PROMOTING SOCIAL TOLERANCE AND COHESION THROUGH EDUCATION

Report 2: Operational Assessment - Vanuatu

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The focus of Report 2 has been the extent of nexus between the rhetoric of education policy, especially in curriculum documents, and the realities of school and classroom practices in the area of social learning.

It has been argued that teaching and learning involves all of the acquisition of knowledge, the development of skills and the formation of values. It is the view of the researchers that in both countries of study, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, the issue of what's worth knowing (knowledge) is undergoing considerable debate both in schools and in the broader community. This study revealed that the current curriculum policy is seen by most practitioners in schools in both countries as being out of date, lacking local cultural knowledge, and, in the area of social learning, mostly irrelevant to young people. The application of Prior's six dimensions of citizenship revealed that no key learning area in the curriculum and no school explicitly addresses all dimensions. In some schools, the principal and teachers had devised activities and revised areas of the curriculum to achieve a specific element of citizenship. There were very few of these schools in either country, but it was the view of the researchers was that, once identified, the ministry of education should publicise these case studies as being best practice.

There is a severe slippage between the expectations of curriculum policy makers and the expectations of teachers (and parents). This may be a somewhat unfair comment on the curriculum writers, for the reality is, in both countries, there are currently no social education curriculum writers. The documents analysed for this study mostly were written by outside contract curriculum writers over 10 years ago and since this time only minor revisions have been made.

The current political uncertainties in both countries, combined with the heavy reliance on outside funding, have not assisted policy makers and practitioners in their quest for curriculum renewal. It has been stated earlier that curriculum is a cultural expression of both what is seen to be valued and what is hoped for in the future. In the context of uncertainties in national leadership, it is not surprising that there is little sense of a set of national goals of schooling upon which to plan future directions. The uncertainties associated with outside funding support, which hang over both countries, have resulted in an inability to plan long term and in an unequal distribution of existing funds to the various provinces. As a generalisation, schools are grossly under-funded for the very basic necessities for teaching and learning. However, a common comment by practitioners in both countries and supported by the observation of the researchers, is that some favoured schools are much better resourced than others. When governments allow such a situation to occur, regardless of their motives, they feed social disharmony and undermine the public perception of social justice in government policy and the public service bureaucracy.

It became very clear, very early in this project, that the promotion of social harmony and cohesion are sub-set elements of much broader issues which cohere under the banner of 'national goals'. By discussing what it means to be 'socially educated' and to be a 'good citizen', participants in the study revealed many insights into what it means to be an individual and what it means to be a member of a community, or of multiple communities. Issues of national identity quickly arose. Issues of the acceptance of diversity of cultures arose. And these issues were embedded in both individual and collective memories, which on occasions betrayed prejudice and expressions of stereotypes. Current education policies and school practices are not addressing these tensions. It has been argued in this report that citizenship is contestable, problematic and in need of constant revitalisation. The failure to recognise and allow for diversity in a broad framework of defining a citizen can only lead to social disharmony. The evidence is that this tension of citizenship is being played out in the current social situation. For instance, the role and the effectiveness of two recent policies – the Education Master Plan (1999) and the

Comprehensive Reform Program (1997) – will be critical in cohering a long term strategy to promote social learning.

The issues embedded in identifying the extent to which schools and teachers actively encourage student involvement in decision making, and student engagement in social action, are very complex. On the one hand, support for these strategies involves a particular view about teaching and learning. Another component involves beliefs about the relationship between schools and their local communities. We believe that there is now sufficient evidence to support the view that the formal inclusion of topics and subjects in the curriculum with a focus on citizenship is not, in itself, effective in enhancing student ideas about making a positive contribution to their community. Nor is the use of national icons and symbols of themselves, an effective strategy for enhancing social harmony. But when many of these strategies are adopted and adapted and linked, in ways which make sense to particular school communities, then there is the possibility of an effective coherent and sequential program.

It has been argued elsewhere in this report that a defining element in assessing the effectiveness of a school in promoting social tolerance and harmony is the role of the school administration and specifically the role of the principal. This study revealed that the idea of the democratic classroom or democratic decision making processes by the school community were both unknown by most school practitioners. There is some evidence that a disbelief in these notions is culturally based within the broader value of respect. Yet in private conversations many teachers were bitter about their undemocratic treatment as teachers and as individuals by both the education bureaucracy and the principal. Other teachers wanted students to be more active participants in their classes. The conclusion reached was that the pedagogies of values education associated with promoting social harmony and citizenship are largely unpractised by teachers and that a great deal of professional development will be required. The introduction of these democratic pedagogies will also need to be introduced during pre-service training of teachers.

SECTION 1: PROCESS OF CURRICULUM AND OPERATIONS REVIEW

Purpose of this Report

The focus of this report is 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 behaviour and management practices.*

The research team considered this focus as an opportunity to document the juxtaposition between the rhetoric of educational policy documents, the expression of those policies in curriculum documents and the reality of actions and practices taking place in schools and classrooms in the Solomon Islands and in Vanuatu. This report complements and augments *Report 1: Stakeholders' Assessment*, for which the fieldwork was undertaken simultaneously. Both this report and Report 1 will inform the development of a policy framework to enhance social tolerance in the South Pacific region, which is the focus of Report 3.

Overview of the Operational Fieldwork in both Countries

A detailed description of the Research Methodology used in this project was provided in Section 4 of Report 1: Stakeholder Assessment. The review of the operational elements of both systems took three approaches to data collection and it was undertaken using a common set of data sources:

Documentary review and summary:

- Ministry of Education published policies and reports;
- Syllabuses and other curriculum documents;
- School policy documents
- Teacher guides
- Student resource documents
- Student writings.

In the Solomon Islands, curriculum documents were collected from several Ministry of Education sources, from the Curriculum Development Centre, and from various other organisations and NGOs operating in the country. In Vanuatu, curriculum documents were likewise collected from several Ministry of Education sources, from the Curriculum Development Centre, the Vanuatu Teachers' College, and from various other organisations and NGOs operating in the country.

In both countries difficulties were experienced, for a number of reasons, in obtaining a complete set of curriculum documents and current policy documents. In some cases no school or organisation had a copy of a particular curriculum document. On other occasions, and for whatever reasons, some policy documents were not made available to the research team. This section of the report therefore is based on an incomplete set of documents.

Interviews with practitioners [principals; inspectors; teachers] and students

In both the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu a range of schools were visited by the research team. The selected schools represented diversity in terms of location, sector, affiliation and focus. For a list of the schools visited see Section 2.

For the second round of fieldwork in Vanuatu, visits to a range of primary and secondary schools of various types, in three provinces (Efate, Espiritu Santo and Tanna), were arranged by officials of the Ministry of Education. In all three locations the research team was able to visit an additional number of schools, which broadened the sample of schools still further. For a list of the schools visited see the country-specific 'contextual issues' section of the report.

On most school visits in both countries, the researcher was accompanied by an official of the Ministry of Education. When this occurred, it was designed to facilitate the visit, as some schools were unaware both of the timing of the visit and the nature of the project. The research team believes that the attendance by the Ministry of Education officials did not interfere with the responses provided by the school practitioners.

Interviews were obtained with as many such people as time and school schedules permitted. Conditions varied: in some schools, general meetings of quite large numbers of staff could be convened for our visit. Sometimes, however, we only interviewed the principal and maybe one or two other teachers. The most common pattern was to interview the principal and teacher(s) of Social Studies, on the grounds that this learning area was the one most likely to address issues of social tolerance. Most interviews were tape recorded with the permission of the participant(s); no requests for such a procedure were refused. During other interviews, notes were taken.

On all occasions, the discussions with practitioners were open, frank and free of any suggestion of influence by Ministry of Education officials. In fact, the practitioners appreciated the opportunity to discuss substantive issues which the project raised.

Observations of actual practice

Wherever it was possible, the researchers were welcomed by teachers into their classrooms when lessons were in progress. However, opportunities for this activity varied according to the site. In some cases the researchers were invited to participate in, or to lead classroom activities. In some cases the students were not present at the school on the day of the visit, due to a lack of power or water or the absence of a teacher.

The complexity of this operational review process is indicated by the common school-based interview schedules (See Attachment 1) and the following questions: Were we:

- looking for whatever vestiges of moral precepts might exist in a specific formal syllabus (or across the whole curricular offering)?

- looking to see how much weight the moral curriculum has/should have/might have within a student's total school experience?

- analysing specific subjects, for example, Social Science; Religious Education; Agriculture, for evidence of current social learnings or for trends or important changes over time?

- looking for some sort of balance between national and personal 'interests' in the educational materials available to its teachers?

- specifically looking for evidence of a whole range of moral, personal, social, familial, community and national 'values'?

- looking for evidence of a chance during the whole school experience of a child for internalisation of values or precepts?

Inevitably, given a brief as wide as this, the project was, to some extent, doing all these things.

Conceptualising the educational process

The educational process, and specifically the curriculum, is both a personal and social construct. Curriculum therefore has different meanings attached to it (Brady & Kennedy, 1999). For stakeholders within the education sector it is tempting to consider curriculum as some sort of private arrangement between teacher and student. On one level in the classroom it probably can be described as this sort of private contractual arrangement. However the nature of curriculum is much broader than a classroom context. It is a part of the social, political and economic structures of society. In seeking to understand the school curriculum the task is also to understand the complex forces and patterns that characterise the operation of society. The educational process and curriculum therefore are fully embedded in the goals, aspirations and values of society.

In *Report 1: Stakeholders' Assessment*, stakeholders defined the education process and curriculum from a wide range of perspectives. Stakeholders in the business community saw the role of schools as delivering outcomes that have relevance to employment opportunities and needs. The view of education of those parents who had had a formal education was shaped by their own experiences as students. They saw the operation of schools as a vehicle linked to a set of values – respect for traditions and cultures for example, and not merely as some form of academic abstraction. Students had a very wide range of views about the nature of their school experience. I both the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, many saw schooling as largely meaningless; unconnected to their lives.

School operations, as expressed through the curriculum, are essentially about the future. Education policy makers come from the dominant hegemonic group, carrying a baggage of values and assumptions about society. Curriculum is therefore contestable and represents the values of a dominant group at a particular time. This places curriculum under continuous stress from groups in the community with different curriculum orientations.

The educational process comprises many different pieces, centred on three key areas: *curriculum*, (what's worth knowing), the *pedagogy* (which enacts it), and the *assessment* (the results of this pedagogy expressed in outcomes of student learning). Around these keys can be placed other areas of student experience, both in formal and non-formal settings, which can be expected to influence the three central ones, and without which any picture of the student learning process is incomplete. These outlier areas include learning done 'elsewhere', during experiences of the *extra-curriculum* (these experiences might include, for example, gardening work done by students after school hours).

What's worth knowing in the education process may not always be explicit. The *hidden curriculum* describes those student experiences which are not explicitly stated in policy documents or are not formally enacted in school operations. Examples of experiences arising from the hidden curriculum are often in the area of social learning. This is therefore of particular interest for this project as values like social tolerance, respect and love are learned outside of the formal curriculum and the learning of such values may take place, for example, during play in the school ground.

