

Pacific Leadership Program

Monthly Update

Message from the PLP Director



Well, another month has flown by. The Program is now well and truly into the home stretch of its initial start-up phase, which comes to an end in June 2009. The PLP team has been busy over the past month completing travel to Vanuatu and Solomon Islands, as well as participating in a range of initiatives with our regional partners based in Suva. Details of this work is provided in the following pages, and in future issues of the Monthly Update.

It has been a long time coming, but during a recent visit from PLP Director Angus Macdonald to the Suva office, we have a Team Photo to share with you.

L-R: Yeshe Smith, Allan Mua, Shradha Sharma, Gary Frost, Angus Macdonald, Georgina Cope

With Phase II just around the corner (scheduled to commence in July 2009) we are all looking forward to a similar – if not increased – pace of Program activity in the second half of the year. This will include expanding activities with our existing regional partners, as well as welcoming some new ones. Our country programs in Solomon Islands and Vanuatu will up and running by mid-year and we hope our other focus countries will follow soon. We also expect that the first of our commissioned research findings will be available, which we hope will not only inform decision and policy making in the region, but also strengthen the research capacity of academic institutions throughout the Pacific. And of course, we are excited about advancing our partnership with the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, through ongoing support for its governance program.

And finally, for those of us working in the Pacific, and indeed the rest of the world, it has been impossible to ignore the sense of hope and renewal which has accompanied the recent Presidential inauguration in the US. We will be watching the new President with interest over the coming months and years as – in one way or another – his exciting leadership style is bound to have an impact on us all. Until next time,

Angus Macdonald
Regional Program Director

PLP Strengthens Regional Partnerships

Inside this issue:

- PLP Directors Message 1
- PLP Strengthens Regional Partnerships 1
- Country Program Developments in Vanuatu 2
- PIPSO Planning Day Looks to the Future 2
- GEPG at the Asia Pacific Forum at ANU 3
- Local Elected Leadership Training in Vanuatu 3

February has been quite busy with the team building on existing relationships and strengthening its relationship and commitment with three regional partners. PLP finalized and signed a tripartite partnership agreement with the Pacific Youth Council and SPC.

PLP has also drafted a tripartite partnership agreement with CLGF and NZAID. Previously PLP had provided funding for activities with PYC and CLGF and are now looking to build on this support through a stronger partnership. Also signed in February was a partnership agreement with the Pacific Conference of Churches.



Angus Macdonald (PLP), Aleki Sisifa (SPC), and Jacque Koroi (PYC) sign the program's first tripartite partnership agreement

Country Program Developments in Vanuatu

PLP Regional Program Manager Yeshe Smith and Program Officer Allan Mua undertook their first country visit to Port Vila in January to begin the Vanuatu Country Program. This initial visit was to introduce the PLP to the development partners and stakeholders as well as the AusAID post in Vanuatu. It also sought to identify for PLP what leadership-related work, if any, is already being implemented in Vanuatu, and by whom.

The PLP Team had a long week of meetings with many non-state groups representing youth, private sector, local government, churches and women. One of the key issues arising during PLP discussions was an interest to discuss leadership in the Vanuatu context. PLP will look with interest for opportunities to support such a discussion during its future visits.

As this was the first time, Yeshe and Allan had been to Vanuatu, they returned with much admiration of the culture, scenery and cuisine in Vanuatu. As such, they are understandably eagerly awaiting their next visit to the '*happiest place in the world*'.



L-R: Charleon Falau (Wan Smol Bag), Yeshe Smith (PLP), Henry Vira (VANGO), Leinasei Simon (Wan Smol Bag), and Agnes David (Vanuatu Department of Youth Development, Sports and Training)

PIPSO Planning Day Looks to the Future



Asif Chida, Marina Pene, Alise Stunnenberg and Kaliopate Tavola discuss future plans for PIPSO.

PLP's regional partner, the Pacific Islands Private Sector Organisation (PIPSO), held their Annual Planning Workshop at the PLP Suva office in early February. Facilitated by PIPSO's Interim Executive Officer, Henry Sanday and Administrative Officer, Marina Pene, the day brought together several key supporters of PIPSO, including: Mr Kaliopate Tavola (formerly Fiji's Foreign Affairs Minister, now working as consultant to PIPSO on resource mobilization and surveys of PIPSO's national members); Mr Asif Chida (representing UNDP, and in his previous private sector development role at the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS), regarded as one of the original 'champions' of PIPSO); Mrs Alise Stunnenberg (representing the PIFS Private Sector Development Unit); and Yeshe Smith (representing PLP).

After an intensive day's work the team had developed a Draft 2009 Annual Plan. The Plan detailed not only confirmed work for the coming year, but identified other priority activities for which PIPSO is seeking additional funding support. These include the formation of a Steering Committee to establish a Multi-Donor Trust Fund to coordinate inputs from development partners to PIPSO, and development of a register of regional success stories on various topics, such as public-private dialogue, product development, SME financing and exporting, which can be utilised by businesses, potential entrepreneurs and policy makers in the region.

Since its Planning Workshop, PISPO has confirmed its next Board Meeting for 19 and 20 March in Nadi.

