



PACIFIC WOMEN EXPERIENCING DISCRIMINATION

Pacific Allied (Women's) Council Inspires Faith Concerning All Incorporated | P.A.C.I.F.I.C.A Inc.

AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

Report 2024

Alternate report to the UN CEDAW Monitoring Committee on New Zealand's progress in implementing the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

September 2024

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ISBN 978-0-473-72522-8

Published by Pacific Allied (Women's) Council Inspires Faith Concerning All Incorporated | P.A.C.I.F.I.C.A Inc.

<https://www.pacifica.org.nz>



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Introduction

Tēnā koutou katoa, Kia orana, Fakalofa lahi atu, Mālo Ni, Malo e laumalie, Bula, Mauri, Fakatalofa atu, Talofa, malo le soifua.

The Pacific Allied (Women's) Council Inspires Faith Concerning All Incorporated (P.A.C.I.F.I.C.A Inc.) is pleased to present its first Alternate Report as a non-governmental perspective on Aotearoa New Zealand's (Aotearoa) progress towards gender equality. This summary highlights the issues of Pacific women in Aotearoa.

In 2023 P.A.C.I.F.I.C.A Inc. published the "Wellbeing Report: Voices from Pacific Women and Girls in Aotearoa, New Zealand"¹. In this report, Pacific women shared their strengths, which help them remain resilient despite facing inequities. The report highlighted the significance of cultural identity, Pacific representation, and the development of Pacific leadership. Additionally, the report identified three challenges faced by Pacific women: a clash of cultures, intersectionality, and socioeconomic hardship.

P.A.C.I.F.I.C.A Inc. celebrates the cultural diversity of its members, it strives to foster and develop leadership that empowers Pacific women to participate at national and global levels.

Faafetai tele lava

Repeka Lelaulu

National President

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https://pasefikaproud.co.nz/assets/Uploads/DIGITAL_A-Wellbeing-Report-Voices-of-Pacific-Women-and-Girls-in-Aotearoa-NZ-FINAL.pdf

Article 1: Definition of Discrimination

Response to CO 12(a), (b), (c)

1. We acknowledge that all documentation shared in Aotearoa New Zealand related to CEDAW is available only in English. While we recognise the language requirements for CEDAW, we believe providing the documentation in the languages spoken by the Pacific peoples would enhance the engagement of Pacific women.
2. The connection to language and culture bolsters Pacific women's confidence in their personal, cultural, and professional capabilities, empowering them to navigate diverse environments.

Recommendation

1.1 The Government to publish submission to CEDAW in the Pacific languages, celebrated in the New Zealand language weeks calendar².

Article 2: Elimination of Discrimination

Response to LoIPR 3 and CO 10

3. The Ministry for Pacific Peoples (MPP) is the Crown's principal advisor on policies and interventions to improve Pacific Peoples' outcomes in New Zealand. Although it has its Gender Pay Gap Action Plan³, there is no direct engagement with Pacific communities regarding CEDAW.
4. MPP's recent budget cuts have led to the Ministry's workforce decrease of 40 per cent⁴.
5. With less staff, MPP might not have the capacity to support and advance gender equality initiatives that align with CEDAW's goals.

Recommendation

2.1 The government should provide an analysis of the impact of MPP's reduced workforce, as job cuts might limit MPP's ability to effectively implement or monitor programmes aimed at ensuring compliance with CEDAW.

² <https://www.mpp.govt.nz/programmes/pacific-language-weeks/>

³ <https://www.mpp.govt.nz/assets/Corporate-Publications/MPPs-Gender-Pay-Gap-Action-Plan.pdf>

⁴

<https://www.thepost.co.nz/politics/350228447/cuts-keep-coming-brutal-slash-proposed-ministry-pacific-peoples>

Article 3: Development and Advancement of Women

Response to LoIPR 6, and Co 18.

6. P.A.C.I.F.I.C.A Inc. has worked closely with MPP, where we are consulted and funded to provide programmes to support women in governance, family violence prevention, and other initiatives that have benefitted Pacific women.
7. The 'Women's Equality Strategy -Engagement' led by the Ministry for Women, as an approach for a National Action Plan, has stalled.

Recommendation

3.1 The Government to progress the National Action Plan in consultation with P.A.C.I.F.I.C.A Inc. and the MWWL, and other NGOs.

