INTERGENERATIONAL DIALOGUE

2022

1-2 NOVEMBER 2022

PEARL RESORT, PACIFIC HARBOR

Outcome Statement

The Intergenerational Dialogue has been convened by Fiji Women's Forum and Fiji Young Women's Forum and is supported by the Pacific Community's Human Rights and Social Division and the United States Agency for International Development.

Background:

The 2nd Intergenerational Dialogue was held on 1-2 November 2022 at the Pearl Resort in Pacific Harbor. Co-convened by The Fiji Women's Forum and the Fiji Young Women's Forum, this Intergenerational Dialogue is a commitment to continue to support the empowerment of women in promoting political participation in the pursuance of self-determination, true democracy and representation. There are persistent inequalities and inequities perpetuated by structures and institutions and societal practices that disregard women, people, agency, human rights, freedoms, indigenous, ethnic minority and other community concerns. As diverse women leaders, we commit to bring the voice, agency and actions grounded in collaboration and solidarity from community to national level to create a better future.

In the past the Forums have stated the importance of fair representation and meaningful participation for young diverse women, and called on leaders at all levels to engage and integrate young women of all backgrounds in decision-making areas.

They have advocated for a consultation on the use of Temporary Special Measures (TSMs) for women in politics in order to improve women's representation in Parliament. They have asserted that in the approaching 2022 General Elections, women must unite with other women and female leaders.

They have called on Political parties to have quotas for representation for young people as candidates. They have urged Political parties to take head of the voices of young diverse women, people living with disabilities and members of the SOGIESC community and women living in the rural and remote communities to create safe spaces that allow for effective communication.

The Forums have continually emphasized the need to increase awareness and training on democratic and electoral processes by targeting young women's groups and conducting door to door surveys on individuals' awareness of democratic and electoral processes.

They have continued to call on politicians, the Fijian Elections office and Fiji Electoral commission to provide information in the vernacular on political processes; to create an online database portal, so that registered voters can vote in any polling station. In addition to implementing affirmative policies to encourage political participation of people living with disabilities, members of the SOGIESC community and young diverse women.

Context:

The Intergenerational Dialogue came in the wake of the announcement of the writ of the 2022 Fiji General Elections. A month away from elections on December 14th 2022, the electioneering and propaganda has and have been robust. In the weeks leading up to the dialogue some events of fear mongering like arrests and persecution of key candidates of opposing political parties has and had occurred.

With recent announcements of candidates, representation of women has been consistently low. The Electoral Commission last reported that 692,918 people have registered to vote in the election which will cost $FJD 26million.

Our Commitments:

The FWF and FYWF continues to rally for empowerment of women in promoting political participation in the pursuance of self-determination, true democracy and representation. Through this national dialogue, the Forums outline these renewed commitments:

THE FORUMS:

- Calls for 50% participation of women in all levels of political leadership whether it be local, provincial or national.
- Emphasizes that temporary special measures be introduced to encourage women's political leadership, the TSMs will be in line with CEDAW which was ratified by Fiji in 1995. CEDAW's general recommendation 25 sets out the key scope and principles of TSMs.
- Advocate for political parties to introduce quotas for women as candidates to contest elections. These will set precedence in the absence of national TSMs.
- Assert the importance of women voting for women. We urge women to research on different women candidate and their ideologies and vote for a woman who most aligns to your belief.
- Recommend that young people as the biggest constituent of registered voters, turn out to vote in same numbers on election day.
- State continued for women in leadership at all levels and encourage women to take up public life.