



Pacific CONNECTION

Issue Nine, September-November 2006

The magazine of the Pacific Cooperation Foundation



IN THIS ISSUE: Directions in Pacific aid • Black Saturday • Youth festival

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ISSN: 1176-7278	

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Cover: mothers and babies outside Angau Memorial Hospital, Lae, Papua New Guinea. Photo: courtesy NZAID.

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Welcome to the ninth issue of *Pacific Connection*. This Spring edition is largely dedicated to coverage of aid – or development assistance – in the Pacific.

There is a substantial article by NZAID and a range of viewpoints contributed by an eminent Pacific academic, a New Zealand opposition politician and a Pacific NGO. I look forward to readers challenging some of the views expressed!

The conference run by PCF 29-30 June on The Future of the Pacific Labour Market, which was foreshadowed in the previous issue of *Pacific Connection*, was a great success. The event was greeted as timely and valuable, and most participants agreed there is potential for a significant win-win outcome by bringing together the need for seasonal labour in New Zealand and the growing surplus of labour in a number of the more populous Pacific Islands.

On 1 August MP Luamanuvao Winnie Laban launched *Pacific Futures*, a collection of essays on prospects for the Pacific written by leading figures from the region. Edited by Michael Powles, the founding chairman of the PCF, the book is a major contribution to thinking about the future of the region. The views of the many well known contributors offer different perspectives on the issues being confronted by the region through the Pacific Plan adopted by Forum Leaders.

Also in this issue is a column by Radio New Zealand International's Sara Vui-Talitu on the recent Pacific Youth Festival in Tahiti Nui. This is the first appearance of what we hope will be a regular column by RNZI.

I hope you enjoy this issue.

Vince McBride
Executive Director

Founding Partners:

Go forward with trust: Satyanand



The appointment in August of Anand Satyanand as Governor-General marks the first time a person with Pacific ancestry has been the Sovereign's representative here.

At his swearing-in ceremony, Judge Satyanand, a former ombudsman, District Court judge and lawyer, spoke of

his connections to Fiji. His parents were born and raised there, and came to New Zealand in the 1920s and 30s. His grandparents came from India.

Judge Satyanand said there were many New Zealanders who came from families like his, and New Zealand's culture and identity had become a blend of Maori, European, Pacific Island and Asian influences.

"Our ambition should be, may I suggest, to go forward on the basis of our communities trusting each other – not blindly, but with good judgement and liberal amounts of information, insight, understanding and goodwill." ❄

Maori Queen mourned by region



The passing of the Maori Queen, Te Arika Dame Te Atairangikaahu (*above, with former Governor-General Dame Silvia Cartwright*), on 15 August was marked by an outpouring of condolences from around the Pacific and a large Pacific contingent at her funeral.

In the Cook Islands, the paramount chief of Takitimu, Pa Tapaeru Ariki Mari, summed up the Pacific sentiment when she said that with the death of the Queen, the Cooks had lost a dear friend, and a selfless and inspirational traditional leader.

Among the Pacific representatives at her funeral were Fijian Vice-President Jone Madraiwiwi, Tongan Princess Salote Mafile'ō Pilolevu Tuita, French Polynesian President Oscar Temaru and Niuean Premier Young Vivian.

Dame Te Ata, who ruled for 40 years, has been succeeded by her eldest son, Tuheitia Paki. ❄

Conference hears case for labour mobility

The Government is listening to calls from Pacific countries to free up labour movement into New Zealand, Immigration Minister David Cunliffe told the PCF's Future of the Pacific Labour Market conference.

Opening the gathering, which was held in Wellington in late June, Mr Cunliffe said the Government was open to suggestions about improving short-term labour migration arrangements.

However, he said it was essential that issues of overstaying and worker exploitation were properly dealt with in any changes that were made.

Other speakers at the two-day conference covered mainly business and academic perspectives, both from New Zealand and the Pacific, on the question of labour access from the region into New Zealand.

There was a consensus view that increased access to New Zealand was important for the development of Pacific countries because domestic labour markets – even if expanded through initiatives such as the Pacific Plan – were too small.

Horticulture sector speakers told the conference that increased labour supply could also benefit the New Zealand economy by providing a ready, reliable supply of seasonal labour that could not always be sourced locally. Safeguards to both overstaying and worker exploitation were seen as essential.

A highlight of the conference was a preview by World Bank senior economist Manjula Luthria, of a major World Bank study on Pacific labour mobility.

That report, since published, says employment opportunities in the region cannot at present keep pace with population growth, and this is likely to lead to social and political instability.

Opening seasonal labour markets in the developed countries of the region – New Zealand and Australia – would therefore help to provide regional stability, the report says.

The main presentations of the conference will be collected, supplemented with other material and published by the PCF in book form near the end of the year. You can reserve your copy now by emailing info@pcf.org.nz

News in brief

Tonga will not host this year's **Pacific Islands Forum** Leaders' meeting as scheduled because 88-year-old King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV is gravely ill and (as *Pacific Connection* went to print) reported to be near death. The required mourning rituals would mean it was virtually impossible for the kingdom to host the Forum gathering a short time after the death of the monarch and so the meeting is to be shifted to Fiji, which already has the necessary conference facilities and accommodation.

More than half of **Tuvalu's parliament**, the *Fale I Fono*, was voted out in the 3 August parliamentary elections. There are some doubts that existing prime Minister Maatia Toafa can continue to lead the country as all six of his cabinet ministers lost their seats. Tuvalu's parliament has just 15 members and there is no formal political party structure.

