

THE MAGAZINE OF AUSTRALIA'S OVERSEAS AID PROGRAM

focus

VOLUME 17 NUMBER 1 » WINTER 2002



- » GIVING PEACE A CHANCE
- » AESOP IN FOCUS
- » YOUTH AMBASSADOR FOR PEACE

IN 2002, PEACE-BUILDING IN OUR REGION IS A PRIORITY
FOR THE AID PROGRAM



FROM THE MINISTER

Conflict and instability has affected a number of our regional neighbours over recent years. Since the end of the Cold War, internal-state conflict has escalated and violent conflict is now perhaps the single most harmful human intervention in the development process.

As a responsible partner in the global community, Australia has, for a number of years, played an active and positive role in a variety of conflict areas. Australian aid activities in far-flung trouble spots have tended to focus on working through United Nations agencies and Australian and International NGOs (non-government organisations). Closer to home in the Asia-Pacific region – for example, Mindanao, Cambodia and Bougainville – the Australian aid effort has been much more intense, complex and multifaceted.

Seemingly more fragile than ever following the events of September last year, sustainable peace has many components. Ultimately, the most important component is a commitment by

those engaged in conflict to resolve their differences peacefully. But the Australian aid program can also help by addressing some of the root causes of conflict by working for the elimination of poverty, good governance, sustainable and fair use of natural resources, and equitable access to education and health services. While poverty, corruption and injustice hold sway, the potential for conflict always exists.

In 2002, peace-building in our region is a priority for the aid program. Following on from our contribution to the Bougainville peace process, Australia is playing a major role in bringing about regional stability in other parts of the Pacific, including Solomon Islands and Fiji. We are also promoting peace-building through our assistance in East Timor and, beyond our region, Australia has recently made a major contribution to reconstruction assistance and emergency relief for Afghanistan.

Australia has a proud record in peace-building and conflict

resolution. Our peace monitoring teams in Bougainville and Solomon Islands play a major role in encouraging weapons handovers and supporting peace negotiations. In the aftermath of war, we continue to assist in the clearing of landmines in Cambodia, Laos, Africa, Sri Lanka and Afghanistan, committing more than \$100 million in funding for mine action during the decade ending in 2005. Australia has been at the forefront of attempts to respond to the humanitarian tragedy of these conflicts and the aid program has been a key component of that response.

It is my hope that the program will continue to succeed in assisting the governments and people of poorer countries to resolve conflict and eliminate its causes, so that we may all enjoy the fruits of peace.

Alexander Downer
Minister for Foreign Affairs

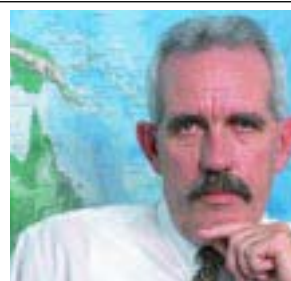
Contents



9



18



20



24



Government aid in focus The Australian aid program is committed to reducing poverty and achieving sustainable development in the Asia-Pacific, Africa and the Middle East. Australian firms and people play a major role in delivering the aid program. We use Australian expertise, Australian experience and Australian resources to tackle poverty. And by investing in development we are investing in our future. In 2001-02 the total amount spent by the Australian Government on development assistance was around \$1.8 billion. The aid program focused on promoting regional peace, stability and economic development through several hundred large- and small-scale projects. Countries we are committed to include Papua New Guinea; Fiji, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Samoa, Tonga, Kiribati, Tuvalu (the Pacific region); Indonesia, East Timor, Vietnam, Philippines, China, Mongolia, Cambodia, Thailand, Lao PDR, Burma (East Asia); Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Pakistan, Maldives, Bhutan (South Asia); and Africa and the Middle East.

ii	From the Minister
2	Editorial
3	What's New
4	Feature: Giving peace a chance
10	Elections Solomon Islands style
12	Afghanistan: Famine on an immense scale
14	Malaria: The battle continues
15	Road restoration: Bringing people together
16	Fresh water, fresh start
17	Senator Patterson moves on
18	Chris Gallus: Taking on the challenge
19	Yung Le: Youth Ambassador for peace
20	AESOP: Creating synergies
21	Global Education
22	Girls' education in Pakistan
24	Peace Monitors: Making peace last
28	Riding the wavelength
30	AusAID Business news
32	Obituaries
34	In Brief
35	Questionnaire

COVER The aid program is enabling people to once again access the markets to sell their produce. Here Justina sells rambutan at the Buka market, Bougainville. Photo: Mathias Heng

FOCUS ON

PEACE



WE CAN HELP COMMUNITIES
TO RESOLVE CONFLICT AND
BUILD STRUCTURES FOR
LONG-TERM PEACE

Experts from around the world observe that today's wars are often fuelled by poverty.

And in the world's poorest countries, internal conflict continues to rise.

Scarce food, water and land resources create environmental degradation, poverty, conflict and migration.

Food security becomes impossible when the agricultural cycle is disrupted by conflict. Farmers are forced from their land or killed by direct attacks; refugees, who have no way of feeding themselves, stream across borders. Hunger worsens, production falls, and conflict spreads.

When conflict arises, it can result in the serious reversal of hard-won development gains. For example, in 1996, armed conflicts put at least 80 million people at risk from hunger and malnutrition.

The Australian Government's overseas aid program has contributed to helping many of these people in a number of conflict-affected environments in recent years.

In Asia, our aid program spreads from East Timor to Mindanao in the Southern Philippines and to Cambodia. In the Pacific, our attention has turned to Fiji, the Solomon Islands and Bougainville

to help these societies deal with the impacts of conflict and build more peaceful communities.

Our overseas aid program plays an important role in conflict situations. This role ranges from providing short-term emergency assistance to supporting peace-building and reconstruction activities to maintain peace and security.

The program plays a significant role during the different phases of conflict.

In the emergency phase, Australia's aid program provides urgent assistance to people who are suffering from the effects of violence. Often this assistance comes in the form of emergency food, shelter and medicine for affected communities and displaced people.

Once the emergency phase subsides, there is an essential role for development assistance in conflict resolution, peace-building and reconstruction. Peace-building has been described as 'the deconstruction of structures of violence, and the construction of structures of peace'.

This is when our aid program can really make a difference – we can help communities to resolve conflict and build structures for long-term peace.

After the reconstruction phase, our role is to help communities

maintain peace and prevent the resurgence of violence and conflict. Long-term peace is based on economic and social development and the capacity of communities to resolve their differences peacefully.

As a leading aid donor in the Pacific region, Australia plays a central role in improving economic and social development and helping communities to find peaceful solutions to their differences.

Our strategy is to invest in the long-term development of countries while still being responsive to their needs in times of crisis.

Nowhere has this been more evident than in Bougainville, where the aid program has strongly supported reconciliation, reconstruction and peace-building following the island's long civil war.

I invite you to read on and discover more about how Australian aid and Australians are making a significant contribution to peace in our region.

Bruce Davis
Director General

WHAT'S NEW



Australian volunteer Dr Andrew Burke visits the Edna family on his daily rounds to the tuberculosis clinic at the Arawa Medical Centre, Bougainville.

JOHANNESBURG 2002

THE WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT 26 AUGUST TO 4 SEPTEMBER

Also known as Rio +10 (from the 1992 Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil) the Johannesburg 2002 summit aims to review outcomes as defined by the 1992 summit, and set directions for the future.

The concept of sustainable development was agreed to at the Earth Summit as a workable worldwide objective, from local to international level. This summit marked the 20th anniversary of the first international environment conference (Stockholm, 1972) which recognised the concept of 'transboundary pollution', ie that pollution knows no political or geographical boundaries. The Earth Summit went beyond this and showed that, if people are poor and national economies are weak, the environment suffers; if the environment is abused and resources are over-consumed, people suffer and economies decline.

It is expected that the Johannesburg summit will attract about 60,000 delegates, including about 120 heads of government,

concerned citizens, UN agencies, multilateral financial institutions and other major players.

For further information see
www.joburgsummit2002.com

WOMEN FACING WAR

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has recently published an important new study of the impact of armed conflict on women. The book, *Women Facing War*, shows that women experience war in many different ways: separation, the loss of family members and livelihood, increased risk of sexual violence, injury, deprivation, and death. War forces women into unfamiliar roles and demands stronger coping skills. The ultimate goal of the study is to further the work already done of behalf of women affected by war.

For a copy of *Women Facing War*, go to www.icrc.org or write to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Communications Division – DC/COM/PMD, Attn: Pascal Kammer, 19, Avenue de la Paix, CH-1202 Geneva.

AUSAID PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBITIONS

MAKING PEACE LAST

Australia's contribution to peace-building in Bougainville, East Timor and Solomon Islands will be highlighted in a series of community events being conducted around the nation during 2002. Peace-builder ceremonies will celebrate the efforts of ordinary Australians who have worked from both home and abroad to bring peace in our region.

The launch of the Making Peace Last photographic exhibition at these ceremonies will portray the extraordinary efforts of Australian peace monitors and volunteers in Bougainville. Students in rural towns will also be invited to convey their impressions of peace through regional art competitions.

For more information see www.aisaid.gov.au or call Gemma Clare on (02) 6206 4693.



Peace in Bougainville means a better future for Genevieve and her four-week-old baby, Mikevieve Pima. Photo: Mathias Heng

GIVING PEACE A CHANCE

The recent weapons disposal ceremonies in Bougainville follow the peace agreement between Bougainville and Papua New Guinea leaders to end a long and deadly secessionist war in the island province. Thousands of people died between 1989 and 1998 as a result of the conflict. Sparked by environmental damage to the island from the Panguna gold and copper mine – begun in the early 70s – the conflict was initiated by the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA) against PNG rule. The Bougainville Resistance Force (BRF) was founded to fight against the BRA, and aligned itself with PNG and the PNG Defence Force.

In the Solomon Islands, violence erupted in 1999 following years of uneven economic development and ethnic disputes over land ownership, mainly between militants from Guadalcanal and Malaita Provinces. The signing of the Townsville Peace Agreement in October 2000 led the way to the establishment of a Peace Monitoring Council and the end to displacement of families, destruction of property, and breakdown of basic systems and services.

The following stories are just some examples of how the Australian Government is helping to make peace last in the region.

BOUGAINVILLE

GIVES UP WEAPONS OF WAR

A high school girl stole the show at a north Bougainville arms disposal ceremony when she made a passionate plea to former combatants and villagers to give up all weapons of war.

‘We students are calling on ex-combatants to get rid of weapons of war to give a chance to us children of today and those of tomorrow, to be happy,’ said Selau Community School head girl Fidelia Miriats at the ceremony in early March.

‘When fighting began we ran away and slept in the bushes, washed by the rain, were hungry and ate leaves of all sorts of trees,’ she said. ‘We grew up hearing the sounds of gunfire.’

