



**Pacific Disability
Forum**

A partnership of Pacific organisations
of and for persons with disabilities

JOINT STATEMENT ANNOUNCING THE PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF NEW ZEALAND AND THE PACIFIC DISABILITY FORUM

The Government of New Zealand and the Pacific Disability Forum are committed to the realisation of human rights for all people, championing equality, and promoting equal rights. We are proud to announce our partnership, which will support the realisation of human rights for persons with disabilities across the Blue Pacific Continent.

There are an estimated 1.7 million persons with disabilities in the Pacific, all of whom face barriers to the realisation of their human rights. New Zealand and the Pacific Disability Forum are concerned that climate change and global crises continue to exacerbate existing barriers that prevent persons with disabilities from enjoying their full human rights, including equitable access to healthcare, education, employment, and personal safety. Persons with disabilities face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and structural exclusion, and are most at risk of being left behind. This manifests as poor development outcomes for individuals, their countries and territories.

The Pacific Disability Forum is an important civil society organisation, working with national organisations of persons with disabilities and regional stakeholders to advance the well-being and prosperity of Pacific Islanders with disabilities. The Forum holds important roles in regional architecture, including the Pacific Islands Forum, and advocates for disability-related rights in the Pacific and internationally.

The multi-year partnership will support implementation of the Pacific Disability Forum's Strategic Plan across the Pacific. This will help strengthen the capacity and reach of the Forum, empower Pacific Islanders with disabilities to have a voice in decision-making, and help achieve meaningful change for them as persons with disabilities and their families.

Ahead of the International Day for Persons with Disabilities, the Government of New Zealand and the Pacific Disability Forum are excited to announce this critical support. This is a welcome opportunity to support Pacific-led response and advocacy to advance the rights of persons with disabilities in our Pacific region, and support the realisation of human rights for all persons with disabilities.

New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Pacific Disability Forum

22 November 2022