PROMOTING SOCIAL TOLERANCE AND COHESION THROUGH EDUCATION

Report 1: Stakeholders' Assessment

Solomon Islands

Warren Prior
Suzanne Mellor
Graeme Withers

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SOLOMON ISLAND STAKEHOLDER ASSESSMENT & VIEWS

As a generalization, it is fair to say that stakeholders in the Solomon Islands acknowledged what the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education called as 'putting out bushfires' in the current approach to educational planning. In other words, the specific issues of the day, for example trying to ensure that teachers were paid, took most of their energies and time. While the questions we asked and the discussions which ensued were actively participated in by all stakeholders, for most of them it was a luxury to have a breathing space to consider such questions like:

- What sort of world do you see children entering schools in the Solomon Islands in 2001 encountering?
- What will these young people in the early 21st century need to be able to do, to know and value?
- What will schools in Solomon Islands be like in order to effectively cater for these visions?
- What are schools for?
- What are the national goals of schooling in the Solomon Islands?
- What are the priorities in the goals?
- What competencies is the system promoting for students?
- How can schools assist in the process of recovery, reconciliation and rehabilitation?

These were questions that stakeholders acknowledged needed to be asked, but which were pushed aside by the exigencies of day-to-day activities. Any discussion of citizenship requires this broader discussion, and, stakeholders, be they professional educators or Form 3 students, recognised the potential importance of schooling in terms of the achievement of social harmony as a major goal for the future well-being of the nation.

Specifically then, to address opinions towards 'cultural diversity, social tolerance and democratic processes', the following points are offered as a summary of widely shared opinions of stakeholders in the Solomon Islands. Many of these points will again be discussed in more detail in the third report which has as its focus the development of a policy framework for education policy makers to consider in the review of current practices.

Points of consensus amongst stakeholders in the Solomon Islands

- There is universal agreement with, and support for, the need to enhance cultural diversity, social tolerance, and democratic processes in the Solomon Islands.

- There is a need for continuing debates about how cultural diversity and social tolerance can be enhanced within the nation, as people usually identify with provinces/islands before the nation of the Solomon Islands. Community has over-ridden national unity.

- The recent 'social tension' demonstrated an unwillingness by a small percentage of the population to accept cultural diversity, social tolerance and democratic processes. Stakeholders acknowledged that the tension was a new phenomenon, but has a long and complex history. Recent events only exacerbated these long held tensions.

- The recent tension has created an air of distrust and fear of cultural diversity across ethnic groups, but there is also fear and aggravation within cultural groups. This will take some time and much effort by all to overcome. Stakeholders see schooling, as the most common cultural experience, as having a critical role to play in restoring social harmony.

- Stakeholders recognised the positive impact religion plays in the daily lives of most Solomon Islanders. They argued that any discussion about the enhancement of common core values, and in particular, social harmony, will need to be considered within the framework of Christian religious principles which pervades much of the life of Solomon Islanders. (The research team however found it very difficult during interviews to engage in an individual's personal commitment with religion. Stakeholders generally preferred to talk in the collective sense about the impact of religion on the life of Solomon Islanders in general).

- Stakeholders in the education sector were mostly overwhelmed by the current financial crisis, which threatened national social stability. The current national financial crisis, they believe, will continue for some time to limit the extent of any policy changes and practices in education.

- The current national curriculum was seen by stakeholders in the education sector as being in need of major renewal in most areas of the curriculum, but particularly in the area of social studies where cultural diversity, social tolerance and democratic processes should be a focus.

- Generally stakeholders considered the examination system as a 'given' and were unable to conceptualise other forms of measurement of student performance. At the same time they considered the current examination system and the consequent high drop out rate, or as it is also called 'push-out' rate, is a serious impediment to enhancing cultural diversity, social tolerance, and democratic processes.

- Stakeholders from non-governmental organizations believed that the high youth unemployment, particularly in urban areas, and the lack of national government initiatives in vocational and rural training for unemployed youth highlights cultural differences in the community and has reduced social tolerance towards some ethnic groups.

- All stakeholders expressed the view that schools are currently totally under-resourced to enhance cultural diversity, social harmony and democratic processes.

- All stakeholders working in schools, higher education institutions and curriculum development centres, believe that there is currently a lack of teaching and learning resources, which accurately and sensitively reflect the many cultures of the Solomon Islands.

- Stakeholders outside of the education system were more likely to believe that the enhancement of cultural diversity, social tolerance, and democratic processes is not just the prerogative of formal education.

- Most stakeholders were not aware of the role schools could play in promoting democratic processes and as places where young people can practice citizenship

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SECTION 1: BACKGROUND TO THE PROJECT

In late 2000 a research team, centred at Deakin University's Consultancy and Development Unit and the Australian Council for Educational Research, both located in Melbourne, Australia, was commissioned by the World Bank to undertake a baseline study of current stakeholder thinking about the 'good citizen' and education practices in the area of citizenship education. The two case study locations selected were the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. In particular, the study was to focus on the role schools could play in promoting social harmony and cohesion in these two countries.

The Terms of Reference for this project noted:

> *The primary aim of this project was to develop an operational framework for the design of a school-based civic education agenda tailored to the specific social and cultural environment of Pacific Island nations...*

and that

> *Education systems can play a crucial role in the process of nation building and consolidation. Furthermore, education may be an effective instrument to promote understanding, respect and dialogue between cultures. Strengthening democratic processes, encouraging political dialogue, building civic institutions, overcoming prejudice, combating stereotypes and promoting social tolerance are not simple endeavours; they can be, however, areas for educational action.*

The broad approach taken by the research team is framed by the notion of the potential role schools can play in developing the 'good citizen'. It is argued that the concentration on only one attribute of citizenship, for example, the acquisition of civic knowledge or a disposition towards social tolerance, is only one component of a good citizen. Research data (Turney-Porta, 1997) clearly indicates that a curriculum approach which emphasises the learning of civic knowledge only, has minimal impact on young peoples' sense of efficacy and interest in community affairs. Likewise an attitude of social tolerance cannot be taught or learned in isolation. We argue that there are numerous attributes that together might constitute the good citizen and that put together all of these attributes constitute the major goal for education.

The focus of this project therefore is not just about 'social tolerance' and 'cohesion', for these alone are but a small dimension of what it means to be a 'good' citizen. Being tolerant per se, does not equate with being a good citizen. One approach to tolerance might imply intention; another might mean active participation in community affairs. It is not the focus of this project to analyse a total range of models about civics and citizenship. However it is important for the research team to declare their hand in these definitions.

There has been a massive worldwide renewal of interest in citizenship since the early 1990s, sparked by a number of political events and trends throughout the world – perceptions of

increasing voter apathy, the resurgence of nationalist movements, the impact of global forces on local social mores, the stresses created by increasingly multicultural societies and the decline of volunteerism in community activities. These events have made it clear that the well-being and stability of a modern democracy depends not only on the justice of its basic structure but also on the qualities and attitudes of its citizens (IEA Civics Study, 2000). But what do we mean by a 'good' citizen? One outcome of the attempts to answer this question has been to articulate notions of citizenship as both problematic and contestable. For example, Cogger (2000) has identified the following attributes of a 'good' citizen:

- a sense of identity
- the enjoyment of certain rights
- the fulfillment of corresponding obligations
- a degree of interest and involvement in public affairs
- an acceptance of basic societal values.

Ichilov (1990) has developed a 10 dimensional model of the characteristics of citizenship. The model places dimensions of citizenship along a spectrum with theory at one end and active engagement at the other. A disposition towards social tolerance, for example, is by itself, only one part, perhaps theoretical, of one dimension. Other dimensions include civic knowledge, and again Ichilov draws the distinction between a person who has civic knowledge and a person who has a critical and reflective understanding of civic processes.

Gilbert (1996) has developed a typology for evaluating education programs which deal with citizenship education, suggesting:

- citizenship as legal status,
- citizenship as democratic identity,
- citizenship as public practice,
- citizenship as democratic participation.

Hannam (1999) in reviewing the data from education studies with a focus on the future of democracy included a list of eight characteristics crucial to the thinking about the good citizen. These are a kind of a set of dispositions and include:

- attitudes towards a democratic society
- human rights
- legal education
- environmental education
- economic education
- moral education
- development education
- problem solving, thinking and communication skills.

Prior's Dimensions of Citizenship

In this Project we have found Prior's (1999) model of citizenship in the context of a democratic society as the most useful framework for both coding the views of stakeholders about the role of schools in promoting social tolerance, and in deconstructing the discourse in curriculum documents. This model is also useful in that it encompasses and coheres the various characteristics of a 'good citizen' as outlined in the Terms of Reference for this project. For example, promoting respect and dialogue between cultures, strengthening democratic processes, promoting social tolerance and supporting community participation.

Prior has identified six dimensions of citizenship -

Dimension 1: Civic knowledge – for example, understandings about political organizations, decision making processes, institutions, legal requirements.

Dimension 2: A sense of personal identity - for example, a feeling of self-worth, belonging efficacy, resilience.

Dimension 3: A sense of community – for example, locating oneself within a community(s), some perhaps imagined communities.

Dimension 4: Adoption of a code of civil behaviours – for example, civil and ethical behaviour, concern for the welfare of others.

Dimension 5: An informed and empathetic response to social issues – for example, environmental issues, social justice, equality and equity.

Dimension 6: A skilled disposition to take social action – for example, community service, active participation in community affairs.

The strategy adopted by the research team was to utilize the methodology outlined in the Terms of Reference and to overlay the six dimensions of citizenship as a framework for coding the collected data. The research team was of the view that the focus of the project was the extent of synergy in the goals of schooling in achieving social harmony and citizenship between the Ministries of Education (policy makers), the implementers (teachers), the receivers (students) and community (parents and other interested stakeholders).

Locating the Project in the Pacific Region

It soon became evident that the Terms of Reference of this project encompassed much broader issues than those specified within the original documents. Issues such as the nature of the visions and aspirations which people hold for themselves as individuals and also for their communities/ nations are bound up with ideas and values underpinning the role of schools in supporting harmonious communities.

Some big questions that immediately faced the research team therefore included –

- What is a 'good citizen' in this region?
- Where do people 'locate' themselves – in families, villages, towns, islands, nations?
- What do people think about social harmony, cultural tolerance and democracy as components of the 'good citizen'?
- What, if anything, can schools do to bring about a 'better world'?
- What are the characteristics of the 'better world'?
- Do people believe that they can 'make a difference' to the betterment of their community?
- What roles do governments have in promoting social harmony?
- What levels of agreement are there on what constitute the 'right' answers to these questions?

These are questions that are not just affecting the daily lives of people in the Pacific region. Nor are they rhetorical questions. There is a sense of a worldwide urgency to seeking the 'answers' to these questions. Driving the asking of these questions are a series of what might be called 'megatrends' in which powerful global forces appear to be taking the daily actions and beliefs away from traditional practices of common people and placing them in the hands of distant economic conglomerates. These megatrends will be discussed later in this report in the context of meanings of citizenship and the impact of globalisation.

The decision to locate this study in the Pacific Islands region and in particular in the two countries of Solomon Islands and Vanuatu was made by the World Bank. While the two countries have a number of things in common, an independent case study approach was taken. This approach allowed for the commonalities to be drawn and the individualities of the two countries to be preserved. Stakeholders appreciated this duality. A comparative approach was not supported by most of the stakeholders in both countries as it was deemed to be one which could lead to simplistic and non-productive comparisons with the identity of each country being lost in the quest for comparative data.

