Development Bulletin

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South Pacific Futures

Features

- Governance and Pacific futures
- Addressing conflict, restitution and reconstruction
- Globalisation and investment
- Land tenure, land rights and remittances
- Population dynamics and development
- The way forward for Pacific trade policy
- Key research issues in the Pacific

Publications

Resources

Editors: Pamela Thomas and Beris Gwynne
The Development Studies Network provides information and discussion on social and economic development issues. It publishes a quarterly journal, Development Bulletin, runs regular seminars on development policy and annual conferences on international development. Members of the Network are encouraged to contribute information and papers to the Development Bulletin.

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The Network

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This issue of *Development Bulletin* considers issues that are critical to the future of South Pacific countries. They include governance and democracy, realistic opportunities for economic development and sustainability, managing conflict and reconstruction, human resources and appropriate research methodologies. The papers are selected from those presented at the symposium, South Pacific Futures, which was organised by the Foundation for Development Cooperation, and held in Brisbane in July 2002. Symposium discussion, some of which is included here, focused on financing for development and on finding appropriate savings and trust funds arrangements for small island Pacific countries, the patterns of remittances as investment funds, the relationship between Australia and Pacific Island countries, the relevance of democratic models of government in Pacific Island countries, and the role of land and customary land tenure systems in social and economic development.

We have provided supporting information on recent publications, useful websites and training materials.

**Editorial Board**

The conference papers included here were selected by a specially convened editorial board which comprised Beris Gwyne of Foundation for Development Cooperation, Professor John Overton of Massey University, Professor Ron Duncan and Dr Brij Lal of the Australian National University, Dr Mark Otter, University of Queensland and myself. I would like to thank the authors of the papers for reducing them considerably so they fitted our journal requirements for short, concise papers.

**Financial support**

We would like to thank AusAID for assistance towards the printing and distribution costs of this issue of *Development Bulletin*. Without their support we would be unable to make this valuable information so widely available.

**Network staff**

Our assistant editor, Tanya Mark has moved. On behalf of our Network Board, I would like to thank her for the help she has provided over the last two years. We are very pleased that Annabel Pengilley has joined us as our new assistant editor. She will take over the day-to-day responsibility for the *Development Bulletin*.

**Back issues**

Over the last 15 years the journal has commented on the major issues in development research, development assistance, development theories and policies. Our back issues provide a goldmine of information and a valuable history of Australian development assistance. The green insert page lists the recent back issues of *Development Bulletin*. Teaching sets of 10 or more are available at $10 each plus GST. Special rates apply to universities and organisations in developing countries. See the green insert in this issue or check our website.

**Next issues**

The next issues of *Development Bulletin* will focus on the development implications of rapid changes in population structure and China as a developmental model. If you would like to contribute a paper to either issue please contact us.

Stimulating reading and a calm and satisfying year in 2003.

*Pamela Thomas*
Managing Editor
Introduction: South Pacific Futures

Beris Gwynne, Foundation for Development Cooperation, Brisbane

The papers and the discussion included in this issue are selected from the South Pacific Futures symposium, organised by the Foundation for Development Cooperation (FDC). It was convened in response to increasing concern at the emergence of an arc of instability, stretching from Indonesia, to Papua New Guinea, and across the island states of Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Fiji, and had as its theme South Pacific futures. The symposium provided more detailed consideration of issues identified at a meeting in Kooralbyn, November 2000.

Assumptions about Pacific futures re-examined in the context of globalisation

As the twentieth century drew to a close, the impact of globalisation was obvious and unrelenting. Transport and information communications technology have provided vehicles for cross-border or borderless transactions in every conceivable field: trade in goods and services, financial flows, information, culture and ideas, even genetic material. The burning of fossil fuels for energy and transport and increased industrial and agricultural production have contributed to global climate change and environmental degradation.

In one sense, the isolation of Pacific states and their dispersal across vast expanses of ocean have slowed the speed of change and provided some cushioning. In another sense, these same features amplify Pacific vulnerabilities, with recent developments in the region adding a note of urgency to calls for re-prioritisation of development objectives, re-assessment of conventional interventions and examination of alternative approaches.

Sustainable development

With the completion of negotiations on new regional trade arrangements and discussion about Pacific states joining the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the debate over the pros and cons of 'special arrangements' for small states has intensified. With levels of agricultural protection in the United States, Europe and Japan equivalent to several times the total of Official Development Assistance (ODA), it is extraordinary that Pacific states, with limited quantities of a very small number of tradable goods, have been persuaded that their best course is to a further opening up of Pacific markets.

To this equation, add Pacific disadvantage in the competition for foreign direct investment (FDI), OECD pressure to limit the activities of Pacific tax havens, the further in-roads likely to result from the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), uncertainty regarding intellectual property rights to bio-genetic materials, and continuing resistance to the freeing up of labour markets. It is hardly surprising that questions are being asked about the benefits of globalisation and the appropriateness of current economic development models for Pacific states when even resource-rich states in the Pacific struggle to obtain reasonable returns from foreign exploitation of fisheries, forests, and mineral deposits, and to achieve fair distribution of benefits to their citizens.

With increasing populations, pressure on resources has increased food and water insecurity, heightening the risk of environmental degradation. Investment in tourism — even the environmentally friendly variety — is a two-edged sword for many Pacific states, providing desperately needed income but adding to pressure on resources and increasing the tension between Western and traditional economies. With rising sea-levels as a result of
global climate change threatening, not just coral atolls but also substantial proportions of already limited infrastructure, the challenges for Pacific states are enormous.

Political issues

The closing years of the twentieth century also saw the beginnings of a new debate about global governance and the role of transnational conglomerates in responding to the HIV/AIDS pandemic and climate change. The particular challenges facing small Pacific states spread over vast expanses of ocean—potentially the last great reservoir of resources on Earth—are exacerbated by the limited human capital available to negotiate with foreign governments, international organisations and business interests.

The vulnerability of small states internationally is mirrored internally, where, in the Pacific, as elsewhere, Westernised national capital elites and other city dwellers and the rural populations which constitute the majority in most Pacific states, live in parallel worlds. In the main, Westminster-style governments and employment-creating bureaucracies have been unable to meet even basic post-independence expectations. Their links with large numbers of their constituents are tenuous, with many communities living as they have for centuries, with traditional decision making processes still in place.

Cultural issues

The clash of cultures is seen most clearly at the interface between Western capitalism and export-oriented production and the subsistence economy of traditional communities. It is also evident in the competition for influence between fragile systems of government and traditional sources of authority. The breakdown of traditional values and supplanting of culturally appropriate problem solving by processes imposed from outside has further weakened indigenous coping mechanisms. With increasing pressure on resources, and unequal sharing of the benefits of engagement with the global economy, the stage is set for alienation of traditional values and supplanting of culturally appropriate processes still in place.

Security

Against this background, the introduction of modern weaponry is catastrophic, magnifying the level of trauma, and increasing the destruction of infrastructure. Recent events in Indonesia, East Timor, Papua, Bougainville, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and Fiji have shown how difficult it is to put the civil unrest genie back in the bottle. These events have also demonstrated how costly such adventures are in terms of loss of credibility for governments and political processes, as well as military and police forces, and in how long it takes to repair damaged relationships between communities of different ethnic background or religious persuasion.

The timing was clearly right for such a discussion, and participants identified four priorities:

- Governance and democracy, incorporating institutional and civil society elements;
- Sustainable development, including economic and environmental considerations;
- Conflict resolution and conflict prevention and reconciliation; and
- Education and capacity building, with the use of information and communication technologies and the role of the media attracting particular attention.

It may seem that none of this is particularly noteworthy in the context of an informed understanding of the region, Australia's relations with its Pacific neighbours and its major role as a provider of Official Development Assistance (ODA). But there are a number of features that distinguished the FDC's Development Research Symposium from other conferences, seminars and workshops held in Australia on the development challenges facing Pacific states.

Creating space for fresh approaches

FDC's response to the circumstances described above, in arranging the 2000 Kooralbyn meeting and the 2002 Development Research Symposium, was to create an environment in which Pacific participants, from government, private sector and civil society backgrounds, would lead the discussion, with Australian and other non-Pacific participants encouraged to develop their listening skills.

This was accomplished in Kooralbyn by the provision of a series of background papers, instead of the usual line-up of expatriate expert speakers. Pacific representatives were in the majority and it was they who decided how to arrange the programme and who appointed the rapporteurs. Several of the Pacific participants commented that the setting aside of titles and honorifics and the privacy afforded by the retreat-style, by-invitation meeting allowed everyone to speak, from senior government officials usually constrained by public service protocols, to community development workers (and particularly women) who might otherwise have been expected to defer to their male colleagues.

Pacific futures: Development outlook, responses, and resources

Presentations by our Pacific colleagues provided a new appreciation of the strengths and vulnerabilities of Pacific states and reinforced our commitment to a re-examination of the responses of Pacific States and their development partners. It was refreshing to view Australia's management of its relations with Pacific states and its contribution through various forms of development cooperation, not just ODA, through the prism of Pacific rather than Australian perceptions.

With a small number of exceptions, there appears to be a substantial degree of 'lock-in' to old understandings and paradigms, a degree of resistance to the notion that some remedies
At another level, the bridging of conflicting worldviews is a stakeholder together to plan and implement development stream for a number of socially responsible management of remittances (a major income aid dependency and improve prospects for sustainable growth.

Among the main issues arising from presentations and panel discussions during the Symposium were repeated reminders of the differences between the 'Western' and the 'Pacific' worldviews, with the latter's emphasis on culture and spirituality, which is rarely taken into account in the formulation of development policy or in the design of development cooperation programs. To the extent that we dismiss such matters as naïve and unrealistic in the face of the inevitability of globalisation, we contribute to the formulation of development interventions that are unwanted, inappropriate, possibly harmful, and, by definition, unsustainable.

The viability of Pacific states and prospects for peace will not be improved by reinforcing the dichotomy between the underlying principles and structures of post-colonial governments and the values and decision making processes of 'traditional' society. Indeed, greater effort is needed to bridge these worldviews to deal with major barriers to development (for example, land title) while accepting the rights of states and communities to choose a different path. To the extent that negotiation of bilateral and multilateral assistance is carried out primarily with (predominantly male) representatives of governments, with an emphasis on measurable outputs and easily recognised milestones, those more labour intensive, long-term, open-ended and process-oriented activities to strengthen civil society will continue to represent only a small proportion of total ODA. More determined effort is needed to integrate Pacific values and priorities and to bring all of the stakeholders together to plan and implement development cooperation initiatives.

Financing development

At another level, the bridging of conflicting worldviews is a necessary element in the definition of positions for Pacific representatives at regional and global negotiating tables, particularly when it comes to negotiation of trade and financial issues. More flexibility with regard to time-frames for the dismantling of trade barriers and more innovative approaches to 'financing for development' mechanisms are needed to reduce aid dependency and improve prospects for sustainable growth. Regional trust funds, public-private partnerships to encourage socially responsible management of remittances (a major income stream for a number of Pacific states) and microfinance are three examples. Pro-active and more generous management of work visas for citizens of Pacific states would achieve far more than an increase in ODA. Harmonisation of ODA is a welcome recent trend.

Non-institutional approaches to conflict resolution

Donor responses to the traumas of recent conflicts have emphasised institutional remedies — working as is appropriate, with instruments of government, the armed forces and police, and to a lesser extent the legislature and judiciary. There is scope for a substantial increase in work at community level to strengthen 'local capacities for peace'. This is an essential complement to donor-led peace negotiations, providing the basis for reconciliation and peace building. The Bougainville experience has confirmed the value of increased emphasis on empowerment of communities, especially women, through access to information and sustainable livelihood initiatives.

New technologies

The conflicting worldviews identified above are also evident in the explosion of investment in Information Communication Technology for Development (ICT4D), with tensions between European and Pacific cultures, global and local priorities, and risks of widening 'information' gaps as a result of different levels of access in urban and rural environments, among old and young people, and among men and women. ICT4Ds offer tremendous potential for Pacific states, in information and communication to strengthen civil society and informed participation, in e-government, and e-commerce. Participants agreed that deliberate effort is needed to ensure that these technologies bring dividends according to Pacific priorities, rather than exacerbate digital, social and economic divides.

The absence of infrastructure and high cost regulatory environments are major barriers, while for those who do have access, particularly to web-based information, there are major difficulties to be overcome to extract relevant and readily digestible information from the massive volumes of material available. In this context, it is necessary to confront the dynamics of power in knowledge creation and information sharing in the face of significant number of international ICT4D initiatives including the World Bank-led Global Development Learning Network and Development Gateway and Australia's Virtual Colombo Plan, to ensure that attention is paid to 'demand-side' interests.

There is growing awareness of the need for improved management of bio- genetic material in Pacific states through support from donors to strengthen regional capacity to prevent bio-piracy and secure returns on this material for future generations.

Development research capacity

Consultations undertaken in preparation for the symposium revealed a substantial decline in interest in development studies in Australia. It is especially worrying that this is the case when the state of the world and Australia's place in it point to an urgent need for substantially greater investment in improving our understanding of the centrality of sustainable development and poverty reduction in international relations and a doubling of Australia's development cooperation efforts.

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The atrophying of development research generally, but especially in relation to the Pacific, was revealed most strikingly in the shrinking pool of available experts (with a small number of expatriate consultants in great demand) and in the emergence of a generation gap, with few younger researchers engaged on Pacific issues, or even including Pacific components in studies with a broader geographic focus.

It was especially discouraging to recognise that despite decades of investment in the provision of tertiary education opportunities for Pacific students, the pool of development researchers in Pacific states is very small. Enormous pressure is placed on the qualified few, many of whom are eventually recruited by government or private sector employers or international organisations, with the result that Pacific views are often not well represented in discussion on major issues. The majority of presentations at the FDC’s Development Research Symposium were made by Pacific researchers, who welcomed what we learned to be a rare opportunity to meet their counterparts and exchange views on current research interests. Greater effort is needed to strengthen the development research constituency in the Pacific.

FDC and its associates are not the only ones to have rediscovered the value of inclusive, multi-sector, multi-disciplinary and participatory approaches to research and policy formulation, but we are among a small number who are determined to move beyond rhetoric and theoretical debate to strengthen local participation in global discussions. In this context, FDC acknowledges the support of the Global Development Network (GDN) and its efforts to ensure Pacific involvement in their Bridging Research and Policy and Understanding Reform initiatives and their support for creation of a Pacific–Australia–New Zealand regional network.

Conclusion

The Foundation for Development Cooperation would like to acknowledge the financial support of the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), the Global Development Network (GDN), the Commonwealth Foundation, and the ANZ Banking Group for the Development Research Symposium: South Pacific Futures, and of AusAID, for this edition of the Development Bulletin. FDC would also like to acknowledge the many authors who contributed papers to the symposium and express our appreciation to Dr Pamela Thomas and our colleagues at the Development Studies Network.

We recommend this selection of papers to you, and others which can be accessed on FDC’s web-site: www.fdc.org.au. We look forward to the next phase of discussion, strengthening the institutions of multi-stakeholder dialogue which provide opportunities for small private sector and civil society leaders and their local, provincial, national, and regional representatives to be mutually accountable, and linking the outcomes of a revitalised research constituency with policy and decision makers.
Land, people and governance: Conflicts and resolutions in the South Pacific

Hartmut Holzknecht, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, The Australian National University

Introduction

Land is the key to resolving many of the conflicts and problems of Melanesia. Solutions have to involve ways that will work for the majority of the people of the region.

A characteristic of the Melanesian South Pacific is that control of the land and virtually all other natural resources is not held exclusively by the state. Only small percentages of the region’s land resources have been alienated to the state. In Papua New Guinea (PNG) it is less than 3 per cent; in the Solomon Islands about 12 per cent, and in Vanuatu all land was deemed to return to its customary owners at independence. These natural resources are held in various combinations of customary group rights and customary individual rights. These rights continue to operate within a range of customary land tenure and land use systems.

National constitutions of these countries specifically recognise the validity of these customary systems within the modern state; the majority of citizens want them to continue. Such determination in the face of significant continuing outside as well as internal pressures implies that there is much about these customary tenure systems that is not appreciated by outside forces that try to undermine and destroy them. Why are these systems so important and how can other activities link up with such customary institutions?

With these customary rights come expectations and responsibilities in value systems that channel and direct both social and economic behaviour patterns of people living within those systems. Over time the strong links between rights and responsibilities have begun to fade and integrated patterns of beliefs, values and behaviour have become less integrated and more diffuse. Critical areas such as leadership, for example (Holzknecht 1997), have taken on new characteristics, expectations and behaviour patterns to such an extent that many modern leaders act with virtual impunity within their ‘fiefdoms’, especially in dealings with natural resources.

The conjunction between land, people and governance in Melanesia must underlie efforts to resolve Melanesia’s current problems and malaise. To speak constructively about ‘South Pacific Futures’ the critical importance of land in these societies must be addressed to find forward-thinking ways to resolve Melanesian dilemmas.

Melanesian systems of rights and responsibilities

An overview of Melanesian customary property rights and regimes and some of the changes within them includes:

- The ownership of natural resources is not ownership, but the control, management and inheritance of different sets of rights to different parts of the resources by different groupings or categories of people. These rights are essentially privatised in that without conforming to particular criteria (such as clan membership) there is no access; they are acquired at birth, membership in customary groups being inherited through kinship systems;
- Each set of customary rights has a concomitant set of expectations and responsibilities acquired through socialisation and maintained by customary sanctions;
- Thus customary resource tenure and use systems in PNG are kinship-based social systems with associated lines of inheritance;
- Melanesian tenure systems are adaptive systems (Berkes and Folke 1998) with feedback loops so that customary managers and users can adjust parts or all of each system;
- There are institutionalised customary resource management and inheritance practices in each particular Melanesian society through customary tenure systems. Pressure factors on these systems include population growth, resource exploitation and increasing areas of perennial export tree crops;
- There are increasing pressures from the influences of globalisation and increasing commodification of natural resources that push socioeconomic and sociopolitical change in PNG; and
- All three Melanesian states are currently experiencing major difficulties with customary land systems and trying to find ways to upgrade them. This is at a time when the government in each country is desperately looking for workable solutions to issues of economic productivity, employment strategies and income generation (individual as well as for the state) and appropriate methods to alleviate the worst effects of poverty for its populations. Natural resources, especially land, forests and fisheries, are seen as essential ingredients to finding solutions to these dilemmas. The temptation in the region is to pursue simplistic solutions while under extreme pressure from various national and international interest groups.
Colonial and post-colonial contexts and constructs

The registration of customary land rights

Customary land tenure consists of sets of traditional rights related to natural resources as well as obligations that preceded and continue to coexist with colonial and post-colonial land legislation. Customary law may be officially recognised as an alternative to modern law or, alternatively, the introduced legislation may simply be ignored, unknown or irrelevant outside the big cities or in the squatter settlements that surround them. These customary land tenure systems are recognised and validated by PNG’s National Constitution. The aim of land registration or land titling is to make these customary rights and relationships legal. This kind of new land system involves investigation, survey, and registration as well as the creation of systems to manage dealings in registered titles, once created. Many arrangements outside modern and customary law exist in societies that are under increasing pressure. Traditional landowners, for example, are said to know where their boundaries are; it is then a matter of registering them and allowing the title to be used for collateral. The process and effect of registration, of course, also changes these systems.

The standard line on Melanesian customary tenure systems is that absence of title can be seen only as an obstacle to development. This view is based on two elements of an ‘evolutionary theory’ of land rights (Platteau 1996; 1999) with a marked tendency towards individualisation and formalisation. Firstly, indigenous land tenure arrangements have been evolving in the face of population pressure and commercialisation. Secondly, there is a public sector response to this: by providing land titles, governments can reduce the associated disputes and bring about other economic benefits. Thus farmers with land titles are said to be more willing and able to invest, mortgage and sell their land. Having land titles also enables governments to manage dealings in registered titles, once created. This kind of reasoning has underpinned land titling schemes across the Third World.

These arguments often are less meaningful among people who, through colonial history, corruption or post-colonial conflict, see government intervention more as a source of insecurity rather than guaranteeing security. Processes of ‘individualisation’ of land and other natural resources held by customary means do challenge and undermine local community-linked value systems (including local customary tenure systems) and do increase levels of insecurity, even when local users of these resources use them individually.

In reality much also depends on other factors in place and functioning, including that banks are willing to lend; farmers are willing to mortgage land to borrow; that there are projects that are worth lending for; extension services are in place to provide the necessary technical and other support; and, above all, what patterns of leadership and representation exist and their effectiveness in motivating people.

Changes in official thinking about customary land

Using PNG as a Melanesian case study, four periods characterise development of official thinking about customary land:

(i) A ‘modernising’ period

A ‘systematic adjudication’ system (Simpson 1976) from colonial central Africa and systematically applied in Kenya resulted in a land title register through which any subsequent dealings in land were recorded. This system was proposed for PNG, followed by the drafting of a package of land ordinances (1962–63). A subsequent report led to the drafting of a Land Adjudication Bill (Simpson 1971). Visits were made to Kenya to see the system in action and system details were explicitly part of the preparation of the 1970 land legislation.

(ii) The nationalist reaction

The Kenyan model was abandoned in PNG following a strong nationalist reaction to planned land ordinances and their allied provisions. PNG politicians and the legal profession opposed the land bills, specifying lack of consultation. A Commission of Inquiry into Land Matters (CILM) developed a more nationalist and homegrown approach using different sets of models and strategies, for example, from Maori land tenure and from other Pacific Islands (Ward 1972; 1983). The CILM in its final report (Government of PNG 1973) recommended a less individualistic system of registering group titles and conditional freeholds. However, of all the proposed bills only one, the Land Groups Incorporation Act, was finalised and approved in 1974.

(iii) The liberal period

Activities revolved around the private enterprise-funded Institute of National Affairs (INA) and were more recently institutionalised in a National Development Forum. INA invited overseas scholars to focus on particular issues of concern. Knetsch and Trebilcock (1981), for example, assumed that Melanesian landowners, like everyone else, were self-interested maximisers. Their report influenced government policy in the early 1980s and led eventually to the drafting of new legislation for the sporadic, rather than systematic, registration of customary land rights, an approach abandoned after World Bank criticism (Noronha 1985). Robert Cooter’s proposals to INA (1991) were more subtle, rejecting the centralisation of Kenyan and other models of adjudication, and instead proposing a ‘common law’ process that built decisions on custom in particular cases. Over time, a practice-based nationwide common law on customary law would emerge and be built up out of ad hoc decisions. Cooter also encouraged realistic processes and noted the high costs of centralised approaches.

(iv) World Bank involvement

The World Bank line on customary land matters remained unclear because in the 1990s the bank espoused different views. The
bank became more influential in these matters early in this period as PNG sought loans as a result of several economic crises (Kavanamur 1998). Bank consultants followed conventional and conservative economic approaches, but were also less suspicious of state activity and involvement than INA's public choice advocates. The bank increasingly used conditionality to structural adjustment loans to push its ideas and preferred approaches.

In 1995 the bank included as a condition in a structural adjustment loan the completion of framework legislation for customary land registration and completion of land registration in East New Britain and East Sepik provinces. A private lawyer was contracted to report on how various provincial governments dealt with land matters and to develop national framework legislation on customary land. This eventually became public and provoked a nationwide backlash with massive and violent demonstrations in urban centres. The government backed down, promising that the issue of customary land registration would not be proposed again and the Bank dropped this particular condition (Filer 2000: 32–37). Six years later, in mid-2001, the public realised that the PNG government, despite earlier promises, was still persisting with the development of a draft bill for the registration of customary land. Once again violent demonstrations forced the government to shelve the plan. This kind of non-participatory way of secretly working out policy concerning an issue known to be extremely sensitive to the general PNG public is obviously unacceptable.

Softening the hard line

There has been a softening in the orthodox view to register all customary land despite regular statements from sectional interest groups. Arguments are advanced, for example, that registration systems must be 'appropriate' or more harm than good will result (Williamson 2001:12). Security, therefore, does not necessarily mean freehold, rights must be adjudicated systematically and not in a sporadic way. A recent PNG-specific draft paper from the World Bank on strategies for agricultural and rural development (Anderson and Parker 2001) also presents sensible views. Platteau (1996:76), in a review of land rights in southern Africa, says governments should only intervene if or after local informal methods are no longer reliable.

How to proceed? One approach is to view both costs and benefits; another may examine methods of implementation; but both need to consider the relevance of governance.

Cost and benefits

The costs and benefits approach to land registration issues can be variously seen as related to subsidies, opportunity costs for government or in the transaction costs to users of formal over informal systems.

Demand-driven systematic adjudication, which is possibly more efficient and fairer than sporadic registration, requires a higher rate of subsidy. Sporadic registration, because costs can be charged to demanding specific individuals, may require lower subsidies. However, the latter brings likely negative consequences (for example, dangers of land grabbing by entrepreneurial individuals; potentially serious border conflicts with neighbours). In practice, the growing middle class can usually find ways to attract subsidies at the expense of the government budget, of equity and at the expense of the majority. Compare also the high opportunity costs of large numbers of skilled survey and adjudication resources towards land registration with the costs of developing and strengthening the courts system for the proper adjudication of land disputes as required (as Cooter's common law proposal suggested).

A 'transaction costs' approach that looks at the costs and benefits of making and securing agreements would not prejudice the outcomes of choice between formal and informal institutions. In some cases registration may be more efficient than self-management, but in other cases this may not be so. As a result, therefore, what will be likely is a mixture (Larmour 1990).

Implementation

Land registration may also be a problem in terms of policy implementation. Successful implementation suggests that simple policies consistent with local values are likely to be more successfully implemented than complex policies that challenge or undermine local values. A successful process requires dialogue and interaction, not the imposition of an inflexible blueprint.

Good governance

Platteau notes that the success of registration is dependant on the quality, character and capacity of the state, in other words, 'good governance'. Here critical factors include transparency, the basis of law (which/whose law?), participation and the taking of responsibility (2000). A land registration scheme is unlikely to have popular support or local-level cooperation if there is widespread distrust of government and suspicion of corruption among officials administering it.

The story so far ...

Melanesian populations, most particularly rural-based communities, do not wish to see major changes taking place in their customary resource use and tenure systems. This wish itself sets up tensions between different interest groups, both locally and nationally. The Land Groups Incorporation Act 1974, almost dormant since its promulgation, has been used sporadically firstly by logging companies using acts of parliament to bypass strict state supervision of their activities, then increasingly by mining and petroleum exploration and development companies.

This Act was one of the few acts of parliament enacted as an outcome of the Commission of Inquiry into Land Matters, and it has been virtually the only law in PNG that has managed to retain important elements of Melanesian flexibility. Through a process spelled out in the Act, the appropriate level of customary grouping can register itself as a modern legal entity, an Incorporated Land Group (ILG). While PNG law does not allow registration of
customary land rights, nevertheless, the ILG process does allow such groupings to list their 'properties' (named areas of bush, forest, grasslands, river, reefs, etc.). Attached genealogies also show kinship connections between the persons listed as ILG members — members are not only self-identified as legitimate members but also by others. The importance of Melanesian flexibility is that for certain customary purposes, the customary grouping operates but in other contexts the legal character of the grouping, as an Incorporated Land Group comes to the fore. Such an ILG can sign contracts and act as any other legal entity can in PNG.

Melanesian conflicts and resolutions?

Land mobilisation/land registration

No-one in PNG has yet satisfactorily set out the actual details of how land mobilisation and land registration is to help PNG as a whole and, more importantly, how it will help ordinary rural people. Without undertaking public information campaigns, any state attempt to refocus land issues and 'mobilise' the use of land is doomed. The major problems and questions associated with land registration raise a serious doubt about the state's capacity to effectively implement such a program. If the state cannot manage the less than 3 per cent of alienated land, how can it properly manage 100 per cent of the land area? To date, in all the speeches and demonstrators' objections to land mobilisation and land registration in PNG:

- No individual or group presented any viable alternatives;
- No thoughtful discussions have taken place regarding the choices PNG has regarding land development (and their pros and cons); and
- No middle way was presented between the extremes of the current dual tenure systems in PNG and the foreign-based idealistic technocratic but ultimately unrealistic and unimplementable solutions.

There are alternatives available that need to be explored in much more detail and not dismissed out of hand.

Productivity

The assumption that customary resource systems are unproductive and inefficient needs to be countered (Holzknecht 1999). In 1996 just five groupings of rural products from lands based on customary resource tenure make up 83 per cent of this rural income — Arabica coffee, fresh food products, cocoa, betelnut and pepper, and coconut and copra — worth a total of 162,082,404 kina.

Customary tenure systems are not inefficient or unproductive; only when implicit and unwarranted comparisons are made with Western systems do they appear so. Note that productivity levels do not depend solely on land registration. Anyone, anywhere will work harder, produce more and make other uses of their land if there are favourable services such as transport, credit, extension and market facilities available to support them. The state took over such systems on independence and over time these services have virtually ceased.

Institution building

Despite the National Constitution and lessons from the 1995 and 2001 demonstrations, the state since 1975 has consistently ignored and often actively undermined these customary tenure systems. The existing active customary tenure systems and institutions have been bypassed and ignored. Virtually all programs and projects are 'top-down' with little explanation, little opportunity for any internalisation of new ideas, and offering no new ways of doing things. There is no evidence of capacity building at local or provincial levels, which is the real need in PNG. This would be most effectively achieved by working with customary resource tenure systems and the people within them, as customary tenure systems are grounded and active at this level. The second level need is for appropriate systems and processes to link and activate bottom-up systems with the top-down state approach. Land tenure systems should therefore not be looked at in the abstract or without a particular context that tells us about local institutions, about local choices, local priorities, local risk-taking and local benefits. It is also about making the absolutely critical linkage between rights and responsibilities work in real contexts.

Conclusion

Many assumptions are made about PNG customary land tenure. Most are based on a lack of knowledge about how these systems work or how productive they are. These systems are efficient and productive within their own terms and continue to provide safety nets to PNG's custom-based societies and to ensure that everyone has access to land and other resources on which to maintain a reasonable living standard. They support the frameworks for leadership patterns and status acquisition, for customary inter-group cultural competitiveness and rivalries. There can be no strict comparison between customary systems and Western tenure systems where different criteria apply and from which a very large part of the sociocultural aspects and frameworks have been removed. Melanesian systems are as much about social as they are about economic issues.

Melanesian countries must become more aware that there are other ways to move forward than by the Western-style individualisation of land title. Recognition of clan land boundaries needs to be pursued and clarified. The PNG Land Groups Incorporation Act 1974 is the only operationalised approach and methodology across Melanesia able to give modern legal recognition to customary groups such as clans and, by extension (but not directly), a recognition that such customary groups can and do control resource rights in their customary clan land areas.

This and related approaches need to be explored and refined further so that Melanesians can build upon and benefit from their own institutions through an evolutionary process (Holzknecht 2002). Such developments would be welcomed across Melanesia, where great interest has been expressed in the approach being adopted in PNG.
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Gendering conflict and conflict management in the Solomon Islands

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Introduction

During the recent conflict in the Solomon Islands, in which unprecedented economic and political suffering occurred, it was the women who bore the heaviest burden. Because of their combined gender roles as mothers, housewives, breadwinners and keepers of the family or clan (Pollard 2000a), Solomon Islands women suffered considerably from the destruction of the social and economic fabric of their society. In not being able to access medical attention for their children because hospitals and medical centres were closed, for example, some women suffered a form of trauma related to a sense of loss of gender identity. Other women were victims of rape and domestic violence, while still others were unable to maintain the economic activities that enabled their families to adequately subsist.

Along with these forms of disempowerment experienced by women, the recent conflict in the Solomons also acted to empower women to work for peace and security. Evoking cultural and historical constructions of women as 'peacemakers', women's organisations such as the Women for Peace group (WFP) in Guadalcanal worked to bring the warring factions together, and to build a culture of peace in Solomon Islands society. Despite the efforts of this group and others, Solomon Islands women were excluded from participating in the official peace process in Townsville, and appear to remain excluded from political decision making at national level after the conflict. There were no women members voted into office in the December 2001 elections, for example (Roughan 2001c).

This lack of recognition of women's efforts, and the apparent unwillingness of the authorities to ensure the adequate representation of women in political decision making processes, flies in the face of current development research and practice, which shows that empowered women are the key to sustainable development in society. Development efforts that ignore women, target solely women's welfare, or focus on integrating women into existing (male-centred) development processes have not been effective in ensuring that society is transformed in ways which promote security and sustainability. The empowerment of women therefore becomes crucial to building a culture of peace in society after a conflict.

Theorising women's roles in conflict and peace

In recent years, the opportunity armed conflict offers to disrupt sex role stereotypes for women has been the topic of intense scholarship. It has been shown, for example, that conflict acts to open up spaces previously closed to women, as the community tends to be preoccupied more with the external threat, and less with internal social ordering (Ridd 1986). It has also been shown that women's involvement in community and political activism during such periods has been an enormous source of empowerment for many (Byrne 1996; Turshen 1998; Jorgensen 1994).

Paradoxically, however, recent scholarship has also shown how discourses of gender in times of conflict have correspondingly sought to entrench traditional expectations and stereotypes (Lake and Damousi 1995; Byrne 1996). Just as 'Rosy the riveter' , that famous Second World War American icon, was exalted for her contribution to the war effort, a conservative lexicon stressing the importance of women's place in the home existed alongside this emancipatory discourse to define and undermine women's war work outside the home (Mongomerie 1996). This conservative lexicon was generally found to continue after the conflicts such that, in the case of Britain, for example, women resuming their place in the home became an important signifier of prewar order (Lake and Damousi 1995).

That is not to say, however, that women's intra- and postwar experiences are necessarily uniform. Moser and Clark (2001:1–2) have argued against simplistic views and divisions of gender roles in violent conflict, pointing out that, 'under- or mis-representation of the gendered causes, costs and consequences of violence has resulted in insufficient recognition of women's involvement and participation, both unavoidable and deliberate'. Instead, scholarship in the field of gender and conflict should recognise the diversity of women's experiences, so that women's agency is not denied or distorted in ways that reinforce mechanisms of power and domination (Marchand 1995).

The diversity of women's experiences

A recent volume on the gendered dynamics of armed conflict (Moser and Clark 2001), illustrates several themes reflecting the diversity of women's experiences. The first is that, during times of violent conflict, women suffer victimisation, most commonly sexual violence and abuse, at the hands of men. This gender-related violence is in itself both complex and diverse, mirroring cultural constructions of masculinity and femininity in society, with consequences that affect such factors as family structure and economic survival (Moser and Clark 2001).

The second theme concerns women's agency and power during times of violent conflict. It is argued that the actions of women in
violent conflict situations throughout the world contest the notion that they are necessarily powerless and passive during such periods. The agency that women exhibit, through their roles as armed combatants and members of social movements, can be a cohesive or a disintegrative force (in that women's collective struggle against patriarchy and oppression can often be divided across religious and ethnic lines) and is influenced by gender roles and expectations (Moser and Clark 2001).

The last theme is that of women's active participation in building sustainable peace in society. While women tend to be ignored in male-dominated official peace negotiations, there is no doubt that gender plays an important role in negotiating and building peace. By emphasising gender rather than political identity in their work, women's organisations have been able to mobilise around a variety of peace-building initiatives, such as social welfare and community development, in times of conflict and peace. As women's organisations tend to engender higher levels of trust than those dominated by men, their work also has important implications for decisions about which organisations will be more successful in 'building social capital' in peacemaking processes (Moser and Clark 2001:10).

Despite the current interest in gender and conflict evidenced by a number of recent publications in the field, theorising on the gendered dynamics of conflict and peace has generally been limited to feminist scholarship and practice (Moser and Clark 2001). Moreover, despite the obvious linkages that can be made between the gender dimensions of conflict and peace and those of development, very little analysis attempts to make such linkages (Leslie 1999). This is an oversight which has important implications not only for development assistance, but also for the design and implementation of reconstruction programs after conflicts (Moser and Clark 2001).

The importance of women's empowerment

From the mid-1980s, gender and development (GAD) has emerged as the predominant approach to both development theory and practice. Previously, approaches and theories concerned with the 'women question' in international development regimes had focused solely on women, ignoring the cultural relationships that exist between men and women and the corresponding effects that these have on women's social and economic development. The hallmark of the GAD approach has been the empowerment of women.

The empowerment approach

Empowerment suggests a process whereby power is generated in order to achieve individual or collective goals (Rowlands 1997). In an empowerment process, varying notions of power are confronted at different levels, such as internal or psychological, and situational or social levels. Empowerment should not be seen, however, as a panacea for marginalised groups. As power is generally viewed as power over a thing or person, the pursuit of power for women and other subordinated groups will usually generate conflict among those individuals, groups and institutions from whom power is being sought (Rowlands 1997). Efforts to empower can lead, therefore, to disempowerment, as alterations in power relations can result in forms of sanctioning by those who have power.

In conflict and in peacetime, development programs should therefore promote women's empowerment, while confronting the disempowerment that women experience through projects that contribute to more equitable gender relations in society. Despite the fact that there are many examples of such projects operating at the grassroots level, official humanitarian intervention in complex emergencies has rarely developed specific strategies to meet women's needs and rights (El Bushra and Mukarubuga 1995). Development programs must begin, therefore, to recognise 'women's role in maintaining the fabric of community interaction ... alongside their potential to promote reconciliation and peace' (El Bushra and Mukarubuga 1995:22).

Gendering conflict and conflict management in the Solomon Islands

Background to the crisis

The violent conflict in the Solomon Islands has its historical antecedents in the struggle for land resources and power that accompanied the internal migration of peoples throughout the archipelago. Prior to colonisation, the movement of people outside of blood and land ties took place as a result of arranged marriages or through compensatory mechanisms resulting from wars between various tribes or islands. Upon colonisation and with the declaration of independence from Britain in 1978, however, the movement of people between islands and provinces increased dramatically, resulting in growing urbanisation and pressure for land in Guadalcanal (Liloqula 2000).

Despite a period of optimism between late 1997 and early 1999, when a change in political leadership saw reform in public services and natural resource policy, longstanding issues of governance and corruption led to various attempts to derail the Solomon Islands Alliance for Change government, and set in place the mechanisms through which violent conflict could emerge (Roughan 2001). By late 1998, Guadalcanal youths had formed the Guadalcanal Revolutionary Army, soon to become the Isatabu Freedom Movement (IFM), and had begun a campaign of terror to chase non-indigenous Guadalcanal settlers from areas in and around Honiara. By June 1999, the militants had killed up to 100 people and displaced more than 20,000, mainly Malaitan, settlers (Roughan 2001; Kabutaulaka 2000).

In response to this violence, Malaitan men formed the Malaita Eagle Force (MEF) and, with stolen police equipment and weapons, began to pressurise the government to pay compensation for the consequences of the IFM's uprising. While the government did attempt to respond to these demands, its compensation
payments and reconciliation gestures did little to address the root causes of the conflict. Meanwhile, the national economy was disintegrating and some provinces were beginning to articulate a desire to form separate states (Roughan 2001). On 5 June, any hope of resolving the conflict through peaceful means was dashed when MEF militants, supported by some sectors of the police, staged a civilian coup, sacking the government led by Bartholomew Ulufa'aloa and replacing it with their own parliamentary proxies (Kabutaulaka 2000).

Military campaigns and reprisals against the IFM and Guadalcanal civilians increased around this time, and further attempts to broker peace were shortlived. When a cease-fire occurred with the signing of the Townsville peace agreement in October 2000, it was clear that, unless fundamental social and economic change and a more equitable distribution of the benefits of development was put in place, the prospects for sustainable peace would be bleak (Kabutaulaka 2000).

**Women's roles and experiences of conflict and peacemaking**

Women were part of the civilian population that was tortured, starved and killed, and women were the ones who suffered the most from the closure of medical clinics and schools throughout Guadalcanal. It was women who were forced to give birth to their babies in the bush, and feel the guilt and fear of not being able to vaccinate their children against deadly diseases such as TB and whooping cough (Paina 2000). While men also suffered from such losses and deprivations, women were arguably more disempowered because of the guilt that their inability to fulfil gender responsibilities created.

It is not surprising, therefore, that psychosocial support has been identified as a priority need by much of the population of Guadalcanal (Paina 2000). The civilian population lived in a state of fear for over 20 months, and this caused ruptures in the entire social fabric. First-hand experiences of such terror and disintegration provided women leaders in Guadalcanal with the impetus to fight for peace such that, shortly after May 2000, the Women for Peace group was formed (Pollard 2000b).

Peacemaking is not a new role for women in the Solomon Islands. In fact, Melanesian women have a long history of intervening in violent conflict when the costs of such become insupporbable (Douglas 2000). Traditionally, women in some parts of the Solomons were able to intervene in conflict by evoking cultural laws and values. As it is forbidden in the Areare culture for a man to step over any part of a women's body, for example, a woman could stop fighting by proclaiming that any further skirmishes occurring would be akin to walking over her legs. The fighting would therefore cease and negotiations for compensation and reconciliation would begin (Pollard 2000b).

The WFP group draws on such traditional values and beliefs in their quest to find a lasting solution to the violent conflict. Comprising a diverse range of Honiara women, WFP is an independent body committed to working with traditional leaders, churches, community organisations, militant groups, national government and the international community to enhance women's ability to engender peace.

During the conflict, WFP realised its objectives in many ways. Delegates attended conferences and forums, met with militant groups, the government and police representatives, participated in weekly prayer meetings for peace, visited rural communities to facilitate the return of child militants and provided essential goods to families in need (Pollard 2000b).

The Guadalcanal Women for Peace movement worked in similar ways to promote peace throughout Guadalcanal province. Formed shortly after and in close collaboration with the WFP, the Guadalcanal Women for Peace movement comprised women who were living in Honiara owing to work commitments or marriage to men from outside the province (Paina 2000). Its ultimate goal was convincing men to search for non-violent solutions to the conflict. In the long term, the movement hopes to empower women by raising awareness about domestic violence, incest, rape and gender equality, and to alleviate the oppression women experience in a male-dominated society (Paina 2000).

**Conclusion**

With growing theoretical and practical awareness of both the need to understand women's experiences of conflict, and the importance of an empowerment approach to women's development in conflict and post-conflict situations, Solomon Islands women's organisations such as the WFP and the Guadalcanal Women for Peace movement should be well placed to work towards their goal of building lasting peace in the Solomon Islands. Yet, despite this awareness and the historical and cultural precedents of women's peacemaking in the archipelago, women's work for peace has not been recognised or encouraged in official peacemaking efforts.

Recent events in the Solomon Islands have shown that the fragile peace brokered in Townsville is at grave risk of becoming unravelled. While the June 2002 weapons amnesty was heralded as a partial success (Associated Press 2002), lasting peace will not be achieved through the surrender of weapons alone. Lawlessness and violence is currently endemic and many Solomon Islands citizens have little faith in the government that was elected to power in December 2001. Recent reports point to a return by politicians to the corrupt and alienating ways of old (Roughan 2001b), and many citizens believe that the present government is nothing more than a government of the gun (many men aligned to the coup masters have been voted into power). There is, unfortunately, little that can be done to restore legitimacy in the political process until social and economic conditions improve for the majority of the people.

Whether official recognition and encouragement of the participation of women in peacemaking initiatives would have resulted in a different form of peace is certainly a matter of debate. Women's organisations must be given the chance, however, in this crucial post-conflict period, to prove that through the empowerment of women, social capital can be built and
fundamental transformations of society achieved. Development initiatives are at present focusing on infrastructural projects which do not directly affect village life and have the potential to foster government corruption and mismanagement (Roughan 2001a). Future research by this author will aim to provide concrete evidence of the need to rethink post-conflict reconstruction, and of the consequences of investing in women's needs and capacities.

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Island communities or nations of this archipelago want to be their own and themselves in terms of organization, having greater freedom to enjoy their lives as much as anyone else in the world (Mamaloni 1992).

**Traditional governance structures**

Before British colonial rule, there was no single system of government administering all islands of the Solomons. They had their own political organisations. As Mamaloni succinctly puts it the “Solomon Islands people” have never been under the authority of any powerful individual leader, nor have they paid homage to a family or clan with royal blood or descent universally acceptable to them (Mamaloni 1992:14). Nevertheless, two forms of leadership and governance were evident throughout the islands.

The common form of government was the rule by mane kaa or mweme kama or ‘big man’. In such a political setting, a person becomes a leader through his own hard work and through the display of certain qualities such as being forceful, even-tempered, hard working, a good speaker, and an able organizer (Hogbin 1964:63). A big man is a respected person in his own village or groups of hamlets, but may have no influence over the organisation of nearby islands or even villages.

In some island societies chiefs became political leaders, with the position normally transferring from father to son. Like the big man political system, the chief’s power is restricted to distinct islands or villages. Political organisation, leadership and governance in the islands were not as simple as described and considerable variations existed.

**Identity and allegiance**

It has been argued that the amalgamation of these small independent communities into one country might have been a gross miscalculation. Mamaloni (1992:10) stated that:

All these small ‘islands nations’ were independent entities long before the northern explorers found them. Their cultures differed from each other. However, inter migration between islands close to each other had resulted in some similarities in customs and other characteristics. The merging of these ‘islands nations’ into one ‘Sovereign Authority’ (constitutional terms) was by human design, and said to be by necessity. Unfortunately, for all practical purposes it was the greatest error of the British administration in this region.

Achieving national unity is crucial since it has implications for policy making, national wealth distribution and development in general (United Nations 2002:28). The creation of modern political and administrative boundaries has amalgamated ‘distinct communities’ into seemingly acceptable convenient groupings.

Geographic and cultural features, and linguistic diversity cannot be downplayed since they are important for present and future directions for national politics and governance. As Liloqula (2000:6) points out ‘since we became one country, Solomon Islanders have yet to accept each other as one people. The situation has been ongoing but we ignored it in our efforts to remain united, focussing on the good and positive small things that happen and burying the big issue as if it does not exist.’

