

INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION OF THE GERMAN ADULT EDUCATION ASSOCIATION  
INSTITUT DE COOPERATION INTERNATIONALE DE LA CONFEDERATION ALLEMANDE POUR L'EDUCATION DES ADULTES  
INSTITUTO DE LA COOPERACION INTERNACIONAL DE LA ASOCIACION ALEMANA PARA EDUCACION DE ADULTOS  
ИНСТИТУТ ПО МЕЖДУНАРОДНОМУ СОТРУДНИЧЕСТВУ НЕМЕЦКОЙ АССОЦИАЦИИ НАРОДНЫХ УНИВЕРСИТЕТОВ

**INSTITUT FÜR INTERNATIONALE ZUSAMMENARBEIT  
DES DEUTSCHEN VOLKSHOCHSCHUL-VERBANDES e.V.**



## ADULT AND COMMUNITY EDUCATION IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC : INNOVATION AND CHANGE



**Edited by Joseph Veramu**

IIZ/DVV SUPPLEMENT TO ADULT EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT NO. 43/1994

# ADULT EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT

is a half-yearly journal for adult education in Africa, Asia and Latin America. At first, in 1973, the journal was intended by the German Adult Education Association (DVV) to help keep in touch with past participants in DVV further training seminars and to support the work of projects abroad. Today, the journal is a forum for dialogue and the exchange of information between adult educators and authors in Africa, Asia and Latin America, both among themselves and with colleagues in the industrialised nations. It is intended to disseminate and discuss new experiences and developments in the theory and practice of adult education. The main target group consists of adult educators working at so-called middle levels in teaching, organization or administration. Increasingly, staff in related fields such as health education, agriculture, vocational training, cooperative organizations etc. have been included, as their tasks are clearly adult education tasks. We also aim at adult educators at higher and top levels, academics, library staff and research institutions both in Africa, Asia and Latin America and in the industrialised nations.

We herewith invite adult educators from all parts of the world to contribute to this journal. Articles should bear a considerable reference to practice. All fields of adult education and development can be treated, i.e. adult education should be regarded in its widest sense. We kindly ask you to send us articles of about 1500 words; footnotes should be used as sparingly as possible.

Responsible for contents are the authors. Signed articles do not always represent the opinion of the German Adult Education Association. You are invited to reproduce and reprint the articles provided acknowledgement is given and a copy is sent to us.

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## Foreword

We are glad to be able to cover, for the first time, in our journal ADULT EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT, such a wide range of materials on adult education, including community education, in the South Pacific Region. The content includes literacy, health, peace and gender issues, and case studies of the region relate specifically, amongst others, to the Solomon Islands and the Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea and Australia.

Thanks must go to Joseph Veramu, who pointed out a year ago that the South Pacific was not being given much prominence in publications on adult education, our journal included, which is true both in terms of readership and subscriptions, and of authors and content. We accepted his offer to organize a group of authors to prepare a book which could then be used as a supplement for our journal. So, within a relatively short space of time, we are in a position to disseminate the findings contained in this volume to our wide English-speaking readership. We assume that the guest editor and the authors, just like the publisher, will welcome further dialogue.

Again, many thanks to all who have made this supplement possible.

It seems that it has almost become a regular feature of our journal to have a supplement:

- 34/90: Grassroots approaches to combatting poverty through adult education
- 37/91: Training opportunities in the informal sector of Freetown in Sierra Leone
- 41/93: On our feet. Taking steps to challenge women's oppression
- 42/94: An introduction to indigenous education in East Africa
- 43/94: Adult and community education in the South Pacific: innovation and change

This book is somewhat special however, as it was purposely written as a supplement to the journal, whereas earlier issues were written for other purposes and only later taken over by us for wider circulation.

We are ready to consider ideas and manuscripts for future supplements!

**Heribert Hinzen**

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## Preface

The publication of this supplement to **Adult Education and Development** journal is a historic occasion for us in the South Pacific. It is the first time that the works of so many adult educators in this region have been brought together in an international journal such as this. This supplement clearly shows that a lot of innovative work is being carried out in the various South Pacific countries.

Not much material on adult education is available in this region because publishers find such publications not viable commercially. This has been a source of great concern to us as it has resulted in adult education research, reports and innovations not being widely circulated. As a result, grassroots adult educators have suffered. Books also tend to cost more and out of reach of most Pacific people's budgets.

We are therefore grateful to DVV/IIZ for their encouragement and for facilitating the publication of this supplement.

The articles are divided into three sections. The first part looks at adult and community education in the South Pacific region. The second section looks at the practice of adult education in the various South Pacific countries.

The third section includes case studies on various adult education projects and programmes. They look at functional literacy, health education, women's empowerment and other adult education issues.

This supplement should serve two very important purposes. Firstly for us in the Pacific who often feel isolated since we are separated by a vast expanse of water this publication is a means by which we can communicate our ideas to each other.

Secondly for those outside the Pacific region, this supplement should help to give insights into the theory and practice of adult education as perceived by us.

Ultimately such publications help to facilitate discussions, debates and the constructive exchange of ideas on the theory and practice of adult education everywhere.

Joseph C Veramu.

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## Adult and Community Education in the South Pacific

Barrie Brennan

The region of the world known as the South Pacific does not contain masses of the world's population, nor are its land areas large, nor do they contain vast natural resources. However, it is a region with a rich history and culture. Though frequently overlooked when the **important** regions of the world are being discussed, its location in part of the rapidly growing Pacific Basin suggests that a greater understanding and appreciation of the region are important. The region also provides a very interesting base for exploring terms such as *adult* and *community* education. Because of its long standing indigenous cultures and its more recent history, terms such as the two noted in the title of the paper that can be applied appropriately to other regions have had only minimal relevance to this region.

As part of the indigenous cultures of the region, the term *traditional education* has a special importance. Though there are means by which the cultures of the many islands of the region can be classified into large and small groups, for example Polynesian and Melanesian, the educational point to be made is that each separate island culture had its own distinctive traditional education *system*. The traditional system involving the religious and work practices of the culture, was designed to allow the culture to be preserved, but also to change and hopefully to endure. It is unfortunate that so much of the anthropological work carried out on these cultures failed to record and report the traditional education and learning systems of these cultures.

The traditional learning systems of the South Pacific can be described as *lifelong*, for the old and involving them in special

roles as well as for the young and maturing. Therefore, although the *teaching* of the young was important, the learning of all those in the communal living system was emphasised. People in these cultures lived in communities: communal practices, processes and relationships were valued. Then the *westerners* came in boats from the north, south, east and west. When they came *to stay* they sought to influence the local culture, to change and *improve* it. A major institutional mechanism that was used to achieve this change function was the school and the target audience for this policy was the children. Without the term being actually used at the time by the colonialists from Britain or France or Germany or the USA, the islands of the South Pacific were given *formal education*. It was certainly different from the traditional - with a focus on a building and written instruction (as opposed to the oral) and with special people (often outsiders to the culture) with the special role of *teacher*.

The formal education system - either in the colonial period or upon the independence of the island nations - came to be developed. The educational ladder was set up. After the school (or the village or primary school) came the secondary school, and then forms of post-school education - colleges and universities. All of this formal education was part of the colonisation, or later the modernisation or westernisation, process. As part of the process of westernisation, other forms of education were imported to the region. The western idea of the education of adults, as opposed to children, was introduced. This concept was important where the British, or those influenced by British culture and institutions, were influential. A major problem for the South Pacific region was to recognise what was really meant by the term *adult*. The school had certainly taught children many things unknown to the adults of the community. So in compari-

son to their parents, children were adult in the field of western book knowledge. However, such knowledge was not necessarily highly valued in the community's culture, and the children did not possess the knowledge and understanding of the traditional culture that gave them the status of adults. Besides adult status was not achieved through progress in the formal education system. There was also the problem of accepting how the central significance of the individual in western adult education was relevant to the more community-focused ideal of the region's cultures. But adult education was accepted as part of the imported culture and educational system, and made some progress.

Another introduced educational concept with apparently more superficial relevance to the region was that of *community education*. The cultures of the region focused on the extended family-community as a basis for learning (knowledge, skills and values) identity, support and personal influence. However, the focus on a good deal of the community-based education was on the community school, as the school-centred focus had been shown to be a useful mechanism in the northern hemisphere. But in the South Pacific how could this form of education be culturally appropriate when it was based on a foreign institution? The focus of the approach on the school and the community was not necessarily on the community as defined culturally within the region. However, community education made some progress and provided programmes and educational opportunities. The process of community development was introduced. This concept too would appear superficially to have a niche in cultures in which the sense of community was readily accepted. However, the problem for community development in the region, as in other regions, has been that it has come to be used not as an instrument of the communities themselves but rather as a

means by which governments (colonial and independent), their bureaucratic and professionalised departments and agencies (national and international) with a focus on providing *aid* have tried to impose projects and schemes on and for the village communities. Community development has promised much but has delivered less than expected.

One of the results of the changing shift of the centre of the world's political and economic gravity, in a westerly direction - from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic to the Pacific - has been that the South Pacific has been prone to catch on to world wide developments more quickly than in the past. What seems to be becoming a world phenomenon is that everywhere nations - both the peoples, organisations and the governments - are recognising that the whole structure of the formal education system - schools, colleges, universities - has not provided the outcomes or fulfilled the promises for which it had been established. The problems of an illiterate unemployed or underemployed generation of school or university graduates or of professionals and technicians who are no longer able to practise effectively have highlighted the dilemma. Also there is in all countries the problem of the spiralling costs of the formal education system. While education system costs are a concern, a further concern is that experience has shown that additional expenditure for education in the formal system does not necessarily produce better, or the required, results.

So there is a general world-wide movement against the formal education system. There are these sorts of *rumbblings* in the South Pacific, perhaps at the moment not of volcanic proportions but at the level of anxiety and concern. Thus the term that can be used to give educational expression to this concern is non-formal education. The term has particular advantages and usefulness in the South Pacific because of its



cultural and educational history.

In the first place, the term allows for the appropriate recognition of the potential role of traditional education - that from which has been relegated to being a form of non-education since the arrival of the first overseas European settlers. Therefore, if non-formal education seeks to re-validate traditional, indigenous learning, what then needs to be done in the various South Pacific nations? What is it that has been preserved of traditional education as part of the educational underground? What is it that needs to be preserved or revived - whether in relation to communal living or the preservation of old crafts or the oral tradition or social and religious ceremonies?

Non-formal education can give status to, and support for, what some may see as being *reactionary* processes. But there are always *negative* as well as *positive* aspects in any educational movement. In balance, however, it is suggested that non-formal education can assist the nations of the South Pacific to address emerging social, and economic, as well as educational, problems. In the process of seeking to re-validate traditional indigenous learning, it must be realised that the clock cannot be turned back. It is not possible to return to some period in the past, some idealised picture of the way people believe that things were, or may have been, or we hope they were, in the past. For example, as the nations of the South Pacific have developed, there has been urbanisation. That does not necessarily mean large cities in a western sense because of the small populations. But there are towns developing: they may be along the coast - they will certainly be where the western trade and administration is being developed at regional and national capitals.

These towns may be in the native homeland or in another Pacific nation. There are to be found around these newly

emerging towns, new sorts of *communities* in which people are being forced to live, or exist. Around these towns are growing up the shanty towns where the fringe dwellers or squatters exist. These new shanty towns are in the islands of the South Pacific, and those who live in them may come from cultures other than that of the city near which they live. What does community mean for these people? What does traditional learning mean for them? In other words, what does being Fijian or Tongan or Samoan mean when you are living in another country? Are these people, as individuals and groups, the ones to benefit from formal education? Not very likely. So, as the South Pacific develops and as social problems grow (if the traditional style of education and the formal system have lost their attraction and impact) perhaps a non-formal approach - as a process as well as a system - may be the most appropriate.

But it is not only in the area of the social problems caused by development that non-formal education is finding its place, or is showing its potential in the South Pacific. As the economies grow and money and jobs become of greater social as well as economic importance, there is emerging another face of non-formal education. If at one level, non-formal education can be shown as being a means by which a traditional village or urban community can be more productive and grow better or different crops or establish small manufacturing or service enterprises and thus have better facilities or more opportunities for the young, then it will be embraced. The self-help aspect of non-formal education with economic outcomes for individuals, groups and communities - with or without government 'assistance' in cash or in advice or in support - may be accepted as a path to a better future by the people of the community - rural and traditional, or urbanised.

If the South Pacific's new emerging industries - whether they be based on agriculture or fishing or on human services or new or old technology - can see that they can train their staff to be more effective and productive and satisfied and do this training outside the formal sector of education, they will do it, and they are. In western countries it is being recognised that as much if not more money is being spent in the educational sector outside the formal sector as within it. This development is evident to some extent in some of the South Pacific nations. Even governments are setting up agencies that support and encourage the non-formal sector - though they may not be using that term to describe what it is that they are doing, nor have clearly articulated the concept. The concept of non-formal education appears to be a way of describing what is being done as well as what can be done in the South Pacific. The term has the disadvantage of being *negative*. To appear to define a concept in a negative way may suggest that it is basically destructive and has no, or few, positive features. Perhaps, the term is not the most useful, but it is expressive of what has happened and what is happening, educationally, in many nations, and why. However, the use of the term non-formal education does offer the advantage of looking both to the past and the future, being able to recognise different players with different objectives and different methods, of not having to defend a large self-perpetuating system, of not being a large user of scarce government resources, of not requiring a large, trained work force of full-time persons and purpose-built facilities to make it happen, and - perhaps most important of all for the small nations of the South Pacific - of being able to be defined in such a way as to reconcile potentially destructive cultural effects and implications.

The argument of this paper is that the formal education system and other types of education have been imposed on the

nations and cultures of the South Pacific. It is further argued that the flexible and multi-faceted concept of non-formal education offers a potentially useful tool as a means of supporting, validating and developing three particular, but quite different, areas of educational activity. It can assist the reinvigoration of indigenous learning particularly in the traditional village. It can provide a vehicle for tackling a wide range of problems in urbanised areas. It can provide a means of managing and supporting education for training and development activities beyond the higher levels of the formal education system. Non-formal education is not a panacea. It however provides an approach to education that supplements the formal system. Thus conceived, non-formal education can be used as a means of tackling social, cultural and economic problems - those long-standing and the newly emerging.

While western education terms such as adult and community education have not served the South Pacific well, perhaps the world-wide concept of non-formal education offers potentially greater value and benefits.

## **Community Education Agenda for the Pacific in the 90's**

**Tupeni L. Baba**

It is apparent from educational developments in the last decade in the Pacific that community education will continue to be important in the 90's but the issue that really needs to be addressed is the agenda for such education. In working out such an agenda, one needs to look both to the past, the present and the future. In community education, in particular, one also needs to look closely at the nature of the communities involved: their socio-economic conditions, their resources, their social and cultural traditions, and their aspirations.

In this paper I will examine firstly our historical traditions and our physical as well as economic and political context. Secondly I will examine the current community education approaches adopted and thirdly, I will analyse some needs and demands of community education. In the final part, I hope to propose some suggestions for a Community Education agenda in the 90's. In this paper, I have not gone into the various terms and definitions related to education and developmental activities in the community, like non-formal education, adult education, lifelong education, continuing education, out-of-school education and so forth. I have simply used the more embracing term community education to refer to these activities. When and if necessary, I will use some of the above specific terms when a particular meaning is intended.

Community education in this paper refers to educational activities organised by or in collaboration with the community to meet its education and development needs using resources in the community including its institutions. A critical component of this education is the involvement of the community in determin-

ing educational activities relevant to its needs. This involves commitment, co-operation and collaboration of all concerned to acquire the necessary resources. Good community projects generate a positive feeling of self reliance and empowerment of all those involved.

The Pacific islands region comprises of 20 small island states ranging from a population as small as 1600 in Tokelau to 700, 500 in Fiji. These islands could be divided into three groups: the three island states administered by France: the French Pacific; the six states administered by or affiliated to the United States: the American Pacific; and the eleven independent or self governing states of the South Pacific. In addition, there are also the three 'continental' islands on the south western fringe, Australia, Papua New Guinea and New Zealand. Two of the three continental islands, Australia and New Zealand, contain enclaves of indigenous people who live in conditions analogous to a Third World environment and share similar problems and have cultural and or historical affinity with Pacific islanders. Papua New Guinea on the other hand is inhabited by diverse groups of indigenous peoples who share with Pacific islanders many similar experiences but they do not live in small islands with their associated characteristics as the other twenty Pacific island groups. In some ways, some of the things said about Pacific islanders could apply to them.

Naturally, the Pacific region, is an extremely diverse one: physically, culturally, economically and politically. Much of what I have to say however relates more to the small island states which because of their size and limited economic resources, have not received the attention that might have been given if they were bigger or resource rich.

## **The Context of Education in the Pacific**

### **a) Historical Tradition**

An examination of the development of educational systems of the Pacific islands will give us some understanding of the present state of community education. The education system of the Pacific states have been influenced by Christian missions and the government. The Christian missions established their own denominational schools before the government entered the scene. The early mission schools were established in the village parishes and most of the teaching took place in that setting. Vernacular languages were used and under this system, Pacific islanders were able to read and write. In fact, the high literacy rate achieved during this period should be attributed to the valiant effort of the Christian missions. That system of education was in fact a form of adult education where adult villages were taught rudimentary hygiene, house building and agricultural skills besides the essential three R's.

Even though the learners were adults and learning was based in the community, the curriculum was determined by the missionaries even though there was a high degree of involvement of the community in both the village or parish schools. This situation continued until proper schools were set up under trained teachers when the government became increasingly involved in education. In time, a very western pattern of formal education emerged everywhere in the Pacific.

The entry of the government in education marked the centralisation and rationalisation of schools and the entrenchment of formal education as we know now. The role of the community in controlling both the direction, content and form of education gradually decreased. This changed somewhat after the war, especially as the Pacific states prepared for independence following the 1960's. Secondary and post primary insti-

tutions were emphasised with their acknowledged role to prepare manpower or womanpower to replace expatriates during independence. For financial reasons, the government sought the support of the community in establishing institutions which were known either as community, provincial or junior secondary schools, in many parts of the Pacific.

This period also marked the beginning of the disenchantment with formal schools in the Pacific, sparked by the growing unemployment of school leavers. On the international front, people like Illich, John Holt<sup>2</sup> and other disciples of the 'de-schooling' movement were criticising formal schooling. Following in their wake, Coombs and Ahmed<sup>3</sup> were pointing to the potential of non-formal education to improve the lot of the poor by providing them necessary skills. It was not until the late 1970's and early 80's that the Pacific states began to focus on the possible role and the potential of adult and non-formal education. At this time, the University of the South Pacific began its extension and continuing education programmes. Many of the Pacific island governments established departments of non-formal education, or departments of youth. Slowly, education programmes were set up for the training of skills in the community. The type and nature of these programmes are discussed later.

#### **b) Physical, Socio-Economic and Political Context**

In addition to its historical tradition, the education developments of Pacific states have also been influenced by the factor of scale: their smallness in size, population and the size of their economy. All the 20 islands states in the Pacific fall within the 1.5 million limit of small states.<sup>4</sup> Not only are these states small; they are either islands or archipelagos and are surrounded by a vast expanse of water. This accentuates their insularity. Their small resource base make them dependent on foreign resources and

aid. In fact, the Pacific region receives the highest aid per capita of the population than any other region in the world.<sup>5</sup>

One critical aspect of small states is their vulnerability. They are vulnerable to natural disasters just as they are vulnerable to bad education practices. Thus, it becomes important to ensure that sound educational practices are introduced which reflect the needs of small states and not merely because they had been introduced in other systems.

However, smallness is not always a disadvantage. Small systems could encourage greater accessibility of the people to those in authority and vice versa. It could simplify and assist implementation of new ideas and practices. Such a system should engender an ambience of popular participation by teachers and other personnel in the development of educational programmes. In the field of community education, it should be reasonably easy, given the size of the community, to assess the success or lack of it of an educational programme. In the case of the Provincial Secondary Schools in the Solomon Islands and the Community High Schools in Kiribati, it took only a few years before they were both rejected having being judged unsuccessful.

Both the historical tradition and the physical, socio-economic and political factors have influenced the nature and type of community education in the Pacific Islands. The missionaries and later the colonial powers had successfully introduced a formal education system in the Pacific islands so much so, that they had almost stamped out the traditional teaching of elaborate rituals which were learnt through non-formal education. The introduction of English and French, the language of respective colonial powers, have had the effect of relegating indigenous and local languages as well as Pacific cultures into the domestic arena. Current efforts to revive the teaching of local

languages and cultures, both in schools and through community education, underlines the fear that something must be done to ensure that these are maintained and passed on.

In the 1970's the international recognition for the value and role of non-formal and community education in development activities have also affected the Pacific states and this has been brought home more dramatically by the failure of the economy to absorb the graduates of formal education system as well as the realisation that because of the size of the economy of small states, the number of people who are likely to be absorbed into the workforce, will necessarily be small. Therefore, there would be a need for people trained in relevant skills through community education, to generate their own employment either in the formal or informal sector.

### **Community Education Approaches**

Community education can be classified in at least three ways: i) in terms of the type of knowledge of skills being developed; ii) in terms of where the learning is based or related and iii) in terms of the orientation of the programme.

The first classification focuses on the type of knowledge being developed whether the emphasis is on the training of skills or whether other social attitudes, awareness and knowledge are also emphasised. The third classification is based on the orientation or the goals of the programme. Some programmes emphasise personal development goals, others emphasise societal change and some others emphasise knowledge as such.

The method of classifying community education on the basis of where the programme is located or based, is a useful method of classifying projects or programmes.

The most prevalent type of community education programmes

in Fiji are the institution based ones. Here, the programmes are often instigated by officials of the various government departments whether it be agriculture, health, education, rural development, etc. The departmental officials often determine the agenda whether it be the growing of particular export crops the adoption of some public health techniques, the adoption of some educational innovation, the employment of some fishing techniques, etc.

The government officials who are usually responsible for identifying groups to be assisted financially, tend to support those groups whose projects are in line with government priorities. Consequently, community education projects of this type tend to support government goals and objectives.

Many such community projects exist only for the sake of getting money from the government or aid donors. As soon as the project money is distributed, the project is not sustained. It dies a natural death only to be revived again if and when further funds are distributed.

In this type of community project, the essential element which include: the full involvement of the community, the need for collaboration and co-operation of all involved, and the eventual sense of self reliance and the empowerment of people, is hardly present.

The above approach is widely followed in the Pacific states for two reasons. First, the economy of the island states are centrally planned and the government inevitably is highly centralised. Second, the government usually assumes a high profile in small states and it is often difficult for community groups to assert their wishes and rights, in the face of government priorities. Community based education projects in which the initiatives are taken by members of the community and where the resources are largely derived from the community are

not as common as institution based projects.<sup>6</sup> These type of education projects are usually small and inexpensive but they are generally perceived to be more successful. However, they are not easy to institute, organise and sustain as they require a high degree of co-operation and self sufficiency.

