

Tok Blong SPPF

A Quarterly of News and Views on the Pacific Islands

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Photo by Hilda Tutton

Marasin Meri with her medicine box at the village of Kolakim in East Sepik Province, Papua New Guinea

INSIDE

GENDER & DEVELOPMENT ISSUES IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC

Featuring ... Analysis of women's position and gender issues in the Pacific
... Profiles of women's organisations
... Reports and assessments of projects involving women
... Communications and networking for women's development

About this journal...

TOK BLONG SPPF is pidgin, a language used in many parts of the Pacific. An equivalent expression in English might be "news from SPPF". **TOK BLONG SPPF** is published four times per year in English by the South Pacific Peoples Foundation of Canada. SPPF gratefully acknowledges financial support for the publication from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

SPPF's major aim is to promote awareness of development, social justice, environment, health and other issues of importance to the peoples of the South Pacific. Through this journal, SPPF hopes to provide Canadians and others with a window on the Pacific that will foster understanding and promote action in support of Islanders in their struggles for development.

We welcome readers' comments on the journal, as well as suggestions for articles, selections of clippings, or notices of development education materials of interest. We reserve the right to edit material. Views expressed do not necessarily reflect those of SPPF or of CIDA.

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SPPF Update

Some of you may have had trouble figuring out the picture on Page 4 of our May issue. We reprint it here the right side up (!) and apologize to Leslie Filiomae for the miscue.

Previous SPPF executive directors, Phil Esmonde and Randall Garrison, both dropped by the office earlier this month. Phil is headed back to Sri Lanka to promote reconciliation programs in that conflict torn country, where he is the Quaker Peace and Service Representative. Randall is returning to the academic world, resuming a teaching position at Camosun College here in Victoria, after a term working for the Minister of Advanced Education of the Government of British Columbia.

SPPF held its annual general meeting in July. The Board of Directors elected includes four returnees: Dr. James Boutilier remains as President; Sandy Argue, Elaine Monds and Dr. Chris Morgan continue to serve on the Board. We welcome two new members to the Board, Gayle Nelson and Mike Mullins. Both have worked in Papua New Guinea and continue to work in the international and community development fields. Gayle has already been an active SPPF volunteer, serving on the planning committee for our 1992 Pacific Networking Conference and co-editing this edition of *Tok Blong SPPF*. Mike assisted with our 1992 conference and has dived into his new responsibilities as Treasurer with both feet, volunteering to streamline our financial systems.

The annual general meeting approved revisions to our constitution and by-laws. SPPF has evolved over the years and it was time to update these documents to reflect current needs. The revised constitution reflects a renewed vision of SPPF's mandate. The new SPPF "mission statement" (See Page 4) was developed at a Board retreat in January and ratified in May. The statement reflects not a radical change in SPPF, but more a clarification of how we see our present and future directions. Reactions are of course welcome.

We are hoping to host a number of Pacific Island visitors to Canada in the coming months. Patrick Kekea and Jacob Sam of Vanuatu will be travelling to Edmonton in September for "Dreamspeakers '92: The First Peoples World Film Celebration". Sponsored by CUSO, they will be carrying the CUSO-funded video on popular theatre in Melanesia, "Em i Graun Blong Yumi" (This is Our Land - available on loan from SPPF). We also hope to host Patrick and Jacob in British Columbia.

An energetic crew of SPPF supporters formed a team in the 3rd annual Save the Strait Marathon (August 22). Traversing 29 kilometres of Georgia Strait from the mainland to Vancouver Island by kayak, the intrepid band of six raised \$1,538 in support of SPPF projects and Save Georgia Strait Alliance environmental programs. Special thanks go to Catherine Sparks, Hewitt Roberts, Sheri Allen, Kate Roberts, Neil Scott-Moncrieff, Peter Roberts, Sea-Trek Sports of Sidney (who loaned us the kayak) and Frank White's Scuba Shop (who loaned us wet suits). Thanks also go to the many individuals and businesses who donated funds in support of our team.

Stuart Wulff, Executive Director





Pacific women on the move

The past two decades have brought a global upsurge of interest and activity with respect to women and development. Even governments and international development planners now often emphasize the importance of including women in the development process. The statistics have been stated repeatedly, so we won't belabour the point here. Suffice it to say that wherever one looks, women seem to assume a disproportionately higher share of society's responsibilities, yet receive a disproportionately smaller share of power and benefits. The Pacific has not escaped this tendency.

Despite the rising chorus of voices in favour of women's rights and participation in development, little has changed in a fundamental sense. Women remain economically disadvantaged, subject to high levels of violence and abuse, overburdened with responsibilities reproductive and productive, and marginalised when it comes to power and decision-making. In some cases, "women in development" projects have actually increased women's burden without altering their basic status.

Despite this seemingly pessimistic scenario, the seeds of change exist and in places are sprouting. Women themselves are taking action to change their situation. In some cases, supportive government agencies and non-governmental organisations have assisted these initiatives. In the Pacific as much as anywhere, there is cause for hope as well as concern. This edition of *Tok Blong SPPF* tells the stories of a few of these initiatives in the Pacific Islands. They are stories of hope and courage.

The global women's movement has been shaped by a number of approaches or paradigms. Many have been influenced by Western feminism. Gradually, as Southern voices have multiplied in the debate, a global feminism is emerging which is more holistic and flexible enough to deal with different cultural and political realities while sharing similar fundamental principles. Often it is an approach which sees women's rights within a broader social context where analysing and changing gender relations becomes an important focus. We have chosen to use this "gender and development" model to tie together and analyse the experiences which make up this edition of *Tok Blong*.

Special thanks go to Gayle Nelson, who served as co-editor for this issue. Gayle brought a strong background in women's studies and work with women's programmes in Canada and Papua New Guinea to the task. Her article on pages 6-7 provides a good introduction to Gender and Development (GAD) analysis and her introductions to the articles serve to link them back to the GAD framework. Thus, each article becomes a form of case study, translating theory into practice.

Our last edition of *Tok Blong* was a pre-UNCED one on environment and development. The U.N. Conference on Environment and Development has now come and gone. We've included a brief assessment of UNCED and its implications for the Pacific on pages 4-5.

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Assessing UNCED

by Stuart Wulff

SPPF was not able to attend the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED). In listening to and reading others' reports, one is reminded of the proverb about three blind men describing an elephant. Depending on who is reporting, UNCED was a resounding success, a resounding failure and everything in between. So what are we to make of this largest ever international extravaganza and what has it meant for those of us who make the Pacific our home?

To begin with, one can discern a certain pattern in reports according to whom is reporting. The effusive optimists tend to be those with the most to gain from portraying UNCED as a success, i.e. the political leaders who gathered in Rio to see and be seen. In a world whose citizens are increasingly concerned about environmental issues and sustainable development, political leaders need to be seen as doing something constructive and UNCED was supposed to be it. For

these "leaders", the public relations angle has been to emphasize the positive.

For others, the assessment tends to be less effusive or even highly pessimistic. UNCED was to be the dawn of a new age in which environmental concerns and sustainable development would take precedence over business as usual and narrowly defined national interests. Ideally, the result of this new ethos would be international agreements, with real teeth and resources behind them, which would address the major environment and development crises confronting us. Everyone knew that this ideal would not be achieved, but many hoped that significant steps could be taken in the right direction. Sadly, the world's "leaders" showed little leadership when it came to the crunch. Rio does leave behind some agreements, some achievements. However, they fall far short of what most had desired and some had anticipated.

The desire to achieve consensus, when confronted with intransigence by some countries, sapped the UNCED process of its cutting edge. There were fewer agreements than hoped for and these were longer on rhetoric than commitment. Notably lacking were clear programmes with agreed targets, adequate resources and minimal standards with enforcement mechanisms. In the end, even this was not enough to secure the support of the United States. Some leaders showed greater vision and courage at UNCED. They must be wondering whether they were right to spend the preceding two years watering down the aims and products of UNCED to meet U.S. and other objections, only to find the U.S. unwilling to make even minimal concessions from its U.S.-first-at-the-expense-of-the-rest-of-the-world approach. Ironically Americans too will pay the price of this approach in a deteriorating environment and unsustainable economy).

Rio shows the limitations of the lowest-common-denominator approach to international negotiations with regards to the environment and sustainable development. What we need are substantive agreements with real commitments involving as many countries as are willing to take that step. With time running out for our planet and humanity's future, nothing less will do. The other "leg" for such an approach would be the development of relevant and meaningful sanctions against countries which continue to abuse the global commons. Such an approach is not without difficulties, especially at the beginning. However, an example of real leadership, combined with public pressure on political leaders in "renegade nations", can move us towards a more effective programme of action. By adjusting the programme to the abuser's needs rather than the planet's and larger humanity's

SPPF's Mission Statement

SPPF is a Canadian-based non-governmental organisation dedicated to promoting increased understanding of social justice, environment, development, health and other issues of importance to the people of the Pacific Islands; and to supporting equitable, environmentally sustainable development and social justice in the region. SPPF does this by:

- a) providing and supporting educational programs about the Pacific
- b) developing and providing print and audio-visual materials on the Pacific Islands and Pacific issues.
- c) facilitating links between Canadian and Pacific island organisations that are working in similar sectors and/or on related issues
- d) supporting the existence and activities of Canadian and international networks/coalitions which address Pacific issues.
- e) conducting and facilitating advocacy on issues of concern to Pacific peoples, including Canadian issues/activities that have a significant connection with the Pacific.
- f) providing direct and indirect support (financial and other) for projects in the Pacific.

needs, the current approach by default sanctions the status quo.

Despite this failure, UNCED optimists have reasons for hope. Rio did produce the following:

- a non-binding "Rio Declaration" of 27 principles to guide environmental policy and development rights.
- an 800-page "Agenda 21" action programme (unfortunately lacking binding commitments and necessary financial resources).
- conventions on global warming and biodiversity. (Both have weaknesses but represent a beginning.)
- a non-binding statement of forest principles.

While the lack of commitments is clear, UNCED has begun to reshape the global consensus. The principles and Agenda 21 provide internationally endorsed standards which can be used by environmental groups, other non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and social movements to educate the public and put pressure on individual governments.

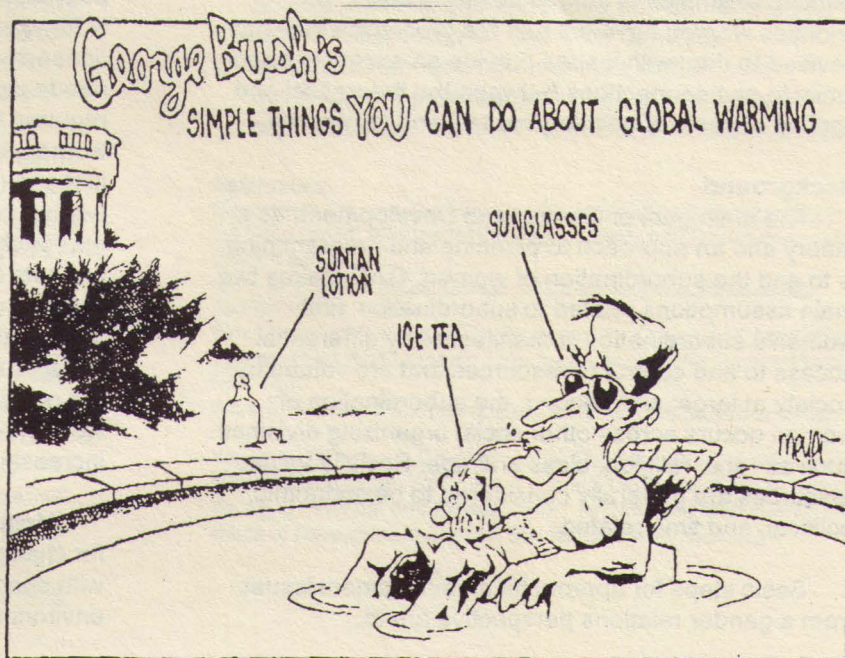
Most important, UNCED stimulated an unprecedented international collaboration amongst other sectors (environmental and development NGOs, indigenous organisations, etc.) culminating in a Global Forum paralleling the official conference. This process leaves important legacies, not the least of which is an emerging global movement for change and a capacity for future collaboration. NGOs engaged in their own treaty making, leading to over 40 treaties on a range of substantive issues. These treaties articulate aims, commitments and plans of action in such areas as debt, indigenous peoples, forestry and sustainable agriculture. The NGO treaties provide a basis for future work and an example of what could have been accomplished by governments with a higher level of commitment and a different approach. Rather than the lowest common denominator approach, the NGO treaties represent voluntary associations of organisations committed to similar aims. They are more ambitious than official UNCED agreements and proceed on the basis of those who want to act being signatories, with the hope and expectation that others will join later.

The Pacific has reason to be disappointed with UNCED. In areas of critical importance to the region, especially global warming and fisheries, what was achieved falls far short of the minimum necessary. However, UNCED was a step forward in getting Pacific concerns on to the global agenda and in increasing the region's stature and influence within international fora. Other delegations gave credit to the Pacific delegations for being perhaps the most well coordinated group of states at UNCED and for having an influence well beyond their size and geopolitical importance.

The UNCED process allowed Pacific Island states to forge new alliances. The Association of Small Island States (AOSIS) was established and played a major role in getting the concerns and experiences of small island states, especially with regards to global warming, onto the UNCED agenda. While AOSIS members must be disappointed about what UNCED did not achieve, they can look with satisfaction upon their success in focusing attention on their concerns and in increasing their influence within the United Nations. In their declaration at the conclusion of UNCED, AOSIS members gave clear notice that they do not intend to fade away. Vanuatu's UN ambassador, Robert Van Lierop, deserves high praise for his role in steering AOSIS to its current position.

UNCED also marked in some ways the coming of age of the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme. SPREP played a leadership role in coordinating a regional response to and involvement in UNCED. *"The Pacific Way"*, SPREP's report to UNCED, stands as probably the most succinct yet comprehensive overview to date of environment and sustainable development challenges facing the region.

For the Pacific, UNCED and the issues it brought to the fore will not go away. One has only to look at the topics discussed by the July South Pacific Forum meeting (global warming and sea level rise, biodiversity, hazardous waste dumping, fisheries conservation and management) to see that "UNCED issues" will continue to shape developments in the region. The challenge remains two-fold: to shape policies and practices within the island states to ensure environmental protection and sustainable development; and to collaborate regionally and globally with interested states and NGOs to promote changes in the behavior of other nations whose practices impact on the future sustainability of South Pacific islands and societies.