However the commonalities are many and they have all been explored in this study. This report demonstrates the duality of the approach adopted. There is a theoretical and methodological commonality, but separate case study data, separately reported. The conclusions discussed in Report 3 will draw on both the commonalities and significant differences between the two locations. A major outcome is the development of a framework/models which might be worthy of consideration by both the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu and other countries in the region, in Report 3.

A consideration of the history of the case study countries is important in illustrating the many variables which continue to impact on present day thinking and practices and sets a contextual framework in this instance for examining the role schools can play in promoting social cohesion and harmony in the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

SECTION 2: CASE STUDY COUNTRY CONTEXT

Solomon Islands

The Solomon Islands comprises nearly 1000 islands, about one-third of which are inhabited by a total population of about 400,000 who speak about 90 indigenous languages, plus Pijin. In such a place issues of identity and location and what it means to be a citizen are bound to be complex. As the recent Australian Council for Overseas Aid Report (2000), *Manmade Disaster in the Solomons,* noted:

> *Solomon Islands is a nation of villages, islands and cultural identities based on language and kinship. National identity is a recent phenomenon created by colonialisation and maintained through post-independence institutions.*

In pre-European times most people lived in small villages on tribal lands. In a subsistence economy, they practiced shifting garden cultivation, fishing, hunting, carving, weaving and canoe building. Rule was by kastom, as recalled by clan elders.

The arrival of Europeans in the sixteenth century saw the beginnings of the exploitation of local resources. From this time the process of colonialisation in the Solomon Islands took on the common features of other colonised countries, including attempts to eradicate local culture, the introduction of fatal European diseases, the establishment of British codes of law and the exploitation of local resources. As in Vanuatu, in the Solomons colonial exploitation culminated in the slave trade in the late nineteenth century where over 30,000 Solomon Islanders were kidnapped to work on the sugar cane fields in Australia and Fiji.

In the 1890s, Britain laid claim to most of what is now the Solomon Islands. Opposition simmered. The Kwaio Rebellion on Malaita in 1927 marked both the rejection of European values and the rise of ill-feelings towards governments in general. The invasion by Japan in World War 2 further dislocated traditional village life by ruining local economies. Massive battles during the war, fought primarily between troops from USA and Japan, caused significant loss of life and encouraged the relocation of many islanders seeking work at the US base on Guadalcanal.

Nationalist movements sprang up after the war, particularly in Malaita, but it was not until the late 1950s that Britain began to concede the need for some form of local autonomy. Regional assemblies were introduced and in 1970, an elected governing council was allowed. Independence from Britain was finally granted on 7 July 1978, with the capital city located in Honiara.

The change in status to an independent nation highlighted issues associated with the meaning of nationhood. Local island demands soon after independence gave rise to the creation of new provinces, from the previous four to nine provinces. Throughout the 1980s there emerged a growing number of grassroots movements expressing discontent with what they saw as the ever-increasing centralization of government services and structures in Honiara. Since independence the tension for all national governments has been the extent to which they could give in to local demands for autonomy, (which include demands for the granting of statehood) while at the same time building a national sentiment and identity. The most common explanation for recent events,

regularly given by people on the streets, refers to the perceived neglect of the provinces (except Guadalcanal) by the central government, based in Honiara, on Guadalcanal.

In late 1998-99 armed conflict and civil strife erupted between Malaitan and Guadalcanal people. The origins of the conflict are many, long standing and complex but land and land ownership central issues. Significantly, the issues were expressed as issues of ethnic identity. A summary here cannot do justice to this tragic situation, but the many outcomes of the conflict have serious implications for the goals of this project. While there was little evidence now of the large-scale displacements of people, looting and a gun culture so often depicted during the height of the tensions, the longer term effects are now being felt.

The effects which fall within the scope of this project take the form of large numbers of displaced youth, collective demoralisation, a dramatic increase in the shortage of resources available for education and an increased stridency associated with demands for the decentralisation of public services. The country is undergoing a period of great economic contraction. It is not surprising therefore that internal tensions continue to surface within the current government. Support of donor countries plays a salient role in the economy of the Solomons Islands.

Here is a society undergoing great pressures associated with transition. It is far from destroyed, but its fragility is palpable. There is a great need to resolve long standing and still-simmering tensions, to recover from the most recent outbreaks of civil strife and to actualise its potential to 'get it right' for the future. Whilst the outside world is prepared to assist, the Solomon Islands must come to terms with the pressures from the global environment. This is the push and pull effect of globalisation. Only the Solomon Islanders can decide how they can fulfill their national goals.

What is the role of schools in this context?

SECTION 3: MEANINGS OF CITIZENSHIP:

Implications for the Solomon Islands & Vanuatu in the Twenty-first Century

One of the most significant contributions of the recently published report of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century – *Education: The Treasure Within,* (Tedesco, 1997) was in identifying:

> *The ability to live together as one of the fundamental objectives of education in the future...The capacity to live together means respect for diversity and the search for resolving social conflict through negotiation... Living together is a key element in the building of democracy...*

In addressing the issues of living together in social harmony, transitional societies such as the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu face two contradictory principles. On the one hand they are organised around issues of individual and collective subsistence, scarcity, and some desire to participate and share in some of the products of the global economy. The extent to which the balance can be achieved can result in exclusionary practices such as those with work and those without work, children who can continue on with their education and those who can't, and the disproportionate amount of money distributed to the area where the capital city is located, compared to the outer provinces. On the other hand, the desired balance of societies in transitional adjustment also involves a desire for secure and collective social solidarity and cohesiveness. In terms of this project, the tension is played out in conceptualising the role of education can play in fostering the type of young citizen desired by the countries.

Within a sociological approach, the first thing emphasised about citizenship is that it controls access to the scarce resources of society and hence this allocative function can be a source of a profound conflict in societies over citizenship membership criteria. Any benchmark of citizenship would therefore have to include some notion of egalitarian openness to difference and otherness, of social harmony and tolerance, as essential ingredients of a democratic system. Who gets citizenship clearly indicates the prevailing formal criteria of inclusion/exclusion within a community and how these resources, following citizenship membership, are allocated and administered largely determines the economic and social fate of individuals and families (Turner, 1997).

Another aspect of citizenship is that it confers, in addition to a legal status, a particular cultural identity on individuals and groups. Citizenship struggles in the late twentieth century have often been about claims to cultural identity and cultural history and racial equality. Citizenship and clear notions of civic virtues are seen as essential ingredients of a civilised and pluralist democracy.

The final component of this sociological model of citizenship is the idea of a political community as the basis of citizenship. This political community is typically the nation-state. When individuals become citizens they not only enter into a set of institutions that confers upon them rights and obligations, they not only acquire an identity, they are not only socialised into civic virtues, but they also become members of a political community with a particular territory and history. Since nations are imaginary communities and since nations are created, sometimes by outsiders, as was the case of both the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, the communal basis of citizenship has to be constantly renewed within the collective memory by such events as festivals and public ceremonies.

A series of public meetings with a title of 'A Civil Society' was recently held (May 2001) in Honiara to discuss these very issues of nationhood, community and identity. The research team attended these meetings and came away from the discussions with a sense of a nation trying to define itself. The arguments commonly raised during the meetings as to why any country needs to define itself included:

- The reduction in government overheads
- The existence of an inherited set of commonalities, even despite diversities
- The widespread existence of institutions, for example, the church, the Chief system
- A belief in biological commonalities, for example, Melanesian
- The importance of being on the world stage, for example, trading in the global economy.

In Vanuatu, the research team attended a number of public meetings in June 2001 with a title, 'The Comprehensive Reform Program' (CRP). This national government initiative is an attempt to revitalise and give direction to the goals and aspirations of ni-Vanuatu. Speakers from a wide range of experiences including government ministers, principals of schools, community leaders, teachers and students drew upon the theme of one nation, one people, one goal. A critical element in these discussions was the need for effective and efficient government. Directly related to the focus of this study were the following suggestions made by speakers:

- The need to discuss government and parliament in schools
- The need for effective and transparent government
- The need for national stability and social cohesion
- The need to defend freedoms and human rights
- The central role of respect in relationships and communications of all sorts.

The argument will be made throughout this report that until a nation defines itself and has a coherent and agreed vision(s) of its past and of its future, its education system will reflect this waywardness and lack of direction.

In some senses the context of the Pacific island region is immaterial in a globalised view of the world. The emergence of the so-called global megatrends (Kennedy 1998) of the twenty-first century – the recognition of cultural and ethnic diversity, the globalisation of economies, the impact of communications technologies, the changing role of world bodies like the United Nations and redefinitions of decision making processes – have the potential to shape the identity of nations both now and in the future.

The challenge facing all nations, but in particular those nations in transition and facing severe adjustments, is squarely confronting a number of options. These options include embracing the mostly outcomes based educational reform models, or ignoring the global pressure as being irrelevant to their educational needs, or adopting some form of mid-way position of taking on the most appropriate external elements while at the same time maintaining and defending indigenous values.

The stepped up global pressure for educational transformation and change are particularly noticeable in emerging democracies or societies in transition where a worsening set of contextual

realities face schools and ministries of education. These pressures in these post-colonial societies can be illustrated by –

- Low levels of belief in community mobilisation and consequently top-down, technocratically led educators, for parents are too busy now trying to make ends meet.
- Lowering levels of public confidence in schooling.
- Higher levels of violent crime.
- Lower levels of public efficacy and confidence in the value or ability of individuals to take action to change the social conditions of existence.
- Lower confidence and expectations in the public sector to deliver and administer an efficient social program.
- High levels of unemployment
- Increasing levels of xenophobia
- Narrow party politics played out publicly and in secret that further weakens solidarity and a sense of community efficacy.

Countries like the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, as most other countries in the world, have begun to engage in the balancing act of trying to work out if/how to confront these megatrends, while at the same time maintaining a strong sense of community. Signs and symptoms of attempts at balancing the pressures of transition and adjustment are not difficult to observe. In the Solomon Islands a deficit in well-being, in particular, is not hard to find. For example, stakeholders in remote locations frequently commented on the lack of social services now almost expected as being universally available, the non-recognition of the role of village chiefs by young people and the remoteness of secondary schools from their village.

Schools and Citizenship

Schools are often at the centre of a community and ministries of education need to be cognisant of debates about what the community expects of its schools. If there is debate, it should contribute to the sort of society individuals want to live in. The schools' role is to develop a curriculum which directly and obviously contributes to the sort of society we want to live in. However when there is a rapid rate of social, economic and technological change and a lack of inspirational leadership to help people to deal with it, there appears a shift in the focus of peoples' attention from the macro (for example, the big megatrends) to the micro (the things that ordinary individuals feel they can control). In the Solomon Islands, the multiple factors impacting on the daily lives of people, for example, unemployment, local racial tensions and the paying of school fees, loom large in peoples' minds and often result in a climate of mistrust, fear and a lack of a sense of efficacy.

This report is not the place to engage in a detailed analysis of the recent ethnic tensions. However, recent tensions and the transition to the current political regime were made possible by the active mobilisation of at least some of the citizenry. One year later, this society in transition was burdened by an inactive citizenry with low levels of mobilisation and with no confidence in the public service, including the education sector, and in the delivery of services. Yet despite the continuation of isolated incidents of violence there is growing evidence that social harmony is a national goal. There is, however, little evidence of national, co-ordinated, or a grassroots response to what contribution education might play in the alleviation of social intolerance.

