

Pacific Pride

Issue 1

The Newsletter of the PRIDE Project

October 2004

Inside this Issue:

From the Director	1
PRIDE Launch	1
First Regional Workshop	2
Project Coordinators	2
Palau - Director's visit	3
Interview with PRIDE's longest serving staff member	3
PRIDE FAQs	4

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.



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E-mail comments to: singh_ma@usp.ac.fj

ISSN#: 1813-0216

Tel: (679) 321 2783

Fax: (679) 330 5291

e-mail: pride@usp.ac.fj

Web: www.usp.ac.fj/pride

From the Director

On behalf of the PRIDE team, I am delighted to welcome readers to this first issue of Pacific Pride.

Many people say to me, "What's so special about PRIDE? What is different? Surely it's just another project, another attempt to 'fix' the problems. We've seen it all before." And my response? The PRIDE team believes the Project is different to those that have gone before.

So what is unique about PRIDE?

- *First*, it was designed by the Ministers for Education of the region. It is their project. The members of the PRIDE team ultimately are accountable to them. We report to the Ministers, both at their annual meetings and through the Forum Secretariat.

- *Second*, the acronym of

the project is profoundly significant. We encourage each country to build its education plans and curricula on a strong foundation of local cultures, languages, and epistemologies. All Pacific students should have a deep pride in their own values, traditions and wisdoms, and a clear sense of their own local cultural and national identities.

- *Third*, there is strong emphasis on mutual collaboration and support amongst the countries. It is about countries helping each other. Earlier projects brought consultants from outside the region. PRIDE will find consultants within the region. And we will fund Pacific educators to go on study and training visits to each other's countries, not outside the Pacific.

- *Fourth*, the Project will encourage consultative and

participatory approaches to educational planning within each country; reform of education should not be a top-down process, but bottom-up, involving parents, teachers, students, private providers, NGOs, employers and other civil society groups.

- *And finally*, the Project strongly encourages a holistic approach to education, with effective articulation between each sector (pre-school; elementary/primary; secondary; TVET) and between education and the world of work.

The PRIDE team looks forward to working with educators and communities across the Pacific to support this most important of enterprises, the education of our children and youth.

*Dr. Bob Teasdale,
Director of PRIDE*

Launching of the PRIDE Project

The PRIDE Project was officially launched in Suva, Fiji, on 14 May 2004, by the Honourable Afioga Fiame Naomi Mata'afa, Minister of Education, Samoa.

The PRIDE project is expected to run until the end of 2008. The PRIDE team is located on the Laucala Campus of the University of the South Pacific. We can be found in a new building adjacent to USP Library and the Halls of Residence (photo to the right) which was jointly opened by officials from the European Union and New Zealand AID on March 23, 2004.



Please visit us at
www.usp.ac.fj/pride

Civil Society and educators interact during PRIDE's Regional Workshop

The PRIDE team hosted its first regional workshop at the Waterfront Hotel in Lautoka, Fiji, from 1-8 September, 2004.

Participants included all of our National Project Coordinators together with education data managers from each of the fifteen participating countries.

- To develop stronger social, cultural and personal bonds amongst participants, thereby encouraging a more collaborative, mutually supportive and pan-Pacific approach to educational planning and paving the way for PRIDE-sponsored study, training and consultative visits between countries;



Participants and Dr. Priscilla Puamau (centre), PRIDE Education Adviser, sharing a lighter moment during the workshop

patory approaches to educational planning, especially in the broader context of civil society.

The final two days of the workshop included two shared sessions with participants at a workshop on the role of civil society in the development of educational policy. This regional group

was meeting in Nadi at the same time, under the sponsorship of the Asian South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education (ASPBAE), Pacific Civil Society Organizations Education Policy Development Participation Project, funded by NZAID.

Our workshop could not have been successful without the contributions of the three staff members of the Institute of Education: Mr. Henry Elder who assisted with organisation of the workshop and looked after all of the day-to-day logistics; Dr. Seu'ula Johansson Fua, our workshop evaluator, whose memorable presentation ensured that the participants did not lose focus of the specific objectives of the workshop, namely that it must be grounded in Pacific values; and Ms. Vasiti Nalatu whose administrative support ensured that all the daily notes were readily available to the participants.

The PRIDE team thanks all participants (photo on page 4) for a successful workshop.



The Director, Dr. Bob Teasdale (centre), during a group session with regional participants

The workshop was designed:

- To brief the PRIDE National Project Coordinators (NPC) on their roles and responsibilities to ensure their full and effective participation in the life and work of the Project;

- To provide training for the NPCs and data managers in strategic planning methodologies for education, and in appropriate techniques for the collection, analysis and management of educational data for planning purposes;
- To explore and document consultative and partici-

Titilia Uluiviti: The first member of the PRIDE team

Titilia, from Natauloa, Nairai in the Lomaiviti Group, Fiji is the longest serving staff member of the PRIDE team.

She began working with the Institute of Education on October 27, 2003 with the task of organising events leading to the appointment of remaining staff and the establishment of the PRIDE office.

