

Pacific Pride

Issue 7

The Newsletter of the PRIDE Project

September 2006

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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.

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.



Pacific Pride is produced by the PRIDE Project, Institute of Education, the University of the South Pacific.

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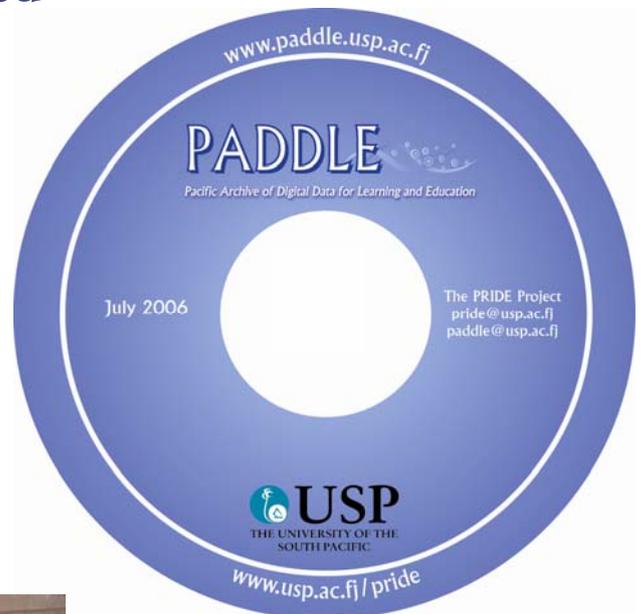
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PADDLE launched

The PRIDE Project officially launched PADDLE on CD-Rom, at a pleasant early evening function on 10th August 2006. Chief Guest at the launch was Fiji's Minister for Education, The Honourable Ro Teimumu Kepa. Speaking at the launch, the Minister said PRIDE, which was launched in 2004, had made a significant success throughout the region in the development of strategic plans and sub projects:

"On behalf of the Government of Fiji and the Ministry of Education, I extend our sincere appreciation for the assistance rendered by PRIDE since it began work in the region in 2004" As far as PADDLE is concerned, she said the core function was the collection, maintenance and conveyance of information. "The process of sharing these best practices will enable us to seek and develop new approaches to education that will reflect the values and



PRIDE's Libby Cass and the Honourable Ro Teimumu Kepa.

ways of thinking of Pacific cultures an approach that we can claim ownership of because it emanates from us, it is about us and not imposed on us, to be ours," she said.

The Minister said its impact would be tremendous, as it would capture the impact of globalisation and unite people to consult one another continuously. "I am convinced that PADDLE has opened up new pathways in our wide Pacific Ocean and I'm just as sure that in the not too distant

future, for many of our educators, their horizons will be broadened well and beyond our blue Pacific.

Speaking at the launch, PRIDE's Information Specialist Libby Cass said that "PADDLE was an acronym and a metaphor. PADDLE as an acronym explains exactly what it is: an archive of Pacific education data. As a metaphor PADDLE captures the essence of the PRIDE Project, a journey by 15 countries to work together to improve basic education in the Pacific.

Continued page 4.....

From the Minister's speech

Here are some extracts from the speech by the Fiji Minister for Education, the Honourable Ro Teimumu Kepa at the launch of PADDLE.

"It is indeed a pleasure and an honour for me to be here amongst renowned academics of Fiji and the Pacific. It is also with honour and privilege that I accepted the invitation to be here today in my capacity as Minister for Education of my country Fiji, which is home to PRIDE and PADDLE.

It would be improper of me to launch PADDLE without first acknowledging PRIDE, an acronym which aptly describes the high regards we 15 members hold of the organisation and the value we place on its work. I acknowledge with gratitude, the Institute of Education,

here at USP for assisting in the implementation of the PRIDE Project, the European Union and NZAID for jointly funding. Fiji has been greatly blessed by PRIDE. The new Fiji Education strategic Development Plan 2006-2008, was developed with the support of PRIDE.

PRIDE funded 6 mini conferences as part of a process of stakeholder consultation prior to the education Summit and it assisted with the planning and delivery of the summit. It also funded a post Summit national workshop for senior Ministry of Education personnel. It is known that PRIDE's support for strategic planning has been replicated throughout the region in the 15 member countries. It is expected that by the end of 2006 all participating counties of PRIDE will

have current strategic planning documents.