There is a huge irony in all of this. It is not simply a matter of trying to work out what kind of knowledge, skills and values are needed if communities and societies are to understand and actively contribute to shaping their own futures. There are also what might be called civic realities of everyday life – drug taking, youth suicide, homelessness, youth unemployment and gambling. Youth culture across the world has nurtured not only shared consumer tastes but widespread aspiration for freedom, while enhanced emphasis on individual choice has challenged long-standing notions of youth as passive recipients of lessons from their elders (IEA Executive Summary). In the process of societies turning away from the global megatrends and to the community, both the global megatrends and the local civic realities have been ignored. The attempt to recreate or return to traditional small communities, while insulating temporarily against the less appealing aspects of the bigger picture, sooner or later results in divisions between the haves and the have-nots. Fostering a personal sense of belonging to a local community is praise- worthy and therapeutic. However unless attention is also paid to the health of other communities, and to the larger context in which they all exist, the fragmentation of society will continue at a rapid rate.

In a society in transition/adjustment, the perception that justice, honesty and fairness is/can prevail is critical for supporting and sustaining an education system which includes citizenship education programs. Any curriculum renewal in this transient context will need to include a broad vision of the 'better future world' with values and assumptions clearly articulated. The challenge, for policy makers in the context of a society in transition, is how to actively engage communities in framing policy, given popular passivity and low social participation. Centralised bureaucratic systems do not lend themselves easily to real consultation. The real test of a 'truly civilised society' lies in our willingness to engage with those who are quite unlike us, who may appear to be in a mess and seem like strangers, and yet are part of us. Participation in all of society's processes will be central for future citizens; otherwise they run the risk of being marginalized. The cost of ignorance, indifference, apathy and antipathy to participating in the processes of enhancing the well-being of all members of the communities manifests itself not only in social terms but also in financial terms when the infrastructure (again both socially and financially) of the community breaks down. The Pacific region has seen several recent examples of this. This breakdown invariably leads to a feeling of mistrust and manifests itself in the rapid decline of social cohesion. The challenge for societies is to reach agreement on what it is that enables people to work and live side by side for the common good while celebrating each other's differences. The challenge for schools is to prepare young people who cannot only survive in a megatrend world, but who can constantly transform it so that it is locally viable, personally meaningful and socially beneficial.

Effective democracy comes about as a result of a balance being maintained between the views of majorities and minorities. Since all these, often diverging, views cannot, at one time, be incorporated in policy or government programs, tolerance of this divergence of opinion must be practised. Tolerance is thus important to the maintenance of a relatively calm, productive democratic society. Citizenship education's role in a democratic society is more than that of contributing to social harmony and cohesion. It is one of reconciliation. An education system that sees its goal as assisting young people to grow into competent, democratic citizens understands the complexities and problematics of the process and understands the need for reconciling the views of all stakeholders.

Project Description

The primary aim of this project, as cited in the Terms of Reference, was to develop a general operational framework for the design of a school-based citizenship education agenda tailored to the specific social and cultural environment of Pacific island nations. In particular, this project addressed how educational systems in these multicultural societies can forge national identities, while promoting social tolerance and understanding, supporting community participation and strengthening democratic processes.

The Solomon Islands and Vanuatu were proposed by the World Bank as country case studies. The research methodology and in particular the educational framework to be developed for enhancing social tolerance and citizenship was to be one which could be used and replicated in other country settings. Moreover, the findings and policy recommendations of these case studies were to serve as a basis to orient potential policy options for other island nations in the region.

(a) Stakeholder assessment: The research team was responsible for collecting data from three different locations in Vanuatu and in the Solomon Islands. The first data included a sample of school principals, teachers, students, parents and community members regarding their opinions towards cultural diversity, ethnic conflict, citizenship and political participation, civic institutions, and democratic processes. The school sample was drawn to reflect maximum diversity in terms of ethnic, language, religious and regional backgrounds as well as including socio-economic and rural/urban diversity. The information which was collected served as a basis to understanding prevalent attitudes towards multiculturalism and pluralism. This data is the focus of Report 1.

(b) Operational assessment: Concurrently with the stakeholder assessment, the research team performed a review of present school-based practices regarding cultural understanding, democratic participation and social cohesion. The activities in this sub-component of the project included an analysis of civic/multicultural values in the prescribed curriculum and textbooks, as well as observable related school activities, classroom behaviour and management practices. This data is the focus of Report 2.

Overall, this activity of stakeholder assessment and operational assessment allowed for the identification of possible vectors of intervention to promote social understanding and civic participation.

These two reports have as a target audience local policymakers and educators. The findings and recommendations from the reports served as a basis for the reflection workshop discussions.

(c) Reflective workshop: The consultant team was responsible for organizing a national reflective workshop in both countries with a view to sharing some preliminary findings of the project. This workshop aimed to promote discussion among local stakeholders of potential vectors for the development and implementation of a school-based "education for mutual understanding" program. The workshop enabled the research team to discuss the data already collected and to give participants another opportunity to reflect on current

policies and practices and contribute their views about future directions. These workshops were conducted in Honiara on 25 May 2001 and in Port Vila on 22 June 2001.

(d) Policy Framework: Building on the findings of Reports 1 and 2 and the feedback from the reflective workshops, the research team developed a framework for the development of a school-based "education for mutual understanding" agenda. This framework was specifically tailored to Pacific island conditions, promoting national cohesion and democratic participation, while respecting cultural diversity and social tolerance. This framework aims to provide a foundation for policymakers to review and address the role of schooling in promoting social cohesion, as well as some basic instruments for teachers to include citizenship education in their daily practices. This framework is the focus of Report 3.

(e) Reporting meeting: The research team organised a meeting with key Ministry of Education policy makers in each country on completion of the reports. This meeting aimed to highlight the most significant aspects of the reports for each country and to discuss the way forward. These meetings were conducted in Honiara and Port Vila, in August 2001, after the three Reports had been submitted by the research team and discussed with the World Bank.

Research Team

Warren Prior: (Project Manager) Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Education, Deakin University, Melbourne, Australia.
Email – warrenp@deakin.edu.au

Suzanne Mellor: Research Fellow, Australian Council for Educational Research, Melbourne, Australia.
Email – mellor@acer.edu.au

Graeme Withers: Senior Research Fellow, Australian Council for Educational Research, Melbourne, Australia.
Email – withers@acer.edu.au

Pacific Islands Social Tolerance and Cohesion Through Education Project: Report 1

SECTION 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this case study research, data was gathered from four types of sources:

1. Interviews of various people or participants who are involved in the phenomena of the study.
2. Documents such as curriculum outlines, syllabuses, teaching materials, policy documents, examples of student work.
3. Direct observation of the phenomena in action.
4. A reflective workshop.

In case study research the methodology of gathering data has the potential to be value-laden. The researchers were very conscious of the cultural context in which they were working and the cultural baggage they carried with them. It is part of the researchers' task to be alert to the participants' agendas and baggage. The interviewees in this study were sometimes acting as representatives of various organizations and at other times were giving their own personal perceptions.

Selecting Stakeholders

The research team has been very fortunate in having access to a wide range of stakeholders with interests in schooling in both the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. The definition of a 'stakeholder' was taken very broadly. The researchers approached both countries with a list of potential stakeholders, developed from research conducted before arrival. Before leaving Australia on fieldwork, individuals and representatives of organizations were also interviewed. For example, several Australian teachers who had recently returned from a two year AVA posting to Vanuatu were interviewed.

In both countries Ministry officials were one group of stakeholders. They in turn recommended that researchers discuss the project with other individuals and/or people who represented particular groups or organizations. So the web grew as these people introduced us to yet more interested stakeholders.

The participants have been stakeholders both from within and outside of schools. The first fieldwork visits concentrated on non-school stakeholders. This had the advantage of allowing the research team to establish a broad-brush picture of the social/cultural context in the two countries. This approach also allowed for the initial establishment of networks of interested stakeholders in the wide community. During the second series of fieldwork visits the focus was on interviewing stakeholders within specific school communities, including teachers, students, parents and principals. The data from the school community group has been woven into the report of all stakeholders. A full list of stakeholders, by country, is attached to this report (See Attachment 1).

Classifying stakeholders is, of course, not as simple as this text implies. Some stakeholders came wearing several hats, including that of 'parent', a 'teacher' as well as perhaps a 'member of an organization'. In our attempt to analyse the participants' views about the role schools might play in enhancing social tolerance and good citizenship, some time in the interview was given to discussing the participants' frame of reference and/or the origins of their views. The selection of

stakeholders in total was governed by a number of factors, including availability, and was restricted in both countries to school stakeholders from three locations (as outlined in the Terms of Reference)

Interview Schedules

To clarify the focus of the interviews and to ensure consistency of approach across the three interviewers in the project, the three members of the research team developed two common interview schedules used as frameworks for stakeholder interviews. The structure and content of these two schedules were robustly discussed by the members of the research team, and also with the project manager from the World Bank and members of the project advisory committee. One schedule was developed for use with non-school stakeholders, for example, Ministry of Education officials, the Council of Chiefs in Vanuatu and a representative of the Peace Monitoring Council in the Solomon Islands. The other schedule was developed for use within school communities, for stakeholders including teachers, students and parents. The two interview schedules are appended to the relevant reports (See Attachments 2a and 2b).

By their very nature, case-study interview schedules are only beginnings. The unique response and view of the interviewee are what are being sought, so no generic schedule will ever suffice. Thus the interview schedules were not followed slavishly and were often modified to suit the context of the fieldwork. They should be taken to demonstrate the issues addressed and the common core data sought by the researchers

Interviews

In practice the interview generally took one of four directions:
1. An informal interview in which questions emerged from the immediate context.
2. An interview guide approach in which issues were specified in advance and the researcher decided the sequence in the course of the interview.
3. A standardized open-ended interview in which the exact sequence of questions was determined in advance and participants were asked the same questions in the same order.
4. A closed, fixed response interview in which questions and response categories were determined in advance.

All four strategies were used over the time given for interviews. The selection of which strategy to use was often determined on the spot in the context of the factors like the time available for the interview and the relevance of the information being offered by the interviewee. Experience in case-study research is a major asset in such work.

As a generalisation, the framing of questions was carefully considered to suit the participants and the discussions were deliberately informal, with the participant sometimes having the running of the direction of ideas. The focus of the discussions was determined by the participant's perceptions and experiences of issues of social tolerance, in general and then in particular, and on the role schools did or might play in creating a better society. All interviews were tape recorded with the permission of the participant, and anonymity was offered. The time given to the interviews varied but on average the typical discussion lasted for about one hour.

When reviewing the tape recordings, the research team coded the responses according to Prior's six dimensions of citizenship model. Particular attention was given to aspects like social tolerance, but in general participants moved between most of the dimensions. This was to be expected. The presentation of the findings from the data collection, in Sections 4 and 5 of this report, and in Report 2, has been structured around the six dimensions. Where possible, the words of the participants have been used to illustrate key issues.

Analysis of documents

During the fieldwork to the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, numerous documents were collected. These took many forms:
- Ministry of Education curriculum documents
- Ministry of Education policy documents
- Teacher training materials
- Teacher-adapted curriculum materials
- Non-school materials
- Student writings (Solomon Islands only)

The curriculum documents collected by the research team included course outlines, teachers' handbooks and course specific students' resources. A full set of curriculum/syllabus documents was not available in either country, due to a number of reasons. In the Solomon Islands, for example, no one, including the Curriculum Development Centre, was able to provide a copy of the Form 1-3 Social Studies syllabus, until one was finally discovered in a rural school. The focus of the analysis of these curriculum documents was to assess the extent to which, on paper at least, they promoted positive social development for young people.

