

Pacific Pride

Issue 8

The Newsletter of the PRIDE Project

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

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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PRIDE regional TVET workshop in Palau a great success

Currently in the Pacific there is much debate about the place of TVET in secondary schools. In the past, secondary education has been largely academic, catering mainly for students who aspire to white-collar jobs or entry to university.

As a result more and more students are being pushed out of the school system without the necessary skills for employment.

In looking for solutions, the PRIDE Project ran a 6½ day workshop on the topic: **The role of TVET in Pacific secondary schools: new visions; new pathways.** It was held in Palau from 15 to 22 November 2006, with 36 senior educators attending.

Although the workshop was organised for the 15 PRIDE countries, participants also attended from Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas, thanks to the newly forged partnership between PRIDE and PREL.

The aim of the workshop was to reconceptualise the place of vocational education in secondary schools, and to explore strategies for integrating TVET programs into the curriculum in a more holistic way.

The workshop was organised and funded by the PRIDE Project in collaboration with the UNESCO International Centre for TVET (UNEVOC) in Bonn, the Pacific Association of Vocational Education and Training (PATVET), and the Palau Ministry of Education.

Dr Rupert MacLean, the Director of UNEVOC, and **Mr Perive Lene**, President of PATVET, were the two resource



The Honorable Camsek Chin, Vice President of the Republic of Palau, with PRIDE Accountant Tasi Taukafa, at the opening of the workshop

people for the workshop. In addition, **Dr Akhila Nand Sharma**, Head of the USP School of Education, played the important role of 'critical friend', providing formative and summative evaluations.

Specifically, the objectives of the workshop were:

- to review contemporary global thinking about the role of TVET in secondary schools and examine the implications of these new ideas for the Pacific
- to reconceptualise vocational education in the Pacific, especially from the perspective of local cultures and traditional ways of imparting skills for life and work
- to explore the integration of TVET, life skills and academic subjects into the secondary school using a more holistic approach
- to consider alternative pathways from school-based TVET to the world of work, not only in the context of paid employment but also of self-sufficiency, self reliance and self-employment

- to examine the interface between school-based and post-school TVET, and between formal and non-formal TVET provisions

- to recommend strategies for the implementation and delivery of TVET programs that are inclusive of best practices from local, regional and global perspectives

The workshop took a highly interactive approach. All participants spent at least half of each day in intensive group discussions, and contributed intellectually and professionally to generating new ideas and knowledge.

One full day of the workshop was devoted to a case study of TVET in Palau, with extended visits to Palau High School, Airai Elementary School, and Palau Community College. The visits showcased an integrated approach to vocational education, beginning in elementary school, proceeding to career academies and work experience in high school, and moving on to the Community College, often with up to one semester of credit earned from high school programs.

On Saturday morning the Fiji participants used audio-visual resources to provide case studies on the teaching of TVET in Fiji secondary schools and the link with the Fiji Institute of Technology. They provided several models of TVET at the secondary level.

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Dr Rupert MacLean, Director of the UNESCO International Centre for TVET, in serious discussion with PRIDE Project Director, Dr Bob Teasdale



Palau's Minister for Education, Honorable Mario Katosang (centre), shares a light moment with two of the workshop organisers, Raynold Mechol (on left) and Emery Wenty, Palau's Director of Education (on right) at an evening reception on the first day of the workshop



PATVET President, Mr Perive Lene, from Samoa, talking with PREL Board Member, Ms Zita Pangelinan, from Guam, at the opening of the workshop

Overall, the workshop was a Mr Emery Wenty, deserves great success. The participants special thanks for his left Palau satisfied with the leadership in the knowledge gained from the preparatory phase and workshop. The PRIDE Project during the workshop itself. is deeply grateful for the Our sincere thanks also support and commitment to the Chief of Research received from the Palau and Evaluation, Mr Raynold Ministry of Education, and Mechold, who assisted with from the Minister, the day-to-day running of Honourable Mario Katosang. the workshop, along with The Director of Education, Tasi Taukafa and Epeli who is also the PRIDE Tokai from the PRIDE National Project Coordinator, team. ■

PRIDE's first visit to Tokelau



(from left) Lili Tuioti, Betty Cokanasiga from SPBEA, Tessa Kirifi (Tokelau Director for Education) and Priscilla Puamau, on Atafu Atoll

they discussed the development issues that confront them.

