

Next Steps for the Convention: Capacity Building for Rights Based Advocacy

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Intended Audience: Those working in the disability advocacy field, people with disabilities and those interested in capacity building for and with people with disabilities.

Session Description

The Pacific Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT) has developed a human rights advocacy training program to give Pacific Islanders with disabilities the legal skills and knowledge to conduct rights based advocacy thus empowering themselves and people with disabilities in their communities and countries generally. RRRT is delivering the training in partnership with the Pacific Disability Forum (PDF). The training is specifically tailored to the needs of the disability community focusing on the specific rights issues of people with disabilities and delivered in a fully accessible manner.

The UN Convention on the Rights of Disabled persons (CRPD) strongly informs the substance and need for this training. CRPD is highly relevant to Pacific island nations. Most Pacific Islanders with disabilities have little or no access to education, employment or community participation. Reviews of the implementation of the Biwako Millennium Framework (BMF) Priorities in the Pacific show that the rights of Pacific Islanders with disabilities are ignored and contravened. This practical training program will contribute the skills capacity needed by Pacific disabled peoples organisations to advocate for policy and legal change.

The paper will report on the pilot training run in Nadi for disability advocates from around the Pacific region. It will consider the way in which inalienable human rights, disability issues, the CRPD and Pacific culture are brought together to enable Pacific Islanders with disabilities to argue for policy, legal and program changes in their home countries. The paper will also discuss the challenges in delivering legal training for people with a variety of disabilities.