In the second category, the research team was unable to collect many policy documents as both countries are currently engaged in developing strategic education plans. Mostly these were not as yet complete and while we were able to discuss the plans with key Ministry of Education officials, we are unable to offer many insights into the policies. The timing of this study was apt for education policy-makers in the two countries, as it came at the very time both administrations were considering future policy directions. We would like to think that the outcomes of this study would inform policy makers. We have some confidence in this thinking following the very successful reflective workshops organised by the research team for key education stakeholders at the completion of the fieldwork in each country (See subsequent comments).

In relation to the third data collection source, it was very fortuitous that the timing of this study in the Solomon Islands occurred when the Honiara newspaper, the *Solomon Star,* initiated a secondary student writing competition. The topic was: *To bring peace and harmony back to our happy isles.* The research team considered this key stakeholder data to be of enormous value. Approximately 500 essays were received from all provinces in the Solomon Islands and the research team analysed 100 of these essays for evidence of young peoples' views about promoting social tolerance and cohesion. Their views about social cohesion are included in the first report of Solomon Islander stakeholders' views on citizenship. In including excerpts from the writings of the students, their writing style and syntactic idiosyncrasies have been retained in their original form.

Observations of school-based practices

In this study observations were limited to three locations in each of the Solomon Islands and in Vanuatu. In both case study countries, Ministry of Education officials generously gave their time to organise a series of visits to a range of schools in the three different locations. The locations were chosen to … *maximize diversity in terms of ethnic, language and religious backgrounds as well as include socio-economic and rural/urban diversity* (Terms of Reference). In some cases this involved traveling long distances over near impassable roads and in other cases hiring of canoes to visit a school on an outer island. However on many occasions, and for a number of reasons, the Ministry letter of support for the project, and the summary of the project goals, prepared by the research team, (see attachment 3) had not reached the school before the researchers arrived. As can be expected in such a situation there was often some confusion and the need for extended negotiations in order for a possible visit to a local school to proceed. This was time consuming for the research team, although in all cases, the local authorities enthusiastically supported the focus of the study and generously gave their time to arrange visits to schools. It is important to note again how on every occasion the issues embedded in the role schools might play in enhancing social tolerance and good citizenship was considered to be of critical importance by members of school communities. A total of 30 schools were visited in the project: 14 in the Solomon Islands and 16 in Vanuatu. They are listed in Report 2.

Generally in each school it was the Principal or teacher(s) who participated in the discussions. However on some occasions a member of the school's Board of Governors, parents and students were also interviewed. The visiting schedule developed by local authorities did not allow for extended visitations, but on average about three hours was spent in each school. The amount of data collected during each visit varied. On some occasions the researchers were invited to talk to all teachers in the school. On other occasions it was with selected teachers.

On other occasions the researchers had free rein of the school and could observe many classes in action and were invited to conduct impromptu lessons. In qualitative educational research the observation process often means sitting in classrooms in the most unobtrusive manner possible and watching teachers deliver instructional programs to students. The researchers were sometimes well aware that what they were observing represented – at least in part – a performance influenced by the teacher's perception of the focus of the study. Classroom activities were not tape-recorded.

Reflective Workshops: Purpose and Process

In the course of the stakeholder interviews and visits to schools, invitations were issued to all interviewees to attend a 'reflective workshop' toward the concluding phase of the project. Two workshops were held, one in Honiara and the other in Port Vila. Included in this report is a copy of the handout given to participants at the workshops, indicating the goals and structure of the day-long program (See Attachment 4). In both case study countries, it was impossible to predetermine who the participants might be. Issues of attendance were affected by such factors as the timing of workshops on a working day, being given permission to attend and the costs associated with traveling to the capital city.

The program of the workshop followed a similar pattern in both locations. As the included handout indicates, the workshops had a number of goals:

- To create a reflective space outside of normal workplaces to encourage participants to reflect on beliefs, values and assumptions underlying current policies and practices.

- To create an environment and an opportunity for a wide range of stakeholders to meet and share their perspectives on the role education might play in promoting social tolerance.

- To inform participants of the progress of the project.

- To enable participants to verify/validate/affirm the researchers' work so far as presented.

- To enable participants to further contribute to the preliminary findings of the project.

- To share with participants and explore together how the focus of the project-the promotion of social tolerance-can be framed within notions of citizenship.

- To discuss what might be some potential strategies for further enhancing how schools might promote citizenship.

On a number of measurements of effectiveness, including the range of stakeholders who attended, the extent of audience participation and the comments from the evaluation document, the reflective workshop proved to be an important research strategy in this project. From the beginning of the first activity, a mind-mapping exercise, to the concluding activity, the establishment of national priorities for future action, the participants actively engaged in discussions of the complex conceptual issues of tolerance, democratic processes and citizenship. It was particularly pleasing to note how individuals listened and engaged with ideas coming from a range of different stakeholders, for example, classroom teachers and curriculum developers talking with senior Ministry of Education officials.

In terms of inputs to the project, the workshops confirmed, amended and enhanced the data collected to date. It also provided some additional insights and data. These will be the particular focus of the third project report.

Reflective Workshop: Solomon Islands

In Honiara, the workshop was attended by 18 participants. Stakeholder groups 'represented' by the participants included teachers, principals, teacher trainers, women's groups, Ministry of Education, religious groups, non-government organizations and interested members of the community (For a full listing see Attachment 5).

In the context of the difficulties associated with getting leave from schools to attend outside activities, it was very pleasing to note the attendance of 5 teachers at the reflective workshop. These teachers, all young and enthusiastic about the focus of the project, made a valuable contribution to the workshop discussions. They also added a sense of realism of classroom practices that officials from the Ministry of Education had to acknowledge. The contribution of the

two representatives from the non-government vocational education sector also brought to the workshop a perspective of the employment needs of young people. The discussions were frank and open, and, at the conclusion of the workshop participants were robustly discussing the need for a national set of goals of education for the Solomon Islands.

SECTION 5: STAKEHOLDER VIEWS ON THE ROLE SCHOOLS CAN PLAY IN NATION BUILDING IN THE SOLOMON ISLANDS

In accordance with the Terms of Reference of this study, the research team was

> *Responsible for collecting data from a sample of school principals, teachers, students, parents and community members regarding their opinions towards cultural diversity, ethnic conflict, citizenship and political participation, civic institutions, and democratic processes.*

The data collected about Solomon Island stakeholders' views on the role schools can play in enhancing social tolerance and good citizenship has been categorised within Prior's six dimensions of citizenship as discussed above. This proved to be a useful coding framework for analysing the data. This process aids the qualitative nature of the study by allowing the voices of the stakeholders to be heard. No attempt has been made to quantify the data, as the number of stakeholders was relatively small at approximately 100. This number does not include the 100 student essays, but it does include those occasions when the researchers spoke with whole school staffs.

The order in which the six dimensions of citizenship are listed is not meant to be of any significance. It will become clear that they overlap. Collectively they frame the notion of a 'good citizen'. Where the data relate to specific aspects of curriculum and school-based practices, some brief analysis of school-based stakeholder comment has been included in this report. However a more detailed analysis has been included in Report 2 which deals with the operational assessment of school-based practices.

No attempt has been made to identify individual stakeholders as the total of the collective data is of more significance to the outcomes of this study. However, when a particularly apt or typical comment was made by a stakeholder, this has been quoted to allow the voice of the participants to be heard.

Dimension 1: Civic Knowledge

Civic knowledge refers to those understandings about the civic processes in any community. This is not to imply that these processes will take exactly the same form in every community. For young people to contribute to, and participate in, decision-making processes, they need a well-developed understanding of the institutions involved and the actual democratic processes of engagement as they relate to the institutions and in their society. Examples of civic knowledge include:

- Understandings about the decision-making processes in the community, for example, the role of village chiefs, pressure groups, elections and government
- Knowledge about civic institutions, for example, courts, parliament, schools, village chiefs
- Understandings about the legal requirements and obligations of citizenship, for example, becoming a legal citizen, paying taxes, voting at elections

- Understandings about the historical and cultural contexts in which a community exists, for example, knowledge about different island cultures, use of vernacular languages

Those stakeholders outside of the education sector frequently commented that young people in the Solomon Islands lacked civic knowledge and that schools did not give sufficient attention to the conservation of traditional cultural values and practices. They gave a number of explanations for this lack of knowledge. They argued that in pre-European times, the processes of decision-making in village communities revolved around the micro unit of the family and the more macro unit of the village chief system. Present day pressures on villages, including migration away from traditional village and family life and the breakdown of the authority of the village chiefs by the introduction of both churches and formal provincial and national governments, had resulted, in these stakeholders' views, in complex and often entangled ambiguities in the area of decision-making processes in communities. One village chief-designate comments were typical of this group of stakeholders:

> *The Chief system is still operating, but under stress, by taking away powers to churches and provincial governments during colonial times and now to national governments and local members. All of these have usurped much of the traditional powers. Politicians do not consult, and there is no register of Chiefs, so governments cannot, or will not, use them for consultation... Is it any wonder young people are confused?*
> *(Village chief-designate, Munda village, Western Province)*

Young people, as stakeholders, often referred to 'the government' as the major decision maker, but closer inspection of these comments overwhelmingly revealed very little understanding of the division of powers and decision-making processes. Young people mostly didn't know the decision makers in their community. In schools, neither teachers nor the curriculum offered them much assistance in enhancing their understandings about decision makers and decision making. For one student beginning secondary schooling, understandings about civic institutions were a total mystery:

> *My father sometimes talked about the chief in our village. But I never met him and don't know what he did. I don't know anything about the government in Honiara... No I don't know the name of the Prime Minister.*
> *(Discussions with Year 7 students, at a remote boarding school, Western Province)*

Some older students could see the complexities in the situation:

> *Leaders including our teachers, should be guided by our traditional experiences of 'community living' and 'collective wisdom'... The government must encourage people to participate effectively in this process of decision making.*
> *(Form 5 Student writing for the Solomon Star newspaper essay writing competition)*

Another senior student had a view of what civic knowledge was necessary and had a very well formed strategy to assist in recreating social harmony and cohesion in the Solomon Islands:

> *One of the ways of bringing back and maintaining peace and harmony is to make use of the socio-political structure of the village, by making use of the village chiefs who*

can arrange programmes for the community... programmes that will help the people
about the importance of working together and building a better community.
(Form 5 Student writing for the Solomon Star newspaper essay writing competition)

Adult stakeholders charged schools with this civic knowledge responsibility. The Citizenship Commission, for example, argued that the current curriculum did not mention the concept of legal citizenship and that young people had no idea about what was required to become a citizen of the Solomon Islands.

There was widespread agreement among stakeholders in the community that Community Studies in the Primary School and Social Studies in the Secondary School were the logical areas of the curriculum to place this area of study. Those stakeholders in the education sector, with specific knowledge of the curriculum noted that the current syllabuses for Community Studies and Social Studies were written in the 1980s and that the documents no longer reflected the values and aspirations of the Solomon Islands in the twenty-first century. They argued that the current emphasis on the colonial period and other Euro-centred topics, for example, the 1960's Cuban Crisis, were inappropriate for young people in Solomon Islands today. Instead, stakeholders wanted more emphasis on current Solomon Island political processes and policies in the curriculum, in particular, in the Social Studies curriculum. These stakeholders believed that the introduction of a more inclusive form of curriculum in schools would greatly assist the promotion of social harmony and cultural tolerance.

The most common and the most passionate comments by adult stakeholders about the lack of civic knowledge, involved the perception that young people today in the Solomon Islands do not know about and understand the pre-European cultural civic traditions. All civic traditions have historical antecedents grounded in cultural customs and it was here that these stakeholders believed most work needed to be done in schools. The following comments made by a parent during one of the field work visits to a school in the outer provinces reflect this perception.