Another limitation of current community education projects is its lack of attention on programmes that make people aware of their own situation and possibilities. This requires a more broad based and flexible approach where people come together and discuss their concerns in a community education forum and proceed to address these through specific activities. This type of approach lends itself to the concept of empowerment and even self actualisation. This could utilise the well tried *yaqona* sessions (Fiji) or *faikava*<sup>11</sup> (Tonga) or other such traditional avenues which bring people together in the Pacific. It is through such broadbased approach that we can make people become aware of their situation which is a necessary step towards action. As Shrivastava<sup>12</sup> pointed out, an individual needs to be made aware of his situation. He needs to know why he is where he is, and where he wants to go and why? This enables such a person to understand his condition and only after that will he be able to make informed judgments about himself.

This aspect of the persons development is analogous to self development and actualisation. It is also related to the improvement of the quality of life of people; it is not only about survival.

**Emerging Needs and Demands**

It can be seen that community education projects have largely been related to institutions and not based in the community. To shift the basis of such projects requires more than a change of attitude of the community members and institutions like the government, non-governmental organisations and aid donors. Governments of Pacific states would need to allow the

aid honors to relate to recipients of aid more directly and without too much red tape and centralised control. However, the government could facilitate this arrangement through non-governmental organisations. Non-governmental organisations have a record of efficiency and accountability and they can deal directly with donors.

If aid funding is disbursed by non-government organisations, the institution based approach to community education could be modified to provide for greater control by the community of their projects. Aid projects in themselves create dependency in small states. This is not helped by the conditions imposed by the donors. Bilateral aid projects as in the case of Australia is designed to meet largely its own interests. In the case of Australia's aid to the Pacific for example about 80% of the Australian aid money does not leave the shores of Australia.<sup>13</sup>

It is therefore important to ensure that aid received for community education and other development activities are used for the purposes for which they were sought. It is important that donors enable recipient community groups to be able to do what they in fact want to do. In terms of research on community education and related developmental activities, some donors require that such research reports be only made available to them and on confidential basis. The donor should not withhold vital information which could be available to community groups. Such research should not only be done by citizens of donor countries and organisations, they should be open also to citizens of recipient countries. These are some of the ways of ensuring that a great amount of control is given to community groups. This will ensure a great degree of self reliance and the removal of dependency.

Another source of inequality is the locality in which people live. In the Pacific islands, rural people tend to receive less

benefits than the urban population. It is important, therefore, to ensure that community education projects provide equitable benefits to all groups. In some Pacific Islands non-formal education is recommended largely for people who live in rural areas who have not benefited from the urban development. This urban bias perpetuates inequality and differential achievement level; this could easily lead to friction, and social and political dislocation.

### **From Survival to Self Actualization: A New Agenda in the 90's**

Apart from addressing the imbalances above, community education in the Pacific must search for a new agenda. This agenda must emphasize the improvement of the quality of life of people through community education.

More than just meeting basic necessities, community education must also enhance one's understanding of one's world. It must also provide one with 'critical consciousness' that Freire emphasises. This certainly would enable one to progress towards liberation and conscientization. In addition, community education should also enable one not only to be able to read and write but also to be functionally literate.

Perhaps an important but forgotten area is the development of cultural and Pacific language courses which would assist in restoring a sense of identity and pride. If such social programmes are covered in community education programmes, our search and pursuit for quality of life is indeed assured.

Finally, there is no limit to what community education could even strive for, not the least is self actualisation, even for the small states of the South Pacific.

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# **Common Learning and Educational Problems in Australia and the South Pacific Region**

Shirley Randell and Jim Sait

## **Introduction**

Often the perception by Australians of the superiority of their development position takes into account little of the difficulties facing less visible elements of their community. The fact has been reinforced that impediments and solutions to learning are widespread throughout Australia and the Asian South Pacific Region. This paper revisits adult learning principles in the South Pacific Region (including Australia) and a report of the last two conferences of ASPBAE, with emphasis on the most recent conference (April 1993) in Apia, Western Samoa. Teasing out the way that descriptions of situations can evolve into action plans both for learning processes and for the administration of education programmes can be instructive in studying informal learning, formal learning and the evaluation of action which promotes both forms of learning.

## **Some main principles of adult education**

In revising adult learning principles the first principle of adult education in the South Pacific region can be identified as the validation of local experience and the rejection of colonisation by educators. Too frequently in the history of this region, theological and bureaucratic missionaries have sought to convert indigenous peoples, and in so doing have loaded them with inappropriate cultural baggage or disabled their capacity to learn. This is evident in the legacy of 19th century values, particularly male-centred education, which can be seen in the South Pacific region today. While the intentions of early mis-

sionaries and educators were laudable the results have been less so. Women in particular have been marginalised.

Another significant principle of adult education involves the process of learning by describing ourselves and our experiences and clarifying our similarities and differences. At the recent ASPBAE conferences, opportunities were provided to share similarities and differences. Often similarities were those of shared values, shared aspirations and shared visions. Differences involved nationalities, cultural backgrounds, and the obstacles to achieving goals. In looking for points where the differing experiences related, common economic, political and social situations were explored.

If at times these descriptive activities raise more questions than answers, that might be considered a third principle of the adult education experience which differentiates it from more formal learning. Adults should be able to acknowledge their own natures (warts and all), accept differences in points of view and tolerate a degree of uncertainty. These three elements are the very things which formal education often erases in its desire to implant content.

The fourth principle of adult education might be considered in many ways the most important. The need to learn, or the will to learn, or the motivation to learn based on the need to know something, must underlie all adult learning. What do people want to learn? It is no good trying to teach them things they do not want to know. The conferences to the Asian South Pacific for Adult Education Bureau (ASPBAE) in Suva, Fiji in 1992 and Apia, Samoa in 1993 illustrate these principles.

### **Main Issues of the Samoa Conference**

Two main issues dominated the conference in Samoa. They were women's education and functional literacy. At first glance

these may not seem very appropriate for consideration in an Australian context where people tend to think that women have equal educational opportunities which are supposedly built into the education system. However, in Australia as elsewhere in the South Pacific Region, many women have not completed their formal education and as adults need further education. That aspect of education can have a largely informal aspect. Similarly Australians do not like to think of their country as one where literacy is a problem. Yet we know that over 10 percent of all Australians cannot read at a functional level and nearly 50 percent cannot make their way with ease through a telephone directory.

### **The Role of Women and Women's Education**

To set the scene, a previous conference of ASPBAE in the Philippines in 1991, raised several critical issues concerning the role of women and women's education for the Asia South Pacific region that were confirmed at the Fiji conference as applicable to the Pacific region:

- limited political participation and decision making;
- violence in various forms: sexual exploitation, violence within and outside the home, militarisation;
- reproduction and sustenance of gender stereotype roles through mass media, education processes, curriculum, and feudalistic systems;
- lack of access to and control over resources and continued discrimination in all spheres;
- disempowerment of women through structural adjustment, and debt;
- commodification of women such as prostitution, barter systems, dowry practices, entertainment and market economic policies;

- control of reproduction;
- marginalisation of indigenous women;
- lack of organisation among women;
- lack of data/statistics about women;
- need to redefine education of women's empowerment;
- non-recognition by men of women's experiences in teaching methodology and curriculum development;
- lack of support to the women's movement and poor linkages with other movements;
- non-recognition by men of women's issues or their concerns, and not confronting their masculinity and femininity (pp. 4-5 conference papers).

The extent of this list, although it can hardly be said to be exhaustive, and the most recent social conditions which it represents in all Asia South Pacific countries, including Australia, prompted the Samoa conference to explore further the issues relating to women's education. A particular focus was the need to redefine education for women's empowerment. How can education for women's empowerment be redefined? The responses to this must be both managerial and curriculum centred. They must account for both formal and informal education practices. They must also be both practical and low cost. Many of the managerial suggestions for action involve training, exchanges, newsletters and the development of ASPBAE links throughout the region.

The content of both formal and informal education processes must involve the education of women to a consciousness that they are not alone in their predicaments, that through solidarity they can make changes, that changing their lives means educating the men in their environment to the need for those changes. The men to be re-educated include their sons, their brothers, their husbands and their fathers. The family is the first

place to exert pressure for change. This is the first step in the informal education of others which comes from a sense of empowerment. All this seems common sense in its orientation, but it is difficult in its realisation. It involves not merely the education 'establishment' but also the surrounding culture and the media which reinforce that culture.

Adult education can give women through self-awareness, *solidarity, and increased potential for economic self-sufficiency*. But adult education also needs money to support it. This means that governments have to be continually lobbied for support. To this end men who are committed to the improvements of women's situations must also be promoted and supported. Programmes to development aid agencies which will meet these objectives must be proposed.

### **Functional Literacy**

With regards to function literacy, the other main topic for the Samoan conference, the key issues considered were:

- how is functional literacy defined?
- who defines it?

The discussion and supporting information regarding literacy which emerged at the ASPBAE conference in Fiji stressed the importance of local control and local ownership in literacy provision. Some of the conference determinations were that:

- local communities should define their own literacy problem not **UNESCO** or outside literacy experts;
- communities (should) be encouraged and motivated to identify and solve their own literacy problems;
- individual countries should decide themselves their need for a common language;
- adult educators should respond to the community's literacy needs.

James Gee in *Social Linguistics and Literacies: Ideology in Discourses* (1991) has identified two kinds of discourse which influence literacy. The primary discourse he defines as '*our socioculturally determined ways of thinking, feeling, valuing, and using our native language in face-to-face communication with intimates which we achieve in our initial socialisation within the family.*' He goes on to indicate that:

*there are other Discourses which crucially involve social institutions beyond the family (or the primary socialisation group as defined by the culture) ... these institutions all share the factor that they require one to communicate with non-intimates (or to treat intimates as if they were not intimates). Let us refer to these institutions as 'secondary institutions' (such as schools, work places, stores, government offices, businesses, churches).*

Gee makes the points '*that any socially useful definition of "literacy" must be couched in terms of these notions of primary and secondary Discourse.*' Thus he defines "literacy" as: *astery of, or fluent control over, a secondary Discourse.* Therefore, literacy is always plural: *literacies!*

Delia Bradshaw of the Council of Adult Education has been exploring the implications for the Victorian situation of the work of this American concept of literacy. In a recent article she notes that draft competence statements for adult reading and writing were proposed in 1992, and comments:

*One of the key educational principles informing this curriculum framework is that four literacies - named in the document as Literacy for Self Expression, Literacy for Practical Purposes, Literacy for Knowledge and Literacy for Public Debate - are fundamental to the design of a robust and comprehensive adult basic education curriculum and programme. (Bradshaw, 1993).* Bradshaw takes the new work by Gee to indicate that literacy has a political agenda. Functional literacy involves:

*knowing that words are not merely marks on a page... They are also the embodiment of a dense complexity of ideas, values, ideologies and feelings. Learning to read and write, from this perspective, means learning to recognise and take on the particular role, persona or stance required by any given social practice or occasion... being literate means being able to take on the identity of the particular social role in question, be that as worker or parent or man or woman, voter or student, Anglo-Australian or Greek-Australian, patient or club member or customer or whatever. Being literate means knowing how to act, talk and write appropriately in that role.*

It might be confronting for the learner when educators 'teach words (not) as clusters or letters but as linguistic structures that are abbreviations for a vast array of discourses' (Bradshaw, p.3) but Bradshaw makes the point that teachers of literacy are not merely teaching the ABC, they are teaching discourses which are culture dependent. In that sense, literacy teaching must necessarily be dependent on local communities who should define their own 'literacy' problems and solutions dependent on the nature of primary and secondary discourses within their communities.

To that end the local community would be teaching literacy based on the vested interests of the learner and creating material relevant to that learner. Thus to the question 'who defines functional literacy?' it seems appropriate to answer: the definition for urban dwellers will depend on their primary and secondary discourses (not only in terms of content but medium as well: oral, visual, and print). Rural learners will define functional literacy in terms of their primary and secondary discourses. It is not likely that secondary discourses will be the same for the two groups.

A major implication of this thinking is that method and material for literacy teaching must be created in and by the local community. Thus different communities with different language backgrounds (whether they are the languages of indigenous or migrant citizens) will have different literacy needs. The financial implications of this are not necessarily insuperable if one is thinking of functional literacy as a first step. Much of the teaching material can be found although when Australia's indigenous culture which is primarily aural/oral and visual is being considered, the nature of literacy, a reading skill, has to be reconsidered. In this case the need or desire to learn must still be related to the primary experience of the individual.

Recent research, common sense and the knowledge gained from experience, indicates that literacy is culture bound. It is bound by the time and money available for schooling as well as the value placed on literacy by a society. Adult educators respond to the community's literacy needs. Their task as adult educators becomes that of helping the community and its members define for themselves what is understood by functional literacy.

In Australia this means much more fieldwork among the different sectors of the community who may be disadvantaged. It also means financial support must be forthcoming from government to proceed with this work.

The two main aspects of the Samoan conference concentrated on issues vital to the societies of countries in the Asian South Pacific region. They were issues where people wanted to learn. They were issues of importance in the eyes of all the world. They were issues which helped to relate the cultures of that region to the rest of the world.

## Conclusion

How then do descriptions of the situation of women's education and functional literacy, issues arising from the Fiji and Samoan ASPBAE conferences evolve into action plans both for learning processes and for the administration of education programmes?

To return to the key points raised above about the nature of adult education and to put these remarks into the context of gender and literacy which is appropriate for the informal and formal education of Australians, the following questions should be asked.

- Is there a desire on the part of the average Australian to learn?
- Is there a willingness to acknowledge the similarities and differences between Australians and other so-called 'less developed' cultures both in the region and at home?
- Are there segments of Australian culture which can be validated to give a sense of worth to the learner?
- Is the toleration of a degree of uncertainty a part of the Australian culture?

The very term, 'third world' or even 'developing world' indicates one of the problems or barriers in Australia to accepting difference or uncertainty when considering other cultures outside the normal dominant middle class 'white' conception. It is the sense that the world is diminished in Australian eyes: not first, not second but third. That part of the world is less significant, less important, less well off. It is less Australian. Or in some cases it is less white. Nor is Australia alone in this. The dominant middle class white culture is no longer merely imperial, it is systemic.

What actions can adult educators take to improve the status and education of women and the acquisition of literacy skills?

Some possibilities arise from this report. Adult educators need to build bridges. They need to foster a sense of solidarity. They need to stop colonising the experiences of others. They need to help others to articulate their needs, to respond to those needs and to assist action. The actions of adult educators are not merely carried on in the classroom or the room where the teachers meet. They are managerial as well. Direction must be given where direction is sought. Support must be supplied where support is needed. Adult educators must advocate with governments at all levels.

An action plan must be developed that Australian adult educators might consider appropriate in strengthening links across the Asia South Pacific Region.

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# **An overview of adult and community education in the South Pacific**

Adele M.E. Jones

## **Introduction**

The small island states of the South Pacific have shared similar colonial experiences with New Zealand and Australia. However, their size and different patterns of development highlight their difference from their larger island neighbours. Most of these small island countries gained their independence over the last two decades but still find themselves locked into dependent relations with their Pacific Rim neighbours. Economically, and to a growing extent, socially, especially in the more urban areas, Pacific Island Countries (PICs) face new problems and the increasing challenge to direct their own development.

While aid continues to flow into these island countries, the role of adult and community education can increasingly be seen to play a vital role in the wise use of resources and in a development process focusing on sustainability and respect for people and their natural environment.

## **The South Pacific and challenges for adult and community education**

With the exception of Papua New Guinea whose size and population is close to that of New Zealand, the island countries of the South Pacific have populations ranging from 750,000 (Fiji) to just over two thousand (Niue). However, smallness does not necessarily make for ease of planning. Distance and isolation is a major issue for planners. The Cook Islands for instance, has fifteen islands and a flight of more than four hours from the capital to the northern-most inhabited island. Solomon Islands

has twenty-one large islands and Vanuatu has eighty islands also with several hours flight from the capital to the furthest point.

Many South Pacific countries have large populations working in Australia and New Zealand. This has meant that along with aid, tourism and industries including copra, sugar (Fiji) and limited manufacturing, especially the growing garment industry, remittances from abroad have become important to many island economies. For all of these countries, the sea remains a major economic resource as well as an important aspect of their culture and history. As PICs move more and more into the global economy, they are met with new challenges which in turn have serious implications for those involved in adult and community education.

In April 1993, the Minister of Finance in Fiji was quoted in the local media, indicating the direction in which the country's economy should move. The government's economic strategies were to continue 'the transition from a protected economy aimed at import substitution and self sufficiency to an outward looking, competitive and efficient one closely integrated with international trade' (Fiji Times, 1993).

Such statements highlight the issue of dual economies operating in many South Pacific countries. On one hand we talk about local self sufficiency (and in fewer and fewer cases, national self sufficiency) yet at the same time countries are moving towards market economies and international trade agreements, some involving special tax free zones.

As well as size, relative isolation, expensive sea and air transport and an increasing concern with being part of the global market, many South Pacific countries are faced with problems of environmental degradation and exploitation, and the social problems associated with urban drift such as unemployment,

pockets of poverty, family break-up and youth crime, problems which, ironically, they share with their Pacific Rim neighbours. It is in this context that adult and community education in the South Pacific needs to be seen.

### **The management of adult education in the South Pacific**

There is no one body responsible for what might be classified as adult and community education in the island countries of the South Pacific. In no South Pacific country is there a government department or NGO co-ordinating all adult and community education efforts - a difficult job in any case.

While the term adult education covers much that is done in large training and educational institutions in the Pacific (both formally and non-formally), it is more commonly used here to designate those activities which are carried out 'in the field' and with grassroots workers and local communities in mind. After a brief description of the general area of adult education, i.e., formal, non-formal and workplace adult education, the rest of this article will concentrate on adult education in and for the community in the small island countries of the South Pacific.

It would be true to say that adult and community education permeates government policy in various sectors yet it does not receive significant attention in any country's National Development Plans. An example of this can be found in Vanuatu's *Second National Development Plan 1987-91* where a 'broad based platform of knowledge and skills' was to be achieved through 'development of general adult education classes' (Vol. 2, p. 34). Likewise, 'in-village adult education' was proposed to 'provide village level adult/member training courses; supportive training for co-operatives... radio programmes for co-operative members and the general public' in the general area of co-operative and rural business development.

Fiji has two non-formal education officers in the Ministry of Youth, Employment Opportunities, Information and Sport and in a 1993 parliamentary discussion paper *Opportunities for growth: Policies and strategies for Fiji in the medium term* the same ministry proposed a non-formal education/adult and community education programme to provide 'parent education, seminars and workshops for teachers and community leaders...' (p. 67). Vanuatu has proposed a special unit within the Human Resource Development Section at the National Planning and Statistics Office which will include non-formal education. Solomon Islands has had Community Education under the wing of the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development. Kiribati has also established an office for adult non-formal education within the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. This office is responsible for several government sponsored Rural Training Centres (RTCs). Like other RTCs (mostly run by churches or local communities), the centres target young men and women who are unemployed and who have at some time in the past 'dropped out' of school. Several other countries have linked Women's Affairs and Community Development together in government departments and are actively implementing adult education strategies as part of their agenda. In fact, a number of government ministries and departments are actively involved in adult and community education through health and environmental campaigns, and through small business and income generation workshops for special target groups including women and youth.

#### **Non-formal adult and community education**

Initiatives in non-formal adult education can actually be seen to operate on various levels. Local community groups are involved in specific, grassroots activities, usually associated

with income generation. National and international NGOs are also involved in localised projects as well as monitoring, initiating and planning health, environmental, literacy, women's education programmes and community development activities across districts and islands. Many of these initiatives are extremely creative and utilise methods and approaches which appeal to ordinary people. These include thriving and blossoming community theatre groups operating in Fiji, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. To a large extent, non-formal adult education has been integrated into government programmes concerned with youth, women, environment, health, co-operatives and agriculture.

### **Formal adult education**

Formal vocational adult education on the other hand, tends to be the prerogative of national technical and marine colleges and institutes and the regional University of the South Pacific. However, the distinction between formal and non-formal adult education becomes less clear cut when we look at rural development training and community development programmes. Some, such as those conducted at the South Pacific Commission's (SPC) Community Education Training Centre (a nine month course for community development workers), and the two year programmes at the Centre for Appropriate Technology in Fiji and St Martin's Rural Training Centre in Solomon Islands for instance, focus on community development, agriculture and mechanics for rural situations. In contrast, other rural training centres (RTCs) found in Kiribati, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu are more recognizable as 'non-formal' in size, scope, membership and duration. While country specific programmes abound (discussed in late sections of this edition), there are also

a number of adult education programmes which operate across the Pacific. These include the SPC community development course, which up until 1994 has targeted women, the ILO T3 scheme (noted below) and the Commonwealth Youth Program (CYP) Diploma in Youth and Community Development. More recently, the South Pacific regional office of CYP has developed a Certificate in Youth Work offered by distance education and piloted in the Cook Islands and Vanuatu in 1992.

### **Industry and the workplace**

Adult education for people in industry and training for the workplace is conducted at national and regional levels by organisations like Fiji National Training Council (FNTC), the International Labour Organisation (ILO), industry training groups such as Eastern Manufacturing Training Group (EMTG) and Garments Fiji Limited Training Centre (GFL), both in Fiji, and private consultancy firms like Job's Fiji. Like FNTC, private firms concentrate on management and human relations issues. 'In-house' training focuses on technical and supervisory training. ILO is also actively involved in small business training, especially for women, as well as health and safety in the workplace and the Technical Trade Testing scheme (T3). The T3 scheme has focused on the accreditation and upgrading of (mainly male) workers in the fields of electrical, mechanical and building trades.

### **Concluding observations**

A dilemma for planners in the South Pacific in regard to adult education policy and practice is whether government policy and planning offices need to decide the direction and extent of adult education or whether innovations at the grassroots should be determining policy at national levels.

Some may argue that adult and community education in the South Pacific is a way of people reacting against industrialization and urban-centred development strategies which have been imposed as part of the 'modernization' approach to development. Others would hold that adult education is or should be proactive to face new challenges and to meet looming social, health and environmental issues head on. Yet again, adult education could be seen as a way of counteracting that type of 'white collar' education inherited by Pacific countries. Mutumbuka (1984, p.5) could have been writing of the South Pacific when he writes, 'the bitter experience of Africa and the third world ... has placed so much hope and resources in education for the masses, only to find that the effect of education is not developing at all, but the alienation of the young through cultural and intellectual colonization'.

Adult education takes on a new meaning in the Pacific where the community controls the direction of the training and where moves are made to re-establish the traditional approach to education which was a community responsibility. To what extent this really happens in South Pacific countries and in local communities may be addressed by other writers in this issue. The question remains, how do communities take control of their own educational environment - an education which includes **all** and continues for the benefit for **all**?