The Secretary-General of the Pacific Islands Forum, Greg Urwin says he will know in a year if efforts set out in the **Pacific Plan** to improve the trading environment within the region are working. The Plan, which was endorsed by Pacific leaders last October, contains a number of measures to be implemented immediately. These include moves to standardise regulations and improve quarantine and customs services. Urwin says he hopes to see signs of economic benefit from these within the next 12 months, but he cautions: "It's pretty incremental in many cases and in some cases the actual trading activity is coming off a really low base".

Samoa has come third in a recent World Bank survey of good governance in 76 poor or developing countries. Armenia came first, followed by Cape Verde. Samoa was next and the Caribbean state of Santa Lucia in fourth. Control of inflation, regular payment of external debt, a competitive economy, and balanced and well-distributed public spending are among the 16 criteria used by the World Bank.

New Zealand's next High Commissioner to **Kiribati** will be career diplomat Craig Rickit, Foreign Minister Winston Peters announced recently. The New Zealand High Commission in Kiribati is also accredited to Palau, the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia. Rickit currently works on the Japan desk in the North Asia Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. He takes up his appointment in November, replacing John Goodman.

Countries belonging to the **Melanesian Spearhead Group** (MSG) are considering setting up their own regional security force. Following a meeting of senior officials recently, MSG chair Gabriel Pepson said such a force could respond to unforeseen political situations such as the civil unrest that broke out in Honiara earlier this year. He said the force could also be used during times of natural disasters such as tsunamis, cyclones, earthquakes and volcanic eruptions. The idea is to be put before

the MSG Leaders' summit, to be held in Vanuatu next year. The MSG comprises Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

Smaller Island States (SIS) within the Pacific Islands Forum will get special attention following the employment of an SIS programme officer. The officer will provide technical support to SIS desk officers in each of the countries. These national officers will provide a link between the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS), the region's technical agencies and the SIS to help realise some of their national development priorities. The first SIS programme officer is senior Kiribati public servant Atanteora Beiatou.

Pacific and Maori art and culture from New Zealand is being showcased at **Pasifika Styles 2006** at Cambridge in the United Kingdom. The exhibition, showcasing the work of 34 leading New Zealand-based artists alongside the Oceanic collections at the University of Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology will run until February 2008. Visiting artists will give talks and performances, produce new works based on the museum's collections, and demonstrate to new audiences the central role of the arts in Pacific cultures. ✿

Custom study paper coming

The New Zealand Law Commission is about to publish a study paper on custom and human rights in the Pacific. It will look at ways in which custom and human rights might be better harmonised in Pacific countries, including New Zealand and Australia.

The paper will be aimed mainly at lawyers, judges, policy makers and aid donors, and will suggest approaches that might be of assistance in resolving apparent conflicts between custom and human rights.

The paper will be available on the Law Commission website, www.lawcom.govt.nz, and anyone wishing to be added to the mailing list for the project should send their contact details to com@lawcom.govt.nz. A full article will appear in the next issue of *Pacific Connection*. ✿

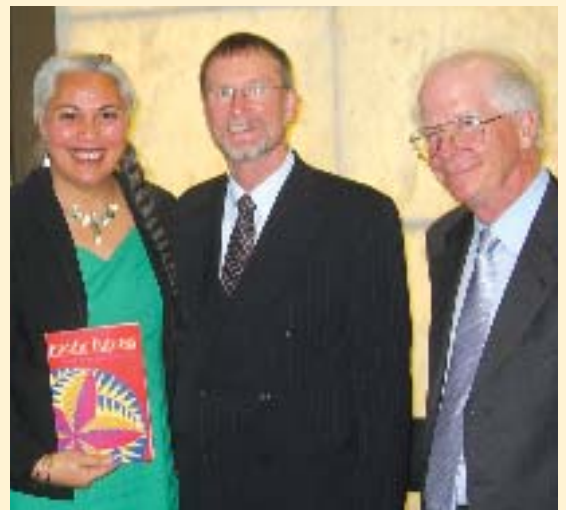
Pacific Futures launched

About 70 guests, including MPs, ambassadors, academics and friends of the Pacific gathered in Wellington in August to mark the publication of *Pacific Futures*, a book of essays edited by former PCF chair Michael Powles.

The Associate Minister of Pacific Affairs, Luamanuvao Winnie Laban, officially launched the book, which considers a wide range of Pacific perspectives on how the Pacific region might most successfully be developed.

Copies of the book can be bought from the PCF for \$30 (within New Zealand) and \$35 (rest of the world), including postage. ✿

Photo: (from left) Associate Minister of Pacific Affairs Luamanuvao Winnie Laban, PCF executive director Vince McBride and PCF former chair Michael Powles at the book launch.



Voyages of the ancestors

Auckland Museum will be the launching point of *Vaka Moana: Voyages of the Ancestors*, an exhibition telling the story of the last great human migration into uninhabited territory – the Pacific.

The exhibition starts with the exploration of the Pacific by the ancestors of today's Pacific peoples 4000 years ago.

"The story of their migration through the ocean is not just a magnificent Pacific event, it was also the last chapter in the story of human settlement of the entire earth," says Massey University professor of history Kerry Howe.

For the Pacific explorers, the stable, fast outrigger canoe – the *vaka* – was the technological breakthrough that allowed the migration to take place.

