

**PROGRESS REPORT**



**YOUTH VISIONING FOR ISLAND LIVING**

**SUPPORTING YOUTH IN THE  
IMPLEMENTATION OF SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES FOLLOWING  
THE REVIEW OF THE SIDS PROGRAMME  
OF ACTION, MAURITIUS 2005**



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**For the Lighthouse Foundation  
December 2006**

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## INTRODUCTION

Over the last six months of the Youth Visioning for Island Living initiative, there has been rapid progress and a marked increase in activities. This maturation of the initiative has helped shape project procedures and highlighted the need to formulate a strategy for the long-term future. In addition, and perhaps more importantly, as projects are being completed and follow-up projects initiated, preliminary signs of the impact and successes foreseen by the initiative are starting to be apparent.

Three projects were completed during this period, sixteen projects are currently in progress and five are being developed. Two of the completed projects are presented below to highlight some of the significant achievements of the Youth Visioning initiative. The efforts made by these youth in improving the lives of people in their communities are indeed commendable.

In Tonga, Ebonie Fifita led the 'On the Spot' Radio programme. Her group prepared radio scripts, discussions and music aimed at creating awareness about the Millennium Development Goals and ways to achieve them. Despite challenges along the way, including having their recording studio burnt down during the recent riots, the group now aims to move into youth-generated music and drama with assistance from local businesses.

In the Solomon Islands, Kennedy Folasi led a group of unemployed youth as part of his Dream Cast drama group to dramatize issues affecting young people in their communities. After the experience, four members found work, one member returned to school after realizing how important it is and parents in the communities openly support the group having seen the impact that their performances have had on their children. Dream Cast are now looking for a permanent home for their performances as well as training new members and touring in other provinces.

This report has been prepared for the Lighthouse Foundation as a deliverable for the contract entitled 'Youth Visioning for Island Living: Supporting youth in the implementation of sustainable development activities following the review of the SIDS Programme of Action, Mauritius 2005' and signed on 22 September 2005. The report concentrates on the progress made in the implementation of youth-led projects in small islands and territories in the Caribbean, Pacific and AIMS regions within the framework of Youth Visioning for Island Living for the period July to December 2006

## SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

Towards the end of the first half of the year, the number of project proposals received was quite significant. Although eighteen projects were in development, many of the leaders showed little or no interest in actively taking steps to implement their proposals. As such, there was a need to take a pro-active role in searching for other young people who would be enthusiastic about working with the initiative - they would not necessarily need to have attended the Mauritius event or know about the Youth Visioning initiative. Therefore, during the period April to July, considerable attention was focused on increasing promotional activities and spreading the Youth Visioning message through our networks:

- The first newsletter in April 2006 was sent to a network of over 1200 partners where new project proposals were invited.
- Collaboration with the organization, **Youth for a Sustainable Future Pacifika** (YSFP) allowed tapping into their network of youth members.
- Participation in the first **Pacific Youth Festival** (Tahiti) in July enabled further promotion of the initiative.

As a consequence, many positive responses were received and the second half of 2006 has been the busiest period of the project implementation phase.

Thereafter, towards the end of August a rush of second and even third proposals from the same island were received. Recognizing this would dramatically put pressure on the level of remaining funds a re-assessment of the overall budget was carried out.

A decision was taken to halt approving any second proposals from islands and once again focus on those countries that had yet to implement a project. A '**last chance**' request was made to these islands giving them ample time to at least indicate whether they were still interested in implementing a project. Through this plan five projects that had been reviewed by the Committee more than three months ago but were lying dormant, were successfully revived.

At the end of October and after 18 months of inviting proposals, it was felt that sufficient time and opportunities have been given to all Mauritius participants to submit a proposal. As a consequence, reviewing and approving second project proposals from islands that had already implemented a project began - the aim being to get as many projects completed by the end of 2007.

## PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

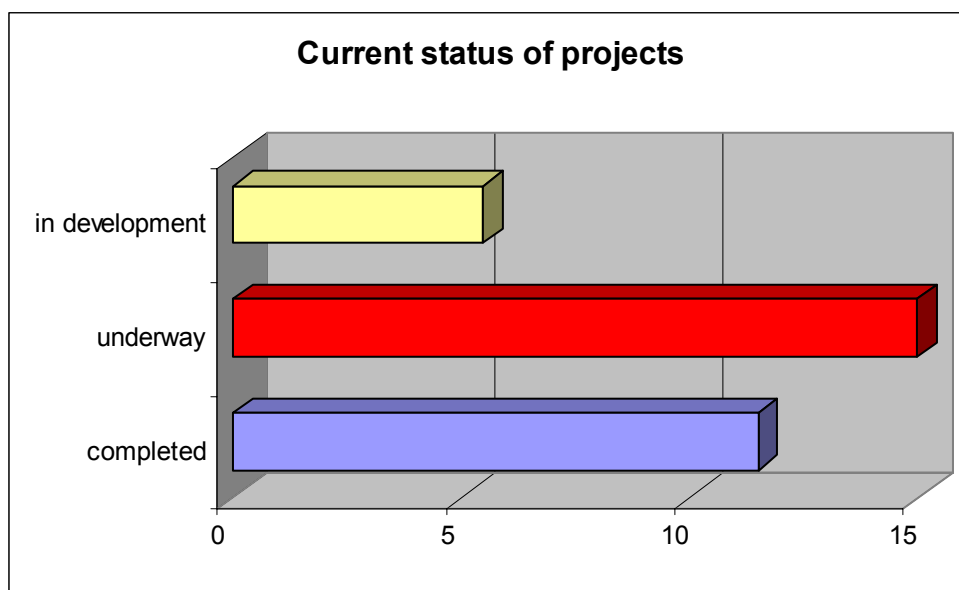


Chart 1

As seen from the chart above, there are currently thirty-one projects, eleven of these have been completed, fifteen are in progress and five are currently being developed. For a breakdown of the projects by region (Chart 2 & 3) and by themes (Chart 4), see the charts in **annex I**. For more details regarding each project, please go to **annex II**.

### **Projects completed**

During the period July to December 2006 three projects have been completed. All three were from the Pacific, under the theme of *Life and Love in Islands* and they started in March 2006:

- National Pride and Unity, Federated States of Micronesia.
- Dream Cast Drama Awareness Program, Solomon Islands
- On the Spot Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Radio Show, Tonga (see **annex III** for a first-hand evaluation of the project)

It is expected that a further ten projects will be completed in the first half of 2007 and ten more in the second half of 2007 (**annex II, Chart 5**).

In terms of continuity some of the projects that began in 2005 have proven successful:

- Young People Against HIV/AIDS, Cape Verde  
(September 2005 – February 2006)  
Lourenço Andrade repeated his HIV/AIDS awareness campaign using sports to attract young people. At the month long event (22 July – 20 August '06) there was also debates, HIV/AIDS screening and a cultural evening of theatre, dance and music.

- Palé Kwéyòl, Dominica  
(August 2005 – January 2006)

Jahisiah Benoit's revival of the Creole language goes from strength to strength with thoughts of even expanding the program to Martinique and Guadeloupe. The progress is probably best explained in his own words, *“Back in Dominica we commenced the second cycle of the Palé Kwéyòl program last week. So far we have had the opening ceremony/press conference, a television program, and a radio program, the interviews for the youth who are to take up office at the Kwéyòl desk are scheduled for today and tomorrow. We have six persons applying for this job, ten who have applied for the training as tutors. Soon their training will commence as well as the spelling B.”*

**Solomon Islands:** Dream Cast Drama group performed shows focused on issues affecting young people in the communities around Honiara.



**Tonga:** ‘On the Spot’ Radio team informed local communities about the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and how to achieve them.

### **Projects underway**

There are currently fifteen projects that are underway. As mentioned earlier, the networking and promotional activities have contributed to the Pacific region having the most number of projects. This is followed by the Caribbean and then the AIMS (Atlantic, Indian, Mediterranean and South China Sea) region.