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## **Indigenous Adult Education: The South Pacific Nutrition Books**

**Published by USP Extension Services, Box 1168, Suva, Fiji.**

**Reviewed by J C Veramu**

In Western Samoa, the Cook Island and Fiji, it is believed that if a pregnant woman eats octopus, she will have a difficult birth and her baby will have skin rashes or be deformed. The people of Maiana in Kiribati feel that pregnant women should avoid eating shellfish lest their babies have scales on their bodies or not enough hair when born. Some traditional beliefs of these types have been disproved by scientists, doctors and many Pacific islanders. The editors of the 13 South Pacific nutrition books, Dr Sitaleki Finau a Tongan and Canadian Diane Goodwillie add that *"there is a need to respect all taboos and beliefs and advise mothers to eat other foods so that they may continue to have a healthy diet. You can substitute taboo foods with others that are not taboo but have the same food values"*.

In one of the nutrition books, *FOOD, DRINKS AND LIFE*, the editors report that, *"In many parts of the Pacific, people do not eat certain species of fish at certain times of the year because they are likely to be poisonous"*. They further add that *"It has been shown that a lot of fat, salt and sugar in the diet is not good for your health. Today in countries such as the United States, Australia and New Zealand, people are trying to change their diets to something similar to the diets of Pacific Island people to improve their health. So we should maintain our traditional foods and not eat food imported from overseas"*.

## **The Nutrition Project**

This nutrition project involved more than eighty writers, graphic artists, illustrators, book designers, adult educators and health, nutrition and community workers in sixteen Pacific island countries as far as Palau, Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia. Canada and Australia have also been represented. It has involved such organisations as diverse as *Save the Children Fund*, *South Pacific Commission* and institutions like *Simon Fraser University* and the *University of the South Pacific*. The project was started to improve the health of Pacific islanders by developing the right types of resource materials about food, drinks and life. Each book has up-to-date information about the ways Pacific people can make good food choices and hopefully lead happy and healthier lives. Stories, drawings, summaries, group activities and questions are included to make the information more interesting, relevant and easy to read.

## **The Nutrition Books Audience**

The books touch on themes such as; *Food, Drinks and Life*, *Food in Schools*, and *the Family*, *Preserving food*, *Infectious and Non Infectious Diseases*.

All types of people have been catered for from babies, school children, youths, mothers, fathers, fat or thin people, the elderly, pregnant women and so fourth. There are specific advice for very fat and very thin women and even the retarded who are thinking of having babies. For teenage girls it is stated that "*some girls become pregnant as early as 13 to 17 years of age. At this stage, they are still growing themselves. They need to eat enough food for their own growth as well as that of their babies. Good food for teenage mothers are fresh meat, fish, dark green leaves and milk*".

In the unit entitled "*Food in Schools*", the content includes materials for school children, health and food. There is a section on boarding schools and ways of producing cheap balanced meals. On the section entitled 'What food should be discouraged', it is stated in simple English that, "*foods like sweets, lollies, chewing gum, sweet biscuits, sweet cakes and potato chips are known as rubbish or junk foods. (They) fill us up and may take the place of good food which are needed inside our bodies. They also cost money*".

A story is then included about how a health/adult educator in Micronesia successfully changed peoples's interest in snack food by making a poster with the slogan, "THINGS GO BETTER WITH COCONUTS". She put announcements on the radio and convinced shop keepers to keep supplies of nutritious green coconuts for people to buy. Another story tells of how Mrs Bryson in Fiji normally made lunch for her two sons, Michael 8 and Christopher 11. On a particular day, Chris is given money to buy lunch at school but being a little late he finds that all lunch packs have been sold out. He decides to buy a meat pie but the lady serving suggested he have a cup cake and an icy, a flavoured drink. Mrs Bryson is furious with the lady at the tuckshop when told of what Chris had for lunch. "*Surely she could have sold a packet of peas and a carton of fun flavoured milk instead of the junk food*". Discussion questions then follow on knowledge of nutritious food, substitutions and the responsibility of choosing snack foods.

### **Teaching Methodology and Learning Approaches**

The books provide useful hints to health, community and adult educators on innovative teaching methodologies and participatory types of learning. Suggestions are made on using traditional visual aids. Adult educators using the books are

encouraged to be very patient with the participants/learners and to help them understand not by over-lecturing to them but by actually making them do things. Because the Pacific people have a strong oral tradition, the adult educators are also encouraged to make extensive use of stories and songs to raise interest. Elders and other people with empirical understanding of traditional nutritious food and health are encouraged to inform others about the importance of their foods.

### **Creativity in the Materials**

Apart from the useful health and nutrition information, there are interesting stories, pictures and poems to make the books not only informative but readable. Some stories are unusual (at least for me). Mati a woman in the highlands of Papua New Guinea adopts a baby and is encouraged to breast-feed him.

*"She thought this was a huge joke and said it was impossible as she had never had babies of her own"*, reports the health worker who spoke to Mati. After going to the doctor for advice on suckling and taking special drugs, she is able to breast-feed her baby two weeks later.

Other stories are creativity done and appeal to our maternal (and or course paternal) instincts. For example. *"If a baby could write, he or she might write a letter like this to tell his or her parents why they should use only breast milk"*. A letter then follows beginning, "Dear Mama and Papa". The baby then goes on to say how much he enjoyed the breast milk, *"I feel that the most wonderful thing for me is to feed from your breasts and have the feeling of being loved and secure"*. The letter ends, "Love, Your baby Annie". A cherubic looking baby is pictured at the bottom holding a pen and promoting literacy as well! On the unit entitled *Food Drinks and Infectious Diseases* there are clear explanations on diseases and infections, food and drinks

that cause sicknesses and how infectious diseases spread. There is also a section on how viruses carry diarrhoea, hepatitis and polio. There are very clear illustrations, explanations, stories and discussion questions.

There is a story about young Sipi who has a bad habit of not washing his hands before eating. He then suffers from stomach ache. The doctor finds that he is suffering from hepatitis (yellow sickness). The punchline is given in the conclusion; *"All Sipi's troubles could have been prevented if he had just taken time to wash his hands. It's surprising how avoiding little and easy jobs like that can lead to so much trouble."* Discussion questions like, "Whose fault was it that Sipi got sick? Why?" then follow

Another book meant for adults, gives guidelines for preventing weight problems on sub-headings like, *"Eat carefully, choose good foods for between meal snacks, eat less fat or oil, cut down on alcohol and sweet drinks and get more exercises."*

### **Conclusion**

The books are aimed at adult educators who would like to help the community in making the right food choices. The resource materials are easy to read and the different sections can be selected by adult educators to make up their own books or training materials. Teachers can use them in the classroom or for Parents Teachers Association non-formal education discussions. The books are now being translated into a number of Pacific languages with Canadian Government support. It is hoped that the books will prove useful in helping people to be healthy and live longer by making the right food choices and by appropriate health habits. More than eighty writers and artists have co-operated in this nutrition books project which makes it a worthwhile regional (and international) effort. With their diverse talents and skills and with the support of regional adult

educators, the books should prove to be a goldmine in health and nutrition education for the people of the Pacific region.

The South Pacific Nutrition Books is a series of 13 books dealing with various aspects of nutrition, health and community education programmes. These 13 comprehensive resource books will help Pacific people in making decisions about the right kinds of food to eat. The books have been published by the University of the South Pacific Extension Services.

## **Adult Education in the Pacific Islands: An Overview**

**Penelope Schoeffel**

### **Introduction**

Adult education as a discrete and serious branch of education was developed in the first world and it was not until the 1950s that its value to the third world was recognised and it was linked to the concept of community development, fundamental education and literacy programmes.<sup>1</sup> In an overview of regional trends in adult education and development by the UNESCO Regional Office for Education in Asia and the Pacific<sup>2</sup> only Papua New Guinea is referred to among the Pacific Islands. The report notes the multiplicity of terms used for activities which might be subsumed under the most comprehensive term "Continuing Education": adult education, non-formal education, out-of-school education, lifelong education, complementary education, community education, are some of the common terms used. Not only is continuing education subject to diverse terminology, but different things are understood by these terms, depending on how they are defined in particular countries. An immense variety of programmes in both the public and private sectors are covered by these terms.

### **Non-formal education as a national strategy**

The Pacific Islands are unique in the modern world for the diversity of their indigenous cultures, the small-scale character of their societies, the geographical isolation presented by mountain ranges and oceans and the historically recent impact of alien cultures and technology upon them. I use the word "alien" because Pacific Islanders were drawn suddenly, during the nineteenth century, into the margins of an accumulated civilisation

derived from all corners of the earth by Western Europeans, who rather arrogantly assumed that they could claim credit for the greatest achievements of this civilisation.

While this is not the place to review the colonial history of the South Pacific, a general point might be made. The populations of those islands where foreign settlement was not the primary goal of the colonising powers were subject to policies designed to suit the economic and strategic interests of their rulers. Only very belatedly in the 1950s, in many cases only a decade or so before most of the colonial powers removed themselves from direct control of the Pacific Islands, was a system of formal state education leading to secondary schooling introduced.

Prior to this, such formal education as was available to Pacific Islanders was offered by the churches, in some instances with small government subsidies. Since decolonisation, most governments of the Pacific Islands region have devoted a massive proportion of the resources available to them to build formal western-oriented education systems. The general assumption has been that formal education is fundamental to development. Despite challenges to this proposition and to the way in which development has been defined, the governments of the independent countries remain committed to this path. Only very tiny states such as Tuvalu are wondering whether, in the absence of opportunities for employment of school leavers, the costs of post-primary education can be afforded.

This is a point which has to be made in relation to the fundamental differences in the status of education between Asia and the Pacific Islands. The relatively small populations and the high proportion of external aid expenditure per capita in the Pacific Islands mean that universal formal education, at least to junior secondary level is an attainable goal. While there is considerable debate as to the ultimate relevance of the goal

itself, it explains why the Pacific Islands governments do not make non-formal education a national strategy. It is given lip-service in development plans but not funding or coherent policies for implementation. Furthermore, large, powerful bureaucracies have developed around the formal education systems, which tend to be resistant, and sometimes hostile, to the less elitist approach to education proposed by the philosophers of adult and non-formal education.

Overall, non-formal education in the region is offered by a multitude of non-governmental agencies, including the churches, and government involvement where it exists, is generally confined to a vaguely defined and enacted coordinating role, or to vocational training programmes. Even at the University of the South Pacific which serves fourteen countries in the region, Continuing Education (non-formal, non-credit) programmes are regarded by academic planners as a low priority activity. These programmes depend on funding from outside the University's regular financial sources, and such funding must be sought through the initiatives of the Centre Directors and the Director of Extension Services.

### **Cultural preservation**

One concern which is common to the Pacific Islands region (or sub-region in United Nations terms) is cultural preservation. As a number of Pacific Islands scholars have observed, this is a subject about which a great deal has been said and relatively little has been done. Like non-formal education, it is something which governments espouse in principle, which is discussed and endorsed at many regional and international conferences, but in fact receives low priority when it comes to the disbursement of national funds or requests for externally funded projects (unless aid donors designate funds as being available exclusively for that purpose).

Even the term "cultural preservation" raises problems for Pacific Islanders concerned about the steady erosion of the largely non-formally transmitted arts and crafts, knowledge and oral traditions, and cultural values of Pacific peoples under the impact of external influences. As the Papua New Guinea writer John Kasaipwalova said in the 1970s. "One can only preserve that which is dead."

It seems very probable that Pacific Islanders, like people of other regions, wish to encourage the vitality and growth of their cultural traditions rather than simply to preserve them in some static sense. It is here that one of the great dilemmas of the Pacific region is to be found. The diversity of the region makes its cultural traditions particularly vulnerable. The standardising influences of an external culture which emanates primarily from the west and gathers momentum through increasingly accessible mass technology and media is seemingly inexorable in its global influence. The large-scale cultures of Asia which embrace millions seem better equipped to adapt this process to their own cultures than the small-scale cultures of the Pacific Islands.

The television "Knowledge Network" of Canada is an outstanding example of how new technology could be harnessed to bring knowledge to the isolated communities of the South Pacific. Will our leaders have the foresight and imagination to plan for such facilities as the Pacific Islands enter the TV age?

### **Non-formal education for social change and development**

An influential philosophy of non-formal education, as defined by Paulo Freire, in his concept of "conscientization", argues that mass education should be a process of demystification of the prevailing social order through enabling people to ask questions and call things into question. <sup>3</sup> Many exponents of alternative

approaches to development perceive non-formal education as the key instrument of a more just and democratic programme of development.

Put very simply, critics of the orthodox approach to development of third world countries which argues the priority of economic growth, point out that the concentration of resources on the creation of economic infrastructure and a system of elite education benefits only a privileged minority. The argument that the benefits of such a development strategy will ultimately "trickle down" to the masses has been strongly criticised. Despite apparently miraculous examples of a successful outcome of the orthodox approach to development in countries such as Singapore, South Korea and Taiwan, there is so far little evidence to suggest that the positive effects postulated by orthodox development theory apply to nations whose people have, until very recently, been engaged in a primarily subsistence economy in small-scale societies with systems of communal land tenure, and who have been administered under paternalistic colonial regimes. Indeed, it has been argued by many that orthodox development strategies lead to the creation of a class system and increasing exploitation and impoverishment of the mass of the population, with none of the balancing forces of industrial societies, be they socialist or capitalist.

The "development education" approach to non-formal education is perhaps the most attractive to idealists and the least attractive to governments. Fortunately in the Pacific Islands we do not have despotic regimes of the Right or the Left; nor do we have mass hunger and poverty, landlessness and oppression. Or perhaps I should say we do not have them on a significant scale, yet. For while we have been fortunate that since decolonisation, governments in the region have been benevolent compared to many other parts of the third world, there is no cause for complacency.

The preconditions for increasing poverty exist; rapid population growth, continuing dependence on external aid and resources, pressure on land in many areas, and thoughtless exploitations of resources which affect the delicate ecological balance between man and the environment of small islands. Social justice and good government in the future will depend upon Pacific Islanders increasing their understanding of both their rights and obligations as citizens, and also the choices with which governments are confronted in their dealings with the outside world.

It may be that the greatest challenge for non-formal education in the region will be to increase mass awareness of these issues. Yet it often seems to me that the apostles of small-scale rural development and community education are insufficiently sensitive to the need for programmes in which local people identify and solve problems within the framework of their own cultures.

Non-formal education in the Pacific Islands is conducted largely by or through Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) or Private Voluntary Agencies (PVAs) supported by external aid programmes which include funds raised by their own parent organisations overseas, or funds channelled through multi-lateral aid sources, from private foundations or foreign government sources. As I have said, national government involvement, where it exists, tends to be confined to a coordinating role. Even non-formal training institutions such as vocational and rural training centres and multi-craft programmes which are nominally government operated, depend heavily upon such agencies and their resources. UN agencies, becoming more aware of the difficulty for Pacific Island countries to absorb or benefit from projects designed primarily for Asia, assist both government and non-government agencies and institutions.

Too often, enthusiastic non-formal educators from afar arrive among Pacific Island communities with idealistic preconceived models of what is "appropriate" and "progressive" without careful consideration of the strengths and values already existing in these communities. One of the most cutting observations I have read on this subject was made by V.S. Naipaul, writing of a village development programme in Indonesia, in which he concluded that the exercise was that of privileged experts teaching "villagers how to be villagers".<sup>5</sup>

One of the major areas of church and non-government endeavours has been in rural training centres of various kinds. These centres tend to provide training in agriculture and other skills for rural life to young men. If young women are trained, the emphasis is usually upon sewing, cooking and other domestic skills. Few offer training to couples or families in subjects which reflect the division of labour between men and women in Pacific societies. The experts and volunteers come with their projects, filled with enthusiasm and after a few years leave, often with a sense of failure and disillusionment. It is hard to be critical of this process because it involves so much goodwill and idealism. Yet certain points must be addressed.

This paper would certainly not be the first to mention the problem of the capacity of small Pacific Island countries to absorb all aid programmes offered to them, the duplication of projects, and competition between NGOs, or the way in which failed rural training programmes are replicated - the "reinvention of the wheel syndrome".

Points of considerable relevance to the Pacific Islands have been made by Bhasin and Malik in their review of people's action programmes in Asia. Citing A.R. Desai, they note the different agendas of NGOs which may be broadly classified in terms of their ideological orientation as philanthropic, reformist

or revolutionary groups. In the South Pacific we would have to add to this list groups affiliated to churches or religious agencies. They observe that perhaps the greatest weakness of NGOs is that too many believe that they know best what is good for the development of the poor and needy. <sup>6</sup> The point made by these writers that indigenous groups are too often "the forgotten NGOs" is also true of the Pacific Islands.

Most, if not all, Pacific Island countries have extended families or clans, established churches with an indigenous clergy, and village and sometimes district or island councils. These traditional or neo-traditional organisations have strong institutional roots in their societies and a capacity to work with the people. There are also traditional systems for informal, non-formal and formal transmission of knowledge and skills. NGOs or voluntary agencies need to be careful that, with the best of intentions, they do not undermine these institutions. For example, in 1984 I visited a small village of fourteen households on an island in the Western Solomons and discovered that three NGOs, one of them a church organisation, had established separate projects in the village. The village was divided into rival factions, each concerned with its own project. I do not imply that the agencies involved caused the factions, but they provided a focus for rivalry and dissension in a community which needed instead a focus for unity and cooperation. While uncoordinated NGO/Voluntary Agency work in non-formal education in the Pacific remains a problem, rigid government control over such activities would not be desirable. Cooperative and positive programmes of coordination and information and resource sharing between government and non-government agencies are needed on a national and regional basis.

## Notes

1. Edwin K. Townsend. (1977) *Adult Education in Developing Countries*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.
2. Adult Education in Asia and the Pacific (January 1982) *Bulletin of the UNESCO Regional Office for Education in Asia and the Pacific*. Special Issue. Bangkok: UNESCO.
3. e.g. Ivan Illich (*De-Schooling Society*. London: Pergamon Press. 1971) and Everett Reimer (*School is Dead*. London: Pergamon, 1971).
4. Paulo Freire (1970) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York: Herder and Herder.
5. V.S Naipaul (1981) *Among the Believers*. London: Andre Deutsch.
6. Kamla Bhasin and Baljit Malik. People's Action in Asia: Constraints, Possibilities, Break through Points. *ASPBAE Courier* 33, 9-14.

**Adult and Community Education in  
the various South Pacific Countries**

## **Adult and Community Education In the Solomon Islands**

**Moses Rahari**

The Solomon Islands, like many of her sister island nations in the Pacific, covers a huge sea area of approximately 1.3 million square kilometres. Of this, there is only 28,530 square kilometres of land. The country is made up of widely scattered mountainous islands and low lying coral atolls stretching some 1,670 kilometres in a south-easterly direction from Bougainville in Papua New Guinea to Santa Cruz and Tikopia Island groups bordering the Republic of Vanuatu.

The population is about 300,000 made up of Melanesians, Polynesians, Micronesians, Europeans and Chinese. (More recently, new waves of workers are arriving in the Solomons with newly introduced industries; for example, logging, fishing and agriculture, from the Philippines, Taiwan, Korea and Malaysia.) English and Pidgin English are the official languages. There are about 70 different languages. The annual population growth rate of 3.5 is one of the highest in the region. The economy relies heavily on fish, timber, palm oil, cocoa and copra. My reason for referring to these facts is that our work programme as community educators are affected by them. The islands are scattered which means that travelling between the islands is very expensive. Language has been a problem and still is even within the same community. Finance has always been a problem with the Solomon Island dollar declining in value with inflation rising. This makes community education a difficult task, at best half done.

## **The Education System**

Traditionally, education has usually been thought of in terms of Formal Education. Through ignorance and misunderstanding, Solomon Islanders feel that only through the formal education mode can human beings develop, gain employment and prosper. However, the formal education system, for various reasons, is unable to cater for the educational needs of all Solomon Islanders and cannot be expected to do so in the foreseeable future. There is an unbalanced development of human resources through formal education. Central to the idea of a country preparing for the future is an education system geared to the entire population. At present, we do not have the type of education system that provides for all.

## **Human Resource Investment**

The formal education system in the Solomon Islands is geared towards children. However, unlike many other nations of the world, it is the hundreds of island clans who own the country's resources - land, trees, rivers, reefs and fishing grounds. Government controls little. These people are under severe pressure from outside forces who are determined to exploit them as quickly and cheaply as possible. The nation's resource owners are in a poor position to understand let alone respond to these pressures. Formal education has no place in its curricula to help Solomon Islanders face these problems. It is true to say that only a nation that invests in its most important resource, its people, will make it into the next century. We don't have to look far. Pacific rim nations, for example, Japan, Hong Kong and Singapore, have demonstrated that a poor country can develop without abundant natural resources as long as it invests enough in its human resources, appropriate technology and technical know-how needed for the change. Adult and

Community Education then, should not be seen as a luxury or secondary to formal education, that is, something that needs to be done only when there is enough money, sufficient teachers and an obvious demand. Adult education lies at the heart of any education system.

### **Change of Attitude**

Our present day formal school system can never be changed or improved by simply pumping in more money, training more teachers, re-tooling new curricula. To respond to the present education imbalance requires more than pouring in more of the same outdated medicines. To respond quickly and correctly, the nation must return to root issues. Unless we re-engage the rural people, inspire them to participate and get them committed to the new education process, no amount of finance will bring about the necessary educational changes. Although the need for adult and community education is known to all our leaders and decision makers, their responses to this issue has been both slow and varied.

The Ministry of Education had established a Community Education Sector. It has established a network of Community Education Officers in most provinces. Government Extension Officers in Agriculture, Health Education, Water Supply, Small Business, Fisheries, Environment, Youth and Sports and Women, are also active in Community Education work in all provinces of the Solomon Islands.

### **Churches**

Historically the churches were the first major actors in formal education and when they left the primary school programme to government in 1974, many invested in the non-formal sector. Their major investment took the form of Rural Training Centres.

Presently there are 20 registered Rural Training Centres. These are located in all provinces and offer skills to just over 1,000 young adults in carpentry, agriculture, building construction, home economics, trade and allied works yearly.

### **Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO)**

Few major local NGO's have proven methods of how to reach out to the rural communities who live in the thousands of small villages, scattered over dozens of islands, spread over thousands of square miles of ocean. One particular NGO that has contributed quite effectively to community education awareness in the Solomon Islands is the Solomon Islands Development Trust (SIDT). In 1982, the SIDT set itself the task of bringing development and education awareness to village people. Its strategy of training school *pushouts* of village men and women to work in mobile teams as teachers of their fellow villages has proven to be both cost effective and efficient. Over the years SIDT through the use of its mobile teams, tours villages giving theatre presentations with women's teams conducting workshops at the village level in all provinces of the Solomon Islands.

### **The Solomon Islands College of Higher Education**

The School of General Studies as a section of SICHE caters for those previously denied access to further education studies. It works closely with Community Education Officers of the Ministry of Education, the Rural Training Centres and the NGO *Village Outreach Programmes*.

SICHE also runs courses on small engine maintenance and refitting. People bring their own machines and tools to these workshops. They can also purchase new parts for their machines at the same time.