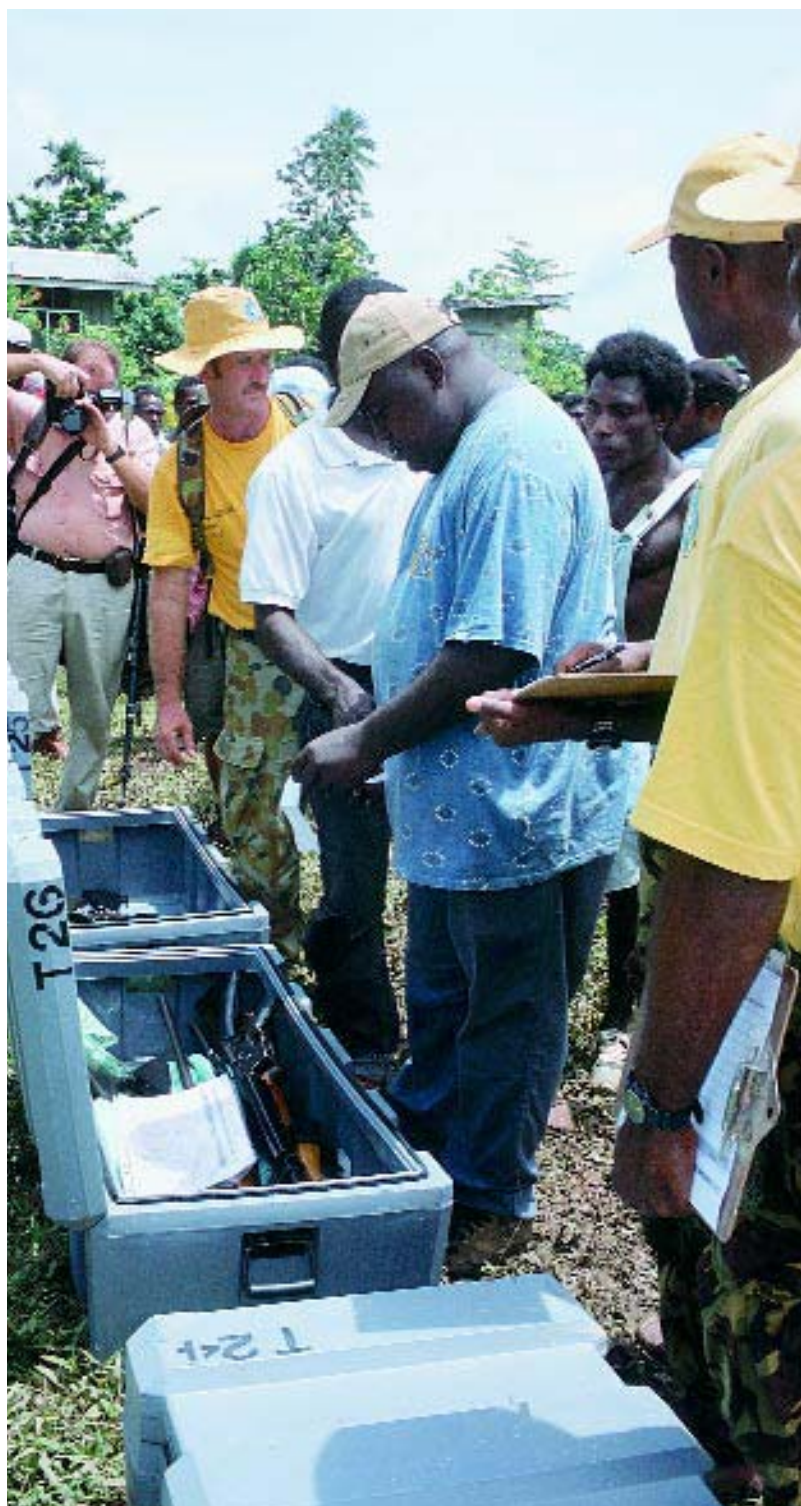
‘We have seen our mothers die, fathers die, sisters die, and brothers die. Please give us a chance to be happy.’

At about the same time as the ceremony at Selau, landmark

weapons disposal ceremonies were also being held at Gagan on Buka Island, Siara (north Bougainville) and Sipi (central Bougainville). Weapons included old re-made World War II guns, a light machine gun, Bren gun, and several M16s and SLRs. AusAID staff member Peter Mahomet, on the Peace Monitoring Group, reports that there ‘weren’t many bombs handed in, but in one ceremony five grenades were handed in with no safety pins, just a bit of sticky tape to keep those levers in place’.

At the Gagan ceremony, chairman of the Bougainville Resistance Force (BRF) Hilary Masiria led by example when he

Trunking guns at the weapons disposal in Gagang, Bougainville. Photo: Mathias Heng



persuaded several BRF commanders to hand in their weapons. Minister for Bougainville Affairs, Moi Avei, and United Nations Representative to Bougainville, Noel Sinclair, were present at this ceremony and both praised Masiria for his courage and foresight.

Monitoring Group have helped the BRA's leader, Ishmael Toroama, to coordinate BRA commanders across Bougainville. Mr Toroama had earlier commented that he would match every weapon surrendered by the BRF.

'I am happy that the second parliamentary vote on autonomy

WE GREW UP HEARING THE SOUNDS OF GUNFIRE

'This is the kind of news that the Security Council members love to read,' said Mr Sinclair, 'And it is the kind that I love to report.

'When I send to New York the picture of Hilary putting away his weapon he will become an instant celebrity for the council.'

Hilary Masiria said after the ceremony that he was 'both happy and sad' to hand in his weapons. 'I have relied on them for over 12 years, but I am ready to get rid of them,' he said.

'It is a weight off my shoulders, and a major step toward achieving peace in Bougainville. I hope that the BRA will do the same.'

And the BRA was doing just that. Australia and the Peace

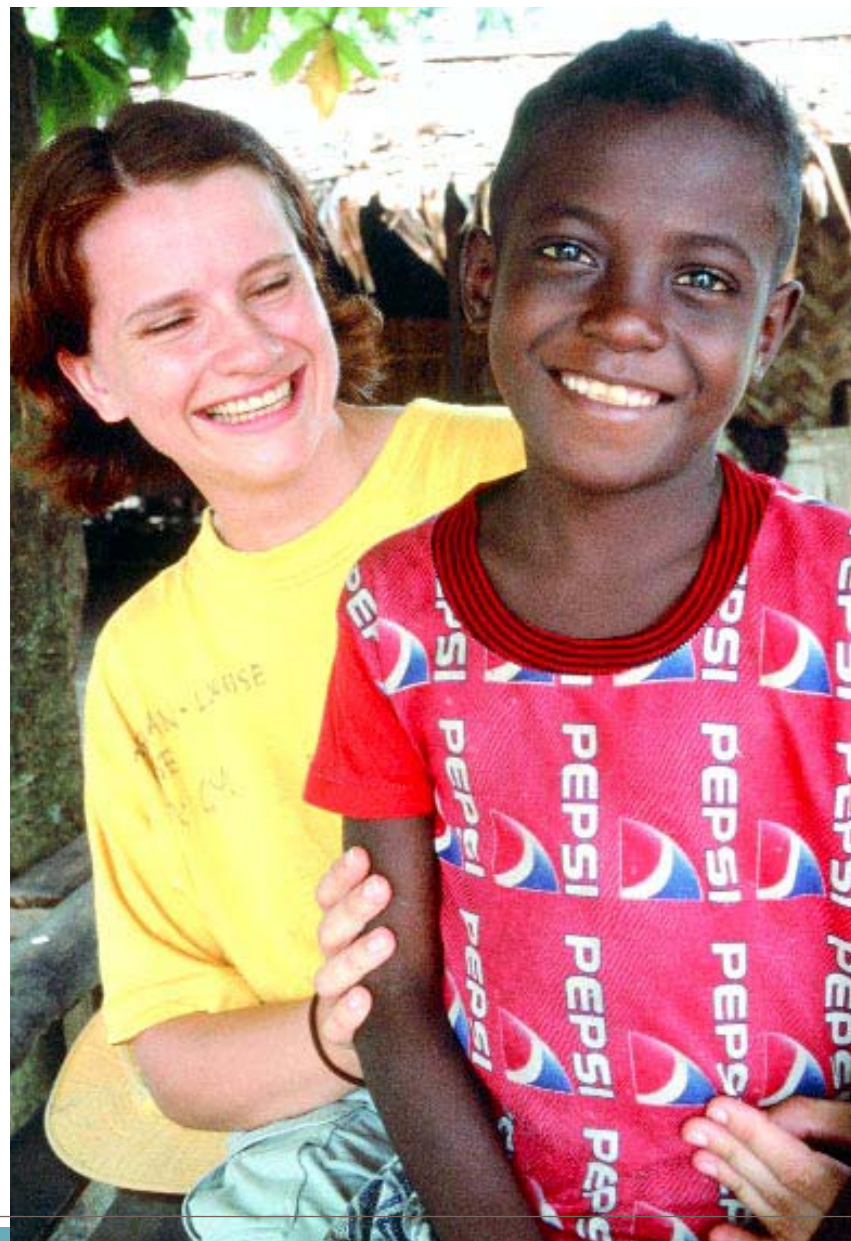
has been such a catalyst for speeding up the weapons disposal process,' he said.

Judging by the success of these ceremonies, lasting peace for Bougainville may be just around the corner. And high school student Fidelia Miriats's pleas to 'give us a chance to be happy' will be realised. •

SOURCES: Papua New Guinea Post-Courier/Pina Nius Online; Peter Mahomet, AusAID, currently with the Peace Monitoring Group.

AusAID Peacekeeper Louise Freeman shares a joke with Emil Monovi while on her rounds in Buka, Bougainville.

Photo: Mathias Heng



ABOUT THE PEACE MONITORING GROUP (PMG)

The multinational PMG, of which Australia is the key participant, assists the ex-combatant factions to achieve weapons disposal and, ultimately, peace in Bougainville. The PMG coordinated and was present at the Stage One weapons disposal ceremony in Gagan, Buka on 5 March.

The weapons disposal plan on Bougainville comprises three stages:

1. Placing weapons into trunks, to remain under the control of local BRA or BRF commanders.
2. Placing the trunks into larger containers which will be double-locked, with one key held by the UN and another

held by area faction commanders.

3. Final disposal of the weapons to be decided by the communities.

Key BRA, BRF, PNG Defence Force, Police and UN representatives formed the Joint Awareness Team with the aim of travelling across Bougainville to advocate weapons disposal.

WOMEN

TAKE AIM IN THE SOLOMON ISLANDS



With a huge watermelon tucked under her arm, Alice Pollard looked no different from the hundreds of other women doing their daily shopping at Honiara's main market. But in recent times this elfin woman has been standing up to gun-toting men and demanding they lay down their weapons.

Violence erupted in Solomons Islands in 1999 following years of uneven economic development and ethnic disputes over land ownership, culminating in the disappearance of hundreds of high-powered rifles from government armouries. The breakdown in law and order, damage to property, and the widespread community fear and distrust, seriously disrupted livelihoods and the provision of basic government services.

But the work of women across the country is helping to restore peace, return guns, and make men more aware of their responsibilities to their families and communities.

'In many cultures in Solomon Islands, women play a better role (than men) in peace-making,' Mrs Pollard said.

'The women were able to participate at the height of the tension. We visited the militants, the victims, the government leaders. We were able to play a role as mothers, asking our boys to return arms and to come back to normalcy.'

The women of Solomon Islands have been getting a helping hand from the Australian aid program with their peace-building activities. One of these was the *Women In Leadership* seminar for women leaders of West Are Are, convened

by Alice Pollard and held in Malaita Province in late 2001. Arriving on foot or in paddle or motorised canoe, women from all over West Are Are travelled to Wairokai Village to learn about leadership styles and how to organise women's groups.

Claudine Watoto, a locally engaged AusAID officer who helped Alice Pollard organise the seminars, says the women of Solomon Islands have been affected in many ways by the unrest of the past two years.

'The violence had all sorts of impacts. Children missed their school. Food supplies got disrupted. Mums and kids had to travel long distances to get medical assistance because health centres were closed down. Criminal activity increased in the villages,' Ms Watoto said.

The *Women In Leadership* seminar has helped communities tackle these problems by giving women the skills to have a more effective voice and the strategies needed to successfully develop community projects.

'The seminar taught women how to use teams to run community activities. Another important aim of the seminar was to raise voter awareness among women leaders before the December national election,' Ms Watoto said.

With women like Alice Pollard and Claudine Watoto working in partnership, it is hoped that the men of Solomon Islands will start to take note. As Alice Pollard says, 'Women have suffered enough. Attention should be given to our children and to the future of their nation. As soon as women stand between two warring parties and talk, the men should listen.' GC

Alice Pollard: 'As soon as women stand between two warring parties, the men should listen.' Photo: Greg Clough

SUPPORT TO SI

Australia provides funding of around \$740,000 for a policy adviser and communications advisor to the Peace Monitoring Council. Funding is also provided for operational costs, eg fuel, transport, rations, tents. Funding was especially important during the elections (5 December 2001) to allow monitors to provide pre-election information and monitor polling stations on the day.