Gender and Development Issues in the South Pacific

By Gayle Nelson

This *Tok Blong SPPE* provides excellent examples of projects and initiatives being undertaken by women in the Pacific. It has been fascinating to read the articles from a Gender and Development perspective, particularly the way theoretical concepts mesh with cultural nuances and sensitivities. An awareness of cultural context is crucial for any successful development project and requires the involvement of local women at all phases of planning and implementation.

The following article gives a brief overview of Gender and Development (GAD). It is a theory, an approach to development work, and a framework for analysing development initiatives. GAD employs a considerable amount of jargon, a curse that seems to afflict ideas as they become tossed around among development professionals and academics. I've tried to minimize that jargon and clarify the concepts associated with GAD theory. I find GAD to be a progressive approach to development because it promotes women's empowerment in leadership roles and as active decision-making participants at all levels of the development process. This participation is the first step to defining needs and working out strategies to meet them.

Also interesting, and distinct from its academic roots, is the evolution of GAD concepts as inherent values in the feminist development approaches of women in developing countries. An awareness of the value of women's participation is evident in much of the work now going on in the Pacific. The Pacific women's development initiatives discussed in this issue provide working examples of some key foci of GAD. The priorities women have set and the processes they have devised to deal with issues provide an excellent opportunity to see connections between the theoretical and applied aspects of development by and for women.

Background

The main goal of Gender and Development, as a theory and an approach to planning and programming, is to end the subordination of women. GAD makes two main assumptions related to subordination: first, women's subordination is manifested by differential access to and control of resources that are valued by society at large; and second, the subordination of women occurs across other social organizing divisions such as race, religion, class and age. Socially-valued resources are generally considered to be economic, political, and time related.

Basic steps for approaching development issues from a gender relations perspective are to:

- examine root causes of the subordination of women in relation to men as perpetuated by systems of social organization;
- develop methods for accurate assessment of women's basic (short-term and immediate) needs and definition of women's strategic (long term) interests;
- identify ways to increase women's participation in decision-making and planning processes at all levels to allow them to meet basic needs, affect social change and work toward fulfillment of their strategic interests.

A Relational Approach

The Gender and Development approach aims to be holistic and relational. It places equal emphasis on personal and state responsibility in assisting women to become more empowered participants in their own societies. GAD rejects the view that reproductive work of producing future generations is entirely the responsibility of individuals. Strategies emphasize the need for support for women at local, regional and central levels of government.

In taking this approach, GAD recognizes that women currently have little bargaining power in any of these political arenas. A key concept of GAD is that political self-reliance is a necessary resource for women; without it, economic self-sufficiency is not an effective tool for the empowerment of women. For example, where women have little or no political self-reliance, the fact that they may earn income is negated by the fact that their male relatives may be free to appropriate that income for their own purposes.

Given this relationship between economic and political power, it is important to consider how difficult it is for women and the poor to have impact on conditions which create their poverty. Meeting their basic needs consumes the time and energy which would be required to develop a political voice and strategy. For women, isolated income generation projects are often just one more task consuming their time and energy without increasing their ability to affect change. A GAD approach attempts to build awareness-raising components into all project work so, regardless of the immediate goal, there is opportunity to share knowledge and create solidarity that will enable women to work towards their long-term strategic interests. Improving the position of the poor in general and the position of women within that economic class is as important as increasing the number of women politicians.

Most development rhetoric acknowledges the need for changes in gender relations to occur concurrently with change on other fronts such as class relations, environmental management and reduction in

militarization. It is, however, critical to monitor the allocation of development agencies' resources to ensure that gender equity is not subsumed by other causes or relegated to the future after those "problems" have been addressed.

Current Development Models and GAD

Within the mainstream international development industry, there is little focus on the inter-relationship of issues in the global crisis caused by current macro-economic trends. The fragmented approach to dealing with symptoms as single issues creates an illusion that concerns are being addressed. In fact, it allows continued concentration of economic power and control of Southern resources into the hands of a small number of individuals and corporations based in the North. Advocates of GAD promote a relational view of these issues and are sponsoring a growing research effort to link issues and trends at the macro level. At the project level, the approach builds from women's practical experience, consistently trying to create an awareness of strategic goals that imply change at a macro level. Communication, documentation and celebration of women's efforts and successes at the micro-level build self-esteem and work as a multiplier by inspiring more women to consider how they can participate in development. Documentation at this level also provides data to inform theoretical work on gender relations in development. This work can inform new policy, completing a cycle of women's involvement at all levels.

An Analysis of Flexibility

The holistic focus of the GAD approach precludes looking at problems from an isolationist perspective. It stresses flexibility and allows application of its principles within any setting where women are available. The aim is to find examples of larger issues manifested in the local setting and to build on and learn from those as a starting point. The approach requires assessment of the flexible and rigidly constraining aspects of any given scenario. Strategies can then be designed to maximize flexibility and minimize or avoid areas of rigidity. This provides an opportunity to begin work from whatever point women themselves feel is appropriate and to move towards consistent long-term goals of improving women's position in society relative to men. Thus, GAD can fit with many cultural realities and acknowledges the need for change in ways that do not leave women at risk or unsupported.

The implementation of GAD projects has to date focussed at the micro-level, with a goal of empowerment. Often this is done through a basic needs approach to deal with issues of immediate importance: food distribution, fuel supplies, water availability access to credit and personal income. At the same time there is support for women to acquire organizational and communication skills. These are often integrated into literacy training and awareness-raising programs on community planning, health and

environmental management. In order for women to be effective change agents, it is critical that development initiatives value women's experiences and knowledge and build from them.

Women are enmeshed in the overall development process. The ability of women to manage the physical environment on which they depend for their subsistence needs and their ability to access and control income for food and other necessities is directly related to their own health and well-being. If women are unhealthy and lose their sense of self-worth, their ability to produce healthy and aware future generations will be negatively impacted.

I find it interesting to note the synchronous and symbiotic evolution of GAD principles at both the theoretical and applied grass-roots levels. Women are obviously learning from each other and the roles of observer, student and advisor are being filled by women from developed and developing countries alike. When reading through these articles, it may be useful to keep in mind the many ways that Pacific women's organizations are striving to meet the goals highlighted by the GAD approach:

- acknowledgement at all levels of women's integral role in the productive, reproductive and community management sectors of society;
- development of awareness of the structural roots of inequality and impacts of differential distribution of resources between men and women;
- involvement of women and the poor in planning development processes, including evaluation of the long-term benefits and costs of projects where community involvement is taking place;
- awareness of the inter-relationship of issues in all development projects, eg. working through basic needs to develop awareness of strategic interests;
- education on relational impacts of macro-economic policies, development priorities and social impacts as they affect women and their families;
- empowerment of women to initiate their own development processes through the delivery of organizational, communication and leadership skills.

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Among the Women

By Wendy Poussard

[Wendy Poussard reflects on her own and other Pacific women's experiences in building women's organizations that can "resist and transform" development processes which often marginalise women. She gives examples of how women's organizations are addressing women's strategic interests and, despite significant barriers, are building a regional and global women's movement.]

"More and more people in villages and towns are starting to see that things are not right. They realise the government has decided that big development projects are the priority. People are forming groups to try and understand the situation, save their resources and protect their rights."

Mary Soondrau, East Sepik Council of Women

Development is often bad news for women. Development takes women's land when gardens and forests are converted to cash crops or resource extraction. Development costs women their jobs when work is automated, professionalised, or relocated. So, through development, women lose their livelihood in a process of economic marginalisation. Women lose status as traditional, sometimes matrilineal, systems of inheritance, land ownership and decision-making are swept away and women's rights within those systems are no longer respected.

At the Nairobi NGO Forum at the end of the UN Decade for Women (1985), women were very critical of the rhetoric and practice of "development". I did not hear third world women pleading to be integrated into the development process ("Integrating" women was the mainstream rhetoric of the time). Women were sick of being "targets" or "beneficiaries" of development. Women's experience had taught us that the only ways to deal with "development" were to resist or radically transform it.

The East Sepik Council of Women is one group which acts to resist and transform development. Based in Wewak, Papua New Guinea, they've worked for 16 years with rural women in food production, marketing, literacy and non-formal education. Women in four districts built centres to use for primary health care and as classrooms. They've been effective in raising awareness about women's rights such as political participation and freedom from violence. Notable ESCOW characteristics are faith in local grass-roots participation and leadership and maintenance of strong international links. Through actions large and small, women have built skills and confidence. When Mary Soondrau challenges the prevailing development strategy, her



view is soundly based on the experience of rural people.

Fiji Women's Rights Movement is another organisation on the cutting edge of Pacific women's action. It too combines local concerns and a global perspective. Its management is collective and its membership is multi-racial. Its major campaign in the past three years has been to change community attitudes and practice in relation to rape and sexual assault. It has worked with the courts, police, press and public, reaching out through drama and popular education to community groups and schools. It also takes a stand on economic issues and is about to begin a new three-year program with women workers.

Both these groups are NGOs (non-government organisations), but there are other ways that resistance and transformation of development can take place. I am thinking, for instance, of the Papua New Guinea Law Reform Commission's program of public education or the political action of women leaders in Belau to maintain a nuclear-free and self-governing status for their homeland. I'm thinking of Pacific women writers, scholars, artists, journalists and the many women candidates contesting local and national elections.

There are enormous barriers in the Pacific to the formation of a popular movement among women. The sea is a barrier; communication within and between small island states is costly and difficult. The status quo power of vested economic and political interests which set the mainstream development agenda is a barrier. As in all countries, patriarchy is a barrier, casting our thinking into male and female stereotypes, and giving privilege to supposedly "male" over allegedly "female" characteristics and roles.

***We talk
as if
Women
are new-comers
to the planet,
as if Women
are new-arrivals
hanging in the wings.***

writes Vanuatu poet and politician Grace Molisa.

Despite these difficulties, there is among Pacific women an alternate and radical discourse which is both personal and political. It reflects changing roles of women and the transformation of relationships between women and men. "Development" is at the heart of it.

By 1985 I had spent two years with a national collective, Women and Development Network of Australia. Beginning in the early 80s, women from popular movements, solidarity groups and development organisations started to talk to one another. We could see that, although we were trying to work for social justice, women were seldom decision-makers in our workplaces or among our partners overseas. Women were not considered important in our organisations or our programs. It was a time, I suppose, when women around the world were having similar conversations, but we began from our experience. We invited others to join us. We lobbied the Australian government's Development Assistance Bureau (AIDAB) and NGOs to take account of women's needs and rights in their policies so that development assistance would become more accessible and useful to women. If women were ignored, we said, if women's needs were not understood, development programs funded by Australian aid would not be cost-effective. The network's campaign was very successful. Most people said "Yes, of course" and AIDAB's revised Women in Development Policy of 1984 stated that women's needs must be considered in the Australian aid program, that women should be involved in decision-making, and that women should have more equitable access to resources and benefits.

Building on our experience in the Women and Development Network, a small group decided to begin an aid agency run by women for women. We could see it would not be easy for existing agencies to implement policies (which we had badgered them to adopt) about including women. We hoped that, by doing it ourselves, we would encourage others to recognise and support women's work. We also hoped to change the image that Australians, even Australian development organisations, had of women as passive victims and as "targets" of aid. We hoped to help Australians learn more about women in other countries and to form real links of friendship, solidarity and co-operative action.

International Women's Development Agency was launched at the 1985 Nairobi Conference. We began with only the idea, our experience and contacts with the international network of women who had been challenging development in the previous decade. We described IWDA as a "voluntary organisation undertaking development projects in partnership with women of other countries". (We later worked with Aboriginal women in Australia.) We planned to "promote projects and programs which demonstrate women's competence and effectiveness as agents of development" and to "assist women internationally to develop skills and to gain just access to resources." Our main criteria was that projects be initiated and managed by women.

We were serious about being "partners". Communication and relationship were important to us. We raised funds, listened to dreams and helped think

through wild ideas, organised events and work exchanges, and facilitated links between organisations. We tried to keep in touch, challenge and encourage, congratulate and sympathise as friends are supposed to do. We also worked as consultants to institutions willing to improve the impact of their programs on women. After six years of this, I left to test what I had learned in a different setting. IWDA is still going strong.

Sometimes I read that "women's projects" have generally been "unsuccessful". But when I think of what women are doing around the world, I am amazed at what is achieved. Both little and big actions can bring about change and strengthen a continuing process of co-operative action and reflection. I'm thinking of Aboriginal women building a community garden in the heart of Sydney or of women in Tari, PNG, starting a tea shop. These actions made important and sustainable changes in the lives of people and increased women's capacity to work together to do more. It seems positive too that development planners are interested in new tools for WID (Women in Development) or GAD (Gender and Development) to help understand what we do and how we can do better.

But often the language of the development industry, of which I am a part, sounds alienating. I don't usually say WID or GAD because to me these natty acronyms sound as if the problems we are considering are management ones which we can fix with new tools. I am sure that systematic oppression of women, people of colour or the poor is not just a mistake caused by bad management. To really change these injustices, even in the gentlest way, makes a lot of trouble, a change of values and a re-distribution of power. I am worried that "development" is getting to sound very complicated, as if it were something that can only be done by experts, with great caution and only if one is carrying the right tools. In my day-to-day work, I never say "development" now, except when I have to go to meetings or write articles. Maybe that's why this one has been so difficult to write.

"Meanwhile more and more people in villages and towns are starting to see that things are not right...People are forming groups to try and understand the situation, save their resources and protect their rights."

Maybe we, who are trying to support this action from our different places and cultures can worry a little less about having the right theory and put more effort into creating and maintaining the social bases which make solidarity possible internationally, between people of different race and class, and between men and women. Maybe, individually and organisationally, we are very important, but not as important as we think. [Wendy Poussard is currently based in Fiji as the Pacific Regional Director for CUSO, a Canadian development agency.]



Contributing to Women's Development in PNG

by Eileen Tugum-Kolma

[Eileen Tugum-Kolma's article reviews the historical development of the women's movement in Papua New Guinea. Particular focus is given to the evolution of the communication network and the Women's Division publication, Nius Blong Meri. The article highlights the critical need for communication and leadership skills and illustrates the benefits of channelling resources to those areas. Nius Blong Meri serves many purposes. It is educational, provides a forum for exchanging ideas and assists PNG women to analyze the complex issues facing them in a rapidly changing society. As well, the focus on the initiatives of rural women reinforces the value of women in all sectors of PNG society. This reinforcement in turn continues to focus attention and raise awareness of the general public and policy makers about the importance of women as agents of change in the development process.]