You will pardon me for the long discourse on PRIDE but that is inevitable because PRIDE metaphorically speaking is mother to PADDLE. For me personally, the acronym PADDLE brings fond memories of being paddled across the Rewa River subjected to unending stories from the paddlers. I chuckled when I saw the similarity in roles between the Rewa paddler then as archive of local stories and anecdotes of our people. Similarly the core function of PADDLE is the collection, maintenance and conveyance of information. On that note I suppose the thing that I have left to say is now to tell our people to dip their oars in deeper and PADDLE on." ■

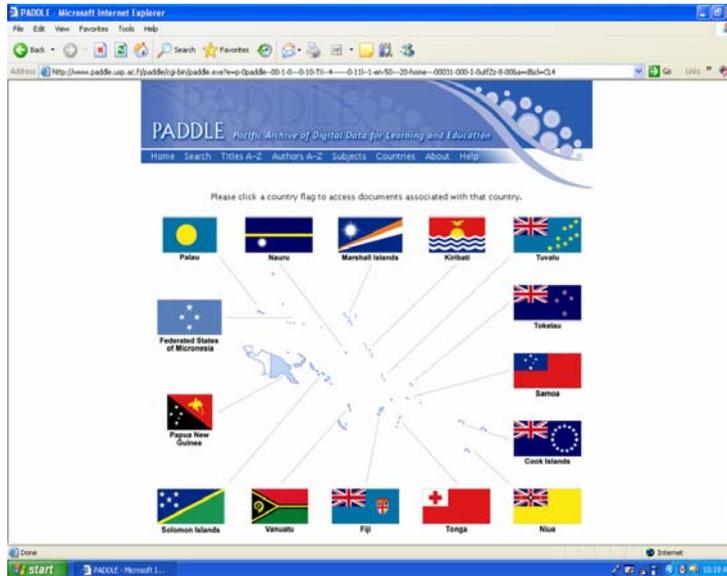
How to navigate PADDLE

From the PADDLE logo to the search interface much thought and consideration about Pacific users has been given. PADDLE has been designed to be visually attractive and easy to use. The wave on the logo represents the Pacific ocean in which the Project operates. Catching the wave or accessing the information is the prime objective of PADDLE.

PADDLE can be browsed by title, author, subject or country. Browsing by countries users access a map and flags of participating countries of the Project (illustrated). Graphical features like the map are included to illustrate the scope of PADDLE and provide a visually attractive interface.

PADDLE can also be searched. The simple search interface allows you to search the full text by word or phrase and sort the results. You can also search for title, author, subject or date.

For each document available in PADDLE, we provide important information apart from the full text. Within the document information



PADDLE's map representing participating countries.

section, we provide information about the publisher, author, subjects, pages and importantly copyright information. PRIDE has ensured copyright holders have given consent for inclusion of their material. Individuals may use, download, transmit, or print material from the PADDLE site for the purposes

of research, education or non-profit activities, but not for commercial gain. Some publications may be downloaded, reprinted and further distributed free of charge, either in full or in part, by acknowledging the source. Gaining copyright clearances for PADDLE has and will be an ongoing activity for PRIDE.

PADDLE online help facility provides users with instant assistance. This includes;

- Advice on how to find information in PADDLE
- How to read the documents
- How to search for particular words
- How to search for a phrase
- How to personalise PADDLE with your own search preferences

Future versions of PADDLE will provide an expanded range of documents in English, and other languages of the Pacific. The next edition will also be on DVD, due to the growing size of our archive.

PADDLE uses open-source Greenstone software, designed specifically for digital libraries. For PADDLE, Greenstone software was customised by DL Consulting of New Zealand. Initial logo design work was done by the USP Media Centre, with the final design and CD label cover and PADDLE mouse pads done by Delia Xie of Fiji. To subscribe to the PADDLE email service send an email to paddle@usp.ac.fj.

Libby Cass: librarian extraordinaire of the PRIDE Project

With a deep love for reading and for books nurtured from an early age by parents who saw the value of a good education, it was no surprise that Elizabeth Cass, better known as Libby, chose librarianship as a career.

Born in rural New South Wales to a rich farming heritage and with ancestors who came as free settlers from Ireland and Scotland, Libby attended a public primary school only 20 minutes away by bus. She caught the bus every morning from the bottom of the family driveway to attend her school which had as its motto, 'Life is learning'.

Libby grew up amongst wheat, sheep, horses and dogs. She recalls, "My memories include making sandwiches for lunches during harvest time and listening to the neighbours talking over the two way radio". She adds, "Farming is a hard life. We all had responsibilities and chores to help around home and farm".

