

# Pacific Pride

Issue 3

The Newsletter of the PRIDE Project

May 2005

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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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ISSN#: 1813-0216

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## From the Director

Staff of the PRIDE Project have had a busy start to 2005. We have been working closely with several countries to help develop their strategic plans for the education sector, including Cook Islands, Nauru, Tokelau and Tuvalu. We have assisted other countries, especially Fiji and Samoa, to review existing plans and to prepare for the next planning cycle.

A second important role of the PRIDE Project is the funding of in-country sub-projects. In fact, more than half of our total allocation of funds from the EU and NZ is available for this purpose. At the moment this amounts to about FJ\$12 million.

The aim here is to assist countries to implement key priority areas of their strategic plans. Ideally these will be areas where significant reforms are taking place.

What are 'sub-projects'? We think of them as *pilot projects*, or *action-research projects*, or *implementation projects*. They should help countries:

- to put new educational ideas into practice;
- to develop new curricula;

- to test an innovation and decide on its feasibility; or
- to trial how best to implement a particular reform.

For example, if a country wishes to bring TVET or life skills and livelihood programs into the secondary school curriculum, it may be helpful to begin this reform in just one or two schools. In this way you can devise the most suitable curriculum and the most effective teaching methods before you implement the reform across the whole country.

Another example: you may wish to develop a more community based approach to the early childhood curriculum, especially in relation to the teaching of vernacular literacy. Again, you may want to test your ideas and approaches in just two or three settings, piloting teaching materials and methodologies ahead of wider implementation.

Pilot projects such as these are ideal for sub-project funding. They will help you find the best ways to implement your reforms. And having done this, they become examples of best practice,

with staff from other schools coming to observe and learn. They also can become exemplars for the rest of the region.

Ideally we would like to document the achievements of your sub-projects, either in print or video, share them with colleagues in other countries, and use them as training resources in teacher education programs.

It is important to note that the PRIDE Project is **not** just another funding agency. The sub-projects are **not** designed simply to fill gaps in your program of donor assistance. They have been designed to help you put your high priority reforms into practice.

The good news is that funding is ready and waiting for immediate distribution once a sub-project has been approved. We do look forward to working with our National PRIDE Project Coordinators in each country to ensure high quality proposals. ■

Dr. Bob Teasdale,  
Director of PRIDE

## A busy first quarter in 2005

Staff of the PRIDE Project have had a busy start to 2005. In addition to two regional workshops held in February and a national workshop in Vanuatu in March, we have been working closely with Cook Islands, Fiji, Nauru, Samoa, Tokelau and Tuvalu on the review and/or development of their strategic plans for education.

Epeli Tokai is continuing to assist Cook Islands with the development of 5- and 15-year strategic plans for its education sector. Unfortunately progress has been slowed by the impact of the 4 cyclones that struck Cook Islands with such destructive consequences in February and March.

In Fiji, the Project funded 6 mini-conferences as part of preparations for a major Education Summit, to take place in Suva at the end of August.



The Minister for Education in Tuvalu, Hon. Dr. Teluka signing the MoU with our Tuvalu NPC, Ms Taloka, as witness.

Held from 8 to 10 March, the aim of the mini-conferences was to consult stakeholders on the findings of taskforces that are preparing detailed briefings for the summit. PRIDE Education Adviser, Epeli Tokai, also has been helping the MoE Planning Unit to review the current strategic plan in preparation for the August Summit.

The Project sponsored a visit to Suva by a planning team from Nauru from 14 to 17 February. The Permanent Secretary, Jarden Kephas, together with the Director of Education and the Co-ordinator of the CASE Unit, spent four days workshoping the draft of their new 3-year strategic plan with the PRIDE Project team, and reviewing it in light of the PRIDE benchmarks. The plan now has been approved by cabinet and is awaiting sign-off by the Minister.

Samoa is in the final year of its current 10-year strategic planning cycle, and is beginning the preparation of its next 10-year plan. As a first step, the achievements of the last 10 years are being reviewed against the goals and targets set by the present plan. This task is being funded by the PRIDE

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# UNESCO and the PRIDE Project work together to build the capacities of Education Data Managers in the region

The PRIDE Project worked closely with the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) in Montreal, and with its Australian consultant, Brian Doyle, to organise and deliver a regional workshop on Education Statistics and Data Management.

