

Pacific Health and Spirituality

Audio from the workshop: Pacific Health and Spirituality.

The workshop covered sexuality, spirituality and access to health services, in particular focusing on Christianity as the most prominent faith in the Pacific. The workshop also covered Transgender health needs with reference to the Asia Pacific Trans Health Blueprint, and heard about country-specific issues.

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1990s, 2010s, abstinence, access to health care, activism, american samoa, aotearoa new zealand, bangkok, bible, blueprint for the provision of comprehensive care for trans people and trans communities in asia and the pacific, catholicism, choirs, christianity, church, colonisation, condoms, elizabeth taylor, fa'afafine, fakaleiti, fiji, fiji human rights commission, gender expression, gender identity, geneva, gigi baxter, harassment, haus of khameleon (fiji), health, health care, hijra, hiv testing data, hiv/aids, hormone replacement therapy, hormone treatment, human rights, identity documents, ilga world, imperialism, international lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex association (ilga), isikeli vulavou, jack byrne, joey siosaia joleen mataele, kapul champion and friends frangipani inc, ken moala, lobbying, louisa wall, love patrol (tv), maori television, marriage amendment act (2012), marriage equality, methodist, missionary, national party, pacific, pacific region commonwealth youth ministers meeting (2015, samoa), pacific sexual diversity network (psdn), papua new guinea, paris principles, pederasty, poofter, port moresby (papua new guinea), presbyterian, proud 2016 (wellington), punishment, queer, queer theology, rainbow pride foundation, religion, rodger stanley, samoa, samoa aids foundation, save the children, sex work, sexual abuse, sexual orientation, sexual orientation and gender identity (sogi), sexual violence, sexuality, spiritual dualism, spirituality, stis, sulique waqa, sulivenusi waqa, switzerland, testing, theology, tonga, tonga leitis association, trans, transgender, transphobic violence, universal periodic review (upr), university of otago wellington school of medicine, vanuatu, vpridefoundation (vanuatu), wellington

Record date: 10th March 2016

Location: University of Otago Wellington School of Medicine

URL: http://www.pridenz.com/pacific_health_and_spirituality_proud_2016.html

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0:00:07 - Isikeli Vulavou

[00:00:00] This podcast is brought to you by the Elgar Oceania rainbow human rights and health conference and pride nz.com. [00:00:10] And start our session [00:00:13] now and in the true Pacific spirit we always value the blessing of our Heavenly Father before any meetings. So I will ask the chair of the PSTN Mishima daily to start the session with a prayer a shot to [00:00:33] take them off Africa Africa [00:00:36] Africa Africa we're not going [00:00:41] by boat I know it is ok and now we [00:00:46] have a lovely afternoon [00:00:49] where we have my token mocha delicate the American forget the Claudia [00:00:54] latencies Maliki [00:00:59] Thank you Julia. Beloved aka Maloney little offer along Guetta and Kira from the Pacific, we welcome you to the Pacific session on LGBT a health where we will be discussing and sharing with you some of the latest information on LGBT I have in the Pacific and the format of the session we will have two key presentations at the beginning. And then after the after each of those presentations, we will give about five minutes. We'll open the floor to you to ask any questions that you may have. After the two presenters are done, then we will have a panel discussion where I will invite three of our panelists also from the Pacific to share some of the latest information on LGBT health in their respective four countries. And we will have the question and answer session for the for the panel at the end of the presentation of the final presenter. And then we will have q&a. We will have q&a after that. And of course we always will be here tomorrow and the day after tomorrow. And you can always ask us if you have any follow up. Questions. I am Kelly will I will be chairing the session. And I'm the founder and executive director of the rainbow pride foundation and also the Deputy Chair of the Pacific sexual diversity network, which is the only [00:02:43] registered an existing regional [00:02:48] NGO for working for the rights of LGBT as well as their health and well being. And I'm also the regional advisory group member for the Asia Pacific coalition on male sexual health. Our first two presenters.

0:03:10 - Ken Moala

The first presenter is Mr. Ken mala, who is also one of the is who is a human rights activist from Somalia, and Australia. He currently lives in Australia, he founded the Samoan AIDS Foundation in 2004 and can receive an award for human rights for his work on HIV advocacy in the Pacific. He also co founded the Pacific sexual diversity network in 2007, of which he currently works as a technical advisor. Ken is also a board member of the Gleason Asia Pacific. The Gay and Lesbian, international sports and human Are you rights Association Asia Pacific. He is also currently serving on the intern committee for ILJ Oceania. He's a member of the Outreach Ministries for the Christian LGBT IQ people of faith in Australia, and is presently doing theological studies for the ministry in Australia. He will be presenting on Christianity and access to sexual health care. Over to you Mr. Ken. [00:04:29] sofa lover, [00:04:30] thank you all for coming. And that's very smaller. And I'm sure we'll get through. I like to dedicate this presentation to my grandparents who were Christian missionaries to Papua New Guinea. But also would like to dedicate this presentation to one one of my ministers and who was actually very instrumental and very informative of nurturing me while I was very young and steamers revenue level, SEO is just [00:05:06] terraces, my rants, my met and who is Dover's in the room at the moment. [00:05:14] But before I start, I just want to give you just a brief outline on the situation of the the current situation of the church in the Pacific, it is one of the very strong pillars of

