



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

UNESCO In the Pacific

April – June, 2017

From the desk of the Director



Fahad Bin Sakhatwani PHOTOGRAPHY All Rights

We are pleased to bring to you the second issue of the *UNESCO in the Pacific*. We are pleased that that our modest attempt at first issue in March 2017, which came after a long hiatus of one and half years, received a warm reception from the other UNESCO offices. We thank you for your support and hope to have you with us as the periodic newsletter matures.

With this in mind, it is our pleasure to share the stories from April to June 2017. The issue covers the Education and the Culture sectors works in Vanuatu, the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) and Social and Human Sciences and Communication and Information sectors' work in Samoa, and Culture sector's work in Palau.

We are toying with the idea of initiating a tradition of including a seminal article from a sector in each of the forthcoming issues. As a newsletter of an Organization, which aims at providing an open, evidence-based source of thinking for promotion of scientific, critical, empowered and inclusive societies and minds, we feel we should do a little-bit more than just report on what we did in recent. Your thoughts and suggestions on this are welcome. Could we interest you, for example, to be contributors who will share ideas on theory and pedagogy and relevance of teacher praxis? Or in moving towards combining, as the Pacific says, 'traditional science' with 'sample- or lab-tested science', may we have you to write introductory thoughts to share with our stakeholders in the Pacific?

With these in mind, we are delighted to welcome you to this issue and we hope that you would enjoy our efforts at writing. We will be glad to receive your feedback.

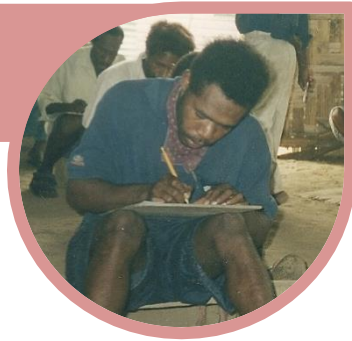
Nisha

UNESCO Representative & Director of the Office for the Pacific States

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Educators reflect on professional standards



In Port Vila on the 2nd - 4th May 2017, UNESCO in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Training in Vanuatu co-hosted the meeting to examine how Professional Standards for School Principals in Vanuatu were being implemented.



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About twenty experienced educators came together in a three day event that was supported by UNESCO in May this year, at Port Vila.

In this event, the group of Principals, Provincial Education Officers from the provinces, School Improvement Officers and officials from the Vanuatu Ministry of Education and Training (VMET), had the opportunity to acknowledge the importance of understanding the key roles and responsibilities of school principals in implementing the standards and to reinforce the idea that the standards are to serve as a benchmark for principal practices. In addition to these standards, they agreed on common procedures and mechanisms for implementing and recording the application of the standards in schools.

The four aspects to the professional standards for school leaders are leadership, management, teaching and learning, and community and partnership. Each standard has a set of expectations included along with indicators of performance or of having reached the standard. The leadership standards also provide a clear indicator of the varied aspects and expectations of the role of the principal. The ultimate aim is by improving the professional practice of school principals, this will impact on the teaching and learning in the classroom and ultimately lift student achievement. The standards were formally launched in 2016 and have been in use for a year.

The educators reflected on how they are working in schools and how they are influencing professional practices. They clarified their role and their expectations of each other. The role of a key principal was examined and discussions were held around the importance of this role to support other principals and schools. A key concern was the perceived increase in workloads relating to the reporting and recording. For the principals, most of the evidence that they are expected to collect as evidence is already part of the expectation of their role in the school as a leader. Evidence relating to staff development, student achievement and financial responsibility for example, is already part of their job description.

All participants agreed on the importance of having clear guidelines and work plans to support success. The challenges facing the more remote schools were acknowledged and the participants discussed some of the ways they could reduce this challenge and ensure that these schools received the support that other less remote schools got. The establishment of a national association for principals was further promoted as a key means to support all principals.

This workshop was important in that it provided an opportunity for principals and key education officials to reach common understandings in relation to the implementation and application of professional standards for school principals in Vanuatu.



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Savaia - first tsunami ready community



Savaia village, on the southern coast of Upolu in Samoa, is recognized by the UNESCO Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) as Samoa's first Tsunami Ready community.

The Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE) and Chair of the Disaster Advisory Committee, Afioga Ulu Bismarck Crawley said that "the Tsunami Ready program is critical in identifying gaps in tsunami preparedness and response at the village level and to guide the implementation of tsunami related capacity strengthening programs".