The exhibition displays the diversity of the Pacific cultures created by the voyages. Wooden carvings, jewellery, musical instruments, weapons and items from every day life show how the voyagers



Canoe at Goregore, an image from the *Vaka Moana: Voyages of the Ancestors* exhibition that starts at Auckland Museum in December. Photo: Auckland Museum.

adapted and thrived in their new environments. The arrival of Europeans and its impact will also feature in the exhibition, as will the subsequent loss of knowledge about traditional navigation and the current renaissance in voyaging.

Vaka Moana will run from 9 December 2006 – 1 April 2007 at Auckland Museum before being sent on a tour to Australia, Asia, North America and Europe. It is scheduled to return to New Zealand in 2011. 🌿

Pasifika media graduates make their mark

Auckland University of Technology's first Pasifika media scholarship graduates have joined the news industry and one of them has launched a weekly newspaper.

Leilani Momoisea won the first undergraduate scholarship offered in 2003 by the AUT School of Communication Studies in partnership with the Pacific Islands Media Association (PIMA) and AUT's Office of Pasifika Advancement.

She graduated this year with a Bachelor of Communication Studies radio major and is working towards a talkback career. "There's a huge lack of Pacific Islanders in talkback and that is really the most important area where we need to be represented," she says.

She currently hosts True School Hip-Hop Show on 95bFM and writes for *Taiohi* magazine.

Kitekei'aho Tu'a'akalau also graduated this year with an MA in communication studies after writing a thesis on the democracy movement and the media in Tonga.

He is now founding publisher and editor of *Tau'ataina* newspaper – *The Independent* – a Tongan language weekly that began publishing in Auckland last November.

"I enjoy doing this project. A lot of people didn't believe we could do another Tongan newspaper in Auckland, but they were wrong," he says.

Tu'a'akalau produces the 24-page paper along with two colleagues

based in Nuku'alofa, Tonga. The paper currently has a circulation of 2000.

Another postgraduate journalist on the AUT-PIMA media scholarship, prominent Fiji broadcaster Mere Lomaloma Elliott, also started a newspaper, the *Fiji Observer*, in Auckland last year.

AUT's School of Communication Studies currently has seven Pasifika scholarship students, including another postgraduate student who has recently submitted a media thesis. There are two Pasifika media scholarships a year – one undergraduate and one postgraduate. The deadline for this year's scholarships is November 30. Visit http://www.aut.ac.nz/schools/communication_studies/scholarships.htm 🌿

Art award entries wanted

Entries are being sought for the 2006 Martin Hughes contemporary Pacific Art Award.

The award is for all contemporary New Zealand and Pacific Island artists whose work reflects a Pacific influence and in the fields of: photography, textiles, installation, multi-media, printmaking, sculpture, jewellery, painting, weaving or carving. Applicants must be based in New Zealand, Cook Islands, Fiji, Niue, Samoa, Tonga, Tokelau or Tuvalu.

Auckland-based Martin Hughes Architecture Interiors established the award in 2000. It is run in partnership with Creative New Zealand. The prize is a travel grant of \$5000 and entries close on Friday 5 October. The 2005 winner was New Zealand-Samoan painter Zarahn Southon.

For further information contact Anton Carter, Creative New Zealand, ph + 64 4 498 0729 or email antonc@creativenz.govt.nz 🌿

Looking out for the neighbours

This issue of *Pacific Connection* focuses on aid in the Pacific – primarily New Zealand’s aid, but also the broader environment in which New Zealand is but one player among many. China, Taiwan, Japan, France, the EU and Australia all have significant and expanding interests in the region, and aid is one of the means by which they can demonstrate engagement and compete for influence.

We start with a look at New Zealand’s official development assistance as it is managed by the Government’s aid and development agency, NZAID. The four-year-old agency recently received a large tick for its poverty-focused policies and programmes from its Ministerial reviewer, Marilyn Waring.

An alternative view of where the New Zealand official development assistance programme is – and should be – headed comes from the National Party’s aid spokesman, former diplomat John Hayes. He argues that our official aid should be more tightly targeted.

Next we look at the changing geographical focus of Volunteer Service Abroad, one of the longest-established New Zealand agencies working in the Pacific with NZAID funds.

Finally we consider the broader Pacific aid environment. Ron Crocombe, one of the region’s best-known academic writers on development, says aid should be in the interests of Pacific peoples, not donors. And a Pacific regional NGO, the Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific, calls for a greater role for civil society in aid decision-making. 🌐

NZAID Pacific development assistance at a glance

In 2006/07 New Zealand has committed \$NZ166.6 million to address key Pacific development challenges. These resources are primarily committed to 11 countries, six regional thematic programmes, eight Pacific regional agencies, and three special purpose funds. *See story next page.*

Pacific country programmes (70% of total Pacific aid budget)

Country	06/07 Allocation
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Core Bilateral Partners

Solomon Islands	18.0 million
Papua New Guinea	16.0 million
Vanuatu	11.0 million
Tonga	10.1 million
Samoa	9.8 million
Fiji	8.0 million
Kiribati	3.1 million
Tuvalu	2.05 million

Constitutional relationships

Cook Islands	9.2 million
Niue	13.5 million*
Tokelau	10.6 million

Other country assistance

Nauru	2.1 million
French Pacific Territories	0.625 million
Micronesia	0.3 million

*Includes the *Halavaka he ke Monuina* (one-off package)

** This scheme supports 25 new scholarships per year on a contestable basis via NZ Universities. The majority of scholarships (over 400 at any one time) are funded through country programmes.