The positioning of educational goals, such as the promotion of social tolerance and good citizenship, in operations of schools cuts across the formal and informal line. It may appear in curriculum documents, and to this extent the research team was able to analyse both the nature of

the social learning and evaluate the values and assumptions underpinning it. In this study the opportunities given to the research team to observe informal student social learning was often limited by the formalities of the visits to schools. The common school-based interview schedule developed by the research team primarily explored aspects of this informal social learning and the hidden curriculum. The views reported in the Analysis of School Operations (see Section 4) were expressed during interviews with principals and teachers and therefore came from their perspective, rather than from direct observation by researchers.

Many stakeholders in schools we interviewed were at pains to point out that school experience and syllabuses for mainstream primary and secondary students do not give a full educational picture in the area of social learning. They argued that principled values, attitudes and behaviours are first incubated in the home, the village and the wider community (and to some extent directly by the churches). This development continues once the child goes to school, and is ideally joined by reinforcement and additional opportunities during schooling. It is at school that the randomness of social learning is replaced by the formality of a (hopefully) sequenced curriculum.

Curriculum is often defined as those learning experiences which are embedded in some structured set of systematic experiences, usually in the context of a school. In deciding what is worth knowing, communities are usually not just talking about the acquisition of knowledge. The development of skills, for example psycho-motor skills or social skills, and the social development of children in terms of attitudes and values are also part of the broad goals of education. The existence of differences between curricula is often demonstrated by the different emphases given to these three areas of knowledge, skills, and attitudes and values. This is not to say that the three areas are mutually exclusive. For example, it is not possible for a person to develop ethical attitudes without an understanding of the basis of ethical options.

Curriculum is also often described as a way of knowing. In the context of this project, where a significant proportion of the focus is on values learning, some understanding of the processes of learning in general, and valuing in particular, is important if the dissemination of curriculum documents and school operations are to be effective in enhancing social learning. This is not the place for a detailed examination of research into the effectiveness of teaching and learning processes. However, the research of Howard Gardner (1983), we believe, is of critical importance in framing curriculum in such away as to utilize the concept of multiple intelligences, regardless of cultural contexts.

Gardner argues that curriculum should be constructed in such away as to allow students opportunities to experience multiple usage of children's' intelligences, including linguistic, musical, logical-mathematics, spatial, bodily-kinaesthetic, personal and social dimensions. In the global context of support for an outcomes-based model of curriculum in which outcomes are largely directed at enhancing the economic goals of a nation, linguistic and logical-mathematical are emphasised. As a result the more non-measurable and personal aspects of intelligence, for example, the social ability to understand the motives, feelings, and behaviours of other people, are down-played as being of lesser importance. This is one of the practical challenges for this project, in that any support for curriculum renewal in the area of social learning will need to recognise the implications of Gardner's research.

Values in the Curriculum

The effectiveness of the enhancement of social learning in curriculum and in school operations, in the case of this project in the area of social tolerance, will also need to recognise the findings of research into the acquisition of values. Dewey (1966) described valuing as

> *Primarily to prize, to esteem, but secondarily it means to apprise, to estimate. It means, that is, the act of cherishing something, holding it dear, and also the act of passing judgement upon the nature and amount of its value as compared to something else.*

Five successive stages of development in the acquisition of attitudes and values can be identified:

1. Identifying and prizing one's beliefs and behaviours

2. Choosing one's beliefs from alternatives and in consideration of consequences

3. Exposure, attainment of basic knowledge and initial engagement;

4. Opportunities for experience, acting on and development of deeper understanding and a wide range of relevant skills;

5. The appearance of internalised, consistent and repeated attitudes and behaviours.

An example of the application of this schema, using 'respect for others' as a key attribute might be as follows. The application in this example combines aspects of the process, so that there are three stages… but each aspect of the schema is present.

The first stage (identifying and exposure) manifests itself as opportunities offered for learning to play, then learn, with others;

The next stage (experience and practice) involves the development of skills and opportunities to practise teaching one's juniors;

The third stage (internalised and acting on) might include for example, volunteer community work.

The most cited purposes or goals for including values education in the curriculum and school and classroom practices are to address the following needs:

- To develop a set of values that can be used to help young people to think reflectively in order to fulfil their responsibilities as members of their community and as citizens.

- To assist young people to develop analytical skills that can be applied to events and issues.

- To promote the development of worthy personal values.

- To clarify and explain the role of values in human affairs from the past and present.

- To teach a systematic means to identify and clarify the practices and habits that exist in differing cultures.

Both affective and intellectual capacities and competencies are required by students engaging in learning about values and controversial issues. These capacities can be encouraged and enhanced in schools, both from the perspective of the formal curriculum and in the daily practices of schools and teachers.

The prime focus in this review of school operations was to collect data of what happens, or what the nation says ought to happen, to promote the positive social development of young people. The assumption underlying this precept is that there is a common understanding, shared by politicians, administrators, social and community leaders, teachers and parents, of what constitutes 'positive social development' of a nation's youth. If countries have a set of stated specific 'Goals of Schooling', such matters would certainly be part of what such a document

reveals about what the nation intends for its junior (and later senior/adult) citizens. The absence of such a charter means that, for example, any 'intention' to inculcate spiritual, moral or behavioural values can get buried in the detail of the ordinances: syllabuses, teachers' guides and the like. Sometimes overarching aims or objectives for teaching a given unit or sequence of instruction, or for a program generally, are stated in a curriculum document. But even then it is often hard to find out how such aims will or might come to life in classroom or playground.

Conceptual framework used to analyse curriculum and school based practices

As explained in Report 1, the Stakeholders report for 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 gives a cohesive view of 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's six dimensions of citizenship are:

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.

SECTION 2: CONTEXTUAL ISSUES TO AN OPERATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF SCHOOL-BASED PRACTICES: VANUATU

Schools Visited

Efate Island:	Onasua High School*	rural
	Port Vila Central Primary School	urban
	Lycee Louis Antoine de Bougainville	urban
	College de Montmartre	urban
	Malapoa High School*	urban
Tanna Island:	Lowanatom Junior Secondary (Technical) School*	rural
	Lowanatom Primary School	rural
	Lenakel Junior Secondary School*	rural
	College d'Isangel Junior Secondary School*	rural
	Tafea Junior Secondary School*	rural
	Dip Point Primary School	rural
	Ienaula Junior Secondary School*	rural
Espiritu Santo Island:	Santo East Junior Secondary School	urban
	College de Santo*	urban
	Matevulu College*	rural
	Hogharbour Junior Secondary School*	rural

* Boarding schools

General Comments on the Vanuatu Education System

The education system in Vanuatu is one stretched to the limits of its funding. Assistance is provided from outside the country by NGOs and governments, and whilst this aid is well received, it is not in the control of the Ministry, and is not always distributed where or in the manner the Ministry thinks best. Being post colonial and poor is not an easy situation to be in.

The archipelago is huge and the sheer distances and poor communications exacerbate many difficulties for administrators and practitioners alike. The system of provincial administration appears to be a good one, although it is reliant upon good relations between the Provincial Education Officers (PEO) and the central office of the Ministry. Personal relations are not always cordial. When the PEO is respected by his or her regional practitioners, the system is powerful in keeping practitioners informed and supported in their professional development. Belonging to the location in which they are working is a crucial element in their effectiveness. The researchers were not surprised to find that PEOs who worked in the communities in which they had been children were well-respected, even loved. They were of course, also consummate professionals.

Lack of funding is the main reason for many of the stresses experienced by both administrators and practitioners, and witnessed by the researchers. Traditions, sometimes of very short duration, tend to mean that alternative ways of allocating funds are not fully examined. These traditions also are used as justification for complaint when systemic changes are undertaken, and not explained. There is a sense in schools that the Ministry should be able to solve problems it cannot. This sense of disempowerment is more profoundly felt when other matters, such as some of the following, constantly irritate.

The role of the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) is not clearly defined. It is also poorly-funded, and is thus doubly unable to fulfil the expectations teachers in schools have of it. Its handful of staff is inundated by requests from the field they cannot accommodate. Thus it is seen as inefficient, which it is, but it is unjustly blamed for this condition. Little curriculum development has occurred over the last decade, and practitioners argue it is critically undervalued. Whilst the CDC may have a plan of curriculum review, it is not a plan teachers can recognise. Curriculum development is not contributed to by practitioners, nor are they engaged in the development of the curriculum materials. Thus practitioners do not feel ownership of the curriculum. Criticism is rife that the physical strength of the materials is inappropriate for school use. The materials are thus reviled on a number of scores. The recent decision, taken by the Ministry, that schools will have to pay for all class sets of curriculum documents ordered from the CDC has had serious reverberations in the way practitioners regard the CDC. The whole process of curriculum review and provision is now one of perceived failure. Clarification of the CDC's role could assist in rejuvenating the content of the curriculum so that it contributes to the social coherence of education, and the management of the process of curriculum development

Contextual Comments to Curriculum Analysis: Vanuatu

Teacher training

There is a shortage of trained teachers in secondary schools in Vanuatu. However this shortage is being addressed by the Vanuatu-Australia Secondary Teacher Education Program (VASTEP), where Aus-Aid funding has rejuvenated the training of secondary teachers. The program's first graduates, and Vanuatu's first new Anglophone secondary teachers for 8 years, will be available for appointment to Vanuatu schools in 2002. They are being eagerly awaited by schools in the provinces, and already some of the first graduates to-be have been informally approached by schools, especially where they are local people and therefore known by the school community. It is confidently expected by current practitioners that the VASTEP teachers will have been better trained than their forbears and will be more skilled in conducting open classrooms and relying less on hierarchy for their discipline.

Primary teachers seem not to be in short supply, though they are moved around the country rather often. It was reported that this movement, and lack of explanation for it, unsettles school communities: staff, parents and children. As a group the primary teachers interviewed seemed able to run any kind of classroom, and a range of pedagogies were employed.

To ask how well teachers are trained is to seek to examine their pedagogy. Researchers found that those teachers interviewed and observed in class generally reflected the school's approach. Regimented schools had teacher-centred, lecture-style, fact-based teaching. Those schools with a more open approached to curriculum and student learning had classes with looser desk patterns, students worked in groups and discussion was a normal part of the pedagogy. The influence of the principal on the tenor of the classrooms in the school was paramount, far in excess of the impact of the curriculum. Teachers who had the opportunity to work in teams, and with the looser structures seemed quite comfortable with the pedagogic demands, and even revelled in them. It appears therefore that those who have been trained have been able to accommodate such demands. This was more evidently the case in primary schools, though this was perhaps because most of the primary teachers had been trained as teachers. Secondary teachers who were trained understood the concepts associated with open pedagogy, and were able to converse about pedagogic options.

Post-training of teachers occurs irregularly it seems. In Vila principals said there was virtually no professional development their teachers could undertake, though some were studying in their own time. But in Tanna, for example, primary teachers were regularly involved in workshops and this

has enabled them to stay in touch with curriculum review and changed methodologies. The role the Provincial Education Officer (PEO) plays is crucial to the success of this process. It also enabled the PEO to then have contact with other practitioners. These outcomes assist in the creation and maintenance of teacher confidence and morale. It is important teacher training.

Teacher professionalism and morale

Teacher morale, it was asserted, is affected by the kind of principal the school has, the sense of community between teachers and the sense the teachers and the school has that the administration is aware of, appreciative of, and responsive to, their work. On Tanna, for example, the role of the inspector in the primary system is supportive of teachers, and with the assistance of the School Advisory Officers (Anglophone and Francophone) the teachers achieve better teaching standards, and there is a strong sense of morale and self respect in the primary teaching service. But there is no secondary inspector and the secondary teachers wish they could have one. They were generally professional in their expressed desire to become better teachers, but they feel they are unable to achieve this alone.