WOMEN AS KEY PEACEMAKERS

The Solomon Islands Peace Monitoring Council has recognised the important role SI women play as peacemakers and will increase the numbers of women field monitors on Guadalcanal.

The council began recruiting women monitors on a trial basis in July 2001, and a review has found that:

- » women monitors have great influence over community groups
- » ex-militants respond very positively to the women
- » the women were trusted more than men as neutral participants in the peace process.

The positive review means that the numbers of women monitors in the area will increase from 14 to 25.

(SOURCE: Papua New Guinea Post-Courier/Pina Nius Online.)

In the violence and unrest that has brought Solomon Islands almost to a standstill during recent years, the country's teachers have worked hard at instilling the virtues of peace in their students.

BOOKS OF PEACE



AusAID officer Elanor Pitikaji and School Careers Master, Ambrose Tarake examine one of the many hundreds of textbooks provided by Australia to assist Solomon Islands education system, which was disrupted by the ongoing violence of 1999. Photo: Greg Clough

‘We are teaching our students to be good ambassadors, to love one another, have no hatred, and what you have you have to share,’ says St Nicholas Primary School Careers Master, Ambrose Tarake.

Like many government services, education in Solomon Islands was severely disrupted by the violence of 1999. But the Australian Government's aid program, AusAID, is helping ensure that students across the archipelago nation continue to learn their Three Rs by providing a range of textbooks compatible with Solomon Islands' education system. Valued at about \$500,000, the books were selected in consultation with the SI Ministry of Education as part of Australia's post-conflict support to the education sector.

‘We are very happy to have received these materials from AusAID,’ Mr Tarake said.

‘We received textbooks for teaching English and science, science equipment, rulers, pencils and other materials relevant to primary schools.

‘The materials will be a very big help for the schools especially since most schools, and especially our school, are finding it hard to

get these materials locally. When funding and money is not available we find it hard to purchase them. So with the assistance given by AusAID I believe it will be a very big relief, especially for teachers.’

Mr Tarake said the books would assist the thousands of students enrolled in 89 community high schools.

In the current political climate, schools in Solomon Islands can expand their role beyond teaching maths, English and science. They can also be important agents of peace.

‘Recently we have, towards building peace, just allowed international peace-builders to come and deliver their message to the students. They ask the students to support them and deliver the message of bringing back peace in the country so we that can get back to normal, so that our schools can run properly as we would like.’

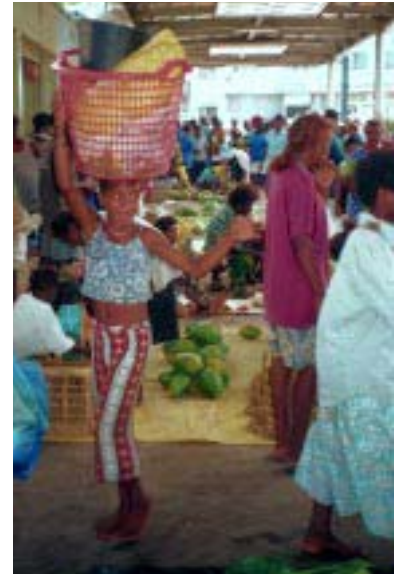
With the dedication of people like Ambrose Tarake and assistance from Australia, students across Solomon Islands are now better able to lend their voice to the nation's call for peace. GC



ELECTIONS SOLOMON ISLANDS STYLE

Election Day, 5 December 2001 marked an important turning point in Solomon Islands. Following years of political unrest, the elections were a positive step towards restoring peace and security. With considerable assistance from Australia and other donors, the day turned out to be a success, with widespread voter turnout and minimal disruption.





TOP The normally hustling, bustling streets of the capital Honiara were empty. Businesses stopped, shops were closed and alcohol sales banned.

ABOVE LEFT Happy voters join a convoy of cars and trucks through the streets of Honiara to celebrate the successful election of their chosen candidate.

ABOVE RIGHT The normal pace of life returns. Honiara Market after election day.

LEFT The Australian Electoral Commission, with support from AusAID, produced posters in English and Pidgin to encourage people to vote and to inform them of their voting rights. The poster on the far left reads: Your vote, my future.

Photos: Greg Clough

FACING PAGE ABOVE Voters' little fingers were sprayed with indelible ink to ensure people voted only once.

FACING PAGE MIDDLE Voter secrecy was ensured by screening off voters from the public. Voters could safely place their vote in their chosen candidate's ballot box with anonymity.

FACING PAGE BELOW Unlike Australia, where all votes are placed in the same ballot box, candidates had their own box with their individual symbol. All boxes were checked to ensure they were empty before polling started.



AFGHANISTAN

FAMINE ON AN IMMENSE SCALE

Aid workers are used to the unpredictable. But the events that took place in Afghanistan in the latter part of 2001 took everyone by surprise.

The anticipated mass exodus of people fleeing drought and conflict did not happen. Instead, the humanitarian crisis affecting millions within Afghanistan deepened. Australian aid specialist Pat Duggan was employed to help coordinate a complex emergency relief program from the UN office in Islamabad, in neighbouring Pakistan. Here she recalls her impressions as she monitored developments.

I arrived at a time when no-one really imagined the war against the Taliban would finish so quickly ... [but] the towns in Afghanistan fell one after the other in a 10-day period and it was like a house of cards....

'I had thought when I came here I would be looking at extensive refugee flows out of the country. As it happened, before we knew it much of the country changed hands and it was then time to move everyone back into the country and get programs geared up again.'

Following the events of 11 September and the start of US air strikes in Afghanistan, international aid workers were no longer welcomed by the ruling Taliban. They were forced to work from neighbouring countries, fearful for the safety of their Afghan counterparts who were left to try to avert famine on an immense scale.

'While we were able to return to the regional centres and the towns, we were not always able to access all communities in need because of instability and lawlessness.

'A particular concern has been for internally displaced people. When the Taliban fell, the UN estimated there were about one million internally displaced people in Afghanistan. Large numbers moved to stay with communities in other parts of the country ... Others moved to large refugee camps such as Maslakh near Herat in the west.'

With the Bonn Agreement in place and an Interim Authority installed, the international community must focus on assisting the new authorities to hold the peace. Efforts are focused on building stability and meeting humanitarian needs, as well as kick-starting the recovery process while longer-term reconstruction programs are formulated.

A key priority is to ensure the

what they need to go back and re-establish themselves quickly...'

The challenges facing the new Afghanistan are immense. Women in particular have to re-establish themselves in Afghan society. 'Certainly the legislative bans that came with the Taliban have gone and the Interim Authority has made very positive indications about the role of women in the new regime. However, what a woman in the capital Kabul might face could be completely different to the experiences of a woman in a remote area.

'A page in Afghanistan's history has been turned and things are moving in a completely new and much more positive direction than they have been for decades, but different warlords and factions have figured heavily in Afghanistan's past. The challenge is to overcome that and build a united country.' EJ

A PAGE IN AFGHANISTAN'S HISTORY HAS BEEN TURNED

'This was no easy task ... [but] the Afghan staff did a brilliant job really to keep programs ticking over and to keep food being delivered.'

As security gradually improved it became safer for international aid workers to start delivering aid again. And although there were difficulties, the emergency aid was delivered where it was needed.

international community is geared up to support a significant return home of both refugees and internally displaced people. 'The UN estimates up to 500,000 internally displaced people and up to 800,000 refugees may try to return to their homes this year now that the fighting has ended ... We need to make sure they have

Pat Duggan was the Senior Humanitarian Affairs Officer for the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in Pakistan. She is a former officer with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in Australia and a former officer with the Australian Government's overseas aid agency, AusAID.

For the latest information on Afghanistan go to the AusAID website www.ausaid.gov.au

AFGHANISTAN EARTHQUAKES

Compounding the already devastating effects of war, a severe earthquake which hit the Nahrin district of Afghanistan, north of Kabul, on 25 March, killed more than 800 people and left thousands more injured. An estimated 10,000 people were left homeless.

Australia provided \$1 million in emergency aid for earthquake victims. This aid was divided between the International Committee of the Red Cross to assist with emergency shelter and medical needs, and the World Food Programme to provide food aid. The funding is in addition to the \$40.3 million previously provided to Afghanistan for humanitarian assistance (\$23.3 million) and to assist in reconstruction efforts (\$17 million).

AusAID will continue to monitor needs in the area.

In Ghor, Afghanistan's largest and most inaccessible province, women travelled for up to five days on foot and donkey to reach emergency food aid. More than 70,000 vulnerable families were part of an ICRC emergency relief program suspended by the events of 11 September.

Photo: Nick Danziger



MALARIA

THE BATTLE CONTINUES



Dr John Reeder outside the PNG Institute of Medical Research in Goroka.

Dr John Reeder, director of the Papua New Guinea (PNG) Institute of Medical Research, is in the front line of the battle against malaria.

And a significant boost in funding from the Australian Government has helped PNG become a world leader in this war against the killer disease.

Dr Reeder is based in Goroka in the PNG highlands but his stage is global. 'Sharing information is a crucial aspect of our research,' says Dr Reeder, who spends much time attending conferences, giving lectures and demonstrating the results of his research. He once journeyed all the way from Goroka to Washington for a two-day conference to discuss malaria research.

Talking about his research into malaria and other diseases is something in which he is well-practised. 'There are two billion people worldwide at risk of malaria, and our work here in PNG is centred on a global outlook. What we achieve in our labs will have a positive impact around the globe.'

Malaria is the second-biggest killer of children in PNG. In February this year the Australian Government committed \$10 million (on top of more than \$8 million committed in 1995) to the PNG Institute of Medical Research in recognition of the progress already made towards the development of a malaria vaccine. 'The additional funding will enable us to broaden our operational base,' says Dr Reeder. 'We are working in support of the National Health Plan, and this includes research into respiratory diseases which continue to be the biggest killer of children in PNG. If we can evaluate and introduce vaccines for pneumococcal pneumonia and haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib) we might reduce child mortality by up to 60 per cent in some of the highland areas.'

Research into vaccines involves collecting thousands of blood samples which need to be checked and cross-checked. Countless hours are spent looking into microscopes, gazing at computer screens and analysing data. 'But what drives us is the ability to see a picture emerging,' says Dr Reeder. 'It is extremely exciting to be the first to discover something ... it's a bit like

being the first person to land on the moon.'

The extraordinary diversity of PNG contributes to such excitement. PNG is often referred to as a small cosmos of geographic, genetic and linguistic diversity, and an example of such diversity is the fact that the country is host to the two major strains of malaria. These are *falciparum*, the often fatal strain common in parts of Africa, and *vivax*, a more common strain that is not fatal but which can be seriously debilitating. 'We need a

MALARIA IS THE SECOND BIGGEST KILLER OF CHILDREN IN PNG

vaccine that can tackle both these strains, and the fact that we have them both here in PNG means that we have far better research opportunities,' Dr Reeder says.

There's also a strong holistic approach to the research that Dr Reeder and his team are conducting. 'Public health issues are a major priority when it comes to disease eradication. We're employing an anthropologist to help assess the impact of improved water supplies, and we're mapping children's health in the highlands. These are just two examples of how our scientific work is

supported by social anthropological work.'

Collaboration is a crucial aspect of medical research, and the PNG Institute of Medical Research works closely with some leading Australian institutions. These include the Macfarlane Burnet Centre, the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research, Monash and Melbourne universities, and the Queensland Institute of Medical Research.

Another key organisation is the multi-billion-dollar Bill and

Melinda Gates Foundation. 'Support from this foundation is helping to minimise the commercial risk of developing a malaria vaccine,' explains Dr Reeder. 'It will ensure that once the vaccine is developed it will be accessible to the regions that need it.' PD

ROAD RESTORATION

BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER

Rosemary Siriosi comes from the heartland of rebellion. During the long years of conflict on Bougainville she and her family watched life as they had known it disintegrate before their eyes.