Pacific regional programmes (20% of total Pacific budget)

Programme	06/07 Allocation
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Governance	10.0 million
Trade/Economic Growth and Governance	6.0 million
Fisheries	4.25 million
Education	2.0 million
Health	9.0 million
Environment and Vulnerability	6.5 million

Pacific regional agencies (10% of total Pacific budget)

Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS)	4.25 million
Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC)	6.14 million
Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA)	3.0 million
South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC)	1.4 million
Pacific Environment Programme (SPREP)	1.0 million
University of the South Pacific (USP)	4.0 million
Fiji School of Medicine	0.5 million
South Pacific Bureau of Educational Assessment (SPBEA)	0.35 million

Special purposes funds

Government Agencies Contestable Fund	7.0 million
Head of Mission Fund	1.04 million
Non-country specific Regional Scholarships Fund	4.0 million **

A Pacific focus

NZAID is the New Zealand Government's four-year-old aid and development agency. Its key goal is to overcome poverty and it has chosen the Pacific as its main area of geographical focus. That decision makes good sense, writes NZAID executive director **Dr Peter Adams**.

We are a Pacific country, sharing the same space and, in some cases, the same challenges and opportunities as our Pacific neighbours. Our links with the region are numerous and strong, and there are relationships on many levels – from government and business to communities and families.

As a neighbour, there are expectations both in the region and domestically that New Zealand will play a positive and engaged role in assisting the Pacific countries to achieve their development aspirations.

We can't pretend aid is a completely selfless exercise that we do out of the goodness of our hearts. New Zealand has a strong interest in a safe, just and prosperous region. Reducing poverty and hardship in the region is a win-win situation for the region and New Zealand's place in it.

In case there is any doubt, let me state unequivocally that there is real poverty in the Pacific. Over the past 30 years, economic and social indicators in parts of the Pacific have improved – and aid has played a part in that – but improvements in indicators have been sluggish and uneven. Population growth, patchy governance, the lack of sufficient sustainable economic growth and the challenges of globalisation mean that significant numbers of Pacific people continue to be deprived of basic needs and services.

The statistics paint a telling picture: 44 percent of adults in Vanuatu are literate; more than 16 percent of people in Kiribati are not expected to survive to the age of 40; a mother in Papua New Guinea is more than 40 times more likely to die in childbirth than in New Zealand. The Pacific region has been identified as one of the regions least likely to achieve all the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015.

Many Pacific countries are small island developing states, which means they are particularly vulnerable to outside influences such as oil price rises and natural disasters. Most countries in the region have human resource capacity constraints and, owing to their size, poor economies of scale.

These are the challenges in the region but also opportunities. Aid can help countries realise opportunities and meet some of the challenges.

Currently more than half of New Zealand's total aid budget is directed to the Pacific. New Zealand's key development goals in



the region are to:

- Ensure every child has access to a good education.
- Help reverse the growing incidence of lifestyle diseases and HIV/AIDS.
- Meet the basic needs of communities through ensuring access to clean water, good sanitation and adequate healthcare.
- Improve the skills and knowledge of leaders.
- Foster sustainable economic growth and improved livelihoods, including through trade and development, and fisheries.
- Contribute to regional and multilateral approaches to the management of common challenges such as the pursuit of security and prosperity, and preparation and protection against natural disasters.

What does this mean in practice? To give some examples: in Solomon Islands, NZAID is working with the Government to get all children into schools and rehabilitate roading so people can get their surplus products to local markets and earn income; in Niue, New Zealand has funded a hospital and comprehensive health services supported by a New Zealand District health Board; and in Fiji, NZAID is working alongside the Government and civil society to build new homes and generate livelihoods for people living in squatter settlements.

It is one thing to say what NZAID is going to do but another to ensure that what is done is effective. New Zealand's aid policy in the Pacific is increasingly focusing on how we work as a critical factor in what we do.

There are a number of factors that we think can improve the effectiveness of aid and in the Pacific, New Zealand is leading the way in many of them. We are investing in partnerships and making a greater use of partner systems and processes, including more local contracting and management by partners.

NZAID is also supporting a general move to fewer, longer and deeper activities. That means less reliance on stand-alone projects and more on sector programmes or sector-wide approaches.

Strengthening NZAID links with other donors is a priority, too. We can do this through harmonised programmes with Australia and joint initiatives with partners such as the European Union, the World Bank and Asian Development Bank. We're also aware of the need to engage with the emerging donors of the Pacific.

It is not an under-statement to say there is a lot to do – and although New Zealand cannot solve all the Pacific's problems, we do have a role to play. By continuing its strong development engagement in the Pacific region, New Zealand will go some way to ensuring that a bright, prosperous future is a reality rather than a pipe dream for Pacific Island nations. 🌺

Tighten aid, boost trade



Former diplomat, MP **John Hayes** (left), is the National Party's aid spokesman. *Pacific Connection* asked him for his view on the current direction of the New Zealand official development assistance programme and where it should be going.

Some months ago I was asked if I supported the United Nations 0.7 percent

target for aid donors. As a member of the House of Representatives it seemed important to check the view of my constituents. As I was already surveying the view of 26,000 households in the Wairarapa electorate I added two questions on aid levels. As I write this we are still ploughing through returned forms but, after recording many of the nearly 3000 replies, the outcome is not changing. Nevertheless, the figures below are provisional.

Two questions were asked:

- The Government is spending \$440 million or 0.27 percent of GNI in international aid next year. Do you think this amount is: too much? 53 percent; about right? 35 percent; not enough? nine percent; don't know? three percent.
- The United Nations recommends that governments spend 0.7 percent of their Gross National Income on international aid. In New Zealand's case, this would be over \$1 billion annually. Do you think New Zealand should spend this bigger amount on aid each year? No, 83 percent; yes, 10 percent; don't know, seven percent.

