

Pacific Pride

Issue 14

The Newsletter of the PRIDE Project

February 2009

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From the PRIDE Director:

This issue contains a taste of what Ministers of Education, senior education personnel, donors and development partners can expect in Tonga in the last week of March this year. And that is evidence of the impact of PRIDE on the delivery and quality of basic education in the fifteen participating countries.

Demonstrating evidence of impact, particularly long-term impacts, is fraught with difficulties. As the recent FBEAP Review (PIFS, 2009: 36) points out, 'measuring the precise longer term impact of a development initiative such as PRIDE presents significant methodological, epistemological and institutional challenges'. Nonetheless, the emerging stories

in this issue provides a snapshot of what four countries are doing in the area of TVET curriculum development (Tokelau), for the development of indigenous curriculum materials for upper primary and junior secondary grades (RMI), capacity building of teachers in culture and performing arts (Cook Islands) and the development of an integrated inclusive education system (Samoa). Sharing and showcasing best practice in Pacific education is the theme of the PRIDE 10th regional conference and exhibition that will take place in Nuku'alofa, Tonga from 20-24th March. The fifteen countries and the PRIDE Project will showcase their achievements in basic education in planning, policy

development, access, equity, quality, culture and language, non-formal education, tools for the enhancement of learning and capacity building. These cut across ECCE, primary and secondary levels and include TVET and IE. Insights and understandings gleaned from the conference and showcase exhibition in terms of benefits and beneficiaries, sustainability of impact, implementation challenges and lessons learned will be shared in the next few issues of the PRIDE newsletter. ■

Priscilla Puamau, PhD
Project Director

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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Curriculum Development —Majolizing the Curriculum

The MoE continues to work toward rethinking education to better address the specific needs of the Marshall Islands. From December 1-12, 2008 "Write Shop," a curriculum development workshop led by University of Guam consultant Dr. Marilyn Salas aimed to do just that. Dr. Salas has been involved in RMI education and the Pacific Islands before, working with the College of the Marshall Islands (CMI). At Write Shop, participants worked to develop Marshallese curriculum materials and resources for students in grades 5 - 9 to use in their classrooms. "The purpose of this workshop was two-fold," comments Dr. Salas. "Marshallese teachers are writing and doing a research project to relate in story form, but they are also learning how to teach the writing process so that they can extend this project to their students."

The goal is to have 20-30 new resources for the Marshallese curriculum. To do this, participants first identified curriculum materials to be written locally and then conducted research at CMI, Alele and other local institutions to gather information about their topics. Some of which include canoes, teenage pregnancy, healthy babies, Marshallese medicine, and navigation. In the process of writing



Participants at "Write Shop" workshop RMI

the materials, participants built their own capacity to write and learnt how to best teach the writing process to their students. Once resources are drafted, they will be integrated into lesson planning and classroom use. Minister for Education Nidel Loreak couldn't be more pleased. He commented, "I'm glad something is being done for the upper grades and that RMI MOE is very instrumental in ensuring that the Majolizing is part of the education system today because there was a time when all of these materials were dying out. And thanks to the EU & NZAID through the PRIDE Project."

Write Shop is part of a series of workshops which are scheduled to be conducted from December 2008 to March 2009, all of which reflect the goals of the 2006 "Rethinking Education" conference,

namely to "Majolize" the MOE curriculum. Most of the materials and resources to be used in this workshop have been identified from the Values & Skills Research Project, that has been conducted since August of this year with technical assistance provide by Dr. Hilda Heine, where field research at pilot schools in Majuro and Wotje (outer island school) identified knowledge, skills, tools, language and values to be integrated into the curriculum.

The Ministry is very excited about both Write Shop & Value Research and looks forward to seeing each participant's hard work and completed curriculum resource. ■

Brenda Maddison
RMI NPC

Small but significant steps in the sand: IE in Samoa

In Samoa a PRIDE subproject on information about children with Inclusive Education has been implemented since 2006. This newspaper have been employed to project is aimed at supporting the do this. The Ministry of Education, establishment of sustainable Sport and Culture after systems for inclusive education in experiencing positive feedback the Ministry of Education, Sport from the first television and Culture. This project is promotions sought additional interesting because it has been funding to complete a series of two coordinated outside the Samoan more promotions.

Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture by SENESE an NGO. I The construction of new schools have had the pleasure and under various development opportunity to coordinate this programmes highlighted the need project and would like to share for accessibility guidelines for some of the positive outcomes that school buildings. The project has worked closely with the Ministry of

The overall project has four main components:

1. Professional development Works to produce a guideline for Inclusive education is a process that all school buildings. Under the involves continual learning for Planning and Urban Management those involved. National section of the Ministry of Natural workshops have been conducted to Resources and Environment



Parents gather and share their ideas how they can work together with the Ministry of Education to allow their children to be included in regular government primary schools.

support teachers' confidence to training is now underway with staff include children with specific to support the implementation of disabilities. These workshops have this new guideline. This is seen as covered specific strategies for a way to ensure accessible buildings including children who are vision or in the short term as we advocate hearing impaired, have a physical for these specifications to be disability or an intellectual disability. incorporated in the Samoan

Under this component we have building code in the long term. conducted parent empowerment 4. Collecting images and stories of meetings that have endeavoured to significant change build bridges of good This was decided as a priority area communication between school as the whole concept of including and home. children with disabilities in regular classrooms is a new and emerging

This component has also conceptual process. Many movie place teacher aide interpreters in clips and photos have been taken four village classrooms to support throughout the project to illustrate families and schools to include just how a diverse range of children children who are hearing impaired can learn together. These will be in accessing education. collated in a package that can be

When completed this shared nationally and regionally. component will have produced Whilst these four components information leaflets and booklets in each have an important role to play Samoa regarding specific in the overall development of disabilities, their causes and helpful inclusive education systems, I strategies for developing each would like to explore in more child's potential. detail the establishment of teacher

2. Media campaigns able to access more accurate programme.



Sina, the teacher aide support person for Faalo, who is hearing impaired works with Rachel, a trainer from SENESE during a support visit to the school.

The idea of training teacher aides to work in government schools came out of a real need to see more children with disabilities included in government schools especially those in rural areas. They also shared the view that all children would benefit from learning together and this programme would help families of children with disabilities to feel confident in bringing their children to school. The families that we are working with all expressed a desire for their children to attend school and because they live in rural locations attending the urban based school for the hearing impaired was not an option. They were eager to learn more communication strategies including sign language and participated in training on how to work in the classroom. We invited an additional member of each respective village community to attend this training as another support for the process.

Initial discussions were held with the principals of the schools who had previously attended national training on the concept of Inclusive Education. The role of the principals in leading and championing this whole process is



Universal accessibility guidelines will ensure schools are built to allow all children to attend.

learning new ways to include the child at home and school. It is also felt that by selecting a member of the family for this position they will have the intrinsic motivation to make it work. To date this is exactly what we have witnessed.

Through cooperation between SENESE, the village schools and the Ministry of Education we have been able to offer regular support to these schools. The teacher aides with the children attend support sessions at SENESE at least three times a month. During these sessions specific guidance is giving to each family. This may include resource development, specific guidance in language or speech work.

Half way through the year we conducted another workshop through PRIDE to help the schools develop individual education programmes for the children. Principals, class teachers, teacher aides and parents attended this programme. The programme was held at the National University of Samoa and helped strengthen the link from undergraduate training to actual classrooms.

We are now approaching the end of our first year trial. The number of schools we are supporting grew by one mid year as a neighbouring school approached us if there was a possibility for one of the trained teacher aides to work in their school as they had a hearing impaired child attending. This was seen as a positive move and implemented as we had trained an additional person in each village. The parents of the children now work together to support their development of signing. They are feeling positive and very pleased to see wonderful changes in their children's development.

The Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture has recently reviewed this component and has agreed to take steps to institutionalize the role of teacher aides for supporting inclusive education. This will be achieved through the design and certification of a course for teacher aides followed by presentation and final authorization through the Samoan Public Service.