GEPG at Asia Pacific Forum at ANU



Dr Priya Chattier, Research, Monitoring and Evaluations Coordinator of GEPG program recently participated and presented a paper on GEPG Research Framework at the Asia-Pacific Forum, held at the Research School of Asia and the Pacific (RSPAS) at the Australian National University (ANU) in Canberra.

The purpose of this visit was to get constructive feedback on the research framework and to discuss the challenges and complexities of fieldwork in Melanesian countries with prominent scholars and research fellows of the State and Society School of Melanesia at the ANU. The first part of the research framework paper provided background to GEPG programme in the Pacific and the second part discussed in detail the theoretical framework, research design, and the research methods that will be used in the field.

The GEPG research framework was well-received amongst the scholars at the Asia-Pacific Forum and was applauded for its ambition. It aims to assess the political context that might pose obstacles for women as well as investigating how people's perception change overtime as the activities of GEPG are implemented and eventually create a sustainable social change towards women's participation in politics.

Dr Chattier also engaged with prominent scholars and researchers from the region not only those based at the ANU but also local researchers based at research institutes and universities in PNG, SI and Vanuatu who have shown keen interest to be part of this research project. It is hoped that these researchers will then become part of the research network that GEPG aims to create in the next few years. For more information contact: priya.chattier@unifem.org

Local Elected Leadership Training in Vanuatu

Since the Vanuatu Department of Local Government decision to use the LEL training as one of the training requirement, more than 800 council staff, have undertaken this opportunity. Four LEL workshops have been provided to Sanma and Tafea in 2007.

In a report that was received from Cherol Ala, the Deputy Director of the Department of Local Authorities in the Ministry of Internal Affairs, told CLGF Pacific Project that "it is amazing to see so many people turning up to take part in the training". Apart from those who were registered for the training many came as observers and also to participate in discussions during the workshop. Ms Ala said the LEL workshops were well accepted and all the time the turnout was excellent.

They are receiving very positive responses to the programme. She said they will work on the evaluation of the programme and make improvement if necessary. She also informed CLGF that they are now involving the traditional leaders, church leaders, women and youth in the training. All of these training were conducted in vernacular by local trainers from the Department of Local Authorities and the Public Service Division.

There are currently seven qualified trainers from Vanuatu who have gone through the training of Trainers programme by CLGF. Ms Ala informed CLGF that she will require more local qualified trainers and was asking for the training of Trainers training to be conducted in Vanuatu this year. The new trainers will assist the Department to cater for the demand from other Provincial Councils that have not been covered already. She also added that the collaboration from the community especially the church and villages is "amazing". The church is providing venues for the training and the villages were providing accommodation to participants during the training at no cost. CLGF is hoping to use these LEL training as a forum for intergovernmental dialogues where people from all walks of life can come together and discuss issues affecting their lives and the outcomes can be used by the Councils to deliver better services for the people.



GEPG Partner Profiles



Dr Orovu Sepoe, GEPG National Coordinator of PNG has been an academic for the last 20 years, serving at the University of Papua New Guinea. She was a Senior Lecturer

and then promoted to Associate Professor prior to leaving the University. Dr Orovu brings to UNIFEM and the GEPG team an extensive experience especially within the context of PNG politics and gender.



Jeannette Bolenga joins UNIFEM as the Deputy Regional Manager for the GEPG programme. Before joining UNIFEM she worked with the Governance studies program at the University of the South Pacific and with the Vanuatu Electoral Office as the Chief Electoral Officer. Jeanette comes to GEPG with a wealth of

expertise in BRIDGE (Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections) methodology and designing capacity development tools for electoral administration and civic education.

Pacific Photography Corner



Monthly Calendar

| DATE | ORGANISATION | UPCOMING EVENT |
|----------------------|--------------|--|
| 17th - 18th February | CLGF & PLP | Partnership sessions with CLGF and NZAID. |
| 20th February | PLP | 2009 Work Planning Day. |
| 23th - 27th February | PLP | 3 rd Country Visit to Honiara to continue development of PLP's Solomon Islands country program. |
| 23th - 27th February | PLP | Regional Program Manager to conduct AusAID Pacific staff training in partnership brokering process, PNG. |
| 16th - 20th March | PLP | Program Joint Monitoring Group return to Suva to undertake partner and data collection interviews for PLP's first M&E report |
| 19th - 20th March | PIPSO | PIPSO Board Meeting |
| 23rd - 25th March | CLGF | CLGF Technical Advisory Panel Meeting |
| 25th - 31st March | PLP | 2nd Country Visit to Port Vila to continue development of PLP's Vanuatu Country Program |

Contact Us

If you have any feedback on the Monthly Update, suggestions on how it could be improved, or would like to contribute stories, pictures or information on your own PLP-related work, we would love to hear from you. If you are in Suva, feel free to drop into the office, or contact Allan Mua on +679 322 0273 or email: info@plp.org.fj.

Pacific Leadership Program
 House 5,
 Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
 Ratu Sukuna Road/
 Private Mail Bag,
 Suva, FIJI ISLANDS
 Telephone: +679 322 0276
 Fax: +679 322 0376