The reconstruction of roads in Bougainville has reopened communication and people once again have free access to main centres and markets. Photo: Mathias Heng

THERE IS NOTHING ELSE
THAT HAS HELPED THE
PEACE-BUILDING MORE
THAN THE ROAD

Like many people Rosemary lost both family and friends to the gun. 'Villages were totally destroyed, there was nothing left, but people survived. We moved back up into the mountains. Most of Arawa was gone – hospitals and schools, most of them were damaged.'

What Rosemary remembers most about that dark decade of bloodshed is her people's gradual drift into isolation as the ships and airplanes stopped coming and the roads and bridges fell apart from neglect.

The lack of infrastructure stopped people moving and talking;

differences could not be resolved. 'It was definitely a major problem when we were just working inside our own communities, because a lot of things happen inter-community and these things needed to be worked out before we could really say the peace process was going to happen.'

It is a point not lost on Australian Bob Willis, team leader for the Bougainville Coastal Trunk Road Rehabilitation Project. 'The rehabilitation of Bougainville's roads has once again enabled communities to communicate across their boundaries. Previously, it was extremely arduous and difficult to travel along the trunk road simply because there had been no maintenance of the road for over 10 years.'

Bob has vivid memories of the years before the crisis when Bougainville had some of the best roads and communications in Melanesia. 'My family and I have a long history with the island [and] coming back in 1999, it was heartbreaking to see the devastation and the loss of community infrastructure.'

Rosemary Siriosi is the project's Community Liaison Officer. Together, she and Bob have

overseen the reconstruction of almost 330 kilometres of roadway and two access roads in the south of the island. The work hasn't been easy, particularly as part of the road runs through the 'no-go' zone enforced by separatist leader Francis Ona and his supporters.

'When we first came to the island there was a lot of mistrust,' says Bob. 'But now I think people recognise the importance of this AusAID project. Now that we have reconstructed the road, people are free to access any area of Bougainville, the main centres are now accessible, and people can get their copra, their cocoa, their produce to main markets as well.'

'We had to spend a lot of time and effort in developing our reputation with the local community. We initially started holding awareness meetings across the island and we spent some three months intensively working with community groups, identifying key people and discussing the project's objectives with those people.'

According to Rosemary, that initial community consultation made all the difference. 'I hear it every day from community leaders and the general community that there is nothing else that has helped the peace-building more than the road and being able to move from one place to another when you want to. That has made people come together.'

For Bob, the long separation from his family has been offset by the progress he feels his team has achieved. 'All of us feel very proud of the success of the project. We've put something back into Bougainville. My family had some very good years in the pre-crisis period and AusAID has given me the ability to pay back a little of that. It's an achievement we will carry with us for a long time.'



FRESH WATER,

FRESH START

Turning on a tap, drinking clean water and washing in clean water should be easy in one of the wettest, lushest parts of Vietnam – the Mekong Delta.

After all, the Delta is Vietnam's 'bread basket'. Enough rice is grown in the green patchwork of padi fields to feed the entire country.

The abundance of water from the mighty Mekong River should make life more comfortable for the millions of people living in the area.

But looks can be deceptive.

Even though water is plentiful, it is not readily available to millions of people living there.

For many people, particularly women, the collection of water is a hard, time-consuming and thankless task, seen as part of the rhythm of village life.

Generally, only about 40 per cent of Vietnamese rural households have access to clean water, and it is often seasonal. In many districts, fresh water is displaced by saline or brackish water for up to six months of the year.

Water is also more expensive in the countryside. Tariffs for clean water sold to rural communities are often up to 30 or 40 times higher than for urban households.

FRESH WATER OFFERS A FRESH START, FREE OF DISEASE AND FULL OF POTENTIAL

Fewer than 12 per cent of rural and district town households have access to a hygienic toilet, and many schools do not have adequate water supplies and sanitation facilities. Solid and agricultural

chemical waste disposal in rural areas is generally uncontrolled.

These problems are particularly pronounced in the Mekong Delta, which contains one-fifth of the poorest people in Vietnam, the second-highest proportion of all regions in the country. Not having access to clean water is one of the main obstacles to social and economic development in the area.

To try to turn things around, over the next five years, the people and governments of Vietnam and Australia will work together to improve access to water and sanitation services in

disadvantaged district towns and rural communities in the Cuu Long (Mekong) Delta.

Local communities will participate in the design and construction of the services, as appropriate, so that the technology is right for them and can be maintained in years to come.

About 400,000 rural poor are expected to benefit from the project.



THE CUU LONG DELTA PROJECT WILL

- » Bring clean water to 500,000 people
- » Cost \$25 million over five years
- » Be managed by the Australian company Sagric International
- » Train local Vietnamese in water and sanitation technology
- » Involve women and communities in decision-making
- » Reduce incidence of water-borne diseases.

Toilets will be built for schools, and solid waste disposal and drainage facilities installed for clusters of rural households.

In three district towns about 100,000 people will have improved and extended water sanitation services, including toilets for schools and town drainage.

In time, a total of about 500,000 people living in poor communes or towns in the provinces of Bac Lieu, Ben Tre, Ken Giang, Long An and Vinh Long will have improved access to safe water.

With better solid waste disposal and more drains, there will be less stagnant wastewater.

By using potable water, the chances of people contracting water-borne diseases such as diarrhoea will be reduced.

Women will no longer have to spend as much time and energy collecting water which is not always clean. They will be able to use the time in more productive ways and will play a significant part in the planning of the water schemes.

The changes are expected to produce other economic spin-offs in rural small-scale industries such as gardening, fish farming and the processing of agricultural products.

Fresh water offers a fresh start, free of disease and full of potential. In the Mekong Delta, it will bring a better life to hundreds of thousands of people. **U**

SENATOR PATTERSON MOVES ON

The new Minister for Health and Ageing, Senator Kay Patterson, brings a wealth of experience to the position.

As Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Foreign Affairs from February 2000 to December 2001, Senator Patterson was a strong advocate for the Australian aid program.

Senator Patterson was Australia's Special Representative for Demining, and a tireless supporter of the Destroy-A-Minefield campaign, travelling throughout Australia to encourage community support. In March 2000, Senator Patterson took part in a 'Hopscotch-athon' in Swanson Street, Melbourne at the launch of Destroy-A-Minefield Week in Victoria.

'The aim of the Hopscotch-athon is to demonstrate the daily risk faced by Cambodian children of stepping on landmines – going to school, walking home, or playing simple childhood games like hopscotch,' Senator Patterson said.

'Cambodia is one of the most heavily mined countries in the world. To date, in Cambodia alone, over 29,000 people have been killed or maimed by landmines in what amounts to a humanitarian crisis.'

Senator Patterson welcomed the Cambodian Paralympics team to Australia to participate in the Sydney 2000 Paralympic Games in October 2000. She was asked to view the achievements of the

Destroy-A-Minefield campaign when she visited Cambodia on a private trip in July 2001.

Senator Patterson also played a significant role in recognising the value of Australian Youth Ambassadors and other overseas volunteers, attending many recognition ceremonies around Australia.

In other areas of the Australian Government's aid program, Senator Patterson championed the role of women in overseas development, particularly women's participation in peace-building and conflict resolution.

'Women's very positive role in peace-making deserves recognition and support,' she said. 'In Bougainville, women have played a critical role in the peace process.'

And during her visit to Papua New Guinea in mid-2001, Senator Patterson praised the efforts of health workers trained under an Australian project in remote areas of the Western Highlands.

'I am impressed with the dedication and enthusiasm of village birth attendants,' she said. 'One birth attendant told me that since receiving her training she had successfully delivered 25 babies.'

Senator Patterson was promoted in January 2002 to the position of Minister for Health and Ageing and no longer assists in overseeing the aid program. **SN**

CHRIS GALLUS: TAKING ON THE CHALLENGE



The Hon. Christine Gallus and Colin Powell, US Secretary of State, at the International Conference on Reconstruction Assistance to Afghanistan, Tokyo, January 2002.

Recently appointed as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and replacing Senator Kay Patterson in the role, is Chris Gallus, MP. Mrs Gallus's career includes a number of 'firsts'. A Member of Parliament for the past 12 years, she was the first Liberal ever to win the seat of Hawker in South Australia; the first Liberal ever to win the seat of Hindmarsh; and the first ever MP

to succeed in passing private member's legislation benefiting her own electorate (Adelaide Airport Curfew Act).

Mrs Gallus was Parliamentary Secretary for Reconciliation and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs during 2001; and was also Shadow Minister for the Environment, and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs between 1993 and 1996.

Parliamentary Secretary for Foreign Affairs since November last year, Mrs Gallus sees her role as promoting the strong work of our aid program both at home and abroad. 'The Australian aid program has many stories of which Australians can be proud and it is important that we recognise the contribution Australia makes to developing countries in our region.'

In January this year, in Tokyo, Mrs Gallus represented the Australian Government at the International Conference on Reconstruction Assistance to Afghanistan. She came away, she says, feeling more optimistic about how the world can better deal with future crises.

'This conference showed the way for the world to better respond to crises and countries in distress. The level of representation and the preparedness of the countries to contribute to the reconstruction of Afghanistan was impressive. The conference not only showed commitment to addressing the immediate problems but also recognised the need for a long term strategy.'

The Parliamentary Secretary is impressed with Australia's own aid program at a number of other levels. In 1996 she was part of a

parliamentary delegation which visited the AusAID-funded Fistula Hospital in Africa and a joint AusAID/NGO funded water project in Ethiopia. The Fistula Hospital helps young women, damaged by childbirth and consequently ostracised by their husbands and communities, to return home physically intact and with dignity'. The water project effectively saves women from walking 'eight hours a day – four hours there and four hours back – to carry water, in a particularly inhospitable climate'.

It is examples like these, Mrs Gallus says, that remind us that the aid program is about changing people's lives by helping a country build up its own resources, especially in the case of the water well.

'I think we tend to talk in such generalised terms that we forget to bring it back the actual effect on people's lives.'

Mine Action is one program which focuses directly on the actual effect on people's lives, and is high on Mrs Gallus's agenda through her role as Australia's Special Representative for Mine Action. Previously known as 'demining', the name change reflects a broadening of the program to include not just the removal of mines but also strategies to address the related issues of poverty. She recently attended a World Vision function in Melbourne with Cambodian landmines survivor Song Kasal to help raise awareness of this issue within Australia (pictured together on page 1).²

AusAID's Youth Ambassador program (see our accompanying profile on Yung Le) is another area that has the Parliamentary Secretary's full support. The program, developed from an idea of

the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Alexander Downer, allows Australia's best and brightest young people to be directly involved in the aid program.

The program enjoys broad support. At a recent function to farewell the seventh group of youth ambassadors going overseas, Mrs Gallus was approached by a diplomat who complained that his country was receiving only two ambassadors. 'We want 20!' he said.

'The benefits are manifold,' she says, 'the aid program and recipient countries benefit from the talents of the Youth Ambassadors and Australia benefits from the experience the Ambassadors gain and the good

impressions they make as Australians.'

Mrs Gallus plans to promote the program amongst the broader Australian community so they can 'get a better understanding of what aid is all about'.

There are, she believes, some members of the community who have serious misconceptions about the aid program.

'It is disappointing to hear people say, "Listen, why are you sending aid overseas when we need it here" because this attitude fails to recognise what the aid program does for Australia.

'We need to live in a region that is stable, and the more economically stable the region, the

better economically it is for us. And AusAID's main role is to alleviate poverty in the Asia-Pacific and assist with sustainable development. This is important in helping to break the poverty cycle, and therefore limit the opportunities for conflict in our region.'

The Parliamentary Secretary is not fazed by the challenges ahead. Instead, she appears galvanised by them and sees herself 'working with the aid program, seeing what we're doing now, and how we can do it better'.