In March 1988, the first issue of a newsletter called Nius Blong Meri (Women's News) was distributed throughout Papua New Guinea. Those that received it, particularly women, were thrilled. For the first time, they had an outlet through which they could talk about issues affecting them and learn about what their sisters in other parts of the country were doing. They and those associated with production of the newsletter (Women's Division of the Department of Home Affairs, which produced it; CUSO, Canadian International Development Agency, Canada Fund and the United Nations Development Fund for Women-UNIFEM, which provided funding) were very proud.

Now in its fifth year, the newsletter continues to grow in popularity and recognition. Over the years, letters of commendation for the newsletter have poured in from all over the country and the world:

- "Congratulations! A publication like this with information about women's achievements, activities and issues is overdue." - Anne Dickson-Waiko, Australian National University
- "I find it interesting and encouraging to know and learn about the achievements of individual PNG women and of the women's groups and organisations in Papua New Guinea... The publication is an eyeopener to women like myself who just sit around and do nothing. Many times it is because we feel we do not have the potential or lack the confidence to do so. The stories on the achievements of women and the activities they carry out are very

encouraging and provide ideas and information that are of help to people like myself to start thinking."

- "Our Division wishes to congratulate you for the excellent job done. We feel that this will have a lot of positive impact on the strengthening of our women's network." - Veronica Zigede, Assistant Secretary for West Sepik responsible for women
- "The Women's Division of the department of Home Affairs and Youth is doing a fine job in featuring activities undertaken by our women groups through Papua New Guinea." - PNG Prime Minister's Department

So how did Nius Blong Meri come about?

In the early 1980s, Papua New Guinea women's leaders did a critical analysis of why their efforts to raise the status of women had made such slow, painful strides. Many had worked hard for many years to gain recognition for women. In the early days of nationhood, there were many positive signs. The PNG Constitution enshrined "integral human development" and the country's founders called for "equal participation of women in all forms of political, economic, social and religious activities. In 1973, a women's section was created in the national government. During the International Year of Women in 1975, legislation was passed creating the National Council of Women. Its objective was to be a watch dog for PNG women that would monitor government policies and programmes for women and, where necessary, bark for changes. In the same year, the national government funded several workshops and conferences, encouraging women to organise among themselves.

These were the first efforts to build national and provincial women's networks. Women became excited about their potential to organise. The Women's Division put its energy into creating the National Women's Development Programme. Within ten years of independence, each province had a women's office and a government officer helping women. PNG women attended the Nairobi Conference celebrating the Decade of Women in 1985. They came back convinced that their country needed a National Women's Policy. They increased their efforts to get one and By March 1990 the policy was in place.

By 1985, however, many women's leaders could see that they had wonderful words in the constitution and politician's speeches, but these translated into little improvement in women's status. They had government

women's offices, but these were neglected and poorly funded. The women's network had a skeleton, but little sense of unity or sisterhood. There were many barriers to women's empowerment, but none so great as the women themselves. Laws, grants or structures could have little impact unless women were united. What became clear to the Women's Division and the National Council of Women was that women did not feel united. Women in one area did not know what women in another thought, feared or needed. The media rarely covered women's issues. More and more women became aware that until thoughts are shared, you cannot discover common ground. It is the values, the needs, the hopes that women share that bond them into a powerful force. It is the cement of effective organisation and solidarity.

It was obvious that women needed a communication tool, their own vehicle to share their issues, achievements and concerns among themselves. They also needed the skills to voice their concerns and effectively have an impact on the existing power structures. When women's groups repeatedly expressed this to the Women's Division, communication became a government priority. In 1988, "increased... support to assist in developing a stronger communication network as a means to mobilizing women for development" became the second priority of five for the Women's Division.

CUSO, the Canadian aid NGO, supplied a volunteer (see p. 12) with communication expertise to help launch a newsletter, give communication training and start a communication office for the Women's Division. One week before she arrived, government cutbacks to the program sent us scurrying for alternate funding. In the end, funds came from UNIFEM, CUSO, the Canada Fund, the Department of Home Affairs and the NGO community and *Nius Blong Meri* and the program went ahead.

Project Objectives

The primary objective of the project was to produce a national communication vehicle for information sharing, organisation building and networking. *Nius Blong Meri* was to be a catalyst for change and activity in the provinces by featuring issues, concerns and achievements of PNG women. To date the Women's Division has produced 14 quarterly issues. Each *Nius Blong Meri* is 12-16 pages and is designed to:

- encourage sisterhood and solidarity through the exchange of ideas and accomplishments;
- promote pride and confidence among women;
- strengthen the existing women's network by highlighting services and initiatives of the Women's Division, the National Council of Women and their provincial counterparts, and by profiling outstanding women's leaders;

- create awareness and respect of the talents and organisational skills of PNG women by the women themselves, decision-makers and opinion leaders within PNG and abroad; and
- focus on grassroots women's needs and issues.

Distribution is primarily through the provincial women's offices and the provincial councils/associations of women. It is also sent to national and provincial politicians, senior bureaucrats, aid agencies and the PNG diplomatic community.

The secondary objective of this project is to impress key decision-makers who have an impact on women's status and opportunities. *Nius Blong Meri* hopes that these people will give women more recognition, resources and power when they read the convincing articles about women's needs, leadership ability and organisational strengths.

New Developments

The Women's Division prepared two pre-election special editions in response to concerns that there is lack of awareness among women of their political rights and about political issues. As well, a March seminar outlined a longer term post-election political education program, to raise women's awareness of their rights and issues in the political arena. One of the biggest achievements of the Communication Office has been to produce the newsletter to a standard that impressed the PNG government into embedding *Nius Blong Meri* funding in the Department of Home Affairs and Youth budget.

The need for women's mobilisation is great. Only 1.3% of the candidates in the 1987 national elections were women. This was out of a record number of 1,512 candidates, an increase of 35% from 1982. Women hold a disproportionately small percentage of middle and upper management government and private sector positions. Seventy-eight per cent of females aged 12 years or older have no formal education and only 31.2% of females aged 12-16 are now in school. Some 34.6% of PNG's under-employed are women.

In spite of the low status of women in education, public participation and the work force, PNG women are the key food producers and marketers. They impart values in their role as their children's most valuable teachers and provide basic health care to their families. These women have talent and leadership potential that needs to be developed. An effective women's newsletter can be a catalyst for development and *Nius Blong Meri* is proving to be that catalyst.

[Eileen Tugum-Kolma is the Communication Officer with the Department of Home Affairs and Youth, responsible for production of *Nius Blong Meri*.]

PNG Women Pay Dearly for Success

By Linda Lomax Pennells

[The following article provides additional insight into the commitment of Papua New Guinea women to the development process. Linda Lomax Pennells touches on the daily reality and struggles that PNG women face in their efforts to participate in development. The article also demonstrates the similarity of problems of violence against women in developing countries with those same issues in Canada and other countries. Sharing and networking about solutions to crimes of violence against women is also highlighted in Christine Bradley's article on the exchange of programming ideas between PNG and Zimbabwe. These articles point to a need to examine root causes of these crimes and to support women globally as they persevere in their fight against the oppressive structures that allow violence to continue.]

I have never thought of paying for my freedoms in blood or bruises. I can't recall being forced to invest a lot of courage before I could do something important to me. A little courage, yes. Gut-wrenching courage, never.

I suspect that makes me a fairly lucky, fairly cosseted middle-class Canadian. That doesn't mean I don't ache over the Montreal massacre, the bombing of the Morgentaler clinic, or the many Canadian women

NO MEANS NO: New rape shield law in Canada

The Canadian Government has recently passed legislation that provides greater protection from rape for women and makes it easier to prosecute alleged rapists. The new law limits the use of information about a victim's past sexual history in rape trials and clarifies that the onus is on a man to ensure that he has obtained consent to sexual activity. In other words, the defence in a rape trial cannot base its case on the victim's sexual history or on an assumption that some aspect of the victim's behaviour implied that she was willing to have sex. The woman must have consented to sex or there is a case of rape. The legislation attempts to clarify what "consent" means, an area that was ambiguous in past legislation. While many Canadian women's groups had reservations about aspects of the legislation for still not going far enough, there has been widespread support for the new law as a step in the right direction.

[For a copy of Bill C-49, write House of Commons, Attn: Public Information Office, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A6 CANADA.]

living in terror in their own homes. What it does mean is that my comfortable environment did not prod me to deeply question my status as a woman, the freedoms I do and do not have, or the price of freedom.

Three years with CUSO in Papua New Guinea hammered me with questions. I've found some answers. Some are still distilling. Some I'll never grasp. That's probably the reality of a cross-cultural experience. I worked with a dynamic group of women in the Women's Division of the national government. We launched a quarterly news magazine featuring the issues, concerns and achievements of women (*Nius Blong Meri*). Its genesis was women's groups who were concerned that women in one part of the country had no contact with women in other areas. The isolation was extreme. A publication that would allow women to share information was critical to developing the solidarity needed to promote change. The Papua New Guinean journalist who is now editor has recently published her fifth issue.

Papua New Guinea is partitioned by rugged mountains and malaria-infested swamps. The national capital is not connected by road to any of the 19 provincial capitals. So travel is by air or boat. Air travel is too costly for most of the people. Coastal and river travel is tedious and often tenuous.

Globalization and the entry of the cash economy were piling stress after stress on women and families. The women's network was becoming more and more concerned that if women were not united, they would have little control of their destiny.

Being a women's activist in PNG makes a woman the target of suspicion and abuse from a lot of men. Many women are uncomfortable with feminist leaders because they feel threatened or are guilt-ridden by their own comparative lack of courage. For women to re-define their role and assert their value in these societies is widely seen as cultural blasphemy...and much more. There's nothing new about this.

What is unique are the environmental barriers that women must overcome to take command of their lives. Here are a few notes from my personal scrapbook. They touch on some of the realities facing women:

- In PNG two of my workshops had to be postponed because of tribal war. Some victorious highland tribes burn the villages and rape the women of those they defeat. It is unsafe for women to cross a war zone.
- One-third of the women gathered at a meeting on the National Women's Policy told us they risked being beaten by their husbands because they took

part. Some said it happens after every meeting so they accept beatings as a price for their activism. Others said they would only be at risk if they didn't have dinner ready on time, their husbands were in an ugly mood, the pigs got out in their absence, etc. We'll never know how many women are too terrified to ever risk coming to a meeting.

- In the mid 80s, PNG's Parliament broke into feisty debate over whether to make wife-beating a crime under the Criminal Code. A number of MPs forcefully denounced the bill. They had paid bride-price for their wives. So, they felt they owned their women like they owned their pigs. Wife-beating is now against the law but it was not an easy victory.
- During the 1988 Simbu provincial election, a woman candidate was shot at twice. She was leading in the polls. She whisked her children to a village for safety, then hid in my home until after election day. Some of her close friends said they were afraid to vote for her. Afraid for her. Afraid for themselves.

I include the above snippets so you can judge the power of women's solidarity in PNG. In spite of the massive barriers, women can and do have the courage to generate change.

One of the things that struck me deeply was that in the small remote villages, the concept of formal government was new. Law by clan chief was tradition. This western model of long-distance governance was difficult for many to comprehend. My PNG team mates often had to start by giving a lesson in civics, using marker and flipchart or drawing on the sand with a stick.

The process of developing the National Women's Policy was, in itself, a powerful education for women. It also involved more Papua New Guineans than any other policy before or since. The women created a model of widespread grass-roots input that I hope will be repeated. Thousands of women who had never had the opportunity to go to school had the opportunity to shape national policy. And although the women get weary and have peaks and dives of energy, they have made amazing strides.

Among the achievements of PNG women, I think these are outstanding:

- PNG developed the first national women's policy of the Pacific. Thousands of women from across the country met under palm trees, in their churches, in the markets and in workshops. They shared their needs, their concerns, and their expectations of government. I arrived at the end of a long

Sharing Strategies to End Violence Against Women

Saltspring Island in British Columbia, Canada, was the scene of a recent (May 22-24) workshop entitled "Changing Our World - Strategies That Work". Twenty-two women who have been dealing with issues of violence against women in Canada, PNG, Zimbabwe and the Philippines gathered to share experiences and strategies for not merely coping with violence against women but for putting an end to it. The focus was on sharing of organizational success stories. Participants came from rape crisis programs, transition houses, women's centres, victim support services, counselling programs and international development NGOs. The workshop was sponsored by the Vancouver YWCA, CUSO and the BC Council for International Cooperation. [For more information, contact: CUSO, 612-620 View St., Victoria, BC, V8W 1J6 Canada]

- information-gathering process, in time to take part in only 15 meetings. There were hundreds.
- In spite of the barriers to women getting together and communicating among themselves, a national women's lobby group has been formed. The National Council of Women has provincial member councils in most provinces. Some are weak. Some are strong. There is hope that the local councils will work closely with women's church groups and other NGOs to increase their collective clout.
- In recent years, the national government has upgraded the Women's Division from a token effort into an effective policy and programming unit. It took years of internal and external lobbying to gain the Division's current acceptance and status within government. The division is doing innovative village-level training. The focus is empowering women in their homes and villages. The starting point is establishing self worth. Women are asked to identify the contributions they make to home, family and village.
- PNG's campaign to reduce wife-beating and other forms of family violence is such a success it is being replicated in other countries.
- Women have some powerful role models. An example is Meg Taylor. She is a successful lawyer and PNG's Ambassador to the United States and Canada. She is more than an example for women of successfully breaking through the gender barrier. Her appointment will be another assault on the mindset of the many men who define a woman's role as the tender of pigs and pikininis.

My brief experience in PNG has convinced me that determined women who want change badly enough will make it happen, but change will continue to cost heavily in courage, blood and bruises. It takes great personal strength and sacrifice to be a change agent within many cultures in Papua New Guinea. I salute these women and feel it a real honour to have shared their confidence and their friendship.

[Linda Lomax Pennells has worked with women's organizations and programs in Canada, PNG and Indonesia. She has recently moved to China.]

NETWORKING FOR DEVELOPMENT

By Christine Bradley

[This article is very interesting in its examination of a government response to the crime of violence against women. The South to South transfer of information and program development which has taken place between Papua New Guinea and Zimbabwe shows how net-working and solidarity have resulted from women's commitment to working in this area. The article also discusses how cultural understanding and sensitivity are essential in program design around volatile problems. The success of these programs demonstrates the importances of conducting a strategic analysis of constraints to determine to whom the projects are directed and at what points in the process other groups are drawn in. The PNG program involved consultation with many groups within government, the judiciary and law enforcement and also drew directly on the experiences of rural women in the production of the PNG video project. Education of the wider population has followed as a key component, and continues to have a positive impact on awareness about the crime of violence against women, and women's legal rights.]

