

Pacific Pride

Issue 13

The Newsletter of the PRIDE Project

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From the PRIDE Team Leader: A shift in mindsets



Palauan students prepare for a cultural dance at Education week.
Photograph courtesy Palau MoE.

and principles. The goal of the RPEI is to promote leadership by Pacific educators for education in Pacific countries. Since 2001, the initiative has been a catalyst for Pacific peoples to re-think education in and for their own communities (see <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/education/institutes/hp/hp-rpei.aspx>) with a key focus on leadership and research.

PRIDE and RPEIPP share the same philosophy that education should be firmly rooted in the cultures of Pacific societies – process and skills, knowledge, arts and crafts, institutions, languages, values, beliefs, histories and worldviews.

The PRIDE subprojects that encapsulate an emphasis on local language & culture have included:

Maori resource development (Cook Islands)

Maori language qualification workshops for secondary school teachers (Cook Is.)

Culture education curriculum development (Kosrae/FSM)

Development of Yapanese culture curriculum and supporting resources (Yap/FSM)

Novice mat weaving (Marshall Islands)

Nauru language first readers (Nauru)

Developing vernacular resources (Niue)

Development of Palauan Studies Textbook for Grade 1 (Palau)

Vernacular education pilot project (Solomon Islands).

It is evident, through this snapshot of language & culture subprojects that PRIDE is changing educational thinking and practices in the region through countries rethinking and interrogating their practices. There is the growing recognition that Pacific cultures and languages matter, that our local knowledge and values matter, that indigenous skills and processes matter. ■

Priscilla Puamau, PhD
Project Team Leader

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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In the last issue, I shared my reflections on the impact the PRIDE Project has made in addressing two concerns identified at a Pacific educator leaders' meeting in 2001 as plaguing education systems in the Pacific region: the lack of ownership and absence of a clear vision for education at national and the regional levels. It is my contention that PRIDE has made a significant impact, through its implementation of the Forum Basic Education Plan, in national vision building through the development of country education strategic plans and a stronger sense of country ownership and control of their education processes and systems.

While the latter is mediated by bilateral or multilateral donor requirements and the demands of the global market economy, countries increasingly are insisting that they are the ones to determine for themselves what their education priorities must be, not the donors or regional development partners. This point came through clearly at the recent FBEAP review meeting with Heads of Education systems from Forum/PRIDE countries held in Nadi, Fiji from 17-19 September.

I hinted in the last issue that the priorities reflected in the PRIDE-funded portion of education strategic plan implementation through more than 140 subprojects are indicative of a mindset shift that clearly signals that countries are now thinking

and moving outside of the box. I would like to explore this further in this issue.

In their presentation to the Heads of Education systems in September in Nadi, Fiji, the Review Team noted that of the 107 subprojects they had analysed in June this year, the four most common country choices for subprojects were educational planning, ICT, teacher quality and language & culture.

It is the (new) focus on language & culture that I would like to further comment on. The number one benchmark articulated in the PRIDE benchmarks to review education strategic plans (see <http://www.usp.ac.fj/pride>) is pride in cultural and national identity with the principle articulated as building the plan 'on a strong foundation of local cultures and languages, thus enabling students to develop a deep pride in their own values, traditions and wisdoms, and a clear sense of their own local cultural identity, as well as their identity as citizens of the nation'.

The PRIDE project complements the work of the Rethinking Pacific Education Initiative (RPEI) implemented from 2001-2006 which has metamorphosed into Rethinking Pacific Education for and by Pacific People (RPEIPP) with funds ending in 2008. Funded by NZAID, this initiative has become a philosophy in countries that have wholeheartedly embraced its ethos

Project Steering Committee Meeting

During the 2007 PSC meeting held in Auckland PSC members requested PRIDE to possibly organize two PSC meetings a year instead of only one. PRIDE was very fortunate therefore to be able to hold its first PSC meeting for 2008 at the Shangri La Resort, Fiji on Saturday 5th July immediately following the big regional Monitoring and Evaluation conference. We thank our Education Partners UNESCO, SPBEA and World Bank for allowing PRIDE to take advantage of this opportunity to incorporate its PSC meeting in the programme.

The 2007 Audit Report was discussed and accepted. One member remarked that it was good to see that the Audit Report indicated a consolidation of the financial expenditure for 2007 and congratulated the team. The Project Team Leader presented the Annual Report 2007 and the Progress Report 2008 (Jan-Jun). The members learned that PRIDE



John and Priscilla and Chair & CEO of Samoa MOE, Mr Tupae Esera at the PSC meeting at Shangri-La Fijian Resort in Sigatoka.

now has over 140 in-country subprojects on its register and ratified 61 new subprojects.