The Guadalcanal crisis was an example of this lack of national identity: a number of Guadalcanal and Malaita police officers ignored national duties and joined forces with fighters from their province and cultural background. This exemplified the strength of cultural affiliations over national considerations.

**Political instability and governance**

There have been a number of attempts to review the provincial government system and national constitution, but constant upheavals in government have prevented any real change.

In 1988, a review aimed at institutionalising the roles of traditional chiefs was undertaken. It ceased when the Alliance Government came to power in 1989 and insisted on maintaining the system but delegating more powers relating to fisheries resources, forestry, mining, foreign investment and taxation to the provinces by 1990. The Alliance was toppled in 1990, and replaced by a Government of National Unity, again disrupting any review processes.

The National Coalition Partner (NCP) government, in power during the mid 1990s, favoured the involvement of chiefs, since they have ultimate power in the villages over land issues, an important factor in development. The NCP government was overthrown in 1994 by a constitutional crisis, and the Solomon Islands National Unity, Reconciliation and Progressive Pati (SINURP) won office in the 1994 election. The NCP’s bid to review provincial governments was abandoned.

In 1997, a review was carried out and the government passed the Area Assemblies Act 1997. Guadalcanal Province challenged the Act in the High Court and it was nullified. Although the Appeals Court ruled against the High Court decision, a new
government was elected into office, and the *Area Assemblies Act 1997* was abandoned and the old system reinstated.

The Solomon Islands Alliance for Change (SIAC) government then appointed a task force to formulate a cost-effective and appropriate system. The task force produced a report and draft legislation but before SIAC had time to present it in parliament, the June 2000 coup forced the plan to be abandoned.

The new government chose the 1987 Constitutional Review Committee's (CRC) recommendations as a starting point for governance reforms, in accordance with the provisions of the Townsville Peace Agreement (TPA 2000). When the SIAC government was voted out of office in 2001, the incoming Kemakeza government continued its approach. A new constitution is now in the making. With new political structures and a constitution in place, it is hoped that democracy and good governance principles will be promoted.

**Calls for autonomy and reforms**

Since independence there has been much frustration and confusion amongst groups wishing to secure political autonomy and economic power to pursue development aspirations. Groups with political grievances identified with their province, as apparent in various post-independence calls for autonomy and governance reforms. The Western Solomons held these sentiments prior to independence. A 1975 submission to government raised the following opinion:

Without a form of government which could create a united nation through respecting the regional differences, the effects of the present government structures, powers, functions could only lead to the overrunning of the numerically weaker regions by the numerically stronger regions (cited in Premdas and Steeves 1984:152).

These sentiments are illustrated by the Western Province threat to break away from the country and the boycotting of festivities commemorating Independence Day (Premdas and Steeves 1984:143). The Western Province people wanted a more federal arrangement where people could determine their destiny and maintain their distinct regional features. Their agenda was overshadowed by fears of being marginalised by migrants, a desire to control their wealth and contradictions of traditional and modern views on land (Nanau 2001).

In 1978, Guadalcanal people also petitioned government: 'Our traditions and customs have been torn to shreds by your onetalk. Your people have often failed to respect us and our customs' (see Task Force on Guadalcanal Demands, 2 March 1999). Thus government is perceived as external to distinct communities, and as representing the interests of whoever is at the helm. The sense of belonging to a nation is weak.

The Act that established provincial governments was an attempt to encourage decision making from below that would ensure popular participation in public affairs. However, decentralisation through this system strengthened identification with a particular geographic region. On national issues, people identify themselves as Solomon Islanders because the provincial government system provides for that national identity. National unity could be achieved if people in their distinct regions are recognised and given a political and economic mandate to look after their own affairs before the affairs of the nation.

**The 1987 constitutional review and Guadalcanal Province 1988 demands**

Ten years after their first petition, Guadalcanal people again petitioned government to change the system. Included in their petition were issues related to the desire for federalism, revenue sharing, movements and settlements and cultural distinctiveness of the province. The notion of being different from others was again raised. Indeed other provinces had the same feeling of being different. A Constitution Review Committee (CRC) commissioned in 1987 recorded these sentiments from a cross-section of the country. Six provincial premiers supported the 1987 CRC recommendation for federalism.

**The ethnic crisis and constitutional reforms**

Coincidentally, another ten years after their second petition and the shelving of the 1987 CRC report and recommendations, Guadalcanal people again pressured government to change the political structure. Some took up arms in an effort to force government to address their longstanding development grievances, which included occupation of their lands by settlers from other islands, particularly Malaitans.

By 2000 a group representing displaced Malaitans, the Malaita Eagle Force (MEF), had formed. Their concern was compensation for properties lost and damaged by the Isatambu Freedom Movement (IFM), killings of Malaitans and protection of Malaitan interests in Honiara (Kabutaulaka 2000:2). By March 2000, confrontations between the MEF and IFM had escalated in areas surrounding Honiara.

The MEF joined forces with elements of the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF) in June 2000. They took over the state armory, staged a coup and forced the prime minister to resign. A new government that took conflict resolution very seriously was formed. The government had independent consultations with conflicting parties, while Australia and New Zealand provided their warships for consultative meetings. Those meetings and the Townsville Peace Conference culminated in the signing of the Townsville Peace Agreement (TPA) and the possibility of lasting peace in the Solomon Islands.

**The Townsville Peace Agreement, Buala Communiqué and constitutional reforms**

As soon as hostilities ceased, the government proceeded with the review of the constitution. The TPA stipulates that Malaitans and Guadalcanal provinces would be granted autonomy, with other provinces to follow. As a signatory to the TPA, government is obliged 'to introduce a form of government that would give
The proposed governance structure and institutions

The present government is committed to the concept of and desire for federalism. As a United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) fact-finding mission confirmed:

The process of constitutional review in the Solomon Islands is on an irreversible track. Politically, the decision has been made to create a federal state and although a thorough analysis of the implications has lacked (sic), the reality does not allow the process to be reversed. For that, too many problems have been encountered in the last 24 years since independence and too much blood has been spilled in more recent years (Muller 2002:9).

The features of the proposed system and intended reforms to the national constitution are as follows.

Political structure

The Office of Governor General would be abolished and the country would become a republic. It would have a three-tier system comprising federal government, state governments and local governments, with distinctive separation of operational powers prescribed under their respective constitutions (Tuhaika 2001b). As such, states would have their own constitutions.

A new body, the Congress of Governors, would be established to embody governors from all states, traditional leaders, and elder statesmen and women who are appointed by the president on the advice of state governors. Parliament basically remains the same except for a change of name from National Parliament to Federal Parliament. The Federal Parliament and Congress of Governors would elect a president who would chair the meetings of the congress, while federal cabinet and the prime minister would keep the president informed of the government's activities.

Below the Congress of Governors are the ceremonial figureheads of each state, the state governors elected by the state legislatures, and the state Council of Chiefs. The state governor becomes chair of the state Council of Chiefs, whose members include the chairpersons of area/local government, leaders, and chiefs appointed by the state governor.

Incorporation of traditional values

In the proposed constitution, roles of chiefs are extended to include their involvement in national legislative processes through membership of the Congress of Governors. This is designed to assuage the conflict of traditional and modern laws, and to encourage communities to take ownership of the system. Ideally, national unity would be facilitated when people see government structures and institutions as their own.

Freedom of movement

Freedom of movement or more specifically freedom to settle was a major problem underlying the Guadalcanal uprising against people from other provinces. It is a consequence of adopting Western notions of democracy, and regarding the ownership of land as an economic commodity. The right to freedom of movement must be upheld, but the freedom to settle anywhere should be subject to basic controls in keeping with the way Islanders have coexisted for centuries. This is a very sensitive issue that many would not want to openly discuss. Nevertheless, if properly and carefully addressed it has the potential to free land for development purposes.

The proposed constitution does not interfere with free movement, but intending settlers must comply with restrictions imposed under federal and state laws and traditional practices of localities within the states. Restrictions apply to settlement on both customary and alienated land.
Local control over land and resources

Since land ownership differs from region to region, states and landowners would decide on how it is to be legislated, how ownership disputes should be solved and how wealth from its exploitation should be shared. Alienated lands would revert to individual states and state governments in turn would return them to original landowners. Currently, land matters are confused due to the application of modern law to alienated lands and its contradictions with traditional land tenures.

Ownership of petroleum and minerals on customary land will be treated as part of land. The current legal situation where the Crown owns anything below six feet would be erased and all such rights given to landowners. Therefore, any explorations would be done under the ownership right of traditional landowners. Arrangements to exploit minerals and other resources would be made between investors, state governments and landowners.

Sharing national wealth

Inherent in all disputes mentioned above is the sharing of national wealth. In the proposed constitutional arrangement, each state would have certain powers to raise revenue, while the federal government continues to provide grants. Revenue raised from exports and imports through the federal government would be shared between the states and the federal government.

A sharing formula is yet to be finalised pending wider consultations to ensure equitable distribution of wealth.

Conclusion

Democratic and governance practices in Solomon Islands are a very interesting development. The once distinct and independent communities within the archipelago were amalgamated by colonial powers to forge a country. This was administratively convenient but as this ‘imagined community’ developed its political structures and attempted to govern distinct groups as one, problems began to emerge.

There have been conflicts over identity and allegiance and over what constitutes the common good. It may be the case that in order to stand as a united country, the Solomon Islands must acknowledge their distinct regional and traditional approaches to governance.

Notes

1. This section deals with the establishment of provincial governments.
2. A chief in this context includes church leaders, youth leaders and women’s representatives, as well as traditional chiefs.

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Managing conflict over West Papua: Community engagement in peaceful dialogue

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The political situation in West Papua today is characterised by violence and uncertainty. The lives and culture of two million West Papuans, who are Melanesians by race, have been threatened. Systematic human rights abuses and cultural genocide have also escalated with devastating effect. The people of West Papua have become a major target of exploitation, repression, colonisation, genocide, discrimination and ecological destruction. Papuans are in the process of becoming marginalised in their own land.

The effects of democratisation in Indonesia

Democratisation in Indonesia began after the collapse of the military regime of the former President Suharto in May 1998. Democratic movements in Indonesia demanded a new and democratic system where the rule of law must be respected. This move to democratisation has opened up new opportunities that have encouraged West Papuan national sentiment (Ondawame 2000:316) and has received wide national and international publicity. It also led to an increase in national sentiment and political turmoil in many parts of West Papua. On 1 July 1998, the West Papuan flag, the Morning Star, was raised in Jayapura, Biak Sorong, Wamena and Manokwari, accompanied by demands for the independence of West Papua (Team Investigation of Human Rights Institute and Advocacy 1998). The occupation forces reacted harshly to these peaceful demonstrations, and many of the participants were arrested, detained, killed or disappeared.

Secondly, the sentiment was channelled through more effective public expression of political desires and the organisation of mass protests and rallies. The Forum for Reconciliation of the People of Irian Jaya (FORERI), for example, was established on 24 July 1998, aiming to promote reconciliation among Papuans and peaceful dialogue with Indonesia. In its final communiqué, FORERI called for national dialogue, withdrawal of the military, release of all political prisoners, the court-martialling of soldiers guilty of human rights abuses in many parts of West Papua, and the opening up of the region to international fact finding missions. This call received a positive response from the government of Dr Jusuf Habibie, which agreed to open a national dialogue. Habibie's willingness indicates openness of the government to hear the aspirations of the people (Izack 1998). However, no agreed agenda has yet been set up for discussion by this government or its successors.

On the other hand, the change has also had negative effects. Firstly, the immigration policy was changed as a result of sharp criticism by the world community. Jakarta significantly reduced the number of sponsored immigrants, but encouraged spontaneous immigrants. The influx of immigrants into West Papua has increased since the collapse of the Indonesian economy. As a direct consequence of economic crisis in Asia in 1996–98, particularly in northeast and southeast Asian countries, Indonesia faced a serious economic setback. The prices of basic goods fluctuated further, many small and middle industries closed down, and the purchasing power of Indonesia's rupiah sank very low in the international monetary market. Many Indonesians moved in seeking their fortune and competing with the Papuans for resources, land, political power and employment leading to social tensions. In the Nabire case, for example, five people were killed in a social clash in 1998 between Papuans and non-Papuans. The struggle for political power, job opportunities and also land were three major causes of these ethnic clashes.

The military has also encouraged many of the recent widespread and well orchestrated mass protests, rallies and demonstrations. The involvement of 12 officers of KOPASUS (elite troops) in the murder of Theys Eluay, the former Chairman of Presidium on 10 November 2000, and in the mass protest in Timika and Timbapagura in 1996 were two clear examples of how the military orchestrated violence in West Papua. These conflicts were aimed at destroying national unity and discrediting the name of the Organisasi Papua Merdeka Papua (OPM). Military 'dirty tricks' campaigns create suspicion between the pro and contra independence movements and this leads in turn to further social tensions. Moreover, the Indonesian military is reported to be encouraging, training and arming Laskar Jihad, a fanatic Muslim fundamentalist group from outer West Papua, which has some connection with Al-Qaida, thus raising alarm in Papuan society. More than 3000 Laskar Jihad have already been deployed in West Papua (ELSHAM Report 2000). The Indonesian military was also reportedly responsible for the killing of two innocent Americans and one Indonesian, and the wounding of 14 others in Tembapagura on 31 August 2002. The military presence in West Papua is likely to fuel more violence, such as a repetition of the ethnic and religious conflict that occurred in the Moluccas two years ago.

The democratisation of Indonesia has had significant social, political, economic and military consequences for West Papua. Along with opportunities for an intensification of political agitation, for increased self-reliance and the opening of new possibilities for independence, there has been an increase in unemployment, a
decrease in economic recovery, and military and governmental provocations, all of which indicate the need for political change in Indonesia. The promotion of a peaceful dialogue and the review of the 'special autonomy' arrangement could be useful approaches in the resolution of this ongoing conflict.

National peace dialogue

National dialogue is a form of peace process that seeks a middle ground where the aspirations of the people and the intentions of government can be heard. Alternative development approaches can be discussed, with a view to narrowing the social and political differences until some form of consensus is possible (Ondawame and Rees 2001).

In order to promote peaceful dialogue, the West Papua Project was established in Sydney on 19 April 2000, hosted by the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, University of Sydney. The goals of the project are:

- To establish networks between NGOs, universities and parliamentarians in Australia, West Papua and Indonesia. These networks will serve as a conduit for the dissemination of public information and as a key source of support for conflict resolution;
- To research and collate information regarding the 1969 Act of Free Choice and its consequences for human rights in West Papua;
- To raise public awareness of situations of conflict in West Papua, with particular reference to their human rights implications and the problem of stability in the South Pacific region; and
- To contribute to the development of an annual conflict resolution training program for Indonesians and West Papuans.

The project aims to put in place concrete strategies to achieve the goal of peaceful dialogue between Indonesia and West Papua. These strategies will consist of strengthening networks, addressing the information deficit on West Papua through research and a public awareness campaign, and promoting education on conflict resolution relevant to the West Papuan issue. The project will be coordinated in collaboration with various key players. The Indonesian government has given a green light to the general idea. National dialogue is a form of peace process that seeks a middle ground where the aspirations of the people and the intentions of government can be heard. Alternative development approaches can be discussed, with a view to narrowing the social and political differences until some form of consensus is possible (Ondawame and Rees 2001).

The cycle of violence, intolerant behaviour and disunity in West Papua must end. Building a better future will require a vision of society based on policies that promote peace with justice and contribute to, and depend on, relationships characterised by personal security. The promotion of peace with justice is a paramount objective of the West Papua Project. In the words of Mahatma Gandhi 'a non-violent society can be built only on the foundation of harmony and cooperation, without which society is bound to remain violent' (Brown 1989).

Non-violence refers to behaviour that contributes to understanding, influence and inspiration in politics and interpersonal relationships and that does not countenance the use of force (King 1992; Suu Kyi 1995). It can be expressed through language and other symbols, cultural and educational development, boycotts, peaceful demonstrations, disobedience, power sharing, empowerment, and building solidarity through alliances. Negotiations and agreements based on the values and practice of non-violence will be successful and sustainable. The philosophy, language and practice of non-violence provide a foundation for the promotion of peaceful dialogue in relation to West Papua.

The status and security of all people, particularly women and children, will need to be bolstered if these goals are to be achieved. Their achievement will also require the promotion of quality of life and an economy that recognises a right to work and in which employers acknowledge responsibility for meeting internationally acceptable workplace standards. The government of Indonesia and the OPM, for example, must recognise and accept the universal values of human rights. Consistent with this vision, the West Papua Project seeks to promote an exchange of views regarding the conflict within West Papuan civil society, and between Indonesian and West Papuan leaders.

'Special autonomy': A solution to the conflict?

Debate about autonomous status for West Papua took place even before annexation began. A report prepared by the Research Institute for Oppressed People (RIOP 1985) and a study by Djopari (1993) both review this early discussion. Papuans believe they had been made empty promises. Socio-economic and political imbalance between centre and periphery is still evident. The central government in Jakarta fears that the 'special status' of the region would lead to 'self-government', undermining political integration.

To win the hearts and minds of the Papuans, Jakarta offered new special autonomy in 2000. Jakarta allowed for a change of name (from Irian Jaya to West Papua), as well as changes in regional symbols. It also offered economic benefits for the West Papuans. The percentage of profit from the region's enterprise retained by the Papuans would be increased, with 80 per cent of revenues from forestry, fisheries and mining industries and 70 per cent of revenues from oil and gas exploration to be apportioned to the province. Of the latter, a minimum of 30 per cent is earmarked for education, with a minimum of 15 per cent allotted to health care programs. After 25 years, the West Papuans' share of their own oil and gas revenues will be reduced to 50 per cent (van de Broek 2001). These concessions are a small victory for the West Papuans, as they will open up new opportunities for capacity building and the development of administrative skills required for self-governance.

Although encouraging, the special autonomy arrangement has many weaknesses. Jakarta regards the existing national symbols of the Papuans as representative of their 'cultural identity' only, and explicitly refuses to recognise them as 'symbols of independence'. The central government retains strong influence over the provincial
government. Jakarta also retains the dominant role in police and security issues. New autonomy laws do not even recognise the land rights of the people of West Papua.

More shameful, in the new arrangement, Jakarta allows the use of the coercive approach in dealing with security issues. The central government is given the right to ‘supervise’ any decisions and regulations, and to settle any conflicts in the region. In carrying out this duty, the central government is permitted to use a coercive approach. The government has the right to repressive control over Perdasus (special regional law), Perdasi, (provincial laws) and Keputusan Gubernur (the decision of the Governor).

The autonomy proposal itself does not reflect the desires of all Papuans. For this reason, the OPM, the Presidium and the majority of West Papuans have distanced themselves from the new arrangement. If Jakarta persists in continuing in the old paradigm of control through coercion, it cannot hope to sustain good relations with the people of Papua.

**Conclusion**

The lack of respect for and recognition of the rights of the people of West Papua, widespread human rights abuses, environmental destruction, dispossession of population and cultural domination have been a feature of the past 40 years of colonisation and have encouraged the emergence of strong national sentiments.

The growth of national sentiments against the central government is manifested in various political and social developments of the last two years. The advancement of the mass movement, the escalation of protests, limited demilitarisation, and the policy change of the OPM are some of the more positive developments. On the other hand, an increase in unemployment, the difficulty in achieving economic recovery, military and governmental provocation, the widespread orchestration and manipulation of mass protests against change, and the divisions that have been created within the Papuan community have been negative developments in West Papua.

However, in the absence of constructive peace initiatives, the persisting conflictual relationship between Jakarta and West Papua on one hand, and within Papuan society on the other, are contributing to renewed violence with serious political implications. Promotion of a dialogue for peace over West Papua is, therefore, an urgent call for the immediate region. The ‘special’ autonomy offered by the central government and ratified by the central parliament, has been summarily rejected by the people of West Papua.

With no recognition of the rights of the Papuans, including the rights to self-determination, conflict will continue to escalate. A new consensus needs to be developed in order to save Papuan culture, traditions and way of life from total obliteration. Special autonomy will not solve the main problem.

The following recommendations are offered as a means of moving forward:

- International third-party support and expertise should be provided to peace and human rights advocates to assist in facilitation during peace negotiations as appropriate;
- All conflicting parties should take steps to create an environment conducive to constructive dialogue. As a first step in signalling its unequivocal commitment to peace, the government of Indonesia should consider declaring a unilateral ceasefire and accepting the Zone of Peace advocated by Papuans to help create an environment conducive to establishing contacts with the OPM, and to signal a clear commitment to reaching a negotiated settlement; and
- Adequate resources should be committed to the peace, reconciliation and resettlement process. These resources are needed to facilitate the resettlement and reintegration of ex-combatants, refugees, displaced people and other victims, reconstruction and development projects, the rehabilitation of education and health care infrastructure and other development initiatives, and to support institutions that promote peace.

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A community role in conflict management: Lessons from managing the Vanuatu forestry sector

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Introduction

In Vanuatu, land, forests and people are inseparably linked. Similar to their Melanesian neighbours, individuals or clans in Vanuatu, through a process of customary descent, own all land. Customary land tenure in Vanuatu has been enshrined in the constitution since independence in 1980. Article 73 states, 'All land in the Republic of Vanuatu belongs to the indigenous custom owners and their descendants', and article 74 states, 'The rules of custom shall form the basis of ownership and use of land in the Republic of Vanuatu'. This puts landowning communities at the forefront of consultation regarding the access to land and natural resources.

Land conflicts normally arise from unequal sharing of resource benefits, trespasses, or breaching of agreements, and are better solved through traditional methods. Forests and forest products form part of the land, and are very important for the daily livelihoods of communities living nearby. Over 80 per cent of Vanuatu's population is still primarily dependent on subsistence agriculture, which is done with shifting cultivation of forests and regrowth land (National Statistics Office 1999). This article briefly outlines approaches taken by the Department of Forests to reduce conflicts while managing the Vanuatu forestry sector.

Land and resource ownership

Possibly in no other region of the world is customary land tenure, and the authority of traditional landowners over their resources, given so much emphasis in legal and political systems as in the independent states of the Pacific. Among them, Vanuatu is unique in the extent to which it has constitutionally entrenched custom as the basis for the nation's land tenure system (Margules Poyry 1997:17). Land tenure is a product of social relationships, and land can be owned by individuals or clans comprising members of an extended family, through customary descent rules. Bule (2000:5) has reported:

customary rules of descent vary between islands. Both patrilineal and matrilineal descent rules are used which determine land ownership and use depending on the language group and sometimes local traditions. In both cases, kinship is of prime importance in the acquisition of rights or authority over the land boundaries of a clan or family land-owning unit. The authority as guardians to the clan or family land-owning units is usually male prominence over female members. This is almost universal throughout the country. It is rare to find in a patrilineal descent, a female acquiring rights to the land. In most cases this is only possible when the only surviving member of a clan or family land-owning unit has no male prominence.

Owning land is very important because it gives landowners power and rights over natural resources. Most importantly, land means life and represents an important identity. Resource ownership is not very well defined, and there are no descriptions of what resources are excluded or included as part of land ownership. This has resulted in landowners claiming everything on the land, everything under the land and everything for a few kilometres into the ocean.

Forests and forest products are owned with land so, for land development issues — such as negotiating logging agreements and establishing large-scale plantations — landowners are consulted, and their views are incorporated into the development plan. The views of resource owners are important because, if they are taken seriously, they will help to reduce conflict in the future and help to guarantee the sustainability of the project.

Communities' role in resource management

Resource and landowning communities have a very important role in sustainable resource management. In forestry, landowning communities were given extensive opportunities to declare their rights and views on how a certain commercial forestry activity should be conducted on their land. Their views are very important and were respected, because once the development ceases, it is these people and subsequent generations who will continue to make a living from the land concerned.

Traditionally, land, forests and people are inseparably linked. Forests and forest products have always provided nearby communities with basic needs. Forests form part of these peoples' cultural and spiritual beliefs, and careful management of their resources is vital because it reflects the preservation of the diverse cultural and traditional beliefs and practices that will be passed to the next generation.

Landowners and communities have a very important role in managing Vanuatu's forest resources. The national forest policy (Department of Forests 1997:4) outlines the role of landowners in this way:

Landowners will decide how their forest resources are to be managed. They will identify land boundaries and assist the Department of Forests to monitor utilisation operations. They will be involved in harvesting their trees with mobile sawmills.
and will assist with planting trees. Communities should assist landowners to decide how forest resources are to be managed and should be encouraged to take equity in forestry developments.

The policy statement recognises resource owners as not only users or beneficiaries of the forest, but also as managers and developers of this resource. Experiences in dealing with landowners on forestry issues have indicated that resource owners are continually becoming aware of their role in the sound management of their forest resources. This is an important positive step towards sustainable forest management, especially by resource owners.

Communities' role in conflict management

Land disputes have a long history in Vanuatu. Although they have not been formally recorded, land disputes have been a major cause of tribal fighting, before ni-Vanuatu contacts with Europeans and Christianity. In forestry, land disputes over logging operations are quite common and take more than one form, normally arising from a failure to comply with logging agreements by either party.

Land disputes may arise between different landowner groups, over differences in interests in, and sharing the benefits of, forest resources. Land disputes arise also within clans and between family members because of either personal interest, existing conflicts, or uncertainty about the ownership of certain resources. A recent example has occurred on the island of Erromango, over rights to sell sandalwood harvested on land owned by members of a family, because of the unclearly defined rights of individual family members. Such disputes may be difficult to solve at the village level when sometimes both members of the clan or family claim the same rights over family land, and the dispute may end up in the courts.

Land and resource use disputes can also be instigated by outside influence, particularly in instances where a logging company persuades a family member to fight other family members on behalf of the logger. This has been observed when a logging company has an interest over land that is already the subject of logging agreements. This situation is normally difficult to solve, especially when both parties have the same rights over the land. Traditionally, elders should be the ones to be respected in such a situation, however, traditional respect has lost its value in today's society.

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The national forest policy regards land disputes as a major constraint to forestry development. The policy recognises that 'continued land disputes in forest areas are a serious problem because they can severely disrupt forestry operations, cause financial losses for forestry investors and limit the establishment of development projects' (Department of Forests 1997:2). The policy regards land disputes as having traditional linkages and calls for the Department of Forests to encourage the parties involved to settle their differences in accordance with traditional systems.

Chiefs play an important role in mediating land disputes, and the criteria and processes by which village or island chiefs are appointed are important because they can ensure that chiefs have the respect of their people. Factors that determine who should be the village or island chiefs are the descent rules and the ancestral chiefly bloodline. The determination of the position of chief is important in the present developing society. Chiefs have to be able to take a neutral position when handling land disputes.

The current formal system of dispute resolution is often lengthy, with a hierarchy of steps starting with the case's presentation to the Village Court. If the dispute is not resolved there, most of the time it ends up in the Supreme Court. These procedures are complicated, and it is often beyond landowners' ability to be effectively involved. The system can lead to lengthy delays and can become very expensive, so it does not suit developers either. The Western-style courts do not appropriately recognise that land and resources are traditionally owned, and that there is also a traditional method for settling such disputes. This has been the cause of a backlog of land cases dating back to the early 1980s.

Resource owners and communities are very resourceful in resolving land conflicts. Experience has shown that settling disputes according to traditional methods is more advantageous than using the Western-style courts. Land and resources are owned under traditional rules that fit well with customary law and, because customary law binds the community, any just customary declaration is accepted by all. In this way, peace and unity within the community is maintained.

Forestry approaches towards conflict management

Communities' resource owners' consultation is a very important tool in establishing communication links, trust and support. The Department of Forests has used consultation regularly as a means of informing and involving communities in decision making processes on forestry issues.

An example occurred in 1989, when negotiations were occurring between landowners from three communities and the government about the rights to the use of 6,000 hectares of land on which an industrial forestry plantation project (IFP) was to be established. Mathias (2000:80) has listed some of the tasks involved in negotiating and securing the lease as:

- Organising the three groups into three land committees, each having its own chairperson; and
- Choosing representatives of the three communities to the IFP Landowner Steering Committee and choosing a chairperson to represent the three groups.

The Landowner Steering Committee comprises representatives of the chiefs of the three areas, who are responsible for maintaining harmony and who ensure that disputes or grievances are resolved through the appropriate traditional means. The Landowner Steering Committee meets quarterly with government representatives to discuss development issues related to the site. The members of the Landowner Steering Committee are accountable to their landowner groups. The lease money (land rent) is paid to the chairperson of the Landowner Steering Committee.

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Committee, who, with the members, ensures its equitable distribution. Mathias (2000: 86) also noted that:

although the organisation of the committees and the Chairperson were not made under any legal framework such as the system of Land Group Incorporation in PNG or the Native Land Trust Board of Fiji, it provides a framework by which landowners could be effectively organised and work with.

The development of the national forest policy in 1997 and a review of the Forestry Act in 2001 have involved intensive consultations with a wide range of stakeholders. These consultations may have been criticised as too lengthy or a waste of resources, but they help to prevent problems by building relationships and establishing common goals.

Negotiations for rights to harvest timber require a lot of community involvement. The Department of Forests’ role in negotiations is to clarify the contents of agreements and witness the signing. Several incidents in the past have indicated that poor consultation at the beginning of the process can result in continual disturbances, which affect the investor. However, few members of the forest industry have experienced loss of profits and damages to property as the result of poor consultation on negotiating logging agreements.

The Department of Forests views community consultation and participation in decision making as an important way of involving communities in forestry issues. Some advantages of community consultation include:

- Limiting the number of disputes and differences in the future;
- Making communities feel part of the process through consultation, and so protecting the project’s interests;
- Ensuring that the project fits with the communities’ objectives, because communities are then more likely to defend the project’s interests from outside influence; and
- Incorporating the communities’ views into the project operational plan to eliminate future disruptions.

Owing to current land tenure arrangements, community consultation at the beginning of the process is very advantageous. If communities are properly informed at the beginning of their role in the project, they are more likely to be supportive, and to sort out conflicts arising within the communities themselves.

Consultation methods in forestry

Identifying key stakeholders and the appropriate consultation method is usually the first step in any consultation. Depending on the nature of the conflict and the consequent needs, typical consultative methods used regularly by the Department of Forests include those listed below.

Meetings in big groups

This is the normal process, which everyone considers appropriate because everyone is present at the same meeting to express and discuss individual views. Such meetings should be designed to ensure that all participants are given equal opportunities to participate, otherwise only a few members of the community will dominate the communities’ side, even though their views are not necessarily those of the community. In certain communities, because of customary respect, there is rarely a disagreement or argument between community members in such meetings. The result of a disagreement that is not expressed in a meeting may then only be noticed when the project is up and running.

Meetings in small groups

Consultation with smaller groups is a better process. The Department of Forests has been using this method in participatory rural appraisals and community workshops. This method is preferred because every member in the community is given an equal chance to participate, and it has produced good results.

Meeting men and women together or in separate groups

Depending on needs and the sensitivity of the matter for discussion, consultation with each gender group can be conducted separately or at the same time. Separate gender group consultations are normally considered during baseline studies for gathering information on forest usage by each group.

Harry’s approach

This consultation approach was developed by forest officer Harry Bule. The method was developed to ensure that information was gathered fairly from the community on the matter for discussion. The process involves Harry going to the village the day before the meeting is scheduled, and having kava with village elders in the evening. During the kava session, Harry obtains the views of the elders on the matter for discussion the following day. This information helps in planning the meeting. Some of the views expressed during the kava session would also not normally be expressed during the group meeting. This method also allows the villagers to gain trust in the visitor and give freely during meetings.

Framework towards conflict reduction

Customary law is the best method so far of land and resource dispute resolution and settlement. Land issues taken to the Western courts normally became more complicated, expensive and difficult to deal with. The complexities of these courts have made it necessary to revise the legal framework and amend legislation and policies to manage the matter in a more appropriate manner.

The Land Leases Act 1983 and Land Reforms Act 1980 have been the main laws governing all land matters. A new law aimed specifically at reducing land disputes is the Lands Tribunal Act 2001. The Forestry Act was revised in 2001 to incorporate the new land tribunal system for resolving land disputes involving forestry. The new Forestry Act has a number of important features aimed at recognising and actively involving traditional owners in
the management of their forests. Outside developers now have to get approval from the government for the right to negotiate with landowners before setting up a business or a project. The Forestry Act increases the involvement of communities through management committees, providing for more equitable revenue sharing by using a more thorough process of identifying landowners during the preparation of a timber rights agreement.

The Lands Tribunal Act is aimed at helping to reduce landownership disputes by declaring landownership based on customary laws, and resolving disputes in local tribunals made up of customary chiefs and village elders. The Act is seen by many as an important development in sorting out land matters. Awareness raising about the Act has been widely undertaken, and acceptance of the new system has resulted in the establishment of the first land tribunal for Vanuatu in early July 2002.

Conclusion

It is too early to evaluate the effectiveness of these new initiatives, however, even when these new Acts are successfully enforced, public consultation will continue to remain important in community participation in decision making about conflict resolution.

Community participation will always remain an important aspect of forest-related developments on the regional, national and international levels, as the Tropical Forest Update newsletter states (ANUTECH Pty Ltd 2002:1):

No forest-related decision can be made these days, it seems, without some sort of 'participatory process' involving 'all relevant stakeholders' — local residents, indigenous people, farmers, loggers, traders, sellers and others. It can't be in any other way: decisions made without such involvement may be unfair, unwise and ultimately unenforceable.

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Papua New Guineans have long recognised instability, inefficiency and corruption in their country’s governance. People at the grassroots, activists from non-government organisations, church leaders, government ministers and aid donors all point to the failure by the political system to deliver the basic services which people need. In response, reformists have attempted to strengthen the operation of Papua New Guinea’s (PNG) democratic institutions to improve governance.

This paper uses the recent PNG elections to examine aspects of the country’s political culture and the interaction between its societies and the state. Can this help us to understand where the country is going, and whether constitutional reforms can achieve the goal of stability which governments deem necessary to improve the lives of their people? Here I try to show why I believe such an exercise has merit.

My ideas have been influenced by the experience of watching the mid-2002 general election in the PNG Highlands, where politics can be an ethics-free zone and candidates will do ‘whatever it takes’ in attempting to grab state power in the name of their traditional clan or tribal group (Standish 2002). Politics in the Highlands is seen as being more intense than in other regions of PNG, but elements of bribery and intimidation have been alleged in the elections in some coastal provinces and the capital, Port Moresby. Recent events fuel my scepticism about constitutional reforms designed to manipulate political behaviour. PNG’s democratic constitution has been grafted on to highly fragmented Melanesian societies, in which local leaders, the modern ‘big-men’, compete for power, wealth and prestige for themselves and their clans.

Three scholars from the University of Papua New Guinea are working on these complex issues. Joe Ketan points to ‘competing legitimacies’, implying that loyalty to the clan and tribe is dominant, as against the requirements of the state and its laws (2000; in press). Alphonse Gelu (2000) argues that the colonially introduced liberal democratic political institutions are inappropriate in the context of PNG’s ‘traditional authoritarian political culture’. Henry Okole writes (2002, in this issue of Development Bulletin) of ‘institutional decay’. Such ideas help us make sense of events surrounding the 2002 elections for the National Parliament and Local-Level Governments, and help us predict what might happen after recent constitutional reforms.

**Gunpoint democracy**

Events in Chimbu Province over the last decade indicate the intensity of political competition and conflict in the PNG Highlands. In the 1992 election it became clear that the electoral rolls were stacked with bogus or ‘ghost’ names, clear cases of electoral fraud. Some people, including candidates, used firearms to pressure their clansmen to vote as directed. In the 1993 provincial assembly election, weapons were used in the presence of senior police to prevent certain people voting, and in many areas polling officers were forced at gunpoint to sign ballot papers and admit fraudulent votes. Local political activists predicted that future elections would be decided between ‘armies’ (Standish 1996:318).

In the 1997 elections, the numbers on the rolls grew dramatically, in some areas padded out by newly invented census places (which are known as ‘ghost rest houses’). By 2002 the numbers of adults on the rolls in some Highlands areas were double the population figures in the 2000 census. More dramatically, it became unsafe for candidates to attempt to campaign outside their own clan or tribal ‘base vote area’. Thousands of eligible people were denied the vote because their ballot papers were stolen at gunpoint. Across most of the Highland provinces, coercion to enforce bloc voting by groups was intensified, again with the use of firearms. In the years since 1997 there are credible claims that politicians and businessman have brought many more firearms into the Highlands.

Elections are a major test of administrative capacities in any country. In the June–July 2002 PNG elections, the administrative structures imploded. Candidate numbers grew over 21 per cent nationwide, to 2878 or about one per 1900 people. There were on average 26 hopefuls per electorate, which created enormous administrative complications. The Electoral Commission is responsible for running elections, but has little control over staff or funds. It relies on public servants borrowed from other departments and casual staff, with vehicles hired from the private sector. Delays and shortfalls in funding impacted upon the provision of logistics and security. Poor weather exacerbated problems caused by the bad roads. From the day the polls opened in Port Moresby on 16 June, the election was described as a ‘shambles’ and a ‘national disgrace’. When voting commenced in the Western Highlands, it was clear that some people, in their desperation for power, were prepared to use extreme violence.

Across the Highlands provinces the elections proved chaotic. This enabled candidates and their supporters enforcing the vote to cause the abandonment of the procedural checks and balances designed to ensure a free and fair vote, such as the indelible ink intended to prevent multiple voting and the use of the electoral roll (Standish 2002). Ballot boxes full of unused votes were stolen...
at gunpoint, and in the Western Highlands three polling officials were kidnapped. In the Eastern and Western Highlands polling officers were stabbed, while in Chimbu a policeman was chopped. In at least four provinces, officials were forced or bribed to sign and authenticate ballot papers which were marked en masse for particular candidates. In Enga, the wife of a returning officer was shot after her husband had refused to admit three tainted ballot boxes to the count. Counting was delayed for three weeks because police refused to provide security unless they were paid additional allowances. The delays may have rendered many elections unconstitutional.

In the midst of this upheaval, the experiences of women were diverse. Abby McLeod (2002) recently reported that Bari village women in Chimbu enthusiastically influenced their clan's internal polinking around elections. They campaigned with zest for their menfolk, but showed little interest in women becoming politicians. Television reports from the Western Highlands and Chimbu indicated that women were prevented from voting for their choice. This is reflected in the low tallies received by quite popular women campaigners. One Chimbu candidate, forced to withdraw from the contest on voting day, was visibly distressed when she told me this had been a gunpoint vot. Indeed, some women candidates were unable to vote for themselves, due to the 'consensus' enforced by their clans' dominant leaders whom they now label 'warlords'.

By July 2002 the situation had worsened. In two parts of Chimbu violence erupted during the voting with open warfare between factions supporting candidates from the same tribe, leading to over 10 deaths. In all, by September about 30 people had been killed in election or post-election violence in Chimbu, and many houses destroyed. Gunfire was a regular feature in the provincial capital Kundiawa, and in Enga at least 30 were killed by high-powered rifles in two election-related fights which continued to November (I have no figures for the Southern or Western Highlands).

Not only were armed groups fighting each other and coercing polling teams, but in the Southern Highlands they attacked state agencies. The police had been deprived of their weapons and vehicles in Tari township in 2000. By the time of the election, Tari had been vacated by banks and the national airline and even the police mobile squad dispersed. Many public servants had deserted the province in December 2001, when major fighting broke out in Mendi and the high school was burnt down in clan warfare. This was an election in a government-free zone, an area where the state had temporarily 'collapsed' (to use Zartman's 1995 term).

In November 2002, some dozens of ballot boxes remain uncounted in remote areas of the Southern Highlands and Enga, filled with papers, futile symbols of the hopes of local candidates. More centrally located candidates and their supporters had created roadblocks (using boulders, wrecked vehicles and firearms), or pulled up the planks on strategic bridges in order to prevent the movement of their rivals' ballot papers. In Kagua and Tari, boxes stored in police stations had been destroyed. The shocking climax had occurred pre-dawn on 11 July 2002. In Mendi selected ballot boxes containing thousands of votes were taken at gunpoint from storage in the police cells, and in Wabag (as I later witnessed) three shipping containers were firebombed after certain boxes had been saved for the count.

More subtle and insidious techniques were used in Chimbu, including the bribery of electoral officials, according to formal statements written and signed by polling officers and defeated candidates. Both senior and junior police in Highlands provinces have told me that the police were factionalised, with shots fired in public confrontations in Hagen city and Kundauwa town. In three Highlands provinces there are credible reports of police interference with the polling and counting. At times police chased away the polling clerks and took over the process, and, in one case, allegedly forced the declaration of a poll before all boxes had been counted. Some of these cases are the subject of petitions among the 83 lodged with the Court of Disputed Returns.

**Constitutional crisis**

By July 2002 it was clear that the elections across the Highlands were so delayed that the writs had to be extended, or else the parliament would not be able to meet. The advice of the Election Manager and Administrator in Mendi, repeated over national radio, was that the election was so corrupted that all nine Southern Highlands seats should be declared void and fresh elections held. However, the electoral law contains no provision to cancel an election once the writs are issued.

PNG's Attorney-General, Frances Damen, asked the Supreme Court to clarify whether the Electoral Commission could deem an election to have failed. He cited 'violence, intimidation, threats, destruction of ballot [boxes] and or ballot papers, riots, sacking of polling booths, holding hostage people entitled to vote, spoiling of papers, tampering with ballot papers, forging of signatures, giving of false names and addresses (and) the prevention of voting of people entitled to vote' (The Australian, 22 July 2002:7). The court ruled that the Commission had the relevant power. Accordingly, on 29 July the Commissioner announced that the elections in six Southern Highlands seats had failed. Supplementary elections will be held in 2003. In addition, the overdue return of the writs may mean that elections for all six seats in Enga also failed, a matter currently subject to appeal. Clearly the PNG state has proved unable to manage elections in these conflictual societies, and they will be without representation for many months.

**Government decline**

The problems of declining state capacity and legitimacy, such that the state is ignored or is itself is under attack in some Highland areas, have not appeared without warning. For 10 years it has been apparent that the PNG state lacks administrative reach, service capacity and the coercive power needed to maintain public order. It cannot deliver the goods that people have come to expect, or develop unquestioned public acceptance of its legitimate right to...
rule. In fact, often the security forces act in ways almost calculated to undermine state authority (Standish 1993, 1994). The PNG state is frequently described as weak, but it also operates in a context where society is weak, divided by clan and tribal rivalries (May 2001). Such a potentially anarchic combination was identified, but not explored by Joel Migdal (1988).

Although reduced revenues have lowered state resources in both rural and urban PNG, much of the reduction in the state's capacity is self-inflicted. The quality of government in PNG has suffered from decades of rivalry between national Members of Parliament (MPs) and elected members of provincial governments. In 1995 the parliamentarians took over power within the provinces, gaining control over public expenditure. Since then, public services, already run-down in rural areas, have declined as provinces have received reduced shares of essential operating grants. Meanwhile, MPs continue to receive millions of kina in annual discretionary grants appropriately called 'slush funds'. This system increased the incentive for clans or tribes to seek to elect one of their own as an MP, in order to grab some funds for themselves, so as to have operative roads, schools and health services. With few exceptions, MPs redistribute little money to local level councils, yet they are themselves unable to spend it effectively. This process further antagonises those who miss out, and intensifies political competition and conflict. It was almost certainly contributed to 83 sitting MPs losing their seats in 2002.

In these elections, allegations of official bias, whether real or imagined, were made more believable by changes to the provincial administrations. Following the 1995 'reforms', MPs — especially the provincial governors — gained control over the appointment of senior officials (some of whom became returning officers). The ethos of public service, the idea of the common good across an electorate and the notion of a national identity have declined through the 1990s, along with state authority (Standish 1999). Such deeply rooted issues are not touched by recent constitutional changes.

The push for reform

Parliamentary politics has been the prime focus for discussion in PNG, rather than political culture and electoral behaviour. For years, observers have stressed the lack of strong political parties as the cause of the country's political woes. The major concern has been political instability, which leads to policy flip-flops and rotating elites ruthlessly exploiting the spoils of office. In PNG a vote-of-no-confidence is possible after a government has held power for 18 months, and Opposition MPs tend to think there should be one at that stage, regardless. Mid-term changes of government have served as a safety valve, and indeed led to Sir Mekere Morauta becoming prime minister in July 1999. Yet like his predecessors, even he had to adjourn parliament in 2001 in order to avoid a vote-of-no-confidence. Sir Mekere, with foreign encouragement, sought to rectify aspects of PNG's political institutions, using the Constitutional Development Commission to develop major constitutional reforms, hoping to create governmental stability.

The Integrity Law

For historical reasons Sir Mekere's main vehicle was called the Organic Law on the Integrity of Political Parties and Candidates 2000, known as OLIPPAC. It seeks to strengthen political parties by funding them according to their number of elected MPs, and making party hopping (known as 'yo-yo politics') almost impossible for individual MPs. Once they vote for a prime minister, party members are now meant to be bound to vote the same way (for or against the prime minister) in key votes-of-no-confidence, the budget and constitutional changes. The aim is to create stability in parties and continuity in government, and ultimately to improve government policy and programs (Standish 2001).

Observers of these issues remain sceptical of political engineering, the notion that the country's entrenched political culture of localised and personalised campaigning and fluid party allegiances can be changed by constitutional fiat. There was no sign in the 2002 election that parties played a highly significant role. The number of parties rose to 43, but 19 of those parties failed to have any candidates elected. Seventeen winners were independents. Parties seemed irrelevant to most people, who instead followed clan loyalties or voted according to candidates' perceived qualities (rather than policies). The candidates of each of the leading parties received less than 10 per cent of the national vote. Nonetheless, the previously dominant party, the Peoples Democratic Movement (PDM), lost 30 of its 42 sitting members, including most ministers. Clearly the PDM government was unpopular, whereas the non-government National Alliance (led by Sir Michael Somare) lifted its numbers to 19. Under OLIPPAC, this meant Sir Michael's name was offered to the parliament as the new prime minister, and duly confirmed with a bandwagon vote of 88 to nil (the PDM abstained). The coalescing process to form government in August 2002 was less conflictual than the usual post-election 'horse-trading', which is seen as a plus, but once again was assisted by wealthy individuals who have since gained high office. Some new MPs and ministers are under investigation for corruption.