Development is something we usually think of as going in one direction, from north to south, from the "developed" world to the "underdeveloped". But the field of domestic violence offers an example of how development can travel between developing countries, and also provide some lessons for countries often thought of as being already "developed".

PNG's work on domestic violence has been used by many other countries in the Pacific region, and even as far away as Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe has gone on to develop its own programme and materials which are now being shared with PNG and other countries in the Pacific and elsewhere. Canada, and a number of other richer countries, have given various kinds of help to the programmes in both PNG and Zimbabwe. The helping countries can also benefit, gaining insights into their own domestic violence situation by using the experiences of countries tackling the same problem in

different cultural and socio-economic circumstances.

PNG's work on domestic violence was spear-headed by the PNG Law Reform Commission (LRC). At the request of the National Council of Women, the Justice Minister authorised the LRC in 1982 to do research into the nature and extent of domestic violence, and to make recommendations for solutions. Domestic violence was defined as violence between husbands and wives, whether or not the marriage was official.

Nationwide research on domestic violence attitudes and practices was carried out in rural and urban areas between 1983 and 1984. The findings were published in four volumes in 1985 and 1986. According to the United Nations, this remains the only systematic large scale research on domestic violence published by any developing country (United Nations, Violence Against Women in the Family, 1989, p5).¹

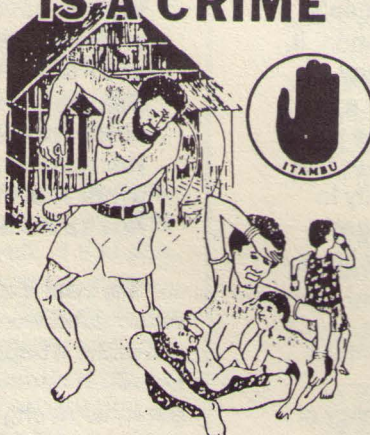
The research showed that domestic violence is common in PNG. As a national average, two out of three wives have been hit by their husbands. However, the range is from 49% up to 100%, in different parts of the country. Usually PNG men pay "brideprice" for their wives, and most people in rural areas (including women) recognise a husband's right to beat his wife in certain circumstances. In urban areas there is less acceptance of this, particularly by women. There is also violence by wives against husbands, but this is minimal in comparison with violence by husbands against wives. Wives hitting husbands is generally not viewed as acceptable.

Investigation of the legal and other solutions to the problem was conducted during 1986 and an Interim Report was submitted to Parliament early in 1987. The Report recommended strengthening the criminal law approach to dealing with domestic violence by clarifying police powers to enter private property to make an arrest, by ensuring that offenders cannot pressure victims into dropping charges and introducing more appropriate sentencing, in particular a system of weekend imprisonment. A system of Protection Orders against violence was recommended, with some right for the victim to stay in the family's accommodation. Other recommendations dealt with improving services for victims by promoting changes in the health services, widening

**PUBLIC INFORMATION
LEAFLET NO. 1**

Women and Law Committee
P O Box 3439
Boroko
Tel: 25-8755

WIFE-BEATING IS A CRIME



WIFE-BEATING IS WRONG.
BECAUSE


- it is against PNG's laws
- it is against PNG's Constitution
- it is against our Christian beliefs
- it spoils our family life
- it is a bad example for our children
- it can cause serious injury or death

accommodation options, providing legal information and legal aid, and the introduction of specific training on domestic violence for professionals such as police, magistrates, probation officers, lawyers, teachers, social workers, church workers, health personnel and counsellors.

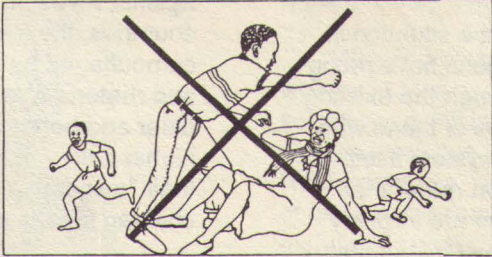
Last, but most important, the Report recommended a national awareness campaign to educate the public that domestic violence is harmful and that help is available to victims. It is this education campaign which has attracted international interest and has stimulated similar initiatives in other countries especially in the Pacific region. As no government funding was available for awareness work, LRC staff invited the YWCA to join with them and other women's leaders to form the Women and Law Committee (WALC), to fundraise for and advise on the awareness work. All materials had to be designed and produced locally, since all existing materials had been produced by and for developed countries and were inappropriate for the PNG context.

A national leaflet and poster campaign using PNG's three official languages was planned, with funds provided by various overseas aid organisations. This was so successful that six more leaflets were produced on related issues, such as women's rights to maintenance and custody of their children, the adultery laws, rape, sexual assault and drinking. All were funded from voluntary local and overseas donations. National and local radio stations were also helpful in broadcasting programmes and discussions on domestic violence, and a radio play written by WALC. There was even a hit reggae song called "*Noken Paitim Meri*" (Don't Hit Your Wife), produced by a local social action group. T-shirts were printed and sold on the same theme, and a youth theatre group was sponsored to tour the provinces workshopping with local groups on plays about domestic violence.

The two productions of which WALC and the LRC are proudest are a 30-minute video drama on wife-beating called "*Stap Isi*" (Take It Easy), and a cartoon storybook now used by all Grade 5 and 6 classes called "*Let's Talk It Over*".² Both are available in Tok Pisin and English, and were funded mainly by the Canadian High Commission in Canberra and CUSO. The video has proved enormously popular throughout



THE
MUSASA PROJECT
P. O. BOX A 712
AVONDALE
HARARE



Wife beating is wrong because

1. It is against the law
2. It spoils our family life
3. It is a bad example to children
4. It can cause injury and death
5. It causes divorce

If you are being beaten or have been raped
phone us on Harare 794983

the country and was premiered on national television by the Prime Minister and the Governor General and their wives. It has also been requested by many developing countries and international aid organisations, and several countries are using it as a model for their own videos. It has proved popular in Australia with Aborigines, because its approach involves men rather than alienating them, which is more culturally acceptable amongst tribal peoples. Materials produced in more developed countries, particularly where there is a strong feminist influence, tend to be confrontational and challenging, and may be rejected by more conservative peoples.

Through a CUSO connection, some of the PNG materials were passed to a group in Harare, Zimbabwe, who were starting the Musasa Project to do counselling and research on violence against women. Some articles from the PNG press were adapted and printed in the Zimbabwe press, and the wife-beating leaflet and

poster formed the basis for Zimbabwe's. Staff of the two projects met up at an international women's aid conference in the UK in 1988 and shared other materials, as well as ideas about dealing with domestic violence in ways more appropriate to non-western countries.

Since then the Musasa Project has blossomed into a flourishing organisation recognised by the Zimbabwe government, with a permanent headquarters, four full-time staff and a vehicle in Harare, and a growing outreach programme into the provinces. Its current Programme Director, Gladys Gwashure, recently visited Canada, with the assistance of CUSO, the YWCA and the B.C. Council for International Cooperation. She brought with her the Musasa project's latest contribution to the international effort against domestic violence, a 308 page handbook for counsellors called "*Sexual and Domestic Violence: Help, Recovery and Action in Zimbabwe*". (\$US20 plus \$US10 postage from the Musasa Project, at PO Box A712, Avondale, Harare, Zimbabwe.) The book is illustrated with cartoons, and will be of great interest to all those working on these issues in a development context.

The Project specialises in providing training on domestic violence, rape, sexual abuse and incest for the police, legal professionals and para-professionals,

social and community workers, teachers and nurses. Staff and volunteers provide counselling and raise public awareness through leaflets, posters, public seminars and workshops, and a lobby for changes in the laws to protect women. They provide short term accommodation for victims and their children in private bed-and-breakfast homes and, stimulated by her visit to Canada, the Director is planning to set up support groups for victims and survivors. As in PNG, the Project is funded by voluntary contributions, mainly from overseas aid organisations.

There are other parallels between the situation in PNG and in Zimbabwe. Both organisations have recognised the value of the law, working through the existing power structures to change the attitudes of those who administer the law as well as the legal system itself. Both believe it is better to work with men rather than in opposition to them. Since both countries are strongly male dominated, lacking a strong feminist movement (less so in Zimbabwe), this is a practical necessity as well as a culturally appropriate approach. Both successfully sought credibility by recruiting the public support of high profile male political leaders. Both have made extensive use of written public education materials, despite having large illiterate populations. When leaflets carry an identifying picture, even illiterate women can trace the leaflet they need and can then access the information through the help of a literate friend or relative.

Perhaps most significant is that although a certain amount of wife-beating is traditional and acceptable to the general public in both Zimbabwe and PNG, activists in both countries have shown that it is nevertheless harmful to victims, their children, the family and the wider society. Both have recognised the key role that such violence plays in maintaining male control over women, outside the family as well as inside it. Both denounce the way that violence is used to "keep women in their place", and aim to change cultural attitudes that maintain women in a dependent position. Both draw attention to the fact that violence against women prevents women from realising their full potential within the society.

In terms of how richer countries can assist poorer ones to tackle their problems of violence against women, both Zimbabwe and PNG are examples of how outside funding can be crucial in getting programmes off the ground. In the case of PNG's video, the guarantee of Canadian funding was what inspired WALC to stick with the project and actually make it happen, despite the many setbacks that arose. The international networking initially begun through CUSO helped both countries overcome their sense of isolation, and international conferences and newsletters were vital in cementing and extending contacts, and in sharing materials and ideas. Overseas study tours and training opportunities financed by outside donors, particularly to

other developing countries, are also valuable in sparking ideas and connections.

In return, the donor countries gain the chance to share the experience of the recipient countries and to see their own problems in a wider context. Many of the basic features and processes of domestic violence can be seen more clearly in other societies. For example, in countries such as PNG and Zimbabwe, where men "buy" wives, it is easy to see how the principle of male control and "ownership" operates to legitimize violence against wives. In Canada and other "developed" countries, the same principle operates, but is camouflaged by an overlay of equal rights legislation and rhetoric. We still expect the husband to be taller, older and better educated than his wife and to earn a higher salary. It is still the norm for women to change their "ownership label" when they marry, and for children to take only the name of their father.

There may also be lessons to be learnt from some of the different approaches and programmes tried by developing countries. The efforts of PNG and Zimbabwe to define violence against women as a community problem rather than as a women's problem, and to involve men actively in public awareness work could be fruitful elsewhere. Lacking state resources for developing a system of women's shelters, PNG and Zimbabwe have built on existing systems of kinship and community to provide support for victims, an approach which is now being looked at for rural areas of developed countries where centralised institutions are not feasible. PNG is unusual in having introduced formal education about wife-beating at primary school level, and in recruiting supermarkets, banks, airlines, transport companies and other businesses to participate in its public education programme, as well as government and church agencies. Other countries might benefit by trying these approaches.

We are learning now that development is not necessarily a one-way process. By networking, by sharing ideas, information, experiences and resources, we can all learn from each other and make development a multi-directional process.

[Christine Bradley is the former Principal Project Officer of the Papua New Guinea Law Reform Commission and a founder member of the Women and Law Committee.]

Footnotes:

1. A full list of LRC publications on domestic violence can be obtained by writing to the PNG Law Reform Commission at PO Box 3439, Boroko, PNG and asking for Appendix 2 of the Final Report on Domestic Violence. All publications are now sold out, but can be obtained through major libraries.
2. The video, schoolbook, leaflets, poster and other information materials may be obtained, if still available, by writing to the PNG Law Reform Commission at PO Box 3439, Boroko, PNG.

Kanak Cultural Exchange with Mali



Photo from *Women's News*, Jan 92

Marie-Claude Tjibaou trying African style

Mali is a dry, poor country in Africa. New Caledonia is a rich, lush island in the Pacific. So why would women from New Caledonia travel across the world on a cultural exchange with women in Mali?

According to Marie-Claude Tjibaou, President of the Kanak Cultural Development Agency, it was a deliberate choice to see how women respond to such a difficult life. 'Mali is so very poor yet the people do so much. Their poverty has made them creative. Here in our island we are nowhere near as creative or imaginative as the women we met. We must do more here, after all we have so much compared to them.'

Marie-Claude Tjibaou was the head of a delegation of seven Kanak women invited to Mali by a group of women's organisations and a cultural co-operative called Jamana. Because French is the national language of both New Caledonia and Mali, the latter was an obvious destination for the Kanak women. A group called 'Culture et Developpement' organised the tour from France to ensure that the diverse interests of the Pacific visitors were all met. Among the group of seven were women with special interests in indigenous education, art and culture, income-generation and women's organisation.

African women are known worldwide for their skills in producing spectacularly coloured material. From the harvesting, spinning and dyeing of cotton, the Kanak group learnt how it was done. They also visited a recycling market where anything and everything is recycled into practical objects and works of art. From jam jars to old tires, the group was amazed at how much could be done with so little. The same applies to the land itself. In Mali the soil is extremely dry, so the

women have to sweat hard and long hours to get anything out of the land. This is especially true of making oil from the karite, an oil seed typical in Africa. It takes long hours of hard physical labour to pound the oil from the seed. And it is the women who do the work. When the Kanak visitors watched the sweat pour from the women's brows, they agreed that life in New Caledonia is paradise by comparison.

'Why is it then', asks Marie-Claude Tjibaou, 'that women in Mali have achieved so much? They are scientists, politicians, doctors. There are even four women ministers in the government of Mali. Here in New Caledonia, our women play 70 per cent of the role of head of the family, yet we do not hold any of these high public posts. We should have at least one or two of our women in high positions, but we have none. We have a lot of barriers to overcome.'

The cultural exchange to Mali was an inspiration to the seven Kanak women who left the Pacific to visit Africa. There is a plan to return the exchange and host a visit of Malian women in November 1992. But in the meantime there is the more difficult task of turning the inspiration into something concrete.

[From: *Women's News*, a quarterly from the Pacific Women's Resource Bureau, Vol 7, No 1, January 1992]

Pacific Women's Training Program

In February, the 29th Course for Women Community Workers began at the Community Education Training Centre (CETC) in Fiji. With this course, over 800 women will have attended the nine month courses. Academic qualifications of participants have changed little over the years. CETC believes it is important to have no limiting academic criteria. However, the principal of CETC, Lili King, believes that there is also "an urgent need to run concurrent courses for those with a higher academic standard who could progress to Diploma-level courses in Youth and Community Development".