#### **Projects by Region**

<b>Region</b>	<b>Projects</b>
AIMS	4
Caribbean	5
Pacific	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>

#### **Projects by theme**

<b>Themes</b>	<b>Projects</b>
Life & Love on Islands	9
Money in my Pocket	4
My Island Home	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>

The theme *Life and Love on Islands* continues to be the most popular amongst the projects with nine of the fifteen projects based on this. They tackle a diverse range of issues such as HIV/AIDS, preservation of island traditions and strengthening of community values. This is followed by *My Island Home* and *Money in my Pocket*. All regions follow this preference in themes also (see **annex I, Chart 4**).

Two interesting initiatives that represent a big challenge are the Fish Farm (PNG) and Home Gardening (Tuvalu) projects. The first one focuses on raising edible fish and the second one on growing vegetables. Both projects have the intention of developing them into marketable items so as to directly provide income and employment to the youth involved. The success of their activities, which depends on how well they can grow vegetables and fish, will impact directly on the long-term sustainability of their project and their communities at large.

Special mention should also be made for the Dominica-Seychelles Creole exchange that took place in October. The predominant objective of this exchange is to share knowledge and ideas to enhance the promotion and implementation (in Dominica's case through the Palé Kwéyòl programme) of the Creole language in their respective islands, as well as to create links for future activities. Although, complications led to only the Dominican representative visiting Seychelles, preliminary communication from Jahisiah Benoit indicate that the visit has been very successful and a full report is awaited in the near future.

### **Projects being developed**

Six months ago, eighteen projects were at the initial stages of development, half of which did not proceed further. Many of these originated from the Caribbean and despite many efforts of encouragement, the youth did not respond positively.

Currently there are five projects in active development. Three of these originate from the Pacific, one from the AIMS and one from the Caribbean.

## ***Project funds spent and committed to date***

Project funds spent and committed to date are detailed in **annex IV**.

Projects financed through the Lighthouse Foundation's funds (US \$57,090 to date) are shown on the left column of the table whilst HIV/AIDS related projects (US \$13,900) are derived from a UNAIDS funding source totaling US \$28,000.

Funding of about US \$3000 per project and up to US \$4000 for HIV/AIDS themed projects is still the norm.

In total, US \$70,990 has been spent on and/or committed to 26 projects, which averages out to US \$2,730 per project.



**Samoa:** Young people caring for disadvantaged families in nearby villages also learn new skills in organizing community events.



**St. Kitts & Nevis:** Participants at Camp Sanguine are guided by former students on 'decision making'. Other issues included education, community building and the value of volunteering



**Dominica:** A competitor in the Creole Spelling B. The Palé Kwéyòl programme is now in its second year and project leader Jahisiah Benoit participated in the Creole Exchange in the Seychelles to discover new initiatives to enrich activities back home.



## **NETWORKING AND AWARENESS**

### **Website**

The website is regularly updated with new items almost every week. It is often cited as the most dependable source for the latest news and information in any correspondence with potential partners.

A new section called ‘Starting a project’, which provides a step-by-step guide to submitting a project proposal has been very helpful to many potential partners. The project proposals received have often used the downloadable template available from this section, which is an indication of the frequency of access and utilization.

### **Newsletter**

The bi-monthly newsletter continues to inform the youth and our network of partners about the latest news. Four editions have been published so far, the latest being the November-December issue.

### **Networks**

As mentioned earlier, collaboration with **Youth for a Sustainable Future Pacifika (YSFP)** has been instrumental in obtaining new project proposals. After a meeting with one of the Australian Directors, Shasheen Jayaweera, in Auckland in April 2006, ten new proposals were received from the Pacific, three of which are currently being funded. YSFP presently have 210 members from 20 different countries.

In addition, Youth Visioning was present at the first **Pacific Youth Festival** held in Tahiti in July 2006, which brought together 1000 young people from 25 countries. It provided a good opportunity to disseminate information to a wide audience of young people through conferences, workshops and an information booth (see **annex V** for more details).

At the Pacific Youth Festival, the initiative benefited from the collaboration with UNESCO’s Youth Section. The latest Youth Visioning News is included in their weekly news bulletin and they also represent the initiative at the various international youth forums organized by themselves or others. The level of their confidence in the Youth Visioning initiative is reflected in their US\$ 10,000 contribution to the project funds and the replication of the Youth Visioning framework for follow-up activities by youth that participate in their youth forums.