Data managers from 14 countries came to Apia from 31 January to 11 February 2005. Epeli Tokai represented the PRIDE Project, assisting Brian Doyle with delivery of the workshop.

The PRIDE Project also funded the participation of Raynold Mechol as a resource person. Ray is Chief, Division of Research & Evaluation, in the Palau Ministry of Education, and also the PRIDE National Project Coordinator in Palau. The other resource people were Ko-Chih Tung and Nyi Nyi Thuang from UNESCO in Bangkok, and Paul Meredith from the Samoa Ministry of Finance.

The aim of the workshop was to further develop the knowledge and skills gained during the PRIDE regional



From L-R: Christopher Person (RMI), Tryphosa Keke (Nauru), Bernice Elechuss (Palau) and Brian Doyle (UNESCO).

workshop in Lautoka in September 2004, and to build the capacities of statistics officers from the Ministries of Education in the region.

Topics covered during the workshop included design of questionnaires, data collection, data entry and systems, through to analysis and publication of results. The workshop also

touched on the calculation of performance indicators for education, measuring the costs of education, and the dissemination of information, including the use of the Pacific Region Information System.

There was clearly a strong spirit of commitment, sharing and hard work amongst the participants at the work-

shop. Brian Doyle, with Epeli and Raynold's support, provided effective input and leadership using a participatory approach. The workshop was very successful overall, building effectively on the outcomes of the Lautoka workshop.

The workshop provided a forum for countries to learn from each other, participants sharing problems and discussing possible solutions. They also set up mutual support networks so they could continue helping each other during coming months.

One highlight was the time that participants spent together in small groups working on their action plans. The aim was to help everyone improve their current data management systems so they could return home and put into practice better ways of collecting, analysing and reporting on national education statistics.

The 15 countries in the region still face big challenges as they seek to improve their Education Management Information Systems. Each country needs timely, relevant and accurate information that can inform decision-makers and assist policy development.

PRIDE will continue to work with those countries that seek assistance. In particular, we hope to strengthen the capacities of the four smallest states (Tokelau, Tonga, Niue and Nauru), and to further strengthen the mutual support network that has developed amongst the Melanesian states (Fiji, PNG, Solomon Island, and Vanuatu). ■

## Mahendra Singh: Our very own PM

Our Project Manager (PM), Mahendra Singh, is the true 'world citizen' of the PRIDE team. He is Guyanese by birth and upbringing, Canadian by citizenship, a resident of Fiji, and has a partner and son who are citizens of Portugal. Add to that a distant ancestry in India, and he spans four continents, as well as the Pacific Ocean.

Whenever Mahendra mentions Guyana, most people need to go off and check their world atlas to find exactly where it is. Officially part of the West Indies, it is in fact in the northeast of continental South America. Like many parts of the Pacific, it has been deeply influenced by its British colonial legacy, one consequence being Mahendra's great interest in all things to do with the sport of cricket.

Speaking of sport, Mahendra is also a very keen long distance cyclist and runner, and can often be seen around Suva, or on the road to Pacific Harbour, extending his already high level of fitness. His most recent passion is triathlon, and he is now diversifying his fitness training at the national aquatic centre.

Mahendra has worked as a Project Manager, Senior Administrator, Research Analyst and Finance Consultant for over ten years, and in several parts of the world: New York, Guyana, Canada, and now Fiji.

For seven of these years he worked for the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) in the management and delivery of Canadian development assistance programs in the Caribbean. The range and depth of experience he brings to the PRIDE Project is truly impressive. No wonder the PRIDE team boast that they have one of the best managed projects in the Pacific!

Academically Mahendra's qualifications are equally impressive. After finishing high school in Guyana, he moved to the City University of New York, completing a BSc *cum laude* in Mathematics, and then an MA in Operations Research. Subsequently, while working in Canada, he did an MBA majoring in Finance at Wilfrid Laurier University.

