

Pacific Leadership Program

Monthly Update



Message from the PLP Director

Greetings to another edition of the PLP Monthly Update newsletter. This month's edition is a special one as it marks the end of the establishment phase of PLP, and also the beginning of the Program's full field operation in July 2009. With the conclusion of Phase 1, we can reflect back on the development of the Program to date, and be confident of the model of partnership that we are building with our regional and national partner organisations across the Pacific. We have always recognised the innovative nature of this particular aid program, and are excited by the way it is developing and the levels of co-operation and trust that have been built so far. This augers well for a continuing and growing successful leadership program.

This month also sees the end of my tenure as the Program's inaugural Regional Program Director. The leadership of the PLP Program will now be passed into the capable hands of Mr Cameron Bowles, who takes over as RPD in July. I am confident that he and Program Manager Yeshe Smith, along with the PLP Team, will be able to take the partnership model to a higher level of aid effectiveness.

I have enjoyed the past 16 months enormously with the Pacific Leadership Program, and would like to extend my sincere thanks to our Minister Counsellor, Judith Robinson at the Australian High Commission in Suva, who has guided our development over the past 18 months or so, and to our Regional Manager, Yeshe Smith, for her strong commitment to true partnerships. To the PLP Team in Suva, our Advisory Panel and Research Committee, and our Joint Monitoring Group, I wish you all the very best for a Program that I believe will be a model for further development in the Pacific, and will contribute considerably to leadership promotion. To the many friends I have made in our partner organisations in the private sector, amongst youth and women, in Fiji, the Solomon Islands and elsewhere, my very best wishes for the future.

Angus Macdonald, Regional Program Director.

Inside this issue:

Message from the PLP Director	1
Umbrella bodies share their experience	1
PLP signs Vanuatu partnership	2
Vanuatu leadership supporters come together	2
Chamber of Commerce is first PLP Partner under Samoa Country Program	3
PLP and NZAID support local government efforts	3
Research on traditional and modern governance	4
Solomon Islands partners reach out to communities	4
Monitoring Sessions - How are we going?	4

Umbrella bodies share their experience

The PLP hosted a second meeting of regional umbrella organisations in Suva on Thursday 11 June. Building on the issues identified at the first meeting, this meeting focused on Organisational Board governance challenges and successes. The session was chaired by Mr Lionel Gibson (FSPI), with guest presentations from Ms Sandra Bernklau (RRRT) and Mr Rex Horoi (FSPI).

The group then shared their experiences on Board interactions with their secretariats and discussed ways to strengthen the effectiveness of those interactions. Participants found the meeting to be very interesting and useful. Ms Jacque Koroi from Pacific Youth Council commented that "The meeting identified issues that young organisations like ours (PYC) need to think about in terms of Board role and relationship with our secretariat"



Above: Lionel Gibson facilitates discussion together with Sandra Bernklau and Rex Horoi. Left: Representatives of Umbrella bodies participate in the discussions

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PLP signs Vanuatu Partnership

PLP returned to Vanuatu in April for second country visit. PLP's Program Manager Yeshe Smith and Program Officer Allan Mua explored development of a partnership with the Vanuatu Department of Youth Development, Training and Sport (DYDTS). The department is in the process of mobilizing provincial councils to revive the Vanuatu National Youth Council. This initiative was identified as a priority at a National Youth Consultation held in Port Vila in 2007. The Ministry of Youth through its department, will oversee this process, incorporating it within the official framework for implementation of youth policy in Vanuatu.

The Director of the DYDTS was appreciative of PLP's approach and supported closer partnership with PLP. Allan returned to Vanuatu in late April to work through PLP's partnership model with the DYDTS, towards supporting the establishment of the Vanuatu National Youth Council.

At the end of the first day it was evident that the DYDTS saw the process as very inclusive and consultative. They also commented on how useful it was to talk through their Strategic and Business Plan all the way through to their activities. This brought increased learning and sharing from both organisations on their Goals, Values and Principles. On the last day both parties were able to finalise a Partnership Agreement which was subsequently signed in May 2009. PLP anticipates a fruitful relationship with both programs growing from this partnership. We look forward to next country visit to Vanuatu.

Vanuatu leadership supporters come together

PLP supported a meeting of key sector bodies on Leadership in Vanuatu. This forum was hosted by the Vanuatu Association of Non Government Organisations (VANGO) and co-facilitated by Yeshe and Allan. VANGO invited members from Church, Youth, Civil Society and Private Sector as well as AusAID, to come together to discuss leadership issues (aside from national level political issues) in Vanuatu.

The meeting created interest and thought around leadership. One of the key points identified was that any leadership development work should be appropriate to the Vanuatu context. Participants identified leadership values and qualities specific to Vanuatu.

The forum participants committed to continue to meet and talk about how they might take forward a path for Vanuatu leadership development work.



Right: Participants at the Leadership forum map out leadership issues for Vanuatu.



Chamber of Commerce is first PLP Partner under Samoa Country Program

PLP and the the Samoa Chamber of Commerce and Industry have signed the first Partnership Agreement under the Samoa Country Program. Building on discussions over the past six months, PLP's Yeshe Smith and Georgina Cope spent two-and-a-half days with Chamber Executive members in Apia to develop the Agreement, and discuss key areas for the future working relationship. "On the PLP's first visit to Samoa, it became very clear that the Chamber plays a strong leadership role in representing the private sector to government on the development of policy" said Yeshe. "It also nurtures young businesses and business leaders. For these reasons, the Chamber was a logical partner for the PLP."

Initial activities agreed under the new Partnership include the provision of PLP funding and technical resources for the engagement of a full-time CEO for the Chamber, and support for a short term local adviser to work with the Chamber and other private sector stakeholders to establish and launch a new National Private Sector Organisation (NPSO) in Samoa.