Her life took a turn when her forward-looking parents sent her many hundreds of miles away to a boarding school for girls in Sydney, one of Australia's oldest Catholic schools, for six years of secondary education.

Libby cried through the first three years from sheer homesickness but this stopped when she made lifelong friends and when she "grew to

realise too the sacrifices my parents made to ensure that my siblings and I had a quality education".

After secondary school, Libby attended the University of Sydney where she graduated with a Bachelor of Arts and the University of New South Wales where she graduated with a Diploma in Information Management/Librarianship.

So what brings an Australian-Irish-Scottish lass all the way to Fiji? After living and working in Sydney as a librarian, she applied for and got a job as volunteer librarian at the Ecumenical Centre for Research, Education and Advocacy (ECREA) under the Australian Volunteers International organisation where she worked for three years.

After ECREA, three significant events happened in Libby's life: first she joined the PRIDE Project as Information Specialist in April 2004; then one year later, she married Ponipate Ravula, an indigenous Fijian who hails from the



Libby, Mika and Ponipate at Mika's recent 1st birthday party.

province of Ra, whom she met while working at ECREA; and thirdly, she gave birth to a son. Her passion for books is transferred to her just-turned-one son, Mika Kadivuka, (literally means the ant that flies) who has been read to since he was born.

As librarian for the PRIDE online Resource Centre, Libby has developed PADDLE, making available online over 300 educational planning and related documents and books (www.paddle.usp.ac.fj). Its recent launch on CD is covered in this issue. Libby's vision is for PADDLE to become the central sources for current comprehensive Pacific educational material. In the same manner that 'Google' is widely used, she would like PADDLE to become accepted termi-

nology. Libby is working closely with USP Library in the development of the Resource Centre. On project completion, Libby hopes that regional support will continue in the areas of information sharing and maintenance of the Resource Centre. This will be done by the USP Library.

Libby is also the President of the Fiji Library Association (FLA). One of her passions, besides her husband and son, is to get school libraries onto the Pacific education agenda. As she puts it,

"Through my involvement in the FLA, I am aware of the desperate situation of school libraries in Fiji and the region. School libraries and their services are integral to the goals of schools and the aims of the school curriculum."

She adds, "The school library and staff should play a role in ensuring the school community's access to an organised collection of teaching and learning resources and services designed to meet the educational, recreational and cultural needs of that community. Those that work in schools libraries should play a role in the planning, implementation and evaluation of educational policies, curricula, outcomes and programs, with particular reference to the development of students' information literacy".

From the Director

In preparing for the recent mid term evaluation, the PRIDE team reviewed its progress against the logframe that sets out key result areas. The first and most important outcome we are expected to achieve is the development of comprehensive strategic plans covering formal and non-formal education in all fifteen Pacific countries.

The logframe specifies that plans should be developed in at least 7 countries by the end of the second year of the Project, and in at least 10 countries by the end of the fifth year. On this, the first and most important indicator of our achievements, we are pleased to report that we are well ahead of schedule. At the

moment, just 2½ years into the Project, 13 countries now have current national strategic plans for education.

Of the remaining two countries in the PRIDE network, Marshall Islands will have completed a penultimate draft of its new plan by the end of September this year. And in the final country, the Federated States of Micronesia, strategic plan development is about to begin with PRIDE Project funding and technical assistance in each of the four states, Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei and Kosrae, with the aim of having all four plans completed by mid-2007.

In addition to this, the Project is funding the development of provincial level strategic education plans in Papua New Guinea. This is an important exercise in the decentralisation of planning, and in building a sense of local ownership. It is the first time ever that education planning has been undertaken at provincial level in PNG using a standard format for district consultation, and using provincial teams to develop the new plans.

It is worth noting that the average population of each of the 21 provinces in PNG is three times greater than the average population of the remaining 14 countries served by the PRIDE



PRIDE's Epeli Tokai (at left) on a recent visit to Palau with a teacher and students from Palau High School

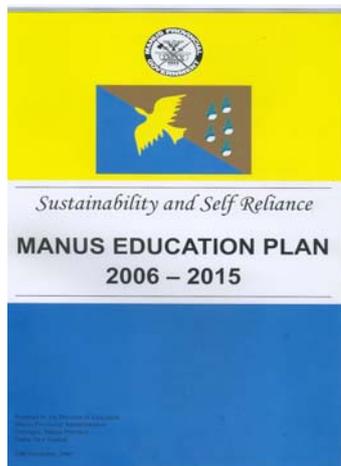
Project. Overseeing the development of 21 plans therefore is a substantial task, and great credit must go to the PRIDE National Project Coordinator, Uke Kombra, and his colleagues, for their commitment and hard work in ensuring a successful outcome. Already Manus Province has completed its strategic plan, more than half of the remaining provinces are on schedule to complete their plans by the end of 2006, and the remainder during 2007.