Not content with working Mondays to Fridays with the PRIDE Project, Mahendra spends an occasional Saturday as a guest lecturer in the



MBA program at USP. In fact, he feels increasingly drawn to the academic life. On completion of his contract in 2007 he expects to move with his family to Brussels, and to embark on a PhD focusing on how countries make the transition from developing to developed status.

In the meantime he continues to enjoy life and work in Suva, and sees significant benefits for his young son Kiran growing up in the Pacific. Like most children here, the development of Kiran's social skills is very well advanced. And even though he is only 4 years old, Kiran already is trilingual, able to move comfortably between the Fijian, English and Portuguese languages. ■

## Countries Update

We are pleased to note that 14 of our 15 member Countries have signed Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) with the PRIDE Project (photo pg 1). The signing of an MoU is the first step in a country becoming eligible for sub-project funding from the project. We have begun the implementation of a sub-project with Samoa and we are currently finalizing projects with Papua New Guinea, Nauru, Cook Islands, and the Kingdom of Tonga.

Currently, the 6 countries that have submitted requests for office equipment are well established to work with the project. We have recently received requests from 5 other countries and we are working to facilitate their requests.



# Nauru: New curriculum shifts the focus away from the teacher to the learner

A workshop to develop a new curriculum took place in Nauru from 4 to 8 April. It was organised by the Department of Education and attended by over 150 teachers, principals, librarians, teacher-aides and headquarters staff. Priscilla Puamau, PRIDE Education Adviser, also attended the workshop. She was invited as a 'critical friend', providing both formative and summative evaluation.

It was the second in a series of professional development workshops focusing on the Nauru New Basics Curriculum. The new curriculum seeks to shift the focus away from the teacher to the learner. It also seeks to shift the focus away from content to process-based learning. The role of the teacher as a facilitator of learning is central to the reform process.

Two experienced educators from Australia assisted. Paul Sutton and Michelle Williams are both working on the implementation of a new basics curriculum in local communities in far north Queensland. They helped partici-



Participants deep in concentration during a group session at the workshop in Nauru.

pants to gain a more in-depth understanding of the concept and practice of *Rich Tasks* and *Productive Pedagogies*.

In essence, the Nauru New Basics Curriculum has three components:

- the curriculum – what will be taught;
- the *Rich Tasks* – how students

learn, and how they demonstrate what they can do; and

- *Productive Pedagogies* – how teachers facilitate learning.

An important outcome of the workshop was the production of Nauruan *Rich Tasks* for trialling in schools in Term II. Topics such as 'Natural disasters', 'Financial literacy', 'The role of agriculture' and 'The tree of life: the coconut tree', are samples of *Rich Task* activities.

The Honourable Baron Waqa,

Minister for Education, in closing the workshop, stressed that the Government views education as the main vehicle for getting Nauru back on its feet. He highlighted the importance of government-teacher partnerships. Commitment by teachers to the new curriculum reform process was viewed as necessary for its success.

Miriam Deidenang, Year 4 teacher at Aiwo Primary School, described the reform process as a "new way of teaching, as something new". She added that after two years, the teachers may be experts and could take the new curriculum out to other Pacific countries. She was excited since "students would be more involved in their own learning and would enjoy themselves more". However, Miriam noted that the new reform "needs parents' support" and that getting them involved in their children's learning would be a huge challenge.

The Librarian at Kayser College, Bereka Amwano, also saw the workshop as something good as it "changed students' style of learning". She added that "as Librarian, I can help the students by getting resources for their topic". She also saw this as an opportunity for students to read more. ■

## Learning how to train

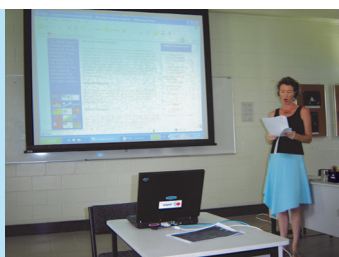
PRIDE participated in a different kind of workshop during March. Our Information Specialist, Libby Cass spent 8 days in Samoa at an Information & Communication Technology (ICT) Train the Trainers Workshop & Symposium.

*Pacific Women's Electronic Network Training* or *PacWENT* was facilitated and co-coordinated by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community's Pacific Women's Bureau (SPC-PWB). It was co-funded by SPC and the Global Knowledge Partnership, or GKP.