the Pacific society. In fact, it actually is a ruling is very instrumental and, and have an impact on the lives of people in Pacific. And regards to LGBT IQ communities, they can pose a very strong challenge to our existence. [00:05:52] Because of the traditions because of the [00:05:57] colonial ization, President missionaries that have had this very detrimental impact on us. But over the period of time, [00:06:09] has taken a struggle for us as [00:06:13] a cover for Finn, FT. Sally will ever go on and on to come to our own and let has been only recently in the last 2030 years that we have asserted ourselves and being tolerated by our society. What I am going to present you may seem very radical, but bear in mind that times change and we need to go with the change. And bearing in mind that we do hold great respect to without our leaders of our society. I am presently studying theology and Australia and I want to be a spokesperson for the LGBT community from the Pacific, counteracting all the, let's say, harassment by the church. So there's no need actually to actually feel this. franchised or marginalized, I think we need to stand up to it, I think we need to really come forward and say, Look, we grew up in this framework, we need to address it within the boundaries that we have set ourselves. So I will start and if you have any questions later on it, you have to answer them. Okay. Okay, that just gives you an overview of the Pacific area, which includes Polynesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia. And we're very fortunate to where PSTN has come the since its inception, and thank you to our members, who actually represent quite a big area Pacific. There's 22 Island territories and countries in the Pacific. And we have reached half the amount so far. So we've got a lot of work to do to reach out to all of the areas we have got in touch the French territories, we have the American Samoa, we got to reach out to all the other territories. But so you know, we have our work before us and I love with the resurgence of the various groups in these islands. Geographically, it's very challenging. Okay, Christianity as a strategy against for queer people and sexual health care is based on what the mainstream and cultural forms of Christianity say about the same sex behaviors? What are the Christian teachings that can combat discrimination, and encourage access to sexual health care? appeals to four main streams one is singular interpretations of Bible passages to spiritual mystic unionism, three hetero, hetero normative theological theology and ethics and sex, and four notions of prohibition and punishment, a very solid, wrong words, but basically, I'll try to explain what they all mean. Okay, it's sexual harassment, violence, actually Bible bashing. It's actually clobber passages right through these passages of the Bible, especially in the context of Sodom and Gomorrah. And they're only one liners, they really need to examine the whole context in which was written and this is about a lot of fundamental churches are doing. They think that our community is going against God and the Bible. Okay, and also pierce the spiritualist of killers of the soul is more important in the body. So this is what the mainstream churches the same. You're either able to disable there's only on holy, so or body, permanent or temporal man or woman, human or non sperm, spirit matter, living or non living beings. Okay, there's also this dualism, you know, seems to attach, no one has come as a link to each other. The soul, which consists of the church and God, and the body, sex, being gay, and HIV, for example, have listened to do with each other. The soul should be given more care than the body. So this is the thought of the mainstream theology, the Christian theology today. [00:10:53] Okay, just to give you a bit of [00:10:57] theological background, Augustine of Hippo in the fourth century, promoted that abstinence is better than marriage can be good to control less than produce children. This is the thinking back then. And then we haven't St. Thomas Aquinas and 13th century, sex is legitimate only between men and women for the purpose of offspring. And then we have the Roman Catholicism distinguished between homosexual tendency and homosexual acts, the only legitimate sex the hetero normative sex, going against divine order, natural, natural goodness. Okay, appeals also to notions of prohibition and punishment, mainstream Christianity, HIV AIDS is not a punishment from God. This is chairman of the angry communions. You have to also said that HIV and AIDS a gay diseases which has merited the wrath of God, and just just punishment from trial expression, am I deserve to be punished mentality? What are Christian teachings they can combat

discrimination encouraged access to sexual health. [00:12:12] So we really need to appeal [00:12:15] to the overarching message of Christianity. We also need to appeal to the alternative interpretations of the Bible. We need to appeal to queer theology. We also need to appeal to Thurman theologies of HIV and AIDS. So let me okay the Bible is a record of testimonies of ancient people's experiences of God. The Bible has been and continues to be interpreted. The clobber passages I explained before can be interpreted differently. header St. Sexual Violence, pride, lack of hospitality, erroneous translations, overindulge overindulges and sexual pleasure and fidelity to God going against one's usual sexual disposition, sexual violence, the consequence not cause of sin. Ensure normative ideas of sex. What the Bible scholars really meant remains a mystery. Therefore the Bible cannot be used as a tool for homophobia and transphobia. Okay, let's This is what we need to see in the message of Christianity. The core message or creations Christianity is love and non judgment. And those scriptures refer to that. Queer theology was queer theology, it's contextual theology, using the experience and knowledge of LGBT Q, people to theological theology, interrogating normative religious and theological identities and boundaries, queer theology or 33 important issues, the incarnation of Christ, [00:14:00] proof that all bodies are potentially sacred. [00:14:03] All of God of creation is good and part of God's diverse creativeness. The borderless Body of Christ is parallel to the borderless bodies of the LGBT IQ people. [00:14:16] Okay, a thermometer [00:14:18] appeal to 30 theologies of HIV and AIDS crisis. Here the Christians are the body. Christ, the body of Christ has AIDS. To reach out to people who HIV AIDS is to reach out to Christ Himself. Christian communities all connected with one part suffers or part suffers. First Corinthians 26, reflecting Christ by reaching out, reaching out to people living with HIV and AIDS. People in HIV and AIDS are bearers of God's mission to other people living with HIV and AIDS and to those who are HIV negative, appreciating life more deeply. Okay, let's see what and I could be high winded moment. But the whole idea is to give the theological approach to what people say about queer people. So our Christianity says that queer people so the first thing is singular interpretations of biblical passages. Secondly, this spiritual, spiritual holistic dealism, the hetero normative theology and ethics can six and four notions of prohibition and punishment. Christianity can be used as a strategy for queer people, when appeals the alternative interpretation of the Bible, the overarching messages of Christianity, queer theology and affirmative theology, so human, HIV and AIDS. I can't just these are the points of discussion that we might have some time, one of the intersecting perceptions of gender, sexuality, sex and Christianity that influenced the sexual behavior of queer people, especially men who have sex with men and transgender people in your own cultural context and experiences. Okay, what are the main evidence based factors the Christianity driven, we are phobia that obstructs access to sexual health care in your own contextual context. And experiences, especially for MSM men have sex with men and transgender people. So I'm just gonna leave about that. Because otherwise, it'll just get above our heads. But I'm gonna throw it out to later to our panel to to just give you an overview of what is happening on the ground in the Pacific and how this affects you know, what is the the discussion on these issues that are fought up, how their communities are affected. So thank you very much. [00:17:03] Thank you very much. Again, let's give him a round of applause. [00:17:11] Taking one or two questions before we move on to the next presentation.