Recently the college has been expanding on its outreach programme to the various rural communities. Four of its schools—Marine, Finance and Administration, Industrial Development, and Natural Resources, have been engaged in rural work. Courses on fisheries and net repairs, basic bookkeeping, joinery skills and tourist ranger training, are already provided by the college.

### **Others**

A wide range of other smaller agencies are also involved in adult and community education in the Solomon Islands. In some cases, duplications and overlapping occur while some areas are neglected. To avoid this, the National Council of Community Education and Training was established a few years back, but due to financial difficulties, it has not convened regularly.

Church women and youth outreach groups are also working in the rural areas but because many of them are operating on a voluntary basis their programmes depend on the availability of volunteers. The University of the South Pacific also runs short courses at its centre in Honiara. This is attended mainly by Honiara residents, while its academic extension courses are enjoyed all over the country. The demand is increasing and USP is trying all it can to cater for this by opening up offices in the main provincial areas.

### **National Adult Education Associations**

Few such associations have been established. The Solomon Islands Non-Formal Education Association was established three years ago with support from an overseas agency. The Rural Training Centres Association just established this year, will be another powerful voice in community education.

The Solomon Islands Literacy Association is being set up and will play a leading role in literacy work.

### **Summary**

As one can see from what I have mentioned, a lot of groups are involved in adult education locally. However, in spite of the number of community education programmes provided, a large number of the rural people remain poorly served. No one organisation or institution has adequately responded to the adult and community education needs of urban and rural people. However, if community education is publicly accepted as a priority issue, there will need to be a government co-ordinating body to rationalise the use of various resources.

## **Adult/Community Education and People Centred Development in Papua New Guinea**

**Naihuwo Ahai**

This paper discusses adult and community education issues with the following pertinent reasons in mind:

- a) that the primary goal of governments in any country is to achieve a level of improved life style (development) for its people. Education, in whatever form it takes, is crucial to the achievement of the country's developmental goals and the failure of development to benefit the masses is in itself a failure of education in meeting society's developmental needs. Education, therefore, is an important tool in redirecting development to benefit the masses
- b) that most education systems of the Pacific Island nations have primarily concerned themselves with the production of manpower that engages itself in economic activities geared towards the improvement of the country's overall Gross National Production. Such emphasis on quantitative aspects of development has ignored qualitative aspects of development.
- c) there is a strong need for the redirection of educational goals at the grass-root level in line with the people's needs in development and resource utilisation.

These discussions will focus on Papua New Guinea.

### **Development Objectives**

Papua New Guinea has a broad agenda of development which is reflected in the eight *National Goals* and five *Directive Principles*. These goals reiterate that the ultimate goals of development is the improvement of the quality of life of the people. The stated development objectives imply a self-reliant,

decentralized, more participatory, broad-based and indigenous approach to development. The reality, however, is much different. Perhaps the wide gap between the unrealistic expectations created among people by the broad development goals and the subsequent realities have led to a great deal of frustration and disappointment among the people. The broad national objectives were translated into a multitude of medium-to-long-term development goals which encompassed the following:

- *the achievement of sustained economic growth;*
- *the creation of income-generating opportunities in rural areas, and,*
- *the reduction of social and economic inequalities.*

The evidence shows that there are drawbacks in efforts made to translate these goals into action.

### **Economic Growth**

Despite the emphasis placed on it, the growth objective has not been achieved. The growth performance of the economy has varied over the post-independence period.

The general assumption among policy makers has been that *growth* is good and more growth is better. Hence a high growth rate is considered an indicator of economic success while negative growth is an indicator of widespread economic failure. Economic growth is certainly a significant factor in the improvement of people's lives. However, it is not an end in itself; it is the means to an end. What matters is how economic growth is achieved, managed and distributed, for the benefit of the people. To accept growth as desirable, it must be shown that:

- *the growth has taken place through the production of goods and services that are inherently valuable and beneficial;*

- *the benefits of growth have been widely distributed throughout the society;*
- *the benefits outweigh the costs;*
- *the growth contributes to 'sustainable development'.*

The rate of growth and the kind of growth achieved during the post-independence period contributed little to development. This may be seen from the disappointingly high unemployment and underemployment of labour in the economy, low level of human development and apparently rising income disparities, between the rich and poor, and also between the urban and rural sectors.

### **Education**

The picture in the education sector is no less disturbing. About 600,000 children of school-going age were not in primary or secondary schools and about 1.1 million adult were illiterate in 1990. Most of the illiterates are women. The average primary school enrolment ratio of seventy four percent shows that twenty six percent of the children do not enter schools at all. During the post-independence period, the primary school drop-out rate has increased from 27% in 1976 to about 37% in 1988. A large proportion of students who enrol, leave school without any worthwhile primary education.

Equally as disturbing as the low level of human development is the disparity in human development. There are four types of disparities: rural-urban; female-male; poor-rich; and inter-provincial.

The education system discriminates against rural children who attend small schools in remote areas and favours those who attend large schools, particularly in urban areas. The system actually favours the social groups who are already advantaged. It penalizes those who are disadvantaged rein-

forces the imbalances between the rich and poor, urban and rural, and educated and illiterate. The basic issue of unequal opportunity is one that affects a large percentage of the nation's school children.

### **Deterioration of culture**

Culture is a central component of development. Development patterns which undermine culture contribute towards significant social discord. The post-independence development, however, has not led to an improvement in culture, despite the fact that cultural development has been one of the stated goals. The outcome appears to have been a culturally confused, rather than a better society. The rising trend in crimes and numerous other social problems are a manifestation of the deterioration of the culture.

### **What is the Role of Adult and Community Education?**

In recent times the peaceful nature of the Pacific is being pushed with increasing frequency to its seams. And those of us who are in positions of influence should perhaps begin to reflect on these rumblings. The challenge for us is to reflect on these developmental disparities as far as our individual countries are concerned and establish the role(s) of adult and community education in redressing these disparities. I believe it has a tremendous role in facilitating "people centred development" which can only be achieved through:

- Policies that focus on sustainable development rather than maximum growth in Gross Domestic Product-GDP.
- Growth which destroys the environment eventually destroys the growth itself. There must be a clear limit to what extent the development needs of the future generations have to be compromised to fulfil the needs of the present generation.

- Much more emphasis is required on the short and long-term environmental impact on mining. Community education has a role in educating the landowners on sustainable development and environmental issues so that they can best determine the utilization of their resources. Greater emphasis should be placed on primary health care, primary education and the improvement of adult literacy both in quantitative and qualitative terms.
- There cannot be sustainable development without adequate primary health care, primary education and adult literacy.
- Despite their significance in human development both primary health care and primary education remain secondary to economic growth. The time is ripe to seriously consider how all governments can be persuaded to give the highest priority to these important sectors.

Adult and community education must provide opportunities for basic and continuing education and also teach about primary health care.

- As the bulk of the people are dependent on agriculture and fishing, it is mandatory to adopt policies that lead to broad-based agricultural and fisheries development to establish a better link between income and human development. It is this kind of economic growth which would contribute the most to the improvement of the well-being of the majority of low-income groups in the Pacific.

Adult and community education must impart skills and knowledge for rural development and for improving the quality of life.

- An important requirement for achieving sustainable development is to create productive employment opportunities for the people. The unemployed cannot be expected to

contribute to the development process, as is evident from the serious social problems of the country at present.

- However, it is unrealistic to expect that the current unemployment problems can be resolved through acceleration of agricultural growth alone. The sheer size of the backlog of the unemployed would prohibit this. It is absolutely necessary to introduce specific employment creation schemes to expand the rate of labour absorption.

Adult and community education should enable persons to engage themselves in income generating activities. Much greater emphasis should be placed on implementing policies and programmes.

- The announcement of correct policies is clearly not adequate as evident from past experience. Policies on paper do not improve peoples' well-being. It is necessary to implement the correct policies effectively to achieve the desired results.
- For effective implementation of policies, appropriate institutions need to be highlighted and innovative approaches emphasised. There should be more community participation in development.

Adult and community education should help to translate government policies into rural development programmes and should also empower the people to manage their own programmes.

### **Conclusion**

Community education has an absolutely necessary role in shifting the emphasis from growth to investment in people in the Pacific. The benefits of the models of development pursued by most Pacific Island nations have deluded the masses and has thus set the stage for the search for alternatives in some Pacific

countries. With increasing concerns on the environment, the challenge for adult and community education is to enable citizens to improve the quality of their lives while at the same time caring for the environment. Such investments would not only improve human development but also lay the foundation for sustainable development.

## **Literacy in the Community: The Papua New Guinea Experience**

Vincent Manukayasi

Papua New Guinea has 869 distinct languages. The first question everybody asks upon hearing this is "How can literacy be possible in 869 languages?" (This question will be answered later.) Papua New Guinea has one of the lowest literacy rates in the world with women the ones most affected. There are two national languages, Hiri Motu and Tok Pisin, and one official language, English, which is used in the schools and offices.

When the first explorers arrived on our shores (and "discovered" us), we were used as cheap labour, looking after their homes and plantations. There was no need for literacy because by being illiterate we didn't know our rights and privileges. They wanted it that way. Then the missionaries arrived and began their task of converting the "heathen" people. But they realised that the only way to do this was to make us literate. To do so, they started their mass literacy campaigns. Literacy for what? Literacy, so the people could be converted! They broke all the traditional rules and customs to make people bible-literate!

Then the Colonial Governments were set up; an exact photocopy of their parent governments - completely over-riding and destroying traditional education, economic and spiritual systems, and political and social structures. There has been no turning back ever since. The Colonial Governments introduced schools to teach the children to read and write in English (or French) so they could be like them. But in their haste to provide literacy, they forgot this glaring question: **Literacy for What?**

This Colonial legacy has been brought down from generation to generation and each generation has asked the same question. Literacy for conversion and for patronising us was good for

those times when we thought 'their' word was nothing but the truth. We are living in different times faced with different issues and different pressures. We need to break loose from this Colonial death-hold. As independent states and people, we must realise our powers, rights and responsibilities, not only for our future generations but also for the future of the global community. We need to come up with a new mission statement for this age-old question. We, the educated elite, the globe trotters, the professional conference-goers, do not have the answers. We can only facilitate.

A world famous environmentalist said that before you cut down a tree, look seven generations back and ask what this tree meant to your ancestors, then look seven generations to the future and ask what this tree will mean to your grand-children. If you are certain that it will not break the trust your ancestors have placed upon you, and will not jeopardise your grandchildren's future, talk with your elders. Only when your elders agree then you can cut the tree down. He also said that forests cannot be planted. Only fools say that a forest can be planted because they can never be. A forest grows by itself, supported by its natural surroundings. Only plantations can be planted, rows and rows of trees but that is not the forest! Education is like the forest. It cannot be planted, nurtured and harvested. It can only feed upon and grow from its natural surroundings. Education is not education until it is brought fourth from the very bowels of nature, the essence of life, and the reasons for living.

Let literacy be for this purpose. Let it be to encompass all aspects of life, giving old meaning to new concepts, ideas and issues, and giving man the power to articulate and savour all that comes, not only with being literate, but also with being in tune with nature. Let literacy give one the power to decide for

oneself ones own interpretation of life while encompassing the prevailing issues and the power to say 'yes' or 'no' without pressure. At the end of the day, when all decisions come to pass, the man will say, "I did it in respect of the trust my great grandparents placed upon me, and for the sake of my great grand-children. I did it with all the knowledge I possess, past and present, and with my knowledge of the future as far as it can go." Only when men and women can say this, will they demonstrate their literacy skill. This is what literacy should be for!

### **How can this be done?**

While PNG may have the largest number of languages of any country in the world, this should not be seen as a problem but rather should be used as an encouragement for literacy workers and educators in the country to put their hands and heads together. If anything can work in PNG, it will work anywhere in the world!

### **The Cost?**

We have been working in nearly all the provinces of the country (with a few exceptions), in collaboration with provincial NGO's and local community organisations to further this objective. This is costing us very little. If every community raised PNG K300.00 kina, we could help train and produce initial literacy materials in any language and show the local literacy teachers the methods of producing inexpensive materials in their own languages in their own communities. This process resolves two important issues; that of centrally produced materials which end up being culturally and linguistically inappropriate, and secondly, giving the communities the power to write, print and teach their own literacy materials, and as an added but important bonus, in their own communities! In PNG where a lot of

communities still have strong ties with their traditional past, and, therefore, are still attuned to nature, we have this chance to learn from such communities the real meaning of education. We cannot continue to believe that the western education system has all the answers. It obviously cannot, because of the problems it is causing in contemporary Papua New Guinea. The formal imported system is geared towards causing problems for anyone who adopts it. It raises expectations about the 'pot-of-gold at the end of the rainbow,' and if you fall along the way, you are made to feel that it is your fault. If you get to the end, you will have to work hard, day in day out, to pay just to sit in the pot. You think everyone should be driving cars, drinking beer and taking out women. If you aren't doing this you must have a problem.

### **Is this the system we want?**

Let us be realistic and plan a system that follows traditional and natural systems. Literacy is the first step towards changing the system. Let us all make literacy work for our communities. Each of our communities can form bigger communities to eventually bring meaning to education. Only then will we find the real power of literacy and the reason for literacy. Education is like the forests that cannot be planted. Planning education outside of its natural environment will produce *plantations* of people. These are people living in a make-believe society doing what everybody else is doing, jumping when the manager says *jump*. When the time is ripe, these people will be chopped down and used as cheap timber. Who benefits? Not us obviously, because we are at the receiving end. We need to realise that our imported education system is planned to make mass believers of the system. We need to break away from this mass hypnosis before the globe becomes one big plantation. We, in the Pacific, have one of the closest ties with nature, and with our ancestral

past. Our experiences are still fresh. Let us build on these experiences before we forget and are led to believe our system of education are not compatible with modern society. We need to tell the world our education system is the only one that is compatible with modern society.

### **What we have to offer?**

We have the richness of traditional learning styles lost in most, if not all, of the industrialised countries. We have our natural environment intact from which we derive our knowledge and plan our future. We still have respect for our elders who have the stories and knowledge about the ways of our ancestors. We still have our natural resources that are the key to our power. We still have people who believe in our system. Let us believe in ourselves and realise the importance of our decisions on the future of our children and the global community. Let us take a second look at the Western system that has been imposed upon us. Let us, through literacy, empower our people with this knowledge and re-awaken an age old tradition of education; a system that works in cycle with nature. Let us rethink the present education system that does not conform to any known natural cycle. Let us enable our people to say at the end of the day. "This is the sort of education we want our children to have."

## **Community Education in the Cook Islands**

**Brian Terrence Hagan**

Community Education is a very much misunderstood term. Ask a group of people what it means and invariably they will give different answers. There are many possible reasons for this confusion such as:

- a) The relative newness of the term to most people especially those who are not in the education sector;
- b) The complexity of the nature and scope of community education (in character, coverage, content, etc.);
- c) Some people are not willing to accept change and to believe alternative systems of learning are equally, if not more effective than the formal system;
- d) The varying definitions ascribed to 'community education' by the professionals.

Thus, community education could refer to the truly lifelong process whereby every individual acquires attitudes, values, skills and knowledge from daily experiences and the educational influences and resources in his or her own environment - from family and neighbours, work and play, the market place, the library, mass-media, and so on. It could also refer to a formalised, structured system of education which attempts to meet the needs of the community as a whole. Community education will be referred to here as being that applicable to non-formal education. Through community education, a child acquires a substantial vocabulary at home before going to school; a daughter learns child-care and cooking from helping and observing her mother; a son picks up occupational skills from his father and children and adolescents learn from their peers. As a process, community education is relatively unorganized and unsystematic, yet it unquestionably accounts for a

very high proportion of all that any person accumulates in a lifetime. It is *people oriented* and in a sense revolves around communal groups. Community education is the responsibility of no single agency and its costs, inputs, and outputs are not easily measurable.

As opposed to this, formal education is a structured and graded modern education system that stretches from pre-school through to the university. It connotes age-specific, full time classroom attendance in a linear graded system, geared to certificates, diplomas, degrees, or other formal credentials. It is thus easily defined, its cost measurable, and its outputs easily identified.

In the Cook Islands there are a number of on-going community education programmes targeted at different audiences. It is handled by a number of different government departments and non-government organisations. Some have been operating for many years and some are new. Some are *high - tech* while others are basic. Some require and offer examinations and certificates while others require a minimum of involvement. No doubt this is the same elsewhere in the Pacific but the whole framework makes up the complex mosaic that is community education. Examples of these are:

- a) *Public Health Department* - health awareness programmes.
- b) *Radio Cook Islands* programmes - for women, growers, children and others.
- c) *Agriculture Department* - extension courses, field days, trials, and farmers' extension services.

**Benefits and limitations of community education in the Cook Islands:**

- a) It has the potential to reach out to all the people in the community whereas formal education tends to eliminate the vast majority of people once they leave school.
- b) It relies largely on voluntary work, self reliance and emphasises using existing resources in the community.
- c) It usually is less costly or self-supporting in cost. The emphasis is usually on the practical rather than the theoretical and in the field rather than the classroom.
- d) It is a way to reach the out-of-school population and meeting the needs that formal education cannot meet.
- e) It is able to offer a wider variety of topics than is available in the formal system and interacts strongly between governments and NGO's.
- f) It usually requires leisure time involvement and does not hinder income earning capacities.

**The Limitations are:**

- a) It is not likely to be accepted as *education* by all sectors of the community.
- b) It is not usually recognized in the formal education system.
- c) Smaller, better educated, more mobile communities equipped with radio, television, VCR's, no longer share in communal activities as was the case in even our very recent past. It seems that today the community lacks interest, support and morale in the activities of many organizations.
- d) A lot of community education activities are the result of the efforts of one individual or a small group or a few and when these few leave the area for any reason, those activities or programmes are often lost. It is very difficult to maintain continuity and standards in those areas.

## **Rationale for continued community education in the Cook Islands:**

1. What a person learns or ought to learn in a life-time cannot be acquired through formal education alone. In fact, it is possible that many of the informational skills, knowledge and attitudes acquired through contact with other people, from work, or from motivated self-study may affect a person's life more profoundly than those acquired through formal education.
2. The Cook Islands education system is undergoing a major overhaul: education policies will be geared to integrated community development, self-reliance, and local access to knowledge and expertise, essential to the achievement of local development objectives.
3. Small island nations are themselves collections of small islands that have disparities to a marked degree. They are compounded by having only small numbers of people with appropriate expertise even in their main centre of population, very limited financial and economic resources, and severe problems of communication and transport between the islands.
4. The Government of the Cook Islands recognises this problem which has many facets. It is actively devising new strategies for economic and social development and for the deployment of agencies that have integrated community development as their aim.
5. Development in telecommunications technology which are, as a matter of Cook Islands government policy, becoming available to island communities other than Rarotonga, can be used to support educational initiatives in ways which until now would have been unrealistic to contemplate. They open up new possibilities through

techniques and materials that local communities can now have access to as planned features of local programmes of continuing education.

### **Case Study: The Mangaia Integrated Development Plan (1990-1994)**

The Cook Islands Government, in collaboration with the Integrated Atoll Development Project of UNDP is developing a model of development planning focused on:

- a) Raising the people's awareness and encouraging them to take more responsibility in their own island's development;
- b) Providing island leaders and community people with relevant planning and management skills to enable them to increase their participation in their island's development;
- c) Sustaining the impetus that has been generated by providing implementation support to some of the initiatives identified by the community;
- d) Strengthening institutional structures at the national and local levels to enable them to respond effectively to the increased expectations of the island community.

In 1988 Mangaia was chosen as the first island community where the approach was to be tried out. The **Mangaia Integrated Development Plan** (1990-1994) was the first outcome of discussions within the Mangaian community about its future. It outlines community objectives to be sought, projects to be initiated, and targets to be achieved during the five years foreshadowed by the plan. The main sectors for action are: agricultural development, marine development, infrastructure development, tourism, education, health and nutrition, youth and sports, and women's programmes.

A major aim is to reduce the long-standing dependence on the local representatives of government departments by fostering industries, a local market for the sale of produce and craft items, and a modest scale of tourism. Continuing education of the adult population and the out-of-school youths is essential to its success.

The main education/training issues identified in the Plan are:

Programmes for Mangaia youths who have left school

- a) development for Mangaia handicrafts;
- b) training for the running of small businesses;
- c) public education in health, nutrition, home management, and food preparation;
- d) discouragement of the use of alcohol and narcotic substances.

The Mangaia leadership for this development is provided by the Mangaia Development Co-ordinating Committee (MDCC), which was set up in 1989 during the initial phase of the project. The committee acts as a technical working arm of the Island Council on Mangaia. Their specific role is to assist the Island Council formulate, appraise, monitor, and follow-up on development projects on the island. The nine member committee consists of a cross-section of the whole island which includes heads of government departments, the government representative on the island, the school principal, and community organisations such as youth, women and farmers.

Since the Mangaia Plan was published, there have been important initiatives in community education through the leadership of the principal, staff and school committee of Mangaia College. Other initiatives in youth development, women's crafts, and in the development of a local market are creating needs and expectations that call for a concerted plan of action under the general heading of community education.

# **Adult and Community Education in the Nauru University Centre**

**Makarita Vaai**

## **Introduction**

The Republic of Nauru is a Micronesian state which occupies 21 square kilometres of land and is located in the Central Pacific. It has a population of about 8,000 people, over half of whom are Nauruans. The rest are made up of Kiribati, Solomon Islanders, Chinese, Tuvaluans, Indians, European, Filipinos and a smaller numbers of other races. Although the Nauruans speak the Nauruan language amongst themselves, there is a scarcity of materials written in their language. The English language becomes the *lingua franca* of the people living on the island.

*The Extension Studies Programme* of the University of the South Pacific offers courses ranging from form six level to the degree level which serves as an adult education programme on the island. Since the establishment of the Centre, there has been consistency in offering adult and community education programmes on the island. This paper will focus on the activities and types of programmes offered at the Nauru Centre of the University of the South Pacific and how the Centre has taken on the leadership role in community and adult education on the island.

## **Types of Programmes offered by the Centre:**

The Centre offers two types of learning programmes run concurrently throughout the year. These are:

- i) extension studies
- ii) continuing education

Both these programmes are geared mainly for adults. But there are some activities which are promoted in the continuing education programme which caters for the school population ranging from pre-schools to secondary schools. These activities are mainly in the form of competitions (poster, short stories, poems) to highlight current issues and to promote awareness of these issues in the community.

#### **i) Extension Studies Programme**

The extension studies programme is made up of courses leading to the award of certificates, diplomas and degrees. These courses are prepared by staff in the *Schools* of the University and the role of the Centre is to facilitate the teaching of these programmes.

The student population in these courses are mainly men and women who have left school and are in some form of employment. Very few students in these courses would be unemployed. Most of these adults are enrolled in a programme of study which would be directly related to their field of employment. For example, teachers would focus on TESL or B.Ed and education related programmes. Some students study these courses with a view of finding employment in the bigger market overseas. For example, some wives of expatriates who are unemployed often enrol in the Certificate in Librarianship programme which does not require any prerequisites. By the time these wives return to their home countries they will have completed their certificates.