Where the principal was able to inject a sense of professionalism in her or his staff, it was remarkable the difference that was produced, in the teaching and in the students. This was reported in schools where teachers had experienced poor principalship, but now were in a better situation. These teachers could make the comparison. It was obvious to the researchers where unprofessional principalship was evidently impacting on the tone of the school and the capacity of teachers to do their job. In poorly-managed schools, teachers gave up and remarked often that there was nothing they could do (about inadequate or inappropriate curriculum, student discipline, the negative effect of the exams, the lack of resources, payment of school fees etc). In well-managed schools, teachers (and the principal) thought they should attempt to ameliorate these conditions, and they prepared and adopted strategies which did, in part, address these issues. Sometimes, increasing the involvement of the parents was seen as a strategic move to reduce the problems. In others such a strategy was seen as interference, and it was rejected as inappropriate.

Teachers were well aware that the treatment they received from the education authorities was not often affected by the quality of their work. This was seen as a crucial matter. They wanted good teaching to be recognised, and for some acknowledgment to be forthcoming from the authorities. They want some systemic approach to teacher support, teacher development, teacher quality and promotion of those who are worthy of it. Teachers were very clear that until there is a policy of promotion of those who are good at, and caring about, their work, then no amount of curriculum change or increased resourcing will improve learning outcomes in schools. The most valuable resource a school system can have is its teachers.

The importance of skilled and committed teachers was demonstrated most poignantly in one remote rural primary school, where the teachers were almost the only resource, and the children were in large groups (approx 40+ per class), they lacked sufficient desks/tables in all classes so most of the children sat on the floors. The teachers were however clear about the intent and importance of education in Vanuatu. All their children from grade six had passed last year and had gone on to secondary school, and the classrooms were full of teacher and student work which showed innovative and collective approaches to the teaching of social issues. The teachers in this school demonstrated pride in the work of education, and the parents were actively involved in the school. The principal regarded his staff and the parents as natural allies in the business of the school. Everyone at the school felt pride that they were doing a good job, but they were all seriously oppressed by the abysmal resources and physical conditions they worked with, and by the lack of recognition they had received for their work. *'Does anyone take notice or care?'* they asked. Morale was good in professional terms, but poor in administrative terms.

Teachers and principals need a recognition and promotion process which will result in the better practitioners amongst them progressing and having a greater impact on schools. Until this is set in place, random allocation of staff to schools will continue, with varying but not the more positive incremental effects on schools. It will also discourage those staff who do care, and who do have professional pride, from attempting to resolve difficulties at the school level. At the present staff feel good teachers are treated in the same way as lazy or untrained or unskilled ones, and they wish it were otherwise. Salaries are low and teachers, trained at state expense, move out of teaching to other careers. The education system of Vanuatu cannot afford to under-utilise the personnel resources it has developed at such cost.

Teacher readiness for cultural and social curriculum

If a greater emphasis is to be placed upon social and cultural concepts in the curriculum, if the profile of these concepts and issues are to be raised as learning outcomes in education, teacher readiness to deliver such a curriculum is crucial. The researchers believe most teachers place a high value on social and cultural concepts as legitimate learning outcomes for schools. They believe that the existing teacher workforce is also reasonably well prepared to deliver such curricula. They will need leadership from within the education system, and from their peers. For that leadership to be evident to them some process of identifying and acknowledging good teachers, those with a strong sense of cultural and social norms being legitimate learning outcomes for primary and secondary students, will need to be in operation.

Teacher-readiness is of course predicated on the recognition by the education system of the need, and on the preparedness to provide appropriate resources and professional development for teachers. In Vanuatu it is believed that teachers can deliver these outcomes, with appropriate support.

The examination system

As was commented in *Report 1:Stakeholders Assessment,* the provision of formal education systems is a very costly item in national budgets, and in the context of global economic uncertainties the desire to get value for money is strong. Currently there is a world wide interest in ways and means of measuring school effectiveness both in terms of student learning and in terms of general cost-effectiveness. Countries have adopted a range of evaluation mechanisms including school reviews, the use of inspectors and the use of formal examinations. In each case underpinning the chosen mechanism is a set of values and assumptions about teacher performance and the nature of teaching and learning.

The selected mechanism to evaluate student learning can have a profound effect on a community's perception of the extent of social justice within the education system. Any sense of unfairness, malpractices and inefficiencies can result in a loss of faith in the system. This contributes to a breakdown of social harmony in a community.

In Vanuatu there are a series of external examinations at the end of year 6 (when students are 11–13 years), again at the end of year 10 (when students are 15–17 years), and then at the end of year 12 (students about 18–20 years). Failure at grade 6 and/or year 10 examinations, result in an inability to further proceed with schooling. Some who pass and could proceed are unable to because of the costs.

Overwhelmingly, school practitioners described the current system of examinations at the year 6 level as a 'culling process' which tested mainly the literacy competencies of students. Teachers were aware of the drop out, or, 'push out' rate, of students and strongly commented on the anti-social impact this was having both on individual young people and on the nation as a whole.

School practitioners agreed with the findings of a review of several examination papers at both year 6 (General Knowledge) and year 10 (Social Science) levels by the research team. This review revealed that the questions were mostly directed at testing knowledge recall and the development of 'academic skills'. The high degree of literacy needed to enter the questions re-inforced the view of the examinations' emphasis on literacy skills.

One principal was highly-critical of the examination system for its impact in creating a hierarchy of subjects in the curriculum.

> *In the examination system, the creative kids in schools get lost, because they are not examined.*
> *(Luganville secondary school principal)*

A teacher at a secondary school on the island of Espiritu Santo commented about the impact of the examination system, particularly for year 6 primary school students:

> *I think many young people see themselves early in life as failures. Then they go through a stage of wanting to stay in towns, then they feel they should go back to their village, even though they have few relevant skills. This is not good for Vanuatu as a nation.*
> *(Espiritu Santo teacher of Social Studies,)*

In summary, stakeholders both from within the education sector and outside in the community, saw the current examination system as firstly, being socially divisive, and secondly, as being an impediment to important social learnings.

Physical conditions in schools

Physical conditions in schools vary hugely between schools. It was not always clear to researchers why physical conditions in some schools were so much better than in others. Sometimes the explanation given was that this had been a primary school before it became a Junior Secondary School (JSS). Sometimes it had been a church school (indeed that it still was), or it was the first, or perhaps the most recent, of its type in the province. A few schools seem simply to have been almost forgotten, and their physical conditions were of the most primitive and neglected (though not unloved) kind. Some were blessed with almost anything a school in the developed world would have had. Dramatic variations such as these do not contribute to a sense of social cohesion.

Resources in schools

Resourcing is not evenly achieved, neither by the Ministry of Education nor by those organisations or institutions outside the country, which, for one reason or another, contribute resources to schools. No-one is so foolish as to reject these contributions, but they contribute additionally, to a strong sense of inequity from people who see resources being allocated in such a random manner. This sense of unfairness reduces the likelihood of schools collaborating in achieving social or cultural mixing goals.

Equipment--such as tables and chairs or stools--were generally provided, though not always by the Ministry of Education. Blackboards and other teaching equipment were generally of a most basic kind. Children cannot learn solely in their heads; re-inforcement requires writing, and basic writing tools were not always available to children for writing. Resourceful teachers kept their posters from one year to the next, and rationed the paper out to students. But the fundamental need to make mistakes and then be able to correct them requires paper to be more readily available than appears to often be the case. Another result of this card and paper shortage is that classrooms were rarely visually interesting, something which is important in increasing student motivation.

Many schools were able to assert they had enough copies of the curriculum books, but these were frequently very old, without covers *('they are not real books and they are not able to last'* bewailed one principal of a JSS). They were universally outraged that they would be expected in future to pay for such resources from the CDC. The Social Studies teachers, and their principals, were very frustrated that their students had no access to a range of optional texts, to enable a range of views to be considered in the teaching and learning, and to assist in the development of research skills. Access by all teachers to teacher guides, which should accompany curricula documents, was rarely asserted as possible. And obtaining further copies of such documentation was rarely deemed possible, not even worth the attempt.

The most strident criticism was retained for the out-of–datedness of the curriculum materials. *'They are an insult to our students'* said one very frustrated JSS teacher. Many teachers can remember most of them existing when they were students, and to meet them now after so long is to suggest the world has stood still, and *'that is not the case'* said another teacher, somewhat ruefully. Lack of certainty about which versions of the curriculum teachers and schools have in their possession makes for a very nervous teacher cohort, especially when they take seriously their task of preparing students for the years 6 and 10 exams. Not one practitioner confidently understood how the process of curriculum development occurred, and this means that attempting to access up-to-date versions of the curriculum takes on the feeling of a (very serious) mystery tour. Provincial Education Officers need this information so they can pass it onto teachers in their provinces.

The need to access materials appropriate to the study of current affairs had teachers commonly asking for newspapers ('*though of course they would have to be translated'* said one Social Studies teacher in a Francophone JSS). Internet access was frequently mentioned as an absolutely necessary alternative resource (and it was generally believed to be cheap, once the system is in place!). Whilst some schools struggle with an unreliable phone line, and experience considerable isolation, others have access to the internet and have computers in classrooms. More inequity, and *'this is not good Vanuatu culture'*, according to one principal.

A few schools had a library building but they were donor-built and a limited range of books existed in them. Generally books were lined around a classroom or sometimes in boxes on the principal's office floor. They are almost-universally old and western in content. These books are the rejects of western culture, often a culture which the researchers could recall from their own (and distant) childhoods. These books are generally donated, and schools keep them out of respect to the motives of those who sent them. But these books are not suitable materials for learning by anyone in the twenty-first century. They appear to be regarded by the schools as not relevant or useful to learning. Researchers at no time saw such books being used by students as a resource, and it is perhaps just as well, if these donations were the best they had to hand. Elite schools were readily-identifiable by the well resourced libraries they had, and by the students who were actually utilising them.

The co-curriculum or extra-curricular activities

The so-called 'co-curriculum', involving extra-curricula activities in sport; inter-school visits; cultural activities; language activities of various kinds, is a very fertile field for exploration and enactment of civic virtue and values. This area of school activity and operations were discussed in every school interview.

All schools, as part of the Physical Education syllabus have their pupils engage in two hours of organised Physical Education activity per week. In many schools a co-curricular flow-on from this curriculum is within school competition and in some schools, interschool competition. Additionally the students (more often the boys than the girls) engage in ball games in the break times. These activities connect to self-respect and to learning objectives in the field of health.

Another curriculum area which results in co-curricula activities is Agriculture (part of the Technology core Year 7–10 curriculum). Students, especially in residential JSS, grow much of their own food. So they also garden to ensure they eat well and have good health. They are encouraged to practise some of the traditional gardening competencies. Similar benefits flow from the other half of the Technology curriculum. Students study home economics/cooking, and the flow -ons of this are mostly eating activities: preparing food for visitors on open days, for parents and guardians on home weekends, for socials and other get-togethers with peers, and for the big cultural days at school. Ultimately the greatest benefit for the students and their society, is when students return home: *'they are useful, contributing members of their community'*, as one proud principal affirmed.