Article 4: Positive Discrimination and Special Measures

Response to LoIPR 8, 13 and CO 22

8. Measures introduced in 2017 have seen women board members increase to 53.1 percent in 2023, Māori board members, now hold 26.8 percent of board roles, Pacific board members 7.2 percent, and Asian board members 6.1 percent⁵. The ethnicity of these women is not reported.
9. There need to be more opportunities to document Pacific experiences that add context to Pacific data, only then will decision-makers make informed decisions relevant to the well-being of Pacific peoples.⁶

Recommendation

4.1 The government to report gender-specific statistics with a specific focus on Māori and Pacific data.

Article 5: Social and Cultural Patterns

Response to LoIPR 9, 10, 11, and CO 24, and 26

10. Pacific women, especially multi-ethnic and New Zealand-born, often struggle to balance Western environments with their cultural values.
11. They also face biases, such as the wage gap, and feel pressured to work harder due to societal expectations.
12. In April 2023, Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora announced a change to how family care is funded⁷. The changes provide more choice and flexibility for those who

⁵ <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/equal-gender-representation-public-sector-boards-third-year-row>

⁶

https://pasefikaproud.co.nz/assets/Uploads/DIGITAL_A-Wellbeing-Report-Voices-of-Pacific-Women-and-Girls-in-Aotearoa-NZ-FINAL.pdf

⁷

<https://www.eldernet.co.nz/knowledge-lab/home-community/carers/can-a-family-member-be-paid-to-care-for-me-at-home>

need support services to remain in their homes and communities. Importantly, it also means that caregivers who support family/whānau will be compensated.

Recommendation

5.1 The government should continue the April 2023 HNZ policy on funding family care.

Article 6: Exploitation of Women

Response to LoIPR 22(b) & (c)

13. Our concern is the recent law changes that compromise workers' rights and dignity without considered and appropriate consultation with the Aotearoa New Zealand migrant communities.
14. Our organisation, with the assistance of the Ministry of Pacific Peoples (MPP) and Ministry for Women (MfW) call for government to support immigration laws that facilitate access to permanent residency permits for mothers of children who hold New Zealand nationality;
15. Our organisation, with the assistance of the MPP and MfW, asks the government to ensure the availability of shelters, legal and psychological support, complaint mechanisms and redress for migrant women who are victims of violence.

Recommendation

6.1 Commission. PACIFICA be included in the government's immigration changes that support migrant women, their children and families and realise LoIPR 22 (b) & (c)

Article 8: Representation

Response to LoIPR 13

16. There are no Pacific Members of Parliament (MP) in the current New Zealand Cabinet.
17. There are currently six members of Pacific MPs in opposition, of which four are women.

Article 10: Education

Response to LoIPR 14 (b,e)

Response to CO 31 (d, e)

18. While New Zealand has universal access to education until 18 years, there are significant inequalities/differences in the range, resources, and quality of education between high and lower economic decile areas where substantial proportions of the Pacific population live.

19. According to the Socio-economic influences NZQA data (2020)⁸ 33% of Year 13 students in decile 1-3 schools attained University Entrance (UE) compared with 70% in decile 8-10 schools. UE attainment by Pacific was 34% (59% by New Zealand Europeans and 64% by Asian students). Importantly, Pacific Girls attained UE at a much higher rate than boys -60% compared with 47%. The reproduction of intergenerational cycles of disadvantage is a danger.
20. **Education Challenges** - Disaggregation of education data by Pacific ethnicity and gender. Education data is not disaggregated by gender and ethnicity and gender as a matter of policy.
21. The Ministry of Education (MoE) has a joint initiative between Education, Health, and Social Development to support Pacific families in accessing the services they need to thrive. However we need a deeper understanding on how to access these services, in particular how to deal with all forms of violence.
22. Since 2020, the proportion of Pacific school leavers attaining NCEA Level 1 or above has declined. In 2023, 80.4% of Pacific school leavers attained NCEA Level 1 or above, a decrease of 0.5 percentage points from 2022. Generally, Pacific female school leavers are more likely than Pacific male school leavers to attain NCEA Level 1 or above⁹. However, between 2019 and 2023, the attainment of NCEA Level 1 or above declined more for Pacific female school leavers (6.9 percent) and Pacific male school leavers (3.2 percent).
23. Furthermore, Pacific males achieve a higher rate of financial return in the workforce than Pacific females by level (certificate/diploma/ degree) and by year. This highlights that early in their work life Pacific female workers experience a gender and ethnic work pay gap.
24. The relationship between school attendance and attainment is well documented. The Learning in a Covid-10 World: The Impact of COVID-19 on Pacific Learners Report¹⁰ found that attendance rates for Pacific learners towards the end of 2021 were below the attendance rates of learners in the general population and continue to be in 2024.
25. The *MoE Talanoa Ako Pacific Talk about Education and Learning 'As and By Pacific Report'*¹¹ (2021) highlighted that Pacific learners experience racism, stereotyping, bullying, and not being included by their peers and, for some, from their teachers due to school processes. Streamed ability grouping has negative and disproportionate effects on Pacific learners.