The 2009 Indicative Work Programme was endorsed and the Project Manager was asked to complete them before PRIDE commence negotiations with the

donors to request an extension of the timeline of the PRIDE Project until the end of 2010. This would allow countries that are slow in implementing its subprojects to complete them before PRIDE ends.

The Review of the Forum Basic Education Action Plan was discussed and Dr. Helen Tavola (PIFS) introduced the Review Team headed by Mr Ian Hind and supported by Ms Elaine Lameta and Dr Hilda Heine who began work in July. She detailed the processes of the review which will culminate in a workshop scheduled for 17th – 19th September to review the key findings and the possibility of a PRIDE II. The final report of the Review will be tabled in FEDMM 2009.

A special thank you goes to the CEO, Samoa Ministry of Education, Mr. Tupae Esera, for efficiently chairing the meeting.

It was wonderful to have the National Secretary for FSM's Department of Education, the Hon Casiano Shoniber, and the RMI Minister for Education, Hon. Nidel Lorak present. n

John Stunnenberg
Project Manager

Pohnpei education officials visit Palau



Seated Front (l-r): Director Emery Wenty, Minister Mario Katosang, Pohnpei Sate Director of Education Joseph Vilazon. Back (l-r): Reynold Albert, Raynold Mechol, Ted Borja, David Orrukem, Catalino Damarlane, Debbie Tkel-Sbal

The article first appeared in the education in Palau." Mechol said Palau Horizon Volume 11, the delegation visited Palau High No.17, Sept. 26-29, 2008. This School to learn more about its edited versions is reproduced with vocational education programs, permission of the author, Mr Philip career academy programs. The N. Haruo.

Pohnpei education officials were sonnel, students, and representatives for a week-long "study visit" tives of the various businesses, tour of the Palau Ministry of Educa- agencies and organizations that are tion. The visitors were Joseph Vila- essential partners of the school's zon, Pohnpei's director of education; programs. Reynold L. Albert, Pohnpei's PRIDE The delegation also visited Airai Project coordinator and chief of Elementary School to get a glimpse curriculum and instruction of the of how MOE implements technical state Department of Education; and vocational education and train- Catalino Damarlane, administrator ing programs at the elementary of the state's workforce develop- level.

ment and skills training program. The Pohnpei DOE "Study According to Raynold Mechol, Visit," according to Mechol, was MOE's chief of research and evalua- made possible through the PRIDE tion, the Pohnpei delegation wanted Project, which also funded many of to "learn about how technical and MOE's school programs, inclusive vocational education and training is of TVET programs in Palau High structured and implemented in both School and Elementary schools elementary and secondary levels of throughout Palau. According to

Mechol, while Vilazon, Albert and Damarlan were in Palau, they entered into discussion with MOE and school officials to gain an understanding of what type of TVET programs and courses offered in elementary and secondary schools in Palau. They also consulted with the MOE officials on how vocational education figures into the overall school programs, talked with school counselors to find out how career guidance programs were implemented to assist students make career choices.

They talked with vocational teachers to learn best practice and challenges in regards to TVET programs and work based activities offered in their respective schools, visited work sites and conferred with local employers who hosted students enrolled in TVET programs, and reviewed and collected samples of curriculum materials, course guides, career academy handbooks and other related documents that could be used as resource material in the effort to review and reform TVET in Pohnpei State.

Vilazon, Albert and Damarlane plan upon their return to use what they learnt from the visit to review Pohnpei's high school programs and in the process extend the programs to the elementary level. ■

Mr Philip N. Haruo.
Palau Horizon

PRIDE's Third

The PRIDE Team led by Tasi Taukafa (Acting Project Manager) & Sereana Tagivakatini (Acting Team Leader) paid a visit to the Pacific Disability Forum Office (PDF) in Desvoeux Rd, Suva on the 22nd August, 2008 at morning tea time. They were there to formally hand over a cheque of FJD \$50,000, the first instalment of funding for PRIDE's third Regional Sub-Project which will address the area of Inclusive Education.

This funding by the PRIDE Project will allow the provision of a Pacific Regional non-award "Certificate of Orientation and Mobility in the Pacific" (O&M), delivered in partnership with the International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment (ICEVI) and in collaboration with RIDBC, the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) and the United Nations Economic & Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP).

Tasi had the honors of handing the cheque over to Setareki Macanawai, President of PDF (pictured) and this was followed by Morning Tea. An article appeared in the Fiji Sun of 23rd August written by Ms Sandra Ah Sam who was also present at the handover with

Subproject implementation in RMI



Math Institute: a JICA volunteer in action.

The Project Manager, John Stunnenberg, visited the Marshall Islands from 8-11 July to provide technical assistance in several areas as requested by the Ministry of Education. During this visit he was fortunate to view the implementation of three in-country subprojects. A courtesy

visit was made to the Hon. Nidel Lorak, Minister of Education, to brief him on PRIDE, while on the last day the DOE staff organized a surprise afternoon picnic, which was well appreciated.