Parent participation in school communities

It appears there is little parent participation in most schools in Vanuatu. This is not to say there is a lack of interest, but for a range of reasons most parents are not actively involved in their children's' education. They are more like witnesses to it. They are commonly invited to parent days at the end of terms where kastom and other activities are enacted by the students and are watched by parents. Some schools talked of plans they had for parents to take part in classroom activities, but this was very rare. It is, of course impossible for parents of most secondary students to travel the distances between home and the school. So most parents have to wait for the school to invite them to attend for a special occasion, or receive a report of their child's progress, or wait for the child to return in the school break. This is perforce the limit for many of them. Parents were involved by schools in student discipline, since school principals generally thought that it was parents' business when their children required disciplining.

But primary schools, especially in rural areas, are closer to their local community, and in such regions there were more examples of parents actually feeling as if they were part of the school community. Even so it was common to be told *'parents visit but are not part of the school'*.

Some schools sought parent assistance with constructing school buildings, but mostly the payment of the fees (not always in hard currency, but in kind) is the sole participation either sought or achieved by schools. Anxiety about the difficult of paying for the school fees was the uppermost concern for many parents, but they were prepared to make the necessary sacrifices though some were just not able to continue for the four years of secondary education. All secondary schools regretfully reported the departure of students whose parents could not continue to pay the fees, low though may be`.

More common though, especially in rural areas, was the view that parents were insufficiently part of the school community and they wished to be more involved. Proposed changes to policy on language instruction are seen as a response to parent insistence that there be greater parent involvement in their children's education. Ways of enabling greater involvement are not readily on most people's minds.

However there appears to be considerable faith within the parent community that schools are probably good for their children, and they trust they will do well in life as a result of attending them. For most parents formal schooling must be a relative enigma, and schools will need to actively encourage parents to engage, if they want greater participation to occur in classrooms.

The language of instruction

The Vanuatu Constitution states that:

> *The national language of the Republic is Bislama. The official languages are Bislama, English, and French. The principal languages of education are English and French.*

In many ways the Constitution gives a mixed message about how to view the relative values of the three languages of Vanuatu. Yet language is one of the most important symbols of identity and social cohesion, and the above quote, and recent policy decisions about the use of the vernacular reflect this new nation's engagement with establishing its national identity.

Not surprisingly, the issue of what is the appropriate language of instruction is enthusiastically debated. Many parents and teachers want to value and maintain vernacular languages. This is a culturally-based position. The reverse positions include the usual reactions associated with the 'weakness' of a spoken language when in written form, as if spelling is the most important aspect of written language, or a heightened sense of the value of being able to speak a foreign language. Neither of these reverse positions recognises the symbolic and cultural significance of the vernacular(s).

Urban dwellers are inevitably more likely to be familiar with languages such as Bislama (the lingua franca) or English or French, rather than their home language, in which there is almost certainly no written reading or signage. Thus regional, equity and deep cultural principles are embedded in this issue. The issue drew a complex response from all practitioners, all of whom have a firm grasp on the cultural and values underpinning it. Almost universal is the belief that the vernacular should be the language of instruction in the early years of schooling. This would suggest that the Ministry policy of implementing language changes, via the trials planned for 2002, will be welcomed by whole school communities. Given that the policy also implies greater community involvement in the learning sites of young children, one can expect this also to be welcomed by Vanuatu parents. Details of these policies were provided in *Report 1: Stakeholders' Assessment.*

Time and again in schools researchers were told that students were forbidden from talking in Bislama, even though it was often the only language they could competently share with each other. Some were even forbidden from speaking Bislama in the school yard. Since the exams are in English and French, and to the extent that it requires considerable facility with one of these two languages, so the need for students' facility to improve is real. This is typical of the dilemmas associated with the language issue in Vanuatu. How much time is a young ni-Vanautu child in school learning foreign languages? And is this an appropriate use of their time, and of the country's slender resources?

The language of instruction issue is compounded by the dependency on foreign aid and the colonial inheritance. The dual system of the national and Francophone systems is being reduced by the recent requirement that all students sit Grade 6 and 10 exams with the same (albeit, translated) questions. However there are still serious separations between the two systems of schools, and these dislocations need to be addressed.

SECTION 3: SYLLABUS REVIEW: VANUATU

Introductory Comments

As was commented in *Report 1:Stakeholders' Assessment,* difficulties were experienced in collecting the syllabus documents. The documents reviewed do not constitute a complete set by any means, and this mirrors the situation in all the Vanuatu schools we visited, where none appeared to have a complete set. Some curriculum documents were read and reviewed, but have not been reported in detail with the others in Section 6 below.

Some of the curriculum documents which were read and reviewed, have not been reported in detail with the others in Section 3. Judgements about inclusion were made, generally supported by teacher opinion on the use they made of the material, as to the appropriateness of some syllabi to the social cohesion context. Those judged to not be clearly contextualised do not appear in the review.

One difficulty when reviewing syllabus and course materials, as was referenced earlier in Section 1 of this report, is how to determine the strength of the link between what stands ready to be developed in the document's content and what might become of such prompting in the classroom when the teacher enacts the materials. Classroom observation would need to be very extensive to enable generalisations to be made about links being manifested between syllabus documents and pedagogy. This project did not allow time for such classroom observation.

There is a need for the reader of this syllabus review to distinguish between teacher and student materials, for they are quite different in their content and objectives. One gains the impression that in many of the teachers' handbooks accompanying the syllabus prescriptions, the content is only designed to give teachers factual information (or access to it), in order to enable them to keep one step ahead of students in their knowledge acquisition. Suggestions for classroom treatments of any content included as information are rare indeed. Given the caveats mentioned earlier in relation to the limited range of pedagogies experienced by trainee teachers, both in their own schooling, and also in their training, the paucity of teaching strategies in the syllabi suggests that little by way of variation from the 'chalk and talk' style of teaching occurs in Vanuatu classrooms. Certainly the researchers saw little teaching at primary or secondary level which varied from this model.

The syllabus documents were analysed for their relevance to the knowledge and the issues which relate to social cohesion and tolerance. The syllabus review, which follows in this section, uses tables to map the content topics in the syllabi which have the potential to connect to such knowledge and issues. Prior's Citizenship Dimensions are again used to provide a locus for the interpretation of the substance of the materials. Section 4 of this report provides a detailed analysis by practitioners in Vanuatu schools of how they teach the curriculum, and this syllabus review and mapping serves as context for that operational assessment.

	Ministry of Education, Vanuatu. (2000). ***Prescription Document for Assessment towards Year 10 Certification.*** Port Vila.

Notes:

Reference	Comments	Six Dimensions
Key areas	For each of the 4 years, there are the same 4 key areas which underly [sic] the topic coverage. There are: p.4 • knowledge and ideas; • skills and abilities; • values and attitudes; • social participation.	All: D1-D6
Main aim	***Through Social Science studies, students will have the ability to cooperate, and show concern and respect for others. Social science, more than any other subject gives students the opportunities to develop these skills and values, and to participate in social situations. (p. 3)*** **Caveat:** *No single aim can satisfactorily describe the contribution of Social Science to a sound general education. (p. 3)* Accordingly, this is supported by eleven more explicitly stated aims and the analysis which follows shows they are mirrored in specific instances in the prescribed curriculum. The aims are given below in **bold italics**: the instances are sorted by Year level – "V8" for example means the activity or learning is to found in the detailed rubric for Year 8 students in the Vanuatu system.	D3-D6
Year 9 topics	• Living in Towns (almost entirely knowledge based, especially geographical) • Nations and Governments (solid section on government in V, p.41) • Learning to Live in Vanuatu (patterns of behaviour: changing customs; making social rules) • Working Together in Vanuatu (co-operation and competition – local)	D1, D3-D6
Year 10 topics	• Population Education (incl. pollution, ecology and other environmental issues) • Our Changing Society (a lot about resources, a lot of historical background) The widest range of suggested activities in the syllabus document occurs for Year 10, Topic 2, "Our Changing Society", but these largely call for explanations and descriptions (pp. 72–75).	D1, D3

Development of essential skills	*Social Science should enable students to participate in activities that develop skills in enquiry, planning, decision-making and problem solving;* • village surveys V7 • primary sources V7 • oral history V7 • survival skills V8 • questionnaire surveys V8 • research topic for common assessment task, V10	D1, D3
Significant social issues	*Social Science should enable students to examine significant social issues;* • matrilineal and patrilineal societies V7 • distribution of populations and resources V7 • supply and demand V8 • exploitation and conservation V8 • tourism study V8	D1, D3, D5
Development of social and historical perspective	*Social Science should enable students to develop and apply their knowledge and understanding about people, societies and environments, in various times and places;* • seeing the school as a microcosm of national society V7 • custom, tradition, culture and society [inc. cultural centres and museums] V7 • custom stories V7 • comparisons with societies in other countries [e.g. V7 Indonesia; Trobriand Islands] • interactions between societies and environments V8	D1, D3, D5
Accent on the future of the society	*Social Science should enable students to explore what is possible and preferable in the future, both for their own lives and for society, and participate in actions which may contribute to more desirable futures;* • awareness of changes in family life V7 • using natural resources wisely, especially through planning, and misusing V8	D5, D6
Accent on the future for oneself	*Social Science should enable students to develop the knowledge, understanding, skills, abilities and values that will be necessary to meet the challenges of life in the twenty-first century.* • work and occupational study V8 • "Spaceship Earth" V8	D2, D5

Values formation	**Social Science should enable students to develop and practise the values necessary for living in a democratic society and a sustainable world** No activities or instances of process for this desired development could be found explicitly stated in the curriculum documents. However, presumably some teaching is expected because "Values" get a place in the assessment scheme – 50% of 30% internal assessment of Year 10 [p.65]. The "Values and Attitudes" (p.75) section focuses largely on learning about the world outside Vanuatu.	D1, D4-6
The self in the community	**Social Science should enable students to see themselves as unique and worthwhile individuals and community members, capable of making a positive contribution to society;** • individual uniqueness within social and communal parameters V7 • defining nuclear and extended families V7 • similarities and differences between particular families V7 • happiness and unhappiness in family groupings V7	D2, D4-6
Lifelong learning	**Social Science should enable students to develop a positive and systematic approach toward being responsible for their own learning** No activities or instances of process for this desired development could be found explicitly stated in the curriculum documents.	D2
Working with others	**Social Science should enable students to work, cooperate and communicate with others;** • co-operative learning and group work V7 • study of occupations (especially rural) V8	D3
The nature of society	**Social Science should enable students to appreciate our society's multicultural and interdependent nature;** • some recognition of different island cultures [e.g. an exercise in class representation] V7 • differences in custom, tradition, and culture from one island to another, and communally intra-island, are dealt with V7 • exploring feelings about the home country V7 • contrast of rural and urban cultures and societies V8	D1, D3
Society and its traditions	**Social Science should enable students to understand how our society has evolved and recognise that it continues to evolve;** • time, the future, and their hopes for it V7 • customs and traditions changing over time V7	D1, D3

Department of Education, Vanuatu (1993). ***Vanuatu Religious Education Syllabus: Vanuatu Programme de l'Education Religieuse***. Port Vila.

Notes:

The following general aim from the Year 7–10 Social Science framework is to some extent supported in the Vanuatu Religious Education syllabus. The Year 10 prescribed course in particular adds something to the Social Science curricular treatment:

Social Science should enable students to see themselves as unique and worthwhile individuals and community members, capable of making a positive contribution to society.