Titilia now has completed almost one year as a PRIDE staff member in her position as Administrative Assistant. She considers it a blessing to have been selected for the post.

"I love this job because it is interesting, she said. "I look forward to coming to work every day and enjoy

working with my boss and colleagues".

Learning to do a variety of things is something she also likes about PRIDE. She particularly likes the interaction she has with students who often visit PRIDE as part of their course work.

Usually, Titilia will be the first person one sees upon arrival at the PRIDE office. She is quite prepared to answer questions from students and curious passers-by.

Since PRIDE is new to the University and the region she stated that the first two questions asked are "what is PRIDE about and does PRIDE only serve Fiji?" This often serves to remind her of the geographical representa-



Ms. Titilia Uluiviti

tion of the university students and she ensures that her colleagues are aware of the close scrutiny the project undergoes from students and others on campus.

The benefits associated with working at USP, including the opportunity for further studies, is something that Titilia also values. She intends to enrol part-time in a degree programme as part of capacity building. Titilia also uses every opportunity to learn from her colleagues as well.

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Palau's education system addressed career development innovatively

PRIDE Project Director, Bob Teasdale, describes his visit to the Republic of Palau as one of his most memorable experiences this year.

"The innovative and thoughtfully planned approach to secondary education was especially impressive", he said.

One of the most best features of the Palau education system is its attention to career development. All students are required to remain at school until the end of the twelfth and final year.

In **Grade 9** they take a compulsory career development course that includes field trips to work sites, guest lectures, computer studies, a business academy, and the study of occupation options and job requirements. In **Grade 10** all students complete a *Workplace Skills* program focusing on communication, ICT and workplace skills development.

In **Grade 11** students select a *Career Academy* from one of five options: business; natural resources; automotive; construction and tourism. Within the academies they learn specialised skills and gain considerable hands-on experience. A full week is spent in a workplace setting. Instructors from the community college come in



Bob Teasdale (front centre) with Hon Mario Katosang (front right), Mr Emery Wenty, PRIDE National Project Coordinator (rear left), Mr Raynold Mechol (rear right) and other senior staff of the Ministry of Education, following their meeting on one of Palau's famous rock islands

to the schools to assist with the academics.

At **Grade 12** students continue with further academy based courses in their selected

"The innovative and thoughtfully planned approach to secondary education was especially impressive",

area, and participate in a one semester career practicum where they work four afternoons per week in an appropriate workplace.

Motivated students can fast track through high school and complete one semester ahead of schedule. Most students are able to earn credits during their

high school studies towards TVET programs, many gaining as much as one semester of credit.

The articulation between secondary school and tertiary education is impressive, as are relationships between the Ministry of Education and the private sector. The workplace programs receive strong support from local businesses.

Dr. Teasdale had several very productive meetings with the Minister of Education, Hon. Mario Katosang, the Director of Education, Mr Emery Wenty, and senior staff of the Ministry. His final meeting with them, on his last day in Palau, was the most memora-

ble.

He was asked to prepare for it by wearing old and casual clothing. On arrival at the Ministry, after an early breakfast, he was immediately taken to the nearby wharf, where one of the Department's speedboats was waiting. An ice box of soft drinks was quickly loaded, and the Minister, the Director, and five of their staff, joined him on a tour of the nearby rock islands.

Palau's rock islands are one of the great environmental treasures of the Pacific. Spectacularly beautiful, they are set in pristine waters within a sheltering reef, and are home to a rich diversity of marine life.

After about forty minutes of stunning sightseeing, the group headed to a small beach on one of the islands, with simple picnic tables under overhanging trees. There they settled down for a totally relaxed yet profound discussion about the future of education in Palau, and about the role that the PRIDE Project might play in supporting curriculum change.

Dr. Teasdale describes the team in Palau, which is relatively young, energetic and has a very practical vision for education in Palau: "They are strongly committed to quality learning, and to preparing their young people for the global world of work. Yet they are equally committed to ensuring that they have a deep sense of their cultural and national identity".

National PRIDE Project Coordinators

To support the implementation of the Project, each country has appointed a national project coordinator (NPC). The NPCs are expected to:

- coordinate the activities of PRIDE at national level;
- act as the liaison person between the national government and PRIDE;
- be the contact person for all Project activities in-country;
- Coordinate the development and implementation of national sub-projects, including the preparation of proposals, oversight of funding, financial reporting, monitoring and evaluation, and report preparation.

We welcome our NPC colleagues to the PRIDE family and look forward to a fruitful relationship.