Savaia has been selected as the pilot village for this program as it has already completed the community disaster and climate risk management program and had participated in the IOC's Exercise Pacific Wave 2017 (PACWAVE17). This program will be up-scaled to become a multi-hazard readiness recognition program for Samoa". Samoa is the first Pacific Island Country to implement the program.

To achieve the recognition, Savaia had to meet 10 guidelines covering hazard assessment, tsunami signage, evacuation mapping and planning, education and outreach, and 24hrs x 7days communications and response planning. The achievements were put into action through a community exercise that was part of the as part of IOC's PACWAVE17.

Chief and representative of the village of Savaia said

"This is indeed a proud moment for Savaia, because never before have we realized how important it is to prepare for disasters such as Tsunami,"



Science Programme Specialist Serena Heckler with village representative

©MNRE, Samoa

The UNESCO-IOC Tsunami Ready pilot is performance based community recognition program modeled after the United States National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration National Weather Service's successful TsunamiReady® Program. The Pacific Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System encompasses 46 countries, covering the Pacific Ocean and its marginal seas spanning more than 20,000 kilometers, and over history, has suffered 75% of the world's fatal tsunamis.

The UNESCO IOC office in Suva and ITIC, a partnership of UNESCO IOC and the US NOAA, are working together to facilitate pilots in the Pacific. Currently, Mexico and Guatemala in Meso-America, Ecuador in the South East Pacific, and Tonga and Vanuatu in the South West Pacific have indicated interest.



©MNRE, Samoa

Safeguarding indigenous architecture



The Safeguarding of Indigenous Architecture in Vanuatu expects to encourage and trigger a new wave of traditional building in the region.

The Nakamal is a chiefly abode that upholds customs and traditional governance of Vanuatu communities, it also has a significant functional role in disaster risk reduction. In the event of the category 5 Cyclone Pam that swept across the islands of Vanuatu and affecting half of its population, the Nakamals was one of the safest evacuation shelter for its people.

The aftermath and damage caused by Cyclone Pam also affected the Nakamals. As a result, it has initiated efforts to not only safeguard the Nakamals but the unique indigenous architectural designs of Vanuatu.

With support from the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund, the Vanuatu National Cultural Centre and Museum worked together with the UNESCO Office in the Pacific conducted a research initiated as a Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) to gather information on the *nakamal* and data on damage to tangible and intangible aspects of the *nakamal* to further determine recovery needs and inform the recovery plan.

This research is compiled in a recently released publication on 'Safeguarding Indigenous Architecture in Vanuatu' that provides an account of the state of Vanuatu architecture following the devastating impacts of Cyclone Pam.

This publication compiles a set of best safeguarding practices aiming to encourage the revitalisation of building skills, in order to ensure the continuing existence of Vanuatu's traditional architecture.

Most importantly, the project on safeguarding the Nakamals aims to sustain the traditional architectural knowledge of Vanuatu by encouraging communities to repair or rebuild their *nakamals*, and to share new found safeguarding mechanisms.



©Vanuatu National Cultural Centre and Museum



©Vanuatu National Cultural Centre and Museum

Youth mobilised to protect Intangible Cultural Heritage



UNESCO supported the networking meeting on Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) Safeguarding that took place in Koror from 25 to 27 May 2017. The Meeting was held jointly by the International Information and Networking Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region under the auspices of UNESCO (ICHCAP) and the Palau authorities.

Under the theme “Youth as Safeguarding Actors for Pacific ICH”, the meeting aimed to promote regional cooperation to assist young ICH practitioners to contribute to ICH sustainability as key safeguarding and transmission actors. The meeting brought together representatives of four Pacific countries (FSM, Fiji, Palau and Tonga) and NGOs (Pacific Youth Council and Waa’gey Inc.) as well as observers from Palau including the Palau Community College, Belau National Museum and UNDP/Global Environment Facility.

The keynote presentations were made by High Chief Reklai Raphaelo B. Ngirmang and Dr Unaisi Nabobo-Baba, Professor at University of Guam, while UNESCO in Apia made a presentation on activities and vision of UNESCO for safeguarding ICH in collaboration with future generations by linking them to the Pacific Youth Development Framework. ICHCAP’s presentation was focused on its projects with the aims of engaging the youth in the Asia-Pacific region for ICH safeguarding through video production, higher education network, etc. Based on these presentations and the country/NGOs reports, the meeting participants discussed a strategy for supporting the youth as safeguarding actors for Pacific ICH.