Some suggestions from the four booklets of Teacher's Notes for Years 7 to 10 are included at the foot of the table, to indicate possible starting points for class discussions about the development of students in accordance with Christian principles (the Year 8 Notes are dated 1992 – others are undated).

Reference	*Comments*	*Six Dimensions*
Key areas	- provide factual knowledge of the Bible; - develop practical Christian values; - help pupils relate religious teachings to their everyday life; - develop in the pupils a desire to communicate responsible social and moral attitude to others [sic].	D3 D4 D2, D4-6 D6
Vanuatu society	- general survey of the first missionaries; (V7) - good and bad results; (V7) - the Church in Vanuatu today.	D1
Year 7	- It is suggested that a *kastom* story relating to creation be used to introduce treatment of the book of Genesis. - Several lessons are devoted to consideration of the impact of missionaries on the traditional customs of the ni-Vanuatu.	D1 D2
Year 8	- A Term 3 segment on Growing Up focuses on physical, emotional and mental changes in individuals, and in relationships between people. - A later segment focuses on attitudes, offering Jesus's attitudes as a comparison.	D2, D4
Year 9	- Term 2 work is introduced by a topic called "My Responsibility for Myself". - This is developed by later topics called "My Responsibility to My Family" and "My Responsibility for My Community". Other topics dealt with are: - sex before marriage; - sharing; - persecution.	D2 D3 D2 D3 D4

Year 10	In Term 2, under the general heading "My responsibility to the World", four separate topics headings offer a chance to review leading issues within a religious framework: however, how these might be treated in class, beyond introductory conversations, is not made specific	
	• Choosing a job;	D2
	• World Poverty;	D1, D5
	• Prejudice;	D5
	• Leadership (including the Qualities of a Good Leader).	D1, D6

Vanuatu Department of Education (1993). *Vanuatu: Agriculture Syllabus: Programme de l'Agriculture.* Port Vila.

Notes: Both the Aims below clearly have some relationship to Dimensions 1 and 3, but the detailed treatment in the syllabus does not indicate how the learning would be achieved.

Reference	*Comments*	*Six Dimensions*
Aim 1	[Having successfully completed the course, the student should] Understand the importance of Agriculture to the economy of Vanuatu, and to the lives of the ni-Vanuatu people.	D1, D3
Aim 3	[Having successfully completed the course, the student should] Appreciate the practical opportunities and limitations of traditional and commercial agricultural systems.	D1, D3

Ministry of Education, Vanuatu (1997). ***Our Communities: Social Science***. Port Vila. Ministry of Education, Vanuatu (1997). ***Our Environment: Basic Science***. Port Vila.	

Notes:

At various times in the Vanuatu school students' experience of their school system, other curriculum documents prescribe supporting opportunities for learning within the orbit of Social Science education. For example, in primary school, learning outside the basic skills is set up as a General Studies course. This allows interactive curriculum treatment of Science and Social Science, and the course is set out in two main strands – *Our Communities* [OC] and *Our Environment* [OE]. Two other strands, *Our Needs* and *Religious Instruction* make up the whole complex curriculum offering.

Not all publications in this series were available: those that were consulted were:

Our Communities
 Teacher's Handbook for Years 1 to 6
Teacher's Handbook for Years 1 to 6.
 Student's Book for Year 1.
 Teacher's Guide, Year 1.
 Student's Book, Year 2.
 Teacher's Guide, Year 2.
Our Environment
 Teacher's Handbook for Years 1 to 6

Reference	*Comments*	*Six Dimensions*
Main aims: Children's needs	• confidence; • success; • co-operation; • creativity; • concern; • independent learning ***Our Environment*** (pp. 28–32)	D2, D4
Teaching/ Learning strategies	The Teacher's Books for both courses are very strong on positive, active and child-centred activities as suggestions for enacting syllabuses: • active learning; • outdoor activities; • problem solving; • group work ***Our Environment*** (pp. 28–32) To these, the other handbook (***Our Communities***, *pp. 23–4*) adds: • investigations and surveys; • interactions; • brainstorming /role-playing. Both Teachers' Handbooks stress the need for integrated activities covering all or most of the four strands, and suggested they look further for integrated opportunities, to Arts and Physical education.	D2 D4 D1, D3 D3 D2

General objectives	These include (OC, Handbook, page 7):	
	• develop an understanding of the past, present and future of the nation and Pacific region;	D1
	• learn about the Vanuatu national government, it's democratic foundations, and become aware of their rights and duties as citizens;	D1, D3
	• learn about local government at the village, islands and towns levels;	D1, D3
	• understand, develop and protect the environment in which they live;	D5, D6
	• understand that Vanuatu is a nation based on Christian principles.	D4
Topic summaries	In the General Studies Scope and Sequence (OC, Handbook, page 8) two major topics are common across year levels:	
	• How Communities Work;	D1, D3
	• Our Roles and Responsibilities.	D2-4; D6
	Together with the topic lists provided at each grade level, these would make for a powerful classroom presentation of the issues and learning styles appropriate to Social Science.	
Some specific units of work	• Me the Individual: I am special (V1);	D2
	• Emotions and Change (V1);	D2, D4
	• Responsibilities with Friends (V1);	D4
	• Village environment: topology; physical characteristics (V2);	D1, D3
	• Rules and responsibilities (V2);	D4, D6
	• Different people on our islands (V3);	D1, D3
	• Working together as citizens (V3);	D4, D6
	• The constitution and parliament of Vanuatu (V5)	D1
	• Government and non-government organisations (V6).	D1

Vanuatu Ministry of Education. (2000). *Technology: Teacher's Guide.* Trial version. Port Vila.
Vanuatu Ministry of Education. (2000). *Technology: Student's Book.* Trial version. Port Vila.

Notes:
The aim below is supported by the detail of the syllabus, in that suggestions for construction and decoration given in design briefs for various artefacts clearly lie within ethnic design traditions. However the same sample briefs encourage students to take their own paths and follow their own inspirations in constructing the actual brief they will follow in their classrooms. So one is in some difficulty, classroom by classroom (or even student by student) in determining whether working toward the finished product would develop Dimension 2 (personal identity) or Dimension 3 (community) or both.

Reference	*Comments*	*Six Dimensions*
An aim of the course (Years 7–10)	be encouraged to use locally available materials and to *maintain ethnic and cultural skills* [*emphasis added*] page 5	D2, D3

	Ministry of Education, Vanuatu. (various dates). ***Social Science: Year 7***. Port Vila.

Notes: These comments are taken from an incomplete set of students and teachers materials:
- *Book 1: Starting Together*. Students' Book (1998) and Teachers' Guide (1991);
- *Book 2: Our Families*. Teachers' Guide (1991);
- *Book 3: Living in Communities*. Teachers' Guide (1992);
- *Book 4: Our Islands, Our People.* Teachers' Guide (1992);
- *Book 5: What is History.* Students' Book (1993) and Teachers' Guide (1991).

Reference	*Comments*	*Six Dimensions*
Book One	• Focus on school and meeting people, developing a sense of school community; • Some conceptual work on "What is Social Science?". • Some activities specified for pairs and groups.	D2, D3 D1 D3
Book Two	• Families and relationships; • Families and roles; • Different peoples, Different Customs (2 lessons only) • How is family life changing?	D2, D4 D4, D6 D1, D3 D1
Book Three	• Living in communities; • Village surveys; • Communities in other countries.	D3 D3 D3
Book Four	Strong geographical and statistical bias: little about 'people'	D1
Book Five	Emphasis on Vanuatu's past, with some exploration of *kastom*	D1, D3, D5

Summary Comments on the Syllabus Review

As was commented in the equivalent section of this report for the Solomon Islands, social tolerance starts with knowing and understanding the societies of others and one's own The syllabuses are indicative of what needs to be known – and teachers were critical of the content, in terms of its minimal local content and the Euro-centredness of much of which is prescribed:

Additionally, in the materials in the syllabus review and in the curriculum which teachers spoke of in the interviews, there is little explicit examination of attitudes such as tolerance, or respect for and celebration of difference. Nor is there any suggestion of how such attitudes might be enacted on a daily basis, of what they might mean in practice. No mention is made of the difficulties we or others might have in reaching harmonious interactions and relationships.

Teachers who wanted to address social tolerance and related issues asserted they had to adapt what they had in the official documents, and the researchers support this position. As has been demonstrated, the syllabus provides little encouragement and the exams little incentive to address such issues or adopt teaching strategies which might allow a divergence of views to be expressed in classrooms.

In the syllabi and other documents, Social Science 'skills' loom large, particularly at the factual acquisition and basic interpretation levels. Some of these we have classified elsewhere as 'civic knowledge'. Communication finds a place, but hardly ever the higher-order skills of testing of hypotheses, evaluation, and demonstration of personal commitment to the values and attitudes (let alone the actions) which are crucial to tolerance, harmony and co-operation.

Where the aim of a school is to prepare children for life after school, global issues are not deemed to be as important as curriculum documents might aver. Some teachers and administrators are concerned with the development of students as citizens, but few in fact saw this as a central aim of the present school curriculum. Social issues were more likely to be treated (directly or indirectly) in Forms 4 and 5 than they were lower down the school. In part, this is a response to curriculum documents and their contents. Social Science has the potential to play a big role in this development. However Social Science teachers, especially secondary, sometimes felt marginalised by the prevailing attitudes in schools, and felt their subject to have red uced status this was not only because of examination-directed learning.

The documentation accessed during this review process was characterised by variations in structure and approach. These have been introduced as a result of the intermittent development of the syllabus over a number of years, by different persons, with different agendas. There is little sense of a sequential and incremental framework. As with the acquisition of knowledge and the development of skills in any other area of learning, the enhancement of social tolerance and harmony needs a structured and developmental framework to be integral to the curriculum.

The syllabus review demonstrates that the mere writing of a syllabus cannot enable an observer or a participant to know what is being taught. Only the construction of a curriculum, where the pedagogy must be outlined and where it should be as much the focus of the document as the content, will enable teachers to know what are the desired learning outcomes, and how possibly she or he may reach them. In no area of human learning can this be truer than it is of values and attitudes learning. The next section of this report provides an opportunity to hear the voices of the ni-Vanuatu practitioners on matters associated with the actual operations of these curricula, in schools, and how these operations affect social cohesion, in the schools themselves, and in the broader society.

SECTION 4: ANALYSIS OF SCHOOL OPERATIONS THROUGH THE SIX CIVIC DIMENSIONS: VANUATU

Evidence of student acquisition of the dimensions of citizenship in schools can come from a range of sources. The most obvious is the extent to which the dimensions appear explicitly in curriculum documents. Another source of data came from discussions with stakeholders in schools – principals, teachers and students. Observations by researchers during visits to schools were a valuable source, particularly in the area of the hidden curriculum and informal school practices.

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

The analysis of the extent of emphasis given to the acquisition of civic knowledge in schools in Vanuatu resulted in the articulation of a number of dilemmas. Stakeholders in schools – principals, teachers and students – all believed that aspects of civic knowledge, in particular understandings about the diversity of traditional cultural practices and the workings of present day governments, were missing from the curriculum.