The result is at variance with a 2004 public opinion survey that suggested 61 percent of New Zealanders were in favour of increasing the aid budget to 0.7 percent.

Perhaps my constituents are out of kilter with the rest of New Zealand. Other questions in my survey, however, give results pretty well identical to those on other issues surveyed across the rest of New Zealand. Accordingly I think the result is an accurate reflection of my constituents' views. It would be a mistake not to take note of community views. It may be that the Government has moved ahead of New Zealand opinion, or perhaps that community support for high aid levels has dropped in the face of a high domestic tax take.

Several Pacific Islands politicians were in Wellington recently at a regional gathering of Commonwealth Parliamentarians. I asked a group of them what they thought about New Zealand's aid programme. "Give us more money," was the response! When I asked, "What do you think of the Government's

objective to eradicate poverty?" the response was "That's a joke that will never happen." I'm inclined to agree.

Globally, aid will not make a real difference to people's lives – but trade can. The logic is simple. Trade enhances growth and growth reduces poverty. Almost two billion people, or half the world's population, live on \$US2 a day or less. Global concessional assistance from rich to poor countries amounts to about \$50 billion per year. But rich countries could provide even larger benefits to developing countries by removing protection against imports from them. William Cline at the Institute for International Economics estimates total long-term gains to developing countries from global free trade at \$200 billion annually. At least \$100 billion of these gains, or twice the annual flow of aid, would arise from the removal of industrial-country protection.

My experience of the New Zealand aid programme runs back to the days of Norman Kirk. I find it hard to recall a single successful New Zealand aid project in South Asia except perhaps the Sagaramatha National park in Nepal and projects undertaken by the Himalayan Trust. Most, like the crop spraying project in Bangladesh, failed.

The picture is the same in Southeast Asia and the Pacific. Millions of dollars of taxpayer money has been wasted over many years. Some aid work such as that undertaken by VSA has been successful. My Pacific parliamentary colleagues agreed. We concluded that too much aid ended up in the wrong hands, for example, under the influence of inefficient and ineffective bureaucrats. We thought more funds needed to find their way to entrepreneurs and business people. They are the people who create jobs.

A strong case exists to cut the "spread" of New Zealand's aid from the 100-odd countries to which we currently disperse taxpayer's money. New Zealand's focus should be the Pacific. Aid should be focused in four areas: education, health, infrastructure and integrity systems. Aid recipients should be required to demonstrate responsibility and common sense. If my constituents could see that aid was not being wasted they might be inclined to support a more generous annual allocation. 🌱



VSA's Melanesian challenge

Much of NZAID's development assistance is delivered by non-government organisations. One of these, Volunteer Service Abroad (VSA) is active around the developing world but, as its writer Adele Broadbent explains, Melanesia is becoming its key area of activity.

Since 2000, the number of VSA Pacific volunteer assignments has doubled. In that time the proportion of assignments in Melanesia has rocketed from 60 to 80 percent of the Pacific total. Solomon Islands will have gone from no VSA volunteers in 2001 – just after the crisis – to 21 during the past year.

"Melanesia is where the highest level of development needs are, and the work is more challenging and complex, but that's where we need to have our volunteers," says VSA Pacific programme manager Dr Peter Swain.

He points out the focus of assignments has also changed markedly from the 60s and 70s, when primary school teachers were the usual recruits. "Now very few people are actually teaching. Most in the education sector are teacher trainers, vocational trainers, principal's mentors and school management advisers."

VSA has a strong focus on economic development and vocational training, both of which have played a particularly important part of the programmes in Solomon Islands and on Bougainville.

"Improving the economic situation for people in their own communities means the cash starts flowing into those communities and consequently people can stand on their own feet and be more self reliant. That's much better development than doing the band aid stuff," Swain says.

"Local people tell us that they want the skills and capacity to

determine their own future. Just increasing the dollar value of aid is not the answer. VSA sends people, not money.

"Of course people need health and education services, but providing economic development and vocational training opportunities enhances family life choices. The capabilities of the communities are enhanced through increasing business opportunities and jobs."

The Arawa Carpentry and Social Development Association (ACSDA) in Bougainville is a good example of this, Swain says.

VSA was involved in setting up and managing ACSDA in 1999. The goal was "to rehabilitate ex-combatants from the Arawa area back into normal society as good citizens capable of generating their own income". The programme has included carpentry and construction skills training, small business development skills and team building, with an emphasis on social development.

By 2001 ACSDA was operating as an independent organisation. With VSA assistance, it subsequently developed a commercial arm and, through linkages with three other Arawa NGOs, became a vocational training institution.

In 2005 ACSDA won a competitive tender for \$NZ160,000 to build the Arawa Police Station. The job was completed on time and within budget, and 11 new jobs were created in the process.

For more information on VSA, visit www.vsa.org.nz 🌱



Us, stingy?

The umbrella group for New Zealand development NGOs, the Council for International Development, says New Zealand can and should be giving a lot more overseas aid.

CID is coordinating a "0.7 percent" campaign to try and persuade the Government to up its aid commitment from the present 0.27 percent of Gross National Income to the UN-endorsed goal of 0.7 percent by the year 2015.

In July, CID chair Rae Julian said New Zealand was "sitting on its hands" regarding its international aid commitments and faced serious criticism if it did not up

its contributions. Her comments followed a description by international aid lobbyist and rock star Bob Geldof of New Zealand's aid levels as "a disgrace".

