Pacific Youth Literature Review

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1. Introduction

The World Bank's Youth Engagement Strategy (YES) in the Pacific sub-region is focused on the labor productivity, economic competitiveness and social cohesion of youth in the Pacific. It is, however, recognized that there is a lack of baseline data and specific research on the social and economic effects of youth unemployment or under-employment in the Pacific. This literature review is therefore intended to be an initial step in determining what, if any, research is available to support strategy development and project preparation, and to establish the basis for further analytical work, including the Pacific Sub-Regional Analytical and Advisory Activity (AAA) that is being initiated towards the end of calendar year 2009.

Objective

The review was intended to produce an overview of published research relating to the key focus areas of the YES. In particular:

- Diagnosing key youth issues in the context of the Pacific, focusing on what issues youth confront and examining interventions that have worked especially in areas that support youth transitions to work and education;
- Investigation of the specific areas of interest, such as unemployment, formal/non-formal income generation schemes, systems and opportunities for second chance education, vocational and other labor or employer-based training schemes, skills certification, life skills training and assess their impact. The analysis should also examine linkages with social unrest, crime and violence, which, whether in the Pacific, or in other regions and contexts, may provide useful insights for the Bank's Pacific YES;
- Lessons learned, especially in respect of the design and execution of projects and monitoring and evaluation frameworks that may be applicable.

Methodology

The work was based on a desk review from a variety of publicly available sources and interviews with Bank specialists. No original survey work was undertaken. The main sources were:

- Documents related to past and on-going work undertaken by the Bank to understand current thinking, the orientation of work done and proposed, and areas of specific interest. Bank publications such as the World Development Report 2007 (WDR 2007) and other publications on Youth at Risk, including work done by the Bank's Latin America & Caribbean Region (LAC) and Human (HD) and Social Development (SD) Units (HD) served as entry points for the review.
- Consulting with specialists among Bank staff
- Publications related to the Pacific as well as developing countries in other regions that may have broadly similar characteristics and more developed countries which may have substantially different economic and social environments, but where the issues are similar and/or there are useful lessons to be drawn, both on the results of interventions and on project approach.
- The publications of the ADB, AusAID, UNICEF, and UNESCO and those accessible via the Australian National University's (ANU) digital libraries.

2. Youth in the Pacific

Demographics

"The need to address youth issues is rooted in demographics because there are more young people than ever around the world. For each phase of Human Development (continuing to learn, starting to work, developing a healthful lifestyle, beginning a family, and exercising citizenship) governments must increase investments directly and cultivate an environment for young people and their families to invest in themselves." in "*World Development Report 2007: Development and the Next Generation*" (World Bank, 2006).

The report goes on to argue that the time has never been better to invest in young people living in developing countries. The cohort of those aged 12-24 years, at 1.3 billion the largest in history, is the healthiest and best educated ever - a strong base to build on, in a world that demands more than basic skills. They will be the next generation of workers,entrepreneurs, parents, active citizens and, indeed, leaders. And, because of falling fertility, they will have fewer dependents than their predecessors as they move through adulthood. This in turn may boost growth - by raising the share of the population that is working and by boosting household savings and investment. The report argues that countries at all levels of development need to seize this opportunity before the aging of societies closes it. Doing so will enable them to grow faster and reduce poverty even further.

These sentiments are reflected in much of the current thinking on development. The basis of the argument is that youth exert a higher leverage, whether positive or negative, upon the development outcomes of a nation than any other section of society. And because human development is cumulative, it follows that by adopting and implementing the right policies, much long-term benefit may be obtained. Conversely, however, failure to do so would not just be a lost opportunity, but would lead to adverse effects on economic and social development of those nations and that could be very costly to reverse.

In most developed countries the projected demographics are such that youth populations relative to the whole (the Youth Bulge) has peaked some years ago, and in many other countries the expected peak is very close. There are however a number of developing nations where this is not the case and the Youth Bulge will not peak for many years (World Bank 2006). Given the current and projected economic growth in these countries and the social issues that are already being observed, there is an urgent need to develop and invest in the right youth policies now, if long-term damage is to be prevented. The literature suggests that these considerations apply very much to the Pacific sub-region. (Duncan and Voigt-Graf 2008; Booth 1998, 1999).

It is estimated (UNICEF 2005) that there were around 1.6 million people aged 15-24 years in the Pacific region as a whole in mid 2005. In most Pacific countries this age group accounted for around 20 per cent of the total population, and at least half the population was under age 25. In the Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga and Vanuatu census data indicates that more than half the population is under age 20 years. Although the rate of increase of the youth population appears to be declining in most Pacific countries, it is still very substantial in Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Kiribati. If current growth rates were sustained these countries could expect a doubling of the youth population within approximately 30-40 years.