#### **ii) Continuing Education**

The term *continuing education* could be applicable to both the extension studies and continuing education programmes and, therefore, could be misleading. The demarcation is not quite distinct and often one programme complements the other.

In fact continuing education sometimes offers bridging courses for some of the extension studies courses. The meaning of continuing education referred to in this paper and used by the Centre, is *any form of educational training programme which is not offered as a credit course by the various Schools of the University*. Such programmes include training workshops, competitions to create awareness on current issues, short courses relevant for a specific need in the community, the pre-school training, cultural programmes to promote the teaching of Pacific languages and activities to enhance and promote creativity. Apart from the pre-school programme which is offered through the extension mode, the rest of the programmes are usually initiated by the Centre as a result of needs identified by people in the local community. Hence the Centre has an advisory committee whose function is to advise the Centre on the type of educational and training programmes needed in the community so that the *continuing education programme* for each year can be planned accordingly. But it does not always work out that way. Often the work load necessary to plan, organise and implement the *continuing education programme* rests very heavily on the initiative of the Centre.

The responsibility of looking for funds to organise and implement these activities becomes the function of the centre. Some of the activities which have been organised and implemented on the island so far under this programme include:

- i) a workshop on creative writing and drama;
- ii) a workshop on community education;
- iii) a workshop in the basic skills for clerk/typists;
- iv) a workshop on legal training.

Some of these activities are on-going while others are generated as the need arises. The personnel recruited to conduct these activities are all staff of the university while some

who teach local classes are recruited from the very limited resources on the island.

### **The Role of the University Centre as an Agent of Change**

The Centre usually initiates the *continuing education programme* and success depends on how efficiently and effectively it is publicised, organised and implemented. Success also depends very heavily on how co-operative the people in the community are and whether they see the programmes as appropriate and useful for them. But perhaps the most important contributing factor to any programme is the general attitude of the people towards learning. The Centre's role is, therefore, a very critical and important one in the community. This role can be seen as an agent of change. As such, it acts as the catalyst in the community to bring about change. Such task demands a lot of time and planning, an understanding of the community and what makes them tick and also requires suitable approaches to suit the different situations. The centre plays an important role too in co-ordinating the educational needs of the community.

These roles are listed below and are not in any particular order:

- a) It identifies the needs of the community through talks with people in the community.
- b) It plans programmes based on community needs.
- c) It administers programmes (publicity, budgeting, enrolments and implementation.)
- d) It does general administration.
- e) It liaises with the community.

All these roles require involvement with the community and through this close working relationship, the centre assumes the leadership role and provides the community with a variety of services that bring about changes in attitude and outlook to life.

## **Conclusion**

The loss of culture has contributed considerably to the disintegration of the human and physical environment of the island. The family unit as an educational agency is no longer effective, creating a major disadvantage. The Centre's attempts at developing and trying to sustain community and adult education on the island are only mere beginnings. A sense of community spirit and commitment needs to be encouraged so that people can be self motivated to aspire to achieve in their educational goals. People need to see the value of education so that they can build up and expand on their manpower resources instead of having to depend too heavily on assistance from outside. There is an urgent need to exploit all possible resources in particular, educational resources. Through education, the future generation should be able to gain the relevant knowledge and information and apply it profitably and effectively to rebuild themselves. The island's critical resource is its people and the underlying power by which these people can lead a healthy and successful lifestyle is in education.

In this day and age we are faced with changes which continuously plague our lives. The need to equip and to educate ourselves to cope with the demands of these changes call for a continuous review of what we offer our people as community and adult educators. It is important to engage in lifelong education and explore all possibilities available together with a resurgence in leadership training. As community and adult educators we are committed to providing the best and what is useful for the communities we work for. This will provide our communities with the appropriate knowledge and skills so that they can fashion

their lives on what is good and useful for them in order to meet the demands of the time. It will also dispel the feeling that anything from outside is better than what is grown in the backyard. Such changes will contribute to the development of educated individuals and an increased sense of community for a country has no greater resources than that of its educated individuals.

## **Adult Education in Fiji**

**Esiteri Kamikamica**

Adult and Community Education are synonymous in Fiji as the emphasis is on providing information, knowledge and skills that people need in order to cope with changing life conditions in a rapidly changing society. Adults in this context also includes youth. Education in Fiji has been largely perceived as a means of access to regular paid employment. There is now a growing problem of well educated but unemployed people and this has resulted in more candidates than there are jobs available.

In Fiji today there is a great awareness that alternatives need to be offered to cater for the needs of adult members of the community so that they may be able to accommodate the new changes that confront them daily. Adult and community education through the non-formal education approach has become increasingly recognised because it contributes to solving societal problems and needs. The formal recognition of non-formal education in Fiji was registered in the 1969 Fiji Education Commission which focused on the need for parents to be educated to enable them to provide support as well as contribute effectively to the educational development of their children.

In 1972 Dr Edith O Mercer was invited by the Government to examine the recommendations of the Fiji Education Commission (1969). In her report she suggested a National Structure of Adult/Non-Formal Education in Fiji. Although the recommendations were not implemented, the various agencies and non-governmental voluntary organisations continued to conduct their own non-formal training programmes. Some government departments and various statutory bodies organised their own training programmes.

In 1980 Wiert Flikkema, made a survey of the *Skill Training Programme* in some areas in Fiji. In his report, he mentioned that many organisations, institutions and agencies are involved in rural training offering a wide range of training programmes and facilities.

Adult and Community Education was established in 1980 within the Ministry of Education and became an integral part of the Youth Department. This has been seen to provide educational measures not only to the youths and children at school but to the parents and the whole community. In 1984 Dr Eitan Israeli was invited by the government of Fiji to evaluate Non-Formal activities and to make recommendations. One of his proposal was the formation of a National Association of Non-Formal Educators. At the end of a National Workshop held from 15th to the 17th of May, 1985 a Fiji Association of Non-Formal Educators was formed and office bearers elected. The Association has now acquired an office space in Suva and continues to promote the cause of adult and community education in Fiji liaising with government and non-governmental agencies and the various training institutions.

### **Programme and Training**

The wide range of differences in different communities makes it impossible to have a standard approach to meet the needs. The programmes therefore vary in their approaches so that they are relevant and adaptable to meet the varying community needs.

The following are the different types of education considered to be essential:

- a) **Basic education.** This includes all training in the skills of family living.

- b) **Civic education** is conducted at all levels to enable men and women to understand better how government works and the reasons for the regulations which affect our lives.
- c) **Liberal education** is pursued not for economic ends but for the greater enrichment of the individual, the enhancement of, his/her leisure, the widening of his/her horizons and the deepening of his/her insight.

The arts are promoted through the festivals and competitions by the Fiji Arts Council, a statutory arm of the government set up to perform this task. Other private agencies also show positive initiatives by organising training workshops to meet needs in areas of health, nutrition, social awareness, marketing, farming, fishing, etc. The University of the South Pacific is already encouraging the growth of local creative writing and facilities for publication. Various craft work are established on an economic basis but there is need for development and refinement.

Although there may be other categories of education included in a total community education programme, the three briefly outlined above are considered to be essential requirements by the Ministry responsible. This Ministry works very closely with other government departments which organise other adult education programmes to meet the needs of their various specified target groups. The University of the South Pacific introduced a certificated course in 1988 on non-formal education. This is a course on the theory and practice of non-formal education particularly for teachers and non-formal educators.

#### **Pilot Adult and Community Education Programmes**

There were initially twenty four schools selected to pilot programmes on Adult/Community Education undertaken by the Ministry of Youth and Sports. These programmes are two-

pronged. They have a community-based as well as a school-based part of the programme.

The school in most cases are the property of the community or *vanua* in the indigenous community context. There are also government and church schools. The three existing administrative structures of the *church*, the *government* and the traditional *vanua* often overtax the personal resources of the parents and community. It depletes the resources to be used on their children and their families. Rural indigenous parents often place their children's needs as the least priority in their family budgets because of the many traditional and religious obligations that are inbuilt in the Fijian way of life. In this context it is important for the traditional and religious leaders together with the government representatives to liaise with one another to co-ordinate their activities, thus allowing more income, time and concern for the children and the needs of the family.

The community-based programmes respond to community needs. These programmes provide training for early drop-outs, youth, women and community members within the pilot school communities. It is often undertaken by non-governmental organisations through the co-ordinated efforts of the various Government agencies. The Ministry responds to requests in the form of funding and resource personnel. Funding is provided only when the training falls in line with the government development programme. In certain situations the community-based programmes are monitored from the school only in their initial development. As the community-based programme gains momentum, it is weaned and is expected to be self-supported, providing on-going educational development programmes for the enhancement of living standards. The initiative taken by non-governmental organisation especially religious groups in

piloting adult and community education deserve a special mention and recognition.

The contribution by the volunteer and charitable organisations now currently affiliated to the Fiji Council of Social Services is commendable.

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## **Adult and Community Education in Kiribati - with special reference to women's issues**

**Tekarei Russell**

### **Introduction**

Kiribati represents a pattern of islands which are very small and slender in the vast sea. The sea is always present. Most of the Kiribati atolls are made up of sand and rocks with little soil. The rainfall is variable except in the north, so agricultural development is limited. Copra is an important source of income for the country. The greatest potential for development however lies in the exploitation of marine resources within Kiribati's 200 mile sea zone. The population of Kiribati in the 1990 census was 72,335. The number of working women were 3117 compared to 7856 men. Education plays a very important role in the development of the social and economic needs of the people and the country. There is however a danger of over emphasising western education standards which may lead to lesser importance being given to one's own culture and traditional education.

### **The Education System in Kiribati**

Education, both primary and secondary, was originally in the hands of the Protestant, Catholic and the Seventh Day Adventist churches. After World War II, the Government began an intensive education development programme. In the late 1960's the Government began to take over the primary schools from the churches and this was completed in 1976. Primary Education is compulsory from classes 1 to 7. (This covers ages 6 to 12). In scholarship awards, a student is considered on her or his merits. At the Form 3 level all the students sit exams and only a limited

number go on to Form 4. It is at this age that many young people cannot get into higher forms because of the very limited places available.

Tertiary education includes Tarawa Teacher's College, which provides teachers for the primary schools. Tarawa Technical Institute provides vocational education and training for both the modern and rural sectors and runs courses such as Engineering, Typing, Accounting, English and Carpentry. The intake depends on the Government and private sector requirements. The Marine Training Centre provides training for males only. The University of the South Pacific Centre provides various types of courses by extension studies. Overseas training is available through scholarship at the USP and secondary schools in Australia and New Zealand.

### **The Role and Status of Women in Kiribati**

In the home the woman plays the most important and responsible role. Being a wife and mother, the family depends on her. She takes care of the children and makes sure that her husband is happy. While her husband is out fishing she organises the family daily activities. She is the planner, manager, nurse and teacher. If she uses her role to the best advantage, her family will be healthy and happy. However, in the community women tend to play a subservient role. They do not sit in the village *maneaba* for deliberations on village projects, yet they are people who are normally charged with the social responsibilities of executing these decisions. In meetings where men are present, the women participating wait for their male counterparts to take the active part, while they sit back and watch or say very little.

### **Training at Home**

Training for girls to understand their roles and responsibilities begins very early in childhood. They are taught to do the household chores like fire-making, cooking and weaving. They help cultivate plants and when old enough may be given training if the family has particular skills like local medicine. Coming of age is recognised when the girl has her first menstruation. During this time the young girl will have to undergo certain rituals. For three days she sits alone in one corner of the house near a post where she performs her work quietly throughout the day making strings. She eats very little and her food consists of coconut and water. On the third day, she rises up and is adorned in new attire and the relatives gather to have a feast. Training in the art of dancing is another important aspect of a girl's education. To perform well one has to go through long hours of training from childhood. As one is growing up, one may be told of family folklore. So the learning process is being done in the home and the community.

### **Formal Education Provided by the Churches**

Since the arrival of the English missionaries in 1857 the Catholic and Protestant Churches have been running schools in the villages. They also have high schools where adults are trained as pastors and catechists. At the end of their training the couples are posted to villages where they work as missionaries and also as teachers. (The wives of the local missionaries were the first ones to have dual responsibilities of being wives and career women.) With their education they were better equipped to perform their communal and religious duties. Prior to the war up to the 1950's the education of our women was left entirely to the Catholic and Protestant Churches. The graduates from these schools were able to help in community training programmes.

### **Formal Education - Provided by the Government**

The government had recognised the need for education but it was initially for the boys. King George V School was built in 1922 and only boys were admitted. This went on for thirty years before they decided to offer Kiribati girls the same opportunities. In 1959 the Government Girls' School was opened and called Elaine Bernacchi School. Later on more academic subjects were introduced. Now the School has Form 7 and the girls sit with boys for examinations for overseas courses. Tertiary education is also available at the University of the South Pacific and overseas for the girls. The South Pacific Commission Community Education Training Centre also trains women to work within their communities.

### **Other Training Bodies**

Various organisations provide training for women. Here members are taught to run and manage their own groups. For the rural women who do not get the chance to attend formal education, they are given opportunities through seminars or workshops. Members can initiate projects and they decide how best to execute the programmes. The Government has also helped women to be trained to help each other and their communities.

### **Career Woman**

Since places were opened up for young women to have formal education and more employment opportunities were made available, women have readily met the challenge. This has enabled them to expand their roles and status in the community. In all sections of the government and Church organisations, women occupy a number of important posts and contribute to the social and economy development of the nation.

In the private sector there are women running their own businesses. Within the last twenty years the women of Kiribati have been increasing in all sectors. No doubt Kiribati women can occupy higher positions at the policy making area given the encouragement. Women are contributing to the national economy. They are accepted by the people as being competent and important.

**How does education influence the role and status of Women?**

Education must not be seen as the key only to successful career opportunities but also a means of allowing women to achieve and to meet the challenges and situations in life and be ready to adapt it to some degree, physically, mentally and spiritually. The women of Kiribati are indeed fortunate that the government and the various church organisations together with overseas agencies have helped to expand women's roles and also raise their status.

**Case studies in Adult and  
Community Education  
Articles on Women's Education**

## **Adult Education to Alleviate Domestic Violence in Fiji with special reference to the work of the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre**

**M. Sidal**

Domestic violence in Fiji is well documented in our daily newspapers. The Women's Crisis Centre is one organisation in Fiji that works with victims of domestic violence. The problem I have identified is that their work is hampered financially by the negative image men have towards the work of the Women's Crisis Centre (hereinafter referred to as WCC). The negative image inhibits financial assistance, recruitment of personnel, provision of foodstuffs, clothing and household needs for victims, and perhaps even sympathy in the courts when it appears to support victims. There is no doubt that men control the power, the decision making and the finances of Fiji, more so than in developed countries. Therefore human and non-human resources will be channeled towards organisations men feel positive towards.

In New Zealand and Australia, Women's Refuge and other similar shelter organisations for victims of domestic violence, are positively perceived in the minds of the public and receive financial assistance from Government and non-government organisations. In Fiji whenever I asked men about the WCC every response I received was negative. I questioned men from a cross section of society including University staff, teachers, ministers of religion and labourers. Some would admit that "*WCC does a good job, but ...*". The most negative aspect that I heard was that WCC is perceived as the group "*who persuade women to leave their husbands*". I questioned Ms Shiu Chand, a clerical staff member and counsellor with WCC about the sort of image she believed WCC had in the minds of men. She

admitted that this was negative, and spoke of reactions from indifference to hostility. Ministers of the church were no different in their reactions than laymen. In New Zealand the church offers strong support to groups assisting women victims of domestic violence.

WCC advised me that they received no financial help from the Government, from men's service groups in Fiji, or any group other than a few women's organisation. All their finance comes from individual donations. It is encouraging to note that the Australian Government has promised a \$250,000 donation to purchase new premises to mark Women's Day on March 8th, 1993. UNFPA approved funding for the Fiji WCC more than two years ago but the government has not endorsed this, according to a paper presented to the *South Pacific Seminar on the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women* held in the Cook Islands in May 1991. Other women's groups such as the *Soqosoqo Vakamarama* benefit from Government in a tangible way.

### **Whose Problem is Domestic Violence?**

Domestic violence is not just a women's problem. It is not just a men's problem. It is a problem of our society. The paper referred to above states:

"Women of all ethnic categories have long suffered domestic violence or abuse in silence because of a predominant attitude that wife-beating is a man's prerogative, exercised to control a recalcitrant wife, and is usually deserved." It is very disappointing that even women lend support to the attitude that women deserved to be beaten. The wife of a former senior Cabinet Minister and a women's leader in her own right, said "but I feel a lot of problems we face is by attitude. We have to tell women that violence is a result of certain action they take." (Fiji Times,

Monday March 8, 1993, page 1, article by Janita Singh).

The paper to the UNCEDW continues:

"In the past, as now, few domestic violence cases are reported to police and women do not enjoy legal protection against domestic violence. Police effect reconciliation in 64 percent of the domestic violence cases that are reported to them. Domestic violence appears to be generally on the increase and more recently seems to be related to the effects of both a worsening economic crisis and social and political insecurities and anxieties. Since the coups there also appears to be a general increase in crime of physical violence including rape, something which may well be related to both the influence of an authoritarian, militarist culture, and the aggressive ethno-nationalism which it is fostering. ....repeated domestic violence and/or the oppression of mothers-in-law are among the factors which lead to female suicide or attempted suicide."

It can be seen therefore, that domestic violence is a problem of our society, and the Fiji WCC will need to have a better public image to carry out their work in educating the society about the community's role in domestic violence, and the work of WCC in helping victims. I believe they are also the right people to offer counselling to men who commit acts of domestic violence.

#### **Non-Formal Education Plan**

- 1) Re-educate the WCC personnel. The WCC lists its aims as follows:
  - a) Community education by providing speakers, running seminars and workshops, publication of leaflets and booklets and dissemination of information through the media, in order to increase community awareness of the problem of violence against women.

- b) Research into the problems of violence against women and into the relevant law.
- c) Lobbying for law reform in the area of violence against women in association with the Fiji Women's Rights Movement.

It is the third objective that causes anxiety to many who would otherwise support WCC. WCC needs to re-educate their organisation to become a protective and defensive group for women, and leave the aggressive pursuit of women's rights to the Women's Rights Movement, in order to better solve the problem of domestic violence in the society. At present the Fijian (pre-dominantly Christian) population see domination of the male of the house as a Christian teaching. WCC should not duplicate the work of WRM. The two issues should be kept separate. For the same organisations to try to solve both the problems of unequal rights for women and society's domestic violence, may mean neither issues are resolved.

- 2. Enlist the help of men by asking the Prime Minister, the President, or another leading figure to become Patron of WCC, and appoint more men to the Board of Trustees. (Only one male Trustee at present.)
- 3. Reprint all WCC literature to show men in a more sympathetic and supportive role. A sample of illustrations from a WCC handout sheet shows only one man (a policeman) depicted as not anti-woman. And he is seen as concerned with upholding the law, rather than protecting the women. Many statements in the present literature are confrontational and would arouse anger in men who might otherwise be sympathetic to the victims of domestic violence.
- 4. Take men with the speakers who talk in high schools and other groups. For a woman to speak on such issues and against men is culturally insensitive, and fails to enlist the

sympathy of the male members of the audiences. A man speaking against domestic violence would have a lot more impact.

5. Work closely with church ministers (who are mainly men) to break down past images of the Society and instil confidence that WCC aims to help solve the problem of domestic violence and not break down traditional values and attitudes in the home.
6. a) Set up counselling classes run by men, along the lines of Alcoholics Anonymous, encouraging men to talk together about handling anger without violence. Funding for overseas training for some male counsellors could be sought.  
b) Approach the courts and ask that men be recommended to these classes as part of sentencing for domestic violence crimes.

### **Evaluation**

The results of such a plan would become self evident in increased funding, increased co-operation from Government Departments and a larger group of men and women offering support (rather than just those who are sympathetic with feminists.)

### **Problems that could arise**

The Women's Crisis Centre personnel may be unwilling to relinquish the "activist" role it now plays entirely to Women's Rights Movement for the good of victims of domestic violence. Thus the programme could fail. In the past, opposition to non-formal education programmes has come from within the formal education system, i.e. teachers and parents. Thus, opposition to the progress of public education (particularly education of

men) about reducing domestic violence, could come from the very organisation that initiated positive support for its victims.

### **References**

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2. Fiji Times, Suva: various articles.

## **Women's Education for Survival: The Case of the Vanuatu Rural Development and Training Centres Association**

**Karen Preston**

Each year it is estimated that 60% of all ni-Vanuatu youths are pushed out of the formal school system before reaching secondary school. Less than 25% of the female population in Vanuatu aged 6 years and over have received a primary school certificate. These "school leavers" find few employment opportunities with their limited skills, and are increasingly becoming dissatisfied with life in rural areas. Urban drift is one symptom of the problems occurring in rural areas. There are few chances for youths to gain a practical education appropriate for rural life.

A number of government and non governmental organizations provide non-formal education for women in Vanuatu. World Vision is forming a committee of organizations working with adult literacy to co-ordinate programmes and develop co-operative training materials. The Vanuatu National Council of Women offers 1-2 weeks courses and workshops for women on topics such as leadership, book-keeping, water tank construction and homemaking skills. The Department of Women's Affairs offers similar workshops to women throughout the country. Church groups also provide short term women's training. There are few organisations however, that offer longer term (6 months to 2 years) practical training for women. In Vanuatu, as in many developing countries, society expects women to gain skills that focus on homemaking and family life. Cooking, sewing, gardening and mothering skills are taught through both formal and non-formal methods. Slowly, as women learn of alternatives, this traditional line of training is changing and

demand for new skills such as financial management, appropriate technology, health and income generation is beginning to increase.

### **Rural Training Centres**

Rural Training Centres (RTC) in Vanuatu have been training youths in rural communities since before the country gained independence. It is only in the last 4 to 5 years however, that most Rural Training Centers have offered this training to women. Rural training for women at the RTCs still focuses on traditional women's subjects that are often chosen by people not directly involved with the training. It is in fact, usually the male Rural Training Centre managers and community members who decide what will be taught in the women's programmes.

Vanuatu Rural Development Training Centres (VRDTCA) focus is on providing training and institutional capacity building for RTC managers and instructors, and acting as a lobbying institution for rural training. Vanuatu Rural Development Training Centre has at times co-ordinated funding to provide material goods to the Rural Training Centres such as tools, books and building materials.

Initially, VRDTCA focused on the young men's programmes at the RTCs; the main reason being that the association is comprised of all male RTC managers. These managers are responsible for the major decisions regarding VRDTCA. They chose the focus of VRDTCA training and how its resources should be utilised. This has usually resulted in the bulk of available resources going to the men's programmes. Women's programmes have traditionally remained in the background. Carpentry, nutrition, and chainsaw mini mill/forest management have received most resources provided for the RTCs in the last four years. VRDTCA intended the nutrition curriculum to be

used by both men and women, but during a 1992 project evaluation, evaluators found that few women's programmes were using the curriculum, in part because the women did not have access to it.