Aid Minister Winston Peters responded to the Geldof criticism by saying New Zealand gave considerably more than the international average, and the aid provided was effective, transparent and largely untied. 🌱

The aid trade



In whose interests does aid in the Pacific really work – the people on the receiving end, or the countries that give it? University of the South Pacific emeritus professor of Pacific studies **Ron Crocombe** (left) argues that whatever the rhetoric and the changes in the aid environment, donors have things their own way – and it's time that changed.

Aid is needed in the Pacific Islands, where the income per person (by GDP) averages less than one twentieth that of New Zealand. But the value of aid that comes to the region keeps decreasing as Islanders are pressured into buying more junk foods and drinks and services from New Zealand and beyond. It is in New Zealand and Australia's economic, social and security interests to reduce such gaps.

Donor countries give what is in their interest to give. When Mike Moore was Minister for Foreign Affairs he said in Fiji that New Zealand gave to serve its own interests as well as those of Fiji. His honesty was respected because people know there is goodwill in aid, but also self-interest on all sides. They are tired of the self-serving hypocrisy they hear too much from all players in the aid trade. Pacific Island cultures, too, are based on reciprocity, and Island nations and peoples also calibrate their likely long-term benefits when giving and receiving.

Aid concentrates and fluctuates around the interests of donor countries. If it was based on need of the recipients, most New Zealand aid might well go to Somalia, Bangladesh, Burma or West Papua. But in fact the greater the need, the less they get. The highest aid per person is to French, US and New Zealand-related countries and territories, which already have the highest incomes in the Islands.

Aid and concessions from Western governments to the Pacific increased dramatically when USSR (Russia in practice) offered aid in the 1970s. All donors rejected a Tuvalu Trust Fund until then Deputy Prime Minister Henry Naisali insisted on it in return for New Zealand's request to reject Russian aid.

Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia and Palau were only allowed even the limited sovereignty they have on condition that the United States controls their defence, can use their territory for US military purposes and can keep all other nations out ("strategic denial" it is called).

The US tests intercontinental ballistic missiles, conducts Star Wars research, and maintains electronic spy systems in the Marshall Islands, where it tested atomic and nuclear weapons that still cause many Islanders to suffer and die from cancers. In return, the US pays those nations cash and services called "aid". There is no world market for that deal because the US demanded a monopoly. What would it be worth on an open market? What, for example, might China be prepared to pay?

Everyone hoped that, with the "Cold War" over, the reduced big power military expenditure would be used to increase aid. The opposite occurred. The US cancelled its aid and other western aid stagnated, despite booming economies. They did not need to give more because they "coordinated" their aid, reducing competition and recipient countries' bargaining power.

Aid levels would have stayed low, but China declined to "coordinate" its aid with other donors. That led competitors for influence to increase their aid and speak more kindly. The US came back with \$US60 million to its main critic in the region, Vanuatu. This was rationalised as a "reward for good governance", a statement bizarre to those familiar with Vanuatu politics. European involvement surged too.

Taiwan competes to aid the six Pacific Island nations that recognise it. China competes with Japan, Australia and New Zealand for influence in Pacific governments, organisations and strategies, and will become a (the?) major regional influence. Much depends on the price the various bidders offer.

Aid from governments is only part of the picture. Tonga and Samoa receive much more from Tongans and Samoans abroad than from governments. And it goes straight to people without being eroded by foreign consultants, bureaucratic procedures, and political leverage. Other aid comes from churches, NGOs and international organisations.

Why do academics, media and governments spend so much time and effort and give such loud publicity to money coming in, and keep so silent about the larger amounts going out? Is it to protect self-interest or hide twinges of guilt?



What goes out includes the profits of foreign air and shipping lines, telecommunications companies, financial institutions, merchandising companies, and mining, fishing, logging and manufacturing operations. Much Islands money in the form of savings, insurance and pension funds (even via locally registered companies) and currency reserves is invested overseas. A share goes abroad of every patent and franchise right, film, video, TV show, computer product, fuel, brand-name food, drink, medicine, beauty product, vehicle, piece of equipment; of most hotel and rental car bills, tour packages and advertising; and an ever-growing proportion of all that foreign promoters daily cajole Islanders to spend their money on. At the same time foreign governments force Pacific Islanders ever more deeply into consumption-oriented systems they dominate. This outflow vastly exceeds all aid and remittances.

Why so little mention of remittances from the Islands by Asian timber and factory workers, hotel staff, fishermen, teachers, technicians and businessmen sending money home to the Philippines, China, Malaysia and beyond? And profits from western and Asian exports to the Islands and their businesses and professions in the Islands, are worth many times more than all the aid.

The larger donors, and some small ones, want goodwill, votes in international forums (UN, FAO, UNESCO, ILO, WHO etc), access to mineral, agricultural, forest and marine resources, and space, markets for the donor nation's goods and services, and a secure neighbourhood.

Donors speak a great deal of aid for the poor, but inter-government aid is largely a deal between those with political power in the donor country and their counterparts in the recipient country. The less donors give, the higher up the hierarchy they target the gifts.

At each annual Forum heads of government meeting, some donors compete to give a fleet of new cars for the three-day meeting, and the host country elite to keep thereafter. Australia, China and Taiwan have been the main donors. The 2003 Forum was held in New Zealand, to which no cars were given because New Zealand sells its favours at a higher price – including to China in return for a trade deal. (Called “free trade” deals, such deals are not free, but rather arrangements involving reciprocal advantages).