Dr Priscilla Puamau, education adviser, represented the PRIDE Project in an innovative initiative that is an example to donors and development partners on how productive partnerships can be developed with Pacific countries.

On 18 November 2006, representatives from 11 regional organisations converged in Samoa to make a journey to Tokelau to draw up a coordinated 3 to 5 year plan of action by their organisations in answer to Tokelau's national development priorities.

After two years of trying to reach our least accessible country, a member of the PRIDE team was finally able to secure a berth on board the *Lady Naomi*, and not only experience the challenges of sea travel, but more importantly to listen to the people from the three atolls of Tokelau as

This Tokelau visit was exciting and insightful. It brought together five UN organisations based in the Pacific (UNDP, UNICEF, UNESCO, UNIFEM, WHO), together with the SPC, SPREP and SOPAC. USP, SPBEA and the PRIDE Project also were invited to join the mission.

Sea travel is the only mode of transport to and from Tokelau, with the closest port of call being Samoa. Priscilla reports that, "It was an enriching experience to actually step foot on each of the three atolls of Tokelau, and to see and hear at first-hand the priorities and challenges that Tokelauans experience in their daily lives."

The outcome of this mission will be a coordinated medium term action plan articulated by the Tokelau people themselves and setting out their key priorities. This will then be a key document that Tokelau will take to New Zealand when negotiating

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Leonaitasi Taukafa: our multi-talented PRIDE accountant

Born on the small island of 'Eua in Tonga, and educated in Tonga, New Zealand and Fiji, Leonaitasi Taukafa, better known to us all as Tasi, joined the PRIDE Project on 1st April 2004.

His regional and international experiences began long before he joined PRIDE, beginning with secondary and tertiary studies in New Zealand and Fiji, and in one of his first jobs in Tonga as an officer in the International Section of the ANZ Bank.

After completing secondary school in New Zealand, Tasi did two years of a business degree at Massey University. However, before he could finish the program, he was recalled home to Tonga because his father could no longer pay the exorbitant fees.

While waiting for the opportunity to complete his degree, Tasi worked for a year as a teacher in Accounting and Economics at Tailulu College in Nuku'alofa, and two years at the ANZ Bank.

Tasi graduated with a Bachelors degree in Accounting and Information Systems from USP in 1998. He attributes his success to his wife Heta whom he married a year before embarking on studies at USP, and who accompanied and supported him during his studies.

He then returned home and worked first as accountant for the Tongan Cooperative Federation Ltd, and then as Finance Accountant for the Tonga Electric Power Board.

Immediately prior to joining PRIDE, Tasi worked for USP for over two years as Project Accountant in the Special Affairs section of



Tasi demonstrates his skill at the end of a fishing line in a recent visit to the Rock Islands of Palau

the bursary. He is therefore no stranger to the way projects work, and he came to PRIDE with a wealth of relevant experience.

As well as his skills as an accountant, Tasi has many other talents. He is an accomplished musician and singer, specialising in the cornet, piano accordion and guitar, and singing tenor in choirs.

Tasi's interest in music found expression when he joined his secondary school's brass band when he was 12 years old.

He pursued his love for music in New Zealand, first representing Auckland in the Eisteddfod Choir Competition held in Sydney where his team won first place, and then entering a piano accordion competition in New Zealand where he came third.

Tasi is the choir conductor for the Free Church of Tonga based in Suva, where he is also a lay preacher, and has recorded and published a CD of contemporary Tongan songs.

Aside from his accomplishments in music, Tasi's hidden talent in food preparation was unveiled during a PRIDE regional workshop in Vanuatu two years ago where he dazzled everyone with his skills in killing pigs and roasting them Tongan-style on a spit.

Much of the credit for the success of PRIDE regional workshops lies with Tasi. His expertise and skill in managing the administrative and financial aspects of workshops have been ably demonstrated in all of our regional workshops, including those for National Project Coordinators. Regional participants have particularly appreciated receiving their per diem on arrival at the airport, as well as having all transport and accommoda-

tion matters dealt with so efficiently and cheerfully.

Another of Tasi's accomplishment is fishing. After our recent regional workshop in Palau he took a trip to the famous Rock Islands to demonstrate his skills. The results are clearly evident in the accompanying photograph!

Since joining the PRIDE Project Tasi and Heta have added two more children to their family, bringing the total to a 'handful' of five. Lydia Pride was born at almost the same time as the Project started, and named after it. She is always a special guest at our PRIDE birthday parties! Three months ago, Penisimani became the latest (and Tasi assures us final) addition to the family.