### **DVD**

The search for a young video producer has begun. Multiple CVs and sample works have been obtained and a final selection will be made in the coming weeks. To reiterate, the aim is to develop a short video to showcase the work being done by the youth to hopefully inspire other young people living in small islands to realize their own ‘island vision’.

## CLOSING COMMENTS

During the last six months, with the steady expansion of the portfolio of projects and the corresponding decline in funds, there is a need to be more selective in the projects to be sponsored. As mentioned earlier, this is reflective of the successful networking activities in the Pacific that has also redressed the imbalance of Caribbean projects at the beginning of the implementation phase. Although the AIMS region has half as many projects, it is also a smaller region. With such rapid expansion in the last six months, some new lessons were encountered:

- It appears that possibilities of getting Mauritius participants to implement projects have been more or less exhausted. From now on, energies will be concentrated on targeting specific islands and other youth, particularly where there has been no project so far.
- Project leaders need to actively promote Youth Visioning more. The Youth Visioning logo has been requested to be put on t-shirts and any other promotional materials.
- Project leaders are also reminded to check and publicize their dedicated project page on the Youth Visioning website.
- Priority still remains to give opportunities to those islands that have yet to implement a project. However, the essential requirement that it must be youth led with the objective of capacity building is strictly applied. There have been a number of proposals where major NGOs or Government Ministries would take the lead and these had to be declined. However, there are of course exceptions, for instance where the youth are not connected to internet or have a bank account for their group or organization and these are considered on a case-by-case basis.
- To best understand the impact and work done by the youth, it is ideal to have someone that can physically visit the project site and report back to the Committee. As this is financially impossible, it is essential to continue to make partnerships with people in the island or the region.
- Another important indication of the impact of this initiative would be to find out the extent to which and what the youth have actually learned or gained from their participation and experiences. Hence, a survey is timely to gauge this, in terms of building their capacity in visioning, conceptualizing, designing and writing project proposals, implementing the project, reporting and evaluation.

The sentiments expressed by UNESCO's Youth Section, the youth and other partners are very encouraging and all are intrigued about the future of this initiative. Therefore, the Coasts & Small Islands (CSI) platform will do its best to continue leading and extending Youth Visioning for Island Living beyond 2007.

The support of the Lighthouse Foundation has and continues to be crucial to the success of Youth Visioning.

**'We thank you for your commitment to this initiative and look forward to keeping you informed of the ongoing project implementation phase'.**

The Youth Visioning Committee.