At present the Chamber and three other business organisations provide joint-representation to the regional private sector peak body, PIPSO. However, all four organisations agree on the need for a single NPSO in Samoa (with the Chamber identified as the preferred representative body), to act as the focal point for private sector engagement with Government at the national level and with PIPSO at the regional level.

At the signing of the Partnership Agreement by Chamber President, Sina Retzlaff-Lima and Yeshe Smith, Sina commented, "We are very excited about this relationship, and the documenting of our understanding by way of the Partnership Agreement. We also appreciate PLP's approach in that they seek to help us achieve our own objectives instead of coming up with a set of outcomes which may not necessarily suit the purpose and goals of Chamber and its members."

Both PLP and the Chamber look forward to a long and mutually rewarding relationship which, it is hoped, will not only benefit private sector development in Samoa, but provide opportunities to develop best practice models in public-private dialogue and donor-private sector cooperation which can be drawn upon by other Pacific Island countries.

" We also appreciate PLP's approach in that they (PLP) seek to help us achieve our own objectives"



Above: Sina Retzlaff-Lima and Yeshe Smith formalize the relationship between the Samoa Chamber of Commerce and Pacific Leadership Program

PLP and NZAID support local government efforts



Above: AusAID and NZAID sign partnership agreement with CLGF. Seated L-R—Yeshe Smith (PLP), Karibaiti Taoaba (CLGF) and Emma Dunlop-Bennett (NZAID)

PLP has strengthened its relationship with the Commonwealth Local Government Forum by signing a tri-partite Partnership Agreement with CLGF and NZAID. After holding discussions and partnering sessions back in February, PLP Program Manager Yeshe Smith signed the agreement together with CLGF Program Manager Karibaiti Taoba and NZAID Governance Manager Emma Dunlop-Bennett.

PLP previously had provided support through a direct funding agreement to CLGF. The new tri-partite partnership provides an opportunity to build this relationship and further strengthen the harmonization of development efforts between AusAID and NZAID.

PLP has supported CLGF with their Local Elected Leadership (LEL) programs which have been run in a number of Pacific Islands countries. PLP envisions further support to help local government continue to play its leadership role in the Pacific.

Research on traditional and modern governance

PLP has committed to support the Foundation for the People of the South Pacific (FSPI) and the UNDP Pacific Centre to undertake a Comparative Study on Local Government and Traditional Governance System Interaction in seven Pacific Island Countries. Program Manager Yeshe Smith and Allan Mua worked with FSPI Governance Program Manager, Mr Lionel Gibson to develop a funding agreement to support FSPI in carrying out this research with the UNDP Pacific Centre. FSPI is a network of South Pacific island non-governmental organisations and overseas affiliates working in partnership across the South Pacific.

Under the governance program, FSPI has a number of projects which aims to address the critical governance issues facing the Pacific community and promote the development of good governance from community level in the region.

The countries identified for the research include: Fiji, Tonga, Samoa, Vanuatu, Kiribati, Tuvalu, Solomon Islands and Cook Islands. PLP will be involved in the research process which includes in-country consultation to find what works separately and jointly.

Solomon Islands partners reach out to communities

PLP partners in Solomon Islands – Solomon Islands Development Trust (SIDT) and Anglican Church of Melanesia Inclusive Communities Program (ACoM ICP) – have participated in their first PLP M&E interviews. The interviews aim to assess the partnership approach, while also monitoring progress with PLP supported activities, including outcomes, links to organisational objectives and lessons learned.

SIDT are moving ahead with their aim to strengthen their community media program and improve their capacity to disseminate community information. This is being achieved through developing the Honiara Youth Drama Group, planning a community radio station, updating printed materials for communities and reinvigorating LINK Magazine.

ACoM ICP are near completion of an extensive series of provincial community capacity strengthening activities for traditional Chiefs in leadership and good governance, accountability and transparency. To develop the capacity of youth and women to be effective in community development work, ACoM ICP has held national and provincial conferences for women and young people.

Monitoring Sessions - How are we going?

In June the PLP team held its 'quarterly partner discussions' to take stock of progress made on the work with partners. The meetings had the dual purpose of monitoring the work to date but while also providing space for the partners to discuss issues and set criteria for interaction and monitoring of the partnership. This opportunity for reflection on the relationship and learnings over the past few months of working together has been very useful in resolving issues and reaffirming commitment to the partnership.

Meetings were held with the Pacific Conference of Churches (PCC), Pacific Islands Private Sector Organisation (PIPSO), Pacific Youth Council (PYC), Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat Governance Program and the Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF).

Following the formal discussions, PLP hosted an informal partners social gathering to help unwind from the week's work and also to introduce PLP's incoming Program Director, Mr Cameron Bowles. Cameron will be joining the team in Suva for the start of PLP's Second Phase in July 2009.



Photos: The PLP team interact with guests at the Quarterly Informal Gathering of Partners and Friends of PLP.

Monthly Calendar

DATE	ORGANISATION	UPCOMING EVENT
21th - 26th June	PIPSO	PIPSO Board and Annual General Meeting, Nadi
25th - 26th June	PCC	PCC Church Leaders Meeting, Pohnpei, FSM
6th - 10th July	PLP	Vanuatu Country Monitoring Visit
13th - 18th July	PYC	Second Pacific Youth Festival, Suva
13th - 23rd July	UNIFEM	BRIDGE Gender and Elections Workshop for the Northern Pacific
16th July	PLP	3rd Meeting of Pacific Umbrella Organisations, Suva
20th - 24th July	PYC	Pacific Youth Council General Assembly
21nd - 30th July	CLGF	Financial Management for Local Government Training Program, Nadi
31st July	UNIFEM	Gender, Media and Elections Workshop in Port Vila

Contact Us

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

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