Tasi says that one of his dreams is for the PRIDE Project to be a success and he will do everything within his means to contribute to this: "A key challenge I face is dealing with fifteen countries with different financial processes and procedures. This huge difference makes it challenging to move from one country to another", he adds. ■

From the Director

I'm delighted to confirm that all of the PRIDE team are back at work after a thoroughly relaxing and refreshing holiday break. November and December last year were rather unsettling for us here in Fiji, but we all resumed early in January with a great sense of enthusiasm and commitment. We have held two very productive staff meetings to fine tune our annual work plan, and I am confident that 2007 will be the best year yet for the Project.

Here in Fiji I am very sad that the Honourable Ro Teimumu Kepa is no longer serving as Minister for Education. She has been a wonderful friend to the Project, and I have deeply valued her wise counsel. We do thank Ro Teimumu for all the support that she has given us.

The good news here at USP is that the Institute of Education has a new Director, who also will have oversight of the PRIDE Project.

The PRIDE team is very glad indeed to welcome Professor Kabini Sanga, who arrived on the last day of January. Kabini is a well known and highly respected Pacific educator, originally from Solomon Islands, but more recently an Associate Professor of Education at the Victoria University of Wellington, in New Zealand.

This will be my last Newsletter before retiring from PRIDE. My three year contract is over, and it is time for the Project to be led by people from the Pacific. I will be returning with Jennie to Adelaide, Australia, where our family has offered us full-time (though unpaid) positions as grandparents to our expanding family. I'm looking forward to the new challenges!

My three years with the PRIDE Project have been amongst the most challenging and satisfying of my life. It is a highly significant Project that already is making a real difference to the delivery of

basic education in many Pacific countries. Perhaps its greatest contributions, however, are more subtle:

- It is reaffirming the ownership of education by parents, grandparents and communities. Consultative and participatory approaches to planning, policy-making and curriculum are now being used more extensively.

- Countries are increasingly committed to building their education plans and curricula on a strong foundation of local cultures, languages and wisdom. This helps students to develop deep pride in their own values and traditions, and a clearer sense of their cultural identity.

- There is growing emphasis on mutual collaboration and support: the Project is helping countries to help each other, and sourcing most consultants from within the region. It also is funding local educators to go on study and training visits to

each other's countries.

- Some countries are beginning to take a more holistic and lifelong approach to education, with effective articulation between sectors, and between school, TVET and the world of work.

- Many educators are now appreciating the need to develop stronger conceptual foundations for education in the Pacific, using a creative fusion of their own epistemologies, values and wisdoms with the most useful ideas and approaches of the global world.

I extend my warmest thanks to everyone in the PRIDE extended family for all they are doing to ensure the success of the Project. I'm sure the achievements of the next three years will be even more significant than those of the first three. My best wishes to you all. ■

Dr Bob Teasdale
PRIDE Project Director
(until 9 Feb 2007)

A new vision for learning and teaching in Nauru

Something new and wonderful is happening in Nauru classrooms. Students are actually engaging in their own learning and teachers are finding that they need to change their pedagogy to cater for this shift in the teaching-learning process.

A new and visionary curriculum, primarily modelled on Queensland's New Basics, but with a distinctly Nauruan flavour in orientation, process, content and context, has been on trial now for almost two years.

This new Nauru curriculum has four conceptual pivots: Nauru curriculum footpath (what is taught); Nauru pedagogies (how teachers teach); Nauru rich tasks (how students learn and show what they can do) and moderation (sharing standards).

All students from pre-primary to Year 11 are engaging in research and cooperative strategies as part of their rich tasks. Topics are culturally appropriate, meaningful, and relevant for Nauruan students. They cover issues concerning identity, health, environment, history and lifeskills, amongst others.

Examples of rich tasks include *Me Myself, Me & My Community* and *The Bush* in each of the three pre-primary years. *Who am I, Kitchen Garden, Prevent Lifestyle Diseases, Nauruan Herbs, Important Dates & Events, Water & Life Saving*, are some examples from Years 1 to 7.

Unlike the emphasis of the traditional subject-based curriculum, the notion of rich tasks entails



A group of Nauruan teachers preparing a report on their discussions for the Nauru Teachers Conference

teachers contributing to and facilitating student work to make each task 'rich' in the fullest meaning of the word.