Critics raise several concerns surrounding OLIPPAC, aside from its compliance arrangements, which require administrative resources which the PNG state simply does not have. In one of his last statements as Chief Ombudsman in December 2000, Simon Pentanu questioned the way the Act might impinge on the rights of individual MPs to represent their constituents as independents, an issue which might need judicial review. There was also concern that the OLIPPAC might be too rigid, in that a poor or even dangerous prime minister is just as likely to be entrenched in office for five years as a good one. Media commentators said the legislation would make small parties vulnerable to losing their members to bigger ones, which has started happening. Apparently MPs can change their loyalties under OLIPPAC, if they do so collectively, as a party. Indeed, the PDM caucus in August collectively voted to dissolve and reconstitute itself with a new name and leader. This has not happened, but they had spotted an unforeseen loophole in the
new law. By November 2002, MPs were said to be plotting the first vote-of-no-confidence against the Somare government. The real impact of this constitutional law on the performance of voters, politicians, parties and governments will not be known until late in this parliamentary term, in 2007.

Preferential voting

The second major reform is the reinstitution of preferential voting, which had been dropped from the independence constitution in 1975. Since then, first-past-the-post voting has delivered parliaments in which most MPs gained less than 20 per cent of the votes in their respective electorates. Not surprisingly, these few voters become their de facto constituency, with the rest often ignored. In January 2002, the constitution and electoral law were amended so that in future elections (including by-elections) a limited preferential voting (LPV) system will be used. The proponents of LPV assert that it will encourage broad-based campaigning in a cooperative manner, so candidates can gain each other’s preferences. They predict that LPV will lead to the election of parliamentarians whose wider support bases will enable them to be more representative and thus serve the entire electorate (Reilly 2001).

This would require a major shift in Papua New Guinean ways of doing politics. Competition will continue to be intense. Local clans and tribes are likely to continue to compete and nominate their own people, so high candidate numbers are likely to continue. The process of counting to achieve a winner will be complex. If there are 26 candidates per seat, as in 2002, then there are likely to be 24 counts before someone gains a majority of remaining votes. Only three numbered preferences will be allowed, which means that the distribution of preferences will eliminate almost all candidates, to the confusion and anger of their supporters. This count will be very slow and expensive, and the problems of maintaining public order will be immense. As in 2002, most of those elected are still likely to finish up with less than 17 per cent of the vote. MPs will still owe their support to localised groups, and seek to advantage them rather than the entire electorate. The benefits may be restricted to those women who wish to vote for someone outside their husband’s clan.

The future?

Changing established political behaviour is not easy, unless it benefits the political actors. PNG’s democratic reforms are likely to follow the pattern seen in the 1990s efforts to redemocratise Africa, namely ‘path dependency’, the continuation of tactics which have succeeded in the past. To be effective, political reformers need to understand the political culture and local ways of doing politics. The PNG researchers cited earlier have, by implication, foreshadowed the intensity of inter-group conflict, the imperative of clan loyalties and authoritarian political behaviour, and the decay of state political institutions so vividly displayed in the latest national elections. In the Highlands, especially, people have shown they are prepared to corrupt, defy and even attack agents of the state in their efforts to gain control of its resources. They will not change these patterns of behaviour unless the rewards are reduced, and that includes the possibility of being elected by what the candidates themselves call ‘foul means’.

There is a chilling logic behind the weakness of PNG’s political institutions described in this article, and the breakdown in trust essential for a polity to thrive. Aside from the better known issue of Bougainville secessionism, there remains the wider problem of the Islands region feeling alienated from the rest of the country. Some observers see signs that the rough tough politics of the Highlands are being copied in some coastal provinces and Port Moresby. Well-informed people across the country were deeply shocked by the breakdown of democratic voting procedures in the Highlands in mid-2002. Had a Highlander been elected prime minister in August 2002, then the dangers of the PNG state fragmenting would have been increased. In most mainland provinces, the problems of governance identified in this article are systemic and not readily amenable to reform.

The Papua New Guinea state faces hard times. The kina is slipping in value and inflation is making survival harder for ordinary people, especially in the towns. Real wages are dropping. Declining state incomes are likely to increase pressures on the political system, which with reduced resources will have difficulty satisfying public demands and those of MPs. Political instability and increasing crime will reduce investment and hence employment. The economy is heavily dependent on the minerals and petroleum sector, which is shrinking. PNG will need to reinvigorate its agriculture to feed its people and increase export incomes, despite low world prices for its agricultural commodities (Baxter 2001).

PNG has many dedicated NGO activists, but their anti-corruption campaigns had little impact on how most people voted in the 2002 elections. The dominant forces were those mobilising traditional group loyalties, marching to a different drum. Many idealistic and impressive new MPs were elected, but others were elected who appear to lack credibility as leaders. The country will need the sustained efforts of courageous leaders and committed citizens to improve its governance. In attempting institutional reforms, they will need to think politically as well as legally. Constitutional engineering is always problematic. Simply changing the rules of the game is not enough.

Notes

1 EMTV (PNG) News 4 July 2002 and film by Robyn Slarke, ABC TV, Foreign Correspondent 21 August 2002. The current use of the term ‘warlord’ in PNG is similar to that of William Reno (1998), who in describing West African politics uses the name for private businessmen who seek to gain control of the state.

2 By November the state had started to recreate a presence in Tari and Mendi.

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Provincial performance and social capital in Papua New Guinea

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Introduction

A frequent question asked by policy makers worldwide is what is it that makes government work well. The aim of my study is to identify ways to develop more effective government institutions in Papua New Guinea (PNG). It is often argued that the prospects for effective government depend on the level of economic and financial resources. Arturo Israel argues that 'improved institutional performance is part and parcel of the process of modernization. Unless a country becomes 'modern', it cannot raise its performance to the level now prevailing in the developed world' (Israel 1987:56).

It is clear that cultural, social and economic factors all affect the performance of government institutions, but the question of why some countries are more successful than others in managing to develop their economies, and establish democratic government is still a pressing puzzle, which decades of exercises in cross-country econometric analysis has not been able to solve. It is apparent that the issue is not the amount of sheer resources pumped into a country, but the existence of certain conditions for resources to be channelled effectively into priority goals (Serra 1998:3).

In recent years, political scientists have begun referring to society’s confidence in its institutions as the stock of ‘social capital’. For example, the World Bank assesses social capital by ‘the informal rules, norms and long-term relationships which can explain differences in the nature and intensity of popular collective activity in different communities or nations’ (World Bank 1997:114). Social capital is therefore determined by two sets of issues: the norms, values and traditions that promote cooperation, and the networks, relationships and organisations that bring people together to try to solve common problems.

I adopt the broadest view of social capital, which includes the social and political environment that shapes social structure and enables norms to develop. Social capital is now generally considered as important as human capital and natural resources and, despite limitations of proxy indicators for social capital, the patterns of results which emerge point to the importance of cross-cutting ties across social groups for engendering cooperation, trust and social and economic well being and better government performance (Narayan 1999:23).

Social capital and government performance

Robert Putnam sought to explain the reasons for good government performance in Italy (Putnam 1993:8), and more recently he looked at the evidence for declining civic engagement in the United States, and its relationship with political and economic performance (Putnam 2000).

For his Italian analysis, he used the unique experiment begun in 1970, when Italy created new governments for each of its regions. These regions varied greatly in wealth, social structure and political leanings. The institutional performance of each region was measured by a composite index based on 12 elements, which included promptness in adopting the budget approved by the regional assembly, extent of legislative innovation, provision of day care centres and of family clinics, industrial policy instruments, local health unit expenditures and bureaucratic responsiveness to citizens’ queries. The degree of civiness (that is, the level of social capital) in each region was measured by means of quantitative and qualitative indicators: voter turnout at referenda, lack of candidate preference voting in political elections, newspaper readership and density of sport and recreation associations.

In Putnam’s analysis, the statistical relationship between regional variation in institutional performance and differences in the degree of civiness were found to be more significant than in the case of socioeconomic variables. He concluded:

some regions of Italy ... are blessed with vibrant networks and norms of civic engagement, while others are cursed with vertically structured politics, a social life of fragmentation and isolation, and a culture of distrust. These differences in civic life turn out to play a key role in explaining institutional success (1993:15).

Putnam also found that it was not the degree of political participation that distinguished civic from uncivic regions, but its character. An effective government–citizen relationship is the outcome of successful solutions to dilemmas of collective action. Norms of reciprocity and networks of civic engagement favour this outcome, because they raise the costs of defection, facilitate information among people, reduce uncertainty and provide models for future cooperation.

Is it possible to use Putnam’s methodology in other countries, and explain differentials in institutional performance among governments with identical organisational forms? Measuring social capital is difficult. Several studies have identified useful proxies...
for social capital, using various types of qualitative and quantitative research methods. Renata Serra examined the possibility of replicating Putnam's methodology in the context of the Indian states (Serra 1998). She discussed the available data for India at the state level, constructed some new indicators, and attempted some preliminary statistical analysis of the relationship between social capital and Indian state performance.

Judith Tendler (1997) drew on cases of good performance by a state government in Brazil to show how people working in public agencies can be closely embedded in the communities they work with, and thereby create 'social capital'. Tendler also found that:

civil society, in turn, was not an unmitigated good. Important fractions of it perpetuated poor government, while others were pressuring effectively for better government. When local civil society played a role in bringing about better government, it was sometimes because central government had made it possible for alliances to form across the government–civil society divide. This enabled reformist fractions of civil society to unite with reformists fractions within government, sometimes at both the local and central levels (1997:157).

Tendler’s research revealed that civic associations play an important role in improving the performance of local government.

Several influential studies therefore have been focussed on social capital (cooperation and trust) as a central element in government performance, suggesting that ‘its roots are buried in centuries of cultural evolution’ (Putnam 1993), but that social capital can also be created to support political and economic development.

**Provincial government in Papua New Guinea**

There is now significant qualitative evidence from a number of studies to indicate that features such as the level of trust and norms of cooperation (that is, social capital) crucially impinge on the effectiveness of government institutions. The question is whether these approaches are relevant to understanding the reasons for the poor performance of such institutions in PNG. Various reasons are given for the poor performance of provincial government in PNG, including inappropriate design (that is, the Organic Law on Provincial Government and Local Level Government 1995), a lack of economic and financial resources, a low level of skills, and cultural impediments. John Burton argues, for example, that:

many of the problems of provincial development ... are traceable to cultural attitudes, not to absolute shortage of money, nor to intrinsically badly educated officials and politicians. Culture is praiseworthy — in village affairs. When it invades government, it leads wittingly to cronyism and nepotism, and unwittingly, to structural imbalances that may take years to correct (1998:175).

The provincial governments in PNG have essentially identical institutional designs and therefore performance differences between provinces cannot be explained by this factor, but there are vast differences between provinces in their economic endowments. One might therefore expect that the wealthier provinces enjoyed an advantage over their poorer counterparts in economic and financial resources, but it seems that the different levels of provincial government performance cannot be explained by their respective levels of economic and human resources. John Burton shows, for example, how Western Province, generally regarded as one of the worst performing provincial governments, has received substantial funding, and 'by 1992, only Enga, a far more populous mining province, edged out Western for the top spot in the provincial rankings of overall funding' (Burton 1998:160).

A recent study of Western Province by the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), found that the province:

is relatively wealthy compared to other provinces. But two dominant features of the provincial economy are a marked dualism and poor financial resource utilisation. The majority of the population is not significantly involved in the cash economy, receives few benefits from the province's income, and gets minimal service from government. These shortcomings are attributable more to poor administration and planning, and a limited economic base than to a lack of financial resources (AusAID 2000:8).

In measuring provincial performance, the first comprehensive study of districts in PNG was published by Wilson in 1974 (note that following PNG's independence, the districts became provinces). However, in 1984, the PNG National Planning Office requested the PNG Institute of Applied Social and Economic Research (IASER) to conduct a study on spatial inequalities at the district level. This study attempted to delineate differences in socioeconomic development at the district level based on an initial list of 32 indicators (de Albuquerque and D'Sa 1986).

The social indicators used for the study were derived primarily from the provincial data system and the 1980 national population census. The indicators were categorised under six main categories: demographic, migration, economic, education, access and health. A development ranking for the provinces had previously been estimated by the same authors in an earlier analysis of spatial inequalities in PNG. In their 1986 study, the researchers aggregated the district scores to the provincial level, revealing a favourable comparison with the earlier preliminary study. Provinces were ranked in terms of their development. The IASER study is still the most comprehensive ranking of provincial performance.

**Measuring social capital in PNG**

Quantitative indicators of social capital applicable to PNG provinces have to be identified. Empirical studies differ in the way they attempt to measure social capital: some have used the density of networks while others have used measures of trust. Others have combined a measure of network density with some proxies for assessing the strength of relevant norms. Krishna and Shrader argued that ‘neither an exclusively networks-based nor an entirely norms-dependent measure suffices for scaling social capital’ (1999:4).

Putnam used horizontally organised networks to measure social capital in his Italian analysis, and argued that vertical networks, no
matter how dense and no matter how important to their participants, could not sustain social trust and cooperation (Putnam 1993:173). More recent studies in other countries indicate that 'horizontally shaped networks do not necessarily reveal the presence of higher social capital' (Krishna and Shrader 1999:7). Because of the enormous uncertainty surrounding this issue, Krishna and Shrader have expressed the view that 'what sorts of norms are associated with which types of networks cannot be assumed in advance but must be verified independently for each social context' (1999:8).

For this study, four indicators have been chosen: education outcomes, the level of community awareness, the number of community-based organisations, and the level of women’s participation in local government. The correlation coefficients between each of these social capital indicators (independent variables), with the provincial development ranking from the IASER analysis (dependent variable), are then calculated.

Social capital and education

Recent research shows an important relationship between social capital and education. In particular, it indicates that social capital is not only a critical input for education, but also a by-product. In addition to strengthening the human capital needed for economic development, social development and state accountability, education seems to foster social capital networks. It seems that social capital is produced through education in three ways: by students practising social capital skills, such as participation and reciprocity; by schools providing forums for community activity; and, through public education, by students learning how to participate responsibly in their society.

It is true that levels of educational attainment are linked to levels of economic development. However, financial resources alone do not guarantee positive educational outcomes for students. Considerable evidence shows that family, community and state involvement in education improves outcomes. Primary schools constitute a centre for social capital in rural areas of PNG. While they are considered to be government institutions, the community also funds them in large part.

School-based research in both developed and developing countries indicates that social capital plays an important role in creating effective schools. In 1997, Francis and colleagues undertook a survey of 54 schools and communities across six zones in Nigeria concerning primary school quality, and found that school environments were not conducive to learning. The research indicated that trust between parents and teachers, the effectiveness and involvement of the local parent–teacher association, and the support and effectiveness of the governmental administration are key components in producing effective schools. It was concluded that the changing relationship between school and community are reflected in the decline of involvement in building educational capacity (Francis et al 1998).

For PNG, the percentage of the population that has completed year 10 at school is used to provide an indicator of the relative levels of ‘educational quality’ achieved in each province. The statistical relationship between provincial development (the dependent variable) and the quality of education (independent variable) is calculated and the Pearson correlation is r = .735, p < .01. This indicates an association between the two variables, or it appears that a higher quality of education is associated with a higher level of development and is statistically significant. R squared shows that 54 per cent of the variance in one variable can be accounted for by the other.

Social capital and community awareness

Another indicator of social capital is the community’s awareness about current events. The *Papua New Guinea Human Development Report 1998* provides data on communications in PNG because it is argued that it:

- plays an essential role in facilitating the process of economic and social development and promoting human development.
- Modes of communication such as print media, broadcast radio, television, video, postal services and telecommunication services are crucial in the dissemination of information and in linking remote locations to services (Government of PNG 1999:128).

The most common form of modern communication in PNG is the transistor radio. However, newspaper readership is also an important mode of communication, because of the role it plays in providing wide information and views on issues of community concern. The relationship between provincial development and newspaper readership is r = .520, p < .05, which is statistically significant. The similar relationship with radios finds r = .751, p < .01, which is also statistically significant. R squared for newspaper readership is 27 per cent and for radios it is 56 per cent.

Social capital and community-based organisations

The *Papua New Guinea Human Development Report 1998* also highlights the role of village organisations in contributing to a positive social environment, because 'churches and local government councils provide structures for mediating disputes between individuals, clans and tribes to maintain peace and stability within communities' (Government of PNG 1999:47). In particular, an important role is played by community-based groups for women. These groups engage in a range of activities that provide income earning opportunities, non-formal skills training, and literacy and awareness training. The number of women’s groups is estimated using the number of census units that have women’s groups, as reported in the village services database (Government of PNG 1999:60). Statistically, the relationship between government performance and the density of women’s associations for the selected provinces is r = .705, which indicates a fairly strong association. R squared is 50 per cent.

Social capital and women in politics

The role of women in local level politics may also provide an indication of the stock of social capital in a community. At the
national level, participation is very low with currently only one woman member in the national parliament. However, at the local level, women's participation is higher and this can be partly attributed to a requirement in the new Organic Law for some female representation. The relationship between provincial development and the number of women in local politics is \( r = .481, p<.05 \), which is statistically significant. R squared is 23 per cent.

**Conclusion**

The specific aim of this study was to analyse the feasibility and validity of both measuring social capital and identifying its role in explaining the differential performance between provinces in PNG. A variety of reasons have been given for the poor performance of provinces in PNG, but arguably the most important are inappropriate institutional design, the lack of economic and financial resources, and other 'socio-cultural' explanations. Most attempts to reform provincial governments have focussed on the institutional structure, and on providing financial resources, but very little attention has been given so far to the role of social capital.

The analysis of the four available indicators with the IASER ranking shows that there is a clear relationship between the level of social capital and the performance of provinces in PNG. As a result, in PNG, public policy should focus on the links between government institutions and social capital, rather than have a primary emphasis on the formal structure of the institutions, and on providing financial resources.

The recent provincial government reforms have thus far failed to achieve improvements in performance because the reforms have neglected this aspect. The comparative analysis of the provinces shows that more emphasis should be given to encouraging social capital to improve government performance at all levels in PNG.

**Notes**

1. The Pearson Correlation shows the strength of linear relationships, and the size of the value provides an indication of the strength of the relationship. A perfect correlation of 1 indicates that the value of one variable can be exactly determined by knowing the value of the other variable (Punch 1998:123).

2. R squared shows the proportion of the variance in one variable that is accounted for by the other variable.

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Institutional decay in a Melanesian parliamentary democracy: Papua New Guinea

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Introduction

Papua New Guinea (PNG) is experiencing testing times. The country is experiencing a decline in the performance of state organisations, as well as in the effectiveness of laws and procedures. Many of the institutional arrangements and legislation that PNG adopted from the pre-independence era are now either unworkable or outmoded in the face of the country's fast-changing sociopolitical landscape.

Scholars have commented on the compatibility of foreign and traditional institutions of governance in Melanesia (see Larmour 2000). The PNG national elections have shown highly unusual results compared to other countries (Okole 2001) and the PNG party system has been dubbed 'deviant' given its incomparability with other developing democracies (Reilly 1999). The house of parliament has gone from a genuine chamber of the people to one that has been increasingly controlled by the executive.

PNG's political culture is marked by passivity and dependence upon the government. This reinforces the extreme personalism, localism, and opportunism that characterise PNG society. When cultural features and self-interest are factored in, the impact ultimately leads to a subdued performance of state institutions (see May 1998). Hence, 'despite its inherited Westminster-style parliament and democratic institutions, PNG's political system has rapidly evolved its own mores and distinctive practices' (Dorney 2000:40). Corrective measures have been adopted to allow stable political activities, for example the adoption of the Organic Law on the Integrity of Political Parties and Candidates (OLIPPAC) in 2001. This law was passed to curb the chronic instability in coalition formation.

Westminster system of government and elections in PNG

The Westminster system emphasises the principle of majority rule through a strong cabinet government. There are nine elements of the Westminster system, based on its origin in Great Britain, two of which are of significance and relevance for PNG (Huntington 1991). Firstly, executive power is concentrated in one party (in a two-party system) or in a majority coalition, which forms the cabinet. Secondly, there is a fusion of the legislature and the executive. Because the executive is dependent on the confidence of the parliament, disenchanted parries can oust an incumbent government through two avenues. They can either initiate a no-confidence motion or they can force the dissolution of parliament and facilitate new elections.

Making ballot choices

People in PNG cast their ballots for candidates, irrespective of party affiliation or issues. There are reasons for political parties failing to become ingrained in the psyche of the voting populace. Most of them relate to the failure or non-existence of a party culture. Very often state institutions are used for electoral and political reasons because of their easy accessibility to political actors. This has been the case with political parties in PNG (Hegarty 1979:190). Scott Mainwaring (1999), who studied Brazil's party system, argues that this is a common characteristic for most third-wave democracies such as PNG (see also Huntington 1991).

In 1987, Yaw Saffu conducted national electoral research in PNG. His results confirmed that political parties in PNG matter little as a factor in choosing candidates. What counts is the character of individual candidates, and particularly their perceived ability to bring tangible benefits to constituencies (Saffu 1989). The role of elected representatives in parliament is often that of meeting the narrow wishes of voters.

The FPTP system and parliamentary representation

The first-past-the-post (FPTP) electoral system was introduced in PNG in 1975 for political and practical reasons that supposedly rendered the optional preferential voting system untenable (Reilly 1997). All elections have taken place in single member districts (SMDs) at the provincial and sub-provincial levels. The change of electoral systems in 1975 created several problems, the main one being that the FPTP system lowered the proportion of the vote for the winning candidate, as shown in Table 1, overleaf.

By 1997, 55 per cent of all candidates won a seat with less than 20 per cent of the vote and almost 15 per cent with less than 10 percent. In contrast, only four candidates could boast of a majority. In the 2002 elections, only one candidate acquired more than 50 per cent of the ballots in his constituency. As winning margins dwindled under the FPTP system, many groups felt unrepresented. Also, it became easier for social groups, be they primordially defined or pragmatically created, to realise the viability of bloc voting in elections (Saffu 1989; Okole 2002).

The low thresholds required for victory under the plurality system have also encouraged various sorts of threats to voters and electoral officials, particularly through the use of weapons, murders, unauthorised roadblocks, snatching of ballot papers and ballot boxes (Kaiulo 1997:5). Post-election violence is not only evidence of anger and frustration, but also demonstrates that candidates
and their supporters are unwilling to accept defeat (Dinnen 1996:102). The 1997 election was once described as the most violent ever (Kaiulo 1997:5). However, that was easily surpassed by the magnitude of problems in the 2002 elections.

The number of petitions filed in court to challenge electoral returns has increased dramatically in recent elections. After the 1997 elections, there were 88 petitions from all but one province. The slow resolution of these conflicts mean that some constituencies have not had parliamentary representation for extended periods. By the end of 1999, three years away from the next scheduled election, nine petitions were still pending in court. The number of petitions is likely to increase further in the aftermath of the 2002 elections.

### Table 1 Winning percentages of candidates, 1977–97

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60+</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-19</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Seats</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>106*</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Three electorates postponed their elections after candidates passed away just before polling.

Note: Aggregated results of winners for the 2002 national elections were not available. Nonetheless, the low winning margins were inevitable and bound to continue.

Coalition governments and parliamentary politics

PNG has a unicameral house of parliament with 109 seats. One parliamentarian is elected the speaker by his colleagues. Since a single party has never won 55 of the remaining 108 seats, parties basically bargain with one another in an unrelenting fashion to make and unmake governing coalitions. During the first session of parliament after an election, a vote is taken in the legislature. The coalition that acquires at least 55 members becomes the government. The other parties become the opposition, which then chooses the opposition leader and a shadow cabinet.

As no political party has emerged with a majority after elections in PNG, parties have found themselves in intense negotiations to form coalition governments. During these negotiations, there are usually two camps, each with a combination of parties and a potential prime minister. The coalition governments that are formed and the manner in which ministries and political positions are allocated are of upmost importance to MPs. The struggle for spoils explains why independent candidates join parties and why party members change their affiliations.

Ministries are the most prized allocation for politicians. Over the years, the number of ministries has increased to the constitutional limit of 27. The challenge for the prime minister is to divide these posts among the parties in the government. How the ministries and other political responsibilities, especially those with perks and privileges, are allocated is very important to the chemistry of a coalition government.

Ministries are assigned to parties in the coalition in proportion to their strength in parliament. The important ministries, such as finance, are divided among the main parties. Ministries are also to be distributed among the four regions of the country: Highlands, New Guinea Coastal, Papua, and the New Guinea islands. Before OLIPPAC was adopted, this pattern of distribution explained why individual MPs were willing to switch parties in order to increase their opportunities to acquire ministerial positions and other political responsibilities. Also, the practice of distributing ministries to all regions prompted some MPs to remain aloof from party membership until the stronger coalition group offered them the incentive of a ministry.

Independent candidacies

Seeking office as an independent candidate was an electoral strategy widely employed before OLIPPAC. An independent candidate was free of party commitment, and was thus available to party groups that stood a reasonable chance of forming the next coalition government. It is not surprising, therefore, that the number of independent candidates has increased in each election since 1977. In 1997, the 36 winning candidates who were independents filled more than twice as many seats as the People's Progress Party, the most successful party in the election. In contrast, in 1977 there had been four main parties, and the 17 independents that won office were nominally affiliated with the existing parties (Hegarty 1983).

The role of independents in government formation has introduced yet another dimension to the nature of PNG's political system. Parties have not only found it difficult to acquire the barest minimum number of seats to unilaterally form governments. As the number of parties proliferated with time, their respective sizes shrunk too. Therefore, coalition maneuvering progressively relied on independents to shore up numerical strength. For instance, the coalition that was formed in 1997 was achieved with the support of the independents. This eventually led to a new government under the stewardship of the National People's Congress, a party that initially won six seats only.

OLIPPAC has tried to restrict the influence of independents, as well as the movement of parties in general. Among the key provisions are, first, the most successful party (or parties) is given the mandate to form a new government. Therefore, the leverage initially enjoyed by independents is removed. Second, independents are not allowed to join a party before a prime minister is chosen. They can only join a party after a coalition government is formed. This is the first time that OLIPPAC has been put to the test.
Rocking the coalition boat

Government has the responsibility for the distribution of resources, thus enabling them to fulfill their electoral promises. The display of public largesse also contributes to the campaign for the next election. Some members on the government side are allocated ministries, and for others, there are vice-ministries, statutory bodies, public enterprises, and special ad hoc tasks. In contrast, the opposition enjoys little opportunity to provide pork to their constituents. The best available option is to look for ways to join the government side and this can be done by crossing the floor of parliament, especially if the government is offering positions. Such offers are however, usually selective and linked to certain conditions. Consequently, most opposition members have an incentive to maintain the status quo. Bribes can induce members to cross to the government side and this can be done by crossing the floor of parliament, especially if the government is offering positions. Such offers are however, usually selective and linked to certain conditions. Consequently, most opposition members have an incentive to maintain the status quo. Bribes can induce members to cross to the government side or defect to the opposition. A prime minister with the best of intentions for the country is drawn into a game in which he must have one eye on governance and the other on maintaining his coalition. Former Prime Minister Sir Julius Chan once complained about how much time and effort he had to commit to addressing his fellow politicians’ desires: ‘I am wasting time in coping with requests for special favours of all kinds, financial and otherwise, from individual politicians. I will be even franker and say that if a Prime Minister is determined to stay in office he can do so quite easily if he is prepared to grant enough favours’ (quoted in Kavanamur 2001).

Yet another sign of malaise is that recent prime ministers have offered bribes in order to induce or maintain support. The PNG and Australian publics saw this situation first-hand in 1997 when a surveillance tape showed Prime Minister Bill Skate and a cabinet colleague discussing political bribes (Standish 1999:13).

Demise of the opposition

Before 2002 and OLIPPAC, party switching not only affected government stability and the nature of the party system. The opposition in parliament became a casualty too, reduced in effectiveness simply because it had become a dreaded place. As explained above, membership in the opposition undercut the ability of MPs to deliver on promises and fulfill popular expectations.

An easily recognised feature of PNG’s parliamentary system, unspecified in the classical Westminster model, was the congregation of parties and loose MPs on the middle benches between the government and the opposition. These positions indicated that a party or member was affiliated with neither side of the parliament. These were very convenient places to wait for changes of government. Most MPs preferred a seat on the middle benches to being an impotent member of the opposition backbench.

A prime minister and his coalition also cultivated the middle benches in order to undercut the opposition. They were enticed with ministries and political appointments when it became crucial to do so. Very often, uncommitted MPs were likely to align with any faction to force a change of government. After all, the prevailing rationale was that they were just entitled to a piece of the action as anyone. The ease with which parliamentarians moved from

Table 2 Coalition governments since 1972

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Prime Minister</th>
<th>Deputy Prime Minister</th>
<th>Precursor of Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>Michael Somare (Pangu)</td>
<td>Julius Chan (PPP)</td>
<td>National Elections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>Michael Somare (Pangu)</td>
<td>Julius Chan (PPP)</td>
<td>National Elections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>Julius Chan (PPP)</td>
<td>Iambaseky Okuk (NP)</td>
<td>Vote of No Confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>Michael Somare (Pangu)</td>
<td>Paia Wingi (Pangu)</td>
<td>National Elections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>Paia Wingi (PDM)</td>
<td>Julius Chan (PPP)</td>
<td>Vote of No Confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>Paia Wingi (PDM)</td>
<td>Julius Chan (PPP)</td>
<td>National Elections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>Rabbie Namaliu (Pangu)</td>
<td>Ted Diro (PAP)</td>
<td>Vote of No Confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Paia Wingi (PDM)</td>
<td>Julius Chan (PPP)</td>
<td>National Elections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Julius Chan (PPP)</td>
<td>Chris Haiveta (Pangu)</td>
<td>Court ousted PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Bill Skates (PNC)</td>
<td>Chris Haiveta (Pangi)</td>
<td>National Elections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Meloro Morata (PDM)</td>
<td>John Pandari (PAP)</td>
<td>Incumbent PM resigned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Michael Somare (NA)</td>
<td>Allan Marar (PPP)</td>
<td>National Elections</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key: Pangu = Pangu Par; PPP = People’s Progress Party; NP = National Party; NA = National Alliance; PDM = People’s Democratic Movement; PAP = People’s Action Party; PNC = People’s National Congress.
faction to faction took a toll on the reputation and performance of the opposition. While it used to be a vigilant watchdog, the opposition became a mob of 'iconoclasts' who attacked the government not so much on the basis of true disagreement, but rather simply for the sake of doing so. Parliamentary debates very often were turned into mud-slinging contests at the expense of important national issues.

During a parliamentary session in May 2000, the ranks of the opposition numbered a mere nine MPs. In other words, most parliamentarians were either on the government side or on the middle benches. There was no longer an effective shadow cabinet to keep the government in check. All of this amounted to a nullification of the principles of the Westminster parliamentary system. The most worrying consequence was that the executive, sustained by buoyant numerical support, usurped power in the absence of an effective opposition.

Assessing the effectiveness of the opposition against the OLIPPAC can be undertaken in the near future. That aside, the continuing existence of the unicameral legislature is bound to maintain the weakness of the opposition. Also, the privilege of a no-confidence motion is still available to parties to use should they need to use it.

Conclusion

Institutional designs under the Westminster model of government have increasingly become inappropriate and ineffective in PNG. This system of government has been overwhelmed by factors that emanated from both the traditional political culture and rational endeavors. These factors, working in tandem, have twisted the system of government to one where the executive arm is in full control of parliament.

One of the institutional designs that needs immediate attention is the unicameral parliament. Since only the government (i.e. executive side) is given opportunity to readily disburse goods and services to the public, politicians will always have the inclination to gravitate toward that side of the house. In a country where the effectiveness of a national politician is measured in how much he gives to his voters, it is the drive to guarantee political survival that causes calculated actions on the floor of the legislature. Political mobility through parties and individual politicians should be understood within that context.

References


Reconciling liberal democracy and custom and tradition in Samoa's electoral system

Asofou So'o, Institute of Samoan Studies, National University of Samoa

Introduction

The arrival of Europeans in Samoa in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries introduced institutions and practices of liberal democracy, which were gradually incorporated into Samoa's existing customs and traditions. When Samoa became the first Pacific Island country to gain political independence on 1 January 1962, her constitution legalised the coexistence of the two systems and provided the country's electoral system. Forty years later, Samoa continues to experience problems with its electoral system arising from the difficulties of trying to reconcile liberal democracy with Samoan customs, traditions, institutions, practices and value systems. Despite several attempts to improve the situation, problems were still experienced in the last general elections on 2 March 2001. The persistence of these problems prompted the government to set up a Commission of Inquiry whose main term of reference was to examine Samoa's principal Electoral Act 1963 and all its amendments to date. This paper focuses on those recommendations that underscore the difficulties of trying to reconcile the two systems.

Under the constitution, the country is divided into 41 electoral constituencies. Four of these have been allocated two parliamentary seats each because of their larger populations. Two seats have been allocated for Samoan citizens with part-Samoan origins who are registered under the Individual Voters' Roll (IVR). However, before registering they had to revoke all their rights to customary lands and Samoa matai (chiefly) titles. Whilst those enrolled in the IVR could vote in parliamentary elections and contest parliamentary seats as candidates, only matai could vote in elections and stand as parliamentary candidates in the electoral constituencies.

The introduction of universal suffrage in the 1991 general elections has given those aged 21 years and over the right to vote in elections while still restricting to matai the right to stand as candidates. A constitutional amendment in 1993 increased the number of seats in the electoral constituencies from 45 to 47 by adding an extra seat each to two other constituencies with bigger populations, thereby increasing the number of seats in parliament from 47 to 49. The political party system was introduced in 1979 following the establishment of the Human Rights Protection Party (HRPP) in that year.

The Electoral Act 1963 regulates the electoral system, including the qualifications of electors. Generally, the Act allows electors to register in any constituency provided they are related by blood to a person who resides permanently in that constituency or if the elector is rendering service to a village or church within the constituency, among other criteria.

The 2001 Commission of Inquiry

The seven-member commission included six men and one woman, all resident in Samoa. The Cabinet-approved chairman was a Western-trained lawyer, a former attorney general of Samoa well versed in the custom and tradition of the country and who holds one of his district's highest ranking titles. The commission included the President of the Methodist Church in Samoa, a prominent businessman, and an academic (the author). Most members were Western educated and are former high-ranking officials, government ministers and/or members of parliament. Only three had not contested seats in the 2001 general election. One member holds an important tulafale title and another a number of matai titles.

The Commission of Inquiry recommendations

These are discussed under each of the commission’s terms of reference (TOR) that directly relate to liberal democracy, and custom and tradition.

TOR 1: To consider appropriate provisions to stop the practice of electors changing constituencies so that electors are registered to vote in the constituency in which they reside. If place of residence of an elector is to be accorded priority, then set out special regulations for matai.

This TOR addresses the issues associated with reconciling the Samoan concept of extended family, the liberal democracy ideas of electoral constituency, and the right of individual citizens to influence through the ballot box issues pertaining to the constituency in which they reside. Members of a Samoan extended family are not confined to a particular village or territory, but may spread to several villages outside the family's village of origin. Family membership is determined both through genealogical connections and through services to the family (tautua). Service in terms of contributions to village and church activities is called monotaga.

Accordingly, the Electoral Act 1963 defines service in relation to a village to mean ‘service to a Church in that village, or to the Village Council, or to any community project or work related activity in that village’ (Section 16(2)(e)). The extended family concept is further complicated by the fact that Samoans can trace and actively maintain their genealogical connections to all families of their ancestors, so a Samoan can belong to several villages and several constituencies. Section 16(2)(a–b) of the Act tries to accommodate that element of a Samoan family, and in doing so
leaves the criteria of family connections and service so broad that they could easily be manipulated for political reasons. The broad nature of the family concept explains why many Samoans hold several matai titles from different villages at the same time. Every matai title has a village and family of origin.

The Electoral Act 1963 stipulates that a matai must vote in the constituency, which includes the village of origin of his/her title (Section 16(2)(a)). A matai who holds more than one title must choose the constituency where he/she should vote (ibid.). The points stressed here are first, that the matai must have only one vote and second, that he/she must vote at the constituency within which is the village of his/her title's origin. With regards to non-titleholders, the Act allows people to register in any village where one could trace family connection either through blood, marriage or service (tautua). The pressure to win parliamentary seats has tempted not only the candidates but electors to bend the rules.

Although there were instances of matai not giving the offices of the Registrar of Electors and the Chief Returning Officer the correct information concerning the matai titles they held in order to register as untitled voters in constituencies of their choice, it was the non-titleholders whom the commission identified as the main category of voters who switched constituencies in the last general elections. The shear number of transferred voters had become a topic of public complaint in the period leading up to the general elections. As the Commission Report has pointed out:

One of the biggest complaints about the 2001 elections was the unfairness caused by wholesale transfers of electors between constituencies, together with apparent ease with which these movements were carried out. It was alleged frequently that as a result of such transfers, the voice of the true residents and matai of villages were superseded by dint of the force of numbers from foreigners. Adding insult to injury, such 'foreigners' were in the majority, untitled persons (2001:20).

The reference to foreigners being mainly untitled persons is significant in the context of custom and tradition. Collectively, matai who comprise the village council have the sole authority to govern village affairs. Therefore, it was a serious insult to have foreigners determine the constituency's choice of Member of Parliament. Worse still, it was the untitled people who comprised the bulk of the foreign population. In Samoan custom and tradition, the untitled people get their instructions from the matai of their respective families, not the reverse. The reference to foreigners implied that although the transferred voters may be villagers according to the criteria stated in the Act, the fact that they do not reside permanently in the village and do not visit regularly, meant that they should rightly be classified as foreigners. In short, the foreigners reside permanently elsewhere and had no genuine interests in the issues affect resident voters. Conversely, a matai whose title originates in a constituency other than that where the holder is permanently resident should be given the option of registering his/her name in the constituency of current residency. Hence the view of the commission 'that those matais who were residing permanently in another constituency should be given the option of registering in the constituency of his residence as opposed to the constituency of his title' (Commission Report 2001:23). Against this background the commission recommends:

(a) That in the case of matai electorate, section 2 (a) of the Act is followed by a new provision allowing registration of matais of other constituencies who are permanently resident in the constituency.

(b) That in the case of non-matais, the criteria for registration are:

(i) continuous residence of not less than two years leading up to the next general elections in the constituency;

(ii) if not a resident, that he or she is the father, mother, brother, sister or child of a matai in the constituency, or of a non-matai resident in that constituency;

(iii) transfers between constituencies by eligible non-matais may take place once only between two general elections, subject to any special exemptions as may be prescribed by the Samoan Electoral Commission, a new body that will be recommended in this Report;

(iv) children adopted in the fiaasamoa (traditional Samoan way) will not qualify to be registered; and

(v) reference to the concept of tautua or service in the Act be abolished.

(c) Sections 16(2)(b) to 16(f) and 16(6) to 16(7) should be consequentially repealed (Commission Report 2001:25–26).

The recommendation relating to genealogical connections has reduced eligibility to register for parliamentary elections from three generations (Electoral Act 1963, Section 16(2)(b)) to two generations. Service (tautua or monotaga) becomes irrelevant.

TOR 5: [t]o consider appropriate means of dealing with person who vote twice or more times during an election. Should not such persons be ruled ineligible and be subjected to a heavy penalty which includes imprisonment?

This TOR implies the same issues associated with the Samoan extended family structure already discussed. There is a potential for voters to vote twice or more given the criteria for registration provided under the Electoral Act 1963. Both the candidates and the voters are under various pressures during the period of registration. The former would be tempted to attract all voters with connections to his/her constituency to register there with the intention that those voters will support him/her come election time. Potential voters, on the other hand, would go around promising their votes to candidates in other constituencies or the same constituency in exchange for favours. Either way, the resulting situation is that of voters either transferring to other constituencies or voting twice (or thrice), firstly in their 'traditional constituency' and secondly in their 'new constituency'. Sometimes the votes are cast for different candidates at different booths in the same constituency. Whilst more accurate records at the offices of the
Chief Returning Officer and the Registrar of Voters could prevent the problem, the commission has nevertheless recommended:

That heavy penalties be imposed for such offenders, including imprisonment for up to two years. In addition, the offence be regarded as a criminal offence, with the conviction permanently recorded against the offender's name (Commission Report 2001:34).

TOR 6: [t]o consider appropriate amendments to ensure that electors voting in constituencies with two (2) Parliamentary seats do vote for two candidates. Should not u vote registering a vote for only one candidate be considered an informal vote?

Samoa's electoral constituencies are subdivisions of the country's 11 traditional districts. Traditional landmarks and/or genealogical factors dictated the manner in which the 11 districts were subdivided, not population size. The result is that in most districts, electoral constituencies vary in population size. In order to maintain a relatively equal ratio of voters to parliamentary candidates, the electoral constituencies with larger population sizes were allocated an extra seat. Currently, there are six such constituencies, excluding electoral constituencies with larger population sizes were allocated an extra seat. Currently, there are six such constituencies, excluding the two seats for the Individual Voters. Furthermore, electoral constituencies were divided when only the matai had the right to vote. The disparity in population sizes of constituencies has worsened following the introduction of universal suffrage.

Trying to come up with a solution to the problem, the commission explains:

Dealing with the second half of this Term of Reference, the commission was of the view that to compel an individual to use his two votes was objectionable, on a least two grounds. The first being that by not exercising his second vote (or indeed by not voting at all) the individual has expressed his opinion: that he supports only one (or no) candidate at all. In other words, refraining from voting is an individual's fundamental right to represent his non-support of the competing candidates.

Secondly, the recently introduced law is that while registration for voting is compulsory, voting is not. It would be entirely contradictory, therefore, if one is penalized for not exercising his second vote, when the law does not compel voting.

Notwithstanding the above comments, the Commission resolved to introduce a new measure that addresses the issue of a two-vote elector. The issue raised by the Term of Reference relates to the widespread practice of 'block-voting', whereby individuals, most likely at the behest (whether or not accompanied by some reward) of the candidate, would use only one of his two votes. This action would obviously increase the numbers of one candidate at the expense of the others (Commission Report 2001:35).

The Commission's recommendation on this term of reference is 'that the present two-seat constituencies be subdivided' (Commission Report 2001:38). The Commission considered that the advantages of these subdivisions included:

- Improving the distribution of seats per votes in the larger populated constituencies;
- Giving relief, politically and economically, to candidates who have historically been required to attend to the needs (including campaigning requirements) of the larger constituencies. The subdivision would reduce such obligations by at least 50 per cent; and
- Encourage MPs to concentrate more on the welfare of a reduced constituency, including his own village, which would traditionally, and in reality, be much more connected with its neighbouring villages under the new subdivision than with the villages farther afield in the original undivided constituency (Commission Report 2001:37–38).

TOR 7: [t]o consider appropriate amendments which consolidate the political party system by ensuring that members remain affiliated to the political party they stood as members of and upon resignation from such party, they are deemed to have vacated the seats and for a by-election to be called. For independent candidates, appropriate provisions safeguarding their rights should also be set out. By doing this, it will ensure a stable country and its politics.

Although several factors may contribute to the personality-oriented nature of political parties, there are elements of Samoa's political culture that help enhance it. As already explained, every title in Samoa's matai system fits into its overarching hierarchy of titles. There are branches and sub-branches of titles within the hierarchy. Genealogy and other elements of customs and traditions such as the relationship between and among ali'i and tulafale titles almost dictate which branch a particular matai should be associated with. These elements of the local political culture make it almost immoral and unethical for a matai to be affiliated with a political grouping outside this 'indigenous' grouping.

Samoaan members of the Working Committee who prepared the draft constitution for the 1960 constitutional convention spoke against the concept of a political party system. They believed that political parties would wreck Samoa society. In the deliberations of the constitutional convention, there was no mention at all of political parties (So'o 1996).

For a long time after the establishment of the national political forum Faipule in 1873, it was by and large the high ranking ali'i (high chief) and tulafale titleholders who were elected by their respective villages and districts. It was a logical extension of their political and leadership roles in the existing indigenous political structure. In the modern parliamentary system, the highest-ranking matai in their respective villages and constituencies are still the ideal candidates. They not only command the respect of their people but are also the embodiment of village pride and prestige. Their election to parliament was due to personal qualities and rank in the matai hierarchy and not to membership of a particular parliamentary group. It took 17 years after independence before the first political party, the HRPP, was established.
Closely associated with this cultural mindset is the keen competition for political positions. A high ranking *matai* who holds a ministerial post brings great honour to his/her village and constituency. It is also a great reward for the efforts of the candidate. To uphold the dignity and prestige of the post, its holder has to be generous to the village and constituency through material and monetary contributions to local activities and projects. In recent years, these contributions have become particularly visible during electoral campaigns. Successful candidates then join parliamentary groupings that give them the best chance of appointment to a ministerial post. This process enhances the personality-orientated nature of Samoan politics to the detriment of a viable party system, which would promote the common good over the local and personal. Party-switching has therefore been a common feature of Samoa’s party system since the establishment of the first post-independence political party in 1979. The commission’s view is that:

the party system, for better or for worse, is here to stay. Samoa cannot return to the unicameral non-party politics that existed at Independence 40 years ago, as inviting as nostalgia may beckon. As is a theme in this Report, the sooner the people accept that the Westminster parliamentary system is alien to the *faasamoa*, and that we should not try and assimilate the *faasamoa* to this system, the sooner we shall achieve a transparent and smoother running electoral process. By separating the two as much as practicable, the electoral process will function better, and the *faasamoa* will retain its integrity (Commission Report 2001:40).