⁸ <https://www2.nzqa.govt.nz/ncea/understanding-secondary-quals/secondary-school-stats/data-2020/>

⁹ Ministry of Education *Student Attendance by Ethnicity 2011-2024*

¹⁰ [Learning in a Covid-19 World:](#)

¹¹ Ministry of Education (2021) *Talanoa Ako Pacific Parents, Families, Learners and Communities Talk Education together: synthesis Report of Pacific PowerUP Evaluations 2016-2019* <https://newzealandcurriculum.tahurangi.education.govt.nz/talanoa-ako-pacific-talk-about-education-and-learning/5637167086.p>

26. The Ministry of Education (*Te Tahuhu o Te Matauranga*) Action Plan for Pacific Education 2020-2030 has a vision that diverse Pacific learners and their families are safe, valued and equipped to achieve their educational aspirations.

27. Similarly the Education Review Office report¹² recommends:

- a. Building on the Action Plan for Pacific Education 2020 - 2030.
- b. Education agencies need to develop a specific response to reverse the decline in achievement for Pacific learners.

Recommendations

10.1 Ministry for Women to offer more systematic gender analysis training across the government, to recognise ethnic and gender data gaps, and increase the visibility of specific populations.

10.2 The Government to address systemic racism and discrimination in education as highlighted by the Talanoa Ako report and to fully implement the Action Plan for Pacific Education.

10.3 The Government to enable every teacher, leader, and educational professional to take coordinated action to become culturally competent with diverse Pacific learners.

Article 11: Employment

Response to LoIPR 15 (a)(b)(c)(d) and 16(c).

28. In 2023, New Zealand's national gender pay gap was 8.6%. For Pacific women, gender and ethnicity combine to create a pay gap of 15.2% compared with all men.
29. The Pacific Employment Action Plan¹³ COVID-19 notes the disproportionate impacts on Pacific women in terms of economic and broader social impacts like increased exposure to family violence, increased family care responsibilities, and their efforts to support others against the impact of the pandemic as front-line social service and health workers.
30. Pacific women have lower rates of participation in the labour market than non-Pacific women and face barriers like lower average incomes and higher rates of working poverty. Single Pacific mothers are much more likely to experience working poverty relative to larger families and households without children. Pacific women are also less likely to return to work later after having a child and face more substantial earnings losses when returning to work.
31. These same issues were identified in the Te Mahere Whai Mahi Wāhine Women's Employment Action Plan (WEAP) led by the Ministry for Women.

¹² ERO Ti Ihuwaka Education Evaluation Centre (2022) *Learning in a Covid-19 World: The impact of Covid-19 on Pacific Learners Summary*, <https://evidence.ero.govt.nz/documents/the-impact-of-covid-19-on-pacific-learners-may-2022>

¹³ <https://www.mpp.govt.nz/assets/Corporate-Publications/Pacific-Employment-Action-Plan-FINAL-approved.pdf>

32. Under the new directions signalled by the current government, our organisation will wish to see the priorities and labour market outcomes for Pacific women will continue to be reported and progressed for the benefit of all our Pacific communities and their families.

Recommendations

11.1 Our organisation asks the government to report its annual progress to implement policies and programmes that prioritise Pacific women's equal labour market outcomes with all other women workers and male workers. We recommend that the government report on the progress of the implementation plans and provide specific information about Pacific Women's data.

11.2 Implement the recommendations of the HRC Pacific Peoples. Our organisation requests to be included as part of the National Pay Equity Taskforce to eliminate Pacific, Māori and ethnic pay gaps by 2042

- a. Urgently introduce pay transparency legislation. Urgently introduce legislation requiring pay transparency. The pay transparency legislation should aim to eliminate Pacific, Māori and ethnic pay gaps as a key principle.
- b. Establish a national pay equity taskforce to ensure Pacific, Māori and ethnic pay gaps are closed by 2042. Resource the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment to establish and coordinate a collaborative taskforce (made up of Government, employer representatives, union representatives and Tangata Whenua representatives) to provide leadership and oversight on pay equity as the systems lead.
- c. Implement the recommendations of the Tripartite Working Group on Better Protections for Contractors.
- d. Ratify the International Labour Organization (ILO) 190 Violence and Harassment Convention (2019). ILO 190 recognises the economic harm that can result from violence and harassment in the workplace, including gender-based violence and harassment. Insert the definition of violence and harassment in the ILO 190 into the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015, the Employment Relations Act 2000 and the Human Rights Act 1993 so survivors can more easily access support, including compensation.
- e. Raise the minimum wage to the same level as the living wage to ensure that increases over time remain adequate to meet people's living costs.