Detailed analysis and projections of population growth, taking into account a wide range of factors including migration and projections of growth in employment opportunities based on assumptions about economic conditions, reported in a study on labor mobility (World Bank 2006a) leads to similar conclusions: that there is a significant and growing youth bulge in the demographics of the Pacific and that prospects for employment for these groups are poor, given the estimates for economic growth when compared to estimated population growth.

Table (1) below illustrates the situation in selected PICs.

Table (1) Population projection to 2015 by age cohorts ('000s)

Country	Total (2015)	%	0-14	%	15-24	%	25-54	%	55	%
Fiji	937.9	1.1	285.7	.8	157.7	.0	381.1	.8	133.4	4.0
Kiribati	119.0	2.3	44.2	2.0	22.3	1.4	41.3	2.6	11.3	3.8
Marshall Islands	74.6	2.7	32.1	3.2	13.1	1.3	23.5	2.4	6.0	5.5
PNG	7,293.0	2.3	2,748.6	2.0	1,380.2	1.6	2,597.0	2.5	567.2	4.3
Samoa	200.1	.9	77.9	.5	34.5	.7	64.6	.8	23.0	2.8
Solomon Islands	601.7	2.5	237.8	2.2	113.5	1.8	207.3	3.2	43.2	2.3
Timor-Leste	1,581.2	4.1	736.8	6.2	251.3	1.0	470.2	3.1	122.9	4.3
Tonga	103.3	.5	35.5	.6	19.4	-.3	34.3	.6	14.1	1.0
Vanuatu	288.4	2.7	114.9	2.4	55.4	2.3	95.7	3.1	22.4	3.3

Source: Duncan and Voigt-Graf 2008

The main issues

Poor employment prospects

PIC economic trends are not encouraging. Duncan and Voigt-Graf (2008) analyzed recent trends in Pacific labor markets including growth in output, measures of poverty, labor productivity and real wages, unemployment and underemployment, migration and remittances, child labor, HIV/AIDS, gender inequality, and factors effecting employment. Some key statistics are reproduced below.

Table (2) Unemployment in selected Pacific countries

Country	Unemployment rate (% of total labor force)[1]	Share of youth unemployment (%)	Year
Fiji	5.9	n.a	2005
Kiribati	1.6	32.8	2000
Marshall Islands	30.9	n.a	2000
PNG	2.8	n.a	2000
Samoa	4.9	57.9	2001
Solomon Islands	32.1	42.4	2000
Tonga	5.2	43	2003
Vanuatu	1.6	n.a	2000

Source: Duncan and Voigt-Graf 2008

1 The data for Kiribati, PNG and Vanuatu show very low rates of unemployment, at variance with general observations. This raises questions regarding the basis of reporting from these countries. For example, "fishing" is appears to be considered "employment" in the PNG data. And these differences need to be accounted for in analyses and in comparisons with other data.

Table (3) Real GDP growth projections to 2011 (%)

Country	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Fiji	3.6	-3.1	1.9	2.8	2.9	
Kiribati	5.8	2.5				
Marshall Islands	4.0	3.5	3.0	2.5	2.3	1.8
PNG	3.7	4.3	3.7	4.4	4.7	4.0
Samoa	3.0	3.5	3.0	3.5	3.5	3.5
Solomon Islands	6.1	5.4	4.2	2.8	1.6	1.5
Timor-Leste	-1.6	32.1	3.5			
Tonga	-3.5	0.8	1.3	1.3	1.2	
Vanuatu	5.5	5.0	4.1	3.0	3.0	

Source: Duncan and Voigt-Graf 2008

Unlike certain East Asian countries, where it is thought to have contributed to rapid economic growth, it is suggested that in PIC countries the large and growing youth bulge will not have the same economic benefits because of the low levels of investment and job creation. Economic growth, particularly in the private sector, in PICs is constrained by several factors typical of small island developing states, such as the role of the public sector in the economy, small local markets, distance from overseas markets, poor infrastructure, cost of communications, weak governance and traditional land tenure regimes, among others. The projected large increases in labor are unlikely to be absorbed in the formal labor market which is a tiny share of the labor force and is largely concentrated in the public sector. At the same time, the shortage of appropriately skilled people for the jobs that are available and the oversupply of unskilled workers, are indicative of an increasingly important issue.

These conclusions are supported by other literature. Maclellan and Mares (2005) present the youth bulge and the expected shortage of employment opportunities as an urgent issue. They suggest that seasonal work opportunities in other countries including Australia, could provide relief at least in the short term.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) in "Global Employment Trends (GET) for Youth" (2008) identified "poverty and lack of decent employment" as one of the challenges in the South East Asia and Pacific region. It noted that an estimated one in five youth, were working but living in extreme poverty at the US$1/day level and many are relegated to unpaid or low paying work. Even though some will succeed in securing better jobs along their career, too many are constrained by limited education and skills and without opportunities to improve their human capital.