High public relations value comes from visible and prestigious gifts that function as sovereignty symbols – parliament buildings, justice and security systems, and national stadiums – and trips and perks. Such gifts do not help “the people” or “development”, as donors and recipients proclaim aid is intended to do. They widen the gap between privileged and under-privileged to buy leverage from gatekeepers who serve foreign interests over national. Recipient gatekeepers are as responsible as donors.

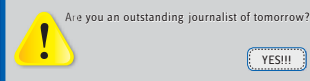
Aid should be valued in terms of benefits measurable 10 years after it was given. Many infrastructure, training and health projects rate well on this criterion, as do foreign volunteers who work with local people at local rates and many small grants to voluntary organisations. But consultant reports litter office shelves in the Pacific Islands. Having read dozens of them I believe the Islands would have been better off without most of them.

Aid to the Pacific Islands will continue. Its scale and nature will depend on the needs of donors and recipients, on the bargaining



skills of the two sides, and on the priority both sides give to long-term benefits to the recipient public. If New Zealand aid is lifted from the present 0.28 percent of GDP to the 0.7 percent at which the world aimed decades ago (and some countries now achieve), and geared more to the needs of recipients, it would benefit both New Zealand and the Islands. 🌐

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A promise kept?

Our final perspective on aid comes from the Suva-based NGO the Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific International (FSPI), which works at community level throughout the region. Its writer **Maureen Penjueli** says official aid is not necessarily reaching and helping the Pacific people who need it – and that won't change until decision-makers learn to take civil society more seriously.

If one were to ask people on the street about aid, it is likely that a few could point to an infrastructure project such as a bridge, hospital or a water tank as evidence of aid money well spent. But most would neither be aware nor care about the politics of aid, nor about how much aid money was spent, let alone the tangible benefits for communities and countries.

Nonetheless there is an important story to be told about aid in the region. Its presumed overall intention is, after all, to build the capacity of governments and their people so they can participate in the global community on an equal footing.

It is now 30 years since independence for most Pacific countries. During that time a huge amount of aid has been poured into the region and yet Melanesian countries particularly continue to perform poorly in basic education and health, particularly in terms of dealing with new diseases such as HIV/AIDS. Conflict and instability are the norm. Most countries have poor infrastructure and, right across the Pacific, most countries continue to show weak economic performance. Rapid population growth is bringing new challenges such as unemployment and crime, particularly in urban centres.

This gloomy picture should raise alarm bells for donors, governments and civil society organizations. It does though give us a clue about what we may need to fix to ensure the next 10 years of aid to the region are more effective.

Currently the bulk of aid goes to governments and regional intergovernmental agencies, with smaller amounts going to civil society organisations. This heavily top-down funding approach is not delivering results, a problem undoubtedly compounded by inadequate or variable governance and leadership at national level.

A further weak link in the existing system is between national government ministries – sometimes by way of their district or provincial machinery – and communities. These national agencies often lack the capacity and resources to consistently and effectively deliver aid programmes.

But perhaps the most fundamental limitation on better delivery of aid to communities is the weakness of the links between regional agencies and governments at one end and communities at the other.

In key areas such as basic education, health, conflict and youth, communities and civil society organisations are in a better position than anyone else to identify community needs and find appropriate solutions to their problems. Civil society groups are usually at pains to work within existing community structures and recognise that communities are the key to their own destinies. They usually have socio-cultural knowledge that technically-focused regional agencies may lack.

Unfortunately, though, there is a lack of real recognition in the region of the important role that civil society organisations play. To some extent, regional agencies and governments still dismiss the call for increased integration of civil society groups



- even though agencies such as FSPI take great care to establish or strengthen linkages with them. The agencies claim that their mandate is restricted to governments, while national governments claim they are already mandated by their people.

However, no government in the world can claim to have such a good connection with its people that there is no useful role for civil society organisations. In fact, they usually emerge to address issues of "the people" that governments cannot and will not address. It is no surprise that civil society bodies are sometimes unpopular with governments.

It must be said that the continued lack of recognition by both governments and regional agencies of the important role played by civil society does not bode well for collaborative opportunities in aid delivery.

If aid is to deliver its intended promise to Pacific communities there must be a change of mindset in regional agencies and national governments about the role that civil society organisations play. 'Smart partnerships' involving all three groupings need to be put in place. In addition, donors must do more to overcome the currently weak links between agencies and governments.

It is imperative that we all work together to solve the region's problems. 🌱

Captions for aid photos. Page 7: ADRA microfinance project in Lae, Papua New Guinea - NZAID; Page 8: small business enterprise in Honiara, Solomon Islands - J Schwass; Page 9: VSA Bougainville field representative Diane Thorne-George - VSA; Page 10: VSA project coordinator Kevin Adshead in Solomon Islands - VSA; Page 11: NZAID examination assistance in Solomon Islands - J Schwass; Page 12: children in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea - NZAID.



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Samoa's struggles



Black Saturday: New Zealand's Tragic Blunders in Samoa

by Michael Field

Reed Publishing (NZ) Ltd

Reviewed by
Galumalemana Afeleti
Hunkin, MNZM

In rewriting the history of Samoa's struggle against New Zealand oppression in the early part of the 20th Century, Michael Field, a New Zealand journalist, has undertaken a pointed but important job in refocusing our attention on some of the

more contemptible characters that fronted the colonial administration of Samoa.

Black Saturday follows on from Michael's earlier book, *Mau*, but expands on and updates the relationship between the two countries by including the apology made to Samoa by Prime Minister Helen Clark in 2002.

