

Pacific Pride

Issue 10

The Newsletter of the PRIDE Project

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The PRIDE Project (Pacific Regional Initiatives for the Delivery of basic Education) is implemented by the Institute of Education at USP and is jointly funded by the European Union and New Zealand AID through the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat.



PRIDE serves Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.



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From the Director: IOE supporting reflective education that is empowering, focused and sustainable. IOE's REEF explained

In 2001, a symposium of Pacific education leaders identified two basic concerns relating to education in Pacific Island countries. Briefly these were: a lack of ownership of education and an absence of a clearly articulated vision for education, nationally and regionally.

Both are related and intertwined. Both are complex and evolving, thereby requiring better understanding and consistent monitoring. Fortunately, the two concerns are generalisations; not about particular countries, situations or variations within states.

The 2001 symposium did not name a Pacific island country (PIC) or an organisation. The sad truth, however, is that these basic concerns are evident throughout institutional, local, national and Pacific regional educational jurisdictions. The symptoms are widespread in the forms of dated plans, dependency mentality, poor stewardship of resources, preoccupation with short term benefits and more.

Being mindful of these concerns, IOE has recently reclarified its vision in an effort to provide leadership as a specialist and dedicated regional capacity serving PIC. In its new vision, IOE aspires to be "a regional hub of excellence in Pacific education". Within this broad aspiration, IOE seeks to offer Reflective Education that is Empowering, Focused and Sustainable (REEFS). Expanded, REEFS stand for the following:

1. **Reflective** of Pacific indigenous philosophies, understandings, ways of being, of doing, of knowing and yet responsive to other contexts.

2. **Education** that is relevant, purposeful and instructive in its approach to

enlighten, adapt and ensure the survival and success of Pacific communities.

3. **Empowering** Pacific scholars, educators and researchers through innovative mentoring, advice, internships, collaborations, engagements and community networks.

4. **Focused** on strengthening Pacific approaches and processes by applying them first before engaging with others as appropriate.

5. **Sustainable**

in clarity of commitment to and excellence in Pacific education.

The above five strands of the IOE vision are multi-purposed: representing the objectives to achieve, maintain and sustain; reflecting the distinguishing features of Institute's core business, values and its particular sense of excellence; and acting as the benchmarks against which the Institute's vision, mission and values might be gauged. Within the new vision, IOE has reaffirmed its mission as follows: To support Pacific peoples and their communities in providing quality, relevant and effective **advice, research, training and publications** to meet their educational needs, challenges and aspirations.

In recent months, IOE research fellows, education advisers and professional project staff have tried to operationalise the Institute's vision through their project work, research and scholarship. It is still early in the envisioning period but already the indications are exciting, with staff sharing experiences of clarity of focus, responsiveness to Pacific peoples' educational aspirations and encouraging insights into longstanding educational problems.



Teachers celebrate World Teachers Day, October 5, 2007, Gizo, Solomon Islands
Photo courtesy Stan Manu

The new IOE vision provides a framework for a more sustainable PRIDE project. The opportunity is presented for the project to ensure that at the regional level, the IOE team (inclusive of PRIDE project staff) is strengthened for post-2009.

At national levels, IOE's success in being "a regional hub of excellence in Pacific education" is likely to inspire actions of sustainability by countries through the achievements of the PRIDE project. ■

**Dr Kabini Sanga,
Director,
Institute of Education and
PRIDE Project**

Dr Sanga has been seconded from Victoria University of Wellington where he holds the position of Associate Professor in the School of Education Studies. He has been the director and chief executive officer of the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education. He has negotiated and managed aid projects, advised donors on aid policy, and supervised and conducted research. ■

Nauru; like no other

My visit to the Republic of Nauru or "RON" was initiated by Nauru's Secretary of Education, Mr Jarden Kephas. I met Mr Kephas at the PRIDE's 3rd Capacity Building Workshop for National and State Project Coordinators in Nadi, Fiji. In that meeting, I was presenting a paper about the roles of each of the Pacific languages in the teaching and learning of mathematics. According to Nauru's Director of Education, Mr Michael Longhurst, Jarden was apparently impressed and, upon his return to Nauru, advised him that I would be the right consultant for their Department's mathematics curriculum review.

Michael initially invited me to Nauru as an Advisor for the Curriculum and Assessment Unit's (CASE) work on reviewing the mathematics curriculum from Year 1 to Year 10. I arrived in Nauru around 4:00am, Tuesday morning, August 14 and, to my surprise, the Director, along with the Secretary of Education and his wife were there to welcome me.