If we want our children to show tolerance and to live in peace with people from other
areas... they must know something about both their own traditions and customs, and
then, that of others.
(After school meeting with 15 parents, Western Province)

The views of stakeholders, both within the education sector and community representatives, usually focused on the perception that young people had a serious lack of civic knowledge. The lack of understanding and appreciation about traditional decision making processes was commonly cited. These stakeholders were aware that this situation was exacerbated by the current reality of an overwhelming majority of students leaving school at the end of primary school level.

Rarely however was the view expressed that these cultural understandings should be placed alongside understandings about present day political processes. This was the view of teachers of Social Studies, particularly those in secondary schools.

I want my students in Forms 4 and 5 to know about how our government works. A
major role of the teacher of Social Studies is to give students access to this political
knowledge... There is no place for this in the current Social Studies syllabus. I'm sure
they don't do it anywhere else in the curriculum.
(Experienced teacher of Social Studies, Guadalcanal Province)

Finally, a sound understanding of civic knowledge, *per se*, may not be a positive force in enhancing social harmony. If these understandings are acquired uncritically, then the collective memories of a community may well be static and may contribute to the continuing dominance of conservative elites. In the worst-case scenario, the promotion of an uncritical approach to the acquisition of civic knowledge results in little more than propaganda. If a major goal of schooling in a democratic society is to develop young active and participating citizens, then the health of the community relies on coming generations to rejuvenate ideals through critical appraisal of past performance and the creation of new visions.

Dimension 2: A Sense of Personal Identity

The psychological theories of the development of positive personal identity, or a feeling of self-worth, are well grounded in the belief that the level of an individual's self-esteem is critical to that person being able to, or wanting to, relate or bond with another person or group. A willingness to empathise with, and be tolerant of, other diverse cultural groups or individuals is predicated on a sense of self worth and personal well being. Examples of a positive sense of personal identity include:
- A feeling of personal security and belonging
- A willingness to trust other people
- A sense of efficacy
- A capacity for resilience
- Recognition of the origins of one's values and beliefs.

Many adult stakeholders, but perhaps particularly those in Guadalcanal, commented on what to them was a collective loss of self-esteem by young people living in and near Honiara. It is in the urban area of Honiara where the larger numbers of young people are more obvious. The dislocation of families resulting from the recent tensions has created a number of demographic trends. Families moving to and from Honiara have disrupted the continuation of schooling for many young people. Principals in schools in the three provinces visited during the study often reported about the fluctuating student population and the resultant loss of personal security by the students.

Although the data is very incomplete, some schools were closed for over one year and it is the feeling of the research team that many students did not return to school after the tensions. For many of those students who continued at school, a loss of self esteem as a result of failure in the examinations at school and the failure to find employment, significantly contributed to this loss of identity. Young people, mostly males, might appear on the streets to have bonded with fellow drop outs or 'push outs', but discussions with them quickly revealed that sitting around all day with little to do was ultimately boring, non-productive and depressing. Recent new options for entertainment and time filling resulting from a breakdown or rejection of traditional supporting structures, including gambling and drugs, only highlighted the worst features of urban alienation. This sense of identity loss was noted by the Peace Monitoring Council:

> *Drugs are becoming a problem. The young people have boundless energy yet they loaf*
> *around the streets, and have no outlet for their idealism.*
> *(Chair, Peace Monitoring Council & Ex Prime Minister of the Solomon Islands)*

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Even young people themselves recognised the impact of the lack of personal trust. Writing in the Solomon Star essay writing competition, a student commented:

> *We must exercise solidarity... Peace and harmony is effective when members of each*
> *society recognize others as persons... It leads to a new vision of unity...*
> *(A Form 5 student, writing for the Solomon Star newspaper essay writing competition)*

Adult stakeholders often recalled activities during their own schooling where they had explored, in simple ways, their own and their family's village identity. The rhetoric of the current national curriculum in the junior primary school continues to support this aspect of child development, particularly in the Community Studies curriculum. However, stakeholders within the education sector believed that once the influence of the formal examination system began to take hold in the senior years of the primary school, all mention of individual personal growth disappeared from the curriculum. It was here also, they argued, that the study of cultural diversity in Solomon Islands also disappeared from the curriculum. These adult stakeholders wanted culturally sensitive topics to be re-installed in the curriculum.

Teacher stakeholders were particularly critical of the type of local cultural material in the curriculum and the lack of teaching and learning resources available about the cultures from other provinces. They often commented that the materials did not encourage students to personally engage with the issues. They were not surprised at their students' lack of interest in the cultures of other provinces given students were not encouraged to learn about their own personal cultural customs and practices.

Dimension 3: A Sense of Community

People live in communities and generally undertake some form of interaction with that community. This social behaviour of belonging is rarely simple, as a complex set of rules and customs determine membership into a community. In some cultures, the family, the village, the clan, for example, became the belonging unit to which members had both rights and obligations. These rights and obligations may have been both formal, like the obligation to defend the community in times of war, or informal, like an expectation to marry within the community.

One of the major complexities and contestables now facing communities in the twenty-first century is that the sense of locating oneself in a community has undergone profound changes. The Solomon Islands has not escaped these recent global pressures on where people might locate themselves. The most recent ethnic tensions, more obvious over the past two years, have only brought to the surface the sensitivities involved in attempting to cohere diverse communities in one location.

A sense of community is rarely static and persons can locate themselves in a number of communities. So locations are not mutually exclusive. Examples of where people in the Solomon Islands might locate themselves and therefore feel a sense of belonging and develop elements of social cohesion and citizenship include:

- Belonging within a family

- Belonging within a village
- Belonging within a clan
- Belonging within an island
- Belonging within a Province
- Belonging within the nation called Solomon Islands

Some young people might also consider themselves to be also citizens of the world, or even of cyberspace where belonging to communities on the World Wide Web might have more significance than belonging to any other location. The issue in the Solomon Islands, as the ACFOA Report, noted, was one of a number of options or (changing) preferences:

> *Solomon Islands is a nation of villages, islands and cultural identities based on language and kinship. National identity is a recent phenomenon created by colonialism and maintained through post-independence institutions.*
> *(Report of the Australian Council for Overseas Aid Mission to Solomon Islands, August 2000)*

All stakeholders, young and adult, commented on the complexities of identity in the Solomon Islands. When stakeholders were asked where they came from, the answer was invariably their kinship island. When referring to another person they would also always describe the person in the same way, for example, "she is a Malaitan", and the label would always carry with it certain identity connotations. Student writings in the essay competition often referred to the tensions of community and therefore the impact it had on promoting social harmony and citizenship:

> *I come from the Western Province. I have my own language. But there should be a promotion of nationalism rather than regionalism... This does not mean that we do away with our home provinces but rather it is to create an inner feeling to see no differences regardless of who people are and where they come from...*
> *(A Form 5 student, writing for the Solomon Star newspaper essay writing competition)*

In its Peace Plan 2000, the current Sogavare Government has developed a number of strategic principles as a basis for national political, economic and social reconstruction. Three of these principles give some direction as to the government's sense of location.

Principle C: Respect and enhance human dignity and strengthen the building of the Solomon Islands

Principle D: Cherish and promote the different cultural traditions within the Solomon Islands

Principle E: Ensure the active participation of our people in the governance of their affairs and provide within the framework of our national unity for the decentralization of power

Related operational objectives include –

Objective G: Foster a greater sense of national unity and national identity
(Report of the Peace Plan, in the Solomon Star newspaper, May 2001)

While recognizing that this is a political document, Peace Plan 2000 acknowledges the duality of functions of government in both encouraging cultural diversity but at the same time framing this within a national boundary. Principle E might be taken to mean some form of a federation.

The locational tensions were invariably seen by adult stakeholders, particularly those stakeholders from the education sector, as a key topic for curriculum renewal. Their view was that the existing curriculum, and in particular the Community Studies and Social Studies curricula, were out of tune with the current goals of national unity while respecting diversity.

> *Issues of social harmony are not clearly defined in the current curriculum... I believe that there is a need to have a culturally sensitive curriculum and to use local knowledge... With topics about peaceful harmony, respect for other peoples regardless of differences.*
> *(Head, Education Faculty, Solomon Islands College of Higher Education)*

Schooling in the Solomon Islands, with its national curriculum, is one of the few shared and common experiences for most young people. The data from stakeholders are overwhelming in their belief that the current national curriculum does not adequately and effectively include culturally sensitive topics of both provincial and national significance which would enhance recognition of cultural diversity and social harmony. The most common view was that the current national syllabi of Community Studies/Social Studies in both primary and secondary schools are grossly outdated, being written in the early 1980s.

Teacher stakeholders frequently added that syllabus outlines were often missing in schools and could not be obtained from the Curriculum Development Centre in Honiara so they either improvised, mostly in collective ignorance, or left the subject completely out of the school curriculum. Teachers overall supported curriculum renewal in the key learning area of social education. A key issue for them in promoting social harmony was the total lack of teaching and learning materials about the cultural diversities of each of the Provinces in the Solomon Islands. The argument was often made by teachers that students often lacked a detailed understanding of their own island culture and that teachers who taught in Provinces not of their own background, lacked knowledge and teaching materials about the cultural practices of their school community. A more detailed discussion of the current curriculum and the role curriculum can play in promoting social harmony is included in Report 2.

Questions of identity need to be better understood and resolved in order for social harmony to flourish. Stakeholders frequently commented that national leadership was needed in defining the nature of community in the Solomon Islands. The leader of a rural training centre describes the social tensions embedded in "locational politics". Furhter, he underlines that provincial governmental structures mostly play a superficial role, bringing with them another layer of complexity and bureaucracy:

> *Since independence, the dominant issue has been location, resulting in community over unity, so confirming diversity... The Provincial governments have further split up the nation. We need faith in a national government. Provinces cost a lot more and can't provide the very local things people want.*
> *(Director, Don Bosco Training School)*

These tensions, of course, have major political implications in terms of the structure of political divisions and the distribution of power in the Solomon Islands. The debates about the desirability to extend the term of office of the current government are partly driven by a mistrust of government centred in the island of Guadalcanal and the perception that the government neglects the provinces in the distribution of services. This report is not the place to analyse these debates in detail. On the surface the debates appear to revolve around arguments of constitutional law defining the length of office versus the perception that, in the current climate, a longer period in office would enable the current government to maintain the momentum in achieving national goals.

All stakeholders saw education as being critical in fostering social cohesion and a national sentiment. The remaining issue was the extent to which regional or island communities could/should be integrated into the nation, perhaps even in some form of a federation. One student had a solution to this dilemma:

> *Schools should encourage their students to have a feeling of patriotism. During school assemblies, the whole school can sing the national anthem while the national flag is raised. This will give students a feeling of national identity and make them feel proud of their country. It will make them see that even though we are from many provinces we are still one country.*
> *(A Form3 student, writing for the Solomon Star newspaper essay writing competition)*

It should be added here that the research team did not see one national flag flying in any school during the field work. But then nor did we see a flagpole. When asked about the singing of the Solomon Islands national anthem in schools, every teacher or principal reported that it never happened.

Dimension 4: Adoption of a Code of Civil Behaviours

Members of communities of all types operate within a code of behaviours which collectively form the values and customs and traditions of the community. Communities generally have ways and means of initiating new members into the community (or excluding them), maintaining the code of behaviours and, if necessary, adjusting them to changing conditions and environments. The term 'civil society' describes those communities in which some form of cohering, peaceful and harmonious consensual agreement has been reached by its members in order to maintain this code of behaviours. The symbols, ceremonies and other activities which illustrate the values and assumptions that underpin the code of behaviours, may vary from community to community, but single communities need some form of agreement among its members about codes of behaviour in order to maintain social harmony.