Article 12: Health

Response to LoIPR 17

33. Pacific women and families still figure prominently in negative health statistics across a range of conditions and in terms of access to medical services, including GP visits (Ministry of Health, 2023)¹⁴.

¹⁴ Ministry of Health (2023). *Pacific Health Data and Statistics (2022-2023)*. www.health.govt.nz

34. However, health statistics for Pacific peoples are not sufficiently disaggregated into gender, so that ongoing monitoring and analysis of Pacific women's health and their particular reproductive issues are not monitored or reported in ways that support Pacific women's solutions for their issues.
35. The provision of free menstrual products at schools for young women is welcome and must be extended and maintained. There are reports that Pacific girls and young women stay home from school when they have periods because families cannot afford to purchase these essential products.
36. We disagree with how the Government bypassed public consultation and fast tracked changes that included the Repeal of the Smoke Free Environment and Regulated Products (Smoked tobacco) Amendment Act.

Recommendations

12.1 Pacific gendered health data be made freely available to ensure government supports and responds to Pacific women's health issues in appropriate Pacific ways.

12.2 The Government must maintain and extend current provisions for free menstrual products at schools.

12.3 The Government should consult on any legislation that highlights negative health outcomes for Māori and Pacific People.

Article 13: Economic and Social Life

Responses to LoIPR 18

37. In 2018, the New Zealand Treasury reported that "Pacific individuals and businesses, contributed \$8 billion to the New Zealand Gross Domestic Product (GDP)¹⁵". Pacific peoples in Aotearoa contributed significantly to the economy despite the many challenges and inequities they experienced in areas such as health, education, housing and employment. It reflected on what more could be achieved by the Pacific peoples' community if these inequities were addressed.

Article 16: Marriage and Family Life

38. The Pacific community in Aotearoa maintains close links with our family and other relationships within the Pacific region. For many of us, we consider both Aotearoa and our country of origin as our homes.

¹⁵ <https://www.treasury.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2018-11/nz-pacific-economy-nov18.pdf>

Appendix 1: Recommendations

Article 1

1.1 The Government to publish submission to CEDAW in the Pacific languages, celebrated in the New Zealand language weeks calendar¹⁶.

Article 2

2.1 The government should provide an analysis of the impact of MPP's reduced workforce, as job cuts might limit MPP's ability to effectively implement or monitor programmes aimed at ensuring compliance with CEDAW.

Article 3

3.1 The Government to progress the National Action Plan in consultation with P.A.C.I.F.I.C.A Inc. and the MWWL, and other NGOs.4.1 The government to report gender-specific statistics with a specific focus on Maori and Pacific data.5.1 The government should continue the April 2023 HNZ policy on funding family care.

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- g. Establish a national pay equity taskforce to ensure Pacific, Māori and ethnic pay gaps are closed by 2042. Resource the Ministry of Business, Innovation

¹⁶ <https://www.mpp.govt.nz/programmes/pacific-language-weeks/>

and Employment to establish and coordinate a collaborative taskforce (made up of Government, employer representatives, union representatives and Tangata Whenua representatives) to provide leadership and oversight on pay equity as the systems lead.

- h. Implement the recommendations of the Tripartite Working Group on Better Protections for Contractors.
- i. Ratify the International Labour Organization (ILO) 190 Violence and Harassment Convention (2019). ILO 190 recognises the economic harm that can result from violence and harassment in the workplace, including gender-based violence and harassment. Insert the definition of violence and harassment in the ILO 190 into the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015, the Employment Relations Act 2000 and the Human Rights Act 1993 so survivors can more easily access support, including compensation.
- j. Raise the minimum wage to the same level as the living wage to ensure that increases over time remain adequate to meet people's living costs.

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Appendix 1: Contributors to this Alternate Report

Repeka Lelaulu

Anahila L. Kanongata'a

Tagaloatele Peggy Fairbairn-Dunlop

Diane Mara