Against this background, the commission recommends that:

- A candidate must remain affiliated to his party;
- If he defects to another party, then a by-election should be called;
- If he runs as an individual, or if he leaves the party to become an independent member, he cannot join another party in coalition; nor should he be allowed to hold a ministerial post in the ruling party for the duration of his parliamentary term; and
- Political parties, in order to be recognised, must comply with the current law and should be formed by election time, if they are to be accorded legal recognition (Commission Report 2001:43).

**TOR 9:** [t]o consider appropriate amendments to ensure that our culture and traditions regarding those not rendering *taumata* in the villages, those without *monotaga*, those not involved in village affairs and those banished from villages are taken into account.

Under this TOR, the report gives a thorough and comprehensive discussion of the legal and *faasamoa* issues at the heart of the tension between liberal democracy and customs and traditions. Since it provides an in-depth discussion of the commission’s guiding philosophy for its recommendations, the report is extensively quoted below.

This Term of Reference raises one of the most fundamental and vexed issues of the Commission’s task. On the one hand it is a *sine qua non* that Samoa is founded upon God and upon its customs and traditions. On the other hand, we have inherited a parliamentary system which is based on foreign concepts and values, resting upon individualised goals as against the communalistic traditions of the Samoan people. The problem concerns not just the concepts of *taumata* and *monotaga* but the whole fabric of Samoan customs and traditions.

A remarkable result has been the history of election petitions, which has seen a steady rise over the years, the predominant grounds being those of bribery and corruption. In the history of election petitions, conflicts have arisen as to what constitutes bribery or corrupt practices as opposed to traditional concepts and chiefly obligations. The Courts have been put in an invidious position in their obligation to decide the applicable law in the realisation that the ramifications for the fabric of Samoan traditional society will be far reaching... [The] decision of Italia Taamale v Attorney General must be considered the authoritative decision on the validity of the power of banishment by *alii* and *faipule*, in spite of the fundamental guarantee provided by Articles 13(1)(d) of the Constitution to all citizens of Samoa to move freely throughout Western Samoa and to reside in any part thereof. This decision should be compared to the Court’s injunctive relief granted in the 2001 elections against the village of Falealupo’s *alii* and *faipule*, allowing the banished applicant to re-enter the village to conduct his campaign, and to eventually succeed as member for that constituency.

The Falealupo case has raised squarely the conflict between the rights of the *alii* and *faipule* in the exercise of their traditional control over their village, as opposed to the individual’s right to run for parliament. In this case, the individual’s rights won...

[P]erhaps the most striking instance from the *faasamoa* aspect in the 2001 elections was the banishment of the Tama-a-Aiga, Tuimaleali’ifano V. Eti, by Falelatai’s Aiga Tauana 3 who preferred the then incumbent Misa Telefuni to represent the constituency. Witnesses views on the issue of *faasamoa* versus fundamental rights was clearly split into two camps: the older people and *matai* adamant that the *faasamoa* overrides the individual’s rights, whereas nearly all of the younger witnesses including the younger *matai* and overseas educated people advocated the supremacy of the individual’s rights. This conflict demonstrates the individualistic as against the communalistic approaches... Rather than introducing laws to attempt to safeguard the *faasamoa* custom of banishment, [the Commission believes] it would be preferable to encourage the *alii* and *faipule* to review their own practices and to act with fairness and honesty in respect of the *faasamoa*. Too often have we seen the deterioration of some aspects of the *faasamoa*, for which blame has been automatically attributed to Western influence, when the real fault lies with the practitioners of the *faasamoa* — the *matais* themselves...

One major feature of Samoan customs and traditions has been its resilience and its ability to adapt to changing circumstances and environment. Any custom worth preserving will have the ability to survive... By allowing the *faasamoa* to evolve at its own pace and with the least interference from statutory legislation and formal regulation, it will have a better chance of surviving into posterity. (Commission Report 2001:46–55).
TOR 14: to extend its enquiries to other important aspects which may assist in the accomplishment of its tasks.

Under this TOR, the commission tries to deal with another problematic area in Samoa's electoral system—the practice of 'o'o' or 'momoli'. These are different terms for the gifts that candidates present to their respective constituencies. Although the presentation of gifts in this manner is one aspect of customs and traditions, the fact that they are presented in the electoral period indicates they are intended to influence voters. To minimise if not avoid opportunities for any breach of electoral provisions relating to treating and bribery, the commission recommends:

That the presentation of the 'o'o' or 'momoli' by candidates shall be permitted only after the official election results are declared and that such presentations shall not be made after the expiry of twelve months from the date of the declaration of the official election results (Commission Report 2001:71).

Conclusion

The Report of the Commission of Inquiry was submitted to Cabinet on 11 October 2001 and has been tabled in parliament, but parliament has yet to deliberate on it. It is not clear, however, whether it was discussed in Cabinet prior to being tabled. The commission’s recommendations are only a first step towards solving the problems in Samoa’s electoral system, which had arisen out of the original belief in the merits of marrying aspects of liberal democracy and Samoan customs and traditions. The guiding philosophy behind the commission’s recommendations is that by separating liberal democracy and customs and traditions as much as practicable, the electoral process will function better and the fa'amatau will retain its integrity (Commission Report 2001:40). The next and most important step is to turn the commission’s recommendations into legislation. Whether all the recommendations will be incorporated into the Electoral Act in the spirit in which the recommendations were made depends entirely on the government and parliament. If implemented in the Electoral Act, time will tell whether or not the effort of the Commission of Inquiry was worthwhile.

Notes

1. Tulafole is one of the two categories of matai (chiefly titles). A holder of this category of titles normally speaks on behalf of the other category of matai titleholders, the ali'i — the sacred chiefs.
2. This phrase refers collectively to village matai (chiefs).
3. A branch of one of Samoa’s ‘royal families’.

References

Development planning for a divided society in a failed state: The case of Solomon Islands

Mark Otter, School of Political Science and International Studies, University of Queensland, Brisbane

Introduction

The task of planning for future development in Solomon Islands is an extraordinarily difficult one. Not only is the economy in a state of collapse with little immediate prospect for improvement, but there are fundamental concerns about aspects of social and national integrity. The continuation of lawlessness in the country, particularly in the capital, Honiara, two years after the Townsville Peace Agreement, is confirmation that there are deep-rooted divisions in society and that the authority of the government and its ability to uphold the rule of law are at an all-time low. The very existence of Solomon Islands as a state is under serious threat.

The 1998–2000 civil war in Solomon Islands — euphemistically called ‘ethnic tensions’ — should be seen more as a product of divisions in Solomon Islands’ society and the inherent weakness of the state, rather than the cause of current problems. It is not a conducive environment in which to conduct conventional development planning; nevertheless this is an opportunity for Solomon Islanders to concentrate on fundamentally important issues of grassroots development and national identity.

Solomon Islands as a divided society

The political conundrum in which Solomon Islands finds itself today is, to a great extent, the result of a diversity and division among Solomon Islanders that has been evident since the beginning of recorded history. Prior to contact with the outside world, Solomon Islands was a collection of disparate clans and villages with a history of enmity towards their neighbours — not only towards people on neighbouring islands, but also towards people in neighbouring villages. When a British protectorate was declared in 1893, it was the first time that the various islands and their inhabitants had ever been gathered into one political unit, or considered themselves to be part of what Benedict Anderson has termed an ‘imagined community’ (1991).

The fact that Melanesians overwhelmingly dominate the population does not mean that there is cultural homogeneity. In fact, there are at least 70 different Melanesian language groups in Solomon Islands. This diversity was, on one hand, a key feature of the superficial harmony in what used to be called ‘the Happy Isles’, but it was also the source of deep division and distrust among the nation’s people. Probably only about 10 per cent of the population identify more as Solomon Islanders than as coming from Malaita, Choiseul, Western province or other places.

Those who do consider themselves as primarily Solomon Islanders are mostly people who have benefited from at least secondary education; have been employed, probably in government; who live or have lived in Honiara; and who have intermarried with people from elsewhere in the archipelago. Their children consider Honiara as their home and together they comprise the nationalist elite of the country.

However, their numbers are small and most other Solomon Islanders owe their first allegiance not only to their island, but their clan, their village or even their family. It is these geographical, ethnic and cultural realities which provide for primary, and competing, bases for political organisation in Solomon Islands. A former (and the longest-serving) prime minister, Solomon Mamaloni, claimed in 1992 that Solomon Islands ‘has never been a nation and never will’ (Kabutaulaka 2000).

The nation-state is a contrived construct for most parts of the world but, in those nation-states which are successful as states, there is a stronger and wider allegiance to the country as a whole than to any of its component parts. If success as a nation-state depends on whether its people feel any benefit from being part of it, then it must be said that Solomon Islands has been a failure as a state.

Solomon Islands as a failed state

The assertion that Solomon Islands is a weak state is not new; indeed most Pacific island countries are weak. Solomon Islands has been described as ‘extraordinarily weak’ — that is, it lacks the capacity to impose uniform rules, construct and maintain effective state agencies, implement state rules, or manage natural resources and the national economy’ (Kabutaulaka 2002:14). It is weak also because the institutions and processes of the state are imposed institutions, for which society lacks a sense of ownership.

When Solomon Islands gained its independence from Britain in 1978, the structures, process and institutions of executive government, parliament and the judiciary were those of Britain; there was almost no accommodation of indigenous social and political systems. Those politicians and bureaucrats who have prospered in this introduced system are often considered by other Solomon Islanders to be self-serving and without the interests of the people at heart. Even the process of politics itself has been seen as a foreign concept. Andrew Te’e, one of the leaders of the Isatabu Freedom Movement (the Guadalcanal militia during the 'tensions'), described politics as ‘essentially “whiteman’s business”’ (Bohane 2000:8).
Government in Solomon Islands is seen as irrelevant, and perhaps even illegitimate, by many Solomon Islanders. Many have lost faith in government, especially in its inability to achieve substantial restoration and reconciliation since the war. The government is unable or unwilling to bring to justice the remnants of the warring militias, now no more than criminal thugs, and to control the police force; income taxes and customs duties are being eroded with ineffectual retaliation from government; currency controls are being easily circumvented; corruption, on grand and petty scales, is rife; and basic services, such as health, education and public utilities, are not being provided regularly. It is now more than a weak state: it is a failed state.

A weak development paradigm
The focus of development planning in Solomon Islands since independence has been on ensuring economic growth, and achieving this primarily through the development of natural resource export industries. Economic development was concentrated on a few large-scale industries (mainly logging, palm oil and fisheries); it was too centred on Honiara and its surrounding areas; and it was dominated by the political elite, who were largely self-serving and incompetent. Economic management models appropriate for a small, fragile developing country were ignored in favour of high-profile, quick-return projects.

Economic growth was considered as an end in itself, with the interests of the country's people, who should benefit from economic growth, being largely ignored. People were considered a factor of production, not the beneficiaries of economic growth. Employment opportunities were not developed where people lived. Income distribution was severely skewed to the rich.

A comparison of the Rural Areas Household Income and Expenditure Survey in 1993 and the Honiara Income Distribution Survey in 1995 shows that 93 percent of households received 22 percent of total income, while the top 1 percent of Solomon Islands households received 52 percent (Solomon Islands Government forthcoming: 89).

Because of the long-term low level of overall development, including low levels of personal income, there has long been a strong temptation to overexploit natural resources, especially forests and fisheries. In good times, returns were high. Revenues from logging in particular increased dramatically from the late 1980s to the mid-1990s, boosting government coffers and overall economic growth. However, the industry was mismanaged owing to poor government oversight, and misappropriation of logging income resulted in a lack of diversified investment. When world commodity prices dropped, the industry collapsed.

Overall, management of the economy by the government has been weak. Government expenditure has exceeded income for many years and it has been forced to borrow, further exacerbating its debt. Private sector credit is crowded out by an overly large government financial sector, and private investment (both domestic and international) has faltered. In addition, rising inflation and a depreciating currency have created an environment of uncertainty that has further deterred private sector development (Solomon Islands Government forthcoming: 96).

Education policies have not been targeted as the real human resource needs of the country. The low level of literacy (only 76 percent of the adult population were literate in 1999) means that educational opportunity has not kept pace with the rate of growth of the population. While primary and secondary school enrolments have increased, the size of the population has increased at a faster rate. The literacy and numeracy levels of primary schoolchildren declined between 1993 and 1999. While the gap between the educational opportunities available to girls compared with boys has narrowed, it is still unsatisfactorily large. Barely one in two students in their last year of primary school enters junior secondary school — there are simply not enough secondary school places for them. The problem is one of being 'pushed out' rather than 'dropping out' (Solomon Islands Government forthcoming: 41).

While there have been significant gains in the past 15 years in reducing the spread of diseases such as malaria, many equity issues in the health system remain of concern. The only referral hospital is in Honiara, and there is a great shortage of doctors in the country. There are almost no specialist medical services outside Honiara. Other serious health issues are the rise of sexually transmitted infections and the threat of HIV/AIDS. Family planning services, and particularly their reach into provincial towns and rural areas, are unsatisfactory.

The large-scale, 'top-down' pattern of development in Solomon Islands has been dominated for almost three decades by a large public sector consuming an inordinate amount of public resources. It has been difficult for the small private sector to compete, so the overall productivity of the nation's workforce has been reduced. It has also kept the beneficiaries of development dependent on the government and living mostly in Honiara. It has been left to the subsistence sector to provide the main source of livelihood for over 85 percent of the population.

A new development paradigm for Solomon Islands
A new way of managing development must be adopted in Solomon Islands, one which is people-centred, 'bottom-up', decentralised and labour intensive, and one which delivers real benefits — including increased incomes and better access to education and health services — to Solomon Islanders wherever they live. The following points would comprise a new human development paradigm for Solomon Islands:

- Development should be democratised, in that people have to be able to voice their opinions on how decisions that affect their welfare are made;
- Misappropriation and corruption have to be seen as abuses of democracy in that people's rights and welfare are being mismanaged and squandered;
- The country's macroeconomic fundamentals need to be managed professionally because public finances are people's finances.

December 2002
The underlying political, economic and social problems facing Solomon Islands today have been dormant, but nonetheless present, years since independence, and the interaction between Melanesian for decades. There are a number of causes of these problems: they lack a clear nation-making vision. They are also partly to do with the inherent divisions in society and the lack of little apparent optimism for the future. Social tensions persist two years after the signing of the peace agreement, and law and order is still in the hands of armed thugs. The economy is in ruins, people have little money and the government is bankrupt. Many health and education facilities are idle. Incompetence, mismanagement and corruption among many politicians and public officials have bankrupted the country.

The civil unrest of recent years should be seen as a sign of deeper problems in Solomons' society. The economy and people's livelihoods have suffered under a social system which has not been able to grasp the idea of Solomon Islands as a nation-state and, instead, has delivered benefits to those who espouse sectional interests. Governments have ignored expert internal and external advice and, in the process, sent the country into bankruptcy and weakened the state to the point of failure.

Equally clearly, there must be a new way of managing the development process, as the old ways of top-down, large-scale growth-at-all-costs development have failed. The old development strategy increased income disparities between the rich and the poor, between the sexes, between urban and rural dwellers and between those living in different parts of the country. Development decision-making was dominated by a few people in high government positions, biased in favour of men, the wealthy, urban dwellers and people with political power or connections. The economy had survived largely because of foreign aid and revenues gained from the unsustainable harvesting of natural resources by foreign companies — mainly logging — and an over-reliance on a few primary commodities such as fish and palm oil. This approach to development has now been proven unsustainable.

There should be a new way of thinking about who Solomon Islanders imagine themselves to be, and how they would like to live their lives. Once they decide this fundamental issue, a new way of thinking about development must be adopted. It must be people centred, democratised, decentralised and labour intensive. It must be one in which public management is efficient and professional, one where the private sector is allowed to be the major employer, one where the political system is brought closer to and 'owned' by the people, one in which education and health services are directed to the real needs of the people, one in which women are empowered, and one in which there is respect for the rule of law. Without a totally new development paradigm, Solomon Islands will become the world's newest 'basket case' and will probably cease to exist.

Note
1. This was according to self-identification in the 1999 Census (Solomon Islands Government 1999). That figure may be considerably lower as there has been no literacy survey carried out since 1991.

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State powers and institutions

Under the constitution of Solomon Islands, state powers comprise the legislature, the judiciary, and the executive. These are assisted by institutions such as the Public Service Commission, the Leadership Code Commission, the Police and Prison Service Commission, the Ombudsman, the Attorney-General’s Office, the Solicitor-General and the Royal Solomon Islands Police. The rule of law defines the relationship between the executive, legislature, judiciary and the citizens. The development and functioning of state powers or institutions and the exercise of state authority within the principles of democracy requires that affairs of the state and citizens must be addressed within the rule of law.

The following short case studies provide examples of the problems in carrying out the rule of law in terms of democratic processes and provide some framework for rebuilding the Solomon Islands as a more democratic state.

Examples of the executive use of power

1988: The Guadalcanal Province petitions offer a good example of the executive’s inability to deal with legal issues. The petitions were for a state government, return of alienated land, and compensation for murdered victims from Guadalcanal. The petitions for a state government and return of alienated land were national issues, which many Solomon Islands citizens wanted addressed. However, the executive did not constructively deal with these issues.

1989: This incident illustrates how the executive used its power to deal with a defamation committed by a citizen. An unknown person wrote a defamatory statement about Malaitans, which was circulated at the main market. This provincial group immediately demanded compensation (Kabutaulaka 1999). The suspect was a Polynesian person from Rennell and Bellona. As a result, there was no police investigation or charge laid to establish whether a crime had been committed. Neither was there any civil suit for defamation.

Compensation was demanded and paid without recourse to the proper legal process. The executive paid SBD$200,000 compensation to Malaita Province. This response by the executive reflected an erosion of the due process of law in Solomon Islands. By establishing a precedent, the compensation floodgates opened and the state has been deluged with demands.

1998: This example shows how the executive used its power to address an allegation of rape committed by a citizen. At Ruavatu Secondary School, two girls claimed to have been raped. No person was suspected, charged and convicted for rape. This meant that in law there was no crime committed. Disgruntled Malaitan parents or guardians directly approached the Guadalcanal Province for compensation.

The Guadalcanal Province refused to pay. However, the executive overlooked the appropriate legal process that the claim for rape was supposed to follow. It proceeded to use revenue sharing grants due to the Guadalcanal Province to settle the compensation demand.

The potential role of the judiciary in this case was ignored. Perhaps it was viewed as alternative dispute resolution. This is a genuine possibility because compensation is a customary practice. It involves exchange of food and other traditional valuables for the restoration of peace and harmony. Such an exchange would demonstrate genuine contrition rather than buying someone out of trouble. The undermining of state powers and institutions in this case aroused suspicion amongst many Solomon Islanders, particularly people from Guadalcanal.

1998: Guadalcanal Province resubmitted the 1988 petitions and demanded rental from Honiara, the capital of Solomon Islands on the island of Guadalcanal. As with the original petition, the government’s response was unfavourable. Guadalcanal people wondered how government could award compensation in the defamation case without reference to legal principles, but then turn around and ignore their seemingly legitimate claims. As a result, some Guadalcanal people started using criminal ways to express their frustration about the confusing ways in which the state exercised its powers and ways in which its institutions functioned.

June 2000: The militant activities in 1998 became a national issue. Parliament was pressured to declare a state of emergency, the executive was placed in a position to address the situation wisely and efficiently and the court was faced with the task of bringing to justice those who resorted to criminal activities. Consequently, in 1999 a Task Force, a Guadalcanal Peace Process Committee and a Government Negotiation Team was formed.

This resulted in the signing of Memorandum of Understanding between the government and Guadalcanal Province on 13 June 1999, and a payment of $2.5 million into a Reconciliation Trust Account (Prime Minister’s Office 2000). The executive then developed seven peace agreements that incorporated...
the Melanesian way of dispute resolution, but it transpired that the militants breached these agreements because they did not effectively address the causes underlying the criminal uprising.

Displaced people insisted that peace could only be achieved if the government immediately met their compensation demands. Justice before peace was the ultimate goal. Consequently, displaced people, particularly Malaitans, formed the Malaita Eagle Force (MEF) and assumed control of government on 5 June 2000. Prime Minister Ulufa’alu voluntarily resigned and Sogavare was elected as the new prime minister.

After the Townsville Peace Agreement (Solomon Islands Government 2000) was signed, the new Sogavare government paid compensation to meet the demands of displaced people. However, in the process of paying compensation more injustices were perpetrated because most payments were not in accordance with the law.

January 2002: By 2002 the custom of compensation had become an acceptable practice with national leaders. After the general elections on 5 December 2001 and formation of the Kemakeza government, compensation demands continued. It was reported early in 2002 that the Minister for Economic Reform and Structural Adjustment demanded compensation of $5000 from Solomon Star following an article and letter to the editor that was published about the minister (Rna Nius Online 2002).

The minister claimed that the publication had lowered his reputation and was not true. According to law, the court is supposed to deal with such a case. From the facts, the minister could sue for defamation if he established his case and compensation would be paid. Unfortunately, the minister ignored the established legal process of dealing with his claim and took his demand directly to the Solomon Star instead.

The exercise of state authority and the functioning of state institutions around legal issues such as compensation claims are still in chaos. The Kemakeza government is faced now with serious legal challenges about safeguarding the democratic powers and institutions of the state of Solomon Islands.

Response to demands

From reading the examples it can be argued that there is inconsistency in terms of the relationship the rule of law tries to uphold. In the 1988, for example, the executive responded unfavourably to the demands. In 1989, the executive paid compensation in one case but then did not go through appropriate legal processes and ignored petitions. In June 2000, the executive opted for a 'peace before justice policy' approach. It did not instruct the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force to respond immediately and constructively to criminal activities. Again, in January 2002, a government minister indulged in demands for compensation as well. This time it was a compensation demand against the Solomon Star.

These examples show inconsistency in how the state exercised its powers. But people themselves do not follow the rule of law in resolving their disputes and claims. They expected the state to resolve their claims instead of submitting them to appropriate State institutions. It was one thing to accept the democratic formula but quite another to abide by the norms and practices' (Tuiatua Tamasese, cited in Crocombe 2001:467).

It is clear from the above that in the absence of a strong state and well-established democratic processes, people devise their own unconventional and unconstitutional ways to submit their demands for compensation. Even those with good negotiators to deal with their claims made their demands without reference to the law. For instance, if the submissions concerned truth and justice, the Commission of Inquiry Act, Death and Fire Inquiries Act, or the Penal Code should be considered. Instead, even though people had legitimate claims or submissions they followed unconstitutional paths. It is unclear whether this is because they did not understand the legal process, or they followed customary practice, or because the rule of law was under siege.

Compensation demands

Compensation was a significant issue in all six examples. People demanded the state pay compensation for lives lost in the crisis, lost properties, employment benefits, harassment and many other things. People felt that monetary compensation was the price for justice and peace. However, as Table 1 (overleaf) shows, the extent to which the government has paid compensation was uncontrolled.

These figures represent only 10 per cent of the total. They show considerable inconsistency in compensation claims and beg the questions: was justice before peace achieved? Did the dollar buy justice? What constitutes justice?

The figures show that the dollar is not the means to attain justice. Most of the claims were lodged outside of the appropriate legal process. All the claims were lodged through a committee established by the Ministry of National Unity, Reconciliation and Peace. It was through this process that compensation demands were assessed and later the funds were dispensed.

Regrettably, this is an unconstitutional approach. The courts and other appropriate state institutions could have exclusively dealt with most of the claims through a lawful process. The claims relate to laws such as the Commission of Inquiry Act, Death and Fire Inquiries Act or the Workmen's Compensation Act. Claims for things such as injuries, harassment, and damage to property or loss of earnings are common law claims (Care 1996:237). That is, they are claims that the courts over a certain period have developed legal principles to address so that justice could be arrived at. Unfortunately, the exercise of state power overshadowed the function of state institutions.

Extortion

Unreasonable or excessive claims or charges became common once the Sogavare government started paying compensation. There was no effective and efficient state power or institution to oversee how funds should be paid. Those in power or some of those with guns interfered with the process of payment. Consequently, overcharging
Waiting patiently for the government to meet their demands. For example, claims for danger allowances by government as reported by the press (Reid for duties done within their capacity as public servants. Thus, the scandal involving Kemakeza and Kii in the Sogavare government as reported by the press (Reid for duties done within their capacity as public servants. Thus, the principle of 'to lead is to serve' became 'to lead is to gain'.

Others claimed that they were paid large sums of money because of their professional capacity, as well as for security reasons. The payments made to the Attorney-General and Solicitor-General were an example. They received quite a substantial amount of money for duties done within their capacity as public servants. Thus, the principle of 'to lead is to serve' became 'to lead is to gain'.

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Note: All payments made by the Ministry of National Unity, Reconciliation and Peace between November 2000 and May 2001.

or extortion either for compensation claims or fees was uncontrollable. Those that were manipulative appeared to be making use of the entire situation compared to others that were waiting patiently for the government to meet their demands. For example, claims for danger allowances by Provincial Members or the scandal involving Kemakeza and Kii in the Sogavare government as reported by the press (Reid 2002: 18). These are good examples to explain that due to the mix up of the function of state powers, institutional corruption became common (Roughan 2001). For some national leaders the democratic principle of 'to lead is to serve' became 'to lead is to gain'.

Others claimed that they were paid large sums of money because of their professional capacity, as well as for security reasons. The payments made to the Attorney-General and Solicitor-General are an example. They received quite a substantial amount of money for duties done within their capacity as public servants. Thus, the Public Service Commission should have addressed this issue. Unfortunately, this was not the case because state powers and institutions have become mixed.

Law and order

Law and order remains a major problem even after the signing of the Townsville Peace Agreement. The Guadalcanal militants seem to be blamed for the initial break down in law and order. However, it was apparent that this was the case only on the outskirts of Honiara. Before the 5 June 2000 coup, the functions of state powers and institutions were not in complete chaos. There were no signs of massive criminal activities such as vehicle theft, burglary, or murder cases in Honiara, in Malaita or in the Western Province. One reason for this was that the Royal Solomon Islands Police force was still operating within the rule of law.

After the 5 June 2000 coup there was an uncontrollable increase in criminal activities in Honiara and other areas. The High Court ruling in Bartholomeu Ulaufa'alu v Attorney-General reaffirms the rise in criminal activities by observing 'there was widespread looting, stealing, harassment and intimidation of innocent citizens in the Capital, with the absence of an effective police force' (High Court of Solomon Islands 2001). Some of these criminal activities were still prevalent even after the signing of the Townsville Peace Agreement.

Currently, state powers and institutions are not functioning effectively to resolve the law and order problem in Solomon Islands. There is no Royal Solomon Islands Police Force as it used to be to assist state powers and institutions, so that democracy can truly be upheld. The campaign for the return of guns is not progressing any further. Militant groups and criminal elements are holding onto the guns and using that whenever they want to advance their own interests. There is much fear and insecurity among citizens.

Restoring democracy does not only depend on the election of a new government, drafting the Amnesty Act or participating in the Townsville Peace Agreement. The rule of law and order is fundamental to a democratic relationship between state and citizen.

The final say — the court

In the final analysis, it should be mentioned that according to the High Court ruling (Civil Case No. 195 of 2000) the coup is still not legally justified. The trial had nothing to do with the truth. The High Court trial devoted its hearing mainly to substantive law and procedure (technicalities).

The High Court ruling in Bartholomeu Ulaufa'alu v Attorney-General had nothing to do with the coup. That case concerned the validity of the election of the prime minister, Manaseh Sogavare. The High Court in that case was not asked to address the legitimacy of the coup. It held a long discussion about the coup but most of what it dealt with were preliminary issues on 'non-justiciability', locus standi etc in order to strike out Ulufa'alu's application for redress. There was no legal endorsement for the coup. It was not one of the issues in that case.

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On that premise, it can still be argued that the coup has yet to be legally justified by a court of law, an organ of the state. Only those who were involved in the crisis could be in a position to reveal the truth about why the coup happened, and who was responsible. The Bartholomew Ulufa'alu v Attorney-General case is on appeal, thus there is not much to say about it at this stage. However, after the two years of crisis in Solomon Islands one thing is definite: the functions of state powers and institutions have become mixed.

Conclusion

The two-year crisis will remain an important landmark in Solomon Islands history. Where did we go wrong as we tried to maintain the democratic relationship between our state, people and citizens? The quest for peace continues, but justice can be achieved only if state powers and institutions function effectively and efficiently within the rule of law to deal with our problems and uphold the true notion of democracy (Short 2002). We must not try to shift the blame for what was caused by our own weaknesses. We must admit that we once failed in the process of developing democracy in Solomon Islands.

Now we should try to help one another to understand the true idea of democracy and help in the rebuilding process. In addition, excessive compensation payments should be repatriated to the state to assist those in need. Only then, can we begin to move ahead.

References


Reid RK 2002, 'Solomons Kemakeza government under the spotlight; Australia, New Zealand issue blunt warnings', Islands Business Magazine, February.


In this article, I will outline the use of Incorporated Land Groups in the petroleum industry as a mechanism for landowner representation and benefits distribution, and the challenges it presents to the industry. Some issues that need further consideration will be highlighted in an effort to strengthen this institution in the interests of all its stakeholders.

The Land Groups Incorporation Act 1974

Prior to independence and during self-government, Papua New Guinea (PNG) initiated various land reforms through an entity called the Commission of Inquiry into Land Matters (CILM) in 1973. The objective of that entity was to look at reforming the existing land tenure systems to provide an opportunity for the country's indigenous people to participate in economic development.

The incorporation of land groups was one recommendation out of 132 made by the CILM, which subsequently passed into law as the Land Groups Incorporation Act (LGIA) in 1974. This legislation enabled customary landowning units to legalise their corporate structure in an effort to increase their participation in the national economy through better land management and increased certainty of title. The aims of the Act were to:

- Allow customary land groups to be recognised as legal corporate entities (similar to the way that companies are recognised as legal organisations); and
- Provide for the manner in which these groups deal with their customary land so that those dealings will be recognised by law.

The Act provides a process for the incorporation of land groups (including settlements of disputes) and involves the adoption of a constitution by the customary land group, an application to the registrar of titles to become an Incorporated Land Group (ILG), an objection period, and public comments on whether or not the customary land group should become an ILG. This process gives a legal structure for a landowning group, which can:

- Manage its own internal affairs and make binding decisions; and
- Enter into legally binding agreements with others.

The ILG becomes an institution that contains a constitution, which should, or is supposed to, keep the entity functioning. The constitution stipulates the name of the group, qualifications for membership and committee membership, the manner in which the group acts, the powers of the group, the custom that applies, the dispute settlement authority, the address, the rule-making power, any other matters and any variation to the constitution.

Ideally, the constitution should reflect the wishes of the land group membership. When a group is registered as an ILG, its internal affairs, including disputes, are handled in accordance with custom, while its relationships with the outside world are generally covered by the LGIA and the group's constitution.

The use of ILGs in the petroleum industry and its implications

Dealing with customary landowners requires a systematic approach to ensure that such dealings can be recognised both customarily and legally. The unique system of traditional governance in most Papua New Guinean communities in the rural hinterland presents an immense challenge to the modern approach of conducting business.

The following issues hinder the integration of customary landholders in the ideal business or Westernised world in a way that would expedite developments and investments:

- Ninety-seven per cent of PNG's total landmass of 47.6 million hectares is still controlled or held by customary tenure;
- Almost 85 per cent of the populace use and control that 97 per cent of land for subsistence agriculture and sustenance;
- According to custom, all resources, both renewable and non-renewable, on or under the soil, belong to the clan; and
- The 1990 PNG census showed that only 35 per cent of women and 65 per cent of men were literate. These statistics are a cause of concern as most illiterate people are in the rural sector where petroleum projects are predominant, so illiteracy can affect development issues.

In 1992, through the developer Chevron Niugini Limited (Chevron), the petroleum sector initiated the use of the LGIA for the Kutubu petroleum project, PNG's first oil project. It did so to ensure that landowners could deal on an equal footing with both the government and Chevron.
Given the complexity of the land tenure system and the need to deal with a central agent for representation and subsequently for benefits distribution, Chevron chose the ILG mechanism. In the ILG process, the company facilitated the legal process of incorporating the group and the election of agents by the people themselves to manage the affairs of the group. It became necessary for Chevron, the developer of Kutubu, to help the landowners use the ILG process to:

- Ensure that the customary land and clan membership rights were retained, including ensuring the equitable distribution of benefits from the project within the clan itself;
- Assist clans to have a complete natural resource inventory and sustainable development plan;
- Facilitate royalty and equity dividend payments or distribution by formally identifying all clans within the petroleum development licence and pipeline licence areas;
- Form a single landowner association that could represent all clans within a single language group or designated area; and
- Ensure that all clans were shareholders in the landowner company that represented their customary landowning areas.

The policy implications in the petroleum industry

The LGIA was passed to facilitate agricultural development, and to allow customary landowners to work their land through a corporate and legally defined structure. The Act was never envisaged as a mechanism for benefits distribution or for representative purposes.

However, in the application of this Act through the regulatory agency, the Department of Mining and Petroleum — later the Department of Petroleum and Energy — the state never had a clearly defined policy on a system for representing and distributing benefits to, customary landowners for petroleum projects. The LGIA was never complementary to the former Petroleum Act or the current Oil and Gas Act 1998. ILGs were accepted as the mechanism for representation and benefits distribution in the absence of a clearly acceptable mechanism.

While Weiner considers that the ILG 'represents the most practical and culturally empathetic fusion of Western corporatism with Melanesian customary resource management' (1998:2), the current problems facing ILGs today justify re-examining, and possibly reforming or strengthening, the ILG institutions. From the state’s point of view, land groups are incorporated in petroleum resource areas for four main reasons:

- As a result of land and landowner identification, for the use of customary land by operators of licences granted under the Oil and Gas Act;
- For proper landowner mobilisation and representation in groups that could deal meaningfully with project developers and the state, as the host community for project development;
- As a benefits distribution mechanism by which royalty and equity benefits and land compensation payments from the project can flow down to landowners or other beneficiaries; and
- Because the Oil and Gas Act implies that ILGs are to be formed for benefits distribution.

In the process of incorporating land groups, the petroleum industry has experienced a lot of divisions of land groups and abuse of this important vehicle. Many land groups have been fragmented from a clan group into family units and even individuals. Many disputes and disruptions to petroleum projects are directly or indirectly related to land group issues.

Problems today

After a decade of petroleum production, the desired results have not been achieved today. Many of the problems being faced in the management of ILGs have been created by landowners themselves, fundamentally because of high exposure to high cash flows. The ILGs continuously break up into smaller and smaller units. It seems that the distribution of cash by the elected leaders is either not transparent, or that people believe that incorporating more ILGs will mean that they can get more cash.

Apart from the cash distribution problems, many other related and complex issues have progressively eroded the basic principle of land groups’ incorporation. These issues can be summarised as follows:

- Internal leadership struggles and the manipulation of ILGs for the benefit of personal or relatives’ benefit;
- Bribery and corruption among landowner groups;
- Political influence and interference;
- Continuous land disputes, causing ILG identification and distribution problems;
- Incomplete landowner identification;
- Unlawful distribution arrangements;
- A lack of ILG maintenance (updating of clan membership and all relevant data pertaining to the management of the ILG);
- A lack of responsibility and coordination between end users on the management and maintenance of ILGs;
- A lack of transparency, accountability and equitable sharing; and
- A proliferation of ILGs, where there are clans, subclans, families and even individuals claiming to be ILGs, leading to unequal and unfair distribution of benefits.

These problems can be managed if the groups’ leaders utilise the established institutions enshrined in their land group constitutions. However, the constitutions are not being implemented for various reasons, some of which are examined below.
The historical and philosophical reasons for problems

In an ideal world, institutions or entities have their own systems or processes to look after the welfare and interests of that institution or entity in line with its respective visions and objectives. However, the use of ILGs in the industry over the last 10 years has been problematic for all stakeholders, including landowners themselves, despite various attempts to strengthen the ILGs in the interests of all stakeholders.

However, all these attempts have proved futile. Regardless, the situation still remains important in light of the potential PNG to Queensland gas project, which will become the country's first ever multibillion dollar investment, and will encompass gas from Hides, Kutubu and Gobe fields.

Lack of knowledge of agency and fiduciary obligations and responsibilities

The end user imposes the ILG on the traditional landowner in order to conveniently serve its own objectives. (End users include stakeholders of ILGs in the petroleum industry — which includes the developers and investors, the Department of Petroleum and Energy and the mineral resources development company — and the landowners themselves.) The end user tries to think that, given the modern world of doing business, this entity 'should' work for the traditional landowner and his kinship, anticipating that the prevailing customs will be given legal status through the formation of an ILG. When this happens, the customary practices are frozen in the ILG, impairing the usual fluidity of customary practices, which change over time.

By freezing custom, and giving credence to doing so, through ILGs, the traditional landowners experience two things: ILG executives abuse and compromise custom, and the ordinary land group members either work along with the executives, or carry on without recognising the existence of the incorporated body.

In essence, what transpires on incorporation is that there are now two customs for the people: one being the contemporary fluid custom notwithstanding the incorporation, and the other being a new custom that is created or recreated after incorporation. However, this is likely to cause problems, especially where there is corporatisation of the land group through formal documentation.

The creation of a new wave of culture through the ILGs rests fundamentally on the following issues:

- The ILG is imposed or created by outsiders for their own objectives or interests and thus is not initiated by the people themselves;
- As most of the people involved will be illiterate, they will not really understand the legal functioning of the ILG, nor will they understand their respective roles, responsibilities and obligations; and
- When the ILG is being imposed on the people, the end user does not provide the education and training that is required so that the people can manage their own affairs, and ensure that their own interests, as well as the end user's, are supported.

Certified, delineated and demarcated land boundaries

In order for an ILG to be formed, the land over which group title is being proposed must be clearly identified and demarcated. The land delineation and demarcation must occur before the incorporation process. It must be made quite clear that the land delineation and demarcation has nothing to do with customary land registration, but rather is only a means of defining the group's title to the land solely for the members' interests in its economic development.

The level of the group to be incorporated will only be determined most appropriately if the land that is the subject of economic interest is delineated properly and demarcated by the end user. Only then will the end user know the level at which to facilitate incorporation.

Physically delineating and demarcating the land will mean freezing the boundaries that are the subject of economic use, while custom allows the shifting of membership interests as amicably recorded in an ILG constitution. The land is the constant in this situation, because it is the end user's objective, as is adequately catering for the interests of the group or members of the ILG.

When the land has been identified and demarcated, it should be recorded and incorporated in the ILG certificate so that another application cannot be made over the same piece of land by people who have the same customary interests. This helps to control the proliferation and splitting of an established ILG. As it is today, the incorporation process in the LGIA does not require confirmation that the land group is the proper owner of the land in question, or of whether any disputes about ownership are current (Kameata 2001).

Lack of clearly defined end users' roles and responsibilities

Obviously, there is much debate about the state's responsibility for mitigating and rectifying ILG problems being faced by end users.

The end users have differing interests in the formation and survival of the ILGs and, to enhance their business operations and objectives, they must understand the system and set in place a monitoring system to address landowner issues. All these entities combined have a certain role to play in addressing and managing the effectiveness of ILGs. As it is today, the initiators, especially the industry, are only interested in the initial registration process that assembles and mobilises landowners into ILGs. The management of issues arising after the incorporation process by the stakeholders or end users is contentious.

The stakeholders of ILGs include the Department of Petroleum and Energy, Mineral Resources Development Company, Upstream Oil Companies, and the registrar of titles, as well as the state and the landowners themselves. There is a need to establish closer linkages between stakeholders on the use of ILGs, so that they can play complementary roles in supporting the functioning of these institutions to ensure that they meet the objectives of all stakeholders.
Prerequisites for ILG strengthening

In order to ensure that the use of ILGs serves the interests of all stakeholders, the following must be considered:

• End users or stakeholders must define their interests in ILGs and take ownership of specific roles and responsibilities to make the ILG work;
• The land that is the subject of, or the basis for, registration of a group title must be clearly delineated and demarcated. This is only possible if good social mapping and landowner identification studies are completed beforehand. Only then can the level at which a group can be incorporated be determined, if this ILG is externally initiated;
• Periodic ILG training and education must be conducted for the people who are being canvassed about incorporation by external initiators of the proposal; and
• A whole-of-government approach must be adopted on the use of ILGs.

Conclusion

The Land Groups Incorporation Act 1974 attempts to mobilise groups to make productive use of their land. The use of the ILG has changed over the years from being developed in the agriculture and forestry sectors to its current use in the petroleum resource sector. The early usage of the Act in 1974 was in close consultation with the Land Tenure Conversion Act 1963 and was based on a policy to diversify the agriculture sector through a system of having communal groups work on their land. In the forestry sector, the ILG concept was used as a means to secure timber rights from customary landowners by way of the Forest Management Agreement.

The petroleum industry in PNG has been faced with challenges in dealing with customary landowners. This is both from the perspectives of representation and benefit distribution. The LGIA (1974) has been used for purposes of benefit distribution to the different land groups in the project area but this has had its own challenges, particularly monies not flowing down to most of the ILG constituents. In the contemporary context of the petroleum industry, representation and benefits distribution were seen to be interrelated, while in actual fact, they ought to be different and the issues seen separately. This paper is an attempt to demarcate and delineate between between the interfacing web of customary connections and contemporary management thoughts based on Western forms of sociality.

Notes

1. This paper represents the author's own views and does not reflect the views of the PNG Department of Petroleum and Energy.
2. PNG law explicitly defines such resources as belonging to the state, however, landowners' control over the topsoil makes customary owners significant players in the overall development of the petroleum industry, and can make or break a project.
3. The 2001 PNG census figures are yet to be officially published.

References


Affirmative action policies and poverty alleviation in Fiji: An examination of post-coup policies and programmes

Mahendra Reddy, Centre for Development Studies, University of the South Pacific, and
Biman C Prasad, Department of Economics, University of the South Pacific, Fiji

Introduction

Affirmative action programmes are designed to alleviate discrimination against individuals and groups. As debate continues in Fiji about the validity of the conservative approach to affirmative action a number of questions need to be asked. What are the monetary costs? Is there a basis to justify affirmative action policies for indigenous Fijians? Have affirmative action policies reached the targeted population? Is the policy constructive or counter-productive? Does it lead to the violation of the civil rights of other communities in a plural and a multi-ethnic society like Fiji?

The genesis of affirmative action programmes in Fiji

Affirmative action programmes in Fiji began with colonial rule, when the government’s policy on land and education was designed to provide special protection for the indigenous Fijian community. This conservative view of affirmative action and protection of indigenous Fijian culture and tradition was enshrined in the 1970 constitution and more specifically in the 1990 constitution. Under the 1990 constitution, programmes and policies were initiated which actually discriminated against the economically disadvantaged groups from other ethnic minorities. Since independence in 1970, government policies have produced various programmes for affirmative action for indigenous Fijians. Narayan (1984) and Overton (1988) point out that the process and nature of economic development pursued by the colonial government led to an unequal development and the distribution of benefits. This was later translated into programmes and policies to bridge the gap between the indigenous Fijians and Indo-Fijians in education and commerce.

Affirmative action policies have been used worldwide to bridge the economic gap between ethnic groups which has arisen because of discrimination. Notable examples are the policies to bridge the economic gap between blacks and whites in the United States and between the Chinese and ethnic Malays in Malaysia. Similar programs are in place in Australia and New Zealand to bridge the gap between the migrant and indigenous communities. There is no consensus on the approach to affirmative action amongst policy makers around the world. Some advocate affirmative action based on ethnicity and race and others advocate affirmative action based on need, that is, because of class or to assist the poor and disadvantaged. In Malaysia, under the new economic policy (NEP) of 1970, the bhumiputras or ethnic Malays as a community were considered in need of affirmative or positive action to improve their living conditions.

Fiji has taken its cue from these countries and more specifically from Malaysia in attempting to raise the living standard of the indigenous community. Ratuva (2000) distinguishes the conservative and the progressive view of affirmative action in Fiji. He points out that the conservative view is that which is being pushed forward by the so-called taukei nationalists, who believe in the supremacy principle and that state resources should be directed towards helping exclusively the indigenous Fijians regardless of their income position. This view was firmly entrenched in the 1990 constitution, which was adopted after the 1987 coups. The more progressive view is based on the 1997 constitution (especially that envisaged in chapter 5 of the constitution). This is a more liberal position based on the idea that the disadvantaged in all ethnic groups must be a target of affirmative action programs.

Current status of affirmative action policies in Fiji

Fiji is a multi-ethnic country with two distinct ethnic groups: Fijians and Indo-Fijians, who respectively comprise 50 per cent and 43 per cent of the population. The issue of the indigenous community being economically disadvantaged has been raised in many forums. These include inflammatory statements in parliament that political instability will continue if the indigenous community continues to be disadvantaged. For example, in a statement in parliament reported in the Fiji Times (4 March 2002) Ted Young MP said, "The National Centre for Small and Micro Enterprise Development should cater mainly for Fijians and Rotumans until their participation in the business arena equals others'.