> *Teacher are complaining that there should be a lot more in the syllabus...*
> *(Efate, Social Studies teacher)*

This was the common view, too, of stakeholders out in the community (see Report1). The dilemma begins with the analysis of the national curriculum documents, for it is here that it becomes obvious that in several areas of the curriculum, aspects of civic knowledge are included (see above Section 6). In at least four areas of the curriculum – Social Studies, Religious Education, Technology (Trial Version) and Agriculture – knowledge of traditional cultural customs are part of the syllabus. The difficulty appears to lie partly in the focus the examinations give to the study of civic knowledge. One teacher perception was that:

> *The civic knowledge that is included in the examination is 'commercial' so kids lose their sense of traditions and history.*
> *(Espiritu Santo, Social Studies teacher)*

An analysis of two recent examination papers supported this contention. The 1998 *General Paper* for Grade 6 students was comprised mostly of multiple choice and complete the sentence questions. The majority of questions asked for the recall of incidental and unconnected facts, with the biggest single focus being on "commercial" questions, like tourism. The 2000 *Social*

Science for Year 10 students had similar types of questions and of the two essay questions, one focused on 'Surviving in a Hot Desert'.

It was the observation of the researchers during visits to schools in three locations that there were several practical issues standing in the way to effectively teaching about the civic knowledge dimension of cultural tolerance. In several schools, teachers did not have a complete set of curriculum materials. Discussions with teachers in several schools revealed a lack of understanding about appropriate pedagogies, for example, co-operative learning, to promote social learning. There were noticeable exceptions, however, where a very enthusiastic teacher engaged the students in participatory activities, almost in spite of the requirements of the curriculum and the examinations.

> *I incorporate citizenship elements into my classes. For example, I use group work. I discuss*
> *social issues and traditions but all of these are incidental to the curriculum.*
> *(Espiritu Santo, Primary school teacher)*

Current affairs appeared to be included in classroom operations on rare occasions, although teachers often referred to the lack of newspapers and radio in their schools as major factors preventing them from incorporating a more relevant approach to their teaching.

With some noticeable exceptions, schools appeared to be almost totally divorced from their local communities. In the case of secondary boarding schools, their physical location often at a remote site well away from villages, produced a cloistered atmosphere where teaching and learning was not part of the real world. There are, of course, historical reasons for the siting of the more long established secondary schools, but it is hoped the plan to establish community schools, in or near villages, will go ahead. Communities have a lot to offer schools in the maintenance of cultural traditions and in the enhancement of social harmony.

There is now clear evidence of the strength of feeling in villages for schools to be part of the community in the desire to reintroduce vernacular languages as the medium of instruction. One of the real challenges for the education bureaucracy in this desire will be the placement of teachers in schools who can speak the local vernacular.

The achievement of social harmony and cultural tolerance needs to be grounded in mutual understandings about and respect for difference. The impression gained from this dimension of citizenship within schools in Vanuatu is that schools, as an organisation, rarely had a whole school plan to approach student understandings about the knowledge component of social tolerance. Teacher knowledge was often deemed to be inadequate both in terms of the key concepts of social tolerance and in terms of understandings about appropriate pedagogies. Resources about social tolerance from the Curriculum Development Centre were also seen by teachers as being inadequate in both the quality of production and out of date materials. Key policy-maker stakeholders within the Ministry of Education could point towards some new policy initiatives derived from the Education Master Plan (October 1999), within the Comprehensive Reform Program (CRP). In an attempt to respond to demands for an enhancement of civic pride, new education policy initiatives include vernacular teaching for junior years, and the establishment of community schools. These have been policy for some time now, implementation of them being particularly slow, to almost-universal frustration.

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 having a feeling of personal security and belonging, recognising the origins of one's values and beliefs and feeling efficacious.

Teacher stakeholders often commented on the lack of topics in the current curriculum with a focus on personal well-being. They supported the view that young people are unlikely to have feelings of mutual obligations and social cohesion if they are not given the opportunities in school to explore their own identity(s). Invariably the power of the external examination was the factor most cited as removing this aspect of education from the curriculum. If it was not to be examined then it was not important, was the common view. A stakeholder at the examination centre conceded this point. *'We are only teaching children to pass the exam. We are not teaching kids about the social world'.*

There is a fundamental weakness in this curriculum-based approach to teaching, in that it ignores the degree of self-respect that derives from belonging to a group, being supported by that group, especially by its key members. Few teachers seemed to believe they could create such a group for their students. But some schools do create a sense of family, of belonging.

> *Our students are happy because of the love and care given by the staff; they feel safe*
> *(Tanna Junior Secondary School principal.)*

The possibilities open to schools to create a community are legion, especially when they are boarding schools, where the students have to learn *and* live together, and where the students must feel quite lost, unable to be with blood family for months at a time. Some school administrators commented that students turn inwards for a while, and the level of school interest in group cohesion is indicated by the policies adopted by schools at this point. One school's approach to its approximately one hundred new Year 7 students each year was simply to:

> *... leave them to it for a couple of weeks... they soon find out there are some distant family*
> *connections who they can rely on to help them when the road gets rough.*
> *(Efate Secondary College Deputy Principal).*

By contrast other schools found that assisting in bonding of students could best be done by actively building on their old identities, nurturing those identities, giving them group tasks, and by setting group goals. In the Tanna school, from which the following quotes derive, the agriculture course was compulsory for every boy and girl and it had become a social activity (not unlike the norm for the ni-Vanuatu villager). To celebrate the Year of Native Food, the students, in their regional groups, had been expected to set the gardens up (*'the teachers were instructed to not be too helpful, unless it became necessary'*) and by turning gardening into a co-operative venture with the 'edge' of a prize (as yet unknown) being offered to the regional group which creates the most productive plot (criteria not disclosed!), student engagement was at a peak.

> *We find they want to be in their gardens all the time, they are working longer and more*
> *together. The teachers in charge will measure the crops, and the children are excited to*
> *learn how it is done. The food they grow is very good for us And it keeps them busy on*
> *weekends.*
> *(Tanna Junior Secondary School principal)*

On the strength of this experience, the principal decided to address some gender and other social issues, by having the children construct their own 'bush kitchens', again in regional and gender-mixed groups. The groups decided on location and construction. The girls did not let the boys decide everything, and *'the responsible teachers supervised from a distance'*. The students used their local skills and knowledge, and are intensely proud of the kitchens, in which, on rosters of their own devising, they cook and eat their weekend meals. The principal's goals with this exercise were:

> *To give the students opportunity to do things on their own, to be creative and be responsible*
> *for the success of their own hut. They need practice to negotiate. They have already learned*

how to co-operate and negotiate from their parent, but they must learn to make decisions for themselves. They have to devise rotations to ensure the houses continue, like the community.
(Tanna Junior Secondary School principal)

This school was led by a principal who was only recently appointed and the school had dramatically changed in his first few months. So these are the kinds of changes any school can make and the students benefit. They are so happy at this school that,

...they don't want to go home on off weekends! And their parents and guardians have said they are different, more confident people now.
(Tanna Junior Secondary School principal)

The Physical Education syllabus (a non-examined course) was consciously used in this school to help students become responsible for their own bodies and health

It is important for their self-respect that students be strong for their lives and for work, it helps them find jobs and it helps them relax in class.
(Tanna Junior Secondary School deputy principal)

This school also had a Student Council, like many in Vanuatu. However unlike those schools which deployed their prefects as the police in their school community, this group, composed of all eight prefects, all elected by the whole student body, had direct access to the principal. Their task, with the two teachers who were on the Council, was to

*Tell the principal about student ideas on anything,, to have student concerns aired and resolved, to be organised in their meetings and responsible in their goals, to seek equity. They help us **such** a lot.*
(Tanna Junior Secondary School principal and deputy principal)

These teachers understood the urgency of a curriculum which will support student identity, and they could list a range of gaps in the curriculum, which they believed were essential if personal identity and social coherence were to be developed.

*There needs to be a basic history of Vanuatu, a good amount of the geography of Vanuatu (both physical and cultural), need a concept of change to be introduced through the curriculum. Current affairs need to be current and some of it needs to be Ni-Vanuatu. We need marketing practice, population shifts, so they can understand why the local storehouse has fallen down. And we should have local text books, or at least regional examples in all the books. Our students need to **know** our diversity, not just be told about it. These are the essentials for personal self-respect and success.*
(Tanna Junior Secondary School principal and deputy principal)

Researchers found no other secondary school where the explicitness of the personal curriculum was as clearly articulated and as broadly-implemented as it was in this school.

Primary schools have different issues and the alienation experienced by the language of instruction being a foreign one makes for a huge impediment to self-knowledge and a strong sense of identity. Teachers are keenly awaiting the introduction of vernacular teaching, and some are already able to speak the dialects of their students. '*It was not so hard!*' they say.

One small rural school had a teacher who believed her students could learn about their identity through the environment they inhabited ('*here and at home*' she said.) By personalising the environment, and the children's' relationship with it, in this poem, she shows a considerable sensitivity to personal identity, and how it can be developed. It is teaching respect for all.

Mother Bush

Oh Mother Bush
How green and beautiful you are
You provide me with what I need
Food, Water and Shelter
What do I do in return for your kindness?

Destroy You!
How can you forgive me?
Oh Mother Bush.
(Tanna Grade 3 teacher)

This poem was part of a course the teacher had devised on the environment, and now it was a mobile swinging from the classroom ceiling. She said the children would occasionally ask again if they could say it together in class. '*It reminds them of who they are*' she explained.

This is the kind of pedagogy which can turn any topic, even one in a poorly structured and less than exciting course, into a meaningful personal learning experience. It starts with the attitudes of the teacher. Her children (as she called them) also did well in the exam, she assured the researcher. Her classroom (which had only two broken tables for the students) was strewn with student work, of which they were inordinately proud. She was not a local woman, and two of her children were attending the school. She had been a teacher for some ten years.

Children have to want to be at school before they will learn well, and those schools which make efforts to ensure their students belong at their school are those who best address the bigger issues of course appropriateness, and can find solutions to inadequate curriculum. There is no room for curriculum electives in Vanuatu schools as courses are compulsory, though emphases can vary from school to school. Thus this avenue of catering to individual identities and strengths is not available to students in most schools.

Dimension 3: A Sense of Community

People generally 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 to 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. Vanuatu has not escaped these recent global pressures on where people might locate themselves. The sense of region is strong, and generally associated with pride in belonging to a particular group. A sense of community is rarely static and persons can locate themselves in a number of communities. So locations are not mutually exclusive. The sense of region combines with belonging to school and nation. In some, small rural communities the space between the students and their families' cultures is small, but in the urban areas, as was seen in *Report 1 Stakeholders' Assessment*, the spaces are so large that students never re-make the connections with traditional culture. And once they are out of the local, family culture they never fit back in again. This social dislocation can be lessened by policy changes.

The promotion of social cohesion as central to a sense of belonging to a community was invariably seen by adult stakeholders as a key element for any curriculum renewal. It was generally agreed, especially by Social Studies' teachers, that this was the case most particularly in Social Studies, and thus curriculum renewal was most urgent in Social Studies. One principal in a Francophone school was fully aware of the tensions and disparity between what should be done and what currently is included in the curriculum.

Social Studies itself is good. But we have copied western society and somehow we don't know what we are doing…. Traditions, values, customs, arts, community … this school doesn't support these … We follow only the syllabus.
(Espiritu Santo secondary school principal)

Schooling in Vanuatu, with its national curriculum, is one of the few shared and common experiences for most young people. Stakeholders were overwhelming in their belief that current school practices do not enhance social harmony because they usually ignore incorporating common national symbols. Principals reported that their school rarely flew the Vanuatu flag. Some principals commented that their school did not have a flag. Only in a minority of Santo schools was the national anthem sung by children outside of a few ceremonial occasions. In Tanna the flag was raised by selected students and flown at each school assembly, generally weekly. However this information was generally offered by principals with a knowing smile. ('*Its no big deal*' one said.) The researcher could only wonder what message was actually being delivered to students, if the principal's attitude to the ceremony was one of ambivalence. Research indicates that one element in the enhancement of social harmony, community and citizenship is the regular exposure to, and practice of, symbolic national icons, but only if they are seen as symbols of pride in the nation.