## ANNEX I - Charts

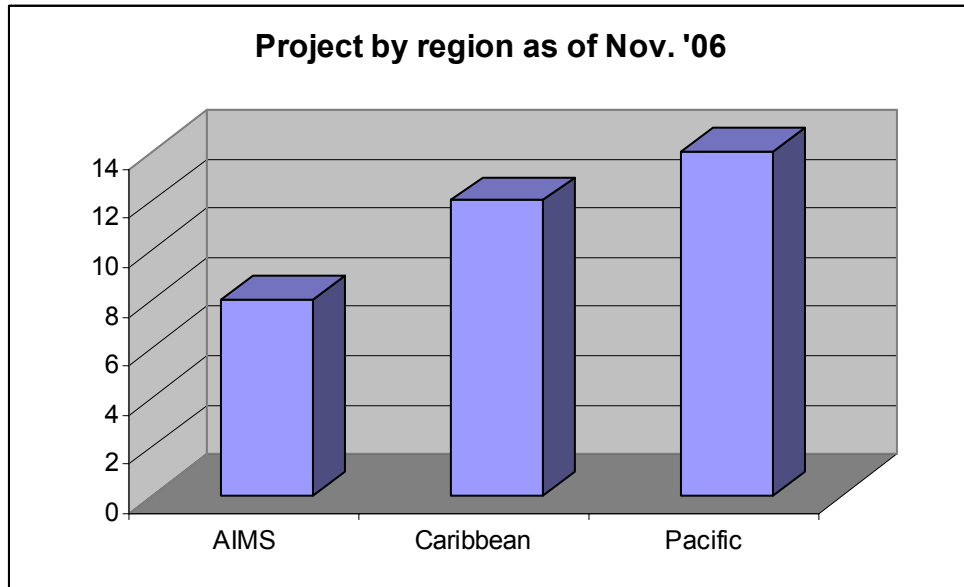


Chart 2

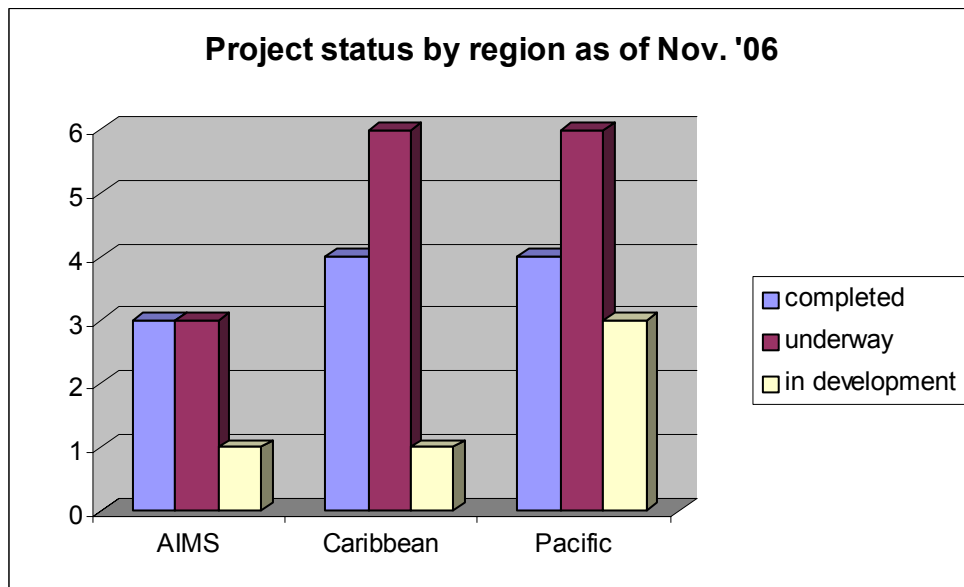


Chart 3

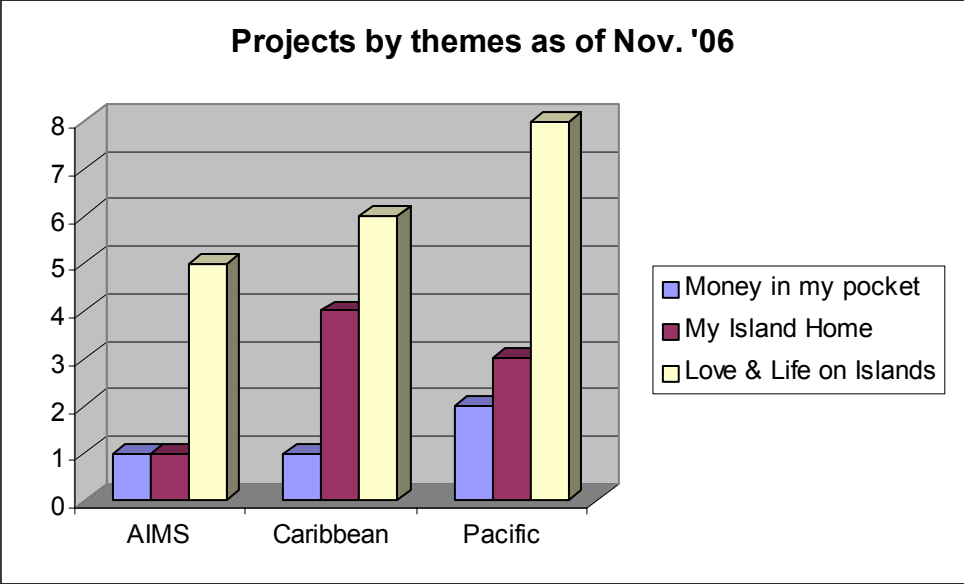


Chart 4

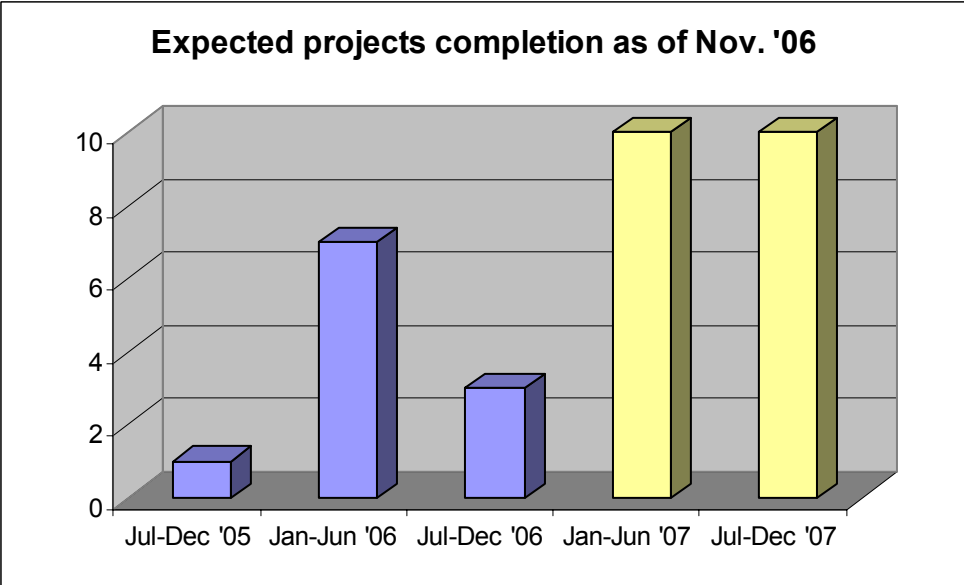


Chart 5

## ANNEX II – Project Descriptions

\* Projects that were completed or began during July-December 2006 have been highlighted in yellow.

### **Projects completed**

Island	Project	Time Frame	Long-term Sustainability	\$ US
<b>AIMS</b>				
Cape Verde	Raising awareness of HIV/AIDS through sport	August 2005 – February 2006	Partners plan to repeat activities in 2006 on their own	1,900
Mauritius	Integrating disabled youth into society	October 2005 – March 2006	Further activities being planned	1,600
Singapore	Intergenerational celebration of Chinese New Year	February 2005- May 2005	Further activities being planned	900
<b>CARIBBEAN</b>				
Antigua & Barbuda	Creation of a website with information for aspiring young entrepreneurs	September 2005 – March 2006	Local support being sought to continue activities	2,500
Dominica	Clean-up and waste management campaign in one village	July 2005 – January 2006	Further activities being planned	2,250
Dominica	Promotion of the Creole language through classes and cultural activities	August 2005 – February 2006	Local support has been secured to continue activities	2,000
Jamaica	Construction of a playground with environmental interpretive stations	September 2005 – February 2006	Youth leader left island, project was completed by NGO	2,500
<b>PACIFIC</b>				
Fiji	Establishment of Youth Parliament Alumni and commitment to 3 youth campaigns	September 2005 – February 2006	Future projects have been identified and committed to by Alumni group	1,900
Federated States of Micronesia	Promotion of national pride and unity through a poster competition	March – September 2006		2,300
Solomon Islands	Education through drama about HIV/AIDS, drugs, alcohol	March – September 2006	Aim to build a permanent centre for the group to perform, recruit new members, tour other provinces	3,300
Tonga	Series of radio programs on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)	March – September 2006	Interest from private sponsors to continue radio shows on different themes	2,000