0:17:20 - Sulique Waqa

[00:17:20] Not We will now move on to the next presentation on transgender people's a transgender people help me in the Pacific. And the presentation will be done by Miss select Wanda, who is a Fijian transgender activist, feminist and human rights defender, who has worked on LGBT IQ issues [00:17:47] of the Pacific region for the past 13 years. She founded a transgender women led movement in Fiji which is called the house of chameleon. And this used to be a project under the Arts

Council for six years now. So Luke has been the chief coordinator of the popular under cynical pageant, a transgender pageant in Fiji. And she sits also as a member of the hibiscus festival committee. Under the happiness events group. Select also serves as a member of the Asia Pacific transgender network, regional steering committee, and she is also a board member of the ILG Oceania. Mr. Lee, thank you, Kelly, thank you so much for the opportunity to speak thank you to the coconut Venus PSTN, as well as apcom. And I know that jack is also special mentioned to jack because I'll be you know, picking some key summary recommendations from these blueprints. And we will part off last year in terms of the consultation that happened in the power, Bangladesh as well as the Bangkok and we'll fortunate to be present in Bangkok, from the Pacific through the Pacific sexual diversity network to be able to put in our submissions and recommendations towards the trans situations, health needs of trans people in the Pacific. And I think it's also great that you know, that we have to keep people in the room was good. Also, they'll be showcasing some of the realities of the situation of, you know, for the consultation and till now. So basically, this really wonderful looking yellow book, the blueprint for the provision of comprehensive care for trans people and trans communities in Asia and the Pacific is a basically a tool to improve access to compete in primary and specialized care for trans people in the Asia Pacific region. Exclusive focus, thematic focus that I'll be looking at is around the human rights standards of trans people, commitments under the international human rights law, as well as monitoring compliance with human rights obligation. One of the wonderful things that we did last year in terms of engaging with Ill go world was the submission of Fiji's University periodic review, we were under review. So we were able to meet submission for Elijah to do a presentation in Geneva. So that's one of the ways in which we continue to engage with Elko world as well as Al Gore Oceania, in terms of lobbying at the UN level and also at the international level in terms of improving the lives of and promoting the rights of transgender people. One of the things I also wanted to particularly focus on today, I really was trying to push for a, you know, just for a minute during the initial Human Rights Commission presentation today, in terms of how we can also look towards New Zealand, as you know, one of the key players in the Pacific as well as Australia, not just in terms of regionalism, but also, you know, if you look at the role that they play in the Pacific Islands Foreign Secretary will also see a big role, the decision whereas the commission can play in terms of strengthening the National Human Rights institutions in the Pacific, particularly for free you who've experienced, you know, military coup in 2006. And we have a dysfunctional Human Rights Commission, some of the duties and the powers that the Human Rights Commission that supposed to be, you know, focusing on, it's no longer there in terms of, you know, fulfilling its role under the Paris principles, and if, you know, ability to make sure that it's had facilitates mechanism and processes where we trans women can access redressed in court in terms of violations of our human rights. And I think we have a lot to learn in terms of the study that jack was part of as a commissioner. And it's also one of the things that I wanted to push in terms of region to have a study, that's one of the challenges that big gap in the Pacific is that we don't have credible, up to date, information and evidence to inform our intervention. And that's one of the areas that I really want to work on. One of the priorities in terms of this blueprint as well is the sexual and gender based violence of transgender women. And I know that these two wonderful women here from WE share, they doing their own, you know, ways in which they are going to be focusing SGBV One of the things that we doing this car is peak research on transgender women violence in Fiji, this is going to be the festival Fiji, that the House of chameleon that I'm part of going to be facilitating, we're working with the future women's rights movement, and with kinds of support from the European Union. So that's something to look forward to, in terms of, you know, further on the recommendation of working with policymakers and government to be able to implement some of the recommendations from here. And we will live looking forward to this end, yeah, will looking forward to sharing it as well with PSTN and also engage you. Please dm information at the levels. [00:22:48] The other thing I in terms of the

trends of blueprint is the access to hormonal therapy for transgender women. Just recently, I decided to late last year to go through HRT, one of the unfortunate thing in the Pacific for transgender women is that we have no access to hormonal health. So when I had the opportunity to go to Bangkok, I managed to work with a few friends there who was the playing fields to me, but unfortunately, just you know, in terms of replenishing my next talk, I couldn't do that, because there was virtually none. So that's one of the issues in terms of access to gender affirming services and treatment in Fiji. Yeah, I think it's about it, because I really wanted to also look at public give me some of the labels development is taking place in terms of access to treatment for transgender women who's living with HIV, as well as the pride was working on some [00:23:55] a few projects in [00:23:57] collaboration with us as well. [00:24:00] So jack, do you wanna add some stuff? [00:24:05] Thank you very much for the short presentation highlighting the two priority, transgender health issues in the Pacific. And there are many more issues that they face. These are recorded on the on the trends health blueprint [00:24:29] book that slick was showcasing earlier. [00:24:35] Are there any questions for sleep? If not, we'll keep [00:24:40] Okay, ask the questions now. [00:24:45] And like this, today, we were talking, we were listening to yesterday at the trans health consultation, like a lot of stuff on medication order. It's like, it's in the Pacific, like, we were like the last edition, it's because, you know, we haven't reached the stage where we actually have conversation, but it was also interesting to like, listen to some of the work that's currently going in or just listen to some challenges that are facing that intersex people and just people face in terms of gender for me, since I [00:25:12] was named in Fiji. There is considerable in the original community. I noticed there another know people from tweeted sexualities and in the room from Fiji. He told me to what extent is [00:25:35] his sexuality to you knowledge to the Indian community, I know [00:25:43] without an issue [00:25:46] in terms of representation of [00:25:48] representation, in terms of how the relations between the the two, I hate these words race because there's such thing, let's uh, let's short code, we used to talk about people who are different. But what I'm asking is a any one of the relationships between indigenous people and non indigenous people in terms of the same same sex experience, and I don't use the term in two days, we invite trans bisexual, in this context, because I used to mean to me and I think it will fix it, but it is a different set [00:26:32] of closes. [00:26:33] So my question is, do you have any contact with for any knowledge or, [00:26:40] or any involvement [00:26:41] with the angler, [00:26:43] sorry, but the indo Fiji community, in your organizations or in your work? That's the first and then underneath here today? That's [00:26:53] one of the things that we have a lot of trans activists who are either we don't call they don't build self identity as a teacher, even though they have history I have been [00:27:04] waiting where where they have performed? Yeah, [00:27:06] yes, but one of the misconceptions, particularly for the women's movement, as well as for the LGBT movement, so we assume that they call themselves as haters. But most of them do not identify themselves as feature even though they have that history. As you know, those that came through the indentured labourers system. Most of them would just identify themselves as transgender because of the roles that expected when you are a heater and you know, the religion all of that they do not. But we have we've worked with we have a coalition called the Fiji LGBT coalition, we have a group called a meaty that's specifically for VGM community of Indian descent. The activists work in the ground, we have members of the House chameleon, who are transgender of Indian descent, who continue to engage with us, we have an activist CRISPR start who's been a lot one of the key players of all of our internal of race relations, all of that it's [00:28:03] we don't [00:28:05] know yet. My Christian that there is a prison in the day. [00:28:11] Which was, which was the point of life. Because we have indigenous people. We don't have any of the people who came to BG as a result of the Imperial Imperial crisis not in colonial, but the Imperial process. We don't hear the diverse people represented here in New Zealand at this conference, we don't have any from that tradition, from what I can see already from the Asia, the East Asia. [00:28:40] Yeah, thank you. I think the point is made. So yes, we'll [00:28:47] ask [00:28:48]