The participants first noted the fact that more than half of the population in the Pacific was less than the age of 25 years old and only 13 out of 25 countries/territories in the Pacific were members of the Pacific Youth Council. This provided a strong justification for the need to build a youth ICH practitioners network as a long-term goal.

To achieve this goal, several key actions were identified, which included, among others, the establishment of a youth ICH focal point in each country/territory, the mapping of the existing policies, programme and activities related to youth and ICH, the support of activities by young ICH practitioners and bearers, the support of the ICH safeguarding programmes with the participation of youth and the youth-led activities.

Regarding the ICH transmission and education, the participants recommended the enhanced support to the formal education and scholarships as well as the non-formal education, especially, the traditional houses and spaces for learning of specific forms of Pacific ICH such as the traditional wayfinding systems. Some flagship projects such as the organization of ICH youth forum at sub-regional/regional festivals and ICHCAP publication on the youth and ICH were proposed. The highlight of the meeting was the launching of the online exhibitions on Pacific ICH developed in partnership with ICHCAP/Google Culture Institute in Rep. of Korea.

The following exhibitions were launched, showcasing the colorful and vibrant ICH in Pacific islands:

Palau’s Rich Heritage in Nature and Culture <https://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/beta/exhibit/palau-s-rich-heritage-in-nature-and-culture/ewlSfglo8Ob7LA?hl=en>

Ngatu, Cultural Wealth of the Kingdom of Tonga https://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/beta/exhibit/ngatu-cultural-wealth-of-the-kingdom-of-tonga/NAKi_qPipunBKA?hl=en

Inspired crafts of Samoa
<https://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/beta/exhibit/WAJCX9ba-dwMLQ>



©ICHCAP



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Gender stereotyping has been identified as one of the root causes of gender-based violence in Samoa. A seminar on School Related Gender Based Violence was held at the National University of Samoa in a partnership with UNESCO to help tackle the issue of continuing violence in the school environment.

Stereotyping is believed to be another cause of the problem, where students are forced to feel a certain way because they are either different or don't meet society's expectations.

UNESCO Programme Specialist for Social and Human Science, Nguyen Thanh Van says stereotypes is harmful because it sets out certain rules and standards for somebody that is different and not wanting to give up to such standards.

"For someone that is different and wouldn't want to live up to these expectations, they would be automatically considered a minority or to be the outliers of society," she added.

"Expectations is how the society expects someone to behave, or someone to act within a certain context," she said.

With these expectations we have amongst each other, Van, says violence usually starts from there and later on would lead to social pressure.

With the partnership between UNESCO and the National University of Samoa Media and Journalism School, they were able to put together a seminar to educate the representatives of each faculty about school related gender based violence.

The seminar highlighted that there is a significant gap in the awareness of the public regarding to the forms of violence that exist in schools and its causes and consequences to the students.

Alexandra Meafou, the president for the National University of Samoa's Students Association says, "I believe this seminar is helpful for everyone, especially someone who is a victim of violence such as myself."

"It changes my mindset with what I have been taught and experience as a child," he said.

"Everyone is equal, despite being rich or poor, black or white, weak or strong, we are all the same which is why we have to treat everyone fairly with the power we are given," he added.





The Journalist Associations of Samoa (JAWS) organised a month long series of activities to promote press freedom. Launched on May 3rd 2017, the official UNESCO World Press Freedom Day, Vice President of the media association, Rudy Bartley, said the day is extremely important in promoting the important role the media plays in advancing the principles of democracy.

With a focus on the theme 'Critical Minds for Critical Times: The media's role is Advancing Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies.' Mr. Bartley added that JAWS modified the theme to focus on the impact, abuse and misuse of social media in Samoa.

"The abuse of social media to incite violence and cyber bullying needs to be put in proper focus through public discussion so that we can focus on the positives rather than the negative use of technology."

The media events closed with a workshop on the recently adopted Media Code of Practice and official closing ceremony on Friday 26 May 2017.



JAWS and special guests at Closing © JAWS



Prime Minister of Samoa, Hon. Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi and Director UNESCO Apia, Nisha. © JAWS



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The UNESCO Office for the Pacific States based in Apia, Samoa covers 16 independent countries and one territory in the Pacific:

Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

In line with UNESCO's global priorities, the UNESCO Office for the Pacific States sets a local programme of action in consultation with the 17 member states and territories.

UNESCO Member States in black.