Positive steps forward are being made in the sand in Samoa to allow inclusive education to be realized. I feel these steps are above the tidal line and will remain to see more children included in their village schools. ■

Donna Lene
IE Subproject Coordinator
Samoa

Cook Islands Performing Arts Project



Performing Art students with masks made at the Performing Arts Project

The local mayor and island secretary have been personally invited. There has been a scratchy interview on the local radio station or a quick TV clip just before 'Home and Away'. And now, a large percentage of the Island population are sitting on benches, holding small children and wondering what will happen next. They have probably heard different stories from their children about what has been going on at the school this week. Not the usual. A group of four performers from three countries have been around to classes teaching, what exactly? They may have come to find out or they may have come hoping to be entertained.

The lights at the back of the hall flicker out and circus music begins. Out tumble the clowns, some of them lost, some of them naughty, all of them with suitcases full of surprises. Over the next hour storytellers depict the lively journey of Whakipo

from under the sea, George the Conductor leaps and bounds and makes us laugh, depicting the life of James Bond, a crazy cowboy, Romeo and Juliet and a duck in the bath. Children come forward and present their songs, dances and new puppets. And all of us join in with Playback Theatre, a form of improvisation that honours people's real life stories. Sometimes people stay afterward and share Kai and their own experiences of performing in the Cook Islands and overseas. There are big smiles all around and everyone seems satisfied that more of this kind of learning is a good idea.

How do we know this project has made a difference? Teachers were clearly enthused by what they saw through performances and classroom modelling and voted with their feet, coming in record numbers to workshops during the holidays. The work that was begun during the tour and in training sessions

is now playing out in many schools end-of-year productions. Numerous principals have reported that lead teachers passed on their enthusiasm and knowledge in staff training they initiated. One school was featured on the evening news depicting legends with puppets they had learned to make as a result of the subproject. Children continue to stop and talk to me about it when I see them in my neighbourhood.

What have we learned? The sequence of learning of this project was a valuable lesson. In the month previous to the tour a teaching resource was sent introducing teaching ideas to accompany the performance. Most of them stayed on the shelf. It wasn't until people were actively involved in the 'creating and appreciating' aspect of the project that the learning came alive, reminding us again of the adage, people learn best by doing. We know for the future to make any introductory learning resources highly visual and brief. The follow up learning however has been in depth, as teachers were stimulated to investigate different aspects of drama, dance and music as tools for exploring both the essential skills and classroom subject areas. With many learning resources supplied on both Cook Islands and international performing arts, teachers have begun to build on their own interest areas of teaching. We will continue with further workshops that offer teachers the opportunity to share their developing expertise as well as learn further skills. ■

Nancy Fulford,
Performing Arts Director
Cook Islands MOE



A clown makes the children laugh at a Playback Theatre performance

TVET in Tokelau

Diagram 1:



Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Tokelau was given a greater focus with the injection of resources through a PRIDE subproject. Prior to this, technical and vocational programmes were not a prominent feature of the formal school system. Traditional subjects such as woodwork and metalwork for boys and home economics for the girls were the only courses which schools tried to fit into their curriculum if there was space in the timetable and more importantly, if there were teachers who could teach them.

The Tokelau subproject in TVET allowed the Department of Education to appoint a National TVET Coordinator with the main responsibility being to develop TVET pro-

grammes to be integrated into the formal education system. It was agreed to:

- Include vocational skills that are relevant to the needs of the local community;
- Develop within the student the spirit and love for learning, as a lifelong process;
- Broaden the experiences of the student to enable them to access other opportunities to realise their potential and interests; and
- Assist students to make clearer decisions about their future direction in education and in life.

Quality TVET programmes and courses for Tokelau will include those aspects as shown in the dia-

gram (see left)

A very important feature of this subproject is the place of the non-formal education sector in the provision of TVET courses and programmes. However, while PRIDE criteria for this work states that subprojects should not fund community-based activities, we have found that establishing school-based TVET programmes naturally "spills over" into the non-formal sector through the sharing of tools, equipment, technology and human resources. So, the development of TVET courses and programmes to be based at the school within the formal education sector means that the additional resources which the Department of Education have brought in, such as additional trained teachers / tutors, technical resources and training for current teachers can be utilised by the community outside of school-time.