Stan with Director of Education Michael Longhurst, Secretary for Education, Jarden Kephas and Deputy Director, Bernard Grundler
Photo courtesy Stan Manu

found out about Nauru's rich tasks curriculum. Because of that, it occurred to me that my role was now redefined to:

(a) understand the rich task;

obvious that to meet or pass the regional benchmark in mathematics, the set of rich tasks currently used in any level does not contain nor generate enough of the mathematics content or the types of mathematical thinking or understanding needed by students. That is why most mathematics teachers were urged to complement their rich tasks by either incorporating or teaching the missing mathematics outside of the rich tasks.

Along with the help of the CASE Unit staff, a mathematics teacher was hired to work closely with me. Because of the short time frame, the biggest challenge I faced with the rich tasks was trying to understand the philosophy, objectives and goals and the tasks and activities. While this could be seen by the advocates of the rich tasks as a limitation on how I assess its mathematical contents, it was clear enough for me to make an appropriate judgment about what direction we ought to take.

There were two major issues that a Nauru mathematics framework ought to meet: one, the need to contextualise the

2015. The rich tasks in some ways did meet the first criteria, but fail to meet the regional benchmarks for mathematics.

I spent a week preparing a draft mathematics framework for Nauru from pre-school years to Year 10. This was presented in a workshop to over 125 teachers from all the schools. The response was incredible. The draft mathematics framework offers a "scope and sequence" of each topic from pre-school up to Year 10. The teachers realised that there is consistency in how each concept is taught progressively; no missing link or gap in the

progression of each topic, no repetition in content across the levels, complete coverage of the topics, a clear understanding of the benchmark at each level (good for exam purposes), and that there is understanding and sharing among teachers at the same or different level of what is being taught.

At the same time, the drafted framework is multi-purpose. Not only does it outline the topics or concepts' scope and sequence for each level but it can act as a benchmark for assessment, at both the national or regional level, or as a guide for collecting and developing mathematical vocabulary. It will also help in selecting appropriate textbooks and supporting materials.

The trip to Nauru was therefore seen as a success for me personally, and for the IOE. As for Nauru, they were appreciative of the fact that I went out of my way to do more than I was asked. My visit to Nauru allowed me to deepen my understanding, respect and appreciation of what I had known or heard of Nauru, its culture and history, and its people. The experience was unique and yet full of complexities. Nauru, like no other, has indeed its own story, history and unique life experiences. There is so much to learn from, even in just a few days.

Dr. Stan Manu
Fellow in Mathematics & Assessment
IOE, USP.



Aiwo Primary School students presenting a rich tasks activity
Photo courtesy Stan Manu

For the ten days of my visit, I was asked to work with the Department's CASE Unit in reviewing the mathematics curriculum. It was then that I

(b) 'unpack' the mathematics contents; and (c) assess the scope of its mathematical contents. After discussion with various stakeholders, it was

curriculum so that it is relevant, useful and meaningful for all Nauruan students; and two, the need to achieve the regional benchmark, and hence, meet the Millennium Development Goals by

Project monitoring and evaluation

The PRIDE log frame required effective strategic plan monitoring and evaluation systems to be functional by the end of 2007. In response to this, a technical assistant was engaged and tasked to develop a PRIDE Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (M&EF).

The final report on the framework was produced at the end of 2006 and, following training with the National Project Coordinators (NPC), it was agreed that an operational handbook be developed to guide users.

PRIDE M&E Handbook has now been completed and after obtaining feedback from NPCs and the PRIDE staff on the use of the monitoring and evaluation tools and reporting formats, the handbook is now ready to be used. The M&E Handbook can be accessed online via the project website www.usp.ac.fj/pride

The aim of monitoring and evaluation within the project is to collect evidence to demonstrate that PRIDE has made a contribution to the achievement of overall objectives, and results are used to improve management, operations and decision-

making. M&E is also designed to support project procedures and processes consistent with the PRIDE principles and Funding Agreement.

At the project level, M&E will deliver information on improvements to education systems in the Pacific resulting from PRIDE interventions. Information for developing and refining policies and strategic directions for the project and for regional organisations and donors will also be provided.

Similarly, data on the performance of the PRIDE project and sub-projects will be provided to government education agencies, to inform their educational planning processes and implementation of their strategic plans. Results from the M&E at the national level will provide information on implementation performance. Information provided will also be used for quality assurance and to improve and strengthen the sub-project development cycle, including the standard of designs and subcontracting arrangements.

M&E will also provide stakeholders with timely and accurate management information, including financial performance, in line with expectations under the Financial Agreement.