Pacifica because you come from these religious dominated societies with [00:28:55] looking at another example island was completely dominated by [00:28:59] are the Roman Catholic Church, and which recently, the people voted by an overwhelming majority. that draws whether they give you any inspiration or [00:29:13] may applied to situations. [00:29:18] I've talked to the Irish eight of us that have managed to because they've got gains team team to recognition and Ireland is around as well as marriage equality. And to be honest, one of the reasons why they think they've been able to achieve it at this time, is because of the huge stigma and lack of faith, and the Roman Catholic Church, because of the sexual abuse, you know, stories that have come, you know, all of those experiences have come out and been exposed. And so so when when the minister speaking from the pulpit and saying particular nine, the authority has been hugely undermined, and Ireland because of sexual abuse, and the numbers of people actively involved in the churches plummeting. And Ireland. So that's a different context from the that's why people say that they created a space where people were willing to, to not just listen to what the church told them today. [00:30:19] Pacific this also change any difference from one country to another, I can only speak for Fiji. In the past, we used to have the dominant church marching against black heavy special marches to march against gay people. And that was when they were trying to introduce Sergey into a petition back in 1997, I think. But now we are working with the judges. The organization I founded we working with detritus Methodist Church, which is the domain that which has the most members in Fiji. And things have started to change, they allowed us to have a candlelight vigil, one of the main judges in the city on Idaho to 2014. And they have also started writing op eds on either heart, [00:31:10] and [00:31:13] asking the judge members to be more compassionate and loving towards people of LGBT. Okay, so change is happening. I think all the reasons that we have the changes because of the change the constitution, if you see from 1997 to now, we were then called as a Christian staying with the maintenance them constitution, but with a change of the 2015 constitution. And with the addition of sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression in the Bill of Rights in the Constitution. We also now a secular state, despite you know, VG being a very multi religious, Marxist racial society. So it has you know, that kind of sort of enable some conversation to take place in terms of the Methodist Church working along with algae, particularly [00:32:00] competing football and the present climate, it's more, it's a long way of coming to that situation. Fade to budget to give explanation. [00:32:13] Certainly by Laura Francaise, Canada, for their station. [00:32:19] Currently, we just recently completed the revision to our fans audience act now becomes stars 61 now becomes from [00:32:34] 2011 from [00:32:38] so throughout, so you that this rebuilding a couple of [00:32:43] other stations that we actually submitted for, like the impersonation in this three, which is an active female. But unfortunately, we couldn't happen to change the block, change the sun, to the sun, [00:33:00] humility, [00:33:02] only the old one, that is the purpose of following from commission been set up by government recently, he's actually review all the information [00:33:14] that we have. And I'm sure along the same line in the future, we will, of course, lobby where for methods that pertain to us, and also the same sex marriage that UN is the push for us to love before with our leaders. [00:33:35] But at the moments with Ricky was just doing fine. We're living in harmony, and we just don't want to stir things up. [00:33:45] Which is take it one step at a time. [00:33:48] saying that there needs to be dialogue between the community and the churches, we need to make those approaches. And I believe that and in Fiji as well as trauma for the advocacy of showing, but it's important that we start to, to actually make them aware of the situation we are. And that's where, you know, building bridges is coming into play [00:34:11] in our work is actually because there's nothing I don't know, it's never happened before that we actually get to fake down face to face with the church leaders. But recently, we've been doing workshops with them. And you know, I'm very glad that we actually come face to face with them. And they will they be gracing us with all the work that we do. But then at the end of that, I don't know what else is there. But we still face problems with some of the non mainstream churches, you know, the new ones like LG and all that.

But with our main one is Catholic, conditional and Methodists. But we still have faced problems with the new thing. I don't know it's cool, but we call it home the new established pitches, those are the ones that actually time and time again, they always say stuff about assets, we are sinners, we are law breakers. But other ones are mainstream judges that we thought so the way that the traditional but the to understand our issues and our way of life. [00:35:24] But we will never start from there. We will continue with our way too long for more fans and more sponsors that the so they can assist us strengthen, work within those. I believe that the method of people knocking always continue to have those conversations within [00:35:43] data gathering. Thank you, Roger. So [00:35:48] if you have any questions, we can you get asked those questions again at the end of the mental discussion. We will now move on to the panel discussion. And the three products that will be in the panel. Miss Julia [00:36:02] with here my right Miss. [00:36:06]