Examples of elements of common/core codes of behaviour which some communities consider important include:

- Moral and ethical behaviour for self and towards others
- Respect towards and trust of cultural norms when they encompass diversity
- Mutual obligations, for example, to family, village, clan, country
- Practical application of codes of behaviour, for example, attendance at religious ceremonies, use of appropriate language, appropriate or traditional dress
- Peaceful co-existence with others

In the Solomon Islands the underpinning values of the numerous cultural groups are both multidimensional and complex. On the surface, the widespread acceptance of the teachings of Christian religions underpins much of the beliefs and behaviours of many people in the Solomon Islands. On the more complex side are the many and varied values and codes of behaviour which underpin village and island customs and traditions. 'Kastom' stresses traditions, continuity and respect for civilian leaders.

Recent ethnic conflicts in the Solomon Islands have clearly demonstrated that tensions now exist in the community(s) about acceptable codes of behaviour. Stakeholders in this study were unanimous about the breakdown of what they had considered to be previously accepted codes of behaviour for a civil society. They also frequently commented that the origins of the breakdown were of long standing and not just the product of some recent incidents of conflict. One stakeholder from the non-government vocational training sector noted that the tensions had produced some new elements of social disharmony:

> *People don't trust each other. This is a new factor... There has been a breakdown of*
> *discipline in schools. There are now arguments within groups, not with outsiders...*
> *and this has resulted in selected damage. People don't feel safe any more. We are*
> *worse now than before the coup because of the emergence of the criminal element*
> *(Executive Officer, Solomon Islands Rural Education Training Centres Association)*

Stakeholders in school communities from the far outer provinces commented on the impact of the recent breakdown of codes of behaviour on their local school community. School property was damaged, teaching and learning equipment was stolen. In one primary school in Guadalcanal, most syllabi were stolen. This school has since had to struggle with only incomplete syllabi with whole areas of the curriculum being omitted from school operations. While the resilience of these stakeholders continues to be tested, they overwhelmingly reported that their students, often coming from a range of provinces, rarely displayed anti-social behaviours towards fellow students from different ethnic backgrounds. It is the very young school age people who are actually still in school, who are the great hope for the future in the Solomon Islands.

As stakeholders, students passionately recognised the impact of the breakdown of acceptable behaviours:

> *I believe that it is the respect shown by each individual towards each other is the only*
> *tool that we can use to bind people together... Peace is something that we can achieve*
> *through the efforts of tolerance, forgiveness, mutual understanding of differences.*
> *(A Form 3 student, writing for the Solomon Star newspaper essay writing competition)*

The data collected from the student essays clearly indicated that young people have strong views and a firm grasp of the impact of the ethnic tensions. They came up with a wide range of key interventions, including government policies, social policies and actions, religion and spiritual initiatives and very specific school-based activities. The contrast provided by a comparative analysis of the writings of the students, with their vast energies and ideas for social harmony, and an analysis of current school curriculum documents which suggest minimal opportunities for students to discuss let alone practice positive citizenship, is substantial. The great chasm between them indicates the urgency of curriculum renewal in social education in the Solomon Islands.

Dimension 5: An Informed and Empathetic Response to Social Issues

As much as we might like to think that many communities operate as socially harmonious units, twenty-first century pressures emanating from individuals, groups and global forces, invariably impact on the daily practices and values of communities. These pressures, and the varied impacts they cause, simply cannot be ignored in a society already under considerable tension. Most communities engage in making some form of accommodations and adjustments to these pressures and issues. One of the tensions for communities and their education systems is the extent to which information and understandings about contentious social issues can be discussed within the communities. Even acknowledgement of the existence of issues such as AIDS, gender discrimination, teenage pregnancies, youth ennui and poverty immobilises some communities. An effective democratic community is one that encourages discussions about contentious social issues and addresses them using inputs from the community. Social cohesion will not be achieved in an environment of ignorance, prejudice and complacency. The reported increase in recent times in the use of drugs amongst youth in the Solomon Islands or the widespread use of outboard motors using high priced fuel, are just two examples of changing practices which are placing pressures on traditional values and are creating a range of social adjustments. The widespread use of outboard motors (like the increasing use of solar power) empowers people to communicate more widely and travel far greater distances, for instance to buy/sell goods, so entering the commercial market place and perhaps in doing so experiencing cultural diversity first hand.

A sense of citizenship requires both an informed understanding of social issues and also a sensitive and empathetic response to the issues. The disposition towards social tolerance and mutual understandings cannot be fully developed with just an emotional response. It requires both a cognitive response and an attitudinal response. Some examples of social issues which adult stakeholders most frequently mentioned included:

- Issues of corruption in government
- Issues of an ineffectual public service
- Issues of social justice
- Issues of high youth unemployment
- Issues of the allocation of scarce resources, (particularly provincial demands)
- Issues of cultural diversity and multiculturalism
- Issues of individual freedom versus the collective good.

Principals and teachers were more likely to refer to the issues on this list of social issues, more so than their students.

In a country which faces severe financial difficulties and which at the time of the second field visit in May 2001 publicly announced its bankruptcy, the argument could be made that individual citizens do not enjoy the luxury or the opportunity to be informed and care about the plethora of social issues surrounding them. An awareness of social issues as a dimension of citizenship has its focus on a state of mind, or a disposition, based on moral and ethical considerations. The management of attitude change is rarely simple. In the context of a society in crisis over a number of issues and in a climate where there is distrust and fear, there is the potential that the development of a positive disposition towards achieving the collective good has been replaced by self and family protection. Community issues like caring for the environment are unlikely to

receive collective support in this climate. The acceptance by communities of open discussions about social issues is more likely to occur in the context of social tolerance and harmony.

Stakeholders working in the education sector frequently commented on the absence of social issues being squarely addressed in the current national curriculum. Issues frequently raised were drugs in the community, youth unemployment, exploitation and inequitable distribution of natural resources. Those stakeholders with specific curriculum development experience strongly supported the need for a more constructivist approach to curriculum development, so that students could learn skills in constructing their own meanings about social issues. Stakeholders in the education sector expressed the view that the secondary Social Studies curriculum, for example, was largely Euro-centred in content and social issues such as the ones mentioned above are seen, if at all, firstly in a remote global context and then only incidentally in the context of the Solomon Islands. Students are unlikely to understand, let alone be personally engaged with, issues like the Berlin Wall and the Cold War. They are much more likely to be personally engaged in issues of cultural differences, for example, in music, between regions within the Solomon Islands. But no curriculum component on this sort of topic currently exists.

Student stakeholders frequently commented on the value of a relevant issues-based curriculum and suggested examples:

> *The schools should include peace curriculum... Programmes that will help the people about the importance of working together and building a better community through inductive teaching, learning self decision-making and through drama or social activities.*
> (*A Form3 student, writing for the Solomon Star newspaper essay writing competition*)

These students not only identified the need for a more issues-based curriculum for their own purposes, but also broadened their discussion to include the issue of unemployed youth and the need for a more relevant curriculum for them:

> *We need our schools to focus on a curriculum to suit the working life of our community, especially vocational training... The government should set jobs for drop out students. Instead of roaming around and in the town, causes trouble...*
> (*A Form 5 student, writing for the Solomon Star newspaper essay writing competition*)

Stakeholders representing the voices of those who saw the current national curriculum as being 'too academic' and lacking a more appropriate focus on vocational skills, were vociferous in their condemnation of the examination system. They directly attributed some of the present social unrest, as demonstrated by the huge unemployment rate among young people, to a largely irrelevant national curriculum, exacerbated by the national examination system. These stakeholders believed the examination system was open to corruption and was socially divisive. Some of these stakeholders were instrumental in the rise of rural training centres run by non government organizations and with a focus on enhancing vocational skills of young 'push outs'. The manager of one newly opened church-supported rural training centre had a very clear vision of the role of such centres:

> *We realised we had to organise a sector that the government has ignored...We teach both a skill, but more important, discipline, commitment, honesty, as key values ... because there is a need for a civil society.*

Dimension 6: A Disposition to take Social Action

Asking the question, "What do you think education should be for?" is a provocative question in a discussion about the purposes of schools. The role of citizenship education in the school curriculum is like this big question in that it makes no sense at all if it lacks a purpose or a practical application. Like the goals of education, the goals of citizenship are both contestable and problematic. An agreed vision of the world in which you hope young people might live happily and productively is needed, in order to give definition to conceptualising citizenship. It is a values clarification exercise; linking visions of the good life to the role education can play as an instrument of change.

Formal schooling is but one stage in learning, so to confine citizenship learning to the classroom, divorced from the realities of the real world, is largely a waste of time. There is little point in being a 'classroom citizen', because only a few people benefit from your actions. The bottom line for any effective social education programme is that students actually have the opportunity to demonstrate knowledge, skills and values which they willingly and purposefully offer to the broader community. In other words they become active contributors to their community. A 'good' citizen is one who does pick up rubbish in the community, who does vote, who actively engages in community affairs. In other words they take some form of action.

Some examples of how social action might be demonstrated by young people in schools include:

- Being actively engaged in community service
- Discussing with teachers how classroom activities might be organised
- Volunteering for positions in schools like form captain and prefects.
- Showing and taking initiatives in school activities.
- Placing posters like 'No More Guns' on school notice boards
- Willingly working with groups of students on class projects.
- Inviting speakers to their school to discuss social issues.
- Writing to newspapers about social issues.

There is now a large body of evidence that indicates that taking action mostly doesn't come naturally (Knight, 1999). School is an appropriate place in which young people can learn to take action. For young people, to develop a positive disposition to contribute to their community, they need to practice taking action, facing the consequences, and becoming contributing independent members of the school community. Schools need to develop structures and practices which allow young people to practice citizenship. When young people do not have experiences in showing initiatives and taking action, they lack a repertoire of appropriate actions from which to choose.

In this study, this dimension of citizenship received limited acknowledgement. Stakeholders from the education sector, and usually those with experience studying overseas, were enthusiastic about child-centred learning, constructivist curricula and the democratic classroom. One such stakeholder felt that he was a lone supporter of this approach to learning:

In my classes, especially in forms 4 and 5, I try to encourage student responsibility for their own learning. I expect my students to have opinions about current events. I think I can do this as well as getting good exam results... No, I don't think many other teachers in this school take this approach.
(Teacher of Social Studies at a secondary school, Western Province)

Fieldwork observations of schools in three provinces in the Solomon Islands indicate that principals and teachers, while wanting their students to be independent learners, to show initiative in their own learning and to volunteer for types of community service around the school, rarely set in place school structures and practices which would allow this to happen. However an important caveat to this dimension of citizenship is that taking action is not always the norm in some cultures. In cultures like the Solomon Islands where respect for elders, for example, as the appropriate initiators of decision making is strong, passivity in the classroom could be misconstrued as lack of interest.

Time and again students in their essays wrote about ways of bringing about peace and harmony to the Solomon Islands and mentioned their willingness to actively contribute. One student wrote:

We need to take an active role in supplementing some of the services provided by the government and churches... But we need ethical leaders... We need awareness programmes for the leaders of tomorrow.
(*A Form 5 student, writing for the Solomon Star newspaper essay writing competition*)

Stakeholders who worked in the non-formal sector of education, for example the rural training centres, were much more likely to support social action and support it themselves in developing initiatives which gave their students opportunities to demonstrate leadership, self-discipline and perseverance.