Country	Officer	Job Title
Cook Islands	Ms. Repeta Puna	Director of Policy and Planning
Federated States of Micronesia	Mr. Aier Willyander	Post Secondary Administrator
Fiji	Mr. Filipe Jitoko	Deputy Secretary for Education
Kiribati	Mr. Matana Anterea	Education Officer Primary & Junior Secondary
Marshall Islands	Ms. Glorina Harris	Acting Assistant Secretary for Elementary Education
Nauru	Mr. Jarden Kephas	Secretary for Education
Niue	Ms. Tiva Toeono	Director of Education
Palau	Mr. Emery Wenty	Director of Education
Papau New Guinea	Mr. Uke Kombra	Assistant Secretary- Planning Facilitating & Monitoring Division
Samoa	Mrs. Doreen Roebeck – Tuala	Assistant Chief Education Officer for Curriculum, Material & Assessment Division
Solomon Islands	Mrs. Mylyn Kuve	Director, Planning, Coordination & Research Unit
Tokelau	Ms Lili Tuioti	Education Advisor
Tonga	Mr Tatafu Moeaki	Deputy Director of Education
Tuvalu	Mr. David Manuella	Director of Education
Vanuatu	Mr. Antoine Thyna	Policy Analyst
<i>Partner Organisation</i>		
South Pacific Board for Educational Assessment	Dr. Visesio Pongi	Director

PRIDE FAQs: Frequently Asked Questions

In this issue the PRIDE team answers some of the most common questions we are asked about the Project. If you have other questions, please write to us (pride@usp.ac.fj) and they will be addressed in forthcoming issues.

What do you mean by *basic education*?

Originally, basic education was used to describe education in the basics: i.e., literacy and numeracy, or the 3Rs.

Then people broadened its use to include all education in the early years of life: pre-school, elementary; primary.

However, the Forum Ministers of Education have adopted an even broader and more useful definition. In their Forum Basic Education Action Plan (FBEAP), and in the PRIDE Project, they define it as all education for children and youth, both formal and non-formal, except for higher education. It therefore includes education at all levels: pre-school; elementary/primary; secondary; and Technical & Vocational Education & Training (TVET).

This is a new and very significant definition for the Pacific because it emphasises education as a holistic process. For too long, education has been fragmented into its various levels, but countries are now being encouraged to see it in a unified way, and to plan accordingly.

The Project therefore will give special attention to the articulation between the various sectors: between pre-school and elementary/primary; between elementary/primary and secondary; between secondary and TVET; and between formal and non-formal. Our aim is to help smooth the dislocations between the sectors, so that education becomes a more

integrated or seamless process.

Basic education also is defined as preparation for life and work in Pacific communities. Effective articulation between school and work, and TVET and work, therefore are very important. And work here need not just refer to paid employment, but to self-reliance and self-sufficiency.

What exactly will PRIDE do?

The Financing Agreement (FA) signed between the Forum (on behalf of the Ministers of Education), the European Union and NZAID sets out exactly what we are expected to do. You can find a copy of the FA on our website (www.usp.ac.fj/pride). Our annual workplan, also on the website, sets out in more detail what we are doing this year. In summary, we have been asked to:

- help each country develop comprehensive strategic plans for education, covering both formal and non-formal education, and to help ensure that the plans are fully and realistically budgeted. The plans should focus on producing specific results, be realistic and achievable, and formulated after wide consultation with all stakeholders;
- develop a set of minimum standard criteria, or benchmarks, that can be used as part of a constructive and collaborative review of each country's strategic plans;
- support the implementation of key priority areas of the plans by funding national sub-projects;
- establish a regional education online resource centre that provides access to a wide range of educational data and resources, thus encouraging the sharing of best practice and experience

amongst countries; and

- provide technical assistance and training to assist countries to improve their planning processes, including the collection, analysis and management of data for planning purposes, and to ensure effective monitoring and evaluation of their plans.

What are the national sub-projects?

More than half of the total PRIDE funding will be available to countries for sub-projects. The sub-projects are designed to support the implementation of the national strategic plans for education. Each country will need to decide its key areas of priority and need, and then design a project, or projects, that respond to these.

The Financing Agreement sets out several important features of the sub-projects:

- they should be in those priority areas identified by Ministers in the Forum Basic Education Action Plan (FBEAP);
- funding will not be provided for infrastructure, major items of equipment, or recurrent expenditure;
- they should not be too long-term; i.e., they need to be completed within the timeframe of the PRIDE Project;
- in order to consolidate a regional body of expertise, they should clearly demonstrate potential benefit for several of the other countries of the region;
- they will be implemented in full consultation with stakeholders;
- they should harmonise with all other in-country donor activity and support; and
- finally, and most importantly, there should be a strong sense of country

ownership.

How do countries apply for sub-project funding?

The National PRIDE Project Coordinators (NPC) have responsibility for coordinating the preparation of sub-project proposals. Once a country has developed its strategic plans for education, the NPC will work consultatively with her/his colleagues, and with stakeholders, to decide priorities, and to design sub-projects that will have maximum benefit for their country.

Acknowledgements

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Joanna Olsson (Nauru) and Naziah Ali (Fiji), journalism students at USP for contributions to articles.

Sheryl Ho of the Public Relations Department for advising us in all those "little things" that novices overlook.

The PRIDE Project has seven staff. Photographs showing three of them are shown on page 2. The remaining staff are shown below:



Mr. Epeli Tokai
Education Adviser



Mr. Mahendra Singh
Project Manager



Ms. Libby Cass
Information Specialist



Mr. Leonaitasi Taukafa
Accountant

Group photo of participants from PRIDE first Regional Workshop (article on page 2)