0:36:10 - Elizabeth Taylor

And Miss Elizabeth Taylor from PNG, who'd like to go first. Miss Miss Elizabeth Taylor. She's from BMG. She works for the Save the Children back in PNG under their sexual and reproductive health program, a program particularly in the area of transgender and physical health. She's the clinic coordinator, and she's the trans activist and human rights defender. She's also a member of the capital champion, which is the group of men with diverse sexuality and transgender people organization. And she's also part of the friendship friends frangipani, which is a sex worker organization. [00:37:00] Over to you, Mr. Ben Casey Kelly, and thank you for the organizing this conference and bringing us here. For us to share our issues back in the Pacific especially I'm going to present about issues related to human rights and in popularity. Before going I'll talk a little bit about the background of coupled championed by the sly couple champion is the Human Rights based focus on the national advocacy for men who have sex with men and transgender individuals in Papua New Guinea. What Cup champion do we advocate and promote the rights of MSM and transgender individual in the country, we advocate and empower members to take responsibilities of their babies in fight against HIV and AIDS. We work closely with several service providers so they can provide conducive and friendly and renderer environment for our members. And also we advocate for the law reform explicitly the decriminalization of delay on sodomy can in DC then, in the second act, section 210 to 12 of the criminal act of upon 18. Pages failing to adequately protect rights of LGBT I basis percent. png continues to enforce laws criminalize the thing. concessional sex between men move it does not connect any laws or policies that protect against decriminalization on the basics of sexual orientation, gender, sex status. This has resulted in widespread of social discrimination, including difficulties accessing police protection from violence, health services, and employment. Transgender people are most likely than other groups to face stigma and discrimination in accessing our services. Transgender people are particularly stigmatized when presenting for a checkup, test and treatment in relation to possible sexual transmitted infection. This impediment to accessing health care services not only proportionately affect this vulnerable population but generally leads to the high prevalence rate of HIV epidemic among transgender people in Papua New Guinea. The initial planning 2011 to 2020 does not make any mention of transgender pets and other members of LGBT community. As a result, the initial plan does not address the specific risk and vulnerability facing LGBT IPS and expressly transgender woman. The risk include the diaries of HIV infection as a result of criminalization of same sex relations, specialist mental and physical health issues arising from arising, I read the discrimination and physical and sexual violence in the country. Transgender people are not able to freely seek health services due to I read of stigma and discipline, and confident cleaning clinics, clinicians have been stigmatized and discriminate them when they seek out services. This has caused mania to be the IP Paul explicitly transgender women to withdraw from seeking of services in the

country. There are several cases where transgender people died due to lack of treatment of HIV related illness. There is no profile that is taken any system in place to capture transgender people accessing our facilities, like most of the data, so always catch it on the male and female. There is no pre exposure prophylaxis is available in our facility for trans people to access. Without Tom does to conclude a Tom, I would just say that the recommendation here expressively to other Pacific countries that PNG will need lobby support from other Oceania countries specifically from Fiji and New Zealand to Jamaica lies this criminal law, this criminalization of same sex law with in regards to the QPR that was submitted to him to be president that in July guarantee that public health system provide comprehensive quality service that acceptable and accessible to trans people, and appropriate training is provided to healthcare providers to address transgender issues in the country. human bodies need to replace the latest Council in Pacific country like PNG we do ever Ignis late council that's [00:41:59] to reveal the policy or the impact, impact new HIV minutes ban and prevent the next, which does not protect the rights of transgender people. It's more like broad covering men and women transgender people are not involved in that. And also, we need trans specialists available to provide health care and counseling services to trans people [00:42:23] who are [00:42:25] HIV positive or seeking other health related issues TNQ And with that, I'm going to give a case a jump for look out. One of our trends is that just experience when she was accessing a clinic back in what must be the name because of confidentiality I just tried different name but the stories what she told me. Miss Tony is a transgender woman from Central province, Papua New Guinea, see had some mail constantly need to seek medical advice from a doctor went to a government clinic and waited on lecture to be safe. While waiting see notice that the doctor he knew and several other patients who are arriving after when it was finally attend to see the doctor, the doctor said to wait further. While he was waiting, the doctor left the clinic to the back door without saving. See what this made minutes later. With the land that adopted departed to avoid providing you with a consultation. They do that. [00:43:29] Thank you very much for sharing p&g experience. And we hope to discuss that further. After [00:43:39] all the presentations are made. Our next presenter is Miss Julia.

0:43:45 - Gigi Baxter

This Gigi Baxter from Port Villa on water. She does a lot of activist work around the islands of underwater and have also [00:43:58] dance dance on work across the Pacific in goo Collins trauma and 3g. And she in fact is TV star from [00:44:13] popular Pacific TV show called love patrol. [00:44:19] It is aired on TV in New Zealand. [00:44:24] And left the channel is of Anwar to local production by an NGO called one small pack that confronts issues in the Pacific region and LGBT. Human rights is one of the one of the main issues that sort of incorporated into the narratives that are shown in the program. Gigi is in fact also the leader for the pride Foundation, which is an LGBT movement in Guanajuato. And she also currently serves as the Secretary to the PSTN bought. And she is currently a student. Also with the Australian Pacific Technical College doing deployment, human rights and good governance and leadership. Miss GG. Thank you, Kayla. Good afternoon everyone. Um, I will not talk much about fee pride because I'll just give you the WordPress website we are on so you can read it at your own time. And also with our Facebook page and you have any questions it's like us a message. Or just tell us specifically or what just a little bit of both Phaedra provides the opportunity for members to learn and to involve in peer education. This is led by our local NGO called calibrated mentioned. And we get funding from NC State and defects. topics that we cover is sexual health, reproductive health, HIV and STI, teenage pregnancy and other health related issues. purification, we do a lot of purification because we find it's a it's a tool that we get to engage with the community and [00:46:20] addressing those issues we find to be build up a relationship with the community to help them understand our issue as well. [00:46:28] Not only that, we talk about the

issues to the whole community face, but indirectly we sensitize them to get them to understand our lives as an LGBT person. [00:46:40] We have a safe space called campus some head in this llama campus that means Come and see us. The name campus and head is that was put on is not to stigmatize anybody. But it's a friendly, and place where everyone has come in. And if you if you walk into that clinic or wherever that space, no one can discriminate you or you feel stigmatized, because everyone knows that you will go and look for hitch and everyone will assume that oh, this person might have HIV or this person is gay and is entering this era. So that's what we put that name campus. At the moment, that group is doing a collaboration with PSG and doing a Pacific mouth collaboration with PSTN and un dp. And also UNSWA study on Pacific multicultural, multi multi country mapping and behavioral study on HIV and STI rates variability among key populations. And just last week, we have recruited some members of the fee prior to get involved. [00:47:56] So these are the things that we've been doing, the challenge we faced, I think we can have already touched based on the Christian influence that we have back home. That's one thing that we still are they use Bible, they they predict by the local communities are still persecuting us again, with the with the Bible. [00:48:21] It's very challenging, [00:48:23] because most of the members [00:48:26] members are from [00:48:29] from chiefly [00:48:32] backgrounds, or family and they could not express themselves to be comfortable with themselves. Therefore, they come up to us because of myself [00:48:44] from also from a chiefly background, and I've been myself, so they feel like coming through me and have a talk with them helps them to [00:48:52] to find their own comfortable space. [00:48:59] Also, yeah, and [00:49:05] our cultural backgrounds. [00:49:08] Because we are also a multicultural country, the sum of [00:49:12] parts of the country, they are they originate from tolerance. So we do not have a local terminology [00:49:22] of a like Filipino fatality, because the different the different terminologies like for some parts of the country, they've used the word fatality, and [00:49:34] some other terminologies. [00:49:36] And I think, with what we're doing [00:49:42] here, so the understanding is not well communicated across because of people are still using cultural background and Christian influence to fight against us. [00:49:55] Another thing as well is amongst just the LGBT community, those of us who well educated once they are successful, and they're up there, they forget about the other sort of, from the grassroots level, that do not communicate and assist. Any of us like, for example, the both, or both of us will be in the session yesterday, I did touch base on a party. And [00:50:21] I want cow come did a demonstration that [00:50:25] the headline the conclusion of the [00:50:29] completion of a presentation. And that was one thing that it's very important that I think, for us what we need to get that addressed because it's, it's it feels like just amongst the LGBT community, we have been distributed amongst our members. Yeah. So yeah, I think I'll stop from there. Thank you. Thank you very much, Gigi, for the very informative presentation on the situation. We want to and we hope that in the discussion, we will be able to discuss more about that. Now, we will move on to our final panelist, Miss Julie, Julie Mattila, who will share with us a little bit about the experience.