CETC also plans to run short courses and provide radio training as part of the Grass-roots Radio Project. Launched last year, the project includes plans for a mini-in-house radio station to make the radio course more meaningful. Another initiative is production of the UNICEF *Garden to Kitchen* newsletter.

In recent years, CETC ex-Students Associations have been formed in Tonga and the Marshall Islands. They hope to provide a network for exchange of ideas and information as well as serving an advisory role to CETC.

[From: *Women's News*, Vol 7 No 1, Jan/92.]

Working for Change in Belau

By Elicita Morei

[The Belauan women's organization, Otil a Beluad, has played a leading role in defending Belau's nuclear free constitution. Elicita Morei talks about the position of women in Belauan society and the work of Otil a Beluad, whose mandate is political education and reinforcing women's roles as decision-makers in Belauan society. The need to mesh traditional and contemporary political systems to enable Belauans to maintain control of their country is emphasized.]

Greetings. My name is Cita Morei and I represent the women. I am a volunteer staff person, but mostly it is the older women who do the decision-making and who are the backbone of Otil a Beluad. In addressing the concerns of the women of Belau, there are a number of issues that are of concern. But before I get into issues, I would like to give a brief history of the traditional role of women in Belau.

Belau is a matrilineal society, which means that women play an important role in policy issues. Women traditionally own and divide land, control the clan money and select our chiefs. Women could place the chiefs and also remove their title. Having closely observed the upbringing of the boys into men, the women decided which men had the talent to represent our interests. From birth Belauan women are responsible for the men. When men marry, the women arrange for the settlement and when they die, the women bury them. This is not figuratively speaking. Women in the family decide which plot a man will be buried in. They prepare the food and organize the funeral. If the man who dies has children, then it's the older women of the clan who decide what the children will get and they also contribute money for the man's family.



Photo by Cita Morei

Food preparation for a first born ceremony in Belau

That process has been somewhat changed with the introduction of Western ideas where mostly men are policy makers. As we see today in Belau, the policy-making bodies of government and the national congress are made up mostly of men. However, some women are realizing that the traditional role of women should be carried over to electoral politics. Right now there are no women in the National Congress of Belau, the law making body. Women have been in the background, taking care of the home and clan affairs. Whereas men or the chiefs are in the policy making body, their main power actually lies in the women who put them there. Women get together to vote for their uncles or their sons or other male relatives.

There are 2 appointed women ministers in Cabinet, the Minister of Administration who takes care of finances and government affairs, and the Minister of Community and Cultural Affairs who oversees social services. With the upcoming November election, women are saying that we must have women elected. We are working to have a candidate who would support the interests of women and Belau as a whole. We are networking among ourselves to ensure that there will be women in the policy-making body.

The Belauan Constitution and the Compact of Free Association

The concern of the women of Otil A Beluad has consistently been to uphold the constitution of Belau, particularly the nuclear free clause, which 92% of the Belauan people voted for in 1979. This struggle has been at the forefront of our movement. We have also been working to resist U.S. military takeover of our land which relates to the Compact of Free Association. The Compact describes a future status that would enable the US military to use Belauan land, the harbour and the airport. It says that, whenever the U.S. wants to use our land, we have to provide the property they seek within sixty days. Nowhere else in the U.S. would they ask that, but in Belau they do. This is not right. This is the second big issue that the women of Otil a Beluad have been working on.

What we've been doing since 1988 is petitioning the United Nations Trusteeship Council, which meets every May in New York. Different people have gone to talk about our concerns. The main theme has been to safeguard the nuclear free constitution and the process of democracy. We need time to develop and go through the process so we understand what democracy is all about. Belau must not be too hasty to get into a military agreement with the U.S.

Education, Environment and Networking

Political education is another project. We have accumulated 130 films on environment. One film we use

is 'Home on the Range'. It is about the struggle of the Marshallese people and the nuclear and military takeover of their lands. Our efforts aim to raise consciousness and change attitudes. We hope we can spread the word through films, pamphlets and everyday speaking to people. We want to make people aware that if it happened in the Marshalls, it could happen here. If we say yes to military bases, if we say yes to the Compact of Free Association, if we disregard the constitution of Belau, it could happen here.

We believe the constitution helps to safeguard the environment, that it can work hand in hand with us for the development of Belau. We've seen developments that come from disregarding the environment. There have been cases where whole mangrove areas were destroyed because of the insensitive acts of our people, people who allow investors to come in and disregard environmental laws in the name of profit. It is important to protect mangrove areas, which are breeding areas for fish and mangrove crabs. In the meantime we must to put a valve on developments that come here. We have to be aware of the vulnerability of the islands.

We feel there is a lack of experience and understanding of what it means to have mass tourism development. An influx of tourists and foreign investors also brings in foreign labourers. We have yet to face this, but that's one of the things that Otil a Beluad is trying to raise awareness about. To employ sustainable development, you have to consider ecotourism. This is the only land that we've got; this is the only coral reef and our lives depend on it. There is a need to both safeguard these resources and, at the same time, share it with other people who come into Belau, but not by building 300 or 400 rooms or skyrise buildings.

Otil a Beluad monitors the National Congress. Last year a bill was introduced to change the building code from three story buildings to an unlimited number of floors. We petitioned our Congress to show our anger that unlimited codes are unheard of and shouldn't be allowed in a small island like Belau. The bill was stopped.

Networking between women is very important, especially with women who teach in schools. We believe that school is the greatest agent of change. We try to work with women and young people to instill among our youth the value of our islands and resources. We have women teachers who talk about these things all the time. We talk with students about how we would implement these concepts of conservation. Just recently there was an Earth Day. The schools and the government took part. Our part was to videotape the event and then share the information throughout Belau. Using the media is important, because Belauans tend to look at things from the US or other places as better than what we have. Through this youth program, we are trying to promote the value of Belauan attitudes and culture in combination with environmental issues.

Conclusion

What I have mentioned are issues of immediate concern facing the women of Belau. We are trying to establish a dialogue between women, the public and electoral politics. There is a tendency among Belauans to just go to the polls and elect your relatives and put them in power. After it is over, we come back and forget about it. If they do something wrong, we accuse them. We do this rather than saying, "we are the ones who chose, so it is our responsibility to check those that we chose." It's not the fault of those who are chosen, but those who make the choice. That is the message that we give to people.

Woman runs for Palau's No 2 spot

Cabinet member 1st woman to run for vice president

By Adrienne Loerzel

After only 12 years as a constitutional democracy, the Republic of Palau has something that took the U.S. more than 200 years to achieve: a female vice presidential candidate. When Palau holds its elections Nov. 9, Sandra Sumang Pierantozzi will be the first woman to run for the Palauan vice presidency.

Pierantozzi is currently the Minister of Administration - an accomplishment in itself, since only 2 women have been part of the presidential cabinet in Palau's history. Though she has only held her cabinet position for a year and a half, Pierantozzi said she has managed to accomplish things no other Minister of Administration has. She balanced Palau's budget for the first time in 1991, and also submitted the presidential budget to the Senate on time. "One of my goals is to restore Palau's credibility. In 1 year we've been able to gain some of it back. We're paying off our creditors slowly but surely."

It is because she hopes to remain as Minister, that Pierantozzi is running for office. Under the Palauan constitution, the VP also holds a cabinet position. "(Being elected) is the only sure way to be back in. I was sort of drafted." At the inauguration of a Palauan governor, she was approached by a group of Palauan women who had heard she was considering running for office. When she told them she was interested, they announced she was a candidate for vice president.

Pierantozzi faces 3 seasoned male opponents, but is not discouraged. "Certainly there's a lot of support from all sections of the community. I think a woman as vice president would be in keeping with Palauan traditions," she continued, noting that Palau is a matriarchal society where women choose the chiefs. "I think I have a very good chance to do it." Whatever the outcome of her bid for office, Pierantozzi hopes her efforts will encourage other women to step forward.

"Win or lose, I'm sort of blazing the trail for other women in Palau, especially the younger women who are getting educated," she said.

[Reprinted with permission from: *Pacific Daily News*, August 14/92]

Primary Health Care as a Tool for Women's Empowerment

by Stuart Wulff

[Since 1987, SPPF has supported a programme in Papua New Guinea to train and support women as primary health care workers. The programme includes the creation of village development committees with women as members. "Marasin Meri" shows how a programme to satisfy a basic and immediate need, in this case improved health care, can also contribute to women's empowerment and the achievement of broader strategic goals. However, the article points out that this type of approach is not without difficulties, particularly where the responsible institutions are not controlled by women and may have other priorities.]

The scenes could take place in any one of 70 isolated villages in the East Sepik region of Papua New Guinea. A woman has a child ill with diarrhea, a skin infection or one of dozens of common but easily treated diseases - easily treated that is if one has the knowledge and basic medicines. Fortunately, the village has a marasin meri (medicine woman), a primary health care worker. The problem is diagnosed and treatment provided. Soon the child is well. A man with an infected cut goes to his village's marasin meri for treatment. Until recently, he would have gone without treatment or had to undertake a long journey to a larger town with a health clinic or hospital. Not too long

ago, he would have been surprised by the idea of going to a local woman for treatment, but he has learned to respect the knowledge and skills of the marasin meri.

Not all problems are as easily solved. Sometimes, there is a need for diagnosis or treatment beyond the marasin meri's capacity. Patients are then referred to a health clinic or hospital. While this means a longer and sometimes expensive trip for the patient, the improvement over the previous situation is marked. Faced with such a trip and no certainty as to the seriousness of the ailment, people often did not seek treatment. Now, people receive treatment for most ailments from their local marasin meri. As well as resolving minor ailments, this often prevents such ailments from evolving into more serious problems. When a problem is beyond the marasin meri's capacity, people travel to a clinic or hospital knowing the journey is necessary and worth the expense.

The East Sepik is one of the most underdeveloped parts of Papua New Guinea. Many villages are isolated and not served by PNG's still inadequate infrastructure, including health care. Local government officials, local women's groups and other observers credit the Marasin Meri programme with significantly improving the level of health in villages. Marasin meris are also trained in nutrition, hygiene and preventative health care. Part of their function is to educate others about the importance of good nutrition, clean water and other aspects of a healthy community and to advocate for projects which will improve community health.

The Marasin Meri programme began in 1984 in the Maprik District of East Sepik Province. Despite a promising start, the lack of funding had led to the near collapse of the programme by 1986. Through the East Sepik women's movement, the need for funding was brought to the attention of a Victoria art gallery, Alcheringa. Alcheringa specialises in Papua New Guinean art, much of it from the East Sepik. The women who own Alcheringa were interested in supporting a project in PNG and, as women, were interested in Marasin Meri because of its emphasis on women and health care. Elaine Monds of Alcheringa approached the South Pacific Peoples Foundation of Canada (SPPF) and a partnership was born. Since 1987, Alcheringa, SPPF and the Canadian government's International Development Agency (CIDA) have been funding Marasin Meri.

Since 1987, 23 women from the earlier phase of the programme have been retrained and 48 new marasin meris have been trained. Upgrading and refresher courses continue to develop the skills of the marasin meris. Medical kits are provided to each new



Photo by Hilda Tutton

Women's Centre in Maprik, East Sepik Province, PNG

marasin meri. The Maprik Primary Health Care Office coordinates the programme and is responsible for restocking of medical kits. SPPF and CIDA have recently agreed to fund a third phase of Marasin Meri, during which it is planned to at least double the number of marasin meris. The women of Alcheringa remain keenly involved.

Village women's groups identify local women to be trained as marasin meris. The women are volunteers and have been identified by their peers and their level of commitment is generally high. However, the additional responsibilities represent a further burden to women already burdened with other roles. For example, the four weeks training course has meant an extended absence from their villages (often involving several days travel plus the course). This problem was partially addressed by decentralising courses to the sub-regional level to reduce travel time. Recently, the training course has been reduced to two weeks with more emphasis on upgrading through short follow-up courses and field visits to marasin meris by medical staff. This may also address a related problem. When marasin meris run short of supplies, they are supposed to restock from the nearest health clinic. Many women find it difficult to take the time for such journeys. During field visits, medical staff can restock marasin meris. However, this issue of pressures on a woman's time and her existing work load is a problem which must be addressed at the village level. Villages must make provision to relieve marasin meris of some of their other responsibilities to be fair to the women and to ensure effective performance of their marasin meri role.

An effort is also being made to establish and support Village Development Committees. VDCs have responsibility for local community development, including health care. The local marasin meri and representatives of the local women's group are members of the VDC. VDCs are being established in an increasing number of villages and some have already taken steps to address health issues and implement projects to support the work of the marasin meris, such as provision of clean water and building of aid posts.

So what has Marasin Meri meant for women in East Sepik? Firstly, it has addressed a basic need identified and advocated by the women, improving health care for themselves and their families, and according to the women it has been a major success at this level. The women have been directly involved in implementation of the project and have had a role in decision-making, such as identifying the women to be trained. Particularly for the marasin meris, there has been an opportunity to develop new skills, leadership skills as well as the health care ones. Through the impact of the marasin meris within their communities and the involvement of the marasin meris and other women on the VDCs, women have gained increased stature and influence within their communities.



Photo by Hilda Tuton

Marasin meri station in Sarikim, East Sepik Province

On the negative side, marasin meris face increased pressures as a result of their new roles. While some steps have been taken to address this, more needs to be done. The decision to base the programme with the PNG government's Maprik Primary Health Care Office, rather than directly with women's groups, has created some problems. As part of its "structural adjustment programme", the PNG government has cut funding for health services. Combined with turnovers in personnel, this has resulted in frequent delays and shortfalls in the Marasin Meri programme. Some women have suggested that the programme would be more successful if directly under the auspices of the women's associations. There may be some truth to this, though the necessary commitment from medical staff may not have been forthcoming if the programme was not under the auspices of the Primary Health Care Office. Certainly the case can be made that basing the project with the women's associations would have increased their empowerment and influence. While the programme has led to some changes, most decisions within the health care system and the villages continue to be made by men.

Is Marasin Meri a success? It depends somewhat on the yardstick one uses. It has had a significant positive impact on health care in many East Sepik communities and has the potential to assist other villages. Is the programme without problems? No, but attempts are being made to address them. Has it increased women's empowerment and their stature within their communities? To some extent, the answer seems to be yes, though some women feel that another approach would have been more effective. Perhaps most important, the programme continues to evolve to meet the needs of the women involved and their communities. As long as this occurs, Marasin Meri remains a significant experiment in primary health care and women's empowerment.