One school had had a competition amongst its students to design a school flag, which is flown frequently. *'They prefer it (to the national flag) because they think of it as theirs'* staff remarked.

The local community is rarely included in the school community in Vanuatu, and as we have seen there are also impediments to a family actively joining in their children's school life. The new policy of community schools is anticipated as a way to engage parents in schools. Few schools use parents as a resource, in the manner this small rural school did. In this school parents had a serious role in the teaching of parts of the curriculum. The personification of a functioning culture was the approach here.

> We think of them as our culture in person, our history in person, the future we still want to have.
> (Tanna, primary school principal.)

A sense of continuity is one of the great blessings belonging to a community can bestow on a people. But the links have to be established, and schools can work to forge links between their students' locales, or they can allow them to atrophy. For social coherence to be supported, the links need to be forged. The culture or talent nights most schools hold are a good example of how links between the parents and students can be forged. But they are also examples of how isolated an experience it can be. This is the community at a distance.

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 (and of excluding them), maintaining the code of behaviours and, if necessary, adjusting them to changing conditions and environments. The term a 'civil society' describes those communities in which some form of cohering, peaceful and harmonious consensual agreement has been reached by the members, in order to maintain the code of behaviours. The symbols, ceremonies and other activities which illustrate the values and assumptions that underpin codes of behaviours, may vary from community to community, but single communities need to come to some form of agreement among its members about codes of behaviour in order to maintain social harmony.

Civil societies embrace codes of civil behaviours which support community values and traditions. Schools can play a critical role in laying the foundations for young people of the codes of behaviour expected in an adult civil society. Values like tolerance and social justice carry with them appropriate ways of behaving which enact the values. Schools can support positive civil behaviours in a number of ways. In a formal sense the curriculum can include topics and issues about a 'civil society'. Schools can adopt rules and activities which promote civil behaviours.

And on the level of the hidden curriculum teachers can model, consciously or not, certain behaviours which it is hoped young people will emulate outside of school.

Under Dimension 1 the role of religious education as a form of civic knowledge was discussed. In the religious education curriculum it was noted how aspects of moral and ethical behaviour were formally promoted as a basis for life long action. Apart from this curriculum aspect of approaching teaching and learning about appropriate civil behaviours, there appears to be little other evidence of formal approaches embedded in the curriculum.

Schools are strictly hierarchical institutions. This characteristic can be overbearing or it can be slight. But in Vanuatu it is always there. The relationship of the school to the ministry is also of this ilk. Students know they are under the control of the adults, and when they are unhappy, hungry, lonely, and in a place they cannot see the sense of, doing courses they don't see the relevance of, discipline must be a dark area of schooling. And so it is by all accounts. Discipline is the word researchers meet when school principals are asked about codes of behaviours.

> *The culture and religion, through religious teaching tell students about the true law, about the discipline and the rules. We have the rules written down for students, and the children all know what they should do. They are also told what the rules are for: 'to make the community work'.*
> *(Tanna, Junior Secondary School principal)*

This was not an overbearing school and the process of disciplining students who had broken rules was consistent with the regime elsewhere. Punishment occurs, and to establish what punishment is difficult. In all schools researchers were made to understand it is a private matter. Former teachers, international teachers, teacher trainers and parents all tell stories of ritualised, humiliating physical punishment which is said to be routine in schools. So what causes this reluctance of practitioners to discuss punishment policy in schools? Is it because physical punishment has been expressly forbidden by the education ministry, and thus it is shameful that it continues? The culture of denial is palpable, and it was embarrassing to all parties in the interview each time it arose.

Parents are called in when things get out of hand, such as pregnancy, *'when the girl was expelled'*. Parent involvement was especially necessary as this girl had been promised to a man in another village. *'This is a problem for our disrupted culture',* said the principal. But, he said, bullying *'does not happen',* and when someone was accused of it, *'a note was sent home to his parents and they talked to him and it stopped'.* Such a set of responses does not suggest a pro-active approach to discipline. The school would say it does not need to be proactive, but one wonders. Overall it certainly does not suggest a culture in which children are encouraged to resolve their differences by addressing the problem together. The strict hierarchy of decision-making does not allow students much space to argue their case. They are expected to realise adults are right, and the student role is to show respect and obey. The authority of the Old Testament, in the religion syllabus is indicative of this view of Christianity.

One teacher suggested to the researcher in a follow-up letter.

> *I think it would be good to create a special 'book for conduct' etc, a special programme for school in the form of workshops.*
> *(Tanna Social Studies international teacher)*

Some teachers reported they did in fact engage students in teaching and learning activities like role plays, group work and student presentations. These teachers clearly demonstrated their energy and enthusiasm for enquiry-based learning in their classrooms. Yet even they acknowledged the generalisation that most teachers from their observation, generally adopted a 'chalk and talk' approach to teaching (and of course it is in a foreign language).

The normal pedagogy is textbook, read from by teacher to class, notes on board, copies by kids into notebooks. These are the answers to the exam questions. This is what everyone (i.e. teachers) knows and understands as pedagogy. Change to this is almost impossible. New teachers are quite different, and much better.
(Tanna Social Studies international teacher)

The reason given by most teachers for them adopting this pedagogy was the impact of the external examinations which largely demands recall of knowledge, and that made activities which took longer class time a distraction to the preparation for the examinations. But others reminded the researchers that: *'Vanuatu people are prepared to be told, they don't want to argue.'*

Modelling by teachers is crucial to the students learning about the culture of social tolerance and cohesion. Where teachers have encouraged students to practice democratic decision making there does not appear to be dramatic increase in the discipline incidents, so some relief should be felt if a school were to attempt a different approach to discipline. But modelling of a collegial sharing or the working in professional groups is most rare. (This comment refers to secondary teachers.)

Teachers are not brought together – ever! – to canvass professional praxis or to resolve difficulties.
(Tanna JSS principal)

Working together is also unusual for most school administrators. *'It's a jungle out there'* reported one new principal. *'No-one helps the new kid on the block; she might steal your staff!'*

Teachers need leadership to work together in schools, and in some exemplary schools it was said to be happening. But when asked about team teaching, or the sharing of lesson plans, the response was negative. Ownership of one's teaching resources and ideas is strongly felt. Comments have previously been made, in *Contextual Comments to the Curriculum Analysis,* about the 'best practice' observed in Tanna, in which the role of the Provincial Education Officer was fundamental. Modelling by Provincial Education Officers by bringing teachers together to work in groups may enable them to share (and co-incidentally, increase their confidence in the advantages of group work as a pedagogy).

Principals and teachers often reported that schools should, and did, give students opportunities to demonstrate a range of civil behaviours which would enhance social tolerance and mutual understanding. Generally the examples given included the system of student leadership positions in schools. As was reported in an earlier section, it was the observation of the research team that these positions – prefects, class captains, work captains, sport captains – while usually student elected, gave opportunities for only a minority of students to learn and practice leadership behaviours. It was also believed that the opportunities for students to active engage and participate in significant decision-making processes in schools was extremely limited. As a generalisation students rarely had opportunities in classes to practice the behaviours of active citizenship. Outside the classroom, while some schools offered a wide range of student initiated extra-curricular activities, the general pattern reported by teachers and principals was one of a very passive, but none-too-contented student cohort.

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 acknowledgment 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. Wan Smolbag, as was reported in *Report 1: Stakeholders' Assessment*, was particularly critical of the paucity of the curriculum in this area. They conduct workshops for many Grade 6 classes in sex education,

> *Because no-one else will teach them about it, Its all too embarrassing, so these kids get*
> *pregnant and contract AIDS without even being allowed to know it is possible and serious.*
> *(Director Wan Smolbag)*

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.

In the current context of a national curriculum which focuses on the recall of unproblematic aspects of knowledge and the development of a limited range of cognitive skills, there was little evidence of students actively engaging in discussions about social issues. Observations of school and classroom activities indicated that students were mostly uninformed about current social, political and economic issues and therefore were unlikely to form an empathetic disposition towards issues outside of their experience or knowledge. To some extent this situation reflects a particular philosophical approach to teaching and learning and is embedded in discussions about what's worth knowing.

It is the view of the researchers that the assumptions and values underpinning the current curriculum model, whether they be consciously held or not, reflect a transmission, rather than a transformative, model of education. For the most part the examination system re-enforces this approach to learning by posing questions which require little more than memory recall. It has been mentioned in other places in this report how the examination could be used as a means to give a different focus to teaching and learning.

It was the impression of the researchers that teaching and learning about social issues rarely occurs in primary schools in Vanuatu. It was here that the overwhelming emphasis in the curriculum was on developing literacy skills and the most common form of teaching was rote learning. It is unclear from discussions with principals and teachers that they believed students were too young to engage in meaningful learning about social issues, and/or if the grade 6 examination so dominated the curriculum and the pedagogy right down to the earliest years of schooling.

One teacher had a number of pragmatic reasons:

> *Our syllabus is so full, that we cannot fit in anything else. I can't think of any social issues I*
> *could discuss with my children. They are not used to discussions anyway...*
> *(Luganville, primary school teacher)*

It was a rare school in which teachers actively engaged their students in relevant (to them) social issues. Usually this happened in those schools which had a group of socially active teachers who regularly shared ideas about teaching and learning. Again this usually occurred in just a very small number of 'privileged' secondary schools in Vila.

> *We get our students to visit Parliament to see how decisions are really made and how our*
> *politicians behave. We then have elections in Year 9.*
> *(Port Vila, secondary Social Studies teacher)*

The space given in curriculum documents, in particular in the *Prescription Document for Assessment towards Year 10 Certification (2000)* for the investigation of current social issues is

considerable. At the time of writing this report, few teachers had knowledge of this document and in discussions, most teachers were confused by the rhetoric of promoting current social issues which focused on 'future possibilities' and the realities of the types of knowledge recall questions traditionally asked in the year 10 examination.

On visits to several schools, the researchers were very impressed with the ability, and the willingness, of the principal to articulate the teaching and learning culture of the school. These principals argued the both teachers and students contributed to what might be called passive learning in classrooms where it was rare to move beyond the prescriptions of the syllabus. One principal had personally taken the lead in formulating a mission statement for his school, complete with a well developed philosophy and a set of specific objectives.

> *One of our objectives already in the school policy is to develop a good active citizen in a*
> *Melanesian Christian society.*
> *(Luganville, Principal, secondary school)*

This principal went to explain how the students at his school had actually gone on strike in response to his expectations that they should devote some of their out of school time to considering local social issues, like keeping the local river clean from pollution.

Other principals referred to the impact of traditional cultural practices on student classroom behaviour.