0:51:10 - Joey Siosaia Joleen Mataele

[00:51:21] So let me introduce [00:51:24] Come on. [00:51:28] Okay, introduction is way too long. [00:51:34] And the runner for this network. [00:51:36] Okay. [00:51:39] I'm going to be fast, because we don't have too much time for for this presentation. Because I'm running a whole workshop on my own tomorrow at [00:51:54] one o'clock, I think was [00:51:59] at one o'clock. [00:52:01] And then I will share the whole history of total a desensitization. Now he started and everything. [00:52:09] But I'm just going to be touching base on what's really going on at the moment, because the latest Association started in 1992. Because of the first transgender person that was infected with AIDS, in 1987, and from 1987 to 1992, for doctors decided to put together Together with the help of SBC, and

a member of parliament, the first female member of parliament, Mrs. Popular for the it together the tone ladies community, and see what they can do to [00:52:54] educate the LGBT [00:52:58] communities, which is more driven by the transgender community. And they're more visible. Okay. So by 1992, we finally were able to put together everything and got the the, the the network registered in the government, as an NGO, and from since 1992, to 2016 100. Now we have 148 members, registered members from that's from the whole 140 Islands inhabited islands of Tama, and mains utilize his contains of three groups of Island, which is taught to topple the harp, I group and have a vile group. [00:54:00] So [00:54:04] our results that just came in from the HIV has been all negative, and we've been negative right through. Okay, so it was hard at first to get to actually, when we first started, it was quite hard for for us to get our members to actually test it be tested, because everybody had a fear of being talked about or being found out that you've got SDI or HIV. But then we went through, we went through quite a few consultations with members. And they were with, they were okay with the idea. But they didn't, they still didn't want to go to the lab, or the hospital. So what we did was, we asked the lab people to come to a retreat center, and then retreat to our annual retreat that we usually do, and get the testing done over there. Okay, so it was a bit weird, because there was no confidentiality over there. And yet, we were trying to get away from the confidentiality at the hospital, you know, I've been being baptized over there, because every time you walk into the lab, the people that are sitting around there waiting to be examined or something going, huh, as another victim. And, you know, we got to the point that we were called a DC, AIDS when you walk down the road, you know, HTC, [00:55:39] but we got over it. [00:55:44] But since then, the Taylor has been leading the HIV program, HIV awareness programs, in trauma, throughout trauma. And we have an end and all, HIV, and we'll test we're the only ones who are out there in public, distributing condoms. When we first started doing that, in the early 90s, it was the biggest joke ever. Because the Methodist church or the Wesleyan Church totally went against it. The Catholic were. [00:56:25] Okay, and then they went No, and, but then I [00:56:33] went with one of the nuns that we were in the same HIV National HIV stakeholders committee, and asked the bishop who is the cardinal now how can we address HIV, you know, and, and, and promote condom condom use for are us, because at the end of the day, we have to protect their lives, you know, so instead of the cardinal Turner and said, Okay, go and do whatever you want to do. But don't promote it, like how it is done. Everywhere else, use it as a tool to make sure that they know that, if there's anything to protect them, there's something there for them, but don't try and make them convince them that they can just go and have sex all the time. But there's something there for them, you know, like, so as long as we hit the Okay, from him, it's fine. But of course, we still have bad backlashes from other people that didn't like it, you know, from the church, but then that didn't stop us from doing it, especially a man who was actually an auntie of mine. And, and then she got pulled up, pulled off from project. And then we tried again, with some of the other members approaching the cardinal again to, for the Christian families, network, within the church, to try and promote health issues, HIV and everything. So now, that is working, you know, so it's just, I think it was just a matter of explaining consultations with members, with the leaders of the groups and telling them what it what it's all about. It's not just condom, you know, it's all about health, because what we had to actually put there, when we started showing them, the, you know, the what the President our presentation was all about, and all that. The first question was, Why do you come to us? Why don't you just concentrate with the posters of the queers of the trans or whatever, because they're the ones who are out there, using their bodies in sinful things. And you know, and then we one thing good about having your data, your HIV test data, is to show them the LGBT community are all HIV free, the ones that are sick now, at the so called churchgoers, you know, and so that's how we were able to get into their brains, you know, to actually make sure that you have your proof to make them believe you. So that when that has break that barrier, I'll you know, we still have a little absent down from from other churches. [00:59:52] And, but [00:59:56] one thing that that, that we are still trying to

go through now is instead of concentrating on on, on HIV, we're trying to go into the registration, to try and see if we can change some of the laws, you know, now we have passed the family protection bill, with past the agenda, policy. they've passed the name change, so you can change your name from John de Mary now, you know, but still, you still can't change the ID, from male to female, you know. So those are the things that we're trying to go through now. [01:00:49] Yeah, I think I better stop here.

