

**From:** [Robert h](#)  
**To:** [Committee, JSCFADT \(REPS\)](#)  
**Subject:** submission: Inquiry into the human rights of women and girls in the Pacific  
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To the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade,

Community problems can only be addressed internally by members of those communities. Recalling Giovanni Falcone's hypothesis that community wide economic development will eliminate the breeding grounds in which Cosa Nostra recruit and thrive. Only opportunities for sustainable employment and legitimate education that develops youth into citizens able to effectively solve today's problems will result in real change. Frank Tate, Victoria's first Director of Education, wrote in 1902, "...Children have left school with no real power of applying [knowledge] in the daily commerce of life. Knowledge which is merely a memorizing of more or less useful facts is not power, it is in the application of knowledge to the practical problems of everyday life that genuine power is most rightly shown." Women's empowerment will only come from the demonstration and recognition of the benefits educated women provide to the community. Locals must be able to confidently argue that a particular intervention made their lives better. The process of modernization is long and alienating. Lessons may be taken from Australian Indigenous efforts in which the value of traditional women's work is promoted such as —but not limited to— caring for the elderly, child rearing and cultural preservation through education programs focused on primary school teaching and aged-care delivered to and in consultation with the community so they may develop their own relevant curriculum for local issues. These efforts must ensure culturally appropriate roles for women that renders them highly valued and indispensable beneficial members of the community. It is easy to suggest rapid armed interventions, adversarial recruitment or forced Australianization that deliver results tomorrow but this strategy is doomed to catastrophically fail. It will take a generation to start to see results. Ultimately the focus on these efforts must match the rhetoric: To promote self-reliance and self-determination in all affairs of the individual and the nation.

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