[Two women from Alcheringa recently visited the East Sepik and met with people involved in the Marasin Meri programme and local women's groups. Their report will be featured in November's *Tok Blong SPPF*.]

WID is More Than Providing Funding Assistance

Canada Funds WID Activities in the Eastern Pacific

by Diane Goodwillie

[Historically the Women in Development approach has focused on integrating women into the economic system with the aim of strengthening national economies. This approach does not always consider the long term needs of women or the involvement of women at decision-making levels, as Diane Goodwillie points out in this article. When this happens, women may have extra income, but they don't necessarily have more control over their lives. These types of projects may in fact increase the work burdens that women carry and make it more difficult for them to meet their traditional family and community obligations. The projects outlined in this article illustrate the learning processes that can take place as development begins to happen. Women often realize as projects get underway that, in addition to the basic production skills, they also require more empowering leadership and administration skills. When women take responsibility for the managerial roles, then they can begin to set their own objectives and design their projects to carry them towards their long term goals.]

What do a knitted sweater from Tuvalu, a cement water tank made in the Cook Islands and wedding cakes prepared in Kiribati have in common? They are all the result of Canadian funding. Are they Women in Development projects? You judge for yourself.

Tuvalu is a country of 9,000 people. Sitting close to the equator, it's the last place in the world you would expect women to be knitting sweaters, but they are and for a good reason. Tuvalu sailors crew ships in Europe and North America. They need good quality, reasonably priced warm sweaters and why not buy them from their mothers and aunties in Tuvalu.

Women had to learn how to use knitting machines and to find a source for cheap wool. With assistance from the Canada Fund, a New Zealander went to Tuvalu along with six knitting machines and a large sample of wool. The women learned the skills, a manager was selected and Skipjack Garments was born. Additional purchases of sweaters and hats were made by Tuvalulans planning overseas studies and by expatriates anxious to sport the "Tuvalu" label after they finished their service in Tuvalu.

Skipjack Garments gave skills and a source of income to women. But on a closer look, who made the decisions? The Businesses Development Assistance Bureau (BUDAB) of Tuvalu directed the project. No women applied for the marketing manager's job so a man was selected. BUDAB's mandate is to develop small businesses, not to develop women's manage-

ment skills. Skipjack Garments developed women's dressmaking and design skills, but a need remains for women to learn business, assertiveness and management skills. Hopefully that will be the next WID project for women in Tuvalu!

When Skills Are Not Enough

Cook Islands has 10,000 people in 15 small islands. Many of these have no lakes or rivers and a lack of fresh water. Communities harvest rain water from roof run-offs which drain into large 20,000 gallon community water tanks, but many of these leak or are a distance from where a family lives. How is a woman to provide clean kids, clean clothes, water for her home vegetable garden and properly cooked foods when fresh water is not close at hand?

A solution was for women to learn how to build household cement water tanks so they could make tanks for their own homes. A training project gained Canada Fund assistance. As a WID program, it enabled women to gain control of their own environment, but it did not fulfil its original objective of providing clean water close to the home. Women learned skills in appropriate technology and proudly made strong water tanks, but because they did not have access to money, they could not continue to build tanks for their individual homes. Short term activities filled a gap, but did not reach the overall objective. Each island has a demonstration tank and women with the skills, but there is a lack of motivation and/or leadership to see that these tanks are replicated for household use. Meanwhile the community decision-makers continue to ask the Canada Fund for money for large community water tanks.

Nutrition and Women

One of the greatest health problems in the Eastern Pacific relates to non-communicable diseases (NCD), such killers as heart disease, diabetes, alcoholism and gout caused by overweight, lack of exercise, too much alcohol and improper diets. These issues are women's issues: women choose the food for their family; they are the role models for their family; and they are dietitians and public health nurses called on to educate people about these diseases. Canadian tax payers' dollars have greatly assisted nutrition education in the Pacific.

A large grant from CIDA to Simon Fraser University and the University of the South Pacific facilitated a unique project, the production of 13 Pacific nutrition reference books. The unusual aspect of this project was not the production of the books, but the way they were produced. Over 70 Pacific Islanders (mostly women) were involved in writing and illustrating the books.

Preparation of Pacific Island Foods



THE SOUTH PACIFIC COMMUNITY NUTRITION TRAINING PROJECT

One of the 13 Pacific nutrition reference books

Dietitians and nutritionists surprised themselves and their bosses with their attractive, useful books. Canadian assistance in developing simple layout designs and using computers greatly assisted the process.

Other grants have aided the campaign against NCD diseases. The Canada Fund provided Cook Islands and Tuvalu with monitoring equipment such as glucometers, heavy duty scales to measure weights over 100kg. and blood pressure monitors. Purchase and distribution of books to school libraries and health nurses has occurred in Kiribati and Cook Islands while translation of the nutrition materials into local language has occurred in Tuvalu and Tonga.

A second phase of the Simon Fraser grant will assist further in the use and implementation of the books. Already desk top units have been supplied to Nutrition Departments in Western Samoa and Tonga so that they can use their newly found computer expertise writing and developing education materials.

It sounds simple, but developing nutrition education materials that speak to people's hearts is not easy. In addition to Canadian initiatives in this area, the South Pacific Commission through Australian and New Zealand assistance has developed videos, leaflets and posters about lifestyles and food choices. A newly

formed Pacific Association of dieticians and nutrition workers should go a long way to help Pacific Island health workers direct the next phases of education and change. People's habits are changing, but it's a slow process that takes a lot of nurturing.

Although technically this nutrition work is not a WID project, it has given women important new skills which has enhanced their status and leadership abilities. From this work, women have gained confidence to develop more materials, to speak out at meetings and to develop a new organisation to continue working for the goal of improved nutrition and better, healthier living in the Pacific.

Can wedding cakes be a WID activity?

Wedding cakes may seem the extreme of "Victorian" domesticity, but if it gives income to a women's group is it a WID activity? The Canada Fund gave assistance to the Catholic Women's Association of Kiribati to help them develop a handcraft and catering training centre for women. Their initial output has been sales of birthday and wedding cakes and catering for government and private functions. They have good skills in cooking and baking, but they also want to develop jobs for young women so they too can earn a living through cooking and baking. Management, book-keeping and marketing are key needs for the women managers, so the next step is to find a resource person to help the women develop along these lines. Hopefully by the time you have read this newsletter, that project too will have begun.

WID is more than providing funding assistance to women. It takes a lot of hard planning and even then projects go astray. One of the biggest problems is finding the infrastructure within a country (either within government or in non-government organisations) that will support long term development needs for women. What is needed is skilled and experienced nationals who have the time, money and mandate to plan for and enable change to take place.

From an outside agency perspective, it takes patience to work alongside of women to help them develop their talents, assertiveness and management skills. This is time consuming and not really the mandate of the Canada Fund Co-ordinator, but to fulfil the obligation Canada has made to facilitate WID programmes, it is necessary. It is not a perfect process and many things go wrong, but it's fun and it is empowering women even if they make mistakes.

[Diane Goodwillie has been active in regional women's work for 14 years and is at present the Canada Fund Co-ordinator for Fiji, Cook Islands, Kiribati, Tonga, Tuvalu and Western Samoa. She can be reached c/o Canadian Co-operation Office, Private Bag, Suva, Fiji.]

Working for Change in Vanuatu

By Rolenas Lolo

[Rolenas Lolo, president of the Vanuatu National Council of Women, visited Canada in April of this year, to be a resource person at the SPPF/CUSO Pacific Networking Conference. The following article is excerpted from a tape Rolenas made for SPPF. She explains the workings of the Vanuatu National Council of Women and emphasizes the Council's high priority on policy and structures which maximize involvement of Vanuatu's women in program planning. The projects the council supports are designed to empower women and value the knowledge that women have in both their traditional and more modern roles in society. The final story that Rolenas has related for us illustrates how, by supporting the concerns of a group of rural people, the Council also educates the larger rural community about the impacts of large scale development and government policy, and reinforces the right of women to be involved in development decision-making.]

The Vanuatu National Council of Women was established in May 1980, just before the country got its independence. It is an umbrella organization that takes care of smaller women's organizations in Vanuatu - church women's groups, women's clubs - and individual ni-Vanuatu women. Our organization is structured in a similar way as our national government. This is to make sure that we do not make decisions or plans for anything that doesn't involve our women in the rural areas. So we have our national conference every two years which brings together women leaders from all the local government regions.

Our National office is in Port Vila. There are also 11 island councils and 77 area councils of women that organize down to the grass roots. At present our main project is island women's centres. Centres are to be established in each of the 11 council regions. This is to take care of projects and programmes that are taking place in the islands. We have already written up the project proposal and sent it to our government to look for funds for these centres.

In each centre there would be a room where our community development workers, women's officers who are working with women in the islands, will be living. There will be a conference room so they can host their island conference and organize workshops on health, nutrition, child care or anything that the women want to learn. All these activities will be held in that centre. We'll have an office where our rural women's officer will work. There will be a store room where women from the villages can send in handicrafts or anything else they have produced. They can send it to the centre so it can be sold for themselves, their women's clubs or their area council. Another room will



Rolenas Lolo

Photo by Jackie Adams

be available so that people who are visitors will be able to stay and pay a small rent. The rent money will go to the island councils of women.

We have another project that is going on now, our training manual. We are trying to write about 10 books. Our own women, ni-Vanuatu women, are writing very simple books that can be read by women in the villages on different things that they need. When finished, these books will be distributed to the islands and sold to the women so they can learn from them themselves.

A plan for the future is to encourage women to fundraise or earn some income for their clubs. This will mean that in future we may have our own small funds for projects or programmes. In the past we have been dependant on outside funding, which is limiting.

The Vanuatu Council of Women have begun to act as advocates for rural women in lobbying for sound environmental decision-making and regulation. The following story from Rolenas illustrates one instance where the council was successful in assisting women to raise their concerns to the government.

There is a Taiwanese company that came into Vanuatu wanting to set up a base on Malakula to do logging. They didn't go through government channels. They just went through the landowners of Malakula trying to get them to sign an agreement so they could start logging. While waiting for the government and landowners to agree, this company cleared the bush from the area so they could set up their equipment and other things for their work. They destroyed the village cemetery and a pool of water that women and villagers have been using for many years for drinking, cooking and washing. Also, the women have been going there to look for crabs, wild yams, birds, firewood and other things. Now the pool is looking like a mud hole. That made the village women very annoyed. The women approached the National Council of Women to see if we could help them put their concerns into a letter to some responsible people. They wanted to let the authorities know that they have been visiting that place for many years and now they can't do that any more because it is just not good to go near. The National Council Women took a picture of this mud hole and put it in our newspaper to let people know about it.

That company is no longer working in Vanuatu. Half their equipment is lying there, but nobody is using it. Our council is going to continue this kind of work to protect our environment and help our women to be aware of companies that come into our country to set up different projects or new developments like this.

The Plight of Nukulaelae

by Winnie Laban

[This article is excerpted from a longer speech presented at the 13th World Congress of the International Organisation of Consumer Unions (IOCU) in July 1991. Winnie Laban works with the South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme of IOCU. Source: "The Plight of the Pacific" from 3rd World Network Features.]

The island of Nukulaelae sits on longitude 180°, where East becomes West, just north of latitude 10°S. It is part of the island nation of Tuvalu, which consists of 9 islands with a total land area less than 26 sq km at high tide and a sea area of 900,000 sq km.

The demands of the industrialised world hit Nukulaelae in May 1863, when "three vessels appeared off Nukulaelae. They were slave ships from Peru come to steal the people. The Peruvians first ploy was to offer their intended victims short-term contracts to make coconut oil on another island. When the people of Nukulaelae turned down the offer, the Peruvians lifted the stakes and suggested goldmining, but this appeal to greed was no more successful.... One of the Peruvians then went ashore posing as a missionary and invited the people to go on board and receive the holy sacrament. All the able-bodied men and most of the women went on board in simple faith (two hundred souls in all). The three vessels then sailed away, never to return.... In a single day, Nukulaelae lost two-thirds of its people." (Reported in Te Tala O Niuoku, a USP publication.)

One of the people taken by the slavers was called Kenu. Samila Iakopo, his wife, waited on shore. She would no doubt have watched with foreboding as the ships sailed away, for she was pregnant.

Little is known of the many people of the Pacific that were captured by slavers. It is known that many died on the voyages to South America and many more lost their lives in the phosphate mines of Peru. Polynesians made poor slaves and many of those taken from Nukulaelae would have died at the hands of their captors. Kenu disappeared into that untold history. Samila and her family survived. Her son was my great grandfather.

I visited Nukulaelae in 1991. It is only accessible by boat, six hours from Funifuti, the capital of Tuvalu. Surf boats brought us ashore through the reef passage into a tranquil, turquoise lagoon. Coconut palms, pandanus and a few hardy plants are the only vegetation. The soil is poor but people cultivate pulaka, a form of taro grown in pits, kumara and a few other household vegetables. Fish is the major source of protein, but pigs, chickens and ducks are raised for cultural ex-

change and food. Toddy, the vitamin-rich sap of the coconut palm, is collected and drunk daily. These traditional Polynesian foods are now supplemented by flour, rice, sugar and canned foods from the island's co-operative store.

The 300 people on Nukulaelae live in harmony with their land, adapting what they require from Western society, sustaining themselves and their land as their ancestors have for over 1,000 years. They live in a fragile ecosystem. Now their land is threatened; it is starting to erode. Climate change is affecting this low-lying island.

Living close to their land, the people of Nukulaelae know through their oral traditions what land belongs to which family and how much land there is. As with any land close to the sea, the process of wave action erodes some land and creates more, but these processes are in balance over time. However, over the past ten years, people have noticed a marked increase in erosion. The balance has shifted; the land is being flooded. This has caused concern and aid agencies have been approached for advice and practical assistance to reduce the erosion and stop the flooding.

The European Community has funded a sea-wall project on Nukulaelae. Concrete blocks are manufactured from coral sand and arranged along the coast in an attempt to stop erosion. The EC provides resources and the local people labour. The long term effects of this work have yet to be evaluated, but it is only addressing the symptoms. A sea wall can only hope to give temporary relief if global warming continues and the seas continue to rise and erode the land. The long term solution must come from the industrialised countries, whose actions are causing the problem. Tuvalu is not the only island nation affected. On Kiribati, the Tokelaus and other small island states, the story is the same.