A rich task generally takes a whole term to complete and it is the teacher's responsibility to cover all the essential learnings, including aspects of language, mathematics, social sciences and science, in order for students to successfully complete each task. And at the end of each rich task, students are required to demonstrate evidence of their learning by way of a final product which is assessed by the teacher against a set of grading criteria.

For example a rich task for Grades 1 to 2 on *Naoero Eben Bwio* (Nauru My Home) entails learning about Nauruan culture through studying the use of local plants, animals and local talents to help students learn

how to make traditional art/crafts.

They are required to show appreciation in preserving their culture by researching and putting together a file on the endangered species of Nauru and ways to preserve them. They then present this as a Resource File to local communities and government departments. The Resource File becomes the finished product which is assessable.

Nauru's critical friend in education, Dr Priscilla Puamau, presented a keynote address on 'The Nauru footpath curriculum: achievements, challenges and the way forward' at the first ever Teachers Conference held in Nauru from 8-11 December 2006. She spoke about her findings from a review of the reform curriculum she was earlier requested to undertake by the Department of Education.

The Teachers Conference provided an exciting opportunity for all 150 teachers in Nauru to come together in a professionally conducive environment to share their experiences and to learn more from each other either through presentations or poster displays.

The teachers, through their presentations and poster displays demonstrated not only their excitement and commitment, but just as importantly, provided ample evidence of the transformation that was taking place in their thinking and attitudes about their place in the larger scheme of student learning.

While there are areas that need strengthening and improvement in the implementation of the trial curriculum, Priscilla Puamau in her keynote presentation made the following observations about some of the significant achievements of the new curriculum:

- It is contributing to the development of confidence in children.
- There is significant evidence of a growth of a professional culture amongst teachers and support staff.
- There is an increasing focus on learning and teaching; i.e., on what actually happens in classrooms.
- There are notable changes in pedagogy and attitudes.
- The curriculum is now much more culturally relevant.
- There is now a strong sense of Nauruan ownership of the curriculum; it is being developed by Nauruans for Nauruans.

PRIDE consultant Mr Peter Baki CBE, former Secretary for Education in PNG, also has been hard at work in Nauru reviewing educational policies and helping to develop a new policies and procedures manual for the Ministry of Education.

(Continued on page 4)

NPC's gather for annual workshop

The PRIDE Project owes much of its success to its team of National Project Coordinators, a very hard working and committed group of educators who hold senior positions in Ministries of Education in each of the PRIDE countries.

Once each year the NPCs come together for an annual capacity building workshop. They gathered in 2006 for their third workshop from 2 to 6 October at the Raffles Tradewinds Hotel in Lami, just a few kilometres west of Suva.

To the great delight of the PRIDE team there were no flight disruptions, and everyone arrived safe and sound, and right on schedule. All fifteen countries were represented.

We were especially pleased to welcome our new NPC for Kiribati, Mr Tebwaatoki Tawetia, and to welcome back Mrs Katalina Taloka of Tuvalu, who spent the first half of 2006 in New Zealand completing her Masters degree.

We were equally delighted to welcome our new State Project

Coordinators (SPCs) from Chuuk, Kosrae, Pohnpei and Yap. The four states of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) have a high level of autonomy in the delivery of education, each with its own Department of Education.

The PRIDE team now is working with each state to develop new strategic plans for education, and to prepare sub-project proposals. To facilitate this work we appointed an SPC in each state, and were excited to bring them to their first PRIDE workshop. Our team in FSM comprises:

Mr Kinios Edmond (Chuuk)

Mr Hanson Sigras (Kosrae)

Mr Reynold Albert (Pohnpei)

Mr Dominic Fanasog (Yap)

We will still have an NPC from the FSM federal Ministry for Health, Education & Social Welfare. Our NPC for the past three years, Mr Aier Willyander, has recently retired, and has not yet been replaced. We wish Aier a long and happy retirement, and thank him for his great support

for the PRIDE Project.

The PRIDE NPCs and SPCs had a very busy five days, with a full program of presentations and group work. Among other things they learned how to make effective use of PADDLE, and they made some very thoughtful revisions to the PRIDE benchmarks.

However the core focus of the workshop was Monitoring & Evaluation. An intensive 2½ days of capacity building was spent with our M&E consultant, Mr Bill Pennington, ably assisted by Pala Wari, our new Education Adviser, himself an M&E specialist.