*PacWENT* brought together a diverse range of participants, and was designed to:

- assist participants to design and implement ICT trainings with a gender perspective;
- make them better trainers; and
- promote collaboration and resource sharing among women ICT trainers in the region.

One of 13 women from eight Pacific Islands countries Libby flew the PRIDE flag while in Samoa. Libby played a dual role as active participant, there to learn how to best develop & deliver effective ICT training for the PRIDE resource



Libby presenting PRIDE's web portal.

centre. As a trainer, Libby delivered a session on copyright, provided training in internet research techniques and facilitated group discussions.

She also found the time to deliver a presentation on the PRIDE Project and its capacity to improve education, particularly ICT education. The inclusion of ICT in the PRIDE benchmarks and the need for countries' education strategic plans to be developed using these benchmarks provides hope for an improvement in ICT education in Pacific schools.

Libby will use the skills & experience gained to develop, implement & deliver training related to the PRIDE Resource Centre, its collection & services. For more information on our Resource Centre visit the website:

[http://www.usp.ac.fj/index.php/pride\\_resourcecentre/](http://www.usp.ac.fj/index.php/pride_resourcecentre/). ■

## Busy Start in 2005

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Project. **Dr 'Ana Taufe'ulungaki**, Director, IOE, and **Mr Abel Nako**, former Director General of Education, Vanuatu, have been recruited as consultants, and will spend up to 7 weeks in Samoa conducting the evaluation and identifying priority areas for the next 10-year plan.

At the end of January, Epeli Tokai spent a week in the Tokelau Office in Apia working with **Lili Tuioiti** on preparation of the first draft of a 3-year education strategic plan for **Tokelau**. The plan built on the outcomes of community consultations, and a teachers' workshop, as described in our last newsletter. Following further consultations and revisions, the plan is now ready for presentation to the *fono*.

In February, PRIDE sponsored a visit to Suva by the Minister, Permanent Secretary, and Acting Director of Education & Sports from **Tuvalu**. They spent 22 February at a

workshop convened by PRIDE, and attended by donor agencies including EU, NZAID, AusAID, JICA and staff of the Suva ADB office. The workshop reviewed the current status of donor assistance to the education sector, explored opportunities for donor harmonisation and project integration, and discussed a forthcoming Education Donor Round Table to be held at Motufoua Sec'dary School on Vaitupu.

Consultations with the **Tuvalu** delegation led to the PRIDE Project agreeing to fund the preparation of an Implementation Plan for the Ministry. Based on a desk study of existing documentation, and consultations in Tuvalu, the Plan will be the key planning paper for the Donor Round Table. **Dr Colin Hindson**, formerly Director of Tuvalu Australia Education Support Project, was recruited to prepare the Plan in close consultation with colleagues in Tuvalu. After three days of workshops led by Dr Hindson in Funafuti, the Plan was approved by the Minister on 14 April. ■

# PRIDE Regional Workshop II: Language Policies & Education in the Pacific



Participants and USP staff at our 2nd Regional Workshop held in Suva. Front row, L-R: Dr Geraghty (4th), Dr Taufe'ulungaki (7th), Dr Kamene (8th), Dr Salas (9th), Dr Mugler (10th), Ms Lameta (11th); and Dr Taumoeofolau (2nd to last in back row).

What languages should be used in schools? By whom? For what purposes? At what level of the education system?

With *Language Policies & Education* as the theme, these were the key issues discussed at the second PRIDE Project regional workshop held in Suva from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> February 2005. The convener was Dr 'Ana Taufe'ulungaki, Director of the Institute of Education. Nineteen regional participants came together to deliberate on language policy development in relation to language choices, language maintenance, codification & standardisation, and languages in education.

Four prominent language experts representing the region participated as resource people. They were Dr

Marilyn Salas (University of Guam), Dr Melenaita Taumoeofolau (University of Auckland), Dr Sakarepe Kamene (University of Papua New Guinea), and Elaine Lameta (Samoa). Dr France Mugler and Dr Paul Geraghty from the University of the South Pacific also provided their expertise and advice.