The PRIDE NPC in RMI, Ms. Brenda Alik Maddison, arranged for an article to be published in the Marshall Islands Journal informing the readers about PRIDE, its donors and the work PRIDE does in RMI. This was a good example of implementing the project's visibility statement.

The following is a brief recount of the three subprojects:

The Math Institute

This subproject had just started with 325 teachers undergoing training by local MoE staff and JICA volunteers. During the three week period in July, Lead trainers engaged the assistance of

Marlie Rota
Project Assistant

Photograph by Marlie Rota



PRIDE Team and PDF Staff at the Handover Ceremony of funding for PRIDE's third regional sub-project.

12 trainers and 12 supporters to train over 300 teachers in 10 groups of 30 teachers on the math curriculum focusing on the implementation of the math standards and benchmarks.

The Lead trainers are the MOE math curriculum specialists, high school math teachers, JICA Math Volunteer specialist, with support from the elementary school teachers. The participants are teachers from all the public and private schools (76 schools) from K-8th grade. The training content was prepared by the Lead trainers and will be shared with the Trainers/Supporters in a one-week preparation session prior to

and soccer. During PRIDE's visit it was RMI's summer break and we were able to attend a soccer clinic organized for young boys and girls under the guidance of two ex-professional soccer players from Japan. There were about 50 participants who were eager to learn basic soccer skills even when it was raining that afternoon.

The extracurricular activities aim to positively structure the youth's behavior and encourage creativity, teamwork and constructive learning. Exercise and fresh air will also serve to sharpen students' minds, thereby improving their performance in school.



Soccer Clinic for primary students held during the summer break

the Institute. Since this will be the second year of the Math Institute, the Lead trainers will improve the content of the training modules based on evaluations of the first Institutes. The beneficiaries of the project will not only be over 300 school teachers who will gain first-hand knowledge of the math concepts and how to teach to the Math Standards, but also over 9000 students, who the newly trained teachers will pass the knowledge and skills on to.

The Majuro School Enrichment Programme

This project started in April this year under supervision of Mr. Rais 'Aho. It consists of two components, Information Technology and an extracurricular activity programme. The IT component has not started yet, as a computer Lab is still in the process of being established at the Majuro Middle School.

A computer instructor will be hired to teach basic computer and typing skills to both students and teachers. The after-school programme however has been very active and youth are now involved in several sports, e.g. basketball

Early Childhood Parent Education

This project is implemented by Women United Together in Marshall Islands (WUTMI), an NGO, whose primary goal is to support and strengthen Marshallese women and in doing so, to strengthen Marshallese families. There is no Early Childhood Education service provider in RMI and WUTMI offers the only ECE support that families are receiving to help them prepare their young children for kindergarten and formal education. This project focuses on training parents to be teachers in early childhood education in the rural areas. The Project Manager met with the Executive Board and was briefed on progress of this subproject. He met two recently trained Parent Educators who had just returned from Hawaii after receiving training through PREL and who are now ready to go into the villages and commence their training of parents as teachers. n

John Stunnenberg
Project Manager

Photographs John Stunnenberg

Pacific Knowledge Societies: Regional workshop



Palauan participants and Niuen participants Valisi and Janet during the workshop.

PRIDE and partners (UNESCO, Pacific schools, students, teachers UNICEF, SPC and PREL) welcomed and the school community become 32 participants to the regional knowledge societies. A knowledge workshop. "Pacific Knowledge society ...is a world where Societies: developing equitable everyone has access to information access to quality resources and that is relevant to them and where information literacy" from 8-13th everyone has the opportunity and September 2008 in Nadi, Fiji. The skills to use this information in workshop brought together creating better societies. She asked representatives from Ministries of the participants "what type of Education from 15 participating knowledge societies do we have in Pacific nations. There is growing our Pacific schools and need within the region for human communities? What can we do to resource development (HRD), improve student and teacher access capacity building and support for to resources that give information school libraries, resource centres about our universe; our physical, and ICT in education. The socio-cultural, economic, political workshop advanced awareness of environment; about our people and the importance of equitable access other people and how we ought to to quality resources to support relate; the world of work; of teaching and learning in the Pacific. relationship and of life?". The workshop was formally opened Throughout the workshop there

on 8th September International Literacy Day, with a traditional welcome by representatives of the landowning mataqali and an opening address by Dr Priscilla Puamau, PRIDE Project team leader. During her address she said the workshop theme "acknowledges that there is much to be understood and shared to ensure that

from international and regional experts; including, Ian Thomson, RICS and Oceania OLPC Project Coordinator SPC; David Leeming, OLPC Coordinator, SPC and Technical Advisor, People First Network; Michael Hutak, Director Oceania, OLPC; Emmanuelle Abrioux, Education Chief, UNICEF Pacific; Elizabeth Jones, National Library of New Zealand and Jane Barnwell, Director, Pacific Resource Center, Pacific Resources for Education and Learning (PREL).