1:01:07 - Questions

So let you guys ask [01:00:54] some questions. And bear in mind, I will be covering all of this with the story. My story tomorrow. Thank you [01:01:06] very much, Julie, Gigi, and Miss Taylor, for your short presentation, we will now open the floor for questions. [01:01:17] Well, one question I had was about us as activists and RT and or, like, you know, those of you who are countries I know. So not everyone here might know what the Universal Periodic Review is. But as a chance when your government reviews all of us human rights laws. So in this and lots of parts of the world. So g communities of us there, because sometimes lesbians tried to use the convention that's about the rights of women. But there isn't a convention that's about the rights of soldiers. So the up arrow is sometimes being seen as a place where we can do that. And I know Tyler has done, you've got some surgery recommendations out of your ups, you've done a submission, the one in Fiji, for public, maybe it's the first one in the Pacific, it talks about the rights of lesbians and the Pacific as well. And then you found one for Papua New Guinea. And I don't know what other parts here. And and the other thing about the PR process is that you write your submissions, and then the people that Christian your government, at governments from other parts of the world, so someone from the New Zealand delegation in Geneva, will decide when tomo comes out when but when it comes up when Fiji comes up of all the issues that all the NGOs asked, they will pick a couple that they will ask questions about and can we help by lobbying them so that they asked the Sochi question? And what is the most effective way for us to do that, [01:02:51] is that [01:02:53] the final decision will be made by the by our national party, that some power is what it be most effective for those of you from the Pacific community who know National Party MPs to be talking to them? Like, I'm just wondering, what does it look like when New Zealand tells the Pacific Officer OG staff, and what's the way that the Pacific is most likely to listen? And then it's most likely to create dialogues between Pacific people here in Pacific people in your own campaigns? In any thoughts? [01:03:24] You know, Billy might have some thoughts on. David thoughts. I've had cases where we presented our report. So the in Geneva, the future, the last up are we report official government, and we had two recommendations, specifically from Chile and Germany, that was based on budget. And those recommendations was taken in by the Fiji governments. Okay, and we've been following up with them pushing implementation. And those recommendations was the implementation and the making sure that the Constitution, the provisions of the bill of rights on surgery is how much throughout domestic law implemented throughout the state. One of the challenging terms of, you know, like I said, this, the the implementation and the interpretation of the Constitution. One very good example was the dismissal of the high court case of the transgender woman who was taking legal gender recognition features on court last year, and deal with, but in terms of actually lobbying within special community and partners, like Hilda, and that can, you know, you can mobilize countries and formed affiliations in Geneva, I think it's very effective, particularly for Australia, New Zealand, [01:04:35] Columbia collected, [01:04:37] she will do something that [01:04:43] each of you spoken about is actually is quite important. So we think that we need to be considering raising [01:04:51] the sheep from now hundreds. [01:04:57] Yes, [01:04:58] just following on on the PR. [01:05:02] So I'm based in Geneva. And, you know, what we often advise activists is a lobby, you know, the embassies back home, but of course, in a lot of the Pacific countries, the embassies won't be there. So, you know, you won't have a Chilean embassy

there, you won't have a German Embassy there. So I think maybe what people based in New Zealand and Australia can do is work together with you to then communicate with the embassies that are in the region, as well as then, you know, you love your capital back home. And then, you know, we also help to lobby the gov, the missions in Geneva. Following on on that, as well, I just recently had the experience of going to New York, during the Human Rights Day events. And I think that that's also another area that we tend to leave out the General Assembly and the missions there, because the US is know, has a very, very strongly funded, multi, multi pronged right wing, lobby, calendar, and they are there in New York all year round, lobbying all the states. So all the states are representative in Geneva. And I think, also, you know, to not forget that, you know, to try and speak to the missions in Geneva, or in New York, and not just concentrate on the time in Geneva, because they get a lot of right wing action, targeted at them. And and we don't have the resources there. For our voice to be heard there. So just just [01:06:36] to one of the challenges, but also [01:06:39] in terms of like, loving straight through missions in New York is that sometimes it's not always a great at Capital, like you can have permission to New York agree on certain things. But when you come back to capital, it's like, okay, no, you should be taken down. This will agree to that statement. We don't agree to the texting stage love that. It's also very important to sort of like, you know, making sure that at home capital, you're also pushing in terms of Foreign Affairs and making sure that you know, the [01:07:09] financing level that for [01:07:14] an empty expense in terms of lobbying within the country I mph in 2012. With the help of the Community Development Minister, we submit a bill to decriminalize the sex, where can sodomy get in shape relationship to the parliamentary and within that country, but it was rejected because only the south of 109 members deliver only three voted for it, and the rest voted for this bill is still pending in the parliament. So we still working around the clock to do consultations and dialogues within the country to try and revive. Be like a. [01:08:00] Thank you, Miss della. Any other questions? Yes. [01:08:08] Thank you for your informative presentation. I just wanted to pick up on that point about changing the pace of change and the Pacific and the influence of the of the church, because I think someone mentioned that Islam, I mean, in different spots, it is slow. But I think that it's important. And it's great that we take this time to kind of acknowledge that it is happening and to highlight where that's happening. So I acknowledge all the work that all of you do, and different pockets. And I also wanted to to present the example because I think change. And in terms of change happening, it's a generational thing to a lot of younger people and, you know, to developers, and to reconceptualize the values around spirituality and, and things like that. And one example I can think of is them with the seminary Lyft Canton, San Juan, which is the village based youth organization. And last year, you would have known that summer hosted the Commonwealth Games, but not a lot of people knew that before they before the games, over three days, Samuel hosted the Commonwealth youth Pacific Region meeting. And so that was when all the youth ministers from across the Pacific sandbar, and alongside other youth leaders within the region. And Tony from teaching anyone they're turning turning here. And so there was a meeting of youth leaders from around the Pacific. And one of the issues that came up during that particular forum was this discussion about gender identities and sexual diversity isn't, and things like that. And so it was a contentious issue. And at our spectacular forum for the summit, initially, Council, we kind of discussed it as a group, because we wanted to ensure that we had consensus going into the meeting. And there was definitely a divide, because the group's quite diverse, and you have a lot of younger, younger people. And then you have a lot of people who are slightly older, you know, the Pacific when you're not married, you're still part of them. So they have very specific ideas about you know, sexuality and identity, whereas the younger people like and I heard the point about people, and someone mentioning that, you know, church attendance was going on, I think people are starting to reevaluate, and re and rethink, exercise their spirituality, and how they, how they treat other people. And so with the younger people that were at that particular forum, when we put the issue across to