This type of call has followed the events of 19 May 2000 when the democratically elected multiracial government was deposed to allow Fijian supremacy and governance by indigenous Fijians. The Interim Government enacted a blueprint for raising the perceived low standard of living of the Fijian community. This is not the first time that we have seen a blueprint for affirmative action in Fiji. In fact, past governments have instigated a number of plans and programmes targeted to the indigenous community. Ratuva (2000), and Robertson and Sutherland (2001) provide very useful accounts of some of the programs that have been undertaken at the expense of taxpayers of Fiji.
There are two myths about the economic disadvantage of indigenous Fijians that are perpetuated by the indigenous Fijian nationalists and politicians. One is that all indigenous Fijians are economically disadvantaged. The second is that all Indo-Fijians are economically advantaged and have better education and employment prospects. However, Robertson and Sutherland (2001) point out that research undertaken in the 1990s has shown that 79 per cent of indigenous Fijians and 89 per cent of Indo-Fijians belong to the disadvantaged group, which includes small farmers, wage workers, peasants, unpaid family workers and the unemployed.

What are the policies of the current government?

The current government came to power on the wave of Fijian nationalism which propagated economic disparity between Indo-Fijians and indigenous Fijians. It has embarked on an ambitious affirmative action programme through the so-called 'Blueprint for the Advancement of Indigenous Fijians' (Government of Fiji 2002). According to Robertson and Sutherland (2001:102) 'the Blueprint is essentially a re-packing of old recipes'. This is not the first time that such assistance packages have been proposed by a Fijian-dominated government. The Fiji Development Bank is a permanent institution for affirmative action programmes and funding for Fijian participation in commerce. The blueprint essentially provides the following measures:

- Government to provide a grant to establish a Fijian Development Trust Fund for investment to generate interest income to be used for, among other things, funding for the Fijian Foundation, leadership and other training programmes, and any other purposes approved by the Great Council of Chiefs;
- A compulsory national savings scheme for Fijians to finance increased Fijian equity and other forms of participation in business, and also investment in education;
- Government to recommence financial assistance to the Native Land's Trust Board through annual grant support;
- Government to provide a grant to endow the proposed Fijian Development Trust Fund;
- Government to provide extra funding to the Fijian Education Fund for more Fijian scholarships, more support for Fijian schools and research into Fijian education issues;
- Government to convert into a grant its F$20 million interest-free loan to the Fijian Affairs Board to purchase shares in Fijian Holdings Limited;
- Government to provide interest-free loan to Yasana Holdings Limited;
- Reserve 50 per cent of government contracts for Fijians;
- Continuation of the Fijian Development Bank Loan Scheme for Fijians;
- Re-instate government budget provision of F$500,000 for interest-free loans to assist Fijians to buy back ancestral land alienated as freehold land;
- Government to reinstate annual allocations of F$1.5 million as grants, not interest-free loans, to provincial councils for participation in business;
- Assistance to Fijian landowners who take up sugarcane farming on their reverted land;
- Government to rent buildings owned by Fijian Provincial Councils and companies; and
- Tax exemption for Fijian companies.

The siphoning of government finances towards funding blueprint proposals continues in many forms (Reddy et al. 2001). Recently, F$3m dollars was allocated as a Seed Capital Revolving Fund to enable the indigenous community to participate in the fishing and forestry industry. However, the most controversial project was the Farming Assistance Scheme, which has drained millions of dollars of Fiji government finances due to mismanagement (Government of Fiji 2001). The question that should be asked is whether ordinary Fijians will benefit from any of these proposals. In the past, only the elite and well-connected benefited from these taxpayer-funded programs, which were often poorly managed and open to misuse of funds by those driving the projects (Robertson and Sutherland 2001). The key issue surrounding the blueprint measures is that they are not supported by the majority of the people. Some of the measures are discriminatory and in contradiction of the government's own economic policies. Potential investors see this as an undue interference by the government in the economy, and those who pay taxes and do not belong to the indigenous Fijian community feel that these programmes are racially motivated.

The proper use of such funding allocations, particularly on capital projects, can have beneficial effects on the whole country. However, when funds are mismanaged and spent on raising the consumption expenditure of the select few, the whole purpose of the exercise is defeated and much-needed government resources are drained. The former governor of the Reserve Bank of Fiji and the current Vice Chancellor of the University of the South Pacific, Mr Siwatibau, recently stated that Fiji has lost around F$500m over the last 12 years due to bad governance (Fiji Times, 7 February 2002:1).

Economic disparity in Fiji: Is there a case for affirmative action?

Indigenous Fijian politicians and the Native Land Trust Board (NLTB) argue that Indo-Fijians are economically well-off because they receive a lot of income from sugarcane farming. This is also one of the reasons advanced by the NLTB for not renewing agricultural leases (mainly sugar). It must be pointed out that the majority of the sugarcane farmers are smallholders producing an average of 150 tonnes of sugarcane annually. The World Bank country report of as late as 1995 showed that each farmer received less than F$4,500 per annum (1995). If rent increases and other-
pressures such as demand for goodwill payments are considered, the figure amounts to a meagre F$2,400 per annum. However, despite this low-income position of the majority of the cane farmers, the sugar industry has remained the lifeblood of the economy (Prasad, 2001).

Various recent poverty reports indicate that almost the same percentage of people live below the poverty line in both major ethnic communities (Ahlburg 1995, Barr 1991; Bryant 1992; Naidu 1999). More significantly according to the Income and Expenditure survey data of 1991–92, the poorest of the poor are Indo-Fijians (Fiji Bureau of Statistics 1994). It is also often suggested that Indo-Fijians have commercial control in Fiji. Again, this seems to be an exaggeration for the consumption of the international community and the ordinary Fijians. Those who put forward this view conveniently ignore the fact that the largest and key industries in Fiji are either owned by foreigners or controlled by large domestic interests supported by the successive Fijian governments. For example, shipping, oil and petroleum, the automobile industry, banking, mining and accounting services are largely controlled by foreign interests. Income disparities between the communities are not significantly different. The 1997 Fiji Poverty Study states:

Income differences within each of the major ethnic groups are more significant than between ethnic groups. While overall, Fijian households have the lowest incomes and Others have the highest, the lower-income Indo-Fijian households are worse off than lower-income Fijian households. Low-income Others in rural areas are the worst off of all. There are more Indo-Fijian households in the very poorest section of society, numbering just over half all poor households. They have an average income 14 per cent lower than Fijian households. In the highest bracket, the average income of Indo-Fijian households is 42 per cent higher than high-income Fijian households. Fijians predominate in the middle income groups. Fijians in urban areas are relatively the best off. Poverty is in all communities, not just particular ethnic groups or sections of the society (UNDP 1997:12).

According to the 1996 annual employment survey, indigenous Fijians comprised 46.8 per cent of the total number in paid employment, an increase of 1.7 per cent since 1993, while Indo-Fijians made up 46.6 per cent of the total, a decline of 1.3 per cent since 1993. If the same trend were followed then in the year 2000, indigenous Fijians would represent about 48–49 per cent of the total in paid employment while the Indo-Fijians would be representing only 44–45 per cent. In terms of sectoral composition of paid employment, there are more indigenous Fijians in agriculture, forestry, fishing, mining and quarrying, electricity and water, transport and communication, and social and personal services. Indigenous Fijian numbers are fast increasing in the manufacturing, wholesale and retail and construction sectors (Fiji Bureau of Statistics 1996). Financial support of unjustified affirmative action policies not only undermines the confidence in the country, but it also leads to wastage of national resources. It leads to incompetence and mediocrity both in the civil service and the private sector.

Concluding comments

The preceding analysis reveals that the arguments to support affirmative action for indigenous Fijians are unsubstantiated. These include the perception that all indigenous Fijians are economically disadvantaged and that Indo-Fijians are economically well off. Affirmative action as proposed in the blueprint goes against the government reform agenda. The forces of globalisation require government to pursue policies based on equality of opportunity for those who want to undertake investment and engage in trade. Fiji cannot on one hand promote the reforms for free trade, and on the other institute policies which distort the market. This has been the case since the radical reforms of 1987 when the urban-manufacturing sector was promoted at the expense of the agricultural sector. Fiji cannot 'have the cake and eat it too'.

Affirmative or positive action for the advancement of economically disadvantaged groups must be formulated as a national policy and must have ownership by all groups to succeed. A number of studies of affirmative action programs in other countries demonstrate that the efficacy and success of such programs can be achieved if they are based on a national consensus and supported by all stakeholders (Hodges-Aeberhard and Raskin 1997). In this respect, the 1997 constitution provides an excellent framework for the development of affirmative action policies that could have positive outcomes.

Disadvantage occurs in all ethnic groups in Fiji. In fact, the indigenous Fijian community may be the wealthiest given their ownership of much of Fiji's abundant natural resources. However, this is not to say that there are no poor Fijians, and there are also poor Indo-Fijians. Affirmative action policies should not be race specific, but rather specific to individuals' living conditions.

Millions of dollars have been wasted over the years to satisfy the elite indigenous Fijians and politicians with no real benefit to the ordinary and poor indigenous Fijians, who have continued to suffer in poverty. The discrimination meted out in the process to the other communities has also put them into poverty. Affirmative action programmes in Fiji have not been based on the principles of good governance. Fiji's record reveals major scams, corruption and mismanagement, which resulted in loss of millions of dollars. The National Bank of Fiji fraud, which resulted in Fiji losing F$200m, the Commodity Development Framework fraud with a loss of F$67m and the Farming Assistance Scheme, are good examples (Reddy et al 2002).

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Political gatekeeping in selected Fijian communities: Sustaining political conservatism and a culture of silence

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Introduction

This paper demonstrates how ethnic Fijian 'political gatekeeping' sustains ethnic Fijian political conservatism by its censorship of socio-cultural and political communication. In highlighting the censorship capacities of ethnic Fijian 'paths of the land' operative in the villages surveyed, this paper attempts to demonstrate that settlement/village-based ethnic Fijian political participation as well as exposure/access to 'political stimuli' is censored and dictated to some extent by culturally defined channels of communication. Simply defined, political stimuli are iconoclastic forces that may induce or elicit a political response or reaction. The paper's focus on communication patterns aims to underline the idea that access for villagers to information and political ideas is restricted, and that this limitation of access to political resources achieves two ends.

First, it helps sustain political conservatism at the village or settlement level by vetting the type of political ideologies and ideas filtering through to the villagers. Second, it helps to impose control and boundaries upon the political interactions of the villagers and the outside world. In view of this, the ‘culture of silence’ that pervades ethnic Fijian politics is apparently rooted in ethnic Fijian political gatekeeping. This paper, therefore, examines the tribal/clan organisations and the paths of the land operative in four ethnic Fijian villages and two peri-urban settlements to highlight how these social structures and culturally defined *sala vakavanua* may censor different levels of communication between the village/settlement and the external world. The paper also examines how the social structures define paths of the land to show how ethnic Fijian political gatekeeping is shaped by affinal links, as well as by existing Fijian sociopolitical hierarchies. The paths of the land are not confined to regulating the relay of ceremonial messages. They do have the capacity to censor the content of politically oriented messages flowing into the villages and settlements.

Since the late 1990s, there has been an emergent emphasis on the need for good governance and for democratisation in development debates. From the broad spectrum of definitions of democratisation and popular participation, the paper selects the following perceptions of the two concepts. Boutros-Ghali (1996:1) defines democratisation as 'a process which leads to a more open, more participatory, less authoritarian society', while Westergaard (1986:25) explains 'popular participation' as 'collective efforts to increase and exercise control over resources and institutions on the part of groups and movements hitherto excluded from control'.

One important aspect of both popular participation and democratisation is the availability of democratic communication systems allowing the free flow of information as well as equitable access to information for all citizens of a nation. Supek underlined this idea when he stated that the 'ideal of any democracy is for public opinion to develop freely. It is an ambition of direct democracy to eliminate all centres of power — political or economic — capable of monopolising information sources and manipulating public opinion' (1986:191).

The paths of the land utilised in Fijian villages are non-democratic and authoritarian because they provide for selective rather than equitable access to information. Such restriction of access to information suppresses the free flow of information to and from villages and settlements, thereby effectively censoring public opinion. Even though slightly more than 50 per cent of the indigenous population now reside in urban areas where political cultures are to some extent shaped by the modern media, indigenous political gatekeeping mechanisms transferred from the rural to urban areas can still wield significant influence on urban indigenous political orientations.

Theoretical framework

Di Palma (1970:4) emphasised the importance of societal influences when he suggested that 'if we focus on the role of social position and individual orientations towards politics, we see participation as the expression and the product of a person’s integration into the system of social and political relations'. Easton (1965:22) elaborated on the idea that social systems have an important imprint upon a society's politics when he stated that in 'a given society the systems other than the political system constitute a source of many influences that create and shape the conditions under which the political system itself must operate'. This paper spotlights ethnic Fijian political gatekeeping as an important societal factor sustaining ethnic Fijian political conservatism.

Ethnic Fijian political gatekeeping is ingrained in existing communication channels identified here as the paths of the land. These *sala vakavanua* regulate the flow of socio-cultural and political information to and from Fijian polities by posting specific gatekeepers at various *mata ni katuba* (gateways) through which information passes through until it reaches its intended final destination. Within any ethnic Fijian polity, the paths of the land are the socio-cultural and political channels of communication which direct the flow of information from the centre (capital or
chief village) to the periphery (villages of lower to lowest rank), and vice versa. They have become entrenched in the colonially established native governance system, as these *sala vakavanua* operate according to colonially restructured provincial, district and village social hierarchies. Most provinces in Fiji have a socio-political capital (the centre) of chiefly *vanua* to and from which information flows according to set patterns defined as its paths of the land. The same centre-to-periphery principle applies in paths of the land operative at the *tikina* (district) and *koro* (village) levels.

Ravuvu (1987:21) identified various paths of the land in the Wainimala valley on southeastern Viti Levu. These were the *sala ni vata* (the path for war) in pre-colonial days, the *sala vakatuanga* or chiefly path and the *sala ni yalewa* (path of the woman). Social (mainly affinal) and sometimes political criteria determine who (whether it be the individual or the clan) assumes the role of the message conveyor or *mata ki* (traditional envoys or emissaries) in these *sala vakavanua*. Ravuvu (1987:15) observed that when communication through given paths of the land takes place between two tribes, the *mata ki* clans of the two tribes are usually the two units that communicate. Some degree of information processing will eventuate at various points of inter-clan communication involving the relay of socio-cultural and political messages. Furthermore, there is a need to consider the implications of this information processing in terms of the edited context of political information that reaches the grassroots at the periphery level.

**Political gatekeeping in Sigatoka village, Western bloc**

Sigatoka village is less than a kilometre from the heart of Sigatoka Town and, despite its urban location, is a formally registered Fijian village. It is located near the centre of the Nakuruwakarua seat of power.

The regulation of information flow in Sigatoka village is unique because it features the household of a *matanivanua* (traditional herald) as the key gateway between the chief and other *mata ni katuba* at which socio-cultural messages or notices are initially divulged. This household is named Talenahila, which translates into the Bauan dialect as *dua ga na voaladoma* (literally: one word/voice). The gatekeeper at Talenahila is the Tui Sigatoka’s herald, who, at the time of the survey was 71-year-old Timoci Wainimala valley on southeastern Viti Levu. These were the

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**Political gatekeeping in Muana village, Rewa, Eastern bloc**

A consideration of the district level sociopolitical hierarchy in the *tikine* Toga Naqavoka is perhaps prudent at this point because the paths of the land operative between Muana village and the external world is defined by this hierarchy. Muana village sits on a small island opposite Davuilevu on the Kings highway. Muana villagers comprise a sole tribe called Nakorolevu.

Four clans make up the Nakorolevu tribe. Three villages comprise the district of Toga Naqavoka. These are Nanokonoko, Vunisei and Muana. The paramount chief of Toga, titled as Vunivalu, resides in Nanokonoko. Nanokonoko constitutes the leading tribe in the *vanua* of Toga Naqavoka while the *sauturaga* (noble) tribe called Navokai occupies Vunisei. The *levu i* (people) of Muana comprise the sole tribe of Nakorolevu, which serves as *bati kei* or warriors of Toga. The district of Toga is in turn the *bati kei* Rewa. In terms of centre-periphery relations, Muana village is the peripheral village while Nanokonoko features as the capital seat of power in the Toga Naqavoka district.

This centre-periphery configuration sanctions to a great degree the interaction of Muana with the outside world. According to four Muana village male respondents, communication to and from their village flows according to a well-defined hierarchical, centre-to-periphery pattern. Hence, since Muana village ranks the lowest of the three villages comprising the Toga district, it is always the
socio-political hierarchy, the utilisation of paths of the land within a segment belonging to a particular province may practise the customs set in the settlement. Given this multi-provincial make-up, no binding social hierarchy has been imposed on the residents. Hence, the settlement is banded into the three Confederacies of Tovata, Kubuna and Tailevu, Rewa and other provinces residing in this area. When communication needs relaying within the settlement, residents are sometimes banded into the three Confederacies of Tovata, Kubuna and Burebasaga. Messages or notices flowing in may therefore be disseminated to members of the three confederacies through their respective representatives. The iVakatawa (Methodist lay preacher) in the settlement holds a special position in the Peceliema community as he fulfils a role similar to that of the village headman in any formally registered Fijian village. Moreover, it is the iVakatawa who mediates between the settlement and the Fijian Affairs Board. This sets him out as a key gatekeeper in the settlement's interactions with the Fijian Affairs Board. Socio-cultural communication in the settlement does not feature the use of elaborate sala vakavanua found in formal Fijian villages. In the absence of a binding sociopolitical hierarchy, the pattern of relaying socio-cultural as well as political notices and messages to and from the settlement is not bounded by paths of the land similar to those operative in the formally-registered Fijian villages.

The settlement lacks a binding social hierarchy, hence the typical village orthodoxy is absent. However, in spite of the absence of elaborate sala vakavanua, the settlement featured specific gatekeepers mediating between the residents and external communicators.

**The East–West contrasts and comparisons**

A significant difference between the village orthodoxies in the west and those in the Central Division was noted apropos the regulation of communication. In Singatoka, the Western example of sala vakavanua lacked specific traditional envoys to transmit communication to and from the villages surveyed. Furthermore, the district and provincial level patterns of communication relay did not accommodate any social hierarchy where villages were ranked according to their social status in a district and provincial configuration. The village of Muana featured paths of the land that worked in accordance with the two villages' ranks in the Tailevu and Rewa provincial and district hierarchies respectively. The veimataki relationships between the villages in Tailevu defining the paths of the land featuring traditional envoys is absent in the Nadroga province.

Nevertheless, despite the differences in the east and west village orthodoxies discussed above, the fact remains that communication between all the villages and settlements surveyed and the external world is regulated according to set patterns recognised and used by the villagers. This regulation of communication, including those pertaining to politics constitutes what Easton (1965) referred to as political gatekeeping.

**Conclusions**

The foregoing examination of the censorship capacities of various paths of the land in the two Fijian villages and one peri-urban settlement should underlie the idea that the exposure of ethnic Fijian communities to political information as well as village/settlement-based political participation by ethnic Fijians is shaped to some extent by societal forces such as political gatekeeping.

**Peri-urban communication patterns**

Peceliema is a suburban Fijian settlement in Suva. The ethnic composition is not homogeneous, for there are Lauans as well as people from Tailevu, Rewa and other provinces residing in this settlement. Given this multi-provincial make-up, no binding social hierarchy has been imposed on the residents. Hence, the settlement does not have a traditional paramount leader or tribal chief. Each segment belonging to a particular province may practise the customs found in their own province. When communication needs relaying throughout the Peceliema settlement, residents are sometimes banded into the three Confederacies of Tovata, Kubuna and
affinal-based linkages and social hierarchies. The main argument highlighted by this article is that the non-conservative or radical ideas are censored by political gatekeepers stationed at various culturally defined gateways in the *sala vakavanua*. Logically, Tri (1986:39) emphasised that 'information lies at the root of participation and its equitable sharing is to a great extent equivalent to power sharing'.

Any future attempt to diffuse liberal democracy ideals or other non-conservative political ideas among ethnic Fijian communities will need to consider how ethnic Fijian political gatekeeping can either help facilitate or negate the success of such an enterprise.

**Notes**

1 *A mata ni katuba* literally refers to a doorway. In the context of ethnic Fijian socio-cultural communication channels, a *mata ni katuba* refers to a social unit (it can be a household or clan) which receives and relays information according to the defined paths of the land.

**References**


Population dynamics and development in the Pacific: Making the connection

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Introduction

Most countries in the Pacific have had considerable exposure to Western-style economic development in recent decades, and have adopted many features of a modern Western lifestyle. Almost all have modern public and commercial sectors, even if they are small, and considerable exposure to the outside world through travel, tourism and the media. High levels of internal migration and circulation mean that only the most remote areas remain totally isolated, while primary education has become nearly universal in most of the region.

Yet nine of the 22 member countries and territories of the South Pacific Community (SPC), including several of the most populous, still have population growth rates of 2 per cent per annum or more, and another five have rates in excess of 1 per cent. If current trends persist, the region's total population of around 8.2 million could double in less than 25 years (see Table 1).

Table 1 shows the annual population increase as absolute numbers and in terms of additional school classrooms needed each year, assuming an average of 30 people per classroom. Investment is also needed to keep pace with the increasing demand for health care and other services. There is little unused arable land in most Pacific countries, and they are usually obliged to sell off rather than utilise their oceanic fisheries, forests and minerals because of the high cost of exploitation. In view of this, such high growth rates seriously threaten the balance between population and available resources.

Table 1 Population size and growth, SPC island member countries and territories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Growth (p.a.)</th>
<th>Growth (people p.a.)</th>
<th>Equivalent in classrooms</th>
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<td>799,265</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>13,170</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Caledonia</td>
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<td>4,732</td>
<td>158</td>
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<td>Papua New Guinea</td>
<td>5,099,200</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>137,678</td>
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<td>Solomon Islands</td>
<td>409,042</td>
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<td>11,453</td>
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<td>189,712</td>
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<td>CNMI</td>
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<td>Nauru</td>
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</tr>
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Source: SPC Demography/Population Programme.

Why have Pacific population growth rates remained so high? The underlying cause seems to be the style of development that has occurred, and especially that modernisation has been confined to urban areas or special enclaves, while village life has remained virtually intact. This has led to an economic and cultural dualism that has weakened population feedback mechanisms. As a consequence, economic development in the Pacific has not triggered a demographic transition of the sort experienced in Europe and Asia.

Factors in changing population growth rates

Studies across many countries throughout the world have shown that two main factors are consistently associated with declining family size, regardless of whether or not a population policy is in place. The first is increasing educational and wage employment opportunities, especially for women. When women receive more education and have the option of becoming wage earners, their role in the household economy changes. It becomes more cost-effective for them to find wage jobs than to stay at home raising children. Women generally cannot care for their children while working, so it is an advantage to have smaller families.

The second factor associated with smaller family size is changing household economic patterns. This has been characterised by Caldwell (1982) as a change...
in the direction of 'wealth flows', or the flow of benefits, between parents and children. In a traditional lifestyle, food and shelter tend to be cheap and easily obtained, so it is inexpensive to raise children. Children can even make a useful contribution to the household from a young age by gathering food and caring for animals and other children, and can contribute to food production as soon as they are physically strong enough. Within a few years, the flow of wealth is mainly from children to parents, so it is an advantage for parents to have large families, for both economic and social security.

In contrast, in modern, wage-based societies wealth flows from parents to children for much longer. Since food and clothing are purchased rather than produced at home, and children need many years of education before they can enter the workforce, it is more expensive to raise children. They have little opportunity to contribute to the household economy and remain dependent on their parents for many more years than in a traditional society. Although these children may eventually have the capacity to care for their parents very well, it could be many years before parents receive any benefits. The long period of time during which parents must support their children, and the higher earning potential of each child if more is spent on education, are thus incentives to have smaller families.

Others have advanced different theories to explain why fertility declines with modernisation, such as responses to changes in income and relative prices (Becker 1991), or utility maximisation and changes in tastes and aspirations (Easterlin 1985). The underlying argument remains the same, however: that development changes economic patterns within the family, which in turn affects the value of children and decisions about optimum family size.

For these two fertility-reducing factors to take effect, couples need some form of family planning capability. In today's world that means good access to modern contraception, but as Demey (1988) points out, population declines in the late nineteenth century preceded access to superior contraceptive technology and were the result of individual motivation to keep fertility low. These early transitions to lower fertility were achieved largely by using traditional family planning methods, and abortion. Conversely, when incentives to reduce fertility are not present, family planning programs and population policies seldom achieve substantial reductions in fertility, as evidenced by the negligible impact on fertility of the national population policies of Solomon Islands (1987) and Papua New Guinea (National Advisory Committee on Population Policy 1988).

Fertility in the Pacific

The style of development that has occurred in the Pacific has tended to inhibit the development of incentives to reduce fertility. Confining wage employment opportunities to enclaves in urban areas and special development sites, such as mines and plantations, has led to high levels of internal migration and circulation between rural and urban areas. Pacific people have dual affiliations, to both the village and modern sector.

Elsewhere in the world, the transition from traditional to modern life (rural to urban) tends to be a continuum, with individuals progressively become less traditional as they become more modern (Oommen 1995). For example, migration to major Asian cities such as Bangkok, Jakarta or Manila usually involves a major upheaval that results in a completely different lifestyle and greatly reduced contact with the village of origin.

In contrast, the majority of people living in Pacific urban areas retain very close contact with their villages. Although Pacific society has changed a great deal over the past 50 or more years, and every country has modernised to some extent, traditional culture remains very strong. 'Culture plays a much more significant role in national economies and national life of Pacific countries than it does in most other regions of the world' (Hooper 2000:3). Even though they may be fully involved in modern sector employment and possibly living in a nuclear family, Pacific people are still involved in traditional life and networks of obligations that link them closely with their kin.

Pacific towns such as Apia, Nuku'alofa and Port Vila are effectively clusters of villages with strong links to villages in rural areas. Rural-to-urban migrants simply move to an urban or peri-urban village to join relatives, and live a lifestyle that is not very different from their rural village lifestyle. In some countries commuting is becoming common. In Samoa, for example, many formal sector workers travel an hour or more by bus to work in Apia, and return each night to their rural village homes. Pacific people are thus both modern and traditional at the same time.

The persistence of village affiliations weakens commitment to the modern sector. For the majority of Pacific Islanders, the modern sector is a source of additional income, but their village affiliations dominate their life. Rapasing describes how employment is considered only a temporary and transitory phase of life in Solomon Islands:

> Only a few enduring souls spend 10 years or more holding down regular jobs. Most Solomon Islanders in many ways still regard the village way of life as their way of life and not only aspire to it but even spend time and resources in trying to maintain and improve it for the day when they can leave their regular jobs (1999:20).

If confronted with ongoing difficulties in the workplace, inexperienced or experienced workers are equally likely to decide to drop out and retreat to the village. Village life provides a cheap lifestyle to fall back on, and a safety net of care for those who are unable to provide for themselves, so families tend to be larger than in modern urban societies. American Samoa, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu all have average lifetime fertility rates in excess of four children per woman.

In villages there are plenty of family members around to help those in formal employment. If a woman does obtain wage work, other family members who are less busy will care for her children, so having a large family does not necessarily mean that she must give up work to care for them. Even when school fees need to be paid, other family members are usually willing to help those who
cannot afford to support their own family. Receiving assistance in this way creates reciprocal obligations that are met at a later date.

The traditional system of obligations discourages business initiatives. Would-be entrepreneurs in the Pacific tend to find it difficult to accumulate capital for business development and expansion because of pressure to share profits with relatives, even though reinvestment could lead to bigger profits in the long term. Pressure to use wages to meet family obligations can also discourage participation in formal employment.

Internal migration supports high fertility. Children may start life in a traditional village where living costs are very low, and where couples can see no disadvantage in having a large family. Later they may be sent to an urban area for education and employment. If they succeed and find work, their families will share in the benefits of modernisation. If they are unable to find work after completing their education, they have a choice of living in poverty in the urban area or returning to the village safety net of food and shelter.

From a rural perspective, having more children appears to increase the possibility that one of them will find well-paid formal employment, much as buying more tickets in a lottery appears to increase the chances of winning. Thus the concentration of modern activities in urban areas tends to inhibit the development of incentives to have smaller families.

The effects of population pressure

Until recently this dualism did not present a problem, since resources were relatively abundant and populations were small. However, it is now becoming apparent that, in Melanesia and Micronesia especially, population pressure is increasing and current population growth rates are unsustainable. In much of Polynesia also, current rates of natural population increase would be unsustainable but for high levels of emigration to developed countries on the Pacific rim. Throughout the Pacific, there is increasing involvement with the cash economy and a growing demand for wage employment to fund the purchase of imported food and other commodities. Unless the development-population feedback is strengthened and there are incentives to reduce fertility, the Pacific could soon experience a dramatic decline in living standards.

The conventional economic wisdom is that low levels of involvement in the cash economy and high unemployment rates, among school leavers especially, occur simply because the rate of job creation in the modern sector is too slow, and that faster job creation will solve the problem. In most Pacific countries, however, it is unlikely that the rate of formal employment creation could ever be sufficient.

In Fiji Islands in 2000, there were five people of working age for every formal sector job, and in Solomon Islands there were eight (UNDP 2001). In Samoa, only 1,000 out of 4,500 school leavers a year find formal employment or continue to higher education, while the rest become unemployed or are absorbed into the subsistence sector (Government of Western Samoa 1997:20). Around 50,000 reach working age each year in Papua New Guinea, but only 5,000 find jobs. Most of those who do not find jobs do not have any qualifications (Tauta 1997:185).

Changing the trend

The solution is to adopt a different model of economic development, based on a broader approach to human resources development and decentralisation of economic activity, rather than the urban, formal sector-based Western model. The objective should be to promote the decentralisation of small business and wage employment to rural areas, by giving rural people the skills to start their own enterprises in villages, rather than depending on job creation in the formal sector and labour migration. This would have the twin benefits of increasing rural wealth while providing incentives to reduce fertility.

The essential foundation for this approach is a multifaceted education system — technical and vocational, informal and formal. There is especially a need for post-secondary education, both formal and informal. Although there has been substantial investment in education and training in the Pacific in the past, the mix has not always been appropriate. Most resources have been devoted to formal education for formal employment, while vocational education and non-formal education tend to be underfunded and left to NGOs and civil society (Forum Education Ministers Meeting 2001a).

There is still a continuing need to develop and improve formal education, since there is a shortage of Pacific islanders with the high-level skills needed for senior professional and management position. Other types of education, however, should be more widely available. Under present education systems, many potential workers, both school leavers and older, are unable to find jobs because they have been trained for mid-level white-collar jobs, even though there are relatively few such jobs in small Pacific economies. At the same time, there are shortages of people with vocational, entrepreneurial and business skills, and the small business and informal sectors are underdeveloped (UNDP 1999:35). This is partly because of a common perception among parents that formal education and white-collar employment is the ideal for everyone, while other types of education and employment are poor alternatives.

Vocational and informal education needed should be available to everyone in the community, not just the young. Men and women, as well as school leavers, can learn skills such as small engine and appliance repair, furniture making and the manufacture of prepared foods and cosmetics at informal education courses. Since some traditional skills have income-generating potential, the elderly also can be involved, as teachers and advisers.

It is important that employment education uses appropriate teaching methods, especially hands-on training and practical experience, rather than the passive learning and memorising that has tended to dominate Pacific education in the past. Practical training in business skills and management should also be available in schools and colleges.
Community enterprise should be supported by well-managed low-cost credit schemes. Free management advisory services are also needed, since lack of management skills is the main cause of small business failure. Business advisers should advise on appropriate business structures and activities, help potential entrepreneurs apply for loan capital, advise on business management, and provide free or very low-cost bookkeeping and management services. Advisers could visit schools to raise awareness of the need for income generation and small business activities, and ensure that young people become oriented towards business and income generation, and know there is a source of assistance available.

Community education in development opportunities and business management is also needed to ensure that infant enterprises are not stifled by the imposition of family obligations before they become viable. The other essential requirement for the decentralisation of small business and employment is the improvement of rural infrastructure — electricity, roads and communications. This will not only improve living standards, but will enable the use of power tools and computers in rural areas, which would vastly expand the range of income-generating activities that are possible.

Conclusion

The need for a review of education systems was recognised in the Pacific Forum Basic Education Action Plan (Forum Education Ministers' Meeting 2000a). This plan and the Pacific Economic Action Plan, which promotes expansion of the small business sector, were endorsed at the Forum Officials Committee meeting in Suva in August 2000. Reshaping education systems would mean devoting additional funds to education, however, as most countries are already spending as much as they can afford on retaining, reshaping and expanding their education systems. As shown in Table 1, most are obliged to make substantial investments in education simply to keep pace with the number of students reaching school age each year.

The extent to which the education systems are reshaped thus depends on countries fully understanding this vital link between the model of development adopted and fertility. Without this understanding, it is unlikely that governments would be prepared to make the considerable effort necessary to find additional resources for education. The adoption of a new approach to development will be helped by recognition that there will be many spin-offs from decentralising development and involving more of the community in income earning. For example, it would help to reduce lifestyle problems related to stress and social disruption, such as tobacco and alcohol abuse, obesity and unsafe sex (McMurray and Smith, 2001).

Since the approach to development suggested here is compatible with Pacific lifestyles, it is much more likely to improve the balance between population and resources than is the Western, urban-based model adopted in the past. The key is to foster a positive, creative approach to human resources development and employment creation that builds on Pacific skills and ingenuity, rather than ignoring them in favour of an imported model of development. Such an approach would improve rural living standards and the balance between population and resources, while preserving the unique qualities of life in the Pacific.

References

The diversity resource? Genetic research in Pacific Island futures

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Introduction

In early 2002 the Cook Islands government made headlines by agreeing to host controversial clinical trials involving the transplantation of pig cells into humans. This proposal prompted widespread debate in the Cook Islands, New Zealand and in Pacific circles. Although the case has commonly been regarded as a rare occurrence in the Pacific Islands, the perception that biotechnological ingress is new to the region is inaccurate. This paper outlines a number of instances of biomedical commerce engaging in research in the region, and two high-profile cases are detailed. These involved cutting edge biotechnology, the appropriation of human genetic information and the possibility of continuing exploitation.

This paper argues that these cases are not isolated coincidences, but represent an ongoing trend. Advances in biotechnology, particularly in molecular genetics, have made certain unique qualities of the Pacific Islands and peoples accessible to science. The proximity of biological science to the 'biotech' industry makes this knowledge a potential resource. And in the Pacific Islands, human biological information has already been treated as a resource, though not by Pacific Islanders themselves.

Surveying biotech involvement in the Pacific

Since 1990 there have been at least five episodes in which biotechnological interests have engaged with Pacific Island peoples and countries.

HTLV-I patent attempts in 1992

The first two episodes came to public attention in late 1995. In 1992 the US Department of Commerce made two separate attempts to patent human cell lines containing novel virus variants, as well as the novel viral DNA sequences themselves. These cell lines and resident viruses were derived from human blood cells sampled from indigenous Solomon Islanders and Papua New Guineans in the early 1990s and late 1980s. The cell lines contained unique HTLV-I virus variants isolated from blood cells of the indigenous islanders (European Patent Office 1992). HTLV-I (Human T-Lymphotropic Virus Type-I) is related to HIV. While it does not cause AIDS, it can cause the development of a form of leukaemia, as well as long-term spinal degenerative disease (tropical spastic paraparesis) (Uchiyama 1997). An estimated 10–20 million people are infected worldwide, and it has an especially high prevalence in the Caribbean, Japan and parts of Melanesia (ibid.).

The stated commercial significance of the unique viral variants and the cell lines containing them lay in their possible application in the production of diagnostic tests for HTLV-I (European Patent Office 1992a,b). In the case of the PNG-derived cell lines, the patent was actually granted (Rural Advancement Foundation International (RAFI 1995) and later withdrawn. There was widespread international outcry on discovery of the patent applications in 1995, and formal protest to the US from the two countries concerned (ibid.). From the perspective of Solomon Islanders and Papua New Guineans, the patenting of any material from human beings was outrageous and morally unacceptable (RAFI 1996; Horoi 2002). The US Department of Commerce eventually withdrew the Solomon Island application, but has not returned the materials concerned.

Diabetes genetic screening programs in Nauru and Tonga, 1997 and 2000

While perhaps less dramatic than the preceding cases, population genetic screening agreements made with the countries of Nauru and Tonga during the later 1990s have potentially wider scope since they involve the undefined screening of entire populations.

In 1997 an agreement was reached between the Melbourne-based International Diabetes Institute (IDI) and the Nauruan government, for a genetic screening programme (Seneviratne 1997), in a deal about which there is little public information. Nauru has a reported 40–45 per cent incidence of Type 2 diabetes (Williams 2001), compared to a worldwide average rate of less than 3 per cent. This massive rate of diabetes, combined with large family size, has been a major reason for targeting the country for genetic screening studies (ibid.). The stated interest of the IDI is to identify genes for a predisposition to Type 2 diabetes.

In 2000 there followed a similar, much publicised agreement, which granted the Australian company Autogen sampling rights to the Tongan genome. Autogen specialises in the identification of genes and therapeutic targets related to lifestyle and metabolic disorders, such as diabetes and obesity. Although Tonga carries less of a diabetes burden than Nauru, rates are elevated compared to other countries. The agreement has only recently been subject to strong criticism from within Tonga, on ethical and moral grounds. Autogen claims it has no ongoing programme there, but the fact is that Autogen's core business is in the identification and patenting of DNA sequences implicated in disease development. The
existence of some past sampling efforts in Tonga is enough to maintain concerns about the fate of any genetic information already gathered, its sources and its potential commercial value.

**Cook Islands xeno-transplantation trials**

While the previous four instances displayed biotechnological interest in genetic information from Pacific Islanders, the recent Cook Islands case has a different scientific basis, but is also related to diabetes. The case involves the New Zealand biotech firm Diatrannz and its proposal to trial xeno-transplants in the Cook Islands. Diatrannz has developed biotechnology in which insulin-producing pig cells are surgically inserted into humans in order to restore insulin production and obviate the need for daily insulin injections. Although the Diatrannz proposal does not involve genetic information, similar issues of ethics and consent are raised. A key concern in this case is the issue of biosafety and adequate medical ethics.

Trials of this technology were rejected by New Zealand regulatory authorities on the grounds of the possibility of porcine retrovirus transfer into human subjects. The fact that the Cook Islands lack the necessary scientific and technical monitoring resources highlights a similarity with the previous instances, in which modern biotechnological concerns are engaging Pacific populations and nations ill-prepared to participate on an equal basis.

It is almost certain that these five cases are not an exhaustive list of biotechnology activities in the Pacific in recent years. The nature of scientific research and knowledge prevents the easy monitoring of research activities or of knowledge that may arise from such activities. Research takes place over time, and normally outside the public sphere. It is the commercial nature of the foregoing cases that brought their existence to public attention.

In the Autogen case, the motivation for publicity lay in concerns for investor confidence in what is a publicly traded company. In the cases of the gene patents, on the other hand, while the commercial implications were the source of public interest, their discovery itself was a matter of serendipity: a Swiss researcher happened upon both the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinean variants of HTLV-I in the Solomons during an extended research effort, the commercial intent in both the cases of the gene patents were more than twice as dissimilar from a Japanese reference strain, as were all other variants.

**Patenting an infection: The HTLV-I affair in the Solomons**

Understanding the reasons for research into HTLV-I is instructive of some issues involved with genetic research in the Pacific region. The human retroviruses, HIV and HTLV-I among them, are relative newcomers to science, having only been discovered in the early 1980s, and as such are the object of much study. Particularly important scientific issues surround their origin and evolution, as well as an explanation for the discontinuous pattern of distribution around the world.

Two American teams of scientists, largely drawn from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), were active in both Papua New Guinea and the Solomons in the late 1980s working on these problems. The presence of HTLV-I in Melanesia was confirmed with its positive identification in a PNG Highlander and in unrelated Solomon Islanders (Gessain et al. 1991). A 1991 paper (Yanagihara et al. 1991) describes how blood samples were removed from Solomon Islanders previously identified as carrying HTLV-I antibodies.

The object of the reported investigation was to determine the molecular characteristics of the HTLV-I isolates from Melanesian populations. Gene sequencing analysis revealed that the variants isolated from Solomon Islanders were more than twice as dissimilar from a Japanese reference strain, as were all other variants distributed throughout the Caribbean, Americas and Africa. Such a level of divergence was interpreted as evidence of an archaic HTLV-I strain present in Melanesia, and evolving apart from cosmopolitan strains in other parts of the world.

While this evolutionary interpretation was one of the outcomes of the HTLV-I research, the significance of the gene sequence divergence was potentially wider. Parallel to purely scientific concerns was the distinctly commercial possibility of exploiting such a large variation in gene sequence for the development of diagnostic products and processes. In this sense, the HTLV-I affair may showcase the difficult grey areas associated with scientific research, in a time when many scientific advances hold some possible future commercial potential, and in an environment where even basic academic research is increasingly forced to leverage itself with industry.

There have been suggestions that the patenting application was simply a requirement of the then NIH policy of patenting any newly discovered gene sequence regardless of its origin.

Regardless of the precise motivation, in September 1992, three US-based and one UK scientist filed European Patent No. WO9215325 entitled 'Solomon Islands variants of Human T-lymphotropic virus' in which they claimed rights over the human cell line SI-5, and the gene sequence that distinguished the Solomon Island variant. The human cell line SI-5 was an immortalised cell line, that is, a line of cells clonally descended from the original white blood cells removed from the unnamed Solomon Islander, a 58-year-old patient from Guadalcanal.

Three years later the application, still not approved, was uncovered. The public reaction was tumultuous and the application was withdrawn. But the HTLV-I variant and its host cell line SI-5, remains the property of the NIH, and the information they contain remains in limbo, just like the identity of their source, the human 'ancestor' of the SI-5 line.

**The search for genes in Tonga**

While the patent applications on HTLV-I in the Solomons came at the end of an extended research effort, the commercial intent in Autogen's 2000 agreement with Tonga was up-front and obvious. Autogen's corporate website identifies as some of its core assets its exclusive access to a variety of populations throughout the world, with elevated incidences of target diseases (Autogen Limited...
straightforward matter. The range of questions that may be raised of these protocols in the context of the about biotechnology practices in the rights and intellectual property rights. However, the application requires that any procedure or treatment (including sampling) have been devised to reduce ambiguity and 'Prior informed consent' is a pillar of modern bioethical practice. Informed consent is a principle of modern bioethical practice, on which the biotechnology industry increasingly operates within a worldview that assumes the acceptability, indeed the necessity, of establishing property rights over life, life forms and genetic materials. For most Islanders, this assumption is at best incomprehensible, and at worst, anathema. Ruth Liloqula, a prominent Solomon Islander, put it succinctly: 'In our culture, genes are not inventions' (RAFI 1996). This applies to an even greater extent when considering human biological and genetic materials. Obtaining consent for the use of materials for 'medical purposes' may not entail consent for the establishment of exclusive commercial rights over what individuals might intuitively assume to be inalienable. Of particular concern is the potential for the use of materials to shift through the continuum from medicine to science to business, without the participants being made aware of these possibilities.

Issues of intention

Regardless of the methodology of obtaining consent in biomedical research, there are also underlying matters of intent. These concerns have been expressed vocally, especially by many indigenous groups. The biotechnology industry increasingly operates within a worldview that assumes the acceptability, indeed the necessity, of establishing property rights over life, life forms and genetic materials. For most Islanders, this assumption is at best incomprehensible, and at worst, anathema. Ruth Liloqula, a prominent Solomon Islander, put it succinctly: 'In our culture, genes are not inventions' (RAFI 1996). This applies to an even greater extent when considering human biological and genetic materials. Obtaining consent for the use of materials for 'medical purposes' may not entail consent for the establishment of exclusive commercial rights over what individuals might intuitively assume to be inalienable. Of particular concern is the potential for the use of materials to shift through the continuum from medicine to science to business, without the participants being made aware of these possibilities.

Issues of benefit

The Convention on Biological Diversity establishes an extremely useful precedent for the negotiation of benefits from the use of biological materials, diversity and even genetic variation. Although royalty payments on the commercial flow-on effects are an attractive option, even these instruments raise ethical issues. For instance, in cases where genetic information is shared by ethnic groups that are in several nations, how is benefit shared? To what extent is the use of biodiversity as a resource, for instance for the purposes of tourism, paralleled by the use of genetic diversity as a resource? These ethical concerns persist throughout issues of benefit.

Biological diversity: A remoteness dividend at last?

The surprising level of genetic divergence displayed by the Melanesian HTLV-I variant when compared to cosmopolitan strains has been taken as evidence of prolonged isolation experienced by
Anthropologists and archaeologists have had a long and continuing support a local research industry. The risks inherent in assuming a role of academia and medicine in genetic research still being investigated by a number of researchers. While intellectual property concerns have long been held with regard to cultural knowledge, there has been less awareness of the potential for knowledge appropriation by the natural sciences. These issues will be best addressed not through government intervention and regulation, but through significantly increased and enhanced coordination between Island researchers and academics, and between them and respective national and regional authorities.

The biodiversity created by isolation extends to the entire island ecosystem. That there is potential for biotechnological research and value in biological research into the flora and fauna, is a given. A number of other factors need to be developed to take advantage of these opportunities.

**Biotech backdoors? The role of academia and medicine in genetic research**

Anthropologists and archaeologists have had a long and continuing interest in the Pacific Islands (see for instance Kirch et al. 1987). In recent decades molecular technologies have been added to their traditional research tools. The employment of these new techniques has added a new dimension to analysis of ancient migrations by allowing direct genetic comparisons between coincident ancient and modern populations (Hagelberg 1993), as well as between different contemporary ones. In the early 1990s, with the HTLV-I cases, the application of molecular genetics to anthropology crossed over into commerce, in an area of medical anthropology which is still being investigated by a number of researchers.