Like some of the other dimensions of citizenship which contribute to social harmony, acceptance of young people in taking on activities like community service is predicated on a cultural shift by principals and teachers. Teachers also often commented on how they were unable to take 'social action' to contribute to the decision-making processes in their school. These teachers then are unlikely to allow their students to share in the decision making processes of their own classroom. Even principals felt severely restricted in being able to put their personal imprint on their school, because they were so inhibited by both provincial and national educational bureaucracies in what independence and innovation they could implement at their school. One principal, for example, was very enthusiastic about building a small and simple 'cultural centre' at his school for students to learn and practice local traditional customs. Students and parents had supported the idea but the provincial bureaucracy was reluctant to give permission. So here was a case of social action and a very worthwhile initiative to enhance social harmony in the local school community being thwarted by provincial bureaucracy.

SUMMARY OF SOLOMON ISLAND STAKEHOLDER ASSESSMENT & VIEWS

As a generalization, it is fair to say that stakeholders in the Solomon Islands acknowledged what the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education called as 'putting out bushfires' in the

current approach to educational planning. In other words, the specific issues of the day, for example trying to ensure that teachers were paid, took most of their energies and time. While the questions we asked and the discussions which ensued were actively participated in by all stakeholders, for most of them it was a luxury to have a breathing space to consider such questions like:

- What sort of world do you see children entering schools in the Solomon Islands in 2001 encountering?
- What will these young people in the early 21st century need to be able to do, to know and value?
- What will schools in Solomon Islands be like in order to effectively cater for these visions?
- What are schools for?
- What are the national goals of schooling in the Solomon Islands?
- What are the priorities in the goals?
- What competencies is the system promoting for students?
- How can schools assist in the process of recovery, reconciliation and rehabilitation?

These were questions that stakeholders acknowledged needed to be asked, but which were pushed aside by the exigencies of day-to-day activities. Any discussion of citizenship requires this broader discussion, and, stakeholders, be they professional educators or Form 3 students, recognised the potential importance of schooling in terms of the achievement of social harmony as a major goal for the future well-being of the nation.

Specifically then, to address opinions towards 'cultural diversity, social tolerance and democratic processes', the following points are offered as a summary of widely shared opinions of stakeholders in the Solomon Islands. Many of these points will again be discussed in more detail in the third report which has as its focus the development of a policy framework for education policy makers to consider in the review of current practices.

Points of consensus amongst stakeholders in the Solomon Islands

- There is universal agreement with, and support for, the need to enhance cultural diversity, social tolerance, and democratic processes in the Solomon Islands.

- There is a need for continuing debates about how cultural diversity and social tolerance can be enhanced within the nation, as people usually identify with provinces/islands before the nation of the Solomon Islands. Community has over-ridden national unity.

- The recent 'social tension' demonstrated an unwillingness by a small percentage of the population to accept cultural diversity, social tolerance and democratic processes. Stakeholders acknowledged that the tension was a new phenomenon, but has a long and complex history. Recent events only exacerbated these long held tensions.

- The recent tension has created an air of distrust and fear of cultural diversity across ethnic groups, but there is also fear and aggravation within cultural groups. This will take some time and much effort by all to overcome. Stakeholders see schooling, as the most common cultural experience, as having a critical role to play in restoring social harmony.

- Stakeholders recognised the positive impact religion plays in the daily lives of most Solomon Islanders. They argued that any discussion about the enhancement of common core values, and in particular, social harmony, will need to be considered within the framework of Christian religious principles which pervades much of the life of Solomon Islanders. (The research team however found it very difficult during interviews to engage in an individual's personal commitment with religion. Stakeholders generally preferred to talk in the collective sense about the impact of religion on the life of Solomon Islanders in general).

- Stakeholders in the education sector were mostly overwhelmed by the current financial crisis, which threatened national social stability. The current national financial crisis, they believe, will continue for some time to limit the extent of any policy changes and practices in education.

- The current national curriculum was seen by stakeholders in the education sector as being in need of major renewal in most areas of the curriculum, but particularly in the area of social studies where cultural diversity, social tolerance and democratic processes should be a focus.

- Generally stakeholders considered the examination system as a 'given' and were unable to conceptualise other forms of measurement of student performance. At the same time they considered the current examination system and the consequent high drop out rate, or as it is also called 'push-out' rate, is a serious impediment to enhancing cultural diversity, social tolerance, and democratic processes.

- Stakeholders from non-governmental organizations believed that the high youth unemployment, particularly in urban areas, and the lack of national government initiatives in vocational and rural training for unemployed youth highlights cultural differences in the community and has reduced social tolerance towards some ethnic groups.

- All stakeholders expressed the view that schools are currently totally under-resourced to enhance cultural diversity, social harmony and democratic processes.

- All stakeholders working in schools, higher education institutions and curriculum development centres, believe that there is currently a lack of teaching and learning resources, which accurately and sensitively reflect the many cultures of the Solomon Islands.

- Stakeholders outside of the education system were more likely to believe that the enhancement of cultural diversity, social tolerance, and democratic processes is not just the prerogative of formal education.

- Most stakeholders were not aware of the role schools could play in promoting democratic processes and as places where young people can practice citizenship

Warren Prior (Project Manager)
Suzanne Mellor (Researcher)
Graeme Withers (Researcher)

PROMOTING SOCIAL TOLERANCE AND COHESION THROUGH EDUCATION

Report 1: Stakeholders' Assessment

Attachments

Warren Prior
Suzanne Mellor
Graeme Withers

July 2001

DEAKIN
UNIVERSITY

Deakin University

And

ACER

Australian Council for Educational Research

Attachment 1: FIELD WORK IN SOLOMON ISLANDS

Researchers: Warren Prior, Graeme Withers

List of Stakeholders Interviewed in Solomon Islands

Guadalcanal Province

- Walter Ramo – Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education and Training
- Donald Malassa – Under Secretary, MoE & T
- Mailyn Cuve – Director, Planning MoE & T
- Bob Cogger – Education Advisor, AUSAID
- Bernard Rapasia – CEO, Vocational Education MoE & T
- Joash Maneipuri – Head, Education Faculty, Solomon Islands College of Higher Education
- Franco Rodie - Director, Curriculum Development Centre
- Director National Art Gallery
- Moffat Wasuka – Education Consultant
- Fr Norman Arkwright – Chair, SIRETCA, parish priest, Tanagua
- Catherine Lamani – Manager Solomon Star newspaper
- Fr Ambose Pereira – Director, Don Bosco Training School
- Francis Taqua – Designate Provincial Director, Makira Province
- Peter Keneilorea – Chair, Peace Monitoring Council (ex Prime Minister)
- Peter King – Executive Officer, Solomon IslandsRural EducationTrainingCentres Assoc.
- Sr Margaret - Deputy Principal, Bishop Eppale School, Rove
- Collin Ruqebatu – Head Teacher, Bishop Eppale School, Rove.
- Charles Fox – General Secretary, National Youth Congress, Ministry of Home Affairs
- Secretary of the Citizenship Commission, Ministry of Home Affairs
- National Teachers' Union
- Fox Irokmani – Education Officer, Non-Fomal Education, Church of Melanesia.
- Ethel Sigimanu – Head of Women's Development, Women in Development. Division.
- Joshua Leitavua – Principal Ruavatu Secondary. School
- Charles Pigoa – Chief Education Officer (Guadalcanal. Province)
- Gideon Moses – Former Premier Guadalcanal Province
- Leonard Nekamale – Education Cleric, Guadalcanal Province

Western Province

- Ms. Dalcy Sito - Western Province Inspector, Ghizo
- Mr Stewart Sione - Principal of Gizo Primary School
- Mr. Piani Lilopio -   Principal, Gizo Community High School
- Nicksin Kaepori – Social Studies teacher, Gizo Community High School,.
- Kenny Jerry – Social Studies teacher, Gizo Commun ity High School.
- Students - four Form 5 girls, Home Economics class, Gizo Community High School
- Mr. Binnet Mavo – Senior Education Officer, New Georgia Region,Western Province
- Mr. Bartlett Julesaba – Education Secretary, United Church, Goldie Secondary College,
- Ms. Miri Taqu Tuke – Acting Principal, Goldie College, Western Province

- Jino Hansome Here – Social Studies Coordinator, Goldie College, Western Province
- Mr. Eki Lee Daga - Chief Designate, Dunde Community-Munda, New Georgia.
- Mrs. Judy Riko Naqu – Principal, Dunde Community High School, Munda
- Anna Teko – student, Community High School, Munda, Western Province.

Malaita Province

- Principal, Su'u National Secondary School.
- Senior Social Studies teacher, NSS
- Principal, Arnon Aitomea Community High School
- Social Studies Teacher, CHS
- Principal Auki Primary School
- Deputy Principal PS
- Grade 6 Teacher, PS.
- Inspector, Malaita Province
- Education Officer, Malaita Province

Pacific Islands Social Tolerance and Cohesion Through Education Project: Report 1

Attachment 2 (A): Non school Stakeholders Interview Schedule

Promoting Social Tolerance and Cohesion through Education

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Concepts of citizenship

- What are your ideas about is a 'good citizen' in your <u>country</u>?

- What do think are some of the influences that determine your ideas about the 'good citizen'?

- How important do you consider the following to be when you think about the 'good citizen'?
  A sense of personal identity
  A sense of community/location
  A sense of the global citizen
  A sense of civil behaviour
  A sense of participation/social action

Reflections on the big picture

When you think about the future of your country/province/village what sort of picture do you have in your mind?

When you think about 'locating yourself' what location do you think of first? Group? Place?

How important is a sense of national identity to you when you think about your future?

Would you consider your country to be multicultural society?

What do you think are some of the blockers that have hindered your notions of what a 'good citizen' is from coming into effect?

What are some of the blockers that have impacted on your ideas about the future of your country/province/village?

What are some of the encouragers that have impacted on your ideas about the future of your country/province/village?

How important is it for you to be involved in the decision-making in some aspects of your life/work? Which aspects? How might you be involved?

To what extent do you think you are given reasonable opportunities to regularly participate in decision-making?

What would be the most important aspect that you feel you do not have opportunities to participate in decision-making?

Pacific Islands Social Tolerance and Cohesion Through Education Project: Report 1

What are some ways you can think of, that the local community/ national government promotes ideas about the 'good citizen?

While acknowledging the recent tensions how would you describe the extent of 'social tolerance' in your country?

What are the biggest problems preventing peace/social tolerance in your community?

Schools and Social Tolerance and Cohesion and Citizenship

At what age do you think children should begin at school?

What roles, if any, are schools currently teaching young people to be 'good citizens?

What roles should schools be playing in teaching young people about being 'good citizens'?

How would you describe your level of understanding about the curriculum in your local school?

To what extent do you think schools/the current curriculum are providing what you want out of education for young people? What's missing?

Should schools be involved in the teaching of values such as social tolerance, cultural diversity and democracy?

Do you think schools are in fact engaging in the teaching and learning of these values already?

Do you support the idea of a national curriculum and/or do you support locally/provincially developed curriculum? Why? What are the benefits? How would you like to be involved?

Should the local community determine the curriculum/ appoint teachers/ pay for them/ build schools?

How important is it for schools to give opportunities for students to practice participating in decision making?

What is the school system doing for the young people who drop out of school, say after grade 6?

Would you support the introduction of a subject in the school curriculum which had a focus on 'citizenship education'?

If so, what would be the most important things/ideas/topics you would want included in this subject?

Local Action

When/what was the last time you participated in some aspect of your local school activities?

How encouraging is your local school in inviting you to participate in school activities?

How important is the teaching of/in local vernacular languages in your school? If yes, would you be prepared/able to assist in this program?

