratic Processes (The Women's Forum)**, to develop a series of time bound strategic actions to ensure that the upcoming political processes including the Constitution Consultation in the lead up to the return to parliamentary democracy takes into account conventions, treaties and commitments to women's human rights.

The objectives of the 2nd Women's Forum included:

- To share progress since the inaugural Women's Forum.
- To identify different ways in which stakeholders can work collaboratively on the four identified issues
- To clearly articulate the Women's Forum non-negotiable position on human rights, security, women in decision-making and participatory constitution-making process.
- To identify the roles and responsibilities of different women's organizations in relation to the four critical areas that were identified by the Women's Forum.
- To clearly define how information will be shared amongst members of the women's forum
- To identify available funding opportunities and identify strategies on securing additional funding for Women's Forum follow-up work.

The Forum, co-convened by the National Council of Women, Soqosoqo Vakamarama i Taukei, Fiji Women's Rights Movement and FemLINKPacific is a collective process bringing together diverse experiences and perspectives with a commitment to the following four priority areas agreed upon by the participants of the inaugural national Women's Forum held in April:

1. Respect for human rights.
2. Defining the role of the security forces.
3. Promotion of women's participation in decision-making and democratization processes including Temporary Special Measures.
4. A rights based, respectful, open and participatory constitution making process.

Outcomes of the 2nd Women's Forum:

A clear set of strategies have been identified on how we will work together to address the four priority areas including:

1. Civic Education strategies such as the development of a rights based civic education curriculum and the use of a multi media and information sharing strategy
2. Addressing security sector governance including through enhancing and promoting a human security approach through collaborative research, policy advocacy and campaigns
3. Enhancing women's participation in decision-making and democratization processes including Temporary Special Measures especially as we recognise we are part of a national process of rebuilding political participation including at local government and national parliamentary system
4. A rights based, respectful, open and participatory constitution making process through enhanced participatory learning and collaboration for submissions that are human rights based and promote gender equality. In particular, women leaders will be making submissions on a strengthened Bill of Rights that includes

a definition of substantive equality and the full range of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights.

The 2nd Fiji Women's Forum, as a diverse collective, reaffirms our rightful role as equal participants in the democratization processes and continues the process for women to claim our rightful place in national decision-making.

The members of this Women's Forum have committed to taking back what we have discussed here this week and sharing it with our communities. We will work with other groups and stakeholders throughout the nation, who are committed to democracy.

We will meet regularly, and commit together and with others, to discuss, debate and advance Fiji to participatory democracy.

The national Women's Forum will continue to ensure that the process to elections and beyond will be genuinely democratic for all the people of Fiji.

ENDS.

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