While intellectual property concerns have long been held with regard to cultural knowledge, there has been less awareness of the potential for knowledge appropriation by the natural sciences. These issues will be best addressed not through government intervention and regulation, but through significantly increased and enhanced coordination between Island researchers and academics, and between them and respective national and regional authorities. The only long-term option is for the research balance to shift to the islands themselves. This will require extensive planning and regional cooperation in order to leverage the basic investment to support a local research industry. The risks inherent in assuming a commodity supply position, rather than that of a biological knowledge producer, in high-value biodiversity products have been highlighted in the case of kava, and may yet play out with noni. Both are unique natural products of Pacific Island biodiversity and indigenous intellectual property, yet have been developed as international products by offshore concerns. In the case of kava, a lack of product control by the Island owners of its intellectual property aspects may have destroyed its potential as a long-term, value-added earner for the Pacific.

The biodiversity created by isolation extends to the entire island ecosystem. That there is potential for biotechnological research and value in biological research into the flora and fauna, is a given. A number of other factors need to be developed to take advantage of these opportunities.

**The future of biotech in the Pacific and the need for a regional agenda**

Biotechnology is a massive and expanding global industry, with a market capitalisation estimated at over US$224 billion. The industry's revenues have more than tripled in the past ten years. The number of patents granted annually in the industry doubled in the five years from 1992 to 1997, and doubled again in the last five years. While the likelihood of continued interest in the Pacific as a source of human and biological diversity is quite high, the exact nature of future pressures is unclear. It is this dynamic aspect of future prospects that especially requires a pro-active stance from the Island nations.

This paper is a brief overview of a complex set of issues. Because biotechnology is moving so rapidly, ethical, social and regulatory responses are everywhere struggling to keep up. This challenge is even starker in the Pacific Islands with nascent or non-existent regulatory frameworks and a weak professional base in molecular genetics and biotechnology.

Although work continues to be carried out with respect to the Convention on Biological Diversity, this needs to be supplemented by a coordinated system of active Islander researchers who are capable of developing their own research programs and providing expert advice to national and regional regulatory and governmental authorities.

Natural, cultural and historical conditions in the Pacific Islands and their peoples have created unique genetic and informational qualities. Modern biotechnological techniques have made these qualities accessible to commercial interests. The same features of Pacific Island peoples that have attracted this attention may sustain or escalate it in the future, particularly as biotechnological techniques become more sophisticated.

Serious attention must be directed to the potential social, economic and political impacts of biotechnical research and commerce in the Pacific Islands.

**References**


Central bank cooperation and coordination in the Pacific Islands

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TK Jayaraman, Economics Department, University of the South Pacific, Fiji

Introduction

In the context of globalisation, among central banks the terms cooperation and coordination have come to be associated with maintaining exchange rate stability as well as fighting currency and financial contagion, and, more recently, preventing the spread of world recession. In the past, it was often considered that such concerted action was required only among the industrialised countries. For small economies, including the Pacific Island countries (PICs), individual country reforms were deemed to be more important.

Accordingly, reforms now being implemented in PICs were designed to promote economic openness and macroeconomic stability. These goals are promoted by formulating sound and transparent economic policies, and by providing a rational regulatory framework, appropriate incentives and robust financial systems. The latter are supported by effective banking and financial institution supervision, and competent governance in both public and private sectors.

It was expected that, if all PICs implemented these reforms, the region would develop faster and would overcome 'the Pacific paradox', namely poor growth in the midst of plentiful foreign aid (World Bank 1991). Apparently for this reason, the subject of central bank cooperation and coordination received much less attention than it deserved. The objective of this article is to examine the need for effective cooperation and coordination among the central banks of PICs, and to suggest measures to improve both in the future.

Globalisation, regional integration and the tasks ahead

Increased globalization has conferred benefits on developing countries. In the last decade, world trade grew at an annual average rate of 6.8 per cent, more than double the annual world output increase of 3.2 per cent. For developing countries, the corresponding figures were much higher: trade increased at 8.3 per cent and output at 5.5 per cent. During the second half of the last decade, PICs in particular fared badly, with poor growth in real output and trade. The Caribbean islands, with which PICs share many features (Fairbairn and Worrell 1996), performed well. Among the Caribbean islands, eight island countries belonging to the Eastern Caribbean Currency Union, which has a single currency, have done far better.

Studies by Duncan et al (1999) and Knapman and Saldanha (1999) show that PICs have not been able to take full advantage of integration into the global economy. With low domestic saving rates, extreme dependence on primary exports and minimal manufacturing capabilities, PICs risk being marginalised. Leaders of PICs are aware that globalisation would draw in much-needed capital, facilitate private investment in key areas and help the transfer of technology, thereby increasing the access of local exports to world markets. Towards these objectives, aside from the requirement that governments must create a suitable environment to encourage domestic investment and attract foreign direct investment (FDI), regional integration is critically needed to overcome the obstacles created by the smallness of markets in each individual PIC.

A foreign investor would find it profitable to invest in producing goods for export in a given PIC only if the regional market is assured. The liberalisation of intraregional trade would present a bigger market, replacing small individual national markets. Referring to North Africa, Chabrier (2001) observed gravity models linking bilateral trade flows to the economic size of, and the distance between, trading partners, and showed that bilateral trade between, for example, Algeria and its neighbours, is substantially below its potential.

A European investor would prefer to set up business in Europe to produce goods for export to North African countries, rather than investing in Algeria. An Australian investor would be ready to invest in Vanuatu, for example, if his exports to other PICs are assured entry free of any impediments. The creation of larger markets also confers benefits on domestic investors by creating economies of scale in production and distribution, lowering transaction costs and increasing the reliability of market demand.

Regional cooperation, now being accelerated by the Pacific Island Countries Trade Agreement which promotes free trade among 14 PICs, should not be confined to trade alone. The establishment of regional infrastructures, both physical and financial, is also necessary. Physical infrastructures include regional transport and telecommunications. Financial infrastructures would cover payment systems, merging of stock exchanges, harmonising investment incentives and tax systems, and labour market reform.

PICs would do well to extend such cooperation to other areas as well: exchanging views on respective reform programmes,
discussing common issues, sharing best practice standards, coordinating regulatory reforms and harmonising property rights and investment law. Such efforts would eliminate the market fragmentation that makes the region unattractive to investors. Further, the regional approach would enable PICs to pool their human resources to achieve greater technical and administrative competence.

Regional cooperation would also contribute to macroeconomic stability. Such cooperation comes in the form of regional peer group surveillance, which would help reduce the risks of macroeconomic slippage. Surveillance tasks would include laying down convergence criteria, targets and a time schedule (Jayaraman 2001a). In particular, the focus would be on exchange rate stability in the region as a whole, which certainly hinges on domestic fiscal and monetary discipline in each country. Aiming at exchange rate stability indirectly brings to attention issues of technical and administrative competence in the central bank of each PIC in the areas of liquidity management and autonomy, which is referred to as central bank independence (Jayaraman 2001b). Participating in a structured program of central bank cooperation would permit national authorities to pursue reforms in regard to central bank independence that aim at eliminating the fiscal abuse of central banks (Fry 1993), and other politically difficult measures at home.

An active program of central bank cooperation would be a precursor to monetary integration, including the formation of a currency union, once intraregional trade volume has reached a high level. Experiences in Africa and the Caribbean have shown that it is worthwhile pursuing ways and means of encouraging greater central bank cooperation.

Experiences from other regions

Regional integration measures in Africa and the Caribbean present contrasting experiences. Africa has many different, overlapping regional arrangements, particularly in eastern and southern Africa. On the other hand, in the Caribbean there is one single regional organisation, the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM), which has now been in existence for more than 40 years. CARICOM, which evolved as a free trade area, finally emerged as a customs union (Hilaire et al 1994).

A commitment to integration efforts provided an impetus to central bank cooperation efforts in Africa and the Caribbean. Consequently, a conscious decision was made to rationalise existing arrangements (Gondwe 2001) and to resort to peer group surveillance of national macroeconomic policies, including the adoption of convergence criteria (Worrall 2001, Hilaire et al 1994, Masson and Pattillo 2001). As a result, the political leadership in the Economic Community of West African States in 2000 adopted criteria along the lines of the Maastricht accession criteria in Europe, which revolved around fiscal deficits, inflation and external debt.

In the Caribbean, the governors of central banks in CARICOM decided in 1992 on a phased approach to monetary union, which depended upon the observance of qualifying or convergence criteria. These criteria were that the countries should have had: foreign reserves equivalent to three months’ import cover for at least 12 months; a stable exchange rate for three years; and a debt–service ratio of less than 15 per cent.

The observance of convergence criteria, and their monitoring through peer group surveillance, help the cause of integration. The central banks in the Caribbean set up a think tank research institution known as the Caribbean Center for Monetary Studies (CCMS). The CCMS, manned by personnel drawn from the region’s central banks and the University of the West Indies, undertakes periodic reviews and provides information on economic and monetary developments in the region.

Central bank cooperation among PICs

The PICs have varied currency and exchange rate regimes. There are five countries which have no currencies of their own, having adopted the currencies of major developed countries as legal tender: Kiribati and Tuvalu use the Australian dollar; and the Republic of Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia and Palau use the American dollar. While Papua New Guinea (PNG) has a flexible exchange rate, there are five countries that have their currencies pegged to a basket of currencies of their major trading partners. Since regional integration efforts do not cover monetary integration, there is no pressure on PICs to push beyond free trade.

There are other reasons they have not done this: despite poor growth with stagnant per capita incomes, the macroeconomic performance of PICs has not caused any serious concern. Inflation has been generally low, as imports have been from Australia and New Zealand, whose central banks have been targeting inflation. Fiscal deficits are also low because of substantial external aid. Further, inflows of private remittances help to balance the external payments.

Reforms, however, are not sufficient to attract FDI to supplement domestic savings and to upgrade managerial and technical expertise. The FDI inflows of PICs have been much lower than those of the Caribbean islands. It is important to present the region to overseas investors as stable, growing and solid so that foreign businesses can become competitive by overcoming the handicaps imposed by PICs — small markets, weak basic infrastructure and limited financial and human resources. The monetary authority of each PIC should coordinate and cooperate with each of the others to promote macroeconomic stability in the region as a whole.

The central banks in the region have no doubt in the past been in touch with each other. Notable among such meetings are the annual meetings of central bank governors, which are held in different capitals of the region. Although there is no fixed agenda for such annual meetings, no minutes are kept to enable a follow-up of subjects discussed, personal contacts have proved helpful. The subjects covered in annual meetings since the mid-1990s include banking supervision,
training and legislation for better monitoring, and controlling illegal money flows to financial centres under tax haven status in various PICs. Other cooperative activities include staff development in PIC central banks, arrangements for staff visits to other central banks to gain work experience and improve the profile of the country.

In this regard, efforts by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in the Pacific region deserve mention. Regional organisations such as the Asian Development Bank are able to monitor macroeconomic performance by using the IMF mission reports. These reports provide the necessary information to compare countries' performances and stimulate discussion.

Further, the IMF set up a Pacific Financial Technical Assistance Center (PFTAC) in Fiji in the mid-1990s, to provide technical assistance and training to PICs in selected areas. These included budget management, tax administration and policy, banking regulation and supervision and statistics. The PFTAC has, however, avoided sensitive areas such as the harmonisation of monetary and exchange rate policies.

Because of this, critical components of central bank cooperation are missing in the region. There is no requirement on the part of central banks to pursue targets similar to the convergence criteria pursued by CARICOM. Consequently, the maintenance of exchange rate stability in the region as a whole is missing: such strategies as bilateral/multilateral currency swap arrangements and improvements in liquidity management, including open market operations and debt management, would contribute to making the region stable.

There is no institutional support to monitor the conditions in the region corresponding to that of the CCMS in the Caribbean region. The absence of mechanisms to achieve peer surveillance of macroeconomic stability has forced PICs to rely on multilateral organisations, which at times have been found by the PIC concerned to be too critical and less constructive on sensitive aspects.

A lack of policy commitment on the part of governments with regard to economic integration beyond trade does not mean that PICs cannot explore further avenues of central bank cooperation. Past experience indicates that central banks in PICs did have some understanding with each other, especially in regard to bilateral/multilateral currency swap arrangements. In times of foreign exchange crisis, when a country's exchange rate is under severe stress, the central banks of the PICs could come to the rescue of others in the region by establishing a network of swap and repurchase agreement facilities among themselves.

It is understood that, in the mid-1980s, an informal swap and repurchase arrangement was executed successfully by Samoa and Fiji, when Samoa was awaiting the finalisation of an IMF program of assistance. At that time, Samoa's reserves were at critical levels, its currency was under stress, and essential imports, such as fuel, were found to be very difficult to finance. It would be worthwhile formalising such arrangements.

Further, the central bank governors in the region may consider meeting more than once a year and extending their meeting agenda to cover new subjects that, until now, have been considered fairly independent and sensitive. These would include providing training in financial supervision and regulation to achieve a more collaborative stance. Considering the acute shortage of expertise in the region, it would pay not only to harmonise the appropriate legislative measures, but also to pool the available expertise and resources into a regional effort that would deal specifically with financial supervision and regulation.

Conclusion

More concerted efforts are needed to assure international investors that the region is stable, which would contribute to overcoming the handicaps imposed by the smallness of national markets and inadequate human resources. In such an enabling macroeconomic environment, factories and businesses can be located within the region to serve the regional market as a whole, without any impediments to the movement of goods or services utilising regional resources. Only under such circumstances can the benefits of globalisation, which have eluded PICs so far, be obtained.

Now that free trade has become a distinct possibility, central banks should explore together areas of coordination and cooperation. One step that is within their capacities is setting up a Pacific Island centre for macroeconomic studies, with expertise drawn from the region's central banks and the University of the South Pacific, which could function as a think tank for the region.

Note

1. We owe this information to Mr S Siwatibau, a former governor of the Reserve Bank of Fiji, now vice-chancellor of the University of the South Pacific, Suva, Fiji.

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Structural reforms, political instability and economic growth in Fiji: Sustainability in the long-run

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Introduction

Fiji's economic problems began in the mid-1980s when the first steps towards the introduction of structural adjustment policies were adopted in line with IMF guidelines. In 1984, the Alliance government introduced a wage freeze, adopted economic policy measures designed to bring fiscal discipline into the country, and moved towards restructuring other sectors of the economy. The economic decline was further aggravated by the military coups of 1987. Governments after 1987 continued with the structural reforms, which are now central to Fiji's fundamental policy direction. Some of the reforms paid dividends in the form of economic growth and employment, but this was not sustainable. The putsch of May 2000 further eclipsed the growth potential in a struggling economy. The lack of investment, political uncertainty and the impending solutions to the property rights in land leases have further compounded Fiji's economic woes.

Recent economic performance

Despite two decades of structural reform, Fiji's economic performance has not improved. What are the some of the reasons for this? Was the reform process properly undertaken? Are further reforms necessary and if so in what areas? This paper addresses some of these questions, and points out that while structural reforms may have achieved some improvement in economic performance, the political instability created through coups, putsch and other elements associated with these not only retarded the reform process, but also affected the overall economic performance.

The recent economic performance of the Fijian economy has been low and not sufficient to absorb the growing labour force. Average growth rates were higher between 1970 and 1975, but since the 1980s growth rates have been very low, particularly post-1987. In terms of sectoral performances, the garment sector performed well, with the government's tax-free factory policies attracting significant investment. The sugar sector is on the decline, with the prediction that it will not survive because of problems relating to land leases. The sugar industry's GDP share has continued to decline over the last decade, and is likely to decline further in 2002. Its share of GDP declined from 11.3 per cent in 1996 to 7 per cent in 2001, with a likely further decline to 6.2 per cent in 2002. The sugar industry's share of all agricultural activity is projected to decline from 41.2 per cent in 1996 to 25.6 per cent in 2002. Because of the declining sugar output, the significance of sugar manufacturing has declined from 22.4 per cent of all manufacturing in 1996 to only 15.5 per cent in 2001. A further decline of 1.2 percentage points is predicted for 2002.

Tourism has been seen as the growth sector. Tourism earnings have already surpassed sugar in terms of foreign exchange earnings. In 1999, tourism earnings were estimated to be at F$558.6 million and in 2000 at F$413.5 million. Tourism earnings for 2001 are estimated to be F$489 million. It is expected that the earnings will be near the 1999 earnings. The current government estimate is at F$536.7 million (Government of Fiji 2002). Other sectors such as fisheries and forestry, which have strong growth potential, have not been as badly affected by the political crisis.

How far have structural reforms been undertaken in Fiji?

Structural reform or economic reform in general is geared towards making Fiji an export-oriented economy. The emphasis of the reforms is designed to create economic institutions and incentives that will support market-led economic growth. This is not only true for Fiji, but is now the economic policy agenda of all Pacific island nations (Duncan et al, 1999). The major areas of reform include changes in trade policies, the labour market, the goods market, public enterprise reform, civil service reforms, agriculture and land, financial sector and investment policies.

Trade policies

Trade policies for Fiji are based on the premise that these are the key to achieving high levels of economic growth. Fiji's implementation of its import substitution strategy for economic growth was beginning to show signs of collapse during the 1980s. There was a slump in the demand for domestically produced goods because of declining wages and reduced government expenditure. This required a re-evaluation of Fiji's economic policies. Similarly, Fiji's economic problems coincided with the problems of rising debts being experienced in many other developing countries. The IMF and the World Bank were already propagating a reform agenda that required restructuring of the economy to promote exports.

The current government policy is to further liberalise trade through reduction in tariff rates. The recent performance of exports...
has been less than impressive. Since 1998, the export growth rate has declined, and in 2000 it was 2.8 per cent, a decline of 0.3 per cent over 1999. It is evident that despite the continuing liberalisation of trade, the export performance overall has been poor (Reserve Bank of Fiji 2001).

The labour market

Economic reforms were accompanied by labour reforms in Fiji. The reforms were geared towards minimising distortions in the market. To bring about the reforms, in 1991 the military government in Fiji adopted a wide range of labour market policies as part of its broader structural adjustment policies. This led to changes in various laws, including the Industrial Associations Act, the Trade Union Recognition Act, the Trade Unions Act, trade unions regulations and the Trade Dispute Act. In the process labour laws were amended, and national wage and salary settlement guides were removed.

A large number of workers in paid employment earn income that is below poverty line. Taking a five-and-half-working-day week, we get 286 working days per year. Based on a wage rate of $17.71 per day, we get a total annual income of $5065.06 per year (Table 1). This is well below Fiji's poverty line income of $6240 per year, and we have 66,000 workers' who fall into this category. If we take the 1999 real wages figure, the case is much worse.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wages</th>
<th>Annual Gross Income</th>
<th>Poverty Line Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominal Income</td>
<td>286 * $17.71 = $5065.06</td>
<td>$6240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real Income</td>
<td>286 * $13.05 = $3732.30</td>
<td>$6240</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Poverty line income is derived by using UNDP's $120 per week poverty line income for Fiji.

Goods market reforms

Goods market reform was part of the broader strategy of the deregulation agenda. It was clearly intended as 'a process of both removing those barriers that protect the market from competition and or prevents it from functioning fairly, efficiently and effectively; as well as developing a new regulatory environment to protect the consumer, at the same time encouraging and ensuring that a fair and functioning competitive environment exits' (Parliament of Fiji 1997).

The process is designed to encourage competition. The theoretical rationale is that competition provides consumers a better choice of products at lower prices. This has been the policy since 1989, and government has continued to reduce the protective tariffs. Under WTO rules, the government really has no choice but to successively reduce the tariff rates on imports of goods. Often, government's stated objective is that further liberalisation of the goods market will provide a range of choice for consumers and bring about lower prices through competition.

Financial sector reforms

In the 2002 budget, the exchange control policy was further relaxed to allow delegation to authorised foreign exchange dealers. The relaxation of controls in the financial sector of Fiji were not in the interest of the large number of small-scale investors. Concerns were raised about the levels of interest rates and fees and charges being imposed by banks and financial institutions, which ultimately acted as a barrier to investment, and in some cases resulted in financial exclusion. The strong price-setting mechanisms in place in Fijian financial institutions arise from the small financial market.

Public sector reforms

These include reforms in the civil service, public sector financial management and public enterprise reform. The public sector attracts an important component of total government expenditure. The reform of the public sector is in line with the overall restructuring programme in Fiji, as is the case in many other Pacific Islands nations.

Public enterprise reform in Fiji is a matter for concern. Privatisation and corporatisation has been one of the key strategies to reduce the size of the government. This was announced in the 1993 national budget as a major policy goal. A familiar argument was put forward — that public enterprise reform would allow many costly and loss-making organisations to be re-organised so that better returns could be derived from them. The process of privatisation, however, is leading towards the creation of private monopolies, and this has not led to improvements in efficiency and services to the consumers. Telecom Fiji is a good example of a profitable public enterprise being sold to private interest.

Corporatisation of public enterprises is even more problematic and, in fact, it has led to wastage of public resources. The government commercial companies, the commercial statutory authority and re-organised enterprises have all been subject to corporatisation. Corporatisation involves re-organisation of state enterprises to improve efficiency and returns. The process of corporatisation in Fiji has been plagued with political corruption and lack of transparency and accountability. Public enterprises in Fiji are under the administration of the ministry of public enterprises, and it is the minister who appoints the board of directors. In the case of Fiji, most of these appointments have been political appointments. This leads to the appointment of people who do not have the necessary qualifications and experience. More often than not, the re-organised enterprises have the same people managing the changed structures.

Land reform

The issue of property rights in land is one of the major constraints to economic development in Fiji (Prasad and Tisdell, 1996). Eighty seven per cent of the land in Fiji is communally owned by the
indigenous Fijians. The Native Lands Trust Board (NLTB), which acts as the agent for the indigenous landowners, manages the native land. The agricultural leases in Fiji have been issued for 30 years under the Agricultural Landlord and Tenants Act (ALTA), which came into existence in 1976. The sugar industry flourished under this legislation. However, since 1987 and, more recently, since 1996, the land leases, which have expired under the ALTA, have not been renewed by the NLTB.

About 97,000 hectares of land is currently under sugarcane cultivation, and, of this, about 63 per cent is on native land. The non-renewal of the leases is a major political and economic issue in Fiji. New farmers are not replacing farmers evicted from native land, and this is likely to cause major disruptions to productivity in the agriculture sector. The non-renewal of native land leases not only affects the agricultural sector, but it also has a flow-on effect on other sectors such as tourism and the manufacturing sector. The land leases problems have been further aggravated by the political crisis. The success of reforms in other sectors would depend on the way in which the land leases problems are sorted out in Fiji. At present, a solution is not in sight and this is likely to stall the progress of reforms.

**Political instability, investment, exports and economic growth**

Fiji is considered a transitional economy, with the development of appropriate institutions an important pre-condition for economic growth (Prasad, 1998). The biggest institutional challenge for policy makers is the resolution of property rights issues. However, the property rights problems are linked to the political institutions and to how these institutions define the existence of democracy in Fiji.

But what does political stability mean as far its impact on economic growth is concerned? First, political stability means policy stability. For investors, this is a crucial factor in their decision to invest. The economic reform process that is advocated strongly for Pacific Island nations, including Fiji, by international lending agencies such as the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank, and by other international organisations such as the IMF and the WTO, does not take into account political and institutional impediments. In fact, policy advisors and economic policy makers in many developing countries refuse to confront the political constraints.

The main thrust of economic reforms is to encourage efficiency and productivity through competition. Competition and efficiency will allow Fiji to improve its export competitiveness. The main thrust of economic reforms is to encourage efficiency and productivity through competition. Competition and efficiency will allow Fiji to improve its export competitiveness.

The 1987 coups led to the formation of an interim government which held power for five years. The adoption of the 1990 constitution in 1992 provided a parliamentary government that was not accepted by the majority of the people in Fiji. The participation of the Indo-Fijian community in the parliamentary elections in 1992 and 1994 was based on the platform that the 1990 constitution was discriminatory and that it would not lead to stability. That political agitation had been designed to bring about constitutional change.

The 1997 constitution was adopted through extensive consultation. It features universally accepted principles of democracy and human rights. The bill of rights and the social justice clause establish clear provisions for ensuring that human rights of individuals and those marginalised in the society are protected. Furthermore, the 1997 constitution establishes the concept of the multi-party cabinet, which allows power sharing. This provision is particularly important as it allows participation of the two major ethnic groups in government.

**Concluding comments**

The level of investment and economic growth in Fiji since the late 1980s has been very low. In the late seventies and early eighties, for example, the level of investment was as high as 29.4 per cent of GDP. Since then it has continued to decline, and in 2000 it was estimated at only 10 per cent of GDP.

Two decades of structural reforms in Fiji have not produced the desired economic results. Declining levels of investment and savings have meant GDP growth rates have not increased. Furthermore, unemployment and poverty have increased in the last two decades. Fiji has regressed in terms of its status as a middle-income country with a reasonable human development index.

There are a number of reasons why this has been the case. Firstly, there has been lack of coherence in the way in which structural reforms have been undertaken. The stated objectives and plans for reform have been thwarted by the political disturbances since 1987. The biggest institutional impediment has been the lack of political will to resolve the issue of property rights in land. The collapse of the sugar industry and lack of investment in other sectors reflect the uncertainty of property rights in land.

Secondly, the political instability since 1987 has led to instability in the economic policies. Political stability is the key to achieving success from structural reforms. The May 2000 putsch has further contributed to the culture of corruption and mismanagement in the management of state resources.

Thirdly, the adoption of affirmative action programmes and the ethicisation of economic policies have led to further polarisation between the different communities. It also sends a wrong economic signal to potential foreign and local investors. The distortion created by these attempts to force the participation of certain groups into business activities could damage incentives for investment. Fiji cannot hide behind the garb of traditions and ethno-nationalism and accept the demolition of democratic
institutions. Those who argue for a variant of democratic principles of good governance in Fiji are not advancing the economic interests of Fiji. Structural reform, which is so readily pursued and advocated by politicians and the government in Fiji, faces many contradictions and constraints from within the country.

Finally, reforms cannot be sustained while qualified and skilled people continue to leave the country at an increasing rate. Every effort should be made to create an environment, which will include social, economic and political factors, to retain the human capital.

Notes
2 See for example, Prasad and Tisdell (1999) for an analysis of the impact of native land leases on tourism in Fiji.

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Introduction

Pacific Island economies continue to face an array of constraints together with new challenges in their struggle to improve their trading environments. These constraints stem from the limited local capacities to access overseas markets. Although existing preferential trading activities have benefited exports, there have been increasing limitations on market requirements that local industries struggle to overcome. The challenges of globalisation have also reached the small Pacific Island economies and trade policy mechanisms have had to be introduced by governments to address these challenges. Pacific Island governments have made commitments to be integrated into the multilateral trading system and this has brought new issues for the development of local industries.

Regional strategies to addressing these constraints and challenges have been developed with the successful completion of the Pacific Island Free Trade Agreement (PICTA) in 2001, which provides a stepping stone for the integration of small Pacific Island economies into the international trading system.

Constraints

Pacific Island economies face a daunting array of constraints, among them smallness in size, limited arable land, high vulnerability to natural calamities, narrow production bases, high costs of capital, relative scarcity of skilled labour and technology, high infrastructure costs, and a land tenure system which restricts the use of land. Most island countries depend heavily on trade, tourism, expatriate remittances and international assistance.

As a result, it has been difficult for most Pacific Island countries to achieve economic growth and sustainability over the last century. Most exports were, and still are, centred on tropical agricultural products, fish and a few processed foods and manufactured garments, making them net food importers with trade deficits far superseding the export receipts. A survey conducted by UNCTAD on the major constraints faced by industries in Samoa revealed similar limitations:

- Difficulties in mobilising investment finance and excessive collateral requirements of banks;
- High interest rates on investment finance and working capital;
- Limited knowledge and expertise of entrepreneurs in building competitive production and export capabilities (for example, identification of cost-efficient machinery and production technologies suited for location in Samoa; development of new products for niche markets);
- Scarcity of skilled labour (for example, the operation of computer-controlled machinery);
- Limited expertise to design packaging, the need to import all packaging material and the relatively high cost of such material);
- Relative scarcity of export market information, difficulties in marketing products and identifying buyers in particular in export markets, and lack of financial resources for marketing activities;
- High cost of electricity supply; and
- Bottlenecks in trade facilitation measures such as wharfage requirements and fees and customs procedures.

In trying to address these constraints, governments have introduced and implemented national trade policies which have been focussed on:

- The promotion of trade in goods through exports;
- The promotion of trade in services through tourism;
- The liberalisation of the financial markets and the privatisation of the telecommunications sector;
- Enabling environment for businesses such as developing updated legislation and policies to facilitate trade and investment in the country; and
- Private sector development.

Despite the fact that the trade policy environment has improved, Pacific Island economies continue to face market access problems, supply capacity constraints, high transportation costs and limited capital financing available for development. Furthermore, the new developments in trade at the regional and multilateral level provide a tougher challenge for the Pacific Island economies, especially with the increasing impact of globalisation on the smaller economies.

Current preferential trading arrangements

South Pacific Regional Trade and Economic Cooperation Agreement (SPARTECA)

SPARTECA, an agreement between Australia and New Zealand on the one hand, and Forum Island Countries on the other, came into force on 1 January 1981. Its current members are Australia, New Zealand, the Cook Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and Samoa.

SPARTECA is a non-reciprocal preferential trade agreement that seeks to promote and accelerate development of the Forum
Island Countries through the promotion of economic, industrial, agricultural and technical cooperation among them. Under the agreement, the two developed nations of the region, Australia and New Zealand, offer duty free, unrestricted or concessory access for virtually all products originating from the developing island member countries of the forum. At present, most exports from the Forum Island Countries to Australia and New Zealand enter under SPARTECA. Preferences apply as long as the rules of origin are met.

**ACP-EU LOME IV Convention/COTONOU Agreement**

The Cotonou Agreement was signed in 2000 to replace 'aid and trade' agreements. Six new members from the Pacific have changed the regional balance within the Africa Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group, and it is hoped that this will help in airing the issues and concerns of small island states more forcefully with the European Union (EU) and in international organisations. The central objective of the partnership remains intact: reduction and eradication of poverty with support to sustainable development and integration of the ACP countries into the world economy. While the Cotonou Agreement, like the Lomé conventions, remains supported by trade and aid, both of these are or will be substantially changed.

Non-reciprocal preferences, which infringe the World Trade Organisation (WTO) non-discrimination principles and require waiver from the WTO members, will remain in force until the end of 2007. From 2008 until the end of the agreement in 2020, a new trade regime based on reciprocal trade concessions will be put in place. ACP countries will have to negotiate with the EU on the form of a new trade regime. These negotiations are planned to start in 2002 and there are a number of challenges faced by the ACP and in particular by its Pacific members, including the lack of capacity and knowledge in handling new policies and issues and parallel negotiations on different levels. However the opportunities that the new Partnership Agreement provides should not be ignored, particularly the support for gradual liberalisation and restructuring of ACP economies and development of private sectors while protecting environment and growing civil societies further.

This agreement permits products 'originating' in the ACP states (this includes Samoa) to be exported to countries of the EU free of customs duty and other charges. The EU market access requirements, however, are very high, especially on standards on different types of products.

**Generalised System of Preferences (GSP)**

The USA GSP is an instrument by which the USA allows imports originating from developing and least developed countries on duty-free or preferential duty basis. The Japan GSP aims at contributing to the economic development of developing countries, providing benefits by enabling qualified products to enter the Japanese market at free or reduced rates of duty.

**Issues on the regional trade agreements**

**Rules of origin**: Rules of origin criteria have been difficult to meet especially for the manufacturing sector where labour is the major input and the majority of raw materials are imported. For instance, the Fijian government has been applying for a reduction of the rules of origin criteria for garments going to Australia with very little success.

For example, Yazaki Samoa Limited is a Samoan-based Japanese company that produces wire harnesses for cars for the Australian market. The company entered the Australian market under special provision made to the Australian motor industry where car components are imported into Australia duty free. However, this scheme ended in December 2000. Yazaki does not meet the rules of origin criteria for exports going to Australia under SPARTECA, so it was subject to 15 per cent duty. The Samoan government together with Yazaki presented a proposal to the Australian government for consideration of a derogation under SPARTECA. This derogation is a special consideration by the Australian Customs Services (in the case where rules of origin is not met) of a circumstance where there is an economic or natural disaster, or unexpected currency fluctuations (leading to increase prices of raw materials).

**Bottlenecks**: Trade administration bottlenecks are created by the requirements of the markets to correctly submit the right forms for goods to access the market under a particular agreement. Importers are not always aware of the correct administrative requirements and shipments may not be accepted by the market.

For example, exports to the EU under the Lomé Convention required completion of two EUR forms. Some exporters had previously tried to send consignments without the forms, hence the products were not accepted. Importers on the other side were also unaware of the requirements. The exporters' governments had to print the EUR forms meeting EU requirements (such as size, fonts, boxes and even the right color). The Samoan government, for example, took more than three months to correctly print and send the forms to Europe for final approval.

**Standards and requirements**: Markets have different standards for different products and the local exporters do not have the capacity to meet these standards, especially the management systems standards that must originate from source and continue down the production process.

For example, the fish handling and quality management standard (HAACP) requirements of the US operate from when the fish is caught. Some exporters do not fish, hence they had a hard time educating the fishermen on the management system for watching fish. EU also have a different HACCP requirement for fish exports which start from a legislative process down to production.

**Intellectual property threats**: This is one of the emerging problems encountered in trying to access international markets under various Agreements. There is widespread lack of knowledge and awareness on the part of Pacific Island exporters on the products already covered under intellectual property rights.
For example, noni (*morinda citrifolia*) exports from Samoa have been trialled in the Japanese market. One of the problems encountered was that the name 'noni' has been patented by Tahiti in the Japanese market. This plant grows wild in some Pacific Island countries.

**Trade disputes:** If there is a dispute between an exporter and importer, which jurisdiction applies? Currently Samoa is not a member of the Convention on the International Sale of Goods, so there will be no dispute between parties. When there is a dispute between parties, it may be difficult to resolve and might end up in the jurisdiction of the other party.

The ADB report on Improving Growth Prospects in the Pacific outlined new issues with the existing preferential trade agreements, which included:

- Diminished access to preferential markets conferred by way of the existing trading arrangements;
- The likelihood that aid flows will either diminish or have more strings attached;
- Uncertainty about the sustainability of migration and remittance flows;
- Globalisation or ever-increasing interconnectedness of world economies;
- The worldwide movement towards market-based, decentralised economic management; and
- The establishment of the WTO and its increased membership and expanded commitments and disciplines from the Uruguay Round.

**Possible strategies for Pacific Island economies**

**National government strategies**

Government assistance should focus on building competitive production capabilities of local industries, especially with the competition from the increase of imported goods. It is also pertinent for governments to strengthen their policies to improve the skills and qualifications of the local labour force, in particular through appropriate training institutions. An attractive investment environment is needed to attract foreign investment. This includes infrastructure support in terms of telecommunications, transportation, utilities, and facilitation of the development of trade.

**Intra-regional trading strategies**

The development of trade in the Forum Island Countries has aimed at improving the competitiveness of the Pacific in the global market, addressing the impacts of globalisation and improving the living standards of Pacific Island people.

**The Pacific Island Countries Free Trade Agreement (PICTA)**

The main objective of PICTA is to create a common market for Forum Island Countries (FICs) and to respond to globalisation. Globalisation means a reduction in tariffs, the decrease and eventual phasing out of most aid, and, in particular, the elimination of trade preferences. A free trade area creates a larger economic unit or bloc that gives FICs a stronger foundation for responding to globalisation and universal trade liberalisation. A free trade area is part of a process of regional integration. Benefits of PICTA include:

- Trade creation. FTA allows countries to enjoy gains from trade through trade creation where members will increase imports of goods and services which their countries produce more efficiently, and increase their own exports of goods which they themselves can produce more efficiently than their partners;
- Economies of scale will enlarge the size of the markets available to producers in member countries and will also reduce production costs;
- Increased competition — improved efficiency on the part of producers as they benefit from operating in more competitive markets;
- 'Stepping stone' to non-discriminatory liberalisation. For instance, the success of the CER; where the opportunities and challenges created by CER made a substantial contribution to the process of adapting to a more competitive environment;
- Can increase the attractiveness of the region to foreign direct investment;
- Increase investment links among member countries;
- A modest immediate economic benefit to Samoa because tariffs will fall and prices of imports will fall;
- In the longer term, the FTA will create a market of 6 million people, which creates future possibilities that cannot be foreseen; and
- Increased collective action on trade policy and facilitation, eg. trade policy with EU, Japan and USA.

**Costs of PICTA**

- Free trade with the other FICs will mean goods produced in other Pacific Island countries will enter Samoa duty free, resulting in a decrease in revenue by approximately 3 per cent;
- It will require administrative costs to operate but these can be minimised through a simple agreement; and
- It will be implemented in stages over eight years. In most FICs, there would be little impact for the first 5–6 years.

**How does this assist the smaller industries?**

The liberalisation policies of governments have led to increased local competition for locally made products. In their struggle to survive in the local market, local industries are forced to improve their efficiency. The new PICTA provides an opportunity for local industries to expand to neighbouring markets. For example, a corned beef manufacturer in Samoa no longer has the competitive advantage in the local market, but does have the opportunity to export to Tonga or the Cook Islands under PICTA.
Multilateral Trade Agreement: The World Trade Organisation

Most countries used to protect their markets from entry of foreign goods with higher duties and tariffs as well as other barriers. Through the WTO, members agreed that trade should be opened up to all markets, which would provide economic prosperity to all exporters.

With the opening up of trade, there must be trade rules to facilitate trade amongst countries. These trade rules under the WTO are effective and transparent. In case of dispute, a settlement panel is established within the WTO to hear and resolve the case. Countries are obliged to follow any decisions of the panel. For Samoa, the benefits are of becoming a member of the WTO are:

- No trade discrimination — from all members and especially from Forum WTO members;
- Improved market access in terms of tariffs and rules of origin requirements;
- Protection of intellectual property rights, especially in protecting Samoan artefacts, folklore and art;
- Transparency and consistency of government policies which are in line with the current reforms of government;
- The provision of more technical assistance especially since Samoa is a Least Developed Country (for the next two years); and
- Long-term benefit of increased foreign investment and increased welfare gains for the whole country.

For Samoa and other PICs, the major costs of membership of the WTO are those required to increase limited financial, technical and administrative capacities and build legal trading environment consistent with WTO requirements. The private sector lacks the capacity to track the trade barriers and discriminatory measures imposed by trading partners. A reduction in tariffs for most Pacific Island WTO members would also mean a reduction in tariff revenue and increased competition from imported products — leaving local industries struggling to survive in the market.

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**Strategic alliance issues in microfinance management**

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**Introduction**

Papua New Guinea (PNG) went through a period of experimentation with microcredit and microfinance in the 1980s and 1990s. Prior to this, the country had a financial development history dominated by savings and loans societies (May 1998), rural development banking, government-supported credit guarantee schemes and commercial bank lending to government-targeted sectors such as agriculture and housing (Kavanamur 2000).

In the past decade there has been increasing interest from donors, governments, NGOs and PNG grassroots in adopting international microfinance best practice principles to benefit local microfinance institutions (MFIs). MFIs are now generally accepted as a major tool in the fight against increasing poverty in PNG which now affects at least a third of the population. Following the success stories epitomised by the Grameen Bank of Bangladesh, BancoSol in Bolivia and the unit desa (village post) system of the Bank Rakyat Indonesia (BRI-UD), attempts have been made to replicate these in PNG. The lessons are relevant not only for MFIs, but also have had wider implications for the small-medium-large financial schemes' lending and receiving methodologies (Hardin and Associates 2000; Kavanamur 2002).

Whilst there have been some positive lessons, the overall results for PNG and the Pacific remain characterised by wide 'expectation gaps'. Among the problems identified are the narrowness of outreach and the unsustainable basis of most programs, operationally and financially (McGuire 1997).

The reasons for this unsatisfactory performance have been considered by practitioners and researchers (Cornford 2000; McGuire and Controy 2000; Gregory 1999). The lack of strategic alliance management skills is a contributing factor since they are often neglected by MFIs involving two or more partners. This paper discusses possible lessons that might contribute to maximising the goals of MFI outreach, sustainability and self-sufficiency in the region.

**Strategic alliance management skills**

An increasing number of MFIs in PNG involve at least two or more organisations in a strategic alliance. An alliance or a business network can be described as 'two or more organisations involved in mutually beneficial relationships, that maintain all participants as separate corporate entities' (Buttery and Buttery 1994:17). Although alliance partners may carry on business operations that are independent of the alliance or network, they may pool skills and resources leading to a new venture in order to jointly create an advantage.

The process of alliance building inevitably assigns the task of managing the alliance to an alliance manager or coordinator who must continually monitor the influence of external factors that may cause a shift in the strategic intent and hence its alignment to core business and governance structure. Such factors may include a partner's organisational culture, and organisational and environmental contexts. Thus alliance management should be viewed as a process that exists within and between organisations being embedded in culture and an environment. The importance of strategic alliances stems from their increasing prevalence among both for-profit and not-for-profit organisations, as a means to (a) reduce uncertainty, (b) provide flexibility, (c) provide capacity, (d) provide speed, and (e) provide information. According to Drucker (1996:1):

The greatest change in corporate culture — and in the way business is being conducted — may be the accelerating growth of relationships based not on ownership but on partnership; joint ventures; minority investments; cementing a joint marketing agreement or an agreement to do joint research; semi-formal alliances of all sorts.

Despite the virtues of alliances, few succeed; failure rates across the world have been projected to be as high as 70 per cent within one year (Rackham, Friedman, and Ruff 1996) and between 40–50 per cent within five years (Bleeke and Ernst 1993). Whilst the high failure rates in the first year are in line with those for new businesses generally and are to be expected, there remains a need to better understand the causes of failures as well as successes in order to reduce the current failure rates of alliances seeking longevity.

A glance at the literature invariably reveals that a major cause of alliance failure is managerial (Niederkofer 1991). Few alliance managers/coordinators understand how to move beyond the 'deal' and the 'structural' aspects of alliance design to the active management of alliances in order to create value (Dox and Hamel 1998).

The role of the alliance manager goes beyond the functions of a general manager in a unitary organisation, which include decision making, internal integrator, external integrator and information manager. The alliance manager is answerable to two or more partners and because (s)he has to integrate staff from different organisational and societal cultures, additional requirements arise within each of the traditional functions. For example, whilst the decision maker in a unitary organisation can easily initiate change, the alliance manager has the added complication of convincing not only the parent organisations but the also the alliance's own board. These additional difficulties stem from two features of alliances: the presence of multiple principals, and the cultural heterogeneity that has to be managed within a cross-cultural
alliance (Child and Faulkner 1998). Thus the alliance manager has to grapple with role conflict and role ambiguity.

It is the responsibility of the alliance manager to maintain cooperation amongst partners at all times. A significant correlation has been found between alliance success, commitment by partner top management, mutual trust between partners, sensitivity to partner's culture, and congruent partner goals (Child and Faulkner 1998).

There is evidence to show that clear, well thought out processes for the dissemination of information, are associated with alliance success (Child and Faulkner 1998). The specific requirements include the establishment of clear dispute-resolution mechanisms, clear authority vested in the chief executive, and a 'divorce mechanism' agreed at the outset.

In alliances, control does not necessarily have to be an 'all-or-nothing phenomenon', unlike in unitary organisations. Instead, it can be exercised by parent companies focussing on (a) specific activities, (b) decisions, or (c) processes based on what they perceive to be crucial to the success of alliance performance or strategic objectives' attainment. This point has been underscored by many studies, observing that parent companies ensure that alliances conform to their own interest by controlling strategically important activities rather than over the whole alliance (Geringer and Hebert 1989).

Human resource management has critical implications for alliance cultures, control, organisational learning and manager qualities. Appropriate human resource management policies can facilitate the development of a shared corporate culture, which articulates goals and standards for the alliance, and a willingness to adopt common practices in the pursuit of those objectives. Great importance needs to be attached to the selection criteria applied when recruiting alliance managers and staff. Such criteria should not only emphasise technical competencies, but also the openness and flexibility of candidates' attitudes to team work with partner organisations. Appropriate attitudes can be further developed through training and reinforced by the systems adopted for performance appraisal, reward and promotion (Child and Faulkner 1998:213–214).

Key traits that have been identified as necessary for alliance management open-mindedness, flexibility, self-confidence, sensitivity to others and a multicultural experience (Child and Faulkner 1998:221). These are complementary to the basic requirements of ability, drive to achieve and requisite technical knowledge, with some alliance management competencies being are teachable and others not (Spekman et al. 1996).

**Microfinance alliance cases**

Two of PNG's MFIs, the Liklik Dinau Arbitore Trust (LLDAT) and Bougainville Microfinance Scheme (BMFS), are briefly discussed to highlight alliance management issues and underscore the importance of inculcating strategic alliance management skills into MFIs in the Pacific.

LLDAT is the best known replica of the Grameen Bank experience in PNG. It was established in 1993 and commenced operations in 1994 in Goroka, Eastern Highlands Province. The project was initiated by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in PNG but was joined by six other partners including the Department of Village Services and Provincial Affairs, Peace Foundation, AusAID, GoPNG, and the PNG Banking Corporation's Village Finance Ltd. UNDP mainly contributed towards project design and management capacity building through its rotating volunteers while the project partners contributed mainly financial resources.

By the end of 2001, LLDAT had run into management and financial difficulties. At the time of the author's visits to Goroka in May and August 2002, operational funds had evaporated and the scheme had effectively ceased operation. Management and governance failures were cited as the major problems. Running costs had been drawn from clients' savings, which apparently had not been adequately quarantined. Donors became impatient with the scheme's poor outreach progress, as well as the slow progress towards the achievement of both operational and financial sustainability.