At the beginning of New Zealand's colonial administration (1914-62) New Zealand could not wait to show its knowledge of how to 'look after' the Samoans, because the military men involved believed that New Zealand's experience of dealing with Maori would put it in good stead in such an adventure – so they mistakenly thought.

In fact their decisions led to the killing of one of Samoa's paramount chiefs, Tupua Tamsese, while he and seven other chiefs were calling for peace. This was a murderous act and the fact that it happened as recently as 1929 made it a horrific act.

When *Mau* was released in 1984, there was shock and disbelief that New Zealand military administrators could behave so appallingly in dealing with the Samoan people.

Mau also records that nearly 25 percent of the Samoan population died from the influenza pandemic of 1918. Again, these bumbling, untrained and racist New Zealand military administrators were to blame.

When I first learnt about this history at university in New Zealand in the late 1970s, I was emotionally overcome. Then followed disbelief, and anger. I had heard the word *mau* as part of traditional songs played on Samoan radio during my boyhood days in the 1950s and 1960s, but no one ever talked about it. We were not even taught any of this history at school.

In *Black Saturday*, Michael Field has contributed to a sharpened understanding of the historical relationship between New Zealand and Samoa. He has also used his own personal experiences of Samoan culture and life (he has Samoan children from his marriage to Maina Ma'aola) to bring a revealingly honed perspective to castigating the colonial administrators for their wrongdoings.

This new book looks at some of the key issues that confronted the administrators, particularly Major-General Sir George Spafford Richardson, in some detail. It reveals an awful arrogance underpinned by a racist mentality directed against the Samoans and also the Chinese copra plantation workers brought in by the earlier German colonists. The 19th century excuse by white colonial masters for mistreating non-white peoples around the globe was that they were inferior, unintelligent beings in comparison to the whites. This helped to soothe their collective conscience over their mistreatment of the darker races.

From a New Zealand perspective, *Black Saturday* is a discouraging read, in spite of efforts by some New Zealand historians following the publication of *Mau* to paint a less than shocking picture of this history. Field mentions one such historian, Ian McGibbon, who wrote of a 'mob' mentality that the Samoans adopted in trying to cope with their maltreatment. Others have tried to suggest that it was Nelson, a very intelligent and loyal Samoan, and one of the central characters of the book (he was an *afakasi*, or half-caste: part Samoan, part European) who was really responsible for organising the *mau*. The Samoans in other words, were not capable of organising and mobilising something like this!

An enlightened Prime Minister Helen Clark resolved to do something about this awful history of arrogance and racism. She went to Samoa and apologised to the Samoan people about it in 2002. Although she did not conduct a formalised Samoan *ifoga* for New Zealand's wrongdoings, the strong imagery associated with her visit touched many a Samoan heart and brought tears, particularly to the present holder of the *Tupua Tamasese* title, Tuiatua Tupua Tamasese Efi, the nephew of the murdered Tamasese.

Field has done a commendable task in re-telling this story. *Black Saturday* is an important book like no other written about this era in New Zealand history. The photographs add another, valuable dimension.

This is a book that needs to be read by all New Zealanders. 🌺
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A voice for the young

The region's inaugural Pacific Youth Festival was an ambitious undertaking that set out to give young people opportunities to help change their region for the better, writes Radio New Zealand International's reporter there, Sara Vui-Talitu.

Hosting the first Pacific Youth Festival in Tahiti was always going to be a big ask. Two years ago, 17 young people from French Polynesia returned from the World Youth Festival in Barcelona and felt that Pacific youth needed a stronger voice at the next world youth meeting. This was the catalyst for the first Pacific festival.

In July more than 1000 young people aged between 16 and 30, and more than 30 keynote speakers, travelled from all over the Pacific region to Papeete. The Polynesia Union for Youth (UPJ) in Tahiti and the French Polynesia Government joined forces to organise the event with the help of sponsors including the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), the Oceania Football Confederation, UNESCO and local businesses. The Government of French Polynesia and its sponsors subsidised many delegates who would not otherwise have been able to afford the cost to attend. Organisers say the festival cost around \$US10 million.



The Festival presented a unique opportunity for young people from many countries, including New Zealand and Australia, to come together to network. There were successful social events too, including nightly culture performances and a day trip to Moorea.

For some, the event provided an opportunity to push political agendas: the opening speech by the President of French Polynesia, Oscar Temaru, plugged the case for Tahitian independence. For others it provided an opportunity to network with like-minded future leaders who are clued up on issues around the region. The festival's keynote speaker, SPC director-general Dr Jimmie Rodgers, issued a challenge to all youth to make a difference upon their return home.

"Make a positive influence for change," he said. "Remember challenges now have a limited lifespan."

Nine themes were debated during the festival, and speakers from around the region addressed youth delegates on these at plenary sessions. The themes were education and training, social and professional integration, sustainable development, cultural diversity, health, equality for all, peace, active citizenship and good governance. In hindsight it may have been better to have more of a mix of speakers of different ages and from different disciplines, and a wider range of topics for debate.

Language was also a challenge, and although translation booths in French and English were set up for conference sessions, translations weren't always readily available. The organisers had problems accommodating the large number of delegates, too.

The Pacific Youth Festival is to be held in a different Pacific country every three years, and one hopes that Fiji has taken notes in preparation for hosting the next one in 2009. 🌺

*Photo: French Polynesian children perform on stage at the Pacific Youth Festival.
Photo: Sara Vui-Talitu.*





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