For the first time in living memory or oral tradition, salt water has been flooding ashore and killing coconut palms. Large areas of land planted with prime palms, a critical part of the local subsistence economy, are now useless for plantations. Salt water has also seeped into pulaka pits, destroying the crops and rendering the pits unfit for further cultivation. The pulaka pits, dug into the coral, gain their moisture from the lens of fresh water that found 1-2 m. below the surface of the atoll. As food cannot be kept in the hot climate, the pit acts as a growing storehouse of food. Pulaka is the staple of the people. Without it they will become dependent on imported foods.

As we sailed away from Nukulaelae, I watched the island slip below the horizon knowing that unless urgent action is taken to halt global warming, one day the people of Nukulaelae may have to sail away from their home and watch it sink below the surface of the sea.

Combating AIDS and STDs in Vanuatu

[Myriam Abel, the AIDS/STD Program Coordinator for Vanuatu spent 6 weeks in British Columbia last December visiting organizations in Vancouver and on Vancouver Island that focus on AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). She participated in a study session sponsored by the provincial Communicable Disease Control Unit, and visited other AIDS and STDs treatment programs. Myriam was formerly associated with the Vanuatu School of Nursing. The following article is based on a recorded session with SPPF staff in which she described the AIDS and STD program in Vanuatu and how it fit in with the South Pacific regional AIDS and STDs program.]

Because of the relative isolation of the Pacific Islands, the spread of AIDS and STDs has been slower than in other parts of the globe. In 1985, in order to combat the growing threat of uncontrolled spread of sexually-transmitted diseases in the Pacific, the island governments with the encouragement and guidance of the World Health Organization (WHO) set up a regional cooperative body, headquartered at the South Pacific Commission in New Caledonia, to address the problem before it reached epidemic proportions. The focus was and is on prevention and health education. These two areas are seen as the mainstays of the program and the weapons for fighting AIDS and STDs in the Pacific Islands. Island budgets are small and funding for expensive treatments for AIDS and STDs like AZT and other medications are far beyond the reach of island governments. The SPC with the help of WHO maintain a resource centre in Noumea, and facilitate the exchange of information within the region. It also sponsors regular yearly meetings that bring together AIDS professionals and educators as well as two country representatives from each participating country in the South Pacific region. At one meeting there was a workshop on "How to Make Use of the Media for the Prevention of AIDS and STDs," focused on the use of radio, a broadly used and readily accessible media form all over the Pacific (whereas television is not). The regional program also gives small funding grants to non-government and local organizations in each country. This encourages participation and cooperation at the local level in the participating countries.

Vanuatu set up its program for AIDS and STDs in 1988 under the SPC/WHO Global Health Program. The Vanuatu government as well as other participating island governments each drew up three year work programs focusing on prevention and health education. Vanuatu's program is overseen by a National Advisory Committee on AIDS/STDs composed of community representatives as well as government officials. The Vanuatu Committee includes representation from the Ministry of Health including the Minister and the Director of Health, the Ministry of Education, the

National Council of Chiefs, the National Council of Youth, the National Council of Women, and the National Council of Churches, as well as the Country AIDS/STDs Coordinator. The job of the committee is to come up with the strategies that the AIDS and STDs Coordinator will implement.



Myriam Abel

Photo by Molly Butler

Vanuatu's population of 145,000 is spread over a Y-shaped chain of 80-odd islands measuring 800 km from north to south. For the purposes of health administration, Vanuatu is divided into 5 administrative districts. Each district has a district hospital, and there are health centres and clinical dispensaries in smaller centres within each district. At the most rural level, villages are encouraged to band together to set up an aid post. The rural aid post is the basis for the whole system and the anchor for the primary health care concept in Vanuatu. Myriam Abel's job takes in everything from regularly scheduled radio broadcasts to organizing in-country training workshops all over Vanuatu from the district administrative centre right down to the rural aid post.

Workshops and training sessions are held each year for the different types of health care workers, usually in the district centres. Specific training sessions for AIDS and STDs have been held, two per district for a total of ten. These involve lots of travelling for both Myriam and the participants. The program also sponsors specific seminars, for example on laboratory techniques.

Myriam has found that a very effective way of reaching people, whether they be nurses, lab technicians or villagers, is to distribute posters and pamphlets through the primary health care coordinators in each district.

A primary focus of the AIDS/STD program is youth. Vanuatu is a very young country. The last census in 1989 showed that young people between the ages of 17 and 27 make up the largest portion of the population, and it is this group that the program is really focusing on. "They are starting to look for their husbands or their wives. In Vanuatu, we are experiencing urban drifting, so we concentrate the programs in those centres. There are large numbers of young people in Luganville

YOU CAN'T GET AIDS FROM:



public education programs on AIDS and STDs. For World Aids Day this year, they planned activities and led a parade in Port Vila, the capital. The government also highlighted World AIDS Day in 1991. A set of four stamps were issued with messages in Bislama, English and French to remind people about the need to be sexually responsible, to care for HIV-infected people and to think about the children and the future of Vanuatu.

Another part of the program for Myriam is working with non-government and local organisations. She has worked with the Rotary Clubs giving talks about the prevention of AIDS. She also works closely with the National Council of Women, the National Council of Chiefs, the churches and different youth groups.

No sector is exempt in the program. Discussions and seminars have been held with the police and in the prisons. A special information day for Parliamentarians is in the planning. 1991 was the year of the South Pacific Games in Papua New Guinea, a country which has one of the highest occurrences of AIDS in the Pacific. The 140 Vanuatu contingent went to the Games carrying t-shirts that sported a slogan "Wantok lukaot AIDS/SIDA tingting gud" meaning 'just think about AIDS when you are away'. Before the group left for PNG, they attended an information seminar on AIDS. A brochure was included in each passport giving information on how to protect yourself from AIDS and STDs.

on Santo and in Port Phillip as well as in Port Vila. There is also another program called the Urban Youth and Women's Health Education Program which the AIDS and STDs Program works closely with. They jointly conducted eight seminars for youth and another eight for women.

Urban youth are taking part in

They were also told that the contingent doctor was carrying a supply of condoms. Myriam recounted that she was laughed at but when the team returned, they reported that the t-shirts had been a great success! They had all been given away, and so the education message spread from 'back to back' via the t-shirt.

So far no HIV positive cases or AIDS cases are known in Vanuatu. The country does not have an evident problem with prostitution although it is suspected to exist. Tourism is increasing and will continue to put pressure on the culture. Drug addiction is still an unknown but alcohol and marijuana are used. So in a sense, there is time to act.

For Myriam the keys are education and preparation. The message is that "people have got to be responsible for their own health. We can teach them how to improve their basic sanitation, how to have a good water supply, how to take precautions against infectious and communicable diseases like TB, malaria and AIDS and STDs. We can tell them about the AIDS situation in the big countries like Canada, Australia and New Zealand." When Vanuatu learned about AIDS in those countries "we started straight away. We didn't wait even though [the subject of] sex was a problem to talk about [for our people]. We didn't wait. Education or prevention is our weapon so that's why we have to move....By doing the prevention program and getting together once a year in the region to try to find new ways, and to exchange ideas, we believe that we probably will have less problems to deal with in caring for our AIDS patients or HIV people, less problems than the big countries."

FIGURES UP

The number of officially reported cases of AIDS and HIV-positive cases in the Pacific island countries which the SPC compiled for World AIDS Day is shown in the table below.

table on the numbers (include Aust. NZ. US and France)

AIDS AND HIV CASES SOUTH PACIFIC REGION CAS DE SIDA/VIH DANS LA REGION DU PACIFIQUE SUD			
COUNTRIES PAYS	AIDS CASES CAS DU SIDA	HIV CASES CAS DU VIH	DATE
FED. STATES MICR.	1	1	30/11/91
FIJI	4	10	4/2/92
FRENCH POLYNESIA	27	102	30/11/91
GUAM	10	34	15/11/91
KIRIBATI	0	2	30/11/91
NEW CALEDONIA	19	78	20/10/91
PAPUA NEW GUINEA	68	103	18/3/92
TONGA	2	3	30/11/91
WESTERN SAMOA	1	1	30/11/91
AUSTRALIA	2796	15257	30/09/91
NEW ZEALAND	300	693	30/11/91
FRANCE			
UNITED STATES			

FIJI ELECTION: RABUKA BECOMES PRIME MINISTER

The man who led two coups against the government of Fiji has become the leader of the first elected government since those coups. More surprising, Sitiveni Rabuka achieved that position through the support of one of the parties which he deposed in the first coup. Rabuka's Fijian Political Party (SVT) won 30 of the 37 Fijian seats, but required the support of other parties to form a government. The 27 Indian seats were split between the National Federation Party (14) and the Labour Party (13). In the subsequent maneuvering between SVT rivals for the prime ministership, Rabuka came out on top when he secured the support of most SVT MPs and the Labour Party, a victim of his first coup. Labour provided its support in exchange for Rabuka's commitment to set up a commission to review the 1990 constitution, extend expiring land leases held by thousands of Indian farmers, abolish the controversial new labour law passed by the Interim Government and scrap the 10% value added tax (VAT) due to be implemented on July 1. Since then, Rabuka has made seemingly contradictory statements about these commitments and imposition of the VAT has proceeded, raising questions about the Labour's support. Several prominent rivals of Rabuka in the SVT turned down Cabinet positions, raising the possibility that Rabuka may also face a future challenge from within SVT ranks.

[From: Pacific Report, Vol 5 No 11, Jun 11/92; Pacific News Bulletin, Vol 7 No 6, Jun/92.]

PNG ELECTION BRINGS CHANGES

Papua New Guinea has a new government as the result of June elections and political maneuvering during July. Former Prime Minister Paias Wingti is back in the post at the head of a coalition government led by his People's Democratic Movement (PDM). With the incumbent Pangu Pati winning 19 seats, the PDM winning 16, and almost half of the 109 elected MPs being independents, the ability to form a government came down to which politician could assemble a working majority. The final result was as close as it could be. Parliamentary balloting for a new PM saw Rabie Namaliu and Wingti tie with 54 votes each. Speaker Bill Skate, having earlier won election by 55-54 votes, cast the tie-breaking vote in Wingti's favour. With 21 independents voting for him, Wingti will be challenged to hold his government together. Both previous Wingti governments collapsed from defections. In his favour is a new constitutional provision preventing no-confidence votes for the first 18 months of a new government. Five opposition MPs have also already bolted the Opposition to join the Government coalition. Namaliu has since resigned as Pangu Pati leader with Michael Somare stepping in as interim leader. The election saw over half of incumbent MPs and Cabinet ministers being defeated. It also saw a record 18 women candidates, with none being elected.

[From: Pacific Islands Monthly, Vol 62 No 8, Aug/92; Washington Pacific Report, Vol 10 Nos 21 & 22, Aug 1 & 15/92; ; PNG Times, Jul 23/92; Women's News, Vol 7 No 3, Jul/92.]

BOUGAINVILLE SITUATION IN FLUX

The PNG government change has led to movement on the Bougainville issue, though it remains unclear how great that movement will be and a resolution of the crisis remains distant. One development was a meeting of the Melanesian Spearhead Group hosted by Vanuatu. Solomon Islands Prime Minister Solomon Mamaloni had been boycotting MSG meetings in recent months as a result of deteriorating PNG-Solomons relations over Bougainville. Mamaloni and Paias Wingti met while in Port Vila and announced afterwards that relations had been normalised between the two countries. Wingti has said he wants to resolve the Bougainville issue and has given some indication of greater flexibility than the previous government. However, no clear policy has yet been articulated as and the appointment of Paul Tohian, blamed by many Bougainvilleans for the original escalation of the crisis, as Defence Minister has created some concern. Spokespersons for the Bougainville revolutionaries have welcomed the change in government and called for a ceasefire to be followed by peace talks. PNG Defence Forces now control the northern and southern ends of Bougainville and in the weeks leading up to the change of government had launched attacks against the Bougainville Revolutionary Army's central Bougainville stronghold.

[From: Pacific News Bulletin, Vol 7 No 8, Aug/92; Waikato Times, 15/8/92;

NAURU WINS FIRST ROUND IN INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

Nauru's claim against Australia for \$A72 million to rehabilitate lands damaged by phosphate mining prior to independence cleared its first hurdle at the International Court (ICJ). In preliminary hearings, Australia raised a number of objections to the Nauru case and asked the ICJ to dismiss the claim. Instead, the ICJ dismissed the Australian objections, clearing the way for Nauru to pursue its case. It could take up to a year for the case to begin being heard by the ICJ. Having lost the first round, Australia may use this time to seek an out-of-court settlement with Nauru.

[From: Pacific Report, Vol 5 No 13, Jul 9/92.]

SOUTH PACIFIC FORUM FOCUSES ON ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMIC ISSUES

The 23rd South Pacific Forum meeting in Honiara (July 8-9) was described by some as "one of the best ever". Following the U.N. Conference on Environment and Development, environmental issues were a focus of the meeting. Economic and trade issues, including the importance of enhanced links with Asia, were also discussed. The harmonious nature of the meeting may have reflected avoidance of contentious issues. Bougainville's rebel government had tried to get the Bougainville issue included on the agenda, but were defeated in this attempt. However, controversy was not totally avoided. The decision to include Taiwan in future Post-Forum Dialogue discussions provoked a threat from the People's Republic of China to boycott such sessions in future. While at the Forum, 13 of the 16 members of the Forum Fisheries Agency signed the Niue Treaty on Fisheries Surveillance and Law Enforcement.

[From: Pacific Islands Monthly, Vol 62 No 8, Aug/92; Pacific News Bulletin, Vol 7 No 8, Aug/92; FFA News Digest, No 4/92.]

BELAU REFERENDUM POSTPONED UNTIL NOVEMBER

THE LATEST REFERENDUM ON BELAU'S PROPOSED COMPACT of Free Association with the U.S., scheduled by President Etpison for July 13, was halted when the Belau Supreme Court ruled that only the National Congress had power to set a referendum. The new date of November 4 was approved by both houses of congress and coincides with Belau's general election. Seven previous Compact plebiscites have failed to receive the 75% vote necessary for approval (75% because the Compact would overturn the anti-nuclear provision of Belau's constitution). The newest referendum attempts to negate this requirement, asking Belauans to vote on whether a simple majority should suffice to approve the Compact. If this is approved, an early 1993 vote would be held on the Compact itself.