Teaching methodologies at the RTCs are a mixture of formal and non-formal styles. Most instructors were taught with formal methods and have not had any training in other teaching methodologies. They have little to base their teaching methods on besides what they learnt. Practical training however, is a large portion of RTC course work and usually is less formal. Nearly all instructors have asked for additional training in non-formal teaching methodologies.

### **Women and Rural Training Centres**

Most RTCs teach traditional women's subjects such as sewing, cooking and gardening. Women's interest has also been primarily in these traditional activities. The lack of non-traditional subjects offered at the RTCs is not necessarily because traditional subjects are the only subjects women would want to learn. Women have had little exposure to new subjects of study such as small business, management, appropriate technology, leadership, health or basic home repairs. These topics can be intimidating to women with little formal education. The women are usually not involved in the decision making at the RTCs and do not have the confidence to speak out. If women had exposure to these subjects and were given the chance to decide for themselves what they wanted to study, there would undoubtedly be more women actively seeking to learn these non traditional skills. Among those women who have been exposed to new skills, interest has been quite high.

For example, Onesua RTC is an all girls RTC on the island of Efate that has a large appropriate technology programme run

by a dynamic and strong ni-Vanuatu woman. The young women at this RTC learn to build water tanks, smokeless stoves, bread ovens, toilets, biogas digesters and water pumps. The compound surrounding the RTC is full of demonstration concrete tanks, ovens and other appropriate technologies that the women have built. For practical experience, the young women travel to villages all over the country and teach communities the skills they have learnt.

Appropriate technology training requires expensive materials including concrete, piping, barrels etc. that community based RTCs cannot easily afford. Available resources generally go toward purchasing the more expensive materials for the young men's programmes such as wood, nails etc. so they can build furniture for income generation. Less expensive materials such as cloth, thread and food are purchased for the women's programmes to produce items for local sale. Resources for income generation are sometimes controlled by the RTC Manager and distributed at his discretion, leaving the women without a chance to learn the business side of their projects. It is difficult to find women instructors who have skills in non traditional subjects willing to become long term teachers in rural areas. Those women who do have the skills are in high demand by the government and private sector, both of whom pay much higher salaries than RTCs. At the RTCs, men traditionally teach men's courses and women teach women's courses aside from religion. Even if there was a male instructor with skills women wanted to learn, he would probably only teach the young men and not the young women.

Because many RTCs have only recently begun teaching women, the courses depend on the skills of the particular teacher. For example, Uluveu RTC on the island of Malekula had a teacher who was dynamic and enthusiastic but she had

only a primary school education so had few new skills to teach the young women. She gave up teaching but expected to begin again after partaking in further training for herself. Walarano RTC, also on Malekula has a teacher who trained students in her home on her own time when the school shut down for an extended period. She taught basic cooking, cleaning and sewing skills as she kept her own house. Nearly all of the women instructors are dedicated, but definitely need further training to be able to provide an education to their students.

### **The Future Role of VRDTCA in Women's Training**

When VRDTCA secures funding for the next four year project period, an entirely new staff will be hired to continue the programme. This is a very good opportunity for VRDTCA to begin the programme working as a team rather than as a traditional top-down organization. If this is to be a true association designed to meet the needs of the rural training centres, then male and female RTC representatives need to be involved with the planning of activities. Essential to this will be a primary focus on increasing the role of women both in VRDTCA and within the Rural Training Centres.

Through demonstrations, the Women's Co-ordinator will introduce new ideas to women and discuss possibilities for training at the RTCs. Subjects that will help women to become active members of the community will be emphasized, particularly those that will allow women to gain economic control in their lives. She may co-ordinate visits by specialists in business, trades, food processing, etc. for demonstrations. Eventually, the VRDTCA Co-ordinator and the women will devise a plan for women's training at the Training Centres Association as a first step in building a women's programme with VRDTCA. This is the most important step that needs to be implemented in a truly

participatory manner for it to represent the women who will be teaching and learning.

After determining what the women want to study, the Women's Education Co-ordinator will organize the resources needed to develop the programmes. This will be a long term process, the eventual outcome being a guide or curriculum for RTCs to use in their women's training programmes.

### **Summary**

The outlook for adult women's training through VRDTCA is very good. A new four year cycle is beginning, introducing new staff including a Women's Education Co-ordinator. The women's programme will be starting from the ground up, with women of rural communities developing training programmes that fit their needs rather than allowing others to decide what they need. Included in these programmes will be the introduction of non traditional topics of women's study such as business, trades, health management and appropriate technology. Women will have more choice in what and how they want to learn. Women will also become integrated into the VRDTCA decision making body so resources allocated to the RTCs will be more fairly distributed between male and female programmes. In order to accomplish these goals, VRDTCA will need the assistance of other organizations working with women's adult education. VRDTCA has little experience in adult education methods and techniques and will need to network with people who do have that experience. It is particularly in training, and the exchange of ideas and experiences that will help VRDTCA grow into the organization it has the potential of becoming.

**Articles on Literacy**

## **Literacy and Women's Education - A Tongan Case Study**

**Salote A Fukofuka**

### **Literacy in the Tongan Context**

If literacy is taken to mean the ability to read and write in one's language, then less than 5% of the Tongan population can be said to be illiterate or semi-illiterate. This is calculated on the basis of the results of the last census (1986), which showed that about 98% of the Tongan population had had primary schooling. However, the Ministry of Education has defined literacy as *the ability to read with understanding, write and do basic mathematical activities like adding, dividing and multiplying in order to assist people to be able to function in the society in which they live.*

In talking to the officer responsible for literacy training in the formal sector, she estimated that between 3 to 5 percent of current primary school pupils have difficulties with the above skill. The last census showed about 28,924 of the people (14,576 of which were females) having had only primary education, and a further 3,000 who never had any kind of schooling at all. Hence, the number of illiterates or semi-illiterates in Tonga is considerably higher than initially assumed, even though no proper research has been carried out to determine the actual number of persons who are qualified for this category.

At present there is no strategy, either within Government or within the non-government sector, to alleviate the problem of illiteracy of adults or the out-of-school population. In view of the increasing contact with the outside world, and the social, economical and political changes affecting traditional Tongan society, it is important that adults be assisted to access the

wealth of information available in the printed media. They need this (as everybody else does) in order to be better informed about the world around them so that they can make informed decisions about matters affecting themselves and their children.

### **The Non-Formal Sector**

There are currently no literacy training programmes in Tonga for the adult population. Women's training programmes focus mainly on income generating skills and other skills relating to home improvements and health. The foregoing discussions on the formal sector however, point to a number of weaknesses which women's programmes could very well exploit for the benefit of both children and adults. These weaknesses, as pointed out by the education officer responsible for literacy training in the formal sector, relate to the linkage between the school and the home. In other words, the efforts being expanded in school with regard to those most in need of upgrading their literacy skills are not being appreciated at home, let alone continued. She pointed out the importance of educating the parents to assist their children to be able to read and write with understanding, to carry out basic mathematical activities and furthermore to equip their children with the right attitudes to cleanliness and the care of books. She even identified poverty and children from broken home as factors which hamper their efforts. This is due to the unavailability of books, storage facilities at home and the increasing number of duties and responsibilities being assigned to children which effectively limit the number of possible hours children can spend on improving their reading and mathematical skills.

The implications for women's literacy training from the above discussions are many. They include the following:

- a) enabling adults to be literate in the sense described by the Ministry of Education;
- b) helping parents understand the importance of literacy for themselves and in the academic development of their children so that they not only improve themselves but are able to lead by examples for their children, and,
- c) assisting adults in understanding the importance of taking care of their children's school properties so that the right attitudes are instilled in their children when still young.

### **Conclusion**

If parents want their children to perform well at school they must be made to understand those things that contribute to the development of their children's abilities and outlook, and this includes accomplishments in literacy skills. Our roles as adult educators must not only include the teaching of skills but also the change of attitudes as well. There is no better way to start but with the mothers themselves who have the most influence with their children. In that way we do not only assist parents but we are also assured of better informed individuals for the future; people who should be able to face the challenges awaiting them. As the education officer mentioned above says *'The benefits accruing to children being earmarked for special literacy training at school right now is minimal if parents continue to look upon our efforts with a minimum of interest.'*

I believe it is the task of all of us, adult educators, to assist parents to be able to match expectations of the teachers with regard to their children at home. I am reminded of a comment made by President Nyerere of Tanzania. *'Our children will not have an impact on our economic development for 5, 10 or even 20 years. The attitudes of adults on the other hand, have an impact now'* (Quoted in Selman, S 1987:7)

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## **A Chance for a Better Life.**

### ***Literacy Education for Liberation:***

### ***A Case Study of Urban Young Adults in Suva, Fiji.***

**Joseph Veramu.**

This article explores the lives of young adults who live in the *Nasinu* area, a suburb of *Suva* City. For the last two years I have been working on a *Literacy for Empowerment* programme with them. The following account is based on my diary note entries, interviews with the youths and records of counselling sessions. (The names of these youths have been changed.) As a member of the Fiji Community Education Association (FCEA) and the Fiji Association of Non-formal Educators (FANFE) I had been asked to be adviser to a **Young Adults Literacy Programme**. Specifically I was asked to look at how literacy education could be used to help young adults solve their problems of unemployment and anti-social behavior.

About 50 youths were involved in the initial programme. However for the purposes of this paper I have concentrated on 3 young people whom I feel are typical examples of the kinds of youths I dealt with and the problems they faced. The problems faced by these young people are alcoholism, drugs, lack of employment, violent behaviour and promiscuity. They almost always come from broken homes, with violent alcoholic fathers. They dropped out of high school and joined neighbourhood gangs. The initial success of this *Literacy for Empowerment* programme has resulted in the Fiji Ministry of Youth, Sports and Employment Opportunities using the Literacy Primers I used with these young people, in their National Youth Service Scheme. This is a leadership and skill training programme involving 3000 young adults over a 5 year period.

### Difficult Lives

Epeli lives in a small "Housing Authority" type house. This consisted of three small bedrooms and a kitchen which also doubled as a dining room. The compound was small and measured about 19 perches. The house was part of a larger Housing Project. The houses were all cramped together on a plain. Epeli was tall and slim with gentle eyes but his military cut hairstyle gave him a severe look.

His father is an alcoholic who used to beat him daily when he was young. *"My mother has become a bag of bones from the beatings she receives. Recently I told my father that I'd kill him if he ever laid his hands on her again. There has been no beatings lately. My father is very violent. He makes out that he is a respectable God-fearing person to the community but he is a hypocrite. He beat us frequently and many times for no reason. He drinks every Fridays and has so many other women."*

He told me that he took to drinking and smoking marijuana almost daily because he was frustrated. Marijuana he said made him feel better, given the depressing home condition. He got it from friends loitering around the EIMCOL Supermarket close to his home. He claimed that the marijuana supply for his area came from Kadavu Island and was distributed from the Suva Bus Terminal.

Maikali lives on another Housing Estate adjacent to where Epeli lives. He met Epeli at a dance, found out that their mothers came from the same province and that they loved listening to *Lucky Dube* reggae songs and became close friends. Maikali is a very muscular young man in the habit of wearing tight tee shirts and fake *Ray-Ban* sunglasses. He has dark moody eyes and is quick to anger. He is a rebel at heart. In one of his drunken states his tantrums might include breaking their cutlery, swearing, screaming and challenging all and sundry to a fight. He has

many girlfriends. His mother tells me that he is a constant problem because he is always bringing girls home and promising to marry them. When he gets tired of them he moves on to other willing women.

A church leader at his community said that he was one of their problem youths. He said that one evening Maikali in a drugged state had taken his niece on a date, made love to her and then went knocking on the doors of other young people late in the night inviting them to a "feast". The "feast" had been her niece. The matter had been solved in the traditional manner. Maikali is an enigmatic person full of contradictions. He is a member of their sector choir, goes to church on Sundays and can be very charming and helpful. His Mr Hyde personality takes over when he drinks or takes drugs. He becomes violent and there is a transformation as swear words issue forth from his mouth covered with specks of spittle and bile.

Joni the third youth has very loving parents and is the universal "nice guy." He is gentle caring, patient and hard working. His only flaw is following bad company and getting invariably involved in the various negative exploits of his gang. He is always well groomed, has a well scrubbed face and is very hard working. Joni's difficulty is that he has grown up in a bleak community, a low cost Housing Estate where many young people have dropped out of school and are unemployed. His peer gang is involved in sports and occasionally drinks and drugs to break the monotony of life. Some of his gang members have been in trouble with the Police for burglaries.

### **My involvement with these urban youths**

I came to know these youths through their friends or when they came to my office asking for help to get odd jobs or do vocational extension courses at the University of the South

Pacific. Others were friends of my brothers or relatives and were told that "this guy can help. Go see him." Joni for example was introduced to me in a roundabout way (surprisingly) by Maikali. I had arranged for some cleaning work for Maikali and Joni had come with him. I had met others at workshops sponsored by the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Employment Opportunities. Some I had met at sporting tournaments. Quite a number had been brought to me by parents.

### **Training Programme**

At the outset I would begin my training programme on the theme of *Developing Inter-Personal Skills*. I would look at *inter personal skills, self awareness, self disclosing, self acceptance and building inter-personal trust*. This initial training programme was a simplified version of a course I taught at the University of the South Pacific entitled ED258 Adult Learning. This was conducted in a participatory way. I also had many group discussion sessions where we discussed such things as drugs, alcohol, sexually transmitted diseases and crime.

The training programme always involved some written exercises in the vernacular. There would also be group presentations. Because English is the national language in Fiji we had agreed upon conducting our discussions in English for at least 30 minutes per session.

### **Literacy Programmes**

The young people were also encouraged to write in group writing workshops. They wrote in the vernacular about "difficult situations" and were encouraged to come up with practical ways of solving personal difficulties. We had also used two Fijian Literacy Primers entitled *Meda Walia Na Noda Leqa* (Let's Solve Our Problems) and *Na Vuli Ni Kawa i Taukei* (Fijian

Education for Empowerment.) The young people read these books and discussed them in groups. Whenever we met, we always started with a Bible reading and prayers. The young people were rostered into selecting a Bible passage, leading a short discussion and then offering prayers. While prayer is a routine part of Fijian life, I felt that the Bible reading and subsequent discussions helped towards the attainment of functional literacy skills amongst the young people.

### **Speaking in English**

English is the national language in Fiji. While we conducted all of our training and discussions in Fijian we made it compulsory that every time we had discussions we would speak only in English for 30 minutes. This was followed later by remedial English lessons for those who requested it.

This usually started off with comprehension, grammar and composition exercises from a collection of Fijian folk stories I had produced. Later we had discussions from a course entitled *LLP13 Preliminary English*. I had tutored this course some years ago at the University of the South Pacific through Extension. Some of the things I covered here were the *use of the dictionary, words into sentences* and *varieties of English*. The youth were also encouraged to keep a diary where they made brief daily entries.

### **Funding of activities**

It was difficult getting internal or external funding for this programme. Many aid agencies and donors had a stereo-typed view of these unemployed young adults as thugs and *cut-throats* intent on crime and not interested in well meaning functional literacy programmes. We therefore held fundraising dances or would besiege our more affluent friends to make

donations. The young people had also been organised into "work gangs." They did small house repairs and painting jobs, compound cleaning and grass cutting. Funds they received were paid as wages and put in their bank saving accounts. A percentage was used for running training programmes.

### **Conclusion**

This short case study gives some insights into efforts being made to assist unemployed urban young adults. I noted that the problems of young adults could be assisted by a more caring society, by more government funding of young adults self-help programmes and by constant support from friends.

## **A Case Study of an Adult Literacy Programme in Suva City, Fiji.**

**Erena Rowe**

In 1990 an Adult Basic Education programme was set up by the University of the South Pacific and the Fiji Association of Non-Formal Educators (FANFE). The classes were held at the YWCA building in Suva. However, FANFE has since taken over the full running of the programme in association with the YWCA.

These adult literacy classes cater for the functional literacy needs in Fijian, Hindi and English. There are approximately 21 people in four classes which are held twice a week, depending on the availability of their tutors. The majority of the people attending are women, ranging in ages from 16 to 87. There is a wide mixture of backgrounds and abilities. Some have had little formal education and are being taught literacy in their vernacular languages. Others have more skills and are improving their English capabilities.

The programme relies on volunteer tutors, two who are working full time and come to the YWCA in their lunch hours. The two other tutors, including myself, are expatriate teachers who have been involved in this community-based programme. From the pilot scheme which started last year at the YWCA, further literacy classes have begun in other venues within Suva and plans are being made to start classes in other regions in Fiji. The learning outcomes, or aims and objectives, intended by FANFE were given to the tutors as follows:

### **Aims**

- a) To develop skills in reading, speaking, writing and numeracy in areas of concern for the immediate and long-term needs of the participants.

- b) To develop knowledge and understanding of issues and processes necessary for the well-being of all people.

### **Objectives**

At the end of the programme the learners should be able:

- a) To read, speak and write in English, Fijian or Hindi
- b) To improve the level of the above further.
- c) To learn skills in letter writing and the filling of forms.
- d) To comprehend and understand road signs, signals and codes.
- e) To read materials necessary for the improvement of their daily lives.
- f) To demonstrate positive values towards personal development and development in the home and society.
- g) To demonstrate an ability to identify problems faced by an individual.

I think that the participants initially were not aware of these intended learning outcomes. However, I feel that my class objectives were achieved by the end of the programme. I am not familiar with all the different classes however I am aware of what is happening in two classes, where I believe the participants are learning some but not all that is intended. I feel that this is occurring because the aims and objectives listed are too general and unrealistic and therefore not easy to achieve in a specific period of time. The time length of the programme is not clear, but three weeks was mentioned and to achieve all of the above in three weeks is quite unrealistic. However, after seven weeks (that is fourteen lessons) the learners in my class have begun to improve their English skills, learned about filling in forms and started map and road work and their personal development has progressed. For example they are more confident.

The participants are learning other things apart from what the organisers intended. In my class, they are learning aspects of the English culture which helps them to use the language confidently. For instance arriving on time is an important feature of the English culture and is essential in business and office situations. There is also a rapport developing among the learners and they are becoming comfortable in each others company, although prior to these classes they did not know each other. They are also from different backgrounds and different age groups. I think that the participants in the classes, that I am familiar with, are satisfied that their wants and needs are being met.

One of the posters advertising the programme asks:

**Do you want to learn to read and write?**

**Do you want to improve your communication skills?**

The participants must feel that they need help in these areas, and that is why they are attending classes. I feel that their needs in this area are being met gradually although it is an ongoing process and not something that can be achieved in a short period of time. I asked my class on their first day, what they wanted to learn so that I could aim towards that, rather than something that I thought they should learn. (Although sometimes I feel they do have needs that they are unaware of - unfelt needs). Subsequently I feel that I am working towards meeting their personal needs. It is worthwhile mentioning that I am going to ask my class for their evaluation of the programme so far, and where they feel they would like further help in their English skills, thereby keeping in close communication with their wants or needs. The class is extremely motivated, which indicates to me that they are happy with what is happening during the lesson, and that their needs and wants are being met.

I do not know exactly what the participants think about the project in relation to the community's wants or needs. However, I can guess that, as it is community-based, organised by two local groups FANFE and YWCA who have close links with the community, that they have seen the need for adult literacy classes and have begun to meet these needs. I feel that I should mention that FANFE are the organisers, and that I as a tutor, have not been involved with the actual organisation of the programme. Therefore, sometimes my intended learning outcome (or aims and objectives) may not be exactly the same as the organisers, although I have kept these into consideration. The length of this literacy programme has not been made clear, which I feel affects what I am going to teach. To achieve all the objectives started by the organisers is a big task and therefore I feel it would be beneficial to have the adult literacy classes continue throughout the year. I believe there is a continuous need for these classes, and the programme should become a permanent part of the FANFE and YWCA activities.

## Young Aborigine People Learn About Life Through Comic Books

Reported by J C Veramu

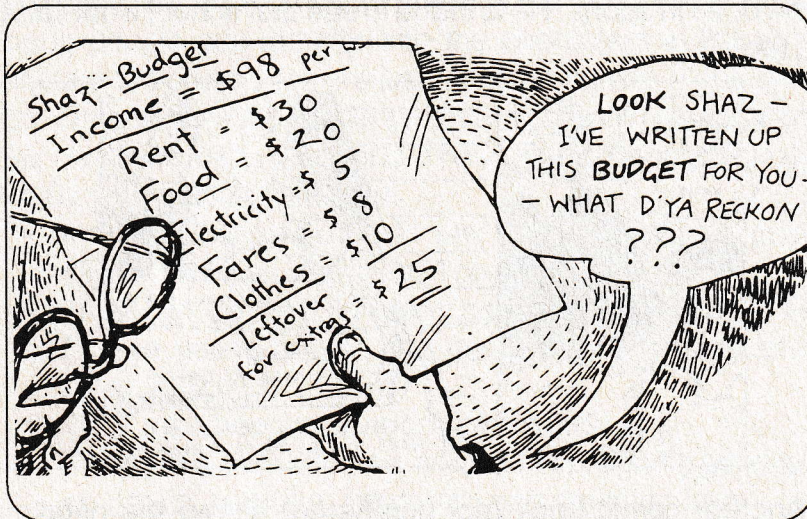
A group of Australian Aborigine people have banded together to produce a series of comics educating young people about improving the quality of their lives. The comic books have proved to be a very successful way of teaching youths because:

- the materials are presented visually through pictures. The pictures are of Aborigine people who dress and look just like themselves. The background scenery is also authentic.
- The characters in the comic books speak the type of English usually spoken by Aborigines. Young readers can therefore identify with the characters.
- The **message** is presented in a subtle way. Readers are made to see the problems caused by the unwise actions of the characters. They learn the educational message from reading through the story and by finding out the consequences of the unwise actions of the characters. However the editors have included the educational message clearly in a few well chosen sentences after the end of a comic story.
- The comics are readily available and cheap.
- The stories have good story-lines with realistic 'down-to earth' characters.
- The comics also use humour to attract the interest of readers.

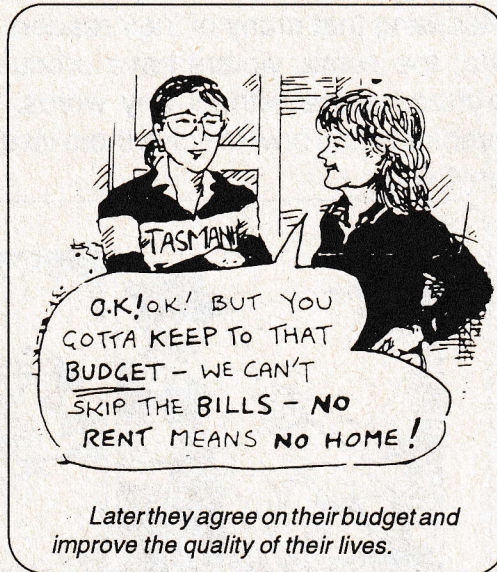
Comic No.16 has four stories.