'Australia has a fantastic story to tell and I think its aid program is one of those really great stories.' LT

For more information about Chris Gallus see www.chrisgallus.com and http://www.aph.gov.au/C_Gallus_MP/

1. For more information about the Fistula Hospital, see *Focus*, July 1999, p.33.

2. For more information about *Mine Action* see AusAID's website: www.ausaid.gov.au and also World Vision's website: www.worldvision.com.au

YUNG LE YOUTH AMBASSADOR FOR PEACE

The Australian Youth Ambassadors for Development program (AYAD) aims to strengthen mutual understanding between Australia and the countries of the Asia-Pacific and make a positive contribution to development. AYAD places skilled young Australians, aged 18–30, on short-term assignments (3–12 months) in developing countries. There are two AYAD departures to the Asia-Pacific each year.



Yung Le with mentor Dr Dianne Bretherton from the School of Behavioural Science, University of Melbourne. Photo: Irene Dowdy

Included in the most recent intake of youth ambassadors is Yung Le. In the fourth year of her psychology degree, Yung has discovered a career path which will enable her to contribute significantly to peacebuilding and conflict resolution in Asia.

By combining her psychology training with an interest in conflict resolution and peace education, Yung has been involved in various projects with the International Conflict Resolution Centre. Most recently, she has undertaken a training workshop to become a moderator for the

Culture of Peace News Network – a UNESCO project that uses the Internet to share peace news. As an Australian Youth Ambassador, Yung will spend a year at UNESCO in Hanoi, Viet Nam, where she will continue her work promoting the United Nations' International Decade for the Culture of Peace.

'Specifically, I will work in the education sector to develop initiatives to strengthen the culture of peace in both formal and non-formal education,' Yung said. 'My first assignment involves organising and coordinating the

Education for a Culture of Peace Seminar for national policy makers and educators.'

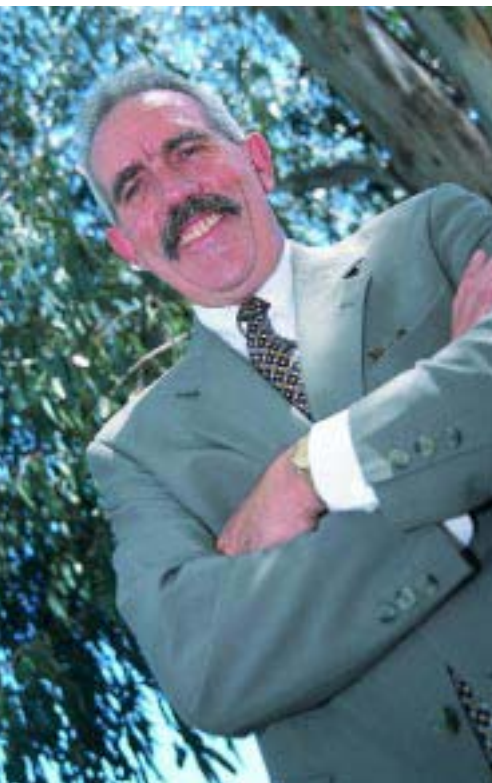
'Participating in this program will help to strengthen the relations between two distinct cultures. I am looking forward to contributing to the development of my birth-country by transferring the skills and knowledge I have gained through my Australian upbringing.' ●

For more information about youth ambassadors and the program, go to www.ausaid.gov.au

Hundreds of business people in Asia and the Pacific respect the work of Australia's business volunteer organisation, AESOP. Yet within Australia, the Canberra-based non-government organisation (NGO) is little known. AESOP's newly appointed Chief Executive Officer, George Morrow, intends to change this, and promote what he sees as a 'natural marriage' between the Australian business sector and development in the region.

AESOP

CREATING SYNERGIES



George Morrow had never heard of AESOP until last year, when he saw the NGO's advertisement for a chief executive officer.

However, like 85 per cent of Australians he did hold a positive view of the value of the Australian aid program.

After 35 years' experience working in the fast-moving information and communication technology (ICT) industry, he was looking for a role where he could use his skills and knowledge – sales, marketing, business consulting and development – to contribute to development in our region.

It appears he has found his niche. AESOP (the Australian Expert Services Overseas Program) was founded as a non-profit NGO in 1981 by the

Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Australian Government's aid program, AusAID. Its mission is to 'contribute to employment creation and the growth of the private sector in developing nations of South-East Asia and the Pacific through the transfer of business and workplace skills to clients using the resources of skilled Australian volunteers'.

AESOP has clients in 23 countries, with 31 representatives and agents in 16 of these. It has more than 800 registered Australian volunteers, and boasts more than 2,200 completed projects. In 2000–01, from a funding base of \$1.8 million, AESOP undertook 201 projects valued at more than \$7.1 million. A further 16 projects were completed on a fee-for-service basis.

Business volunteers are generally placed on assignments for about three months, but these can be as short as two weeks or as long as six months. And AESOP is now diversifying into 'program assignments' involving multiple volunteers and mentoring. This means that clients receive a much broader range of expert advice, and therefore more options to meet their changing requirements.

Projects undertaken by AESOP volunteers range from horticulture and viticulture in Thailand, Papua New Guinea (PNG) and the Philippines, to diesel mechanics in East Timor; from institutional strengthening to business and government entities in Cambodia, Fiji and Tonga, to financial planning, human resource development and strategic development planning in Tuvalu, Samoa, the Philippines and PNG.

'AESOP is "well-wired" into local business in Asia and the Pacific,' says George, 'And we are in a strong position to deliver business value. But we have much more credibility there than in Australia, where we need to raise our profile. To achieve this we are developing marketing and corporate communications plans.'

Australian businesses will benefit from the development of Asia – this area contains proportionally the largest population of any region in the world – and globalisation of business, finance and trade is a reality.

'Australian businesses which operate internationally also benefit from the cross-cultural awareness of employees with business volunteering experience.

'Moreover, it is in Australia's interests to help develop societies with strong institutions of civil

society and viable and vibrant business sectors in this part of the world.'

For this reason, George says, AESOP assignments are emphasising corporate governance, business systems and business process design, and the technical aspects of business as well as the more traditional focus on trades and primary industry.

'We don't place Australian business volunteers into line management, because we believe we would be detracting from local employment opportunities. Instead, we facilitate business planning and help establish business processes and systems,' he says.

And information communication technologies are changing the way AESOP will offer advice, including pre- and post-project support. 'Use of technology such as distance learning or email and chatrooms enables us to extend the scope of our services so that anyone in the region will be able to access us easily,' says George.

AESOP also plans to substantially reduce its current 85 per cent funding dependence on AusAID. It aims to achieve 50 per cent of its financial support from corporate and other government agencies through a mix of dollar and in-kind sponsorship, as well as corporate volunteering. And with the realisation of this aim, George Morrow will be well on the way to achieving his goal of greater Australian corporate awareness and participation of AESOP and its mission. **CTS**

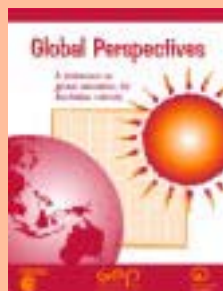
For more information see www.aesop.org.au or contact AESOP Business Volunteers PO Box 25 Deakin West ACT 2600 Tel: (02) 6285 1686 Fax: (02) 6285 1424 Email: info@aesop.org.au

GLOBAL EDUCATION

Global education is a valuable investment in our future. It is only through teaching our children about the issues around us that we can ensure a better world for them and future generations.

AusAID's global education program delivers high-quality curriculum material and professional development to teachers and trainees throughout Australia to help them to teach our children well.

Following is a summary of the latest developments on the global education front.



TEACHING GOVERNANCE

You have heard about overseas aid, but what is meant by good governance and civil society, and why are they key players in reducing world poverty? A new publication outlining what they are and why they are essential to the reduction in world poverty will be published later this year.

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE SERIES

In April 2002 the global education project and the Curriculum Corporation published *A Global Studies Statement for Australian Schools*. This is the fourth in the Global Perspectives Series and presents the background and rationale for global education.

The three teacher resource

interests and ability levels, and to support civics and citizenship education initiatives. More specialist texts on Vietnam and the Mekong basin are also available.

For more details or information on how to obtain these publications, go to <http://globaled.ausaid.gov.au> or call (02) 6206 4969.

AUSAID'S GLOBAL EDUCATION PROGRAM DELIVERS HIGH-QUALITY CURRICULUM MATERIAL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

This will be a secondary text and is being published by the South Australian Global Education Project. For more details or information on how to obtain this publication, go to <http://globaled.ausaid.gov.au> or call (02) 6206 4969.

books previously produced are *Think Globally* (early years of schooling), *Look Global* (upper primary) and *Go Global* (lower to middle secondary). These resources seek to develop students' understandings of peace, ecological, social, economic, technological and political interdependence on a global scale.

Each book has a comprehensive range of activities designed for different learning styles, students'

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Global Education Program supports the professional development of teachers in global education throughout Australia. For information on how to contact AusAID's professional development consultant in your State, go to <http://globaled.ausaid.gov.au/devcentre-addresses.html> or call (02) 6202 4969.

ABOUT BALOCHISTAN

- » The Balochistan Province is one of the least developed provinces in Pakistan.
- » The districts within the province lack most of the basic civic facilities such as telephone.
- » The literacy rate for Pakistan is estimated at 49.0 per cent (male 61.3 per cent; female 36.8 per cent).
- » The two central problems with Pakistan's education system are the low proportion of girls in school and the poor quality of basic education.
- » Balochistan fares less favourably than other provinces and issues are compounded by difficult geographical conditions.
- » Literacy rate drops to as low as 7 per cent for girls in the least developed parts of the province due mainly to the second class status of women.
- » AusAID/UNICEF launched the girls' primary education project in September 1999.
- » The Australian Government committed \$1,140, 610 over two years.
- » The main aim is to maximise the number of girls aged 5-7 entering primary schools in remote districts of Balochistan Province and to enhance retention and completion via:
 - improved school and community action
 - community mobilisation through the establishment of village committees
 - teacher training and supply of key materials
 - improved water and sanitation facilities.
- » The project has made significant progress despite initial delays due to the social and cultural hurdles.
- » New completion date of the project is June 2002 with a possibility of AusAID support for the second phase.

GIRLS' EDUCATION IN PAKISTAN

What Mariam enjoys most about school, she says, is its cleanliness. 'The building is clean and the teacher and students come clean and well-groomed, and I like that very much,' she says. 'But I also like poems and mathematics.'

THE STUDENT: MARIAM'S WORLD

One of the most active and intelligent students at the school – opened under an AusAID/UNICEF project – Mariam's enthusiasm and determination is leading the way for her younger sisters and many other young girls of her village. In fact, she would like to become a teacher, and all her efforts show how keen she is to bring about a change and build a better future for her community.

Mariam is the eldest of four children (three others died in infancy) of a poor coalmining family in the remote Killi (or village) Sheer Baz in the Sibi district of Pakistan. On a typical school day, she wakes up early in

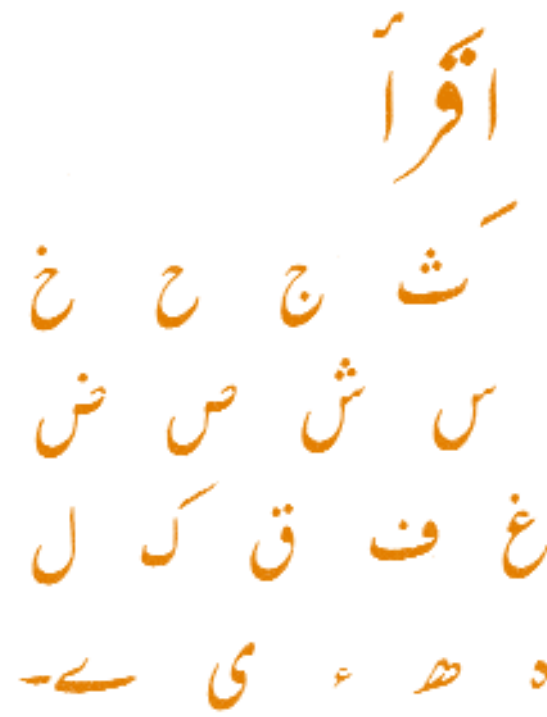
the morning to help her mother with her younger siblings. She takes care of her baby brother while her mother prepares breakfast, then gets herself and her two younger sisters ready for school. After school Mariam helps her mother with chores but always manages to get her homework done.