Donor partners left their contributions to be managed by the UNDP and local management and subsequently found out that they were unable to leverage control over the management of the scheme. Primarily this was because of an oversight on the part of partners to ensure a proper governance structure and control mechanisms were in place before the scheme commenced operations. The UNDP itself learned from a review in 1998 (Hickson et al. 1998, cited in Conroy 2000) that there was no separate account for savings held at a commercial bank and therefore an absence of any reserve savings to meet contingencies.

An AusAID review in February 1999 cautioned that Liklik Dinau's continued operation was at stake because of a looming liquidity crisis. The, scheme, had earlier on been bailed out by AusAID and the GoPNG. After the 1999 review the two parties had injected a further A$1.2 million over a three-year period up to 2002 (Conroy 2000). The support was premised on the scheme meeting a set of stated performance targets, with a twice-yearly reporting schedule. The AusAID review of 1999 reasoned that for LLDAT to achieve a modicum of sustainability and self-sufficiency donor support would have to be continued beyond three years. AusAID's inability to exert effective control over the scheme resulted in its complete withdrawal by 2001.

BMFS was initiated by Credit Union Foundation of Australia (CUFA) and Australian Volunteers International (AVI) in partnership with the Commerce Division of the Bougainville Administration in 1996. The main funding partner has been AusAID, which joined the alliance in 1998. AVI and CUFA perform the main function as the Australian Managing Contractor (AMC), which manages the project on behalf of AusAID and the local Commerce Division. AVI and its partners as the AMC provides a team of advisers to a local implementing team who are employees of the BMFS located on the ground on Buka. AVI's team of advisers visits Buka three times a year to oversee capacity building and the implementation process.

Phase 1 of the project alliance ran from 1996–2000 and involved a process of sensitisation through a development education program and piloting. This resulted in the decision not to rush the project development but to 'go isi' and to establish a central
coordinating and support organisation, provisionally named Bougainville Haus Monti (BHM). It was also decided that the project alliance should test the microfinance financial intermediation concept in four initial pilot project areas. Phase 2 involved a project design team of two microfinance specialists and a project design/gender specialist who benefited from the coordination and contribution of AVI's network broker and a CUFA technical specialist who had been in PNG at the same time for the activities under Phase 1 of the project.

An initial project design was drawn up by the project design team. This was appraised by AusAID, resulting in adjustments which emphasised the need to reduce the scale of the project to three years' duration, the role of women in the project activities, and project budget reduction, but care was taken so as not to compromise the long-term sustainability of the project. According to AVI's network broker, AusAID had sought an adjustment to the project's initial operating logic aimed at increasing project outreach because it was not sure of the viability of such an exercise. Earlier in 1998, AusAID had become entangled in the LLDAT microfinance alliance with partners such as UNDP. Thus, the project design review sought to emphasise capacity building first at the BHM head office and within the four pilot projects at the expense of outreach goals. It increased headquarters staff and trimmed field staff. The performance of BMFS to date can be gauged from Table 1.

Unlike LLDAT, the BMFS alliance partners have ensured that the goals of the project alliance are clearly spelt out and understood by all parties including its main beneficiaries, the grassroots. The goal of providing financial intermediation services to the people of Bougainville after a ten-year conflict seem related to the core business of each alliance partner and there appears to be a significant presence of alliance management skills amongst partners. At the local level such skills are being developed through training. The project alliance currently benefits from the networking skills of the AMC, AusAID and the assistant secretary of the local Commerce Division on Buka. AusAID's direct involvement in the project has ensured a continuous attempt to align the strategic presence of alliance management skills amongst partners. At the interface with partners. In almost all of these cases the results have been identified as the main constraints.

A number of lessons can be gleaned from the brief discussion of above cases above as and from the author's own research on alliance management in PNG over the last four years.

First, the author's review (Kavanamur 2000) of financial alliances including those of LLDAT, Rural Development Bank's Smallholder Agriculture Credit Scheme (SACS), Small Business Development Corporation's Small Business Guarantee Facility (SBGF), GoPNG's Credit Guarantee Scheme (CGS) and National Investor Scheme (NIS) reveal an overall absence of strategic alliance management skills in PNG. The task of managing an alliance does not seem to have been clearly assigned to a single alliance manager/ coordinator. Where this has been done as in the cases of the GoPNG's CGS and SBGF junior officers have been tasked to interface with partners. In almost all of these cases the results have not been encouraging. The junior alliance officers have tended to liaise laterally only with their counterparts and find it difficult to liaise vertically with senior executives in partner organisations. An exaggerated sense of hierarchy, limited networks, lack of self confidence, absence of team work skills and lack of innovation have been identified as the main constraints.

Second, an alliance is likely to fail when its importance to a key partner dwindles and it is no longer considered as central to its core business. For example, in the case of the SACS, the Department of Agriculture and Livestock (DAL) became less involved in the scheme over time when it felt that there was little benefit from it even though it was initially the main sponsor of the scheme in 1996. It is therefore important for an alliance to demonstrate some early positive results so as to keep partners on side. Third, because of the volatile business environment in PNG the likelihood of misalignment between

| Table 1 Summary of GMFIs by district, September 2000 – 30 June 2002 |
|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
|                   | Sep 2000 | Sep 2001 | June 2002 | % Increase |
| No. of MFIs       | 42      | 136      | 184      | 338          |
| No. of members    | 5,827   | 10,997   | 14,363   | 226          |
| Savings (Kina)    | 149,600 | 252,254  | 484,267.51 | 224          |
| Av. Savings (Kina)| 26      | 23       | 33       | 27           |
| Loans (Kina)      | 15,696  | 97,782   | 241,573.77 | 1439         |
| No. of Loans      | n/a     | 622      | 2,945    | 229          |
| Av. Loan size (Kina) | n/a   | 157      | 118      | -25          |
| Loans (Kina) as % of savings(K) | 10.5   | 38.76    | 49.9     |              |

Source: Adapted from Newsom (2002) and BHM official records.

December 2002
an alliance's strategic intent and governance structure, planning and control mechanisms, culture and environment is a real threat. In such a situation partners can find each other drifting away from one another and from the initial project alliance design. The cases of SACS, CGS, NIS and SBGF demonstrate that despite legally sound tripartite agreements reporting requirements were being paid lip service and partners refused to communicate with each other to resolve, for instance, payment obligations such as default called-up guarantees submitted by participating commercial banks. This results in a break down in trust and jeopardises future relationships. In PNG there is a tendency for alliance managers to go underground and hope that any problem will simply dissipate.

Fourth, even where alliance governance structures and feedback/control mechanisms are in place, alliances require management beyond the formal structures in order for partners to derive mutual benefit. It has been widely recognised that how the interaction between partners is managed will determine the longevity of an alliance (Doz and Hamel 1998). The alliance interface relates to how day-to-day interactions and exchanges between partners are managed, the extent to which partners' respective contributions are commingled or kept separate, and the operational linkages between them. Essentially, the interface consists of exchanges of information, meetings, joint task forces, common teams, and sharing of progress reports.

Fifth, PNG's volatile business environment contributes to the short life span of alliances. Almost all alliances that have been managed for more than six years have been ineffectual. Observing more recent and promising alliances such as that between the National Superannuation Fund (NASFUND) and AON Consulting (PNG) Ltd where the latter performs backroom operations for the former, it would seem that setting shorter alliance duration in agreements with clear measurable goals is likely to entice partners to work the alliance. At the end of an agreed period the alliance can be either terminated or renegotiated, depending on the degree of goal attainment.

Conclusion

Most MFIs in PNG tend to involve more than two partners. However, the line management skills based on Weberian hierarchical principles that characterise alliance managers' training is insufficient for ensuring the success of alliance management in PNG and the Pacific generally. This gap in management training is showing up in the failure not only of MFI alliances but also of interagency projects to achieve desired goals. MFI training programs in the Pacific would do well to include strategic alliance management practices in their training programs in order to reduce the managerial constraints that MFIs have had to contend.

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Information and communications technology in the South Pacific: Shrinking the barriers of distance

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Introduction

The Internet offers enormous potential for the developing countries of the South Pacific, which are made up of many scattered islands. The Internet can help both businesses and government agencies to communicate with the public and with each other. The 'anytime, anywhere' character of the Internet allows information and services to be more widely available at a relatively low cost. Most Pacific Island countries have reached the stage of using the Internet for retrieving information and sending messages. The goal now is to use the capabilities of information and communications technology (ICT) to move from mere communication to true collaboration.

E-government

E-government covers two separate areas. First, it covers changing internal government operations, as information technology is used for cooperation amongst government agencies. Second, it covers external operations, opening up the possibility of citizens and companies managing their interactions with the public sector on a self-service basis. E-government is not only a case of using more information technology (IT) in the public sector; it is also about governments wanting to use IT more strategically. Though the focus is on external services, it is also important to use these as drivers to make the internal services more efficient (Gronlund 2002).

South Pacific governments can use the Internet to assist with public sector operations. For example, ICT can provide governments with an increased capacity to collect revenue from fishing, forestry, agriculture and tourism. An intranet can allow different government departments to share information without having to make it available to the general public.

According to Purcell (2002), most government departments in Samoa now have websites. However, their use is limited to advertising and information sharing only. A collaborative e-commerce system has not yet contributed to the efficient and effective process of procurement as it does now with governments in developed countries.

E-government initiatives will be implemented to boost the efficiency and effectiveness of public services. These initiatives include putting services online, equipping the wider population with Internet access, and simplifying the bureaucracy of government departments by unifying public services under one e-department.

The concept of an information service portal is central to the idea of e-government. A portal is an individualised point of access to the Internet, which shows only the information that is relevant to the individual using it. Portals can give individuals access to applications to register births, information about education services, health information, and can allow them to carry out tasks such as paying utility bills and renewing of licenses. In countries such as Malaysia, kiosks have been set up at strategic locations in urban areas to make access to these new services as widespread as possible.

Information management

Information and communication technology provides opportunities for information management in organisations dealing with Pacific issues. Owing to the scattered geography of the Pacific, there are many different organisations dealing with similar issues. With the cooperation of these organisations, information collected can be shared to avoid duplication and wastage of scarce resources.

An example of the potential of ICT is the PacLII legal information service, jointly managed by the School of Law at the University of the South Pacific in Vanuatu (Blake 2002) and the Australian Legal Information Institute. PacLII provides free access to Pacific islands public legal information via the Internet. PacLII will aim to provide texts of legislation, decisions of courts and tribunals, law reform reports and similar materials. The PacLII service will be of use to the whole legal sector and beyond. Law reports are out of date in every South Pacific country, and in a tropical climate it is very difficult to store paper records. PacLII has the potential to perform the dual role of keeping legal records and providing an information service.

The development of PacLII is still at an early stage. At present most regional courts do not have computers with Internet access. Judicial officers also require training in the use of the Internet. Negotiations are under way in some countries with aid donors for the supply of computing equipment for the judiciary. One of the roles of PacLII could be to provide suitable training, ideally in the judges' own countries.

The legal profession in the South Pacific is enthusiastic about the development of PacLII. Lack of information has been a barrier to efficient legal practice in the region, with public prosecutors and solicitors facing a shortage of up-to-date information about previous decisions and legislation. Maximising access to the law supports the rule of law. A transparent legal system enhances a country's economic efficiency and global competitiveness.
Similar applications could be used in other areas. SIDSNet is an application that provides a medium for sharing information and good practices among the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) on common issues such as biodiversity, coastal and marine management, and energy sources.

The development of information management in its broadest sense is one of the primary issues in the South Pacific. There must be a commitment to building infrastructure and maintaining records. This is of particular importance in countries such as the Solomons and Papua New Guinea, where disputes over land are commonplace. The lack of records of land ownership becomes a real problem when villagers are competing to prove ownership of land, or when a land titles office is destroyed (as happened in Rabaul following the 1994 election).

The efficient management of records - parliamentary records and the records of government departments and land titles offices - is a critical aspect of good governance. Once a commitment to good practice is made, ICT can offer the tools to build a secure and easy-to-maintain system. Such an information system would also be an important part of recording and maintaining Pacific islanders' heritage and history. This history forms an important backdrop to debates about governance and to relationships between the South Pacific nations and New Zealand/Australia.

Information and communication technologies in education

The use of ICT in schools is the key to developing the future. Information and communications technology can extend the range of education beyond the four walls of the classroom. It can be of particular benefit in rural areas, the non-formal sector and technical colleges.

The University of the South Pacific, which serves 12 Pacific Island countries, has recently upgraded its satellite telecommunications network, known as USPNet, which is owned and operated by the university. This will provide the opportunity for distance learning students to participate in audio tutorials, communicate by telephone, fax, or email with lecturers and fellow students, watch live video transmissions of lectures, and take part in video conferences. Video conferencing will be most useful for activities such as tutorials, counselling and discussion groups. The goal of USP is to utilise these technologies to develop distance and flexible learning operations in ways that can benefit Pacific Island students (Lockwood et al 2000).

This type of virtual distance learning is well suited to tertiary education, where students' motivation and commitment is high. It can also open up opportunities in the primary and secondary sectors. It could be particularly useful in providing a standardised level of primary education to those living in rural areas. It is common in developing countries of the South Pacific for families to send their children to live with families in urban areas so they can receive a better education. It is the belief in these countries that children going to school in urban areas get a better education, because good teachers would rather teach in urban than in rural areas. With ICT, the same curriculum that is taught in urban areas can be taught in rural areas. This technology could reduce the threat of overpopulation in urban areas, and raise the standard of living in both rural and urban areas.

At present initiatives to introduce IT into schools have tended to come from school committees and boards of management, rather than from the ministry of education. This has resulted in a sporadic implementation policy, and widened the division between rural and urban schools. Access to the Internet would allow rural-based teachers to improve their own skills. In 2001, Telecom Vanuatu decided to give all official schools in the country free access to its Internet service during school hours (Vanuatu Trading Post 2001). This service aims to educate young people about the Internet, so they can go into the workforce fully prepared to meet the challenges of technology.

Information and communication technologies and health

Telemedicine and telehealth are emerging as important medical and health applications of ICT. Telemedicine applications are those directly related to medical applications and treatment (for example, medical consultation and diagnostics), whereas telehealth applications are focused more on the holistic health related programs (for example, promotion of proper nutrition and family planning). Telemedicine and telehealth applications have advanced rapidly in recent years and are beginning to significantly improve the practical delivery of medical and health care in remote areas, where isolated communities must cope with small and dispersed populations and a limited resource base.

These applications have the potential to facilitate the integration of services across communities that cannot sustain a full range of health services individually (Mukaida et al 1996). Telemedicine and telehealth applications can improve Pacific Island health care systems by providing affordable, quality health care to patients, where and when they need it. They may also lessen the cost of services by making it unnecessary to evacuate patients to the United States or Australia for treatment.

One example of telemedicine can be found at the Tripler Army Medical Centre in Hawaii, where doctors make use of an Internet tumour board to discuss care and treatment options for breast cancer patients, sharing digitised radiology pictures and conferring remotely without requiring the medical evacuation of patients for examination (Nilges 1999).

The Fiji School of Medicine is soon to launch a Flexible Learning and Telehealth Unit (Association Telehealth Service Providers, 2001) which will make health training and telehealth services more accessible to health professionals throughout the region. The service will use a 'one-stop shop' web page, and will provide support in three areas: distance education, distance consultation and distance health-related information. For those without access to the Internet, the information will also be accessible using email, telephone or facsimile machines.
The use of the Internet will see developing countries’ medical orders supplied much more quickly than by traditional methods. The Samoan Director of Health predicts, that instead of waiting for over a month for medical supplies from overseas, deliveries could arrive within a week or even less (Purcell, 1999). Medical staff can search the Internet for medicines currently not available locally; they will also have access to a wider range of suppliers, and should be able to negotiate with the suppliers for cheaper prices.

ICT should also reduce the costs of distribution. At present, if a regional hospital requires medical supplies, they have to either telephone or fax the order; the receiver then passes that order on to another person to complete. If the person filling in the order cannot read the original handwriting, then dispatching the order is delayed. With an integrated e-commerce system, regional hospitals can complete an order on-line, and dispatch it on the same day overcoming some of the limitations of current processes.

Access to technology

One of the major barriers to development in the South Pacific is a lack of access to technology. Table 1 shows the relatively small numbers of computers and Internet users in the South Pacific region during the years 1998 and 1999 (Gold et al 2002). On average there were roughly 2.5 personal computers (PCs) and one Internet user for every 100 people in the South Pacific region. By contrast, the corresponding numbers during the same period for the United States were approximately 50 personal computers and 40 Internet users per 100 people.

The increasing use of computers can sharpen the division between urban and rural areas. Most of the rural population in the South Pacific are unlikely to own a computer. Recent research carried out in Samoa provides more background to this problem (Purcell 2002). The Internet has registered a significant growth in Samoa. Almost all government departments and large private organisations now have websites. However, it has failed to reach most parts of Upolu and Savaii. For example, the village ‘fale’ (a Samoan traditional thatched house) operators outside of Apia, and places like Fa'alealupo, do not even have access to the telephone.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Estimated no of PCs</th>
<th>PCs per 100 inhabitants</th>
<th>Estimated no of Internet users</th>
<th>Internet users per 100 inhabitants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fiji</td>
<td>40,000</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7,500</td>
<td>0.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiribati</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>1.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marshall</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>4.82</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>0.80</td>
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<tr>
<td>Islands</td>
<td>Samoa</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Solomon Islands</td>
<td>18,000</td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tonga</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>1.53</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vanuatu</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>1.61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Gold et al 2002.

This shows that, in common with other countries in the South Pacific, Samoa has a rural-urban divide. Research has confirmed that a strong urban bias exists for Internet use in all developing countries worldwide (UNDP 2001). Poor telecommunications infrastructure is a common barrier to development in the developing countries.

One way to promote equity of access to ICT is the use of telecentres, especially in rural areas. A telecentre is a building containing one or more computers linked to the Internet. The telecentre is staffed by an operator, who will search for information for anyone visiting the telecentre, either for free or for a small fee. These can be useful community resources, providing information about agriculture, fishing, weather conditions and health. Information available from the telecentres should be available in a variety of media, including CD-ROM, video and print. The telecentres should be linked in with existing community organisations in order to work effectively. It is also important to provide the technical support necessary to repair faulty equipment. If the telecentre idea is adopted, it is important that the role of the telecentre in the locality is carefully thought out, and that the information provided is of local relevance.

Telecentres are currently being set up in rural areas of the Solomon Islands using high-frequency radio technology and information management techniques. The Pfnet (People First) station is supported by United Nations agencies, and the site contains community news, announcements and reports from development partners (Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation, 2001; Taqiri, 2001). It is anticipated that there will eventually be 26 rural email stations in all nine provinces of the Solomons.

Telecommunications infrastructure

There is a substantial body of economic research demonstrating significant improvements in the economies of countries as a result of investment in telecommunications infrastructure in their regions (Parker 2000). The more rural the location, the greater the benefits. This is not surprising, because the two major barriers to rural economic growth are distance and the lack of economies of scale. Telecommunications infrastructure in the age of the Internet can neutralise both of these problems and level the competitive playing field for remote locations. Figure 1 (overleaf) shows teledensities in the South Pacific region in 1997, and the contrast between access in rural and urban areas. The lack of access to telephone systems and the limited bandwidth available are major constraints on developing the use of the Internet. The key to improving the use of ICT is improving the telecommunication infrastructure. Until this bottleneck is removed, the Internet is likely to be used mainly for email in the South Pacific region. Deregulation of the telecommunications industry has the potential to increase competition and reduce costs. However, countries with low populations may not be attractive to short-term investors. Regional cooperation could be important in producing economies of scale that will pressure suppliers. The expansion of satellite communications already in use in the Pacific may be the most cost-effective way of improving telecommunications.
South Pacific countries have three options open to them for improving telecommunications access: satellite communications, undersea cable and mobile wireless computing. The near future will see countries trying a number of different options.

**Conclusion**

Information and communications technology offers tremendous opportunities for South Pacific islands to overcome their traditional disadvantages of vast distances and low and widely scattered populations. Improvements in access, awareness, human resources development and usage are required for the populations of these islands to take their place in the global knowledge society.

Initiatives to develop ICT are often 'top-down' and do not involve local partners and the business community. This often results in the ICT benefiting the privileged few, while the divide between rich and poor grows greater than ever. It has been observed that the spread of Internet use among the world's population is much more inequitable than that of other ICTs, such as television or telephones (Peters 2001). It is imperative that international policies are adapted to the local context, and that private sector backing is obtained.

The benefits of technology can be great, but there is a downside: hidden costs can be crippling. It can often therefore be an advantage to be a technological follower, rather than a leader. There are four choices of policies that can be adopted towards new technical innovations: promotional, permissive, precautionary and preventive (UNDP 2001). The benefits and drawbacks of each of these approaches should be carefully considered by each South Pacific nation.

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Tourism and social development in Seychelles

Michel Rosalie

Introduction

Tourism in the developing world has both the potential to be an agent of social and economic development in less developed areas or a source for friction and alienation within the local community. For many nations, in particular small island developing states (SIDS), tourism has become the main sector of economic activity, or at least the main source of foreign exchange earnings, and in most countries, it is also an important sector for employment (United Nations, 2001). But in the words of a Southeast Asian developer, 'the global tourism industry has both the potential to destroy through insensitive development, the very source of its existence, or to create a symbiotic relationship with the natural environment, preserving it, enhancing it for future generations to enjoy' (Kwon-Ping, 1992).

Developing countries are often seen as primary locations where tourism can flourish because they have retained distinctive cultural and environmental characteristics; unfortunately they are also less equipped to protect and guard this heritage. Seychelles, a small island state in Africa, has a service-oriented economy where travel and tourism contribute approximately 21.8 per cent of GOP. Tourism also brings in 60 per cent of the country's precious foreign exchange as Seychelles has a limited land area available for agriculture, few natural resources and is extremely dependent on the importation of raw materials and a wide range of commodities. Tourism is described as one of the pillars of the economy of this archipelago composed of 112 islands scattered over 1.2 million square miles of the Indian Ocean. It has a population of over 80,000, who live on the coastal zones of the three main islands of Mahe, Praslin and La Digue.

Overview of social development in Seychelles

The UNDP Human Development Index ranks Seychelles as having the highest index in Africa. GDP growth for Seychelles has been around 5 per cent annually from 1996 onwards, except for 1999 when it fell to 2.99 per cent. The annual GDP per capita is US$7500, which places the country in the middle income group of countries.

The tourism industry can truly be considered as everyone's business because of its major contribution to the economy. Because of the revenue generated directly and indirectly by tourism, government has been able to provide a range of welfare services to citizens at no cost or at very low cost.

Overview of tourism in Seychelles

The tourism industry took root in Seychelles with the opening of the international airport in 1971. The trend in visitor arrivals for the period 1975–2000 is shown in Figure 1 (overleaf). As it shows, there has been a remarkable increase in tourist arrivals in the country over the last 30 years.

In the first National Development Plan (NPD) for the period 1977 to 1981, the government's intention was to preserve and protect the special attraction and individuality of Seychelles as the foundation for the development of tourism by encouraging selective development of the industry while considering the suitability of the investments and the costs as well as benefits to Seychelles. The approach for tourism development was based on eight fundamental points:

- To promote and generate all-year-round tourism;
- To spread tourist traffic evenly across the islands;
- To maximise the economic benefits derived from tourist expenditure, and to increase net foreign exchange earnings from tourism;
- To encourage investment by the commercial and public sectors in tourism within Seychelles;
- To maintain a steady, orderly and controlled growth in tourism;

Table 1 Gross domestic product by broad productive sectors for Seychelles, 1994–1999 (in Seychelles rupees)

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, forestry and fishing</td>
<td>101.6</td>
<td>101.0</td>
<td>97.4</td>
<td>93.2</td>
<td>99.4</td>
<td>99.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Industries</td>
<td>462.5</td>
<td>529.6</td>
<td>560.6</td>
<td>683.3</td>
<td>786.1</td>
<td>909.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tourism</td>
<td>388.9</td>
<td>366.1</td>
<td>370.7</td>
<td>418.5</td>
<td>419.0</td>
<td>401.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>344.6</td>
<td>338.8</td>
<td>351.0</td>
<td>376.0</td>
<td>411.0</td>
<td>434.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other services</td>
<td>1161.8</td>
<td>1064.3</td>
<td>1209.0</td>
<td>1273.6</td>
<td>1353.5</td>
<td>1310.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>2459.4</td>
<td>2418.8</td>
<td>2588.7</td>
<td>2844.6</td>
<td>3060.0</td>
<td>3155.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


December 2002

95
when fewer than usual, were actually spending more per day - thus increasing the yield. According to the Central Bank statistics on trade in services, tourism earnings have increased steadily from SR353 million in 1986, to SR663 million in 1993, reaching about SR750 million in 1999 (US$1 is approximately 5 Seychelles rupees).

In view of the relatively poor performance of the Seychelles tourism industry over that period, government has undertaken a thorough assessment of the situation to identify and respond to shortcomings that ‘act as restraints to growth’. Additionally, the Ministry of Tourism and Transport is presently looking at the possibility of introducing the use of Satellite Tourism Accounts (STA) which determine the size and economic importance of tourism by including measurements that take into account both the direct and indirect contributions of tourism. The STA provides a comprehensive set of indicators based on a detailed analysis of all components of the demand of goods and services associated with tourism, rather than looking at earnings from tourist operations only.

**Policies for the future of tourism**

The strategic directions listed in the Vision 21 document (Ministry of Tourism and Transport 2001), which makes provision for coordinated national efforts for the period 2001–10, include such aims as expanding capacity, increasing yields and promoting eco-tourism and community benefits through the development of a wide range of nature-based attractions and activities. They also include ensuring that tourism is a nationally integrated industry that takes account of environmental capacity and sustainability.

Vision 21 states that ‘the long-term economic sustainability of the Seychelles’ tourism industry is closely linked to the continued health of the natural eco-systems upon which it depends’. It also adds that ‘it is now widely recognised that if local communities are not involved in tourism projects from the design stage through to implementation and management, community residents often will not support the project nor be in a position to benefit from it’.

It is clear that the intention is to mobilise ‘strong national commitment and partnership’. This is to be achieved through (a)
sustainable growth of the industry using eco-tourism as a base; (b) an integrated approach that will take into account the needs of the community; (c) promoting and conserving the cultural heritage; and (d) developing human resources appropriately.

**Sustainable growth of the industry through eco-tourism**

Seychelles has so far resisted the temptation of allowing mass tourism, in spite of the perceived ‘easy pickings’ that could be made over a short period of time. It has instead determined a carrying capacity for the island system. The aim is to achieve an increase in visitor arrivals of about 7 per cent a year, using the year 2000 as base zero to a figure of about 180,000 in 2005 and subsequently a more modest growth of about 2 per cent annually to a figure of 200,000 visitors in 2010.

It has limited the size of its hotels in order to prevent the over-use and eventual pollution of the environment by too large a concentration of individuals in one location. Until now a hotel unit could have a maximum of 200 rooms, but recently the concept of tourist ‘villages’ in pre-determined sites has allowed more than 200 rooms, but these will be different theme-based establishments. Although the islands offer a range of facilities from 5-star accommodation to small guesthouses, quality is a defining factor. This has allowed Seychelles to maintain a selective marketing approach where pricing acts as a filter for the type of tourism that the country desires.

The notion of eco-tourism is gradually becoming more popular, but while frequent references are made to this form of tourism, there are few projects that truly embrace valid aspects of ecological concern. Furthermore, most of the tourism establishments are old and difficult to convert to eco-friendly processes. In order to take into consideration this new approach, the Vision 21 document defines Seychellois eco-tourism as follows:

Eco-tourism accommodates and entertains visitors in a way that is minimally intrusive or destructive to the environment and sustains and supports the native cultures in the locations it is operating.

Recently a requirement was introduced for all new hotels or other tourism projects to be subjected to an Environmental Impact Assessment prior to implementation. However, the 2000–2010 Environmental Plan of Seychelles (EMPS), admits that despite all the good intentions and cases of obvious progress in several areas, there are a number of existing problems. These include inappropriate land use and zoning, destruction of natural habitats, malfunctioning sewerage plants, continued sale of marine souvenirs (in spite of stringent control laws) and the use of large amounts of natural resources such as water and fossil fuels.

Development of tourism on the various islands differs according to population levels, infrastructure and accessibility. The islands of Mahe and Praslin tend to have well-established hotels of various sizes. Several far-flung islands have also been turned into tourist hideaways. It is interesting to note that destinations such as Bird Island or Cousin Island, which sell an essentially environment-centred product, perform considerably better than the average establishment in terms of occupancy despite the fact that they are costlier and located quite a distance from the main islands.

**Social impact**

Much time and effort goes into ensuring that the industry functions at peak level in order to maximise revenue, providing the highest level of satisfaction to clients, as tourism is, first and foremost, a business. Nonetheless, this business can have a tremendous impact on the social fabric of a country if it is not guided and contained in the appropriate way. A survey of the situation in Seychelles carried out in 1998 looked at the impact of tourism. It investigated:

- Who benefits financially from the tourism sector;
- How tourism has affected our local and moral values; and
- What influence tourism has had on our cultural life.

In response to the question about who benefits financially from tourism, 53 per cent of respondents stated that everyone benefited, 31 per cent thought most people benefited, 14 per cent thought some people benefited and 2 per cent considered that very few people received any benefits. However, nearly 70 per cent of the respondents stated that those employed in the tourism sector were either poorly paid or very badly paid.

In terms of the impact of tourism on moral values, 14 per cent thought there had a considerable impact, 22 per cent thought there had been some impact, 24 per cent a little impact and 39 per cent felt there had been no impact on morals. However, 45 per cent felt that tourism might have increased prostitution while 55 per cent considered it had virtually no impact on prostitution.

Tourism was considered to have an impact on culture, but whether this impact was good or bad was not specified. Fifty seven per cent thought it was a major influence on culture, 36 per cent, a partial influence and 5 per cent thought it had very little influence.
In order to ensure that informal 'contacts' between nationals and tourists produce positive results and help the industry, the Ministry of Tourism launched a sensitisation program in 1993, to increase awareness of the importance of the tourism industry to the economy of the Seychelles and the subsequent need to provide good service. The programme is led by a committee with representatives from the various relevant bodies.

Recommendations

It is difficult to predict the social and economic performance of Seychelles without the boost in tourism from the early 1970s. Unlike other developing countries, Seychelles has managed to avert negative social and environmental impacts. However, substantial work needs to be done at both the strategic and operational levels to produce a coordinated approach to long-term tourism development. Therefore, the following recommendations are proposed:

- Preparation of indicators that can help to determine the demographic capacity in relation to tourism intake in Seychelles, bearing in mind the established limitations in regards to economic, social and environment sustainability;
- Conduct a baseline study on knowledge, attitude and practice (KAP) of the local population regarding tourism and use the results to inform personnel working in the tourism industry;
- Define sustainable tourism indicators that will help to consolidate all the policies and programmes for sustainable tourism; and
- Intensify communication measures to raise public awareness and productivity in the tourism sector.

Conclusion

In a speech given in March 1999 in Seychelles, Francesco Frangialli, the Secretary General of the World Tourism Organisation, stated that from his point of view 'Tourism can be a viable option for small islands but only if it is solidly based on the principles of sustainable development'. The Seychelles has started on that path. The country has also tried to diversify the bases of the national economy by investing in fisheries, but it is clear that tourism is and will continue to be an essential component of the economy. As stated in Vision 21, 'not only does tourism generate direct economic benefits in terms of income, foreign exchange, employment and government revenues, it also serves as a catalyst to other economic activities such as agriculture, fisheries, manufacturing and crafts. Additionally, tourism helps pay for the development of infrastructure used by the entire Seychellois community, and it helps justify and pay for conservation of the natural environment and cultural heritage of the country.'

The country's track record is impressive for such a young nation with such a small population, but these achievements cannot be taken for granted because the world we live in is far from being static. Great efforts need to be invested in maintaining advantages gained, and this is where the knowledge and experience of other countries with similar conditions can be important sources of ideas.

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The South Pacific Futures symposium comprised nine sessions covering different aspects of South Pacific development. This report covers the issues that provoked the most sustained and useful discussion. They fell into four major categories: financing for development; conflict management, with the discussion centering around land and ethnicity; development research and its relevance for policy; and knowledge creation and information sharing.

**Financing for development**

The discussion from this session focussed on finding appropriate savings and trust fund arrangements for small Pacific Island countries, the need for secure ways to hold funds and savings and to get funds from the periphery to the centre, most particularly those related to social services and pensions; the role of remittances, the effectiveness of microfinance and microcredit schemes, especially in situations where land is held in customary tenure, and the social and economic advantages and disadvantages of customary land tenure systems.

**Trust in financial institutions:** A key issue underlying lack of larger-scale local investment in Pacific countries was lack of trust in local financial institutions. Bill Standish expressed his concern about this and the absence of trust between elites and rural populations: 'A manifestation of this is lack of community support for health services. The elite are investing in private hospitals and schools while the public system is collapsing. In education there is corruption by the elite in conjunction with government.'

For example, in Papua New Guinea, the elite are tapping off the major financial institutions and superannuation funds. So people will not invest in local organisations - the landowners' trust fund being set up to deal with the closing down of the Ok Tedi mine is being managed by private firms in Singapore. People do not trust anything locally. Maybe this is part of the agenda we need to think about and look at national and local loyalties.'

Other examples were of trust funds in Kiribati, Nauru and Tuvalu being managed by private overseas institutions, rather than by local banks.

**Remittances:** Remittances were discussed as a form of local trust and investment fund. In Tonga and Samoa they are used to fund social services and continue to provide a major source for savings and investment. Richard Brown gave examples of remittances forming a very substantial source of investment funds in the Pacific:

'Globally, remittances are much larger than originally thought. Although in the past, the rationale for remittances was considered to be cultural it has now been found to be commercial. While it has been suggested that governments try to control this flow of funds, this should be discouraged and a free flow of money and goods encouraged.' Regional organisations have suggested that development banks be established to deal with investment by Pacific Islanders living overseas, so they could be involved in the development of their home countries. However, remittances are largely committed, and there was no interest in such a scheme.

In the discussion of how remittances were spent, Sitiveni Halapua said that in Tonga and other Pacific Islands they were being used to pay for insurance policies being sold by American companies. Richard Brown gave examples of a high proportion of remittances being invested in housing, about 10 per cent on education, and 10 per cent on businesses such as starting a shop or buying a taxi.

Ron Crocombe stated that from his experience, New Zealand or Australian born Islanders remit less than recent migrants and that the amount will remitted will decline with time: 'Few people in the Pacific now trust government financial institutions because they have been robbed by politicians and officials, but it may be possible to develop a trust fund which is a combination of government, non government and private institutions, to provide funds for investment in housing and pensions.'

**Microcredit:** Credit, microcredit schemes in the Pacific and the economic implications of customary land tenure were also discussed. On the whole, microcredit schemes were said to work well in the Pacific, with the use of the community as security obviating the need to use land as collateral.

Key issues emerging from the discussion were the lack of trust between people and governments regarding finance and development, lack of trust in local banking organisations, and the need to recognise that people are innovative and entrepreneurial and do not need to be shown how to do business.

**Conflict management: Land and people**

**Conflict management:** The discussion focussed on conflict arising from inequities and lack of access to land and resources; disputes over land boundaries and the inability of Western court systems to deal with this; lack of development and the inequities established by Western-style development; and lack of consideration for issues of conflict within development programmes. The role of the state,
people's perceptions of its legitimacy, and the impact of political mismanagement were identified as important underlying issues.

Sitiveni Halapua suggested that the way we perceive conflict needs to be changed: 'The idea of development is driven by an economic rationalist perspective where conflict is not considered to be an issue. Economists maintain there is conflict only because we do not follow the rules of economic rationalism. This is not the way to deal with conflict. Development agencies need to pay attention to existing conflicts, to the conflicts that can arise from the introduction of development programmes, and to the need to provide conflict mediation, for example, between the main stakeholders in the Fijian sugar industry. We need approaches to long-term development planning which incorporate conflict and relief management, and we need to integrate conflict resolution and prevention into development programmes.'

Helen Leslie agreed that conflict, conflict resolution and conflict management need to be integrated into development planning and that women's roles must be considered in any discussion and activities related to conflict: 'Bougainville provides an example of women's involvement in the peace process, but then being ignored in the development process. The potential for women's empowerment in conflict was not carried through into development policies or activities. This was an opportunity lost.'

In West Papua, development and conflict resolution perspectives are kept separate. People are aware that conflict comes with a cost, but, as Brij Lal suggested, 'it is very unclear whether money or cost stops conflict, particularly as some people use conflict to their advantage'.

Causes of conflict: Bill Standish outlined the way in which development programmes can lead to conflict. 'Development can bring conflict when there is big money and rewards that do not support equality. In Nigeria, for example, development means a heightening of ethnicity differences if there are big resources available. In Papua New Guinea it has led to fighting between different groups in the Southern Highlands. There is an intensification in the fight for resources. Once valuable resources are created, and there is unequal access, people will fight for them — whether this is access to parliament and power, access to land access to royalties. If you are missing out — there will be conflict.'

Mark Otter suggested that conflict is also the result of lack of development. In the Solomon Islands, for example, it is a result of corruption and lack of development. Young men have no jobs and no opportunities. Once conflict has emerged it is very difficult to find opportunities to resolve it, particularly, as Hilda Lini pointed out, when 'there has been a large increase in military and police budgets and police keeping. We are getting internal militarisation from our own governments. While they all talk about genuine peace, governments are continuing to increase military and police budgets. This is no way to achieve lasting peace but leads to even greater conflict in the long run.'

Brij Lal discussed a farming assistance scheme in Fiji and the importance of affirmative action to address current inequalities. The scheme was put in place by government at the time of the coup. Affirmative action currently pertains only to indigenous Fijian groups, not to Indians who are below the poverty line. If affirmative action is to address poverty it should be equally shared across ethnic groups. Investment opportunities are also available to indigenous Fijians but not to poor Indians. This kind of inequity is likely to fuel further conflict.

There remains a lack of consideration for the role of women in both conflict management and peace building.

The issue of compensation was raised and discussion focused on the problems arising from compensating those who had caused the problem rather than the victims. Joseph Foukona outlined the situation in Solomon Islands where government paid out large amounts of compensation without going through the established legal procedures. This he said, led to further conflict. Other major underlying causes of conflict were considered to be mismanagement, corruption and the lack of commitment to the idea of the nation state.

Land issues: Conflict over land and land use is prevalent in Pacific Island countries where dealing with land issues is difficult and time consuming. While there is more awareness now of the role of indigenous land owners in managing land, it remains a continuing source of conflict. Sitiveni Halapua outlined the situation in Melanesian countries where mining companies have to deal with numerous overlapping claims from different landowning groups. While the corporations are expected to facilitate formation of land groups, this is seen as being imposed from outside and is readily abused. The difficulty is how to delineate land when there are numerous traditional 'owner groups' which splinter down to individuals. They splinter by greed. How can a register of titles continue sustainably in this kind of situation?’

In discussing the situation in Papua New Guinea, Ian Marru outlined the utility of Incorporated Land Groups as they pertain to the petroleum and energy industry. The ILGs are the mechanisms by which monetary benefits in equity dividends and royalties are channeled to project area landowners or beneficiaries. The petroleum industry facilitates the establishment of ILGs, but, while their operation is supposed to be governed by a constitution, this is often ignored by group members. In part this is because it is a foreign concept and because the distribution of cash is not always transparent and landowners adapt the process to maintain greatest personal benefit. ILGs were expected to streamline agreements and payment of royalties, but there remain problems with the demarcation of land and internal struggles and manipulation of the ILG for individual or family benefits.

The role of land tenure in economic development was an issue of considerable discussion and varied opinions. Ron Duncan maintained that customary land tenure was a serious hindrance to development as it tied up capital in ways that did not allow its utilisation for investment. There was strong disagreement from the floor. Bill Standish pointed out that 'some people think that title to land is the only way to go, but the reality is that traditional ownership is what people want. Outsiders can't insist on change. State land is mismanaged. When cronies want what foreign economies want we need to be careful about the boundaries and how to maintain security. How do you move from traditional
owernesship to title? The transition costs make it not economically sensible and there is seldom any social justice in this move. There is no evidence that private title is more productive.'

Harmut Holzknecht's opinion was that 'there is little recognition in the Pacific that the economy and the role of land are not necessarily related. The modern economy does not work in this way. The strong cultural connectedness of Pacific cultures to land is becoming an impediment, but I am not suggesting private title.'

Ian Marru agreed and said that consideration had to be given to the ways in which land owner groups changed and adapted to current situations.

**Development research and linking research to policy: Pacific Island futures**

Discussion focussed on the need for greater interaction between research and policy and how it might be achieved; the limited amount of research into trends and the future; the need for making research results and development issues more widely understood, especially by Pacific Island leaders, and the need for a greater role for the media in information dissemination, but this last was hampered by a wide distrust of the media in the Pacific.

**Doing research:** The issue of who does research was crucial to this discussion. There were divided opinions on whether outsiders should undertake research in the Pacific, as there is a raft of complex moral and ethical questions about who owns the research results, what happens to research results, and with whom and how they are shared. But, as Hilda Lini stated, there are difficulties in the demarcation between outsiders and insiders. It is her experience that there are many outsiders who are much more sympathetic to Pacific situations than insiders — and there are also insiders who will sell their souls to outsiders. 'But good research is hard to come by. We should encourage good research and researchers wherever we find them. We want to see Pacific Islanders undertaking cross-cultural research. Samoan researching Fiji, Fiji researching the Cooks. We need more collaboration between Pacific researchers.'

Tony O'Dowd raised the issue of who pays for research and said that there appeared to be a degree of naivety in perceptions about the role of donors regarding research. He said that donors are not usually looking for good ideas, but will commission research for specific purposes and with set criteria. In terms of AusAID funding, there is no independent research as the organisation is more interested in strategic research targeted to its own concerns.

As the papers from this session focussed largely on Pacific Islander's experience, the issue of Australia's role in the process was raised together with the need for Australia to make its position clear to avoid inaccurate expectations in the region that Australia should fix problems.

**Researching the future:** Ron Crocombe said from his experience people needed to have a greater understanding of processes, options, ways of increasing opportunities and overcoming obstacles: 'I regret that there is no understanding of future thinking in the Pacific. Australia needs to think more about this. We should have courses in futures studies. Taiwan has a compulsory course in 'futures thinking'. Currently, academics think backwards — it's easier.'

**Linking research and policy:** In discussing the link between knowledge, research and policy, Laurie Dunn outlined the need for knowledge that is guided by policy goals: 'Knowledge generation needs to be seen more broadly, most particularly about how it informs policy. Knowledge should influence institutions and the way they work. There is a need for broader knowledge generation and research that seeks to address policy issues.'

Hilda Lini recommended that there should be much better coordination of research and policies, most particularly with regard to Australian policy as it impacts on the region. 'Australia needs to ensure that local people are involved in both research and policy which relates to the Pacific. There is plenty of national and regional expertise in the Pacific but it is not often used.'

The problem of communication, or lack of it, was raised several times: how to communicate research results, how to encourage continued dialogue. It was suggested by Sue Campion that to make research more relevant policy makers should be involved right from the beginning and the dialogue continued throughout the process. Perter Aitsi discussed the communication aspects of disseminating research results in readable format: 'I think the difficulty for researchers is a communication problem. Language is a problem. The relationships between researchers and policy makers and the public can be difficult, and it is often hard to communicate ideas in ways that are acceptable. Policy makers must trust researchers and be sure that their recommendations are based on the research results. Once a policy maker does not trust you — look for something else and publish your work in a journal.'

Speaking from her experience as a policy maker, Sue Campion said that personality conflicts can make the relationship between researchers and policy makers difficult. Policy making is a complex process and there needs to be conferences, working groups and on-going meetings to discuss the ideas. A working group should develop a draft paper and circulate it for comment and encourage comment. Policy makers must encourage more collaboration.

A researcher has to be a sales person and moderator as well as being a good researcher who can put results cogently. In response to the question, 'Where do policy makers and researchers discuss issues if policy makers do not understand the issues?' Sue Campion said that ongoing dialogue and the provision of expert facilitation are required, but the issues need to be prioritised.

However, existing policies tend to support the status quo while new policies tend to threaten it. While initiating new research is important, this is becoming increasingly difficult with funding cuts. In Britain, the Overseas Development Institution identifies areas of research that would be useful, but policy makers set the research agenda. Bureaucrats are the gatekeepers and are threatened by research. Today, there are increasing problems for researchers with the cutbacks in the tertiary sector. There are major problems regarding what has happened to research funding. This is
influencing what researchers can do and the relationship between research and policy. Research has now become a dependency.

Basically there is a contradiction — research needs to be close to government to have relevance, but at a distance from government to have freedom.

Pacific perceptions of research: Sitiveni Halapua maintained that most Pacific leaders do not believe in research. This was supported by Hilda Lini: 'Most Pacific Island leaders have very little knowledge of the subjects upon which they are making decisions. In Vanuatu, the whole Council of Ministers has to make decisions, but based on what? Usually they have a very small advisory staff who do not have a range of information. I am concerned about linking research to needs and priorities but also about where we can access this information. Where is the coordination of this? In the Pacific we do not have a research institute and if we have to depend on our own and not look at the broader aspects of the situation, our decisions will affect the population negatively. There is so much research undertaken but it is never available when you need it — and then there is the question of who owns it. Those who commission it? The researcher? The communities researched? 'Communities' should be the moral response. They should be empowered by the process, not just used.'

Sitiveni Halapua said from his experience bureaucrats are the gatekeepers of research and are threatened by it. A crucial factor is the process of interaction between researchers and policy makers. Policy makers need to be involved in research design. This is a challenge as it is an individualistic activity, but it suggests that researchers have to move to a more collective, inclusive approach. Currently it is hard for researchers to have dialogue with policy makers. There is the feeling that policy makers may try to influence the research results and we have experienced this at the Pacific Islands Development Program. The idea was to develop research programmes and to sit down with policy makers. This was started in 1980, but after 10 years we continued to have a challenge from the researchers. Policy makers can be interfering but think that to make research more relevant they should be involved right from the beginning and be involved in continued dialogue.