They all touch on the theme of using money wisely. Readers are warned to be careful about purchasing goods on 'hire-purchase' (on credit). Story No. 2 *Flats an that*, give hints on

budgeting and using money wisely for young people interested in living on their own away from parents.



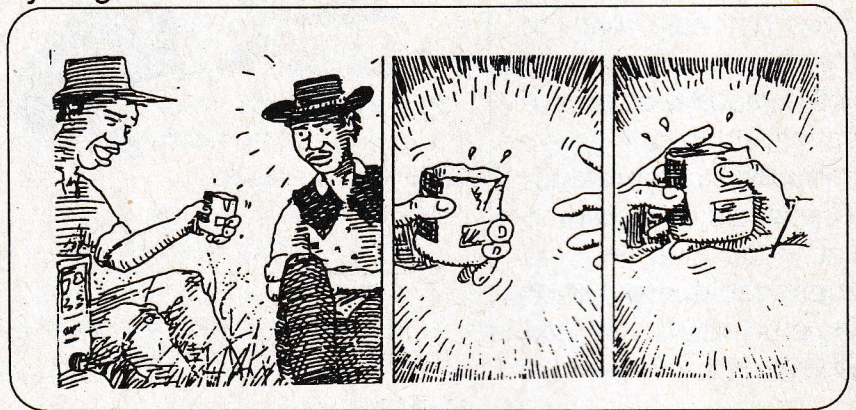
Comic No.17 contains three stories on the theme of education. Young people are told that dropping out of school or playing truant does not help them in their future. They are told of the importance of education, and of doing their schools assignments. This would help them to find good jobs and live comfortably later. *Making it* is the story of Paul who is more interested in



games rather than school work. Paul is encouraged by his parents and teachers to show the same interest in school work as he does in sports. He is made to see that school work can be fun too.



Another comic book (not numbered) shows the pitfalls of drinking alcohol, sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS. Realising that many of their readers may be functionally illiterate, the comic writers have produced some stories through pictures alone without any words. The reader learns of the problems and how to solve them visually without having to read anything.



The comic books have proved popular because they teach young people important ideas dealing with health, employment, personal lifestyles and culture **visually** in a very interesting way. Young people can identify with the characters in the stories because the characters are just like themselves. Youths learn from the mistakes these characters make, not to repeat them in their own lives in the real world. These types of comics can help Pacific young adults because

- they can be produced in any of the Pacific languages (Bislama, Fijian, Samoan, Tongan etc.)
- They can be read by many people in their leisure time. (These young people can pass on their copies later to other youths).
- They are cheap to print and circulate.
- They are a very effective means of spreading good ideas on health, nutrition, education and development.

## General Adult Education Case Studies

## **A New and Interesting Way of Teaching and Learning for Adults in the Solomon Islands**

Nicola Baird

*In this case study Nicola Baird tells of the interesting and creative ways of getting messages on development across to villagers in the Solomon Islands. A theatre team (drama group) goes around the islands performing plays in which the villagers take part.*

They present plays on issues like land use, environment, urban drift and health. The group has played to more than 20,000 people. At the end of the performance, small comic papers are handed out to the people.

In 1982 a village-based non-government organization known as the Solomon Islands Development Trust (SIDT) was formed. Its simple objective was to teach development education throughout the islands so that village people might assume some measure of control over events. The Solomon Islands are under pressure to change, to forego custom and tradition, to over-exploit resources, to improve social services, to provide more jobs and to increase trade. In short, to conform to the first world paradigm.

Much of this pressure is due to a rapidly rising population. The growth rate is 3.5 percent. Over 60 percent of the population is under 16. What to do with all the young people gravitating to the bright lights of town? In the capital, Honiara, crime is on the increase. Last November, youths smashed windows and looted shops. Presumably it was more exciting than hanging around doing nothing. Public discussion of sex matters is taboo in most Solomon Islands cultures so SIDT has developed an action that explores the issue indirectly. Enter a bunch of babies, crawling and caterwauling from under a stone downstage right.

On an unnamed island in the middle of an unnamed ocean lives a childless couple, Elsie and Jek. Both want children to help them in their garden, carry firewood, make copra and care for them in their old age. But they "don't know nothing about birthin' babies." One day Elsie meets an old woman willing to disclose the secret provided Elsie promises never to tell Jek.

At full moon Elsie will find a child under a magic stone. But she must roll the stone back or face the consequences. Next full moon Elsie sure enough discovers a fine baby boy. Over time Elsie uncovers three babies, but on a final visit to the stone Jek secretly follows her and pushes the stone away hoping to uncover yet another baby. The hole is empty.

In a huff, he stomps off without resetting the stone. Suddenly from the hole a babble of babies appear, all tottering off to follow their new found Daddy home. In the final scene the two weary parents, surrounded by a howling horde, explain to the audience the problems of a large family and their fears for the future.

The last half of the action show the effects of rapid population growth and lack of good resource management on land, natural resources, environment, social services and town life (urban drift). It ends up comparing spacing coconut palms and spacing children. SIDT has just begun to present this action. It is not going to be easy to get over the message.



As a woman in Malaita reports: "Some women produce up to ten children because they want their in-laws to be happy with them. Also children eventually work and help their parents. Another good reason for having lots of children is that it is our customary way for the woman to repay the bride paid for her." In the discussion following a workshop in Isabel Province the provincial member said: "Our population is growing too fast. We're selling off all our resources. Our young people go and hang around town. We have many problems ahead. Your actions make us think about these problems. They don't give us any answers but they force us to try to find some for ourselves - before it's too late."

## **Towards Cleaner Living Conditions**

### ***A Case Study of an Adult Health Education Programme in the Rewa Delta, Fiji.***

**J. C. Veramu**

The small settlements of Nauqu and Wailevu in the Rewa Delta are reached only by small punts. There are no roads that lead to these settlements as they are surrounded by mangroves, swamps and countless streams. They have no electricity and get light from kerosene or benzine lamps. The people living in *Nauqu* are displaced Fijians living away from their tribal lands. Those people living in *Wailevu* are villagers from a *Rewan* village that have decided to settle on their own clan lands. The people of these two settlements are members of the Fiji Community Education Association. This case study is a record of a project to dispose of household waste more efficiently and to construct water-sealed pit latrines. The two settlements have a very high rate of illiteracy. (This is unusual of the Rewa delta where people tend to be more literate and articulate.) Two of the problems faced in this community were waste disposal problems and the lack of proper toilets.

The waste disposal problem is one that is also faced in most parts of the South Pacific. Kerrie Strathy in her paper **Waste Disposal Crisis Threatens Paradise** wrote that the "*The postcard image of Fiji is generally one of paradise. But paradise ... is facing a life threatening assault on its environment. Plastic rubbish litters, mangroves and shorelines, raw sewage is dumped into rivers ... and pesticides and toxic wastes contaminate food and water.*" (1993 unpagged.)

The Fiji Mineral Resources Department in their report on Waste Disposal noted the problems of waste disposal in Fiji.

The report highlighted amongst other things that "*mangrove swamps are frequently used as dump sites but these areas are important breeding grounds for sea life.*" (Strathy 1993. unpagged)

In the *Wailevu* and *Nauqu* settlements, families have their own rubbish dumps on the shores of streams adjacent to their homes. The dump sites contaminate the sea and result in a lowering of sea resources. The picturesque scenery looks bleak when empty tins, plastic and paper packets are strewn on the sea shores.

In March 1991 the Fiji Government passed the Anti Litter Decree. The Decree was to prevent inappropriate disposal of waste. An anti litter campaign was mounted with posters, bumper stickers, newspaper advertisements and radio and television spots. The campaign slogans used were **Keep Fiji Clean and Beautiful** and **Only Lazy People Litter**. Unfortunately many poor rural communities like *Nauqu* and *Wailevu* were not affected by this important decree or campaign. They had heard about the **Keep Fiji Clean** campaign on the radio but in their own cynical way had not seen their own small dumps or health problems as being part of a greater problem.

The other problem in these two settlements was the lack of proper toilets. While many rural Fijian communities have water sealed pit latrines, these two settlements were part of a number of poverty-stricken communities lacking the basic health amenities. The current practice was to dig a hole 10 metres from the main house, put two pieces of timber across and excrete. This was a great family health hazard as pests and parasites of all types abounded. Some of the more younger members of the settlements took to urinating on the shores or perched themselves on the branches of mangroves to excrete and jumping nimbly down should a punt pass the stream. This probably accounted for their agility.

### **The background**

The people of the settlements earn their livelihood from fishing and crab-catching. Like typical Fijian village communities, the women are usually up early in the mornings to prepare simple breakfasts of cassava balls or pancakes (with quaint names like *babakau*, *parile*, *vanikeke waicala*). This would be "washed down" with lemon leaves tea or with tea the popular brands here being *Bushells* and *Punjas*. When the menfolk went off fishing or crab-catching, the women would clean the house, look after the children, wash clothes, cut firewood, clean the cassava patches and cook meals. The men would return in the late afternoons. After the evening family prayers the menfolk would drink *yaqona* and play *tarabu vakaviti* a popular Fijian card game ending with the routine coitus with loved ones. This was the routine life cycle in these two settlements. This would be changed periodically for traditional Fijian obligations of deaths, marriages and births.

### **An Awareness Programme**

An awareness programme was held for the representatives of these two settlements at a national workshop of the Fiji Community Education Association. Among other things the workshop had looked at how to reduce household rubbish. They were also encouraged to reuse waste materials. For example food wastes could be put in a compost heap, and empty tins could be used to store small household items. Health issues were discussed. This dealt with food, nutrition and infectious diseases. There was some discussion of diseases caused by viruses, bacteria and parasites. These diseases affected people who did not observe clean living habits.

## An Awareness Education Programme in the Settlements

The participants from the two settlements later sent a message to the FCEA saying that they had reported back on the outcomes of the workshop. The people had requested that we visit their communities.

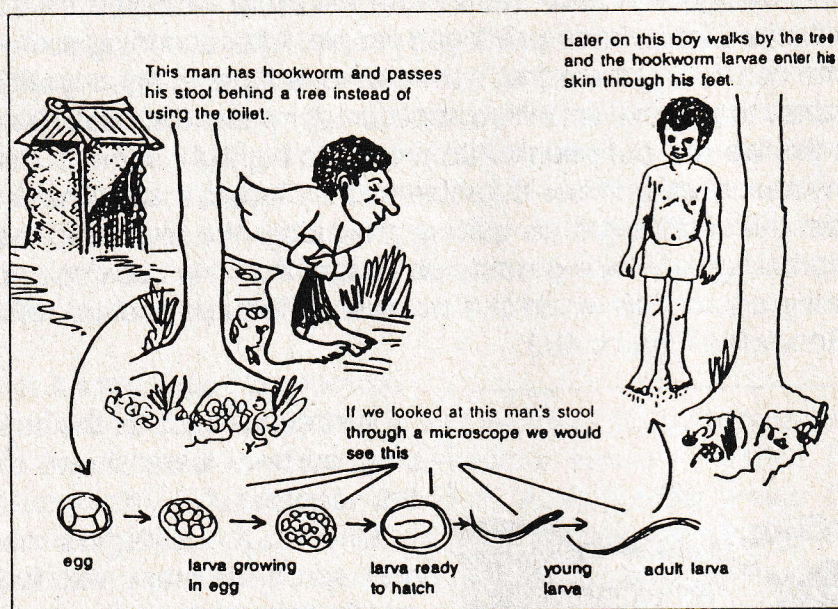
Unfortunately our first meeting with the people was a disappointment. There had been some misunderstanding with some of the community members. They thought that we were part of the Poverty Alleviation Committee set up to distribute seven million dollars to underprivileged people. After spending some time convincing them that we were not a funding agency with money to give out, we talked about proper waste disposal. Prior to this we had put people into groups to highlight some of the environmental and health problems they faced, if any. The list from the various groups quickly grew long. We explained the importance of keeping waste separated from the cooking and eating areas. This would free the area of flies, rats and animals. (Goodwillie/Finau p.45.)



Illustrations such as the one pictured here were shown to the people.

One of the villagers remarked on the many well fed rats that abounded in the community. The rats had even eaten cassava and sweet potatoes in their farms. At nights they caused quite a commotion moving around the houses with confidence. There was a lively discussion on how dis-

eases spread through improper waste disposal. The people gave examples of the kinds of diseases they and their children suffered from. They slowly came to the realisation that most of these infectious diseases were caused by unhealthy living standards. We discussed infectious diseases caused by parasites. Some of them had quaint names like amoebiasis, giardiasis, and toxoplasmosis. We showed illustrations like the one below and explained that such practices caused health problems.



*Parasites like worms can cause health problems.*

Source: Smith, C., *Health Care Manual*, Christian Books Melanesia Inc., PO Box 488, Wewak, Papua New Guinea.

The people were encouraged to "have proper safe toilets as excreting on the ground spread worms because dogs, fish, pigs, snails and other animals will eat faeces and later pass the worms back to people." *Goodwillie and Finau* page 111.

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There was a lively discussion on traditional methods of treating worms, for example using the sour fruit *wi ni idia* and eating ripe pawpaw seeds. We suggested a slogan on the above problem: **The best medicine for worms is good footwear and good toilets.** Goodwillie, p.112

### **The Cycle of Action**

Our work had started off when the younger members of the two settlements had attended one of our national workshops on primary health care. They reported back to their communities. Later we were invited to speak to the people. This was initially difficult because the people had thought that we were from the Poverty Alleviation Committee come there to give out new outboard engines, punts and other aid materials. We spent some time trying to correct this misinformation. We then used a participatory method of discussion asking the people to tell us about the various health problems (if any) they faced. We took these points down. We then talked about the types of infectious diseases that would be caused by poor waste disposal methods and a lack of proper toilets. We kept this as simple as possible and used diagrams. As much as possible we used examples to relate this to the community. We held three meetings with the two settlements.

After becoming aware of these health problems and its affects on their families they agreed to take some action to rectify it. We facilitated their meetings where they set down their objectives and targets based on solving some of their immediate health problems. They also prepared a plan of action for constructing toilets. The people said that they would provide labour, punt transport and food costs for the construction of the water sealed pit toilets. We would raise additional funds through a social night in Suva City to pay for the costs of the water sealed

toilet sets sold by the Ministry of Primary Industries. I volunteered to transport the toilet sets from Suva to Laqere bridge about 8 km away. From the bridge they would be transported by punts to the settlements.

In addition we took along some empty 44 gallon drums we got from the nearby government quarry in Laqere. (In one of our earlier meetings some of the people said that it was difficult digging pits since the soft sandy soil usually caved in. We had hit upon the idea of putting the drums in the pit to stop it from caving in. I had suggested that the toilet users use "seat belts" made of ropes suspended from the toilet ceilings and put over their shoulders but the people had politely and firmly declined it!) We took along some of our young unemployed volunteers from Suva to help the people in their work. The project had a number of other side benefits. This was a good opportunity for the people to work together. The volunteers we took from the city interacted well with their rural peers. Some of the elders in the *settlement were well versed in Fijian traditional stories and kept many of us enthralled with these tales.* This particular project has brought about a new awareness in the people of the importance of having a clean living environment.

### **Waste Disposal**

The people had already attended a workshop on **Waste Disposal**. In one of the group exercises, the participants were asked to look at innovative ways of making use of discarded materials. For example, decomposable food peelings, and natural matter could be put in a compost heap. Other rubbish could be burnt or buried. There had also been some talk about having one common rubbish dump for the two settlements. Later we had been shown discarded materials that the people had re-used for other purposes around the house. Empty tins

had been used as ash trays or for storing things like nails. We were however not satisfied with the progress on waste disposal but understood that it took time to change people from deep seated old ways of doing things to more enlightened methods. The people however had expressed great interest in having more awareness education programmes mounted in their communities. We would use these opportunities to keep pounding in, the idea of garbage being kept away from eating and cooking areas. This would help keep away flies, rats and animals. We would facilitate the setting of objectives and targets by the community towards bringing about a cleaner environment. It is true that the community had already begun working towards household cleanliness but a more co-ordinated effort was required especially with regards to the wider problem of the dumping of waste matter.

### **Evaluation**

Most Fijians relax in the evenings around the yaqona bowl. We had begun encouraging people to use some of these sessions in looking at and constructively criticising the on-going programmes. This would be a kind of formative evaluation where people would interact more honestly and discuss ways, the programmes could be strengthened and made more effective.

### **Conclusion:**

There is a danger that programmes on health, such as the one mentioned here are introduced with great fanfare only to lapse into dormancy when the rhetoric has died down. One Fijian custom is to show deference and be polite to visitors and say what they want to hear. As such, well meaning programmes like the one introduced to the two settlements are quickly

forgotten and people revert back to their old unhealthy ways. We have begun training younger people from the communities in leadership, management, administration and to be generally good facilitators. These facilitators would set the good examples and work closely with their own people. The people here are very devoted fundamental Christians. The facilitators have started taking advantage of the situation by saying that "cleanliness is next to godliness."

### Reference

1. Strathy, K (1993) **Waste Disposal Crisis Threatens Paradise** in *On the Street*, Suva. (unpaged)
2. Republic of Fiji *Anti-Litter Decree* 1991.
3. Goodwillie, D and Finau, S (Editors) (1990) **Food Drinks and Infectious Diseases**, USP Extension Suva.

# **Peace and Human Rights Education: A Fijian Case Study**

**Jo Rauto Tauleka**

## **Introduction**

In Fiji, generally people see human rights education as a **western** concept. To be quite honest, grassroots people in Fiji are not aware of the issues of peace and human rights. Generally, people face economic hardship and don't understand the links to this and basic human rights. People interpret human rights according to their culture and sometimes this may be different from the **western** views. In Fiji for example the chiefly system is seen as part of culture. Westerners may find this concept going against democracy. (This does not mean that Fijian's do not know their rights.)

Many of us, Fijian grassroots people and community education facilitators see this in a positive way as democracy with a traditional face. I base my views on peace and human rights education on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This guarantees the right of everyone to life and to the due processes of law. In Fiji we have the rights to the freedom of thought, religion and freedom of expression. In general we do not experience the arbitrary arrests, tortures or civil unrests or wars experienced in other countries. Our organisation, the Fiji Community Education Association, is concerned that people are made aware of their basic rights. That is the thrust of our human rights education programme where we integrate it with our literacy, environmental and women's education programmes.

## **The Fiji Community Education Association**

I shall now say something about the Fiji Community Education Association of which I am its Deputy Secretary. In this

organisation, we are trying to integrate peace and human rights education into our literacy, women and environmental education programmes. At the basic level we are promoting tolerance amongst our members from different religious and ethnic groups.

A number of our members cannot read or write. Our human rights education programme includes teaching them functional literacy skill. This is for their survival. In this way, we hope they will not be exploited especially as consumers of junk products. (For example the Courts Company *hire-purchase* of household goods.)

### **Right to development**

Another issues I would like to highlight is the right to development. This means the rights of people to the fruit of development. For example the right of employment, education, housing, health services, sanitation facilities and the right to decision making. To a great extent we have all these rights in Fiji. I understand that the rights to development is also associated with multi-national companies. Our experiences with some of them has not been a very happy one. For example some of our members in the Nadera area working in garment factories are very poorly paid and are often exploited by their bosses. In one recorded case one worker was paid 9 cents an hour.

Our education programme aims to teach some of these women, managerial skills and awareness programmes so that they are not exploited.

Multi-national corporations also exploit our environment. For example in the timber industry, overseas investors were seen to exploit this area by raping our forests, rich with indigenous timber without replanting programmes to supplement the loss. It is unfortunate for me to record here that some land owners

have also contributed to this factor. We are closely liasing with SPACHEE to bring about environment education that will boost our aims to bring about awareness on human rights.

### **Women's Education**

I am happy to report that in our women's programme we are not just concerned with making women good cooks or sewers or producers of male children. Although these are important, our programmes now empower women to make their own decisions. They are taught managerial, administrative and economical skills. And they are looked highly upon in the family.

To conclude we wish to reiterate that the **Fiji Community Education Association** sees human rights education as very important. In our own small way we are integrating this education with our literacy, environmental and women's education. Some of you may not be happy about our slow progress but remember that Rome was not built in one day. We will liase closely with other NGOs' in its human rights education programme.

If we cannot change this generation then we will work towards seeing the next generation have a better future.

*I would like to acknowledge the assistance given by J. Waqalevu and K. Nalatu in the writing of this paper.*

## **Multicraft - A Good Idea Poorly Implemented**

**Akhilanand Sharma**

### **Introduction**

This paper sets out to discuss why the multicraft initiative failed to be implemented successfully in Fijian secondary schools. Firstly, it gives a brief overview of the context of the multicraft programme. Secondly, it outlines a conceptual framework for discussing the factors militating against the successful implementation of this programme. The next section identifies and discusses the factors which militated against the success of the programme. The paper concludes with a brief critical review of the programme. The multicraft programme is a two-year secondary school-based vocational education course in agriculture, building craft, light engineering and home craft. It aims to: firstly, improve the potential of the early school leavers for developing self-employment enterprises (particularly in the rural areas) and for obtaining wage employment in the urban area; and secondly, to assist adults improve their standard of living and self-sufficiency (Fiji 1982:40)

It now only exists in about twenty seven secondary schools as a second option-mode to formal education. Fiji's political, socio-economic, cultural, colonialist legacy and neo-colonialism (dependency on international aid) have acted rather unfavourably for the successful implementation of this programme. These factors will be elaborated in the following section of the paper.

### **The context of this programme**

At independence in 1970, Fiji had been under British rule for 96 years. The colonial experience laid the foundation of Fiji's contemporary social, economic, political and educational struc-

ture. Today Fiji is home to many different peoples and a variety of rich cultures. The population, however, predominantly comprises ethnic Fijians and Indo-Fijians who constitute 46 percent and 44 percent (1990 estimate) respectively of the total population of about 730,000. Economically, Fiji is mainly dependent on primary products. Sugar remains the country's largest money earner. The Indo-Fijian population is generally involved in this commercial industry, and over the years have succeeded in accumulating considerable socio-economic power in the country. Politically Fiji enjoyed harmonious race relations under its 1970 constitution which was based on parliamentary democracy. In April 1987 a coalition government was elected, only to be removed by military coups in May and September the same year. This resulted in the revocation of the 1970 constitution. The country became a republic. A new constitution, giving the ethnic Fijians a substantial political advantage, was promulgated by a decree in July 1990.

**Education:** Non-formal educational activities were carried out in villages by older members of the community long before the introduction of formal education by Christian missionaries in the early 19th century. Several studies (eg. Mead, 1963) have shown some of the ways in which members of the community in the islands ensured that their values, skills and attitudes were passed on to the next generation. Basically, this form of education was concerned with the continuity and maintenance of the community. Traditional education had maximum community participation in education where the community members decided "what to learn and how to learn it". Learning was thus institutionalised as an on-going part of the community life.

The educating initiative of the Christian missionaries in the early 19th century was mainly concerned with bringing about total societal change based on Christian principles. This was the

beginning of the formal education system in Fiji - a system which did not allow any type of community participation. This brand of education, not surprisingly, was highly academic and not particularly relevant to the daily life of the islanders. However, both the providers and the receivers of this formal education saw it as playing a positive role in their socio-economic and political development. In reality formal education was seen by the initiators as a means of inculcating their values and by the users as a way of adopting the cultural symbols and values cherished by the western world.