Not unlike many children in Australia, you might think, but it wasn't always so easy for her.

Before she went to school at the age of six or seven, Mariam had to run her father's small shop all day. A labourer in the coalmines which support the community of Sheer Baz, Mariam's father ran the shop to supplement his income in order to support his family. He was therefore reluctant to let his eldest

THE TEACHER: THE COURAGE OF SHAAR BIBI

There is no access road to Babar Kach in the Sibi district in remote Pakistan. The only transport there is a late 19th century train which travels at snail's pace all the way from Sibi early each morning.



daughter – another source of income for the family – go to school at all. It was only her pleas to the local teacher which then enabled the teacher, with the help of the social mobilisers and village education committees, to convince her father that she should go to school.

However, as Mariam finishes school at midday, she is still able to help in the shop after lunch. It is open now only in the afternoons but, being the only shop in the area, customers have adapted to the new hours and the shop is thriving.

Now Mariam's parents, like other parents in the community, are grateful to the teacher and the social mobilisation process inherent in the project for the opportunities for their daughters to attend school.

Today there are 45 girls enrolled in the school who can all look forward to a better future.

Until recently, there was no girls' school in Babar Kach. According to teacher Shaar Bibi, before the school was opened no girl or woman could even entertain the thought of education.

'Females are treated like slaves in their communities,' she says. 'They take care of cows and sheep, and fetch water from the far-flung springs or ponds. They build mud-rooms for the family and they are responsible for all the house chores and child-rearing.

'Besides all that, they are beaten by men badly and if they get sick nobody cares for them. When a woman gets sick her family puts her in a room without any care, saying that if one has to die then let her die.'

Shaar Bibi was one of the lucky ones. Educated in the bigger towns of Karachi and Quetta, Shaar Bibi then returned to Babar Kach and married her cousin, as custom demands. When the AusAID/UNICEF girls' education project was started, she was selected as teacher and enrolled in winter teacher training sessions at Quetta.

Her husband's initial reaction to this made life somewhat difficult for her. Being illiterate,

and of the customary view of women as second class citizens, he was distrusting of the training college and suspected the presence of men there. To Shaar Bibi's great embarrassment, he convinced the teacher trainer to allow him to sit in front of the classroom while she conducted her lessons. However, to her great relief he was satisfied with the environment after a few days and stayed away.

AUSAID/UNICEF LAUNCHED THE GIRLS' PRIMARY EDUCATION PROJECT IN SEPTEMBER 1999

Today, Shaar Bibi is a favourite with all the girls and women in her community. And even the men respect her. 'I try to help the women solve their problems and to make them aware of the benefits of education,' she says. 'And I try to spend more time with my students and involve them in extra-curricular activities.'

The parents and students all appreciate the free textbooks, reading and writing material and other school supplies. Being a very poor community, not being able to access these was a serious obstacle to the girls' education, she says.

'If I were not involved in

teaching learning process, I could not have survived. My husband is jobless, my two daughters also study at the school, and I bear all the expense of the family.'

But it is not just the financial gain which sustains Shaar Bibi. Her work gives her great satisfaction and provides her with the energy she needs to continue the fight for girls' and women's rights.

Her struggle has not been in vain. Today Shaar Bibi is a role model for the whole community and parents wish that their daughters will some day be like her. •

For more information go to the Pakistan section of the AusAID website: www.ausaid.gov.au

PEACE MONITORS

MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN OUR REGION



The Australian aid program is committed to reducing poverty and conflict in our region. Following is a photographic essay portraying the extraordinary efforts of Australian peace monitors and volunteers in Bougainville and East Timor, and the people whose lives are enhanced by their involvement.

Photographs by Mathias Heng.



ABOVE Helen Hakena, coordinator of the Leitana Nehan Women's Development Agency, talks to listeners about their problems on her radio talk show. The Agency was recently awarded the Millennium Peace Prize for Women by UNIFEM and International Alert.

LEFT Corporal Amanda Hunter, army mechanic, and Peter Kokes, peace monitor, repair machinery in Arawa, Bougainville.

FACING PAGE Austin talks to AusAID peace monitor Peter Mahomet about his experiences as a child during Bougainville's bloody war.





1. Education and employment opportunities are increased through the sharing of knowledge and technical expertise between East Timor and Australia.

2. Peace monitors prepare for a peace mission in Bougainville.

3. Weapons disposal, 5 March, Gagang, Bougainville. Village commander Hilary Misiria (far right) is committed to the peace process.

4. After years of violence, small business is making a comeback in

Bougainville thanks to the aid program. Helen Tatou, of Gogohe, Bougainville, is now able to run a poultry business, selling eggs and chickens at the Buka market.

5. Training is important for building small businesses in Buka, Bougainville. Here Sister Lorraine Garusa conducts training with Helen Pakanis.

6. After a decade of violence, children of Bougainville welcome peace.

7. Australian volunteer Melanie Stevens helps East Timorese in the arts and

crafts industry to be self-sufficient.

8. Australian team leader for the Cocoa and Copra Drier Rehabilitation project, Trevor Clarke, demonstrates the process to local women in Tulatu, Bougainville.

9. Reminders of past conflicts, such as this WWII tank, are scattered throughout Bougainville.

10. Australian volunteer John Oke helps an East Timorese woman on the path to self-sufficiency.



10

TIME TO TALK WALKS THE WALK



Pius Bonjui. Photo: Peter Davis

Time to Talk is a 13-part radio series about politics, society and governance in today's Pacific. It was first broadcast on Radio Australia in December 2001, on Radio National in March 2002, and received \$212,000 in funding from the Australian Government, through AusAID.

The program features an outstanding list of interviewees: prominent politicians, church leaders, leading women activists, and also grassroots workers. The State Society and Governance in Melanesia project of the Australian National University (ANU), the Commonwealth Foundation, Fiji Women's Crisis Centre, and the Tonga Human Rights and Democracy Movement

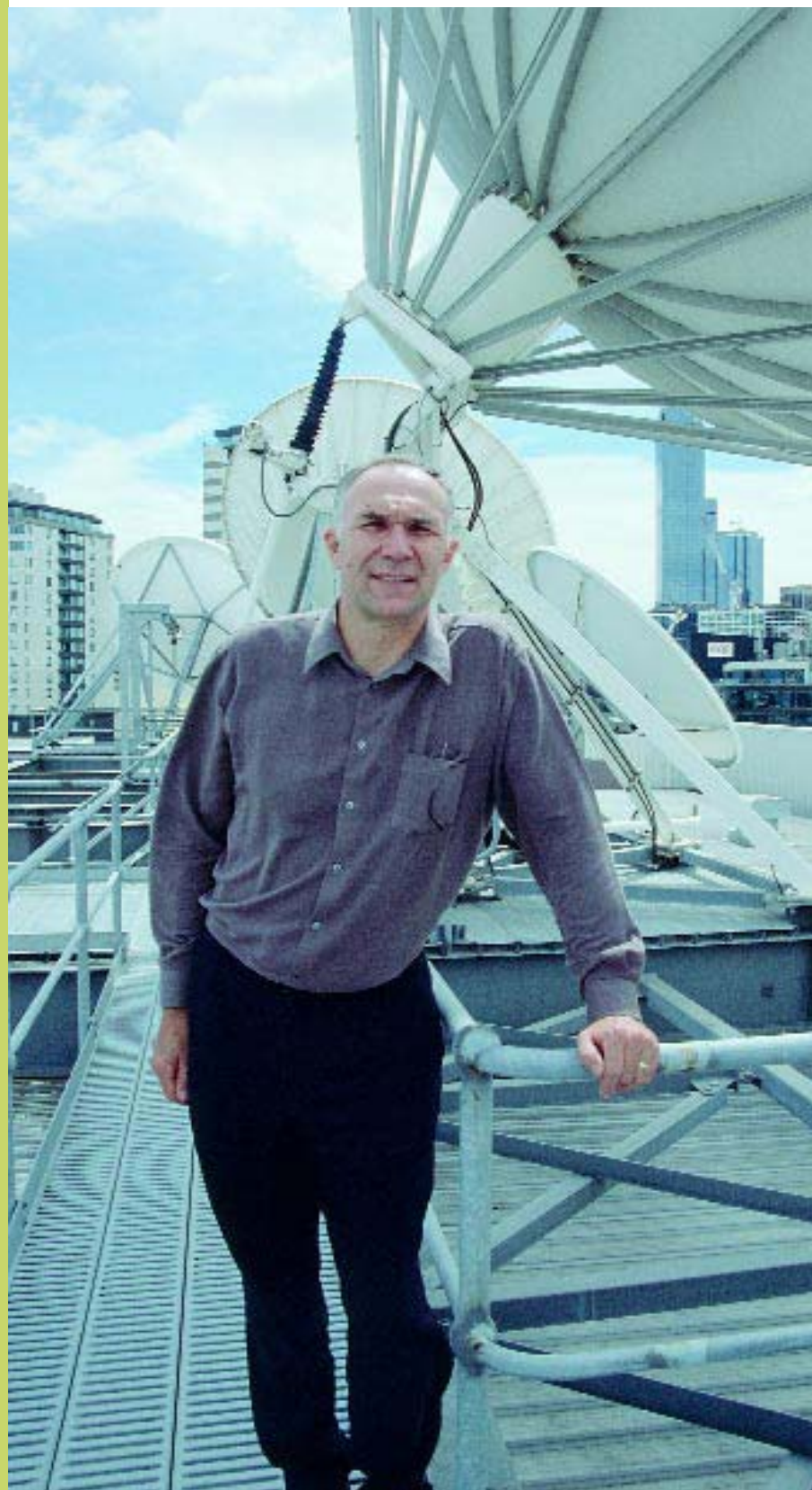
are among the institutions that have contributed to production.

It was produced in partnership with Pacific media professionals at every level. Pearson Vetuna (English) and Pius Bonjui (Tok Pisin) present the series and are co-producers. David Palapu, Program Manager from Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation, worked on the series while on secondment to Radio Australia to study new radio technologies.

The series gives voice – in English and Tok Pisin – to key players in politics, society and governance and cover a wide range of issues relating to governance in the Pacific region, including indigenous systems; the legacies of colonial rule; the agenda of international agencies; justice, corruption and the rule of law; and human rights and the role of civil society. ●

For more information see
www.abc.net.au/timetotalk

The site contains transcripts, fresh opinions on issues covered during the series, listener access and excellent background material.



Jean-Gabriel Manguy. Photo: Peter Davis



RIDING THE

WAVELENGTH

Jean-Gabriel Manguy surveys the Melbourne skyline from atop the five-storey Radio Australia building. Out there, people are listening, not just in Australia, but also throughout Asia and the Pacific.

And, as Head of Radio Australia, he's pleased to know that, thanks to funding from the Australian Government's overseas aid program, AusAID, and assistance from other areas, his Pacific listeners now have an opportunity to learn more about politics, society and governance in their region.

Time to Talk, a new 13-part radio series on governance in today's Pacific, was produced by Radio

'Governance' is typical of terms used in Western policy-speak but mean very little to communities struggling to meet basic needs. It is true that 'good governance' is critical in reducing poverty but equally true that, to last, it must be founded in communities that value and can safeguard it themselves. *Time to Talk* hands the microphone to Pacific political and community leaders, giving them the opportunity to transform the concept, explain its local meaning and discuss it with a broad audience.