What skills would/could you offer to teach in your local school?

Do you think the cost of school fees prevents some families from sending their children to school? How might local communities assist their local school to lower school fees?

In this project we will be organising a reflective workshop in mid year. What would you like to tell decision makers to consider in their deliberations on what schools can contribute to social tolerance, community participation and democratic processes?

Attachment 2 (B): School-based Stakeholders Interview Framework

Promoting Social Tolerance and Cohesion through Education

Curriculum documents/policies

Does the school have a complete set of current Ministry curriculum documents?
If not, why not?
To what extent are Ministry curriculum documents/resources available to all teachers?
To what extent are these curriculum documents used as curriculum planners by teachers and schools?
To what extent do students and parents have an understanding of the contents of the curriculum documents?
To what extent do curriculum documents drive/dominate teaching and learning?
To what extent can teachers adapt curriculum documents to suit the locality/their own style?
To what extent do curriculum documents focus on local/island/national/global issues?
Do you support the idea of a national curriculum and/or do you support locally/provincially developed curriculum? Why? What are the benefits? Who should be involved? How would you like to be involved?

School governance

What are the traditional processes/patterns of decision making/leadership in the local community?
How do these processes work? In what ways does the community benefit?
Are modifications to the traditional processes possible, and if so how might they be initiated?
Should these traditional ways of decision making be encouraged/taught in schools?
How would you describe the decision making style of your school?
Who and/or what factors determine the style of leadership/school governance in the school?
To what extent do individuals/collectively teachers contribute to decision making in the school?
In what ways do students contribute to decision making in the school? Examples?
In what ways do parents contribute to decision making in the school? Examples?
When/what was the last time you participated in some aspect of your local school activities?
What would be the most appropriate style of school governance for your community or school? Why?

Classroom practices

To what extent do examinations drive classroom practices? Is this OK?
Can you name some social issues that have been discussed in your classes?
Why were these particular issues raised in class?
To what extent do teachers encourage/allow for the addressing of social issues in classrooms?
If so, how is this done?
Do you think teachers impose their values on the students? When?
What are the blockers that prevent active student engagement in social issues?
To what extent and in what ways do parents and others contribute to classroom practices?
What is the most commonly used teaching and learning pedagogy? Why is this the one? Who

decides?

What do understand by the term 'democratic classroom'?

Do you support a democratic classroom?

How do you as a teacher /parent feel about sharing decision making with students?

How important is it for students to be taught and learn in their own local language?

How often does this happen in your school/ classroom? Why this often? Under what conditions?

Is there a punishment/reward regime in this school?

How often have you experienced/witnessed intolerance, culturally insensitive behaviour and verbal/physical abuse in your classroom/school?

How important do you believe modeling in school and family are to young people learning and practising tolerance?

Curriculum content

What are the most important things students should learn in school?

What skills are important?

Who should decide which values are the important ones for young people to learn?

Should school teach values? If yes, what values?

Can schools teach young people to be a 'good citizen'?

How important is it for students to practice how to be a 'good citizen/person at school?

How might this be done?

How important is it for schools to include topics that encourage social tolerance and cohesion in the curriculum? Why?

Do you think schools are in fact engaging in the teaching and learning of these values already?

Is it important that religious education is part of the school curriculum?

Is religious education the appropriate curriculum area to teach about values?

How important is it that the curriculum allows for/encourages the teaching and learning of local issues/skills/ content?

Should students develop a global perspective?

What are the most important aspects of the curriculum? Why?

To what extent do you think schools/the current curriculum are providing what you want out of education for young people? What's missing?

Has the curriculum changed since you were at school? If so, for the better? Why?

The possibilities

What's the best thing that schools are doing at the moment?

What's the thing that they could do a lot better?

In an ideal world what would you most like changed at your school?

What do hope that your school can most offer to all of its young people?

What can the school system do for the young people who drop out of school, say after grade 6?

What are schools for?

What do you understand by the term 'social tolerance'? What are some of its essential parts?

What goals can you envisage coming true for you and your place?

What is the role of social tolerance in this picture?

While acknowledging the recent tensions how would you describe the extent of 'social tolerance' in your community/country now?

What are the biggest obstacles preventing peace/social tolerance in your community?

When you think about the future of your country/province/village, what sort of picture do you have in your mind?

In this project we will be organising a reflective workshop in mid year. What would you like to tell decision makers to consider in their deliberations on what schools can contribute to social tolerance, community participation and democratic processes?

Pacific Islands Social Tolerance and Cohesion Through Education Project: Report 1

Attachment 3: Project Summary Handout

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Promoting social tolerance and cohesion through education

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Project Description

Education systems can play a crucial role in the process of nation building and consolidation. Furthermore, education may be an effective instrument to promote understanding, respect and dialogue between cultures. Strengthening democratic processes, encouraging political dialogue, building civic institutions, overcoming prejudice, combating stereotypes and fomenting social tolerance are not simple endeavors; they can be, however, areas for educational action.

The primary aim of this project is to develop a general operational framework for the design of a school-based civic education agenda tailored to the specific social and cultural environment of Pacific island nations. In particular, this project will strive to address how educational systems in these multicultural societies may forge national identities, while promoting social tolerance and understanding, supporting community participation and strengthening democratic processes.

The Solomon Islands and Vanuatu are proposed as country case studies; however, the methodology hereby developed could be used and replicated in other country settings. Moreover, the findings and policy recommendations of these case studies can serve as a basis to orient potential policy options for other island nations in the region.

Specific objectives
The project will involve collecting field data at three different locations in Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands.

The following questions will serve as an overarching guide:

Does the educational system give equal chances to people from all ethno-linguistic groups?
Does it bring children together from these groups?
Does it address directly (through the curriculum or other avenues) with the values of respect, tolerance, multicultural understanding, compromise and negotiation?

(a) <u>Stakeholder assessment</u>: The consultant team will be responsible for collecting data from a sample of school principals, teachers, students, parents and community members regarding their opinions towards cultural diversity, ethnic conflict, citizenship and political participation, civic institutions, and democratic processes. The school sample will be drawn to maximize diversity in terms of ethnic, language and religious backgrounds as well as include socioeconomic and rural/urban diversity.

The information collected will serve as a basis to understand prevalent attitudes towards multiculturalism and pluralism.

(b) <u>Operational assessment</u>: Concurrently, the consultant team will perform a review of present

school-based practices regarding cultural understanding, democratic participation and social cohesion. The activities in this sub-component will include an analysis of civic/multicultural values in the prescribed curriculum and textbooks, as well as observable related school activities, classroom behavior and management practices.

Overall, this activity will allow the identification of possible vectors of intervention to promote social understanding and civic participation.

(c) Reflection workshop: The consultant team will also be responsible for organizing, potentially in collaboration with a local agency, a national reflection workshop in order to share some preliminary findings of the project. This workshop will also strive to promote discussion among local stakeholders of potential vectors for the development and implementation of a school-based "education for mutual understanding" program.

Deliverables

Upon the conclusion of the stakeholder and operational assessments, the consultant team is expected to present two reports:

(a) An analysis of stakeholder views within the educational system on cultural diversity, social tolerance and democratic processes.

(b) An analysis of curricular and other school-based practices regarding cultural diversity, social tolerance and democratic processes.

These reports will have as a target audience local policymakers and educators. The findings and recommendations from these two reports will serve as a basis for the reflection workshop discussions, which in turn will result in the production of a third deliverable:

(c) A framework for the development of a school-based "education for mutual understanding" agenda, specifically tailored to Pacific island conditions, that promotes national cohesion and democratic participation, while respecting cultural diversity and social tolerance. This framework should strive to provide a foundation for policymakers to review and address the role of schooling in promoting social cohesion, as well as some basic instruments for teachers to include values education in their daily practices.

Research Team

Warren Prior: (Project Manager) Faculty of Education, Deakin University, Melbourne, Australia.
     Email – warrenp@deakin.edu.au

Suzanne Mellor: Research Fellow, Australian Council for Educational Research, Melbourne, Australia.
     Email – mellor@acer.edu.au

Graeme Withers: Senior Research Fellow, Australian Council for Educational Research, Melbourne, Australia.
      Email - withers@acer.edu.au

Attachment 4: Reflective Workshop Handout

Pacific Islands Project

Promoting Social Tolerance and Cohesion through Education

Workshop Handout

Project Brief: Strengthening democratic processes, encouraging political dialogue, building civic institutions, overcoming prejudice, combating stereotypes and fomenting social tolerance can be areas for educational action.

Chief Project Goal: In particular, this project will strive to address how educational systems in multicultural societies may forge national identities, while promoting social tolerance and understanding, supporting community participation and strengthening democratic processes.

Specific Research Questions:
- Does the educational system give equal chances to people from all ethno-linguistic groups?
- Does it bring children together from these groups?
- Does it address directly (through the curriculum or other avenues) with the values of respect, tolerance, multicultural understanding, compromise and negotiation?

Reflective Workshop Goals: The consultant team will also be responsible for organizing a national reflective workshop in order to (1) share some preliminary findings of the project. This workshop will also strive to (2) promote discussion among local stakeholders of potential vectors for the development and implementation of a school-based "education for mutual understanding" program.

Workshop Session 1: Values and Assumptions Underlying Schooling
- Symbols used for Identity in Solomon Islands/Vanuatu
- Introduction to idea of mind mapping as a means of conceptualising curriculum
- Education as socially constructed: values and assumptions;
- Need for development of National Goals of Education as framework for curriculum and policy.

Workshop Session 2: Connections to the World Bank Social Tolerance Project
- Progress of the Project
- What are the attributes/characteristics of the ***good citizen***?
- The Six Dimensions of Citizenship:

Civic Knowledge (*e.g.: Understanding of cultural contexts in which a community exists*)
A Sense of Personal Identity (*e.g.: A positive attitude to self*)
A Sense of Community (*e.g.: A commitment to family, village of nation*)
Adoption of a code of Civil Behaviours (*e.g.: A respect for others*)
An informed and empathetic response to social issues (*e.g.: Caring for the environment*)
A disposition to take social action (*e.g.: Engaging in community service*)

- Key Questions when Considering the Development of a Set of National Goals of Education

1: What sort of world do you see children entering schools in 2001 will encounter in Solomon Islands/Vanuatu in their lifetime?
2: What will young people in the early 21st century need to be able to do, to know and value in Solomon Islands/Vanuatu?
3: What will schools in Solomon Islands/Vanuatu need to be like in order to effectively cater for these visions?
4: Can these 3 visions be summarised into agreed and common national goals for the 21st century?

Workshop Session 3: Small groups to discuss the following Big Issue, based on previous Questions
- Establishing priorities for National Goals of Schooling for Solomon Islands/Vanuatu

Workshop Session 4: Draft Proposals for National Goals of Schooling for Solomon Islands/Vanuatu
- Brief reporting by groups of discussions /conclusions regarding the Big Issue
- Closure & overview
- Presentation of Certificates and Gifts

Attachment 5: Participants at Reflective Workshops

Solomon Islands Reflective Workshop

Participants by job-type

Principals: 2 (from Guadalcanal Province)
Catholic Education Authority: 1(Education Secretary)
Classroom teachers: 5 (Guadalcanal Province schools)
Ministry of Education government officers: 4 (Under Secretary, and 3 Senior Education Officers)
College of Higher Education: 1 (Head of School)
Community Groups: 1 (Interested person)
Non Government Organisations: 2 (Director, and secretary, Don Bosco Vocational Training
Organisation)
Other Government Departments: 2 (Head of Women's Development, General Secretary National
Council of Women)
Total: 18

Attachment 6: REFERENCES

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