Achievements for Tokelau

The TVET subproject for Tokelau has achieved the following:

1. Raised awareness of the importance of vocational and technical education and training for all students
2. The important role of the community in the provision of a more holistic education for students
3. Broadened the school curriculum to meet the needs of a wider spectrum of students
4. Widened and strengthened Tokelau's networks in the

TVET sector within the Pacific region.

Since the start of this subproject the outputs have included:

- i. The role of the TVET Coordinator is now an established permanent position within the Department of Education;
- ii. TVET courses will be integrated into the secondary school curriculum from Year 9 in 2009;
- iii. TVET courses are being developed to assist students to transition from formal schooling (after Year 11) into more relevant pathways. These will be integrated into the senior secondary programme in 2009;
- iv. Training for three teachers in basic trades courses over 20 weeks during 2008, in preparation for the provision of these programmes in the school curriculum with support from a VSA TVET Training Coordinator;
- v. Working in partnership with one village in the provision of a community-based school-leavers course in basic carpentry, with on-island training / tutorials and off-shore practical placements;
- vi. Working in partnership with three villages in the provision of sports massage and therapy education and training. ■

Lili Tuioi
Tokelau NPC

Pacific education news in brief

✉ Mrs. Sanjana Kumaran joined the PRIDE Project on 1st September 2008 as Resource Centre Assistant. Before joining PRIDE, she taught computing and economics in three secondary schools in Fiji for nine years. Sanjana has a Diploma in Library Information, Diploma in Applied Computing and a BA in Economics and Management. She is married with three children, two at secondary school and a two year old.

✉ Mrs Sereana Tagivakatini, joined the Project as Education Advisor on 1st July 2008. A familiar face to PRIDE and the region, Sereana comes with a wealth of experience, having worked in education for the last 25 years. She was a Fellow with the Institute of Education before she joined PRIDE. She started her career as a senior secondary school science and mathematics teacher and Head of Science (1983-1991) before she joined the Fiji College of Advanced Education as Senior

Lecturer in Science (1992-1995). She was then seconded to the Institute of Education, USP. During her stint with IOE, Sereana was a project coordinator for a number of USP-based regional projects that included visits to many countries in the region and Long Term Education Advisor on two national AusAID Teacher education projects in Fiji and Vanuatu. Her professional background includes science education, teacher education, curriculum & assessment, project implementation, and training & research.

✉ Fiji has a new PS Education. Mr Filipe Jitoko, former Deputy Secretary for Education and PRIDE National Project Coordinator was appointed to replace Mrs Emi Rabukawaqa upon her retirement. Mr Josefa Natau is Fiji's new Deputy Secretary for Administration & Finance & PRIDE NPC.

✉ Project Manager John Stunnenberg left PRIDE to join the

Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat in February 2009.

✉ Palau has a new Minister of Education, the Hon. Mr Masa-Aki N. Emesiochl. Mr. Emesiochl is a former Director of Curriculum and Instruction for the Palau Ministry of Education and served as a programme specialist for PREL.

www.directions.usp.ac.fj

Celebrating 30 years of publishing excellence, USP's Institute of Education launched *Directions: Journal of Education Studies* online late 2008. Since going online there have been numerous visitors to the site; many from countries far away from the Pacific: Israel, Trinidad and Tobago, Canada and Finland to name a few. The digitisation of *Directions: Journal of Educational Studies* is an important action by the Project to build regional capacity. It is expected that online access to *Directions: Journal of Educational Studies* will generate improved access to Pacific

education articles and increased interest and understanding of Pacific education.

✉ The Pacific Education community lost a great friend and colleague, Ross Tasker, on January 12 2009. Ross spend much time at USP as lecturer in Education, is remembered in Samoa for his contributions to the development of teacher education and the Teachers' College in the early nineties and for his warmth in character. Condolences and sympathies to his wife Gillian and family.

✉ The PRIDE Project, in partnership with the Tonga Ministry of Education, Women Affairs & Culture, will hold its 10th regional conference culminating in an exhibition on the theme 'Sharing and showcasing best practice in Pacific education' at the Fa'onelua Convention Centre, Nuku'alofa, Tonga from 20-24th March 2009.