[From: Pacific Daily News, July 11/92 & Aug 4/92; Washington Pacific Report, Vol 10 No 22, 15/08/92.]

EAST TIMOR: TRIALS AND OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

The widely condemned Indonesian government inquiry into the Dili massacre placed some blame on the military for over-reacting and for not having prevented the demonstration, but assigned most of the blame to East Timorese agitators. This line has continued in a series of trials and other measures that have taken place in recent months. Three officers were dismissed from the armed forces and several others disciplined for laxity in not preventing the demonstration. Ten lower ranking soldiers were given sentences of 8-18 months for actions during the massacre. In contrast to this, East Timorese charged in relation to the Dili demonstration and later protests in Jakarta have received much stiffer sentences. Several people charged with "subversion" re the Dili demonstration have received sentences ranging from five years to life. Two students charged with "subversion" for organising a Jakarta protest received sentences of nine and ten years while others received shorter sentences for "expressing feelings of hostility, hatred or contempt toward the government". While the government's actions have been widely criticised, most Western governments and aid donors have expressed satisfaction with the steps taken. At the new Consultative Group for Indonesia meeting in Paris in July, donor countries and agencies pledged increased aid to Indonesia for 1992-93 of \$4.94 billion. However, while the Bush administration has remained a strong supporter of the Indonesian government, the U.S. Congress has been increasingly critical. A number of bills have been put forward in recent months to sever or curtail U.S. aid. Meanwhile, Jose Ramos Horta, Special Representative of the National Council of Maubere (East Timorese) Resistance, has proposed an immediate ceasefire to be followed by negotiations to establish a 7-12 year period of East Timorese self-government under Indonesia. A referendum on self-government, including the independence option, would be held at the end of this period.

[From: Inside Indonesia, No 31, Jun/92; Pacific News Bulletin, Vol 7 No 6, Jun/92; East Timor Action Network/U.S. Documents on East Timor, Vol 15.]

FRANCE JOINS NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY...BUT WILL TESTING RESUME?

The French government has followed up its suspension of nuclear weapons testing by finally joining the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). The French National Assembly approved the NPT on May 20 and accession documents were filed on August 3. The decision marks a sharp change in French government policy since the 1960s and likely reflects the Socialist Government's efforts to court the Green vote in upcoming national elections. However, the government is apparently under strong pressure from the French military and others to resume nuclear weapons testing in 1993. A number of French military and Atomic Energy Commission officials have gone public in recent weeks with calls for a resumption of testing.

[From: Newscler Notes from France, Nos 5 & 6, Jun & Jul/92; Vanuatu Weekly, 08/08/92.]

SPPF RESOURCES

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PRINT MATERIALS & BOOKS

Women in Develop in the South Pacific: Barriers and Opportunities. Papers presented at a conference in Vanuatu, August 1984. Contributors: Hughes, Chilcott & Lucas, Pulea, Kamikamica, Siwatibau, Morauta, Nakikus, Fahey, Schoeffel, Parkinson, Cole, Molisa. Development Studies Centre, ANU, Australia. 1985 225 pp.

Pacific Women: Role of Women in Pacific Societies. T. Tongamoa (ed). Contributors: Tuivaga, Cox & Aitsi, Pollard, Moengangongo, Rarua, Tongamoa. Institute of Pacific Studies, USP, Fiji. 1988. 104 pp. Index, bibliography.

Environment and Pacific Women: From the Globe to the Village. L. R. Va'a and J.M. Teaiwa (eds.). Contributors: Sutton, Naikatini, Bolabola, Robertson, Schramm, Jalal. The Fiji Association of Women Graduates in association with the Institute of Pacific Studies, USP, Fiji. 40 pp. Addresses appropriate technology, effect of development on women and environment, on health, on lifestyles, on communities both urban and rural.

Working With Women: a Community Development Handbook for Pacific Women. Handbook No 29. 1988. South Pacific Commission, New Caledonia. References, illustrations. 86 pp.

Bibliographies:

Women in the Islands: an Annotated Bibliography of Pacific Women's Issues 1982-89. Anne Woods. Plan B Paper. Centre for Pacific Islands Studies, U of HI. July 1990. Around 100 pp.

Women in the South Pacific: a bibliography. Simons and Yee (eds). The Library, University of the South Pacific, Fiji. 1982. 124 pp.

Annotated Bibliography on Women in Development in Asia and the Pacific. WINAP, POPIN and the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. 1988. 120 pp.

Regional Meeting of Pacific Islands Women's Non-Governmental Organisations, 1985. Report. South Pacific Commission, New Caledonia. 99 pp.

Workshop on Socio-Economic Statistics on Women: 1987. Report. South Pacific Commission, New Caledonia. 25 pp.

Pacific Studies. Domestic Violence in Oceania. D. Robertson (ed). D. Counts (guest ed). The Institute for

Polynesian Studies, Brigham Young University-Hawaii. July 1990. Contributors: Korbin, Aucoin, Lateef, Nero, Carucci, Lewis, Nash, Mitchell, Counts, McDowell, Scaglione, Zimmer. 304 pp. References.

Tahiti: the Other Side. R. Crocombe and A. Hereniko (eds). Institute of Pacific Studies, USP, Fiji in association with Editions Haere Po No Tahiti. English edition 1985. 147 pp. Includes accounts by three Tahitian women.

PNG Law Reform Commission publications:
Marriage in Papua New Guinea (1986), Violence in Urban Papua New Guinea (1985), Violence in Rural Papua New Guinea (1986). See this issue p. 16.

The Health of Women in Papua New Guinea. J. Gillett. PNG Institute of Medical Research. 1990. 180 pp.

Women and Education in Papua New Guinea and the South Pacific. E. Wormald and A. Crossley (eds). U of PNG Press. 1988. 272 pp. Index. Proceedings of the 1987 Women in Education Conference.

Regional Newsletter and Bulletins:

Women's News, Pacific Womens Resource Bureau, SPC, New Caledonia. Quarterly.

Pacific Aids Alert, SPC, New Caledonia. Quarterly.

Pawonet Newsletter and Newsclippings. Pacific Regional YWCA. Quarterly.

and many in-country newsletters, e.g. Balance (Fiji), Nius Blong Meri (PNG), etc.

AUDIO VISUALS

Pacific Women: Challenge to Change. 60 min. 1988. VHS/NTSC. Documentary of the 1988 South Pacific Commission 1988 Pacific Women's Conference. Rental bookings through SPPF.

Stap Isi (Take It Easy): 30 min. 1989. VHS/NTSC. In Tok Pisin with English subtitles. A teaching video to reduce violence in the family in PNG. See this issue p. 15. Rental bookings through SPPF.

and missed out
last issue...



Em i Graun Blong Yumi: (This is Our Land) Popular Theatre and the Melanesian Environment. 59 min. VHS/NTSC (or PAL directly from CUSO Vanuatu, PO Box 158, Port Vila, Vanuatu). Broadcast quality. Available in French or English. Highlights the work of Seil Adson Tim in Solomon Islands, Wan Smol Bag Theatre in Vanuatu and Raun Isi Theatre with the National Theatre of PNG. Environment is the key theme. The objective is to bring popular theatre as a teaching tool to the attention of people in the Pacific. Excellent.

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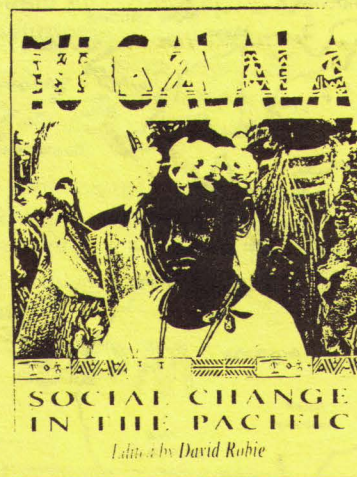
TU GALALA: Social Change in the Pacific

Edited by David Robie. Bridget Williams Books/Pluto Press, NZ. Order from SPPF for \$24.00 plus postage.

For many outsiders, a persistent image of the Pacific has been that of a tranquil paradise. But for Pacific islanders, this image of tranquil and static societies bears little resemblance to current reality. Increasing poverty, social and political upheaval, environmental degradation, the impact of militarism and nuclear testing, and continued colonialism confronted by a range of independence movements and liberation struggles are significant aspects of the contemporary Pacific.

The story of this other Pacific provides the basis for *Tu Galala*, David Robie's long awaited sequel to *Blood on their Banner: Nationalist Struggles in the South Pacific*. *Tu Galala*, a Fijian term meaning 'freedom' or 'self-determination', is a collection of essays primarily by Pacific social and political activists. It does not disappoint. Broader in scope than the earlier book, *Tu Galala* should be essential reading for anyone hoping to gain some understanding of current issues and developments in the Pacific. While recent events have already dated several articles, they still provide essential background and serve as a useful introduction to the issues and to many of the key players in the social movements and organisations involved.

Robie's decision to base his book on the accounts of grassroots activists directly involved in these social struggles provides a refreshing sense of intimacy and engagement with the issues which is missing from the predominantly outsider/academic perspective which dominates much writing on the Pacific. *Tu Galala* also brings home the point that the Pacific is not unique. The issues confronting the Pacific and the changes it is experiencing have much in common with other parts of the world. Those with a general interest in indigenous peoples, liberation struggles, environmental issues, militarisation issues and socio-political change will find much to interest them in *Tu Galala*.



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Photo by Quentin Shaw

Marasin meri nutrition workshop

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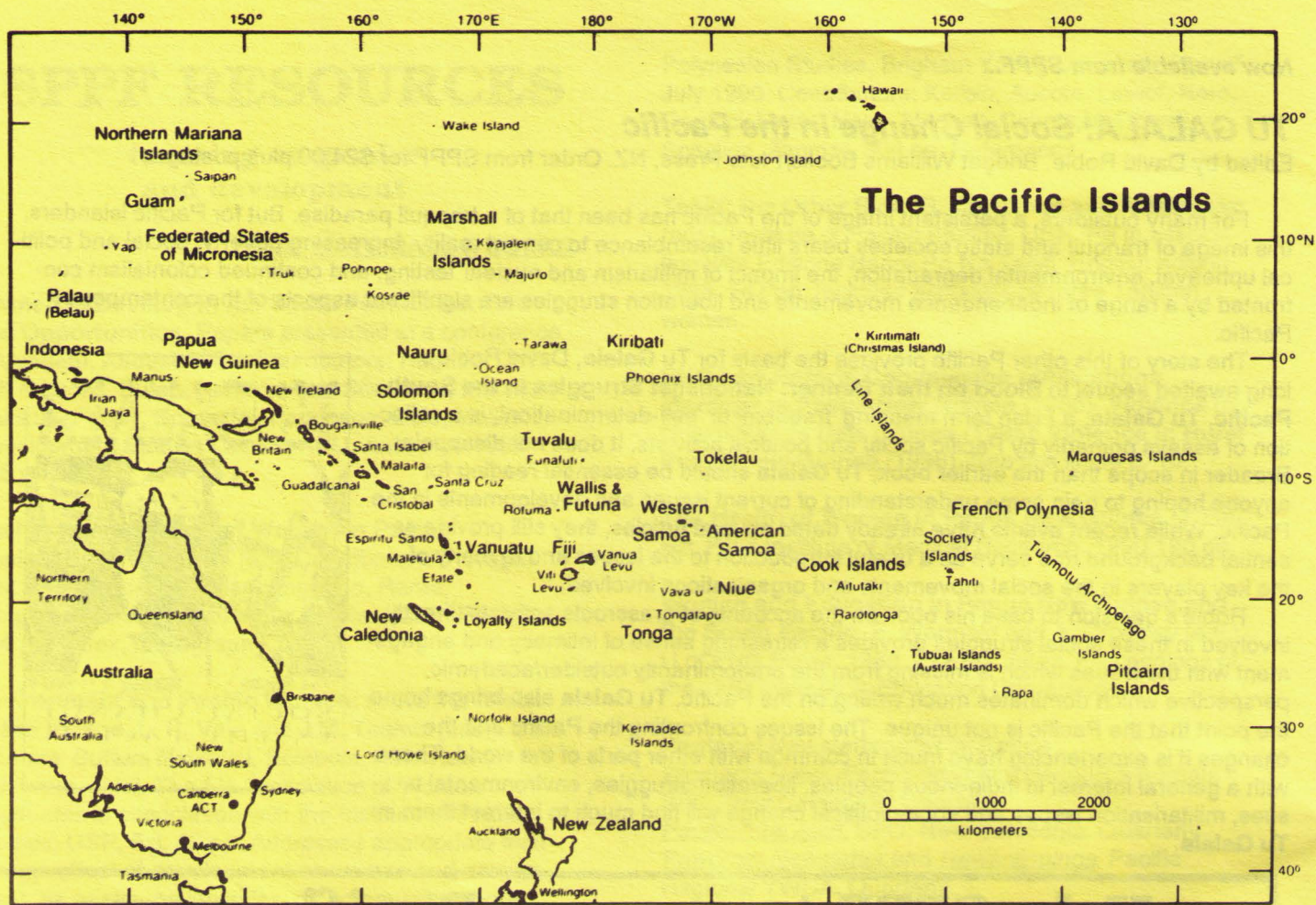
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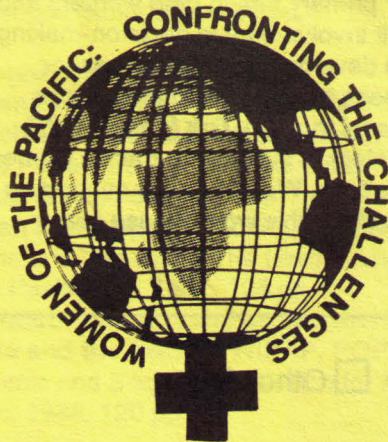
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Look for a conference report in the next
Tok Blong SPPF

PACIFIC ISLANDERS OUTNUMBER AUCKLAND MAORIS

Pacific Islanders have outstripped the Maori population of NZ's largest city. Auckland Pacific Islanders now number 94,110 or 12% of the city's population while there are 71,637 Maoris.

By contrast, the capital Wellington has 30,072 Maoris, but a rapidly growing number of Pacific Islanders, currently at 21,128. The Wellington islanders comprise the overwhelming majority of NZ's remaining Pacific Islander population. Islanders represent 5% of Wellington's population while Maoris comprise 7.6%.

The figures are contained in the Statistics Department's regional summary released Monday. The NZ population stood at 3,373,926 on census night.

[From *Vanuatu Weekly*, 18/07/92]



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