By the end of the training everyone had a much clearer idea about the monitoring and evaluation of strategic plan implementation, and how to carry out formative and summative evaluations of their PRIDE subprojects.

All in all the workshop was rated as very successful in achieving positive outcomes for the PRIDE Project, and for each of the NPCs and SPCs who attended. ■

Nauru....con't

While Priscilla Puamau was in Nauru she attended a hand-over of the first draft of the manual to the Minister and senior staff. Members of the Policy Development Group also were present at the handover ceremony. ■



Peter Baki hands over the draft of the policy manual to the Minister for Education in Nauru, Hon. Baron Waqa (left) and the Secretary for Education, Mr Jarden Kephias (right) as Dr Puamau looks on.

Con't ...Data management for small states....

from 18 to 22 September 2006 in the PRIDE Conference Room, and attended by data managers from the four countries. Representing Uniquet were Rebecca McHugh, a Capacity Building Adviser, and Brian Lewis, a Software Design Specialist. The two Uniquet staff took a lead role in the workshop with support from Epeli Tokai, Education Adviser for the PRIDE Project.

There was much enthusiasm and interest throughout the workshop. Key achievements were:

- the development of Annual School Survey forms based on the needs of the countries, with a data collection plan for the start of the 2007 school year;
- the development of a prototype EMIS loaded with the countries historical data assets, and a set of data entry screens that match school survey forms;
- training of the data managers with the skills required to instal the prototype on their return home, and also to enter the 2007 school survey results; and
- a good understanding of how the data collected could feed into the data analysis process and enable reporting against chosen indicators.

Where to from here? Another workshop has been scheduled for late April 2007, with a focus on data entry, data analysis and reporting training. By then the small states EMIS will be ready for more intensive trialing in each country.

Once the EMIS is up and running in each country we expect to see much more systematic analysis and reporting of data for planning purposes. When completed, this will be another important milestone achievement for the PRIDE Project. ■

Con't from Pg 2.....PRIDE's first visit to Tokelau



Lili and Priscilla on board the Lady Naomi their next budget cycle.

This groundbreaking approach to regional collaboration and productive partnerships to meet national development priorities is an ideal way of the future for partners and donors working in the region.

From a PRIDE perspective the

visit also was useful in developing a better understanding of the particular development and education challenges that confront Tokelau.

Sea transportation and passenger safety, for example, pose huge challenges in the absence of wharves on each of the three atolls. Students on Fakaofu have to travel to school by boat, a journey of 20 minutes, as their school is located on an uninhabited islet close by. Inclement weather can mean that many school days are lost.

Priscilla was accompanied on the journey by our National Project Coordinator for Tokelau, Lili Tuioti. Priscilla introduced the PRIDE Project to the meetings of the taupulega

(village council) on each of the three atolls, explaining the assistance that PRIDE provides and commending Lili's work as NPC.

The visit was especially useful in giving Project staff a better appreciation of the difficulties that Lili faces in providing educational advice and support to the school on each atoll while physically based at the Tokelau office in Samoa, and in preparing and implementing subprojects in Tokelau.

Priscilla was excited to discover that while Tokelau may be a difficult country to reach physically, the government officers on each atoll were well linked to the rest of the world through access to broadband internet services. ■

Data management for small states

The PRIDE Project currently is funding the development of an Education Management Information System (EMIS) suitable for use in the four smallest Pacific states: Nauru, Niue, Tokelau and Tuvalu.

The aim is to strengthen planning and policy capabilities within the four Ministries of Education. Until now, these countries have been collecting and analysing education data manually. Not only is this time consuming, but it also highlights the lack of capacity within each Ministry to do this kind of

work.

The PRIDE Project has contracted UniQuest, based at the University of Queensland, to provide technical assistance. The UniQuest team already has worked with the Ministries of Education in Kiribati and Solomon Islands to develop data management systems, known respectively as KEMIS and SIEMIS, and also has a contract to develop a VEMIS for Vanuatu.

Our aim is to support Uniquest to develop a system for the four microstates that is fully compatible with those of the other three countries, thus allowing easier

comparison and exchange of data.

A specific goal of this project is to support the four states to develop an EMIS that effectively integrates school, student achievement/assessment and financial data, and to produce user-friendly annual reports that provide clear guidance to education planners and policy makers.

PRIDE also intends to train the data managers to use the new system, enabling them to measure how well their countries have met international goals such as EFA and MDG.

An initial workshop was held