> *Students are not active talkers. Teachers have to engage them. Ni-Vanuatu are quiet, they*
> *respect others, and this can be a barrier to communications in classes about discussing*
> *social issues. For many of my teachers, too, having an open discussion can be threatening to*
> *how they see themselves as teachers.*
> *(Espiritu Santo, Principal, Secondary school)*

It is the view of the researchers that culturally appropriate social issues should be included in the curriculum. A willingness to respond positively to cultural diversity and to engage in some form of social action are hallmarks of citizenship education. The decision about which issues is clearly one for educational policy makers in Vanuatu. It is the observation of the researchers however that issues like conflict resolution, conservation of cultural heritage, drug use, AIDS, and environmental awareness, are worthy of consideration. The social studies curriculum appears to be the most obvious key learning area for the inclusion of social issues. It is in this area that the rhetoric of skill development espoused in the current curriculum documents could be applied to the investigation of social issues.

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 becoming actively engaged in community service or 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 fieldwork observations of schools in three provinces in Vanuatu indicated that principals and teachers supported strategies which actively promoted social tolerance. These stakeholders wanted their students to be independent learners, to show initiative in their own learning and to volunteer for types of community service around the school. However principals rarely set in place school structures and practices which would allow this to happen. Mostly students who did engage in some form of 'community-based' activities, for example, clearing the school grounds, were doing so because it was either punishment or it was seen by school administrators as a form of no-cost labour to the school. Rarely was this type of activity conceptualised broadly as practising community service and developing positive dispositions for later adult life.

One principal at an outer island Junior Secondary School commented that while he supported the view that schools have an important role to play in developing future community leaders, the opportunities for practice at his school were limited.

> *I know what you mean. It helps democratic processes. I would like students to be more active in some of our school activities and ceremonies. But what can we do here? We can't even appoint flag monitors. We have no flag or flagpole.*
> *(Espiritu Santo, Principal, Junior Secondary School)*

When it was suggested that students might initiate an activity like writing to the local chief to visit the school, as an example of student-led social action, this was received as a most innovative idea.

One principal had a well-articulated view about the value of young people having opportunities to be active contributors to their communities.

> *Boys and girls need to have basic life skills and these are not part of their junior secondary curriculum, and they should be. In my school, with our students, the guardians and others who give jobs to our students, say how resourceful, responsible, skilled and helpful they are. We receive comments about how they are contributors. Our school agenda is to teach skills, attitudes and values. We are proud that our students have learned these things.*
> *(Principal, Junior Secondary School, Tanna)*

It has been mentioned earlier in this report that teachers and principals sometimes explained the passivity of students as being derived from the cultural norms of showing respect for elders and those in authority. Discussions with students outside of the school environment however, revealed some interesting insights into how they believed schools were not giving them opportunities for engaging in meaningful activities. In particular, boys, in these discussions, saw school as something to be endured.

> *At school we never went into town. I would have liked to try working with my brother at his repair shop and maybe even helping other members of my family around the town. I could have done this at the same time as being at school.*
> *(Discussion with a group of school leavers, in central park in Luganville)*

The location of most secondary boarding schools in Vanuatu some distance out of towns and villages has resulted in these schools being outside of the mainstream urban activities. In some instances this could be regarded as a good situation. The other argument is that students have minimal opportunities to interact with the community. Students are sent 'away' to boarding schools. It is in village primary schools where habits of community interaction can be fostered. Teachers and schools do not appear see the local community as a major resource in which young people can learn both a huge range of social skills and positive values about how they might contribute to harmonious relations in their village.

Summary Comments on the Operational Assessment by Practitioners

The visits to a wide range of schools in three locations revealed that principals, in their attitudes and approach to the role schools can play in promoting social learning, rarely had a whole school plan. Rather they agreed to the role school can play in the social development of young people, but mostly this was incidental to other purposes, like assisting students to pass the examinations. Principals have recently been asked by the Ministry of Education to develop individual school mission statements and school administrative handbooks. While a small minority of principals have done this, it has been outside of the national picture. Most principals appeared to be struggling to develop schools goals let alone think of the place of social development in this schema.

Most teachers and administrators in Vanuatu are concerned with the development of students as citizens, but few in fact saw this as a central aim of the present school curriculum. Social issues were more likely to be treated (directly or indirectly) in Forms 4 and 5 than they were lower down the school. In part, this is a response to curriculum documents and their contents. Many practitioners were very inclined to criticise the curriculum as preventing greater attention being given to social issues. Whereas the few teachers who were comfortable with discussion pedagogies, or who wanted their students to have detailed understanding of the concepts underpinning elections, for example, had no difficulty in using the Social Studies syllabus as a source of affirmation of their approach. However at present most Social Science teachers, especially secondary, sometimes felt marginalised by the prevailing attitudes in schools, and felt their subject to have reduced status. This is generally because Social Studies is not seen as contributing directly to a student's employment prospects.

Discussions about the kinds of skills all students need for their future lives has the potential to enhances the role of Social Studies in schools, but teachers and principals in particular need to be able to see a range of ways in which these skills can be delivered to students. An emerging interest in the generic competencies might be a foreshadowing of the re-emergence of Social Studies. Social Studies has the potential to play a big role in the curricular and pedagogic development that relates to a emphasising of the social domain, with its emphasis on evidence, hypothesising, working together in groups, the power of values and empathy, a sensitivity to a range of ways of problem-solving, etc.

Teachers supported curriculum renewal especially in 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 Vanuatu. 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, also lacked knowledge and teaching materials about the cultural practices of their school community.

Teacher stakeholders were particularly critical of the lack of local cultural material in the curriculum and the lack of teaching and learning resources available about the cultures from other provinces. The teachers were not surprised at their students' lack of interest in the cultures of

other provinces given students had not been encouraged to learn about their own personal cultural customs and practices. Frequently teachers were not able to provide any detail, and this lack of knowledge indicates a low level of interest, which will need addressing.

The culture in the school had a major impact on the capacity, and preparedness, of staff to step outside the models of 'real knowledge' as defined by the examination questions or by a minimalist reading of the syllabi. Whilst most practitioners professed great interest in the issues of social coherence and the future of the nation, they did not allow it to impinge on their practices.

Schools were generally very undemocratically organised, with most students having little chance to develop or practice empathy or leadership, except of the most moribund nature. Having to be in charge of things (silence in the classroom) or for the disciplining of others is not, is not sufficiently akin to being responsible for oneself, to be a useful learning. Schools which have boarders are able to create communities which are vibrant and self-managing, and there are very few of those.

SECTION 5: CONCLUSIONS

The <u>major</u> conclusions to be drawn from this operational assessment of school practices regarding cultural understanding, democratic participation and social cohesion can be applied to both the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. It has been stated earlier that the approach to this project was not as a comparative study, but more a case study approach. To that extent what follows is not comparative, but more in the realm of commonalities. The researchers are very conscious of the extent of differences between the two countries and the diversity within each country.

The focus of Report 2 has been the extent of nexus between the rhetoric of education policy, especially in curriculum documents, and the realities of school and classroom practices in the area of social learning.

It has been argued that teaching and learning involves all of the acquisition of knowledge, the development of skills and the formation of values. It is the view of the researchers that in both countries the issue of what's worth knowing (knowledge) is undergoing considerable debate both in schools and in the broader community. This study revealed that the current curriculum policy is seen by most practitioners in schools in both countries as being out of date, lacking local cultural knowledge, and, in the area of social learning, mostly irrelevant to young people. The application of Prior's six dimensions of citizenship revealed that no key learning area in the curriculum and no school explicitly addresses all dimensions. In some schools, the principal and teachers had devised activities and revised areas of the curriculum to achieve a specific element of citizenship. There were very few of these schools in either country, but it was the view of the researchers was that, once identified, the ministry of education should publicise these case studies as being best practice.

There is a severe slippage between the expectations of curriculum policy makers and the expectations of teachers (and parents). This may be a somewhat unfair comment on the curriculum writers, for the reality is, in both countries, there are currently no social education curriculum writers. The documents analysed for this study mostly were written by outside contract curriculum writers over 10 years ago and since this time only minor revisions have been made.

The current political uncertainties in both countries, combined with the heavy reliance on outside funding, have not assisted policy makers and practitioners in their quest for curriculum renewal. It has been stated earlier that curriculum is a cultural expression of both what is seen to be valued and what is hoped for in the future. In the context of uncertainties in national leadership, it is not surprising that there is little sense of a set of national goals of schooling upon which to plan future directions. The uncertainties associated with outside funding support, which hang over both countries, have resulted in an inability to plan long term and in an unequal distribution of existing funds to the various provinces. As a generalisation, schools are grossly under-funded for the very basic necessities for teaching and learning. However, a common comment by practitioners in both countries and supported by the observation of the researchers, is that some favoured schools are much better resourced than others. When governments allow such a situation to occur, regardless of their motives, they feed social disharmony and undermine the public perception of social justice in government policy and the public service bureaucracy.

It became very clear, very early in this project, that the promotion of social harmony and cohesion are sub-set elements of much broader issues which cohere under the banner of 'national goals'. By discussing what it means to be 'socially educated' and to be a 'good citizen', participants in the study revealed many insights into what it means to be an individual and what it means to be a member of a community, or of multiple communities. Issues of national identity quickly arose. Issues of the acceptance of diversity of cultures arose And these issues were

embedded in both individual and collective memories, which on occasions betrayed prejudice and expressions of stereotypes. Current education policies and school practices are not addressing these tensions. It has been argued in this report that citizenship is contestable, problematic and in need of constant revitalisation. The failure to recognise and allow for diversity in a broad framework of defining a citizen can only lead to social disharmony. The evidence is that this tension of citizenship is being played out in the current situation in both case study countries. In Vanuatu, the role and the effectiveness of two recent policies – the Education Master Plan (1999) and the Comprehensive Reform Program (1997) – will be critical in cohering a long term strategy to promote social learning. Likewise, in the Solomon Islands, the newly developed 'Strategic Priorities for the Ministry of Education 2002–2005', with its mission of assisting people to 'live in harmony with others', a direct response to the recent tensions, which connects with this project's orientation.

The issues embedded in identifying the extent to which schools and teachers actively encourage student involvement in decision making, and student engagement in social action, are very complex. On the one hand, support for these strategies involves a particular view about teaching and learning. Another component involves beliefs about the relationship between schools and their local communities. We believe that there is now sufficient evidence to support the view that the formal inclusion of topics and subjects in the curriculum with a focus on citizenship is not, in itself, effective in enhancing student ideas about making a positive contribution to their community. Nor is the use of national icons and symbols of themselves, an effective strategy for enhancing social harmony. But when many of these strategies are adopted and adapted and linked, in ways which make sense to particular school communities, then there is the possibility of an effective coherent and sequential program.

It has been argued elsewhere in this report that a defining element in assessing the effectiveness of a school in promoting social tolerance and harmony is the role of the school administration and specifically the role of the principal. This study revealed that the idea of the democratic classroom or democratic decision making processes by the school community were both unknown by most school practitioners. There is some evidence that a disbelief in these notions is culturally based within the broader value of respect. Yet in private conversations many teachers were bitter about their undemocratic treatment as teachers and as individuals by both the education bureaucracy and the principal. Other teachers wanted students to be more active participants in their classes. The conclusion reached was that the pedagogies of values education associated with promoting social harmony and citizenship are largely unpractised by teachers and that a great deal of professional development will be required. The introduction of these democratic pedagogies will also need to be introduced during pre-service training of teachers.

The focus of Report 3 will be on establishing a generic framework for the development of a social education curriculum, specifically tailored to the promotion of social tolerance, social harmony and good citizenship in the Pacific islands.

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APPENDIX A: ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – School-based Stakeholders Interview Framework

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 modelling 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?