This radio series grew out of Jean-Gabriel Manguy's experience of training people in the Pacific for work in broadcasting, when it was realised that many of the trainees didn't understand some basic facts about their political and economic systems. Believing that 'people have a right to understand the changes that shape their lives,' Jean-Gabriel says, 'we tried to come up with a program that would explain the major issues, the major forces.'

Jean-Gabriel's expertise is grounded in the early 70s when, after coming to Australia from France in 1969, his awareness of Australia's role in the Asia-Pacific grew along with his ABC career. After stints as a factory worker and jackaroo, then in the ABC's Sydney mailroom and as a scene-shifter on the *Playschool* set, he graduated to conducting interviews and

presenting programs for Radio Australia. He has also studied Asian and Pacific languages and history.

As a volunteer with Australian Volunteers International program in 1987, Jean-Gabriel piloted a community education program for villagers in Vanuatu. Between 1986 and 2000 he was also involved in training journalists, broadcasters, presenters and producers in the region, first through the Pacific Island Broadcasters Association, then under AusAID-funded programs in the Pacific, Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia.

He was appointed Head of Radio Australia in September 1997 and, despite budget cuts at that time, he has remained optimistic for the future. A driving force is his passionate belief in the crucial role played by Radio Australia in giving people in the region access to relevant information and knowledge.

'We are committed to the people in Asia and the Pacific in servicing their information needs [and] we are lucky to have now in Radio Australia more voices from there than we ever had before.'

'What we'd like to see now is not only us having more of an on-air presence in the Pacific and in Asia, but also have some of our own staff based there, so we can be really involved: on-air, on-line, and on the ground.' **LT**

PACIFIC LISTENERS NOW HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN MORE ABOUT POLITICS, SOCIETY AND GOVERNANCE IN THEIR REGION

Australia with cooperation from AusAID, ABC New Media and the ANU – with contributions from the Pacific islands media and the region's various government and non-government organisations. The Australian broadcast was launched recently at Parliament House by Foreign Affairs Minister Alexander Downer, ABC Chairman Donald McDonald, and PNG's High Commissioner to Australia, Renagi Lohia.



BUSINESSNEWS

Up to 1.3 billion people worldwide live in absolute poverty, surviving on less than a dollar a day. Absolute poverty remains a fundamental challenge for developing countries and aid donor countries.

The aim of the Australian aid program is to reduce poverty and achieve sustainable development. Australian businesses play a big part in helping to fulfill that aim.

AusAID, the Australian Agency for International Development, manages the Government's overseas aid program and associated business contracts.

AusAID MANAGES THE GOVERNMENT'S OVERSEAS AID PROGRAM AND ASSOCIATED BUSINESS CONTRACTS

Every year hundreds of contracts for goods and services are managed by, or awarded to, Australian firms by AusAID. Involvement in the aid program helps these companies become more internationally competitive and builds expertise. Much of Australia's aid is designed, delivered and assessed jointly with governments and the people of our partner countries.

- » Involvement in the aid program is open to businesses of all sizes, and contracts range widely in value, eg from \$83 million to build a bridge in Viet Nam, to \$2,000 for medical research in China.
- » Most AusAID contracts involve the employment of Australian experts, their companies and support staff.

- » Australian primary producers benefit through the sale of rice, wheat and flour to AusAID as part of the aid program. Australian aid will go mostly to support Papua New Guinea, the Pacific and the poorest regions of East Asia, and particularly to rebuild those communities devastated by poverty, war and disasters.

SEMINARS

Seminars are held in regional and metropolitan centres around Australia in response to requests from interest groups. These seminars aim to promote greater understanding of the business opportunities available through the aid program. Topics generally covered are:

- » AusAID's role and objectives
- » Business opportunities
- » Identifying and accessing business opportunities
- » Tendering with AusAID
- » Hints on getting started.

Seminars were held last year in Brisbane (January), Townsville (March), Adelaide (April), Sydney (May), Perth (November), and Cairns (November), and a trade delegation from Queensland visited AusAID in Canberra in March. So far this year seminars have been held in Brisbane and Toowoomba. •

ANUTECH: AUSTRALIAN MANAGING CONTRACTORS

ANUTECH Pty Ltd was appointed by AusAID as the Australian Managing Contractor for the Solomon Islands Community Peace and Restoration Fund Project (CPRF). The project was started in November 2000, following the signing of the Townsville Peace Agreement (TPA). The initial term of the CPRF was for six months but was later extended to December 2002, with a total funding allocation of \$4 million for activities.

The TPA formally ended the ethnic conflict that had existed mainly between militants from Guadalcanal and Malaita Provinces. This conflict displaced many families, destroyed personal and government property, and caused the collapse of government systems.

The CPRF provides support for small-scale, community-based activities which meet the reintegration, resettlement and rehabilitation needs of affected populations. At the same time, it aims to help communities meet these needs in a manner that promotes peace and reconciliation between previously warring parties.

BUSINESS INFOCUS

Local communities have been able to meet these aims by consulting with provincial coordinators in identifying activities that will make a positive contribution to those groups directly or indirectly affected by the conflict. Funding is then made available for small-scale projects in the health, water and sanitation, education, gender, youth, infrastructure and income-generating sectors. In the past 14 months some 230 projects have been approved for funding under the CPRF. The two-storey classroom at Tamboko Primary School is but one example of these projects.

NEW CLASSROOMS MUCH MORE THAN EDUCATION

More than 200 people gathered to participate in the handing-over ceremony of the new classroom at Tamboko, Solomon Islands, in December 2001. And it soon became clear that the classrooms symbolised much more than just education opportunities for children in the area.

Judi Pattison, project manager of the AusAID/ANUTECH CPRF, talked to leaders in the community about what the project means for the community.

Education in Guadalcanal Province was severely disrupted as a result of the conflict, with many children in the area having no schooling at all for more than two years. Village spokesman Willie Sau Tu'ata said that, during the

'[THIS BUILDING] MARKS AN IMPORTANT STEP IN THE RECONSTRUCTION AND RESTORATION OF PEACE AND SAFETY WITHIN THE TAMBOKO AREA'

conflict in Solomon Islands, the Tamboko Primary School was closed and used by the militants and as a refugee centre. During the fighting most of the villagers escaped and lived in the bush but, when the construction of the classrooms began, it attracted people back into the village to be part of the building team. It was a sign that peace and security were returning to the area.

CONSTRUCTION OF THE CLASSROOMS ATTRACTED PEOPLE BACK INTO THE VILLAGE

Vice Chairman of the school committee, Victor Tadakusu, said, 'We cannot find words to say how proud we are with this new building. This is great achievement for the community

and we are privileged to be among other communities in the country who have benefited under this fund. It marks an important step in the reconstruction and restoration of peace and safety within the Tamboko area.'

CPRF Provincial Coordinator for Guadalcanal Province, Bernadette Laure, said the completion of the school showed the combined efforts of the villagers and the CPRF Project as partners.

'The CPRF project provided building materials, building plans and technical advice to assist the community to complete the work, and the community provided all the labour. This project involved everyone in the community.

'Women provided food for the workers, and everyone helped in small ways. Young people, many who were ex-militants, became very involved with the work on the project. It helped to integrate them back into the community.

'The building will at last provide proper accommodation for Tamboko schools pupils. Because of the excellent work done by the community in completing the project to such a high standard,



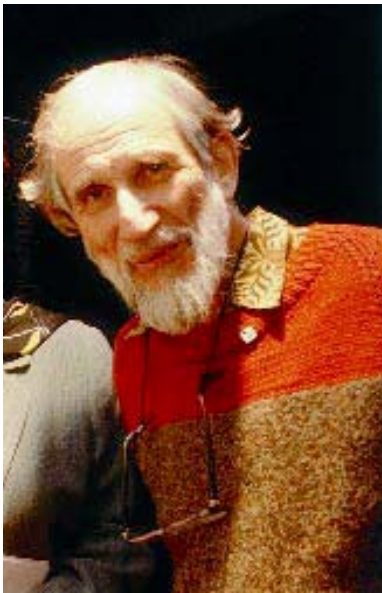
Dancers at the handing-over ceremony.



Villagers celebrate their new classroom.

CPRF will also provide classroom furniture and water tanks.'

This is the kind of project ANUTECH encourages as part of the CPRF. It not only provides much needed facilities, it also helps to build stronger, more self-reliant communities that are better able to work cooperatively with other communities and on their own behalf. ●



HERB FEITH

LIFE WITH INDONESIA

Herb Feith, one of the best-known pioneers of the Australian international volunteer movement in Asia, died tragically in a level-crossing accident in Melbourne on Thursday afternoon, 15 November 2001. Herb, who was 71, had been riding his bicycle from Monash University to his Glen Iris home.

Peter McCawley from the Australian National University remembers him as a colleague and friend.

Herb was not only well-known for his volunteer work, but also widely respected as one of the West's outstanding scholars of modern Indonesian politics. Indonesian scholars across the world were deeply saddened at the news of such a great loss. And with his death, the peoples of the developing world lost a champion.

Herb Feith was born in Vienna in 1939 and came to Australia that same year with his parents as Jewish refugees. He met his future wife Betty when they were both 16 at high school. She later recalled that from the start she was drawn to him because he was so different from many of the Australian boys she had grown up with. 'He didn't talk about cricket and football,' she said. 'He talked politics non-stop, religion non-stop – his family was like that. I thought it was very exciting.'

Herb and Betty were involved in the Student Christian Movement at the University of Melbourne. In 1951 Herb pioneered the Volunteer Graduate Scheme to Indonesia and went there as the first volunteer. He returned to Australia to marry Betty, and then went back to Indonesia with Betty once more as a volunteer.

These initial volunteer efforts led to the establishment of Australia's Overseas Service Bureau in 1961, incorporating it with a new program, Australian Volunteers Abroad (AVA). The first group of volunteers under the AVA program left to work in PNG, the Solomon Islands, Nigeria and Tanzania in 1964.

Herb followed Indonesian politics closely during the 1950s. He chose to work on a doctoral thesis about Indonesian politics at

Cornell University in the US. In 1962, his thesis was published as *The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia*. It was a brilliant study of Indonesian politics during the 1950s and remains highly readable.

During the 1980s and 1990s Herb took a great interest in events in East Timor. He welcomed the fall of Soeharto in 1998, and hoped that a period of greater democracy would contribute to better government in Indonesia.

On his final visit to Indonesia late last year, drawing on his experiences as a volunteer in Jakarta in the 1950s, he reflected on the current mood in Australia. 'We were young, we were a bit radical, so we also saw ourselves as engaging in a form of protest, staying with Indonesian families, in hostels, rather than in European enclaves. We saw ourselves as protesting against white colonial attitudes, against expatriate lifestyles.'

'Looking at Australia today, it is certainly a much more multicultural country than it was when our 50s group of volunteers came here. It is a country which engages Asia in far more ways, but it is still a country in which First World parochialism is still a very powerful force. So those of us who believe in solidarity with Asians and people in other Third World countries still have an awful lot of battles to fight. It is a happy thing that we have been empowered in those battles by a lot of valuable Indonesian friendships.' **PMcC**

STOP PRESS: AusAID was saddened by the sudden death of Professor Heinz Arndt at the Australian National University. A tribute to Professor Arndt will appear in the next issue of *Focus*.

OBITUARY

AMAZING GRACE



A PACIFIC WARRIOR PASSES ON

The death of Grace Mera Molisa on 4 January 2002 was a great shock to all who knew her and worked with her. An educator, activist and poet, she was born in Vanuatu on 17 February 1946. A measure of her standing is reflected in the lengthy ceremonies conducted over five days. Her body lay in state in Vanuatu, Ambae, and Santo.

Following are tributes from just a few of the many who mourn her passing.

We need each other
You need me.
I need you.
Impossible to love so easy to hate!
It does matter that at least we try.
We play our role.
We do our share.
Co-operation.
On every level.
Any level.

From Grace's poem *Co-operation* (in *Beneath Paradise: The Pacific Women's Development Project*, 1995).