The four objectives of the workshop were:

- to assist PRIDE member states re-think their language policies in education;
- to help each country develop a language policy strategy framework;
- to identify and discuss critical language policy issues in education in the Pacific; and
- to provide opportunities to raise issues, share concerns and recommend future national and

regional actions and strategies.

Participants engaged in exciting, relevant, meaningful and radical conversations about the place of vernacular languages in Pacific schools, communities and island nations. They were challenged to rethink the use of the vernacular as the language of instruction, and as the cognitive language of the classroom. They also developed first drafts of their national language policy frameworks.

The outcomes of the workshop, including papers presented by the consultants and summaries of workgroup discussions, are being prepared for publication in a book to be released by the PRIDE Project later in 2005. This book, the second in our series, will be available online on the PRIDE website. ■

## Personnel Changes

After 15 months with us, our Administrative Assistant, **Titilia Uluiviti**, decided to move on, taking up a position in January as secretary to the head of the World Wildlife Fund in Fiji. Titilia was a valued and hard working member of the PRIDE team, and we were very sorry to see her leave. We wish her well in her new position, and send her a very big thankyou for creating a friendly and efficient office.

Our new Administrative Assistant, albeit on a temporary basis, is **Marlie Rota**, who worked previously with the Secretariat for the Pacific Community (SPC) in Suva.

We also have been notified of two changes of PRIDE National Project Coordinators. In Tonga, we bid farewell to **Tatafu Moeaki**, and welcome **Kalolaine Moeaki**, who recently returned to the Tongan Ministry of Education after successfully completing full-time post-graduate (MBA) study at USP in Suva.

In Niue, we have been advised that, due to staffing changes in the Ministry of Education, a new NPC has been appointed. We bid a sad farewell to **Tiva Toeono**, and thank her for her lively and proactive contributions at meetings and workshops, and wish her well as she takes on new challenges. We are pleased to advise that our new NPC in Niue is **Loseligi Siakimotu**, Director of Education.

We warmly welcome both of our new NPCs, and look forward to working with them.

## Tri-lingual workshop in Vanuatu a great success

The key priority of the 2004 Vanuatu education strategic plan is the extension of basic education from Class 6 to Class 8. The reform requires development of a new curriculum for the extra two years of compulsory schooling, and the preparation of teachers to teach this new curriculum.

PRIDE agreed to fund a national workshop to help implement the reform. The workshop was designed to prepare staff who will develop and deliver a new in-service program for up to 200 teachers.

The workshop ran from 7 to 11 March. Priscilla Puamau and Bob Teasdale were the facilitators, together with the PRIDE NPC in Vanuatu, Antoine Thyna, the Principal of the Vanuatu Institute for Teacher



L-R: Mr Eldin, Mr Royeres, the Minister for Sports and Youth Opportunities, Hon. Mr Prasad, Dr Teasdale, Dr Puamau, and M. Keteca

Education, Jacques Gédéon, and the Head of the Inspectors' Unit, Charley Robert. There were 35 participants.

A key feature was the idea of a tri-lingual workshop allowing equal

participation of Anglophone and Francophone participants, and the use of Bislama as a common language for work groups. This was the first time that the Vanuatu MoE had ever attempted a joint Anglophone/Francophone workshop. Previously the two systems have operated quite independently.

To help ensure a balanced program, the PRIDE Project helped fund the participation of staff from L'Institut Universitaire de Formation des Maitres (IUFM) du Pacifique in Noumea, including Mr Pascal Royeres (Director of Pedagogy), Mr Wapone Kawidrone (Lecturer) and Mr Bruno Eldin (Lecturer).

At the end of the workshop it was unanimously agreed by all present that the workshop had been fully successful

in achieving a balanced and effective blend of Francophone and Anglophone perspectives.

At the core of the workshop were seven workgroups that met for two extended periods each day to develop handbooks for a series of in-service courses. Importantly, the main focus of the handbooks was not on course content, but on methods of course delivery.

Another valuable feature was the participation of Mr Jone Keteca from the Curriculum Development Centre, Fiji MoE. Mr Keteca had played a key role in the delivery of the BEMTUP Project in Fiji, and given its close similarities to the current reforms in Vanuatu, his detailed case study and his overview of the BEMTUP training materials proved invaluable resources to participants. ■

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