In reviewing PRIDE's support for the development of strategic plans in the Pacific during the past 2½ years, there

has been one person who has played a key role. I refer, of course, to the quiet achiever of the PRIDE team, Epeli Tokai. Almost single-handedly, Epeli has led the way in providing technical assistance and planning advice. And he has done so in a singularly effective yet unobtrusive way.

I would like to pay tribute to Epeli's wonderful capacity to help people create plans using a 'bottom-up' process that ensures a real sense of local ownership. ■

Dr Bob Teasdale, Director of PRIDE



Rethinking teaching and learning in Tonga

The 5th PRIDE Regional Workshop "Rethinking the teaching and learning of literacy and numeracy in the Pacific" took place at Sia'atoutai Theological College in Tongatapu, 24 -31, May 2006.

Our thanks to the Principal and staff from the College for all their assistance and support. Thanks also to the participants, resource people from both PREL and USP and the people of Tonga.

Papers and presentation from the workshops will be published in our Pacific Education Series, No 5 due out early next year. ■



Participants at the "Rethinking the teaching and learning of literacy and numeracy in the Pacific Workshop"



PRIDE's Leonaitasi Taukafa, Dr Priscilla Puamau and Elsie Fukofuka and Kalo Moeaki from MOE, Tonga



A presentation for Tevi—our critical friend



The PNG Team - Mr Godfrey Yerua, Mrs Lucy Nakin, Mrs Jaking Marimyas and Mr Steven Tandale

The PRIDE team is delighted to welcome two new staff to the Project. At the beginning of July we were joined by **Mr Pala Wari**, our third Education Adviser. The Secretary for Education in Papua New Guinea kindly agreed to release Pala for 12 months so that he could join the PRIDE team in Suva.

Pala is well known to the PRIDE extended family, having played a valued role at our first regional workshop in Lautoka, and having attended two meetings of the Project Steering Committee, serving as chair of the second.

Pala's substantive post in PNG is that of First Assistant Secretary for Policy, Planning, Research & Communication. He holds a BEd degree from UPNG, a Masters degree in Education, specialising in Monitoring and Evaluation, from Murdoch University in Perth, and is one year from finishing his PhD at the University of Sydney.

He comes to PRIDE with extensive training and experience in education policy and planning, and in



Our newcomers—Pala & John

project monitoring and evaluation. Since joining the Project he has taken particular responsibility for overseeing the implementation of national sub-projects, and for supporting the work of the M & E consultant, Mr Bill Pennington.

Our new Project Manager, **Mr John Stunnenberg**, joined us in mid-August. Unlike Pala, who flew thousands of kilometres from Port Moresby, John only had to walk 100 metres from his nearby office on the Laucala Campus. John has spent the last two years here at USP as Senior

times he has worked at the National University of Samoa as Dean of the Faculty of Commerce, and with the South Pacific Board of Educational Assessment as Manager of Corporate Services.

Back in 1979, John not only fell in love with Samoa, but with a lovely Samoan, Alise, and she with him. They married the following year. Alise now works in the Private Sector Development section at the Forum Secretariat, right next door to USP. ■

EU Project Coordinator, with management responsibility for a major EU Human Resource Development Project funded under the 8th EDF.

We are delighted to welcome John to his new abode. He is a well known figure in the Pacific, having first arrived in 1979, when he came to Samoa from his home in Holland as an FAO adviser. In more recent

Latest news from the Project

The Project is funding the development of a new five year strategic plan for the Ministry of Education in the **Marshall Islands**. PRIDE consultant, **Mr Abel Nako**, formerly Director General of Education in Vanuatu, has been supporting Ministry staff, and assisting with stakeholder consultations. The planning team visited **Majuro, Ebeye and Jaluit** during July and August to meet with stakeholder groups, and a draft of the plan will be completed by the end of September.

PRIDE Education Adviser **Epeli Tokai** has been focusing on strategic plan development in the northern Pacific in recent months. He has twice visited **Palau**, where the Project is funding the development of a new ten-year strategic plan for education. After his second visit he travelled on to **Yap and Pohnpei**, in the Federated States of Micronesia, where the Project will fund the development of state education plans later in 2006. In August Epeli returned to FSM for consultations in **Kosrae and Chuuk** to negotiate PRIDE support for the preparation of plans in these states.