## Projects underway

Island	Project	Time Frame	\$ US
<b>AIMS</b>			
Seychelles	Helping to create more youth employment through increased local investment	March 2006 – February 2007	2,000
Mauritius	HIV/AIDS awareness workshop leading to youth follow-up action	November 2006 – July 2007	4,000
Zanzibar	HIV/AIDS awareness in schools	November 2006 – July 2007	4,000
<b>CARIBBEAN</b>			
Haiti	Environmental education through tree-planting and clean-up competitions	July 2006 – June 2007	3,200
St. Kitts and Nevis	Organization of a youth camp for underprivileged students with a commitment to volunteer projects	May 2006 – January 2007	3,500
St Lucia	HIV/AIDS awareness through a panel discussion and jingle competition	June 2006 – March 2007	4,000
Dominica-Seychelles	Island exchange to share information on celebrating and teaching Creole language and customs	August 2006 – January 2007	3,500
San Andres	Training and role playing games to educate on land tenure issues	June 2006 – June 2007	3,300
St. Vincent and Grenadines	Recording local traditions from elders to pass on to the next generations	December 2006 – October 2007	3,000
<b>PACIFIC</b>			
Marshall Islands	Inter-generational exchange to preserve local handicraft and skills	October 2006 – October 2007	3,000
Papua New Guinea	Fish farming to sell fish in local markets to create sustainable income	November 2006 – June 2007	3,000
Samoa	Teaching the performing art of the fire-knife dance	September 2006 – January 2007	3,140
Samoa	Young people helping the needy and elderly – clean-ups and clothing and food donation	July 2006 – January 2007	2,000
Tuvalu	Educate young people how to establish sustainable home gardening for income	December 2006 – November 2007	3,000
Vanuatu	Environmental education and construction of village rubbish pits	November 2006 – June 2007	3,200

### ***Projects being developed***

<b>Island</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>\$ US</b>
<b>AIMS</b>			
Madagascar	Environmental education and planning in a village	Detailed proposal being prepared	3,000
<b>CARIBBEAN</b>			
Trinidad and Tobago	Beach protection and conservation	Waiting for revision of project proposal	3,000
<b>PACIFIC</b>			
Niue	Environmental awareness raising and cleanup campaign	Detailed proposal being prepared	2,000
Niue	Preserving the Niuean language	Revising proposal	2,000
Cook Islands	Implement recycling system in schools	Detailed proposal being prepared	In development

## **ANNEX III – Visit to Tongan Youth Visioning project**

### **Mission to Tonga (7 July – 10 July, 2006) by Lindsey Higgs**

#### **Background**

In November of 2005, the YV Committee received a project proposal from a youth group in Tonga that is affiliated with Youth for a Sustainable Future with the aim of educating people about the MDGs and encouraging young people to get involved. A contract to support this project was issued by UNESCO Apia in March 2006.

Despite the cancellation and subsequent rescheduling of my planned 6 July flight I was able to make a short mission to Tonga to meet with the YV project leaders there as well as with Mrs. Lucy Moala-Mafi, Secretary-General of the Tongan National Commission for UNESCO.

#### **YV Project: On the Spot –Raising awareness about the MDGs**

I stayed with the family of the project leader and the family was very friendly and welcoming. Much to my surprise, I discovered that Lyndsey Fifita who we thought was the young project leader is in fact the mother of the project leader, Ebonie Fifita. Lyndsey is very involved in support the project but it is Ebonie, 22 years old, who is actually leading it. Ebonie is very dynamic and proud of her Tongan heritage and committed to staying in Tonga and contributing to youth development there. She and her siblings (there are five children in the family) have been active in cultural performances both in Tonga and within the Pacific region, including traveling to Palau for the Pacific Arts Festival in 2004. Ebonie was also selected this year as one of the Tongan representatives on the Ship for World Youth. She is currently working on a degree in youth development policy at the local USP campus.

Ebonie has a core group of about 10 people working on the project, including several of her siblings, but as the activities progress more youth have expressed interest in taking part. In response to the growing interest they decided to have 100 T-shirts printed instead of 20 as originally planned. Their house is a constant hub of activity with young people coming and going. The group has been conducting surveys during late June/early July and when I was there they had 80 completed. They had a launching event planned for 12 July but have decided to postpone that until August when more of the MDG raps and songs will be ready to be performed. They have had a good response so far from youth interested in writing songs and raps on the MDG theme.

