

Concept Note

Young leaders Dialogue on Human Rights & Good Governance

Venue: Fiji

Dates: 15 – 17 October, 2019

Background, rationale

Young people's participation in good governance contributes to national development and addresses youth issues. The youthful population of the Pacific presents challenges and opportunities for Pacific Island governments; the engagement of young people in decisions making processes on issues that affect them is key to maximising the opportunities and addressing development challenges.

Creating a space for young people to participate in national and regional dialogues to bring youth issues and concerns is critical to ensuring that national and regional development initiatives are inclusive and caters for different groups of young people. Strengthening good governance and promoting social inclusion are means to realising the rights of marginalised individuals and groups.

A growing number of young people in the Pacific are taking up leadership roles in Parliament (Members of Parliament), public service, private sector and civil society organisations. This presents a unique opportunity to strengthen the participation of young people in good governance and using parliamentary mechanisms to advance youth development and human rights.

One of the key areas that the Social Development Programme (SDP) and Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT) of the Pacific Community's (SPC) focuses on is to build capacity and increase knowledge of government officials and leaders to apply gender, social inclusion and human rights standards in the planning and delivery of public goods and services. SDP and RRRT are also cognisant of role that civil society play in representing and advocating for the needs of marginalised and isolated populations, and the need to support government and civil society/groups dialogue to enhance good governance.

SDP and RRRT intend to engage young leaders to contribute to national and regional dialogues on gender, social inclusion and human rights and with the aim to bolster collective actions between national and regional leaders with young people for increased investment and implementation of youth-focused initiatives across different development sectors. This initiative also responds to one of the key strategic areas of the Pacific Youth Development Framework 2014 – 2023 on strengthening development accountability by engaging young people for increased duty-bearers' response for youth development.

Young leaders can utilise their roles as politicians, leaders in the private, public, faith and social sectors to elevate youth and human rights issues, propose locally appropriate solutions and take action. This cross-section of young leaders can influence change and inform their peers to

take initiatives to uphold human rights, through national and local dialogues, contributing to policy and legislative changes and holding government to account for their duty to protect and fulfil human the rights of its citizens. At the same time, this process can build a strong link between political leaders and youth, demonstrating equal partnership for development.

Young leaders' dialogue

A regional **young leaders' dialogue** will be held in October 2019 in Fiji, and is aimed at enhancing collaboration between young leaders – young members of parliament, young business and civil society leaders to advance youth development with particular focus on gender, social inclusion and human rights.

The Young Leaders' Dialogue will provide a platform for young people to:

- a. Strengthen engagement with national and regional leaders and development partners to promote and uphold the principles of good governance;
- b. Discuss good governance issues, challenges, best practices and sustainable solutions to youth development; and
- c. Strengthen networks and relationships between young people to advance youth in governance.

It is envisaged that the dialogue to contribute to and strengthen existing youth initiatives and build new relations to bring young people and their views to the centre of national development.

The dialogue will feature panel presentations on challenges, good practice and sharing of ideas to give both leaders and young people re-energise their efforts in engaging young people to find and implement locally appropriate solutions to youth issues.

Youth participants

Young people who wish to participate may do so as participants, panellists and/or facilitators of mini-workshops or display at side-events that will be held during the course of the dialogue. The following criteria will be used to select interested participants:

- a) Active involvement in national human rights issues (education, employment, livelihood, health, climate change, gender, good governance, persons with disability) and local community development and transformation;
- b) Have strong links to communities and groups under-represented in decision making,
- c) Demonstrated leadership abilities when working with others;
- d) Demonstrated ability to engage with leaders and young people to address issues;
- e) Able to articulate issues and proactively implement solutions;
- f) Demonstrated understanding of youth challenges locally and regionally;
- g) Minimum of two years' work experience either formal or voluntary on youth issues
- h) Demonstrated knowledge on the cultural structures of her/his country; and
- i) Must be below the age of 35

Please refer to application form.