One of the winning entries for Science Fair during Palau's Education Awareness Week in March 2007, a PRIDE sub project

Photo courtesy Emery Wenty

The M&E Handbook is designed to assist NPCs and PRIDE project staff to undertake their monitoring and evaluation responsibilities, to help record project achievements and to provide information for managing project activities more effectively. Further, the handbook is to guide users and it brings together practical elements of PRIDE M&E system. These are

use by PRIDE Project staff in carrying out their monitoring and evaluation responsibilities. It contains instructions and guidelines for using templates and reporting tools. Finally, section 4 contains the standard templates and reporting formats for PRIDE. ■

Pala, Wari

Education Adviser, IOE, PRIDE, USP

linked to the regular PRIDE project management cycle, and the requirements of participating countries.

The handbook is divided into four sections. Section 1 explains how the handbook is to be used. Section 2 provides a set of instructions and guidelines for NPCs. In undertaking monitoring and evaluation under PRIDE. Similarly, section 3 is for

Boosting literacy in Asia and the Pacific

The second in the series of Regional Conferences in Support of Global Literacy focused on East Asia, South-East Asia and the Pacific was held in Beijing (China) from 31 July– 1 August, 2007. "Addressing Literacy challenges in East Asia, South-East Asia and the Pacific: Building partnerships and promoting innovative approaches" was the theme of this UNESCO-organised sub-regional conference hosted by the Government of the People's Republic of China.

IOE was represented by Sereima Lumelume, IOE Fellow (Literacy Education). Sereima was one of the 150 policy-makers, planners, representatives of civil society, academics and researchers, and members of bilateral and multilateral organizations from 23 countries of the sub-region.

Director-General of UNESCO, Mr Koïchiro Matsuura opened the Conference. In his inaugural address, the Director-General recognized the progress that the sub-region had made since 1990 in tackling illiteracy, noting that the overall rate of literacy had increased by almost



Professor Batchuluun Yembuu, Director National Centre for Non Formal and Distance Education, Mongolia and Sereima Lumelume, IOE Fellow (Literacy Education). Pictured during the UNESCO Conference

Photo courtesy Sereima Lumelume

10 per cent to around 91.7% today. He pointed in particular to the tremendous progress China had made in reducing illiteracy, citing the country's efforts as "an example to be followed".

However, Mr Matsuura underscored that deep inequalities still existed both

between countries, and within them, especially between urban and rural populations and between men and women. "Over 70.4% of illiterate adults in the sub-region are women", the Director-General stated, arguing that "this has a negative impact on the learning opportunities of the entire family".

goals.

"The strong focus on universal primary education will undoubtedly reduce the flow of illiterates from poor schools or lack of schooling. But we cannot in all conscience abandon millions of adults and young people to a fate of lifelong illiteracy. This is unacceptable in the 21st century", ■

Source UNESCO news

<http://portal.unesco.org/education>

Describing the provision for literacy for all as "a moral and development imperative for governments", the Director-General called for a three-pronged approach. "National governments", he said, "must strengthen efforts to expand education and improve its quality, to scale up youth and adult learning opportunities, and to develop literate environments". Mr Matsuura likewise called for national funding for basic education to be scaled up, and the budgetary allocations to literacy significantly increased.

The Director-General also called on donors to do more in support of literacy, commenting that while new pledges to basic education had been made, external aid remained insufficient to meeting the Education for All (EFA)

Advancing Inclusive Education in the Pacific

Education decision makers and experts from within the government and non-government stakeholders from Pacific island countries (PICs) met to discuss the issue of 'Inclusive Education' at a workshop held in Nadi, Fiji 1-5 October, 2007. The workshop was coordinated by the Fiji Government, the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, the Pacific Resources for Educational Learning, the University of the South Pacific (PRIDE), UNICEF, UNESCO, the South Pacific Board for Educational Assessment (SPBEA) and the Pacific Disability Forum (PDF). Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat said

The overall goal of Inclusive Education is to promote opportunities for all children to participate and be treated equally. It is a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all

learners and of reducing exclusion to and within the education system.

"Our schools in Pacific Island Countries can only be inclusive when they are working towards full participation, community and equality through respect for differences, respect for different learning styles, variations in methods, open and flexible curricula and welcoming each and every child," Greg Urwin, Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat said

With the theme of "Advancing Inclusive Education in the Pacific", workshop outcomes included; an agreement on a common Pacific definition of Inclusive Education, a policy framework on Inclusive



Teacher and students from Nadi Special School during a visit by workshop participants
Photo courtesy IOE

Education, a draft status report on the situation of Inclusive Education in PICs and confirmation that the UNESCO Tool Kit for Inclusive Education be implemented at national levels. ■

Source PIFS press statement 11/3/07

Teacher and Education in the Pacific Project

Recently, IOE has written to CEOs of Ministries of Education throughout the 12 USP member countries informing them of our latest project at IOE – the Teacher and Education in the Pacific (TEP) project.