Grace was at the forefront of Pacific women's activism. She started campaigning against nuclear testing in French Polynesia in the 1960s and continued campaigning through the 70s when she was part of the Nuclear Free Pacific team at the 1975 First World Conference on Women in Mexico City.

In the 80s, she took an active role in Pacific Women's plans and preparations for the Second World Conference on Women in Copenhagen in 1980, and the Third World Conference on Women in Nairobi in 1985. More recently, Grace was involved in formulating plans of action for Pacific women in preparation for Beijing 1995, the Pacific Platform for Action in preparation for the Fourth World Conference on Women.

Here in New York we followed Grace's career as an activist, writer and publisher with enormous interest. When we were setting up *Women, Ink.* in the early 90s, we asked Grace to write a working paper on Pacific women's writings and opportunities for publishing those writings. Grace did so, enabling us to include a Pacific women's paper alongside papers from other world regions.

Most importantly, however; we were great admirers of Grace's ability to write poetry of enormous sensitivity and feeling. Her poetry will be a lasting legacy for a life well lived. She was an original suffragette, a fighter of dragons, a champion of the poor and powerless. Goodbye Grace. We will miss you terribly. And thank you. Anne S. Walker

I first met Grace Molisa in the pages of a book. I must have been 12 at the time, but even then, I felt a magic and power in her writing that I was lucky enough to experience through meeting her in my work at the SPC Women's Bureau. It feels like only yesterday that we drove through the streets of Vila and laughed and fell silent at all the stories she had to share.

I remember Grace with sadness and a smile, and pay tribute to her and the hardworking women of Vanuatu who worked alongside her along the rough path forward which Melanesian women tread.

Heartfelt sympathy and *aroa* goes to her family and friends, and to the many colleagues who shared her life and her work – often the two being the same thing. *Te atua te aroa, Lisa*

Many of us will be devastated, as we are, to hear the news that Grace Mera Molisa passed away in Port Vila hospital. We mourn the passing of one of our earliest Pacific Island feminists and environmentalists who boldly spoke out on all issues, especially for women's rights and a Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific. She contributed so greatly to our vast sea of islands and her poetry radiated beauty (and protest!) *Ruth Lechte and Diane Goodwillie •*

On International Women's Day in Vanuatu, Prime Minister Edward Natapei launched a new publication titled *Ni-Vanuatu Role Models: Women in Their Own Right*, which includes Grace's story. The occasion was organised by the Vanuatu Writers Association in recognition of Grace and attended by nearly 100 people.

For more tributes to Grace and more information on the new publication by Shirley Randall, see www.sria.com.



The Hon. Christine Gallus with some of the most recent Youth Ambassadors to go overseas. Photo: Irene Dowdy

YOUTH AMBASSADORS FOR DEVELOPMENT – SEVENTH INTAKE

One hundred-and-twenty Australian Youth Ambassadors gathered at a reception at Old Parliament House recently before heading overseas to assist in 17 countries in the Asia Pacific region. Youth Ambassadors are skilled young Australians aged 18–30 placed on short-term assignments in developing countries.

Mrs Chris Gallus, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, was there to farewell the new ambassadors and said they made a positive contribution to the development of the region. ‘Their reception in developing countries has been fantastic,’ she said.

The program, which began in 1998, aims to strengthen understanding between Australia and the countries of Asia and the Pacific, and has placed more than 450 young Australians overseas.

Mrs Gallus also presented Certificates of Appreciation to Australian Partner Organisations sponsoring Youth Ambassadors.

‘These partnerships give the added benefit of strengthening linkages and networks between organisations and institutions in Australia and counterparts in developing countries,’ she said.

INBRIEF

HIV/AIDS TACKLED IN CHINA

A five-year project worth \$15 million has been awarded by the Australian Government to aid and development consultants, Melbourne University Private, to help in the fight against HIV/AIDS in China.

Xinjiang Uygur, in northwest China, is one of the country’s poorest and most HIV/AIDS affected regions. Consultants will work with local government and community groups there to reduce the spread of the disease and improve the care for those affected.

Strategies include improving the capacity of local institutions to deal with HIV/AIDS, promoting awareness of the disease and healthy behaviour among the general population, and training for health workers and family carers.

Australia’s success in tackling HIV/AIDS is recognised internationally, and it plays a leading role in helping to counter the advance of AIDS in the Asia-Pacific region. It is providing more than \$200 million over six years to prevent the epidemic from devastating the health of populations in countries such as Papua New Guinea, Indonesia, India and China, and stalling their social and economic development.

AUSTRALIA HELPS EAST TIMOR’S RURAL POOR

Almost half of East Timor’s population is living in poverty, with rural districts the poorest, according to a recent report prepared for East Timor’s National Planning Commission. In order to assist the rural poor, Australia has committed \$32 million over the next four years for two major projects.

Foreign Affairs Minister Alexander Downer said the \$18 million Australia-East Timor Rural Development Program, managed by an Australian contractor, would improve food security and incomes for the rural poor, as well as engaging local community groups and businesses and helping transfer urgently needed skills and knowledge to East Timor.

The \$14 million Australia-East Timor Community Water Supply and Sanitation Program will develop community-based water and sanitation services in target rural areas. A consortium of Australian businesses and NGOs will manage the program and work closely with East Timorese organisations and local communities.

CONTRIBUTION TO INTERNATIONAL APPEALS

Australia will contribute to two international appeals to help internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Indonesia and refugees from East Timor.

More than one million people have been severely affected by conflict in parts of Indonesia. Australia will contribute \$8.5 million through various United Nations agencies and NGOs to help vulnerable groups of IDPs, particularly women and children.

Australia will also contribute \$6.6 million to help the Indonesian Government and the UN find lasting solutions for up to 80,000 East Timorese still living in refugee camps in West Timor.

AUSTRALIAN AID IN AFGHANISTAN

Australia will provide \$1.5 million to Australian Volunteers International and CARE Australia to help rebuild Afghanistan. Aid projects include literacy programs, water sanitation, and training for Afghan women in project management.

Australia has committed \$40.3 million to Afghanistan for activities which include emergency food aid, removal of landmines, immunisation, nutrition, drug control, and assistance to the UN Interim Authority.

\$17 million in aid was announced by Mrs Gallus at an international donors meeting in Tokyo in January.

Mrs Gallus said Australia’s assistance to Afghanistan focused on addressing the most pressing needs of the people. ‘Our assistance to date has been well-received as timely and appropriate,’ she said.

Late last year Mrs Gallus visited a South Australian mill where flour was being processed before being sent to assist the World Food Programme’s relief activities in South West Asia. Australia has committed 7,200 tonnes of wheat to assist humanitarian relief activities in Afghanistan and neighbouring regions.

For more information on Afghanistan see page 12 or go to www.ausaid.gov.au

FOCUS QUESTIONNAIRE

WELCOME TO THE 'NEW LOOK' *FOCUS* MAGAZINE!

AusAID's aim in redesigning *Focus* is to inform our readers more effectively about the Australian aid program. Your response to this questionnaire is vital to help us ensure *Focus* achieves this aim and is relevant to you.

Please take a moment to answer the questions and return this form via the freepost address listed at the end of the questionnaire. The first five people who complete the questionnaire will receive a set of four peace posters with compliments of *Focus* magazine.

READERSHIP

1. Who reads this copy of *Focus*?

- a. self
- b. other family members
- c. work colleagues
- d. unknown – if displayed in a public place, please specify where

2. If your answer to (1) includes (a), how much of *Focus* do you read?

- a. cover to cover
- b. several articles
- c. only those articles that are of specific interest, eg:

- d. photos and captions

CONTENT

3. From the following regular items, please circle those of interest to you:

	Not interested				Very interested		
a. From the Minister	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
b. Editorial	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
c. What's New	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
d. Snapshots	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
d. Business News	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
e. Global Education	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
f. Volunteers/Youth Ambass.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
g. Special in-depth stories	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
h. Specific story (state title)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

4. How informative was the material?

	Not informative				Very informative		
a. From the Minister	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
b. Editorial	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
c. What's New	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
d. Snapshots	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
e. Business News	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
f. Global Education	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
g. Volunteers/Youth Ambass.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
h. Special in-depth stories	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
i. Specific story (state title)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

5. Would you like to read more or fewer stories about the following topics:

	Fewer		About the same			More	
a. Human interest	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
b. Statistical data	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
c. Health	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
d. Education	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
e. Peace-building	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
f. Gender	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
g. Environment	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
h. Agriculture	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
i. Governance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Other topics, please specify

Would you prefer *Focus* to be themed or to be more general in coverage?

7. How do you rate the following design and layout aspects of *Focus*?

	Strongly disagree				Strongly agree			
a. I would pick up this magazine to look at it	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
b. I think the magazine is interesting and credible	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
c. After reading <i>Focus</i> I know more about the Australian aid program	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
d. After reading <i>Focus</i> I feel more positive about overseas aid	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
e. I would recommend <i>Focus</i> magazine to others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
f. <i>Focus</i> magazine generates discussion about issues	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

9. What AusAID publications have you read?

10. *Focus* magazine is also published on AusAID's website. Would you prefer to read it as a traditionally published magazine or as an online publication?

11. Other comments?

Name (optional)

Address (optional)

Postcode: _____

Email address (optional)

Gender ● Female ● Male

Age

Profession

Location:

- Remote
- Rural and regional
- Inner city
- Suburban

» » » » » » » » » » » » » » » » » » » »

Thank you for completing this questionnaire.

Please return it by FREEPOST to

The Editor

Focus magazine

Public Affairs Group

AusAID

Reply Paid 887

Canberra City ACT 2601

or fax it to (02) 6206 4695

For more information about the Australian Government's overseas aid program, visit www.ausaid.gov.au



These four posters celebrating peace are now available from the Global Education Program <http://globaled.usaid.gov.au> or tel (02) 6206 4969

FOCUS IS THE MAGAZINE OF AUSTRALIA'S OVERSEAS AID PROGRAM

Focus is published by the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID). It aims to increase community awareness and understanding of the Australian Government's overseas aid program, which is managed by AusAID.

The views expressed are not necessarily those of AusAID or the Australian Government, nor do the boundaries and names shown on maps imply official endorsement by the Government.

Articles and photographs may be reproduced with permission from The Director, AusAID Public Affairs Group, telephone (02) 6206 4960.

Contributions are welcome and should be sent to:

The Editor, Louise Tigchelaar
Focus Magazine
 Publications Unit
 Public Affairs Group
 AusAID
 GPO Box 887
 Canberra ACT 2601

Tel (02) 6206 4967
 Fax (02) 6206 4695
 Email louise_tigchelaar@ausaid.gov.au

Contributors: Greg Clough, Peter Davis, Antony Funnell, Diane Goodwillie, Sandra Gray-Rodgers, Elizabeth James, Ruth Lechte, Peter McCawley, Peter Mahomet, Susan Nicholls, Judi Pattison, Caroline Taylor-Steele, Louise Tigchelaar, Anne Walker, Lisa Williams

Photography: Greg Clough, Peter Davis, Irene Dowdy, Mathias Heng, Cameron Major.

Contact the editor regarding proposals for articles. AusAID does not accept responsibility for damage to, or loss of, material submitted for publication. Allow several weeks for acceptance or return.

Design by Griffiths and Young Design, Canberra
 Printed by Goanna Print, Canberra, using renewable forest timbers (G Print 130gsm).

ISSN 0819-9973
 Volume 17 No 1 Winter 2002

For more copies of *Focus*, or other AusAID publications, contact:
 Canberra Mailing Centre
 PO Box 462
 Fyshwick ACT 2609

Tel (02) 6269 1230
 Fax (02) 6269 1229
 Email books@ausaid.gov.au

Most of AusAID's corporate publications from November 1997 onwards are available in full on the Internet at www.ausaid.gov.au



VOLUME 17 NUMBER 1 > WINTER 2002



FOCUS IS THE MAGAZINE OF AUSTRALIA'S OVERSEAS AID PROGRAM