them, you know, sort of within the framework of human rights, or another particular discussing the other kind of cuts across all these other issues. A lot of people start, you know, thinking, Okay, this, you know, start changing the mindset. And so even though they probably go back home, and they go back to church to be told the other way, I think the fact that the thinking that enter the having these conversations in these places, and in taking get back to where they're from, I think that's really, really important. So thank you and keep up the great work. [01:11:07] I think the important thing to note is sometimes we often confuse a church acceptance with the participation of, for example, transgender women in church choir, a lot of people you can say that all because there's a lot of participation of transgender women the good question, they are more accepted. But I seriously think that the real compensation is not taking place. They're not having the conversation about LGBT rights. And a lot of us in the Pacific continue to think that there is real competition within the church and accepted when it is not. And I think it's important that we pick on and make sure that, you know, there's a difference between, you know, them agreeing to the, you know, the rights of participation, there's a huge confusion in the Pacific in terms of what level is the tolerance level at one level to the waiting game? engage us? It's tricky. [01:12:00] wait to meet the sick directives. Okay. Yeah, but we know it's not [01:12:04] it's not [01:12:06] sexy to still very close. [01:12:12] And are, you know, the way in terms of the world around us around the world? [01:12:22] And it's never been an easy task, but it's really good. [01:12:26] We need to be doing it. Communities. [01:12:35] Why, you know, what we have already spoken about how we lobbied and other cases, it was not just together it is because there's going to be the cases where that's where the that's where the towers settle, for example, [01:12:50] decision making around what people's mindsets are? [01:12:57] And how, how do we get into those churches? [01:13:01] So every day think we how do we do that within our families? And it is the ministers. You know, it's amazing the conversations we can be having with the ministers and actually how they do certain Listen, energy, you know, if you have a good relationship with your ministry, he is the conversations pretty easy and straightforward, as how do we continue to do have those? Answer more clearly, young people like [01:13:30] what you said about people asking questions, and we should really encourage that, because it's one thing that we do ask the right questions, because invariably, you know, we're told to shut up and not to help us how can we continue? I think we should create awareness, and especially in the church arena, we need to ask the questions. What is your issue on this? What is your views on that? And I think we have our outspoken [01:13:59] crusher slam. [01:14:05] What's been interesting is actually after the [01:14:09] Presbyterian Church here, the panelists, the PRC, churches that pushed [01:14:16] for [01:14:18] for LGBT q are not hold positions within the church. Now, that was really interesting, because what we heard was, she was a senior at first saying he would support you know, they would support [01:14:31] the [01:14:33] having LGBT [01:14:35] joy, he said, within the churches print, but it was the PRC teachers, and it is concerned because it was the end that they had the power to be able to change it. And that's where the push came from. And so it does say to me that there's something that just haven't changed at all. And where is it that we need to be putting the energy? Yeah. [01:15:00] Fabulous. [01:15:04] Through the marriage equality, stuff, all the lessons learned from my father, [01:15:11] you know, and like, and what's his wife say, it's really important that we actually have those conversations with monsters because they do listen. And it's about you. And it's their job to actually think about how they may have those conversations with the congregation's but if you can include that as part of the everyday, whether it's the sermons or because the people will come to them. Yeah, it's like they're the gods. And, and it's hard. It hasn't been easy. I mean, there's a lot of backlash. I kid, you know, and the thing is, I've used my being themselves ministers daughter, to actually advocate and continue kind of challenging. And I think that's important. And aside, you know, the other thing that was actually helped me grab all the ministers kids, and he gets into start pushing, pushing the ball, because I think this, you know, and young people, there's lots of young people that actually right

behind us, so how do we get the momentum going? So I think, to this evening, [01:16:15] thank you. Are there any other questions for the panel? [01:16:27] Free to face is the doctor I came to fruition your doctor me now, because some of us so violence, a very isolated very huge, you know, the amount of landmass and all that. And we just wanted to ask whether I would you face any challenges and the difficulties in collecting and collecting the data. And I think it's very important that we have the number one problem fast. So I'm asking whether you are lobbying for more funds or more [01:16:56] responsibility, so you can actually do a proper job moving forward. In collecting your data and extra, we have some basic data in place to assess the number one problem that we face, in someone with a semester of no data available. So yeah, we really am in our fights at the ground level, that we, as somebody can assist us in the future for me, so we have a class in store. [01:17:24] I'm also putting to you whether you are loving on getting some, let's say man issue. [01:17:41] Yeah, like you said about the island, but the the geographical layout of the islands. But also, I think there's another problem, that issue that is also in place in data collection is the participation, like I've mentioned that those who are well off are well qualified to be successful graduates, they do not participate in this testing. I've noticed that in Guanajuato in Fiji and Papa New Guinea. And they do even if we the members or the of the movement, we go and approach them to get our Spirit Award for HIV tests. They do not get involved, they either stay discreet and do not participate at all. So I think that's another way maybe if we can find ways to communicate or get them engaged in participation, [01:18:33] maybe because they're just afraid of being [01:18:36] exposed to and then we find out that the other one, like what what what do we notice that they have their behavior is always at risk. And this is another question of how do we make available make use of the existing data that's available, most of the times the Pacific like for some of the work has been done around HIV responder on populations, transgender sex workers, today, states are still in the shelf, they're not being used by the very people that, you know, did the research. One very good example is integrated bio behavioral research that was done in Fiji, still in the shelf, no follow up no implementations? You know, I think it's also responsibility for the LGBT movement in terms the thing that is a huge gap, but to also do sort of like a desk, review, whatever, look at existing available data that we can make use of before we sort of like, you know, making sure that current trends are included and current emerging issues and things like that, I take into account. Thank you. I think that probably going to close our session today. And just to summarize, thank you very much to the presenters, and also the panelists for raising some of the issues. The health issues pertinent to MGBT, there were only a few that was raised, but those were probably the priority health issues that they felt needed to be raised at this forum. And we hope that the strategies or some of the way forward that we have discussed in trying to ensure that we increase the access to health for our LGBT IQ in the topic, will be improved through strengthening or strengthening or creating an enabling environment around faith around legislation, which we have also spoke to spoke about to that will contribute to increasing access [01:20:38] to health services for our LGBT members. Thank you very much. [01:20:44] We hope to see you in our next session.

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