The workshop was both interactive and participatory. A unique feature of the workshop was access to a best practice example of a school library. The "e village" showcased the integration of ICT and traditional learning resources in a modern and comfortable environment. The simulated environment was available to participants throughout the workshop. The workshop closed with the formulation of outcome statement that will be presented by the workshop partners at the Forum Education Ministers Meeting in Tonga, 25-26th March 2009. ■

Libby Cass
Information Specialist

What the participants did and thought

Like previous regional workshops this workshop required contributions from the participants; including work done prior, during and post workshop. All participants completed a country survey prior to the workshop. The survey was designed to gather baseline data on Pacific Knowledge Societies indicators and assist countries in their presentations. Country presentations were held on day 2. This was a great opportunity for everyone to learn about other countries in the region in the areas of basic education statistics, information literacy, library, ICT in education and even in answering some "fun" questions which turned out to be very educative and informative, such as the similarities and differences in the Pacific vernacular words for "knowledge".

On day 2 participants were allocated into groups. Each day the groups were asked to draw out the parallels and differences between the presentations and the Pacific context. They were actively engaged in reflecting on the implications of theories, concepts and ideas provided in the presentations. Working under the guidance of the resource people, the participants also generated new understandings and ideas from examples of best practices and discussed possible practices in creating knowledge societies within schools. In particular groups acknowledged the important role roles libraries and ICT are said to play in improving access to quality

resources and how they support teaching and learning; especially literacy and information literacy. The involvement of the resource people was viewed highly by the participants. Each group presented the product of their group discussion on day 5. PRIDE will take these outcomes and present them on behalf of the participants and the workshop partners at the Forum Education Ministers meeting, Tonga, March 2009.

What is knowledge?

As part of the country presentations each country was asked to provide in their main vernacular, the word and meaning of knowledge. The following are some examples of what was shared at the workshop

Cook Islands

knowledge = "Knowing information" "kia ka to rama ei toki tarai enua" "Light your torch and carve a better nation"

Samoa

knowledge = "iloa" to know something

Vanuatu

knowledge = save (Bislama)

Nauru

knowledge = Emwan

Kiribati

knowledge = Rabakau or wanawana

Palau

knowledge = Klemedengei

The workshop was fortunate to have a critical friend present

- to bring a fresh perspective and add value to the discussions
- clarify key ideas and issues and ensure that the focus of the workshop was maintained
- recast the issues or asking probing questions to enable participants to gain fresh insights
- offer helpful critiques and exercising careful judicious evaluation of the workshop

Dr Manu found his role "enriching, enjoyable and challenging, all at the same time, and certainly worthwhile." In his evaluation report Dr Manu noted that for most of the "participants, the workshop succeeded in strengthening and advocating the roles of libraries in promoting teaching and learning. Participants came to understand and appreciate that a library can be a key resource for teaching and learning in the classrooms, schools or even communities. It is a critical component to a student's success and it needs to be structured and promoted. Libraries can expand and link all things considered to be information literacy, whether locally or externally".

At the end of day 6 the participants, presenters and workshop partners expressed their sense of joy and gratitude that the workshop had taken place and acknowledged the future work to be done. ■

Libby Cass
Information Specialist

OLPC Oceania

A unique feature of the workshop was learning by doing through use and exposure to the OLPC, the installation of a RICS and access to a model school library. On day one participants were issued with an OLPC, through the One Lap Top per Child (OLPC) Oceania project. The OLPC project is a project to create educational opportunities for the world's poorest children by providing each child with a rugged, low cost, low power, connected laptop with content and software designed for collaborative, joyful, self empowered learning.

SPC is coordinating pilots of the OLPC in Niue, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. This initiative, launched at the 2007 Forum Leaders meeting in Tonga, responds to a call by Leaders in the Pacific Plan Digital Strategy to bridge the digital and communication divide between the urban and rural and remote areas in the Pacific.

Participants at the workshop noted that the OLPCs were important and relevant to learning or education and acquiring quality resources for quality education.

They also believe that the OLPC can help children to be more literate and transfer a "ripple effect" to the rest of the family and community. OLPC to some participants promises to transform communities and societies.

Most agreed that the OLPC has great potential in improving the delivery of education to remote areas, and that it can encourage distance learning.

The OLPC was seen as a mechanism to improve students' attitudes toward learning. In addition, the OLPC would expand and link teaching and learning in schools to the 'outside' and vice-versa.

The OLPC was seen as a way to engage those most marginalised from information literacy opportunities and the many children who are not accessing formal schooling. ■

Libby Cass
Information Specialist



Ian Thompson from SPC, explaining the RICS to participants during the workshop.