Research methodologies: In the discussion on research methodologies there was consensus that single discipline-based methodologies were completely inadequate and resulted in biased results. It was agreed that there needed to be qualitative and quantitative research that considered the concepts from a range of disciplines.

Knowledge creation and information sharing

Role of the media: In discussing the role of the media in informing and educating, Tony O'Dowd of AusAID said that he felt the role of the media was not sufficiently discussed. 'The media is undervalued in the development process by governments, academic institutions and by donors. We need better use of the media. Much more can be done. A further issue relating to knowledge and information sharing is the use of language. As an economist, I am amazed by the language used here. Development experts are overtaking the economists in the use of jargon. We need to have sessions where terms like capacity building, transaction costs and the like are not used. We continually lose meaning when we use complex terms.'

While the media can be important in disseminating knowledge and in the Pacific it is a major gatekeeper of knowledge, it has severe limitations. Peter Aiisi illustrated how information has to be translated so people can understand it. 'This is difficult, particularly in the Pacific where there are vested interests and disinformation. The media is not effective if there is no trust between it and the community. If the media is not trusted, it has no power. Governments don't always understand this and want to control the media — destroying its credibility.' On the other hand, the media in some Pacific countries does have reasonable freedom from political influence.

Appropriate education: Considerable discussion focussed on education in Pacific Island countries and the need for education systems that were appropriate to the social and economic situation in the Pacific. Eci Nabalarua observed that: 'Western-based systems are not working — they teach people for jobs that will never exist and they do not reach everyone.' Greater consideration needs to be given to the system of education, the curriculum and what people are being taught for. More consideration needs to be given to knowledge creation that has a greater community base and has real meaning in the rural context.

In Hilda Lini's words, 'Information and education are vital vehicles for building civil society and a secure future.'
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New Books

The Pacific Islands: An Encyclopedia
Brij V Lal and Kate Fortune (eds), 2000, ISBN 082482265X, 664 pp, illus. Price: US$115.00. University of Hawai'i Press, 2840 Kawaiulani Street, Hawai'i Honolulu, HI 96822-1888, USA, E-mail: uhbooks@Hawaii.edu; Website: http://www.uhpress.hawaii.edu

The vast geographic expanse of the Pacific has been the subject of countless books and articles, but few attempts have been made to produce a comprehensive compendium of this remarkable region in all its variety and complexity. The Pacific Islands: An Encyclopedia brings together in one place for the first time information on major aspects of Pacific island life (the physical environment, peoples, history, politics, economy, society, and culture) compiled by some of the world's leading scholars from the Pacific, the United States, Canada, Europe, and Japan.

Good Governance in the South Pacific
Kim Gravelle (ed.), 2002, The University of the South Pacific, ISBN 9820103046, 78 pp, US$7.50, University Book Center, University of the South Pacific, Suva, Fiji. E-mail: info@usbookcentre.com; Website: http://usbookcentre.com

This compilation of frank, controversial and diverse views on the best way forward for Fiji and the South Pacific — politically, economically, and socially — is a must read for anyone with an interest in this important phase of South Pacific political history.

The South Pacific
Ron Crocombe, Institute of Pacific Studies, 2001, ISBN 9820201543, 788 pp, US$45, hardback, illus. University Book Center, University of the South Pacific, Suva, Fiji. E-mail: info@usbookcentre.com; website: http://usbookcentre.com

The South Pacific is about the 128 islands nations and territories of Polynesia, Melanesia and Micronesia. Indigenous and external influences are creating new and unique arts, cultures, identities, societies, economies and politics of extreme diversity.

Crime, Corruption and Capacity in Papua New Guinea
Maxine Pitts, 2002, Asia Pacific Press, ISBN: 0 7315 3681 9, Price $A$36.00. Asia Pacific Press, Asia Pacific School of Economics and Management, The Australian National University, Canberra ACT 0200. Tel: (61 2) 6125 0178; fax: (61 2) 6237 2886; e-mail: books@asiapacificpress.com; website: http://www.asiapacificpress.com/public/home.ehtml

This book builds on the arguments and views of many PNG observers that community controls are more effective in controlling crime than state controls. Papua New Guinea is a weak state in that it is depleted by frequent political leadership changes and corruption, manifesting in an increasing inability to provide goods and services to its citizens and an increasing inability to control crime. Peter Donigi, the Papua New Guinea UN representative, says 'it is not the system of government or its laws that is undermining good governance, but the choice of people in senior posts and political interference in administrating the public sector'.

Another dilemma of controlling crime in Papua New Guinea, is that what may be a crime according to state law, may not be a crime according to local law, and what may be considered a minor crime by the state, is a serious crime under local law. Maxine Pitts guides the reader through anecdotal and factual data to show the relationship between politics, leadership, accountability, corruption and capacity — within and between state agencies and local communities — and how that relationship often stigmatises both state and community crime control initiatives.
Land Claims in East Timor

Daniel Fitzpatrick, 2002. Asia Pacific Press. ISBN 0 7315 3688 6. Price A$40.00. Asia Pacific Press, Asia Pacific School of Economics and Management, The Australian National University, Canberra ACT 0200. Tel: (61 2) 6125 0178; fax: (61 2) 6257 2886; e-mail: books@asiapacificpress.com; website: http://www.asiapacificpress.com/public/home.ehtml

The relationship of a person and their land has many aspects; spiritual, familial, economic. Land provides the home and shelter for the family, the sense of security which is essential to human dignity. Land is a source of food; it is a source and the most permanent form of wealth. And so, the stability of a society depends upon the justice and effectiveness of the laws and institutions which govern and protect the access of the people to land. East Timor begins its life as a new and independent nation without the benefit of established laws and institutions to regulate land, its ownership and use. It must create those laws and institutions in order to foster the peace, security and economy of its people.

In addressing questions of such magnitude, there is an inevitable risk that the solutions might be inadequate or, in copying the provisions of more developed legal systems, inappropriate. East Timor is fortunate in Mr Fitzpatrick’s Land Claims in East Timor to assist. It is a work of scholarship, based firmly on his research into the existing situation in East Timor.

Creative Writing in Memory of Grace Molisa

Randell, Shirley (ed), 2002. Blackstone Publishing. 108 pp, illus., available from SRIA, PO Box 1702, Port Vila, Vanuatu. E-mail admin@sria.com.vu.

This remarkable collection has been put together to celebrate the memory of the late Grace Mera Molisa, pioneer, poet, author, publisher, women’s activist and stateswoman from Vanuatu. It is the first of what will no doubt be several publications on her life. The book has three sections. The first consists of tributes to Grace’s life, the second includes creative writing on issues Grace cared about, and the third records other tributes to Grace’s memory. Poets, authors and artists from Vanuatu, Cook Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Fiji Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Australia, New Zealand, UK and USA are represented. The majority of the writing is in English but there are also French and Bislama pieces. The book will be a valuable resource for Pacific literature courses in secondary and tertiary institutions. However, it has much wider appeal as it pays tribute to a woman who played a significant role in the politics of Vanuatu and the Pacific, in particular the advancement of women and creative writing.

Ni-Vanuatu Role Models: Women in Their Own Right


There are very few publications either written by or about ni-Vanuatu people. This valuable collection is the first of its kind, setting out two-page biographies of 20 distinguished women from every major island and Province of Vanuatu, told in their own words.

The book has been designed especially for use as a text for secondary school students and particular attention is paid to the educational training experiences and career choices of each role model.

However, it has much wider appeal as it includes stories of the significant life experiences of senior public servants, business women, journalists, an internet technician, a housegirl and a receptionist with a disability.

The stories are remarkably frank, touching on early pregnancies, domestic violence, discrimination in the workplace and other challenges overcome. Pioneer poet, publisher, women’s activist and stateswoman the late Grace Molisa tells her story. The story of her politician husband and lawyer daughter are included as an example of a supportive partner and the next generation.

The Pacific Small Business Ideas Book

Andrew Shadrake, 1998. Development Solutions, PO Box 2307, Wellington, New Zealand. E-mail: PacificIdeasBook@development-solutions.co.nz.

Aimed both at people wishing to start their own business and those who may be advising others on how to start their own business, this book contains information on 60 small business ideas which could work in the Pacific. It tells readers what resources will be needed for each idea, and where to get more information. The book has sections to help readers decide if business is right for them, and gives some advice on how to make a business succeed.

Visions of Development

David Alexander Clark, 2002. Edward Elgar Publishing, Cheltenham, UK. ISBN 1 84064 982 8. Price US$96, 296 pp, hardback. Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, Gainsland House, Montpellier Parade, Cheltenham, Glos GL50 1UJ, United Kingdom. Tel: +44 (0) 1242 226934; fax: +44 (0) 1242 262111; E-mail: info@e-elgar.co.uk; website: www.e-elgar.com

A path-breaking and original volume, examining concepts and perceptions of human development through a unique synthesis of empirical and philosophical work. The author builds on the foundations of Sen and Nussbaum’s capability approach, now at the forefront of development studies.

The book aims to identify and clarify academic concepts of development, to consider how poor people themselves perceive ‘development’ and confronts abstract concepts of development with the views of ordinary people. It represents the first systematic attempt to construct a development ethic (list of valuable capabilities) that is based directly on the values and experiences of the poor.

David Clark considers the case for viewing development in terms of the expansion of human capabilities instead of some narrow conception of utility or opulence; and develops a non-paternalistic
methodology for forging a development ethic that can respect the values of all people. He then proceeds to develop an account of human development based on the perceptions of people living in both rural and urban locations in South Africa — Murraysburg and Wallacedene respectively. 

A multidisciplinary and accessible text, this challenging book will appeal not only to scholars and researchers in development economics but also economic geographers, social scientists and political economists. It will also be of great interest to policymakers and practitioners.

From Civil Strife to Civil Society: Civil and Military Responsibilities in Disrupted States

The 1990s saw the United Nations, the militaries of key member states, and NGOs increasingly entangled in the complex affairs of disrupted states. Whether as deliverers of humanitarian assistance or as agents of political, social, and civic reconstruction, whether in Somalia, Bosnia, Kosovo, or East Timor, these actors have had to learn ways of interacting with each other in order to optimise the benefits for the populations they seek to assist. Yet the challenges have proved daunting. Civil and military actors have different organizational cultures and standard operating procedures and are confronted with the need to work together to perform tasks to which different actors may attach quite different priorities.

From Civil Strife to Civil Society explores the nature of these challenges, blending the experience of scholars and practitioners. It is underpinned by an understanding that recovery from disruption is a laborious process that can easily be de-railed. The first part of the book offers a rigorous examination of the dimensions of state disruption and the roles of the international community in responding to it; the second part looks at military doctrine for dealing with disorder and humanitarian emergencies; the third part examines mechanisms for ending violence and delivering justice in post-conflict times; the fourth part investigates the problems of rebuilding trust and promoting democracy; the fifth part deals with the reconstitution of the rule of law; while the sixth and seventh parts address the reestablishment of social and civil order.

Foreign Direct Investment for Development: Maximising Benefits, Minimising Costs

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is one of the main features of globalisation and a key challenge facing both developed and developing countries is managing it as a force for global welfare. According to this new OECD publication, while FDI can entail drawbacks for host economies, the benefits that it brings generally outweigh the costs by a wide margin. The book surveys evidence from a round the world of linkages between FDI and economic development in the countries that receive it.

Trade, Environment, and the Millennium (2nd edition)

In January 1995, the World Trade Organization (WTO) became the successor to GATT, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. Recent criticisms focus on many different aspects of the WTO. Some maintain that trade liberalization under WTO auspices has led to an environmentally harmful exploitation of natural and other resources, and others argue that the WTO hampers governments in pursuing environmentally friendly policies. Further, the WTO is seen as increasingly extending its reach into areas — particularly through its dispute settlement process — that go beyond what is normally thought to be trade policy with important implications for the environment. This book provides an overview of the key issues for negotiation at the WTO Qata Ministerial meeting and well beyond. Resolving these issues is a precondition for the launching of a new round of multilateral trade negotiations — something considered critical by many WTO member governments in order to ensure a stable multilateral trading system that fully represents the interests of developing countries.

The authors of the chapters have been selected as being world authorities in their respective areas. Their contributions to the first edition of Trade Environment and the Millennium have been broadened and deepened in the light of the experience of the failed negotiators in Seattle, and other relevant developments in the WTO over the past two years. Further, as developing countries have a great deal at stake in the outcome of many topics in this complex debate, the authors have specifically addressed their special interests in the forthcoming negotiations.

Compendium of Election Laws, Practices and Cases of Selected Commonwealth Countries, (Volumes 1 and 2)
Published by the Commonwealth Secretariat. Available through York Publishing Services, 64 Hallfield Road, Letchworth, York Y031 7ZQ. Tel: +44 (0)1904 431 213; Fax: +44 (0)1904 430 868; E-mail: orders@gp-publishing.co.uk, web http://www.thecommonwealth.org/pub.html

There is a growing realisation among members of the Commonwealth of Nations that the holding of free and fair elections is central to democratisation. As a result, many have recently reviewed their constitution and
Intellectual Property, Biodiversity and Sustainable Development: Resolving the Difficult Issues


Intellectual property rights have become a major source of controversy. Corporations are now patenting human genes, plants and other biological materials, many of which exist in nature or have been used for generations by farmers and indigenous peoples. In this book, Martin Khor examines the 'biopiracy' phenomenon, its links to the TRIPS Agreement (trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights) and its various effects. In particular, he deals with these questions: What are the implications of TRIPS for traditional knowledge and the rights of local communities? What tensions exist between TRIPS and the Convention on Biological Diversity? Should life forms be granted the status of intellectual property, and has TRIPS made patentability of biological materials mandatory? Will TRIPS endanger the transfer of technologies required by developing countries for their sustainable development? What are the options for resolving these problems and what is the way forward for each issue? This book provides a useful summary and analysis of the key aspects in this complex and controversial subject, and just as importantly, it describes the processes and debates now taking place in the WTO and other fora, and gives suggestions on how to move ahead on the various issues.
Journals

Alliance

Alliance Magazine, Allavida, 55 Bondway, London, SW8 1SJ. Tel: +44 (0)20 7735 8096; fax: +44 (0)20 7735 7608; e-mail: alliance@allavida.org; Website: http://www.allavida.org/alliance.htm. Annual subscription (4 issues) OECD/DAC countries £290, developing countries and CEE/NIS £130.

Alliance is a unique quarterly magazine that examines issues relating to the delivery of funding to civil society organisations worldwide. Alliance is now published by Allavida, a new international non-profit organisation that brings together grantmaking, training and capacity building, and research and publishing whose goal is to provide the resources — funding, skills and information — that people and organisations working for the development of their communities need in order to achieve their own objectives.

Land Reform, Land Settlement and Cooperatives

Published by Sustainable Development Department (SD), Food and Agriculture Department of the United Nations (FAO).

Full text available on line at http://www.fao.org/isd/SDpub_en.htm

The full text of current and past issues of this bulletin is available on line. Recent issues included, in 2001–02, a geographically and technically diverse range of papers covering Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, the Near East and Central Europe. The technical areas covered reflect the experience of FAO and others in the practical issues of land reform, from broad questions of how to promote and deal with land markets in the Czech Republic, to specific project interventions in support of implementing land policy in Mozambique, while 2000–01 looked at how access to land and natural resources needs to be on an equitable basis allowing the poor and the disadvantaged, including women, to secure the assets needed for them and their families to generate sustainable livelihoods.

Development in Practice

Published by Carfax Publishing Taylor and Francis Ltd on behalf of Oxfam GB. E-mail: devinprac@gn.apc.org; Website: http://developmentinpractice.org

A multi-disciplinary journal published five times per year and offering practice-based analysis and research concerning the social dimensions of development and humanitarianism, and provides a forum for debate and the exchange of ideas among practitioners, policy makers, academics, and activists worldwide. By challenging current assumptions, the journal seeks to stimulate new thinking and to shape future ways of working. Contributors represent a wide range of cultural and professional backgrounds and experience.

Pacific Economic Bulletin

ISSN 0187-8038. Published twice yearly, in May and November. Asia Pacific Press, Australian National University. Available by subscription and individual articles can be purchased for A$7/US$5 each. Policy dialogue papers are available to download free of charge. http://www.asiapacificpress.com/public/home.shtml

An important resource for those interested in economic and policy developments in Papua New Guinea and the Pacific island countries. It provides background analysis to those setting the policy agenda in regional matters, or those simply interested in keeping up with recent developments in the region. Topics covered include governance, unemployment, exchange rate policy, impact of natural disasters, crime, savings and investment, lack of investment in education, public sector reforms, implementation of reforms, tax reforms, social security, social indicators, mineral and petroleum resources, natural resource management, and social capital.

The Contemporary Pacific: A Journal of Island Affairs

Published twice yearly by the University of Hawai'i Press, Journals Department, University of Hawai'i Press, 2840 Kolowalu Street, Honolulu, HI 96822. Tel: 1-808-956-8833; Fax: 1-808-989-6052; E-mail: uhcp@hawaii.edu; http://www.uhpress.hawaii.edu/journals/cp/

Publishes scholarly articles on contemporary developments in the entire Pacific Islands region, including Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia. Articles are chosen from a wide range of disciplines in the social sciences and humanities, and those drawing on the literature of more than one discipline are encouraged. Dr Vilsoni Hereniko, Pacific literature and film specialist at the Center for Pacific Islands Studies, is the Editor. Each issue carries articles, political reviews, book reviews, and a dialogue section on issues of current concern. The resources section presents specialized bibliographies and essays on source materials.

Occasional special issues focus on a particular current issue or series of events, sometimes under guest editorship. Five have appeared to date, the first on the Fiji Coup (Volume 2, Number 1), the second on the crisis in Bougainville (Volume 4, Number 2), the third on logging in the Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, and Vanuatu (Volume 9, Number 1), the fourth on migrant labor and tourism in the Republic of Palau (Volume 12, Number 2), and the fifth on Native Pacific cultural studies (Volume 13, Number 2).
Organisations and Programmes

The Foundation for Development Cooperation (FDC)

PO Box 10445 Adelaide Street, Brisbane Queensland 4000 Australia. Tel: +61 7 3236 4633; Fax: +61 7 3236 4696; E-mail: info@fdc.org.au; Website: http://www.fdc.org.au

An independent think tank committed to development cooperation for sustainable development and poverty reduction in Asia and the Pacific through strategic research, policy development, advocacy, and private sector and community participation.

Since its establishment in 1990, FDC has established itself with major research programs in areas such as regional development — shaping new approaches to regional cooperation through policy dialogue, and by undertaking comparative studies on economic development issues faced by small island states in the Pacific and the Caribbean; and microfinance — leading a series of pioneering action research programs, resulting in the development of microfinance policy frameworks and the establishing of a collaborative network of community organisations and financial institutions, the Banking with the Poor (BWfP) Network, in nine Asian countries.

Current areas of focus FDC is continuing to develop these programs as well as establishing new areas. It is currently focusing on new forms of economic and technical cooperation among and within Asia–Pacific countries, focusing particularly on the role of the private sector; support for sustainable development and poverty reduction at the community level; globalisation and its implications for sustainable development in the region; and the potential for applying information and communication technologies to reduce poverty.

The Pacific Islands Development Program (PIDP)

Pacific Islands Development Program, East-West Center, 1601 East-West Road, Honolulu, Hawai'i, USA. 96848-1601, Tel: (808) 944-7778; (808) 944-7745 Fax: (808) 944-7670; E-mail: pidp@EastWestCenter.org; Website: http://www.eastwestcenter.org/pidp-ab.asp

PIDP conducts a broad range of activities to enhance the quality of life in the Pacific islands. The founding mission of PIDP, established in 1980, is to assist Pacific islands leaders in advancing their collective efforts to achieve and sustain equitable social and economic development consistent with the goals of the Pacific islands region's people.

PIDP began as a forum through which island leaders could discuss critical issues of development with a wide spectrum of interested countries, donors, nongovernmental organizations, and the private sector. Today, PIDP's role as a regional organization has expanded to include five major activity areas: the following: Secretariat of the Pacific Islands Conference of Leaders; United States/Pacific Island Nations Joint Commercial Commission Secretariat; Research; Education & Training; and Pacific Islands News.

As PIDP was formed at the specific request and for the benefit of the island Leaders, the program is unique within the East-West Center as it functions with a certain degree of autonomy and can draw on the resources of the entire Center. The Standing Committee, composed of 17 island leaders, annually reviews PIDP's work in the foregoing areas to ensure that it is responsive to the issues and challenges facing the Pacific islands region.
Richard F. Taitano Micronesian Area Research Center, University of Guam

http://guahan.uog.edu/marc/mission.html
Contact: La Vonne Guerrero-Meno, Administrative Officer, email lavonne@g.uog.edu or Rosita A. Hassfeld, Secretary II, tel: 671-735-2150; fax: 671-734-7403.

The Micronesian Area Research Center (MARC) recognizes and affirms its responsibility to the entire Western Pacific community in the conduct of research, instruction, service, academic support and collection development. MARC will carry out these activities on a complementary and mutually beneficial basis. The Guam and Micronesia Collections will continue to provide reference materials in a variety of formats for the benefit of researchers within and apart from the University community. The Reference Collection, the Spanish Documents Collection, and the Manuscript Collection will continue to seek out documents of historical significance for the region and organize them for use by the people of Guam, the region, and researchers worldwide.

MARC recognizes its need to expand research activities for the purpose of assisting in the identification and solution of the problems of changing societies. An emphasis on research will strengthen both graduate and undergraduate education by providing courses with research findings, both contemporary and historical, that describe the social realities of the region. MARC re-affirms its mission to discover new knowledge through basic and applied research that is relevant to Guam and the Western Pacific. This knowledge is needed to solve the critical and interrelated problems of peoples, societies, and environments, and will be made available through a variety of public and scholarly programs designed to contribute to social and economic development. MARC further affirms that it shall maintain a responsive and receptive stance toward the needs and interests of the community it serves.

Australian Foundation for the Peoples of Asia and the Pacific (AFAP)

AFAP, PO Box 12, Crowe Nest NSW 2065 Australia, Tel: +61 2 9906 3792, Toll free: 1800 007 308; Fax: +61 2 9436 4637; Email: afap@mpx.com.au; Website: www.afap.org

The AFAP is a non-profit organisation, established in 1968, with development programs in the Asia-Pacific region. AFAP is an independent member of the Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific International (FSP) network, whose affiliates have been working in the Pacific since 1965. This network is the oldest, largest, and most experienced secular NGO network in the Pacific. In 1989, AFAP began work in Asia with program initiatives in Vietnam. In the South Pacific Region, AFAP has indigenous affiliate offices or representatives in Tonga, Tuvu, Kiribati, Fiji, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea and Western Samoa as well as projects in the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Palau and Niue.

AFAP works to assist the peoples of Asia and the Pacific by supporting projects that are environmentally and economically sustainable, gender balanced and supportive of the integrity and self-determination of local communities. AFAP aims to improve the status of women, children, ethnic minorities, handicapped and other disadvantaged or marginalised sections of society.

Centre for the Contemporary Pacific

Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, Australian National University, Canberra ACT 0200, Australia, Tel: +61 2 6125 3098/4189; Fax: +61 2 6125 5525; Email: cp@coombs.anu.edu.au; Web: http://rpsps.anu.edu.au/ccp/

The Centre's objectives include developing links with government agencies, institutions and universities within Australia and the Pacific region and acting as a focal point for their access to Pacific studies at ANU; facilitating contact and communication between Pacific scholars in Australia and around the world through active cooperation with other centres and institutions for Pacific studies; undertaking an outreach role in the Pacific region on behalf of the ANU and more generally for Pacific studies within Australia. The Centre pursues these goals by: creating a network of information in a form which can be accessed by government and universities throughout the region; consolidating and expanding Pacific Island library and reference material in Australia; establishing visiting fellowships, for Pacific Island political and public service leaders to share their expertise with interested scholars and reflect their experience; hosting major annual workshops on topical issues and concerns in the contemporary Pacific; facilitating collaborative research projects with island universities in the humanities and the social sciences. In the context of the Centre's activities, 'the Pacific' refers to Papua New Guinea and to other islands and states and territories of Melanesia, Polynesia and Micronesia, with particular emphasis on the Southwest Pacific region.

Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies (University of Sydney)

http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/departments/gec/cpacmain.html. Tel: 02 9351-7666, fax: 02-9360-0862; e-mail: CPACS@social.usyd.edu.au.

The Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies (CFACS) was established in May 1988 as a specialist research and teaching centre within the University of Sydney. It promotes interdisciplinary research and teaching on the causes of conflict and the conditions which affect conflict resolution and peace. Projects focus on the means of justice and the means of attaining a just society. Projects examine the conditions which contribute to the attainment of equitable social relationships and the resolution of conflict with a view to attaining just societies. The Centre aims to facilitate dialogue between individuals, groups or communities who are concerned with conditions of positive peace.

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whether in interpersonal relationships, community relations, within organisations and nations, or with reference to international relations.

Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
http://www.forumsec.org.fj/default.htm. Private Mail Bag, Suva, Fiji, tel: +679-3312 600, fax: +679-3305 573 E-mail: info@forumsec.org.fj

The Pacific Island Forum represents Heads of Government of all the independent and self-governing Pacific Island countries, Australia and New Zealand. Since 1971 it has provided member nations with the opportunity to express their joint political views and to cooperate in areas of political and economic concern. The 16 member countries of the Pacific Island Forum are: Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.

Commonwealth Secretariat
The Commonwealth Secretariat,
Marlborough House, Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5HX. Tel: +44 (0)20 77476500; fax: +44 (0)20 7930 0827; E-mail: info@commonwealth.int.; Website: http://www.thecommonwealth.org/index.asp.

The Commonwealth Secretariat is the principal organisation of the Commonwealth, which implements the decisions taken by the associations 54 member governments. It was established by Heads of Government in 1965 and is located at Marlborough House in London. Its sister inter-governmental organisations are the Commonwealth Foundation (also based at Marlborough House) and the Commonwealth of Learning (in Vancouver, Canada). The Secretariat works as a partner for all Commonwealth people as a force for peace, democracy, equality and good governance; as a catalyst for global consensus building; and as a source of assistance for sustainable development and poverty eradication.
Land Tenure and Land Conflict in the South Pacific: Background Report for the 2002 South Pacific Land Tenure Conflict Symposium

Boydell, S. Land Reform, Land Settlement and Cooperative Journal FAO. Available from Eldis, The Gateway to Development Information, Website: www.eldis.ids.ac.uk

The paper is a desk study prepared as a basis for discussion and further field research into land tenure and conflict in the region. The first section provides an overview of land tenure and land utilization issues. It includes an analysis of gender and other demographic issues as they relate to land tenure and access to natural resources. The second section focuses on more detailed case studies of land tenure conflict in Papua New Guinea, The Solomon Islands, Fiji, Vanuatu. See also Land Reform, Land Settlement and Cooperative Journal published by the FAO. Articles from 1996 onwards are available full text online, http://www.fao.org/ald/ledirect/landref.htm

Genetic Resources Action International (GRAIN)
Website: http://www.grain.org

GRAIN is an international NGO which promotes the sustainable management and use of agricultural biodiversity based on people's control over genetic resources and local knowledge.

Traditional Knowledge of Biodiversity in Asia-Pacific: Problems of Piracy and Protection

Most people across Asia, a region rich in biodiversity, are directly dependent on plant genetic resources for their livelihoods. But both these resources and the knowledge related to them are under threat. The quest for "green gold" by transnational companies and global institutions is penetrating all countries of the region, bringing with it a rise in the problem of biopiracy. The misappropriation of traditional knowledge has been helped by changes in regulations—mainly the introduction of intellectual property rights. Governments are increasingly trying to manage rights to biodiversity and traditional knowledge through exclusive monopoly systems, while mechanisms to protect and strengthen the collective rights of local communities remain weak.

This 30-page briefing provides details, with numerous examples, of the changes that are occurring in the region; from international agreements and regional initiatives to action taken by farming communities. Many people at the grassroots level are working to fight back and protect their resources and knowledge from blatant exploitation. Emerging strategies on what communities and organisations could do to further ensure the strengthening of community rights are outlined.

Global Development Network (GDN)
Website: http://www.gdnet.org/

GDN — generating, sharing and applying knowledge about development. Since its inception in 1999, GDN has supported and linked research institutes that generate, share and apply knowledge about development. To foster new knowledge, GDN regional networks established competitive peer-review grant mechanisms and distributed millions of dollars in research grants to developing country institutions. GDN facilitates knowledge sharing through regional conferences, the annual GDN Global Development Conference, and through electronic tools: a monthly e-mail newsletter, online discussions, and www.gdnet.org, the GDN website.

RAPNet: Research and Policy Network
Website: http://www.gdnet.org/subpages/projects_underresearch.htm

RAPNet is a network for researchers and policy makers to share information, discuss and learn about how to improve the links between development research and policy. It is the online platform of the GDN Bridging Research and Policy Project which aims to synthesise existing knowledge, commission new research and produce lessons, recommendations and practical tools for researchers and policy makers. The goal of the project is: improved policy development and implementation in developed and developing countries to reduce poverty. The purpose is: enhanced understanding and capacity among policy-makers and researchers of how to improve research-policy links and impact.

The Europe Pacific Solidarity network for Studies, Information and Education on Pacific Issues (ECSIEP)
Website: http://www.antenna.nil/esiep/

In the 1980s Pacific issues became the subject of NGO and church organisations in France, Germany, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark and Switzerland. These national organisations now work together in the Europe Pacific Solidarity Network. Since 1989 the Network has organised annual seminars at which activists of the network meet and discuss common campaigns. The Network and participating organisations have been active on such issues as the impact on the surrounding environment of the Ok Tedi copper mine in PNG, human rights abuses in Bougainville, the political situation in Belau and Kanakay/New Caledonia, support for the victims of past nuclear testing, driftnet fishing, the plans for dumping domestic, chemical and nuclear waste in the Pacific region and the transport of chemical weapons from Germany for incineration on Johnston Island.

In 1992 the network started ECSIEP which was set up to improve the quantity
and quality of the information flow from the Pacific to Europe. It makes this information available to the Pacific networks in the seven countries where these networks currently exist through the Europe Pacific Solidarity Bulletin which can be accessed on-line at http://www.antenna.nl/ecsiep/bulletin/indexbul.htm. The reports of the ECSIEP annual seminars are also available on-line. The major themes of the thirteenth annual seminar (11-13 October 2002, Strasbourg) were: conflicts in the Pacific, bringing together initiatives and knowledge; European fishing in the South Pacific region and Recognition of the victims of nuclear testing in the Pacific (on-line report forthcoming).

The State, Society and Governance in Melanesia (SSGM) Project was launched in January 1996 in the Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, Australian National University. The key objectives of the SSGM Project are to increase awareness and understanding of governance and state/society relations, to encourage scholarship on these issues and strengthen the linkages between academic and policy communities. The Project's research and outreach activities focus on the Pacific Islands with an emphasis on Melanesia—Papua New Guinea (Bougainville), Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, New Caledonia, Fiji. The geographical scope of the Project is now expanding to include neighbouring, culturally related areas (West Papua/Irian Jaya and East Timor).

The Project's primary functions are to: conduct research, publication and outreach activities on issues of governance, state and society in Melanesia; organise regular conferences, seminars and workshops in Australia and the Pacific Islands region and encourage collaborative research and dialogue on governance issues with institutions and organisations in the region; strengthen the interface between academic and policy communities; identify policy-relevant research; and support practical measures for building good governance and conflict prevention into development assistance policies and programs; and develop an SSGM Associates Scheme to build a database of regional specialists and to further encourage regional dialogue for policy makers, academics, consultants and others involved in Pacific governance.

Asia Pacific Bulletin
http://www.asiapacificbusiness.ca/apbn/bulletin.cfm

Produced by the Asia Pacific Business Network, the Asia Pacific Bulletin is available free on the web to non-members one month after publication. The bulletins features news and analysis with a focus on business in Asia and the Pacific.

PNGDEV email bulletin

See PNGDEV Site for instructions on how to subscribe: http://www.global.net.pg/atprojectslpngdev.htm

An email bulletin intended to provide an additional way for those interested in development in PNG to collaborate. It is a forum for discussions of relevance to development, for exchanges of questions and answers, and for announcements of events, products, and job openings relevant to the development community. Above all, the list is intended to be a place to share resources of all kinds in a quick and efficient manner. Anyone can join, regardless of where you reside; the list is unmoderated, and available free of charge.
Learning about Livelihoods: Insights from Southern Africa


The Disaster Mitigation for Sustainable Livelihoods Project (DiMP) was developed by the Department of Environmental and Geographical Science at the University of Cape Town, along with partner organizations in southern Africa. This comprehensive guide to applying the Livelihoods approach to the practice of disaster risk reduction — a direct outcome of the project — comprises a facilitator’s handbook and filmed case studies from five southern African countries. The pack contains ten training sessions, which build understanding of the factors that make poor families vulnerable, as well as their inherent strengths. It then explores opportunities for applying these insights in practice. The handbook includes extensive and up-to-date references to further print and Internet information resources.

The five film documentaries portray a diverse range of pressures facing people in precarious circumstances, with case studies drawn from Lesotho, Mozambique, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. These explore the impacts of such diverse disaster events as retrenchment, flood risk, recurrent drought, HIV/AIDS, violence and political instability on individual households and their communities.

This publication makes accessible the expertise of practitioners and participatory educators who have worked with and applied the livelihoods approach in a wide range of disaster contexts. Development practitioners, trainers and managers in non-governmental, governmental and consulting sectors will find it an invaluable resource for strengthening the effectiveness of their development initiatives, especially those targeted to at-risk communities.

Programme Support and Public Finance Management: A New Role for Bilateral Donors in Poverty Strategy Work (summary)


Development assistance provided by international donors must be administered effectively if it is to achieve a lasting reduction in poverty. This study, produced by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), highlights the importance of setting up good public finance management systems in recipient countries so this goal can be met. It identifies the need to build government institutions capable of handling, tracking and applying funds efficiently.

In most poor countries, such institutions are lacking and the authors discuss and recommend ways for donors and recipient countries to work together to achieve progress. They stress the importance of developing systems and tools that facilitate good financial management systems and of implementing them in cooperation with partner countries. They also make a series of concrete proposals in this regard and offer numerous helpful hints and pointers for all those involved and interested in ensuring that modern development assistance actually reaches the people for whom it is intended.

Australian Aid Training Guide (AATG) for 2003

TorgAid, December 2002. PO Box 13, Torquay 3228, Australia; Tel: +61 3 52612955; fax: +61 3 52616639; E-mail: cpiper@deakin.edu.au.

The following information supplied by TorgAid is published on the ACFOA (www.acfoa.asn.au) and AidWorkers Network (www.aidworkers.net) websites. TorgAid produces the AATG gratis for the Australian Aid Community.

The AATG summarises the main aid-related courses offered in Australia for humanitarian and development practitioners. The main subject areas include international studies, development studies, project management, international health, humanitarian assistance/disaster management, peace/conflict studies, cross-cultural training, etc (full details on the web: www.acfoa.asn.au and www.aidworkers.net). As well as providing this Australian training course information, the AATG also includes practical information sections: Finding Overseas Work; Travel Information; and Other Useful Australian and Overseas or International Contacts.

The AATG is aimed at aid workers, be they experienced practitioners, or those sometimes called Less Experienced Professionals (LEPs). The latter can include:

• People who may have had some limited previous overseas humanitarian or development experience;
• People on existing agency registers;
• People who have worked in a support office environment;
• Indigenous or community based program workers;
• Technical experts wishing to augment their skills by moving into overseas humanitarian or development work; returned overseas volunteers; and;
• People who have a tertiary qualification in development studies, or related subject area.

Most training offered takes place in Australia. However, some of the short courses are also run overseas (eg RedR/TorgAid workshops), whilst an increasing number of tertiary options are taught either on-line or
through distance education. Some of the latter courses may therefore be particularly suitable for national or expatriate staff working in the field.

Finding overseas work

There are various ways for people to seek out appropriate overseas positions. Relevant websites include:

ACFOA (www.acfoa.asn.au). This Australian coordinating agency lists weekly vacancies with Australian aid agencies both in Australia and overseas.

Aid Workers Network (www.aidworkers.net) A new site that gives tips on finding your first job; highlighting openings for experienced practitioners and LEPS; and giving advice for consultants.

Dev-Zone (www.dev-zone.org/jobs) This New Zealand based site includes details of a large number of humanitarian & development positions globally.

ReliefWeb (www.reliefweb.int/vacancies) This international site includes a large number of global humanitarian positions.

Travel Alternatives (www.travelalternatives.org) This Australian web-based information service aims to educate and provide resources to young people wanting to work, travel, study or volunteer overseas.

Other avenues

Register with either with RedR Australia (www.redr.org), which recruits for UNHCR and other agencies, or a number of the larger Australian NGOs (eg Australian Red Cross, OXFAM/CAA, MSF), whose contact details can be found in the ACFOA website. Check adverts in newspapers such as the Weekend Australian (for Australian agencies) or the Guardian Weekly (www.guardianweekly.com) for international agencies.

Travel information


Other useful Australian contacts

Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) (www.ausaid.gov.au) AusAID is responsible for the management of the official Australian Government Overseas Aid Program. AusAID's website describes how this occurs, and explains its relationships with developing countries, NGOs, Australian businesses, and international agencies.

Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) (www.aciar.gov.au) Mobilises Australia's research capacity to help solve agricultural problems in developing countries.

Australian Council for Overseas Aid (ACFOA) (www.acfoa.asn.au) This is the peak coordinating agency for nearly 100 Australian non-government organisations (NGOs). It produces a variety of useful information and services relating to the work of the Australian aid community.

Community International (C.I) (info@communityinternational.com.au) This newly formed social organisation encourages individual and community involvement in the development sector. It is particularly interested in helping guide LEPs who want to develop a career in development assistance.

Development Gateway (www.developmentgateway.com.au) An Australian initiative under the Virtual Colombo Plan (VCP), this gateway provides developing countries with information on Australian government, private sector, civil society and academic sources.

Development Studies Network (DSN) (http://devnet.anu.edu.au) Provides a forum for cross-cultural disciplinary debate on various development issues; runs regular symposiums; and publishes a quarterly journal, Development Bulletin. For further information: devnetwork@anu.edu.au.

Foundation for Development Co-operation (FDC) (www.fdc.org.au) This Australian-based think tank is committed to development cooperation and poverty reduction within Asia and the Pacific.

Last First Network (www.lastfirst.net) This non-profit organisation is dedicated to advancing grassroots development, raising awareness and resourcing practitioners and organisations who want to work with the poorest and most marginal groups in any society.

New Internationalist (www.newint.org) This international communications cooperative provides reports on issues of world poverty and inequality; focuses attention on unjust relationships between the rich and poor; and campaigns for radical changes needed if basic material and spiritual needs are to be met.

Other useful overseas or international contacts

Administrative Committee on Coordination/Sub-Committee on Nutrition (ACCOSCN) (http://acc.unsystem.org/scn/) UN focal point for harmonising nutritional policies and strategies throughout the UN system, and strengthening collaboration with other partners for accelerated and more effective action against malnutrition. Produces periodical review SCN News.

Aidworkers Network (www.aidworkers.net) A new initiative designed to provide practical advice, ideas, support, best practice and training by aid workers for aid workers.

BBC (www.bbc.co.uk) This not only has the latest news updates, but also contains in-depth coverage of key current major events, for example, Israel/Palestinians, the Iraq crisis.

Dev (www.dev-zone.org) This non-profit NGO provides information and educational services to people and agencies operating in fields of overseas aid and development. It also has strong development educational links with the secondary and tertiary educational sectors.

Emergency Personnel Network (EPN) (www.redr.org) Coordinates seminars to explore the ability of participating agencies to find, select, prepare and retain staff for humanitarian assignments.

Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) (www.fao.org) A specialised UN agency focusing in on agriculture, forestry, fisheries and rural development.

Intermediate Technology Development Group (ITDG) (www.itdg.org) Specialises in helping people to use technology for practical answers to poverty. Also manages ITDG Publishing.
International Agricultural Research Centers (IARC) (www.cgiar.org/centers.htm)

These are 16 International Agricultural Research Centers (IARC) that make up the global network known as the Consultative Group of International Agricultural Research (CGIAR).

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) (www.icrc.org) A neutral, impartial and independent organisation whose humanitarian mission is protect the lives and dignity of victims of war and international violence, and to provide them with appropriate assistance.

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) (www.ifrc.org) This is the world's largest humanitarian organisation, with 178 member National Societies.

Institute of Development Studies (IDS) (www.ids.ac.uk/idsl) A leading centre for research and teaching on international development. Includes the Participation Group, whose focus is more specifically on participation methodology.

Overseas Development Institute (ODI) (www.odi.org.uk) A leading think tank on international development and humanitarian issues, it offers a useful and practical variety of publications and other services designed to assist development or humanitarian practitioners.

People in Aid (PIA) (www.peopleinaid.org) Promotes global best practice in the management and support of aid personnel. It produces a People in Aid Code of Best Practice, and also publishes a useful quarterly newsletter.

Resource Centre for Participatory Learning and Action (RCPLA) (www.rcpla.org) An informal partnership of 15 organisations (5 each in Asia and Africa, 2 each in Europe and Latin America, and one in the Middle East), committed to sharing information on participatory methodologies and frameworks.

ReliefWeb (www.reliefweb.int) Serving the information needs of the humanitarian relief community, this contains useful information on major humanitarian crises and relief operations, as well as a mass of background resource material.

The Sphere Project (www.sphereproject.org) An international collaborative program which focuses in on issues of current international law, and recommended minimum standards in Water Supply & Sanitation, Nutrition, Food Aid, Food Security, Shelter & Site Planning and Health Services.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (www.undp.org) Provides a range of services to governments and others in the areas of democratic governance, poverty reduction; crisis prevention and recovery; environment and energy; information and communications technology; and HIV/AIDS.


United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) (www.unicef.org) Working with a range of partners UNICEF seeks to protect children and their rights, by the provision of services and supplies, and by helping shape appropriate agenda and budgets.

World Bank (www.worldbank.org) One of the world's largest sources of development assistance, the World Bank works in a number of complementary areas including health, education, HIV/AIDS, debt relief, biodiversity projects, civil society, post-conflict assistance and poverty alleviation.

World Food Programme (WFP) (www.wfp.org) A front-line UN agency, WFP is in the fight against global hunger. It engages in programs related to emergencies; rehabilitation; development; women; school-feeding; and food-for-works.

World Health Organisation (WHO) (www.who.int) This UN specialised health agency is involved not only in combating disease and infirmity, but also in promoting complete physical, mental and social well-being.

Participatory Workshops: A Sourcebook of 21 Sets of Ideas and Activities


Twenty-one sets of 21 ideas, activities and tips drawn from decades of international practical experience. Essential for trainers, facilitators and teachers, this is an invaluable sourcebook on participatory training methods from the authority in the field and author of Whose Reality Counts? and Challenging the Professions.

Making participation real requires workshops, training and learning that are themselves participatory. This sourcebook presents the results of the author's vast experience in the form of 21 sets of ideas, activities and tips, both serious and fun, for topics such as getting started, seating, forming groups, managing large numbers, analysis, feedback, evaluation and ending.

From the Preface: 'This is for all who try to help others learn and change … There is something here for participatory teachers and trainers; for organizers, moderators and facilitators who want their conferences and workshops to be interactive; for staff in training institutes who want to enliven their courses; for faculty and teachers in universities, colleges and schools who would like to enable students to do more of their own analysis; and for those engaged in management training who want to widen their repertoire.'
Author Guidelines

Manuscripts and Copyright
Manuscripts are normally accepted on the understanding that they are unpublished and not on offer to another publication. Once published by the Development Studies Network (the Network), however, manuscripts, articles and reports may subsequently be published elsewhere. Acknowledgement of the Network as the source would be appreciated. No acknowledgement is needed for conference reports, other notices or lists of publications.

The Network cannot assume responsibility for any loss of or damage to manuscripts. Contributors are therefore encouraged to retain a complete copy of their work.

Word length
Submitted papers are to be short and concise, with a minimum of 1000–1500 words and a maximum of 2,500–3,000 words. The word limit includes subheadings and footnotes and excludes references. Conference reports: 800–1000 words.

Presentation and Style
Manuscripts should be double spaced with at least 2.5cm (1”) margins. Subheadings, footnotes and references need to be clearly indicated in the text. Quotation marks should be single, double within single. Spelling is English (OED with ‘-ise’ endings).

Documents can be sent as email attachments, on disk or in hard copy. Documents sent electronically should be saved as Microsoft Word files, or in .rtf format. Email attachments are preferred in Word or .rtf format. A virus check is requested prior to any material being electronically sent. No .pdf files please as these cannot be edited or corrected prior to printing.

Referencing
A minimum of references and/or footnotes is requested due to space constraints. All references referred to or cited in the text are to be included in the reference list. Book titles and journal names should be italicised or underlined; titles of journal articles and book chapters are in single inverted commas.

The Harvard style of referencing is preferred: author’s surname, forename and/or initials, date of publication, title of publication, publisher and place of publication. Journal references should include volume and issue number, date and page numbers.

Detailed guidelines on the Harvard style of referencing are available online at: http://www.uwe.ac.uk/library/resources/general/info_study_skills/harvard2.htm#book

Examples:
Hill, H.M. 1986, 'The Jackson Committee and women', in P. Eldridge, D. Forbes and D. Strachan (eds),
Palmer, D. 1995, "Getting shown a thing or two": The adoption of Nyungar cultural forms by youth workers', Youth Studies Australia, 14(4), 22-28.
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