The first radio show aired Wednesday, July 12, on both AM and FM. I met the owner of the recording studio who is providing his services for free and he recorded an interview between Ebonie and I about YV which was used during the first radio show. The group was in midst of painting their van with the MDGs while I was there and they plan to take the van to the market each Saturday to conduct informal quizzes and surveys on the MDGs to raise awareness.

Ebonie told me that the biggest challenge thus far has been the lack of active support from the government. The government has not opposed the project but has not shown much interest in backing it or doing much to promote the MDGs in Tonga. However, while I was there a new government employee had just been appointed to take over the MDGs and Ebonie was going to



pick up information from him. I was also able to gather materials on the MDGs from the UNDP Office here and deliver those to Ebonie and her team.

Food costs have proved higher than anticipated as many of the youth involved in the project come back to the Fifita's house after the activities to eat together. However, Ebonie also stressed that a particular benefit of this project is that it is not affiliated with any particular school or church – often sources of division and rivalry between youth involved in different activities. This project is providing an opportunity for many different youth to come together. It has been difficult to get the local girls involved in the project as they tend to have more family obligations and are not allowed as much free time as the boys. The girls I met who are involved in the project had lived abroad in Australia and New Zealand and generally had more confidence and interest in the project activities than the local girls.

The group is already thinking of means of making the project sustainable, though perhaps with more of a focus on youth-generated music and drama after the MDG program is over, and they are seeking local support. Ebonie said that businesses have generally been supportive but no firm funding commitments have been made as the past month has been busy with the celebrations for the king's birthday. She plans to follow up in the coming weeks.

Overall I was very impressed with the energy and commitment of Ebonie and her team. It was wonderful to put faces to the names that we have seen for months through email correspondence. I was able to provide them with MDG materials and also explain more about YV, including telling them about their project page on the web site, not only to those on the project team but also to the wider audience who will hear the radio interview.

## **Conclusion**

It was excellent to have the opportunity to meet some of the YV project leaders in person and also to be able to strengthen the connection between the Tongan National Commission and the project leaders. The benefits of face-to-face meetings with the YV project leaders cannot be underestimated as I was able to learn much more about the project and the people running it in just a few short days. As it is not possible for the YV Committee to physically visit each project, this mission has re-emphasized for me the importance of seeking the cooperation of field offices and national commissions to assist in the on the ground monitoring of the projects.

## ANNEX IV – Funds spent and committed to date (December 2006)

Country	Project	YV Funds (\$US)	UNAIDS Funds
<b>Funds already spent</b>			
Dominica 1	Clean-up in Gutter Village	2,250	
Dominica 2	Parle Creole	2,000	
Antigua & Barbuda	Youth employment	2,500	
Fiji	Training youth leaders	1,900	
Jamaica	Environmental education	2,500	
Mauritius	Integration of disabled youth	1,600	
Singapore	Intergenerational activities	900	
Cape Verde	Young People against HIV/AIDS		1,900
FSM (Apia)	Unity and national pride	2,300	
Solomon Islands (Apia)	Awareness raising through drama	3,300	
Tonga (Apia)	Radio show on MDGs	2,000	
<b>Total</b>		<b>21,250</b>	<b>1,900</b>
<b>Funds Committed (Contracts underway/issued)</b>			
Seychelles	Youth employment	2,000	
Mauritius	HIV/AIDS awareness		4,000
Zanzibar	HIV/AIDS awareness for school youth		4,000
Dominica/Seychelles	Creole Exchange	3,500	
Haiti	Tree planting, clean-ups	3,200	
San Andres	Role Playing Game	3,300	
St Kitts	Youth camp/training	3,500	
St Lucia	HIV/AIDS awareness		4,000
St. Vincent & Grenadines	Recording local traditions	3,000	
Marshall Islands	Preserving Handicrafts	3,000	
PNG	Fish farm	3,000	
Samoa	Youth volunteering	2,000	
Samoa	Fire-knife dance workshops	3,140	
Tuvalu	Home Gardening	3,000	
Vanuatu	Environmental education + clean-up	3,200	
<b>Total</b>		<b>35,840</b>	<b>12,000</b>
<b>CURRENT TOTAL</b>		<b>57,090</b>	<b>13,900</b>
<b>COMBINED TOTAL \$US 70,990</b>			