### **Factors Militating Against the Success of the Multicraft Programme**

This section discusses the factors which militated against Fiji's multicraft programme. It represents part of the empirical work (Sharma, 1989) that I carried out in 1989 to evaluate the effectiveness of this programme. The study included nine multicraft centres which were selected by stratified random sampling to represent five rural and four urban centres. Out of these, one was located on an outer island and one was a girls' school. The factors which militate against its success, as my research findings and those of the Review Teams (1982 and 1986), are summarized under the following headings: initiation, implementation and institutionalisation.

**Initiation:** Multicraft, as an educational concept, has considerable potential for providing basic skills needed for satisfactory livelihood both in the rural and urban areas and if planned and implemented properly, it can form a useful component of the total learning system. The objectives of the programme appears to be appropriate in meeting the occupational need of the early schools leavers. The introduction of adult education was strongly recommended in the 1969 Education Commission Report. As a

result the multicraft programme was established in 1974 in two secondary schools.

### **The Conceptual Framework**

This idea in fact was initiated externally, though the non-formal section of the Fiji Ministry of Education (MOE) and they assumed the role of the change agent centres, prepared prescriptions and implemented the programme. This top-down decision making strategy is one of the main reasons for the lack of basic understanding of the programme at the schools and community levels. It was discovered, however, that the principals of the two schools were briefed and they were keen to introduce this programme in their schools as long as MOE provided the necessary funds, facilities, equipment and the staff. In other words, this programme was aid-driven and neither the change agents nor the principals and their staff, and community understood the rationale behind it. There was a lack of shared visions on the part of all those concerned. Consequently, the programme was discontinued in both the centres only after two years in operation. According to senior officials of the multicraft section of the MOE, the school staff, the pupils and their parents had very little knowledge of the multicraft-type of education. A lot of importance was given to credential-based formal education which was seen as providing better opportunities for wage employment. With the introduction of a number of junior secondary schools in rural areas there were more seats available in them for students to repeat. Hence they returned to academic type education. It is also important to note that the "junior secondary school", as an innovation, was more attractive than this one.

The multicraft idea left behind, however, was gradually revived with enthusiasm by the government. By the end of the

1981 there were twenty seven multicraft centres in operation in the country. Since this programme is fully resource-backed, the idea was accepted by many school principals and their school management committees. For many principals, the establishment of multicraft courses mean promotion for them at a higher salary level and for school management committees it was progress in terms of more classrooms, more teachers and pupils, and more facilities which cost them nothing. They depended largely on government aid and without that the programme was in danger of closing. A principal told me: "...if the government stops the grants my committee stops the multicraft programme" (Sharma, 1989: 97). The centre principals, teachers and the school community were not involved in the goal-setting exercise. Therefore, it can be argued that the assessment of local innovation was not modified at the subsequent levels to suit the local environment. This is one other factor which contributed towards its unpopularity.

Another significant aspect of this programme which did not allow it to be implemented well, was that the MOE officials and the centre-staff did not understand the theory and practices of the non-formal education upon which the programme was based. In a formal education setup and with the use of formal education-learning strategies, this programme did not make much progress.

In summary, though multicraft as an idea is sound, the rationale behind it is not understood by most people in it. It has not been a dynamic, social process. It has existed as an imposed innovation. Literature (Firestone and Corbett, 1988; Louis and Miles, 1990; Fullan, 1991; Murphy, 1991; Goddard and Leask, 1992) supports this. However, such literature has not looked at the experiences of developing countries like Fiji.

**Implementation:** The curriculum of the programme was also externally imposed. The prescriptions of the four courses were prepared by the multicraft section of the MOE and posted to various centres for implementation. Efforts were not made to involve the teachers in curriculum development, now increasingly recognised as a central aspect of successful implementation. The syllabus, of each course is not flexible enough to cope with the needs of the rural community. In the building craft syllabus for example, the students had to learn a variety of sophisticated skills which were not relevant to their rural setting. This prescriptive approach which restricted teachers' autonomy is yet another factor affecting the success of this programme.

Most teachers neglected the home project part of the programme. Lack of funds, resources, suitably qualified teachers and the like have been forwarded as excuses for not taking the home projects adequately. Most students and their parents and the multicraft centres were too dependent on government assistance, a phenomenon not uncommon in most development projects in Fiji. The multicraft section of MOE had both qualitative and quantitative staff problems. A number of positions at the headquarters were vacant and the officers who were there, were largely involved in office work rather than being present in the centres assisting teachers and running teachers retraining courses. Consequently, there was lack of supervisory services, staff development programme and feedback from the centres and vice-versa. The second administrative problem noticed was the absence of functional administrative procedures at the multicraft section of the MOE. The main problems resulting from this have been recorded as mismanagement of funds, delays in building projects and maintenance, delay in the supply of equipment and materials to centres, difficulties in allocating funds with some centres receiving more than others

and loss of equipment, tools and building materials. Therefore, the MOE officials failed to provide professional leadership to the centre principals and teachers.

Another notable problem related to the absence of sufficient data on multicraft budgeting, teachers, students, graduates, facilities, equipment and the like. Such information was needed for the programmes' on-going evaluation and planning. Furthermore, the quality of headquarters staff in terms of having appropriate expertise is a major concern. It is argued that the success of this programme implementation depends on the experience and dedication of these officers. They should not only understand the rationale behind this programme but also have the "know how" of the theory and practice of non-formal education. It is only then they will be able to guide the teachers and the community in the right direction.

The multicraft programme at the various centres is completely under the control of the high school principals and they consider it as one of their high school streams. The day-to-day functioning of the programme is under the leadership of the Head of the Department of Industrial Arts. In most centres the students follow the secondary school rules which, among other things, include compulsory attendance, punctuality and wearing of school uniforms. This further goes on to explain that the principal and the teachers at the centre do not understand the practices of non-formal education upon which this programme is designed. They are unable to employ the non-formal and adult teaching-learning strategies because they have not been sufficiently prepared to do so. Moreover, the absence of any career structure and lack of promotional opportunities for teachers in this programme make it a second class option for them. Naturally, with a sense of low self-esteem and self-image, it is difficult to expect the teachers to promote the programme to optimum levels.

**Institutionalisation:** The multicraft programme did not really get built in as an ongoing part of the programme of the secondary schools. This superficially-implemented programme continues to remain as a separate section of the school. The dropout rate for the multicraft programme, especially during the first year of the courses, has been quite high. The proportion of those completing the two year programme has been small. Some of the reasons for not completing the programme include:

- a) the centres were unable to provide well organised and relevant training, and thus maintain the interest of adult learners; and,
- b) the status of this programme has been further lowered by the establishment of a more attractive youth vocational training scheme where students received an allowance for attendance and have promise of better prospects upon completion. There are also other training programmes which are more attractive than this one.

One of the secondary objectives of this programme is to assist adults to improve their standard of living and self-sufficiency. However, the centres did not make any determined effort to involve the community. Community talents were rarely utilised. Most centres do not allow the community to use their resources and benefit from the expertise of the multicraft teachers. One of the factors required for successful implementation and continuation of an educational innovation (Fullan, 1991) is a good relationship with the school community.

### **Conclusion**

The multicraft initiative did not achieve much success in Fijian secondary schools primarily because it was mismanaged at all the three phases of the change process. Apparently, better management at initiation and implementation stages of this

programme may yield some success. However, its attractiveness compared to that of formal education remains doubtful. Multicraft, a non-formal education initiative in Fiji, is trapped in the framework of socio-economic inequality, as the position is with the majority of the non-formal education projects in most Third World countries. As long as formal education credentials predominate as the most important prerequisite for the job market, the multicraft programme, under its prevailing organisation, has little hope of making any significant impression on educational development in Fiji. Given the contemporary socio-economic and political benefits and privileges accrued through academic qualifications, the multicraft programme will continue to exist as a second option-mode of education. Most students of the programme are recruited from the lower socio-economic classes and are on a track leading to lower paid jobs. In contrast, the upper and middle-class parents continue to educate their children in academic and elite streams. This programme merely perpetuates the existing socio-economic stratification.

This programme is highly dependent on external aid. Though this programme was technically optional, it was readily accepted because it came with highly desirable financial resources. It was also found that the multicraft grants were used in other secondary schools projects. The donor, that is, the New Zealand government, was little concerned as to how the money was spent as long as its bilateral relations which Fiji remained warm. Such attitudes on the part of the donor and the recipients did not augur well for the successful implementation of this programme. Furthermore, this neo-colonial relationship with the west has, to some extent, made the actors in this programme rather passive recipients of ideas and resources.

Perhaps, one of the ways of promoting this programme in Fiji is to include it as a compulsory course in the total learning

system. I see this a way to institutionalise this programme in Fiji's education system.

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## **“Saving the Plants that Save Lives”**

**SPACHEE/Fiji Department of Forestry**

**Women and Forests Programme**

**Kerrie Strathy and Asenaca Ravuvu**

*As part of the National Environment Awareness (NEA) Campaign ' that was carried out by the South Pacific Action Committee for Human Ecology & Environment (SPACHEE) women were involved in an experiential workshop to explore their relationship with forest ecosystems in July 1992. This article outlines the initial Women & Forests Workshop that encouraged women to recognise the importance of biological diversity in forest ecosystems, and encouraged them to protect forests for the future. It then highlights the traditional medicine documentation and promotion programme that emerged from it. The initial workshop and follow-up activities were made possible with assistance from the Environmental Education Officer of the Department of Forestry, Asenaca Ravuvu, who was keen to be involved in this programme because women involved in a three day workshop on forestry issues in 1991 indicated an interest in learning more*



### **The Context**

The nations of the South Pacific Region are custodians of a large portion of the earth's surface. Their combined Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ) occupy 30 million square miles of the Pacific Ocean - an area three times larger than China or the United States of America and ten times the size of India. Their land area, however, is only 1.8% of that total and their population is estimated at 5.8 million. (SPREP, 1992)

People of the region depend on the biological resources of their small islands and their surrounding ocean to meet their needs. The people of the South Pacific have a close and special relationship with their environment because of their economic and cultural dependence on it. The main activities on the islands continue to be fishing and agriculture, and for some islands these are the only source of export income. Island ecosystems, however, are extremely fragile and must be handled with care if they are to continue to provide for the needs of current and future generations.

For many generations Pacific islanders have used forest resources sustainably and could continue to do so for future generations if their living value is recognised. Increasing pressure to accumulate cash is now threatening the survival of rainforests in Fiji and other countries in the Pacific. Solomon Islands, for example, estimates that if current rates of logging continue all useful timber species will be gone within the next seven years! High population densities and high population growth are also putting increased pressure on resources such as trees, and the environment in general.

Since many of the islands that make up the South Pacific region are isolated from each other, they have a high degree of ecosystem and species diversity. Many of the plants found on these small land masses are endemic and found nowhere else in the world. The plants found on these islands are essential to the health and well-being of islands who use them as food, fuel, and medicines.

### **The Need for Environment Education**

A sustainable future for fragile island ecosystems, and the earth depends upon a healthy environment, economy and lifestyles. The future well being of Pacific islanders also de-

depends upon an awareness and commitment to improve all three-every day, not just on Earth Day (22nd April). Our survival, and the survival of the future generations, is being seriously threatened by our current actions.

Effective environmental management ultimately depends upon the widespread adoption of an environment ethic or code of conduct reflecting environment awareness and the need for sustainable development and biological diversity. Environmentally sound and sustainable development requires far more than action on the part of United Nations agencies and governments. Co-operation amongst them is crucial, but sustainable development is not possible without public participation in decision-making and the information necessary to make sound decisions.

We have the ability to make rational decisions about our future. We must learn to live within the limits of our natural resources and find better ways of using, protecting and sustaining these resources. The people and economies of Pacific islands depend on developing and managing natural resources wisely. When we do not live on our income - on our renewable resources - we are destroying our capital. Development options that impoverish the environment have no vision.

Forest depletion is just one example of the ways that humans are testing the earth's capacity and destroying their capital. With the earth's forests disappearing at a rate in excess of an acre a second, a sense of urgency is merely common sense. Solutions are based on environmental awareness - people who are aware of trees' protective functions will not uproot them.

A pilot *Women & Forests Workshop* was organised because women living in the interior of the larger Pacific islands, such as Fiji, depend on the forests to meet their basic needs. Forests provide food, fuel, medicines, craft materials and much more for

women and their families. If forests are used wisely women will continue to be able to meet the subsistence and cultural needs of their families and to contribute to its economic needs.

### **Women & Forest Workshop**

Organisers of the 1992 Women & Forest Workshop quickly abandoned the idea of holding the week long workshop entirely in Suva, Fiji's capital. So, instead of spending a week hearing about forest ecosystems, participants had an opportunity to experience one. Participants met in Suva where they had a brief introduction to forest ecosystems, and then spent five days, with Nadovu villagers who live in, and depend upon, Fiji's productive rainforest. Holding part of the workshop in Nadovu had very positive benefits for the women of Nadovu, for the community itself, and for workshop participants who came to know the meaning of rainforest well since it rained every day except the last one!

The workshop began with participants naming their favourite tree and explaining the reason(s) for their choice. Many participants named the coconut tree because all its parts (leaves, husk, fruit, wood etc.) are useful. Participants also identified fruit and nut trees, trees used to supply craft materials, trees used for traditional medicine and a variety of other trees, such as hibiscus, which also has many uses. This initial exercise clearly demonstrated the importance of biological diversity to women, their families, and their communities.

Dr. Randy Thaman, Professor of Biogeography at the University of the South Pacific, encouraged participants to view living trees and forest as capital. Forests, he argued, were traditionally perceived in this way, but with the introduction of the monetary economy, many people have come to view logging and other activities that earn cash as the only value of trees and

forests. Dr. Thaman concluded by telling participants that, "*We must live on the interest, not the capital, provided by our natural resources (such as forests) if we are to provide a good future for our children*".

During the workshop participants looked at various ways to communicate messages about environmental protection and forest conservation. They learned how songs, posters and videos can convey important information about environment concerns. Songs, such as "Take Care of Our Island" and "*Mati Sobu, ua mai*" (High Tide, Low Tide) were so popular that participants wanted to perform them at the public opening that was being held on the first evening.<sup>2</sup> Participants later wrote their own songs and poetry and suggested that t-shirts and/or *sulus* could be printed with clear messages as a means of stimulating environment awareness, throughout Fiji and the South Pacific.

Videos served as the stimulus for some of the discussions held in Nadovu, while others were more spontaneous or continuations of discussions started in Suva. Practical demonstrations helped participants to understand the value of forests - for food, cooking pots, hair dye/conditioner, crafts, medicines and more. Role plays and skits were both informative and fun for the participants as well as the villagers.

One exercise that was extremely well received involved the use of posters. Participants were divided into small groups and one person from each group had a chance to view a poster. They then had to explain what it was about to another participant. That participant explained to another and so on until all persons in the group had heard the explanation. The last person to receive the information then had to draw the poster. This exercise produced a great deal of discussion about the need for

clear communication as well as some interesting drawings and a great deal of laughter!

Participants have undertaken a number of follow-up activities since the pilot workshop, in spite of the fact that follow-up plans were not fully developed or articulated at the end of the workshop due to the unexpected visit to the logging operation. Participants developed ongoing community awareness programmes related to forest conservation and protection. A Rainforest News Alert (education kit) was prepared and the video *Protect the Earth & She will provide for You* was produced.

One workshop participant began work with the Forestry Department to develop more education kits and programmes after she graduated from the University of the South Pacific. Another participant carried out research into pulp logging operations in Fiji. Some participants developed the Lali Theatre Company as a result of the enthusiastic response they had to the popular theatre video they saw, and villagers reaction to their performance.<sup>3</sup> Other participants have been involved in planting traditional *kau salusalu* plants, fruit and medicinal trees.

#### **Traditional Medicine Workshop**

Phase two of the *women and forests programme* was the Regional Traditional Medicine Practitioners' (TMP) Workshop which was held in August 1993. Since many of the participants at the pilot workshop had a particular interest in traditional medicine they played an active role in the planning and implementation of the TMP Workshop. These women had an interest in encouraging regional information sharing about traditional medicines and threats posed to them by loss of biodiversity brought about by the rainforest destruction.

The *Regional Traditional Medicine Practitioners' Workshop* was held at Nadave, Fiji with participants coming from seven Pacific island nations. This Workshop was jointly organised by SPACHEE, the Fiji Forestry Department, and the YWCA. The workshop generated a lot of interest such that the University of the South Pacific (USP) and the South Pacific Forestry Development Programme (SPFDP) offered to assist with the programme. We also received assistance from the Fiji-German Forestry Project, and the International Women's Development Agency (IWDA).

Participants represented governments and non-government organisations in Tahiti, Cook Islands, Tonga, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Fiji. They included traditional medicine practitioners, western or so-called 'modern' medical practitioners, educators, conservationists and supporters who explored the practice of traditional medicine in the Pacific.

Participants noted that traditional medicine is important to the health and well being of Pacific Islanders, but that some plant species are becoming hard to find. Another issue they dealt with was the proper identification of medicinal plant species, and the conditions they were used to treat. A one day field visit was organised to the Nakavu Natural Forest Management Project (of the Fiji-German Forestry Project) to involve the participants in an inventory of traditional medicine plants.

Dr. Ken Chen, WHO Regional Adviser for Traditional Medicine, came from Manila to be part of our opening programme. He spoke about WHO's interest in the area of traditional medicine and stressed that traditional medicine has an important role to play in achieving WHO's goals of **Health for All By the Year 2000**. Dr. Wolf Forstreuter, of the *Fiji Forest Inventory Project*, talked about how minor forest products, such as traditional medicines, are included in their forest inventory in recog-

nition of the fact that a forest can provide much more than timber.

Participants developed plans to encourage the promotion of traditional medicine practice and conservation of traditional medicine plant species. Plans include the establishment of Traditional Medicine Associations at the national level and demonstration gardens - like the one they established at USP as part of the official closing ceremony.<sup>4</sup>

Participants at the workshop are very enthusiastic and keen to initiate follow-up activities at home - in other participating countries, and in other parts of Fiji. Less than a month after the Workshop ended the two participants from eastern Fiji started the Lomaiviti Traditional Healers' Association and have secured a piece of land in Levuka for a Traditional Medicine Demonstration Garden and nursery. Another Traditional Medicine Demonstration Garden may be incorporated into the Mount Evans Range Ecotourism development. Work is progressing on the traditional medicine video. These are just a few examples of the many exciting follow-up activities that are already underway.

### **Conclusion**

The Pacific, like the rest of the earth, is facing a life threatening assault on its environment. It is already late, but not too late to take action. While the world situation can be described as desperate, it is not hopeless. There is still time for people to move forward together to build a future that is just and sustainable.

The continuing work on traditional medicine documentation and promotion is one example of how a group of women are moving forward to ensure the protection of forest ecosystems and biological diversity. As this article is being written (May 1994) Fiji participants are getting ready for another workshop

where they will continue work on the Fijian Traditional Medicine Handbook that was drafted by Fijian participants at the August 1993 workshop. This handbook - or 'cookbook' of traditional medicines - will be in a form that will be easily understood and used by the lay person, particularly village women.

In addition, participants at the May 1994 Workshop will assist in the verification of documentation currently being compiled for the *World Health Organisation's* publication on traditional medicine in the South Pacific. To prevent further degradation of fragile island ecosystems, and the rest of the earth, it may be useful to consider the consequences of our actions on the next seven generations as some societies do.

### Notes

1. The NEA Campaign was part of the National Environment Management Project that was to develop a National Environment Strategy for Fiji. It was designed to stimulate awareness and action to prevent environmental degradation in Fiji. Public awareness was stimulated through community workshops, radio spots, and the production and distribution of posters and leaflets.
2. Participants were encouraged to write their own songs in local languages - and to translate those taught by the singer/songwriter who led this session if they would be useful.
3. The Lali Theatre Company had its first public performance on World Environment Day (5th June) 1993) at the launching of SPACHEE's Low-Income Urban Community Participatory Primary Environment Care Project. This drama focused on forest loss and was very well received.
4. At the Official Closing of the Workshop, participants and invited guests, including the Director of the Fiji School of Medicine, Matron of the Colonial War Memorial Hospital, Dr. Lefevre from WHO, Tang Hon. Tat and Klaus Enevoldsen of the SPFDP, and representatives from UNDP, the South Pacific Commission's Community Education and Training Centre, the PNG Embassy, the British Embassy, the World YWCA and several others assisted with the establishment of a Traditional Medicine Demonstration Garden at USP's main campus in Suva.

### Notes on Contributors

1. **Tupeni Baba** is Reader in Education at the University of the South Pacific. He has published widely on education and development internationally.
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3. **Nicola Baird** is a community worker attached to the Solomon Islands Development Trust.
4. **Karen Preston** works for the Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific (FSP) based in Port Vila, Vanuatu.
5. **Joe Rauto Tauleka** is Secretary of the Fiji Community Education Association based in Cunningham, Suva City.
6. **Penelope Schoeffel**, an adult educator, is based in New Zealand.
7. **Shirley Randell and Jim Sait** work for the Centre for Adult Education in Melbourne. It is the largest provider of adult education in Australia with over 65,000 students annually. Shirley is Director of the Centre.
8. **Salote Fukofuka** is a University lecturer attached to the USP Centre in Tonga. Her interests include women's education and functional literacy.
9. **Esiteri Kamikamica** a former school teacher is a renowned adult educator in Fiji. She has published widely on the subject of education and development.
10. **Tekarel Russell** is attached to AMAK a very large women's organisation in Kiribati. A former teacher and Member of Parliament she is noted for her contribution to education.
11. **Erena Rowe** worked for some time in Fiji and has returned to her home country of New Zealand where she continues to work in the area of adult education.
12. **Akhilanand Sharma** is a former high school principal. He teaches at the University of the South Pacific. Currently he is on study leave studying at the University of Bristol in England.
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19. **Makarita Vaal** is Centre Director of the USP Centre in Western Samoa. She has published widely on adult education although she is better known in the region as a poet.
20. **Joseph Veramu** is Co-ordinator of the Fiji Adult and Community Education Think-Tank Group. He has written widely on adult education and development. He is also the author of two books on Education, two children's books, one novel and one collection of short stories.

# ADULT EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT

We herewith invite our readers to become authors of our journal.

Possible themes of the next issues are:

- Culture and communication
- international cooperation, partnership and professionalism
- evaluation and research
- orality, literacy, print and electronic media
- technology: innovations, transfer and alternatives
- global and local concerns: environment and peace
- teaching, training and learning
- gender issues
- role of institutions, organizations and associations
- financing, legislation and lobbying.

We are interested in looking at these themes by way of case studies, reports, statements, stories and poems reflecting theoretical and/or practical implications for us as adult educators. We would appreciate it if graphic material, photos etc. could be added.

Please contact the editor.