The Project Director, **Bob Teasdale**, was an invited guest presenter at the Board of Directors meeting of the Honolulu-based Pacific Resources for Education & Learning (**PREL**), held in **Palau** in July. PREL plays a key advisory and support role for education in the northern Pacific, and Bob's participation in the Board

meeting has opened the door for a much closer partnership between PREL and PRIDE and between the north and south Pacific.

The PRIDE team is contributing to about half of the seminars in a second semester Masters course taught by **Dr Akhilanand Sharma** in the USP School of Education: ED492 Educational planning in third world countries. Our first publication, along with PADDLE, are key resources for this course.

The PRIDE team also is very pleased to welcome **Mr Bill Pennington** who is working with us to develop a Monitoring and Evaluation framework and methodology for the Project. Bill also will attend the annual workshop for PRIDE Project Coordinators in October. With the assistance of **Pala Wari**, he will provide 2½ days of intensive M&E capacity building for NPCs. Thereafter he and Pala will be available for any national or subregional M&E workshops or in-country training programs that are requested.

Another consultant who is joining the PRIDE team this month is former Secretary for Education in **Papua New Guinea**, and current interim Vice Chancellor of the University of Goroka, **Mr Peter Baki**. Initially Peter will be assisting the Nauru Ministry of Education to review all existing education policies, and to develop a new policy framework and documentation. Thereafter Peter has agreed to advise on the development

of state level strategic planning in **FSM**.

In **Vanuatu**, **Mr John Henly** has returned to the Ministry of Education to support the implementation of a new and substantial PRIDE sub-project linking his earlier work on distance education policy development to the improvement of primary education.

PRIDE Education Adviser, **Dr Priscilla Puamau** is spending two weeks in **Nauru** during September to carry out an evaluation of Nauru's curriculum reform initiatives, and to advise on further development of the school curriculum.

A team of four teachers from Motufoua High School in **Tuvalu** has just spent two weeks in Fiji. Their study program, funded by **PRIDE** and organised and delivered by Fiji Ministry of Education CDU personnel, was designed to help Motufoua reduce reliance on external examinations by making greater use of continuous assessment.

Congratulations to **Leonaitasi and Heta Taukafa**, on the arrival of Benjamin, their beautiful baby boy, at 8.10pm on Thursday, 07th September, 2006.

For more information,
please visit us @
www.usp.ac.fj/pride

At the end of June the PRIDE team said a very sad farewell to its Project Manager, Mahendra Singh, who had been with us since PRIDE started in April 2004. Originally from Guyana, in the West Indies, Mahendra had found his way to Fiji in company with his wife, Maria Ralha, when she was appointed to the Delegation of the European Union for the Pacific.

With Maria completing her assignment in Fiji, it was time for the family to move back to Brussels, and with much reluctance, on both Mahendra's part and ours, he packed his bags and made the long flight to Europe.

Just as Mahendra was leaving his office for the last time, the PRIDE team gathered to sing together the Fijian song of farewell, *Isa Lei*. It was a very emotional parting.

Speaking at his farewell, PRIDE Director, Bob Teasdale, paid tribute to Mahendra's total commitment to the Project, and to his hard work in setting up effective management protocols. "Mahendra is a highly qualified and talented person", Bob said, "and has made a very significant contribution to the success of the Project."

On behalf of everyone associated with PRIDE we say a huge thankyou to Mahendra and wish him well as he moves to the next stage of his career in Brussels. ■



Mahendra & Maria at their farewell

From page 1....

PADDLE and the Resource Centre is of central importance to the Project.

By facilitating access to accurate, relevant and timely information, a key ingredient in effective decision-making, the PRIDE Resource Centre is ensuring that the Project team and stakeholders can make informed decisions".

PADDLE includes publications from the Ministry of Education including strategic plans, education legislation, curriculum frameworks and school policies. It contains national development plans, statistics and budget information for the 15 Pacific countries. PADDLE also includes material from international and regional organisations including UNESCO, and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat.

PADDLE has been online at www.paddle.usp.ac.fj since September 2005. The CD-Rom version is in recognition of the disparities in internet access in the Pacific. Many people in government and other potential users of PADDLE in the Pacific do not have access to the internet. Those with access are unlikely to have the bandwidth to download large files.

1000 copies of PADDLE on CD-ROM being distributed around the region and internationally. ■