TEP is an AusAID/ADB funded multi-phased project which will run for the next 3 years. The key purpose of this project is to identify options for policy and strategy framework that Pacific Island countries (PICs) may consider in formulating policies to improve the effectiveness of teacher performance at primary school level (Year 1 – 8).

To do this, the Institute will firstly conduct a desk study on the status of teachers and teacher training including projects that have been carried out in the past in an effort to improve teacher performance. Secondly, a research study on teachers and education in the region and thirdly, based on the findings, IOE in collaboration with Ministries of Education will prepare concept papers for policy action to include national and regional frameworks and strategies for the improvement of teacher performance.

The TEP project commenced in June of this year and our IOE fellows are now currently busy working on the first phase. IOE has been identifying and collecting all pertinent information. IOE believes that the more comprehensive the data collection per country is, the better informed that country will be in defining key areas for research in the second phase of the project.

A regional meeting involving participants from PICs, research associates, Pacific education stakeholders and donors will be hosted by IOE in Suva, from 5-7 December. IOE is currently finalising the synthesis report of 8 preliminary studies, outlining the main issues, findings and recommendations, this report will be discussed at December meeting.

Expected outcomes from the meeting include advice and feedback on the implementation plan for phase 2 and 3 of TEP. It is hoped that the participants will endorse a draft plan for phases 2 and 3 and that the plan is achievable and reflective of participating countries' needs and donor's intentions.

The project team has members of IOE and the School of Education, USP. ■

Source Dr. Seu'ula Johansson Fua, Fellow in Research Leadership, IOE

Education news from the Pacific

☐ The Pacific Internet Society Conference 2007 in Honiara last August featured a special day devoted to ICT in Education. Over 100 participants discussed the main factors helping and hindering internet and computer access to teachers and students across the Pacific; with a focus on practical problem solving. The event included a discussion about PRIDE, and a demonstration of the low-cost One Laptop Per Child device (OLPC), designed to promote information literacy among young students, especially in rural areas. The keynote speaker, Jimmie Rogers of SPC, emphasised the importance of giving young Pacific citizens better ICT access.

☐ IOE was recently awarded consultancy work by UNICEF. The work has seen Dr Manu and Dr Sanga visit the Solomon Islands to conduct field research into the barriers to enrolment, retention and performance in basic education in the Solomon Islands. The field work took place in September and October within the Honiara, Gizo and Auki areas.

☐ IOE has a new AUSAID/ADB project on Teacher and Education in the Pacific. This initiative is a research project in search of strategies to improve teacher performance.

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☐ IOE launched a new publication in September. The latest release is *Na Cakau* a Fijian language textbook for high school students.

☐ Each year the Institute of Education (IOE) at USP is visited by a team of external monitors commissioned by the European Commission to report on the progress of the PRIDE project, which is co-financed by the European Union. The objective is to maintain and where possible, to improve the quality of their external cooperation activities. The main criteria to be addressed during the visit are Relevance and Quality of Design, Efficiency of Implementation to Date, Effectiveness to Date, Impact to Date and Potential Sustainability.

This year's team was lead by Mr Javier Calzado, from PricewaterhouseCoopers based in Curacao, the Netherlands Antilles. The team were in the region for nearly 3 weeks. The team sent monitors to 9 of the 15 PRIDE countries to collect data. The countries visited were: Fiji, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Tuvalu, Tonga, Samoa, Kiribati and PNG.

Although we have not yet received the final report, the first indication was that PRIDE

has performed well and was on schedule according to most of the criteria. A Monitoring Report will be sent to IOE with a summary of conclusions and key observations with actions recommended to the different stakeholders of the PRIDE Project.

☐ The new proposed Teacher Registration Bill (TRB) has been highly commended by various teachers' bodies and institutions. Fiji Teachers Union general secretary Agni Deo Singh said it would resolve some long overdue problems in the education system. "We are in favour of this Bill because it will set a standard for teachers and in this way it will not be possible for just anyone to become a teacher".

The Fiji Times
September 12, 2007

☐ A brief history of Education in Micronesia is an online Micronesian Seminar photo album. Schools go back a long way in island history. The album offers a visual tour of education through the years.

See: <http://www.micsem.org/photos/education/01.htm>