The emerging pattern is one of serious social pressures resulting from the lack of employment opportunities for youth, even now, and an impending crisis for most PICs within a relatively short time. How short is indicated in the World Bank report on Tabor mobility (2006a) which concluded that "...without dramatic increases in formal sector employment, the supply of excess labor in the Pacific would have increased significantly by 2015, creating a potentially serious problem, but also an opportunity to supply labor to those countries whose populations are aging".

Increasing marginalization

A series of reports and Situation Analyses ("Sitans") researched and published by UNICEF, in collaboration with UNFPA and the SPC, and various national government agencies between 2004 and 2007, provide useful overviews of the situation of youth in the Pacific. The regional report "State of Pacific Youth 2005" (UNICEF, 2005) provides a comprehensive overview of the regional situation while the country specific "Sitans" provide a more specific view of each country (UNICEF, 2004, 2005a, 2005b, 2005c, 2006).

UNICEF (2005) states: "It is evident that in most countries young people are not completing secondary education and/or finding suitable employment, are vulnerable to engaging in activities such as consuming drugs and alcohol, unsafe sex, or crime and are therefore unable to meet their full potential." It is noted that these same concerns were documented in the "The State of Pacific Youth 1998" (UNICEF 1998) and while Pacific governments and regional organizations have taken a number of initiatives to address them, including developing the Pacific Youth 2005 Strategy and numerous other initiatives that have benefited many young people, large numbers are still exposed to the same youth risks.

The report argues that the main reason why youth issues continue to be a major concern in the Pacific region is that most of the effort has focused on addressing the symptoms rather than the underlying causes. It suggests that more emphasis is needed on the participation of young people in addressing the causes rather than just involving them at the "problem stage". The idea of investing in youth as a resource for development rather than regarding young people as a problem group in society is encouraged.

Similar views are expressed in the World Bank report "Giving South Pacific Youth a Voice" (World Bank 2008) which presents the results and recommendations from research based on a participatory action approach carried out across six Pacific countries. Employment opportunities and the quality or outcomes of education emerge as important issues as do fears of marginalization and the lack of a role in decision-making.

Crime, violence and risky behavior

The negative social and economic impact of reduced opportunities for youth are well understood (World Bank, 2006; Cunningham et al. 2008). But there are reasons to fear that in the Pacific these pressures could intensify to a degree that creates instability. Chevalier (2001) examines the conflict that erupted in the Solomon Islands in 1999-2000, which, among other factors, was caused by the dissatisfaction of youth, as an example to other Pacific countries of the dangers of failing to provide adequate opportunities for youth. For example, the underlying demographic, economic and educational realities of the situation of youth in the Solomon Islands far exceed the resources allocated by or available from governments and donors.

McLean Hilker & Fraser (2009) provide a detailed analysis of the causes of youth engagement in crime and violence. They conclude that the structural exclusion and lack of opportunities faced by young people effectively block or prolong their transition to adulthood and can lead to frustration, disillusionment and, in some cases, their engagement in violence. Although the relative importance of factors that stall the transition to adulthood may vary from context to context, the following are identified as the major structural factors that appear to underlie youth exclusion and lack of opportunity and are argued to increase the likelihood of youth engagement in violence: Unemployment and underemployment and lack of livelihood opportunities; Insufficient, unequal and inappropriate education and skills; Poor governance and weak political participation; Gender inequalities and socialization; Legacy of past violence. Many Pacific countries show one or more of these factors.

A survey of gangs and youth groups in Timor-Leste (Scambary 2006) showed how many marginalized youth obtained a certain level of "self-respect" and a sense of belonging through their membership of gangs. Both authors, however, also point to the many groups of youth in similar circumstances who *do not* engage in violence and, in Timor-Leste, were active in promoting community activities and other initiatives as volunteers. These groups could, it is argued be the focus of efforts to positively influence youth, through funded interventions.

Supporting views are expressed in (World Bank, 2007c), where a distinction is made between factors that place youth at risk and those that actually tip them into engaging in undesirable behavior

Dinnen and Ley (2000) examine the issues surrounding violence in Melanesia. While the book explores range of issues, the study of the causes of frustrations for youth in Fiji, particularly conflicting demands and norms and the study of the issues facing young Highlands men in Port Moresby, PNG are especially relevant. Geographic dislocation (PNG) results in changed social dynamics and the need for "reconstruction of identity" in multi-ethnic urban centers Such geographic dislocation is taking place, both in the search for employment and due to parents' attempts to obtain better educational opportunities for their children (UNICEF, 2005). Establishing or re-establishing links to community and creating a degree of social cohesion through positive engagement of youth is also presented as a key part of effective youth policy in (World Bank, 2007c).

Booth, H. (1999) reported on a comparative analysis of suicide levels and characteristics based on available data for thirteen Pacific Island nations. Global comparison showed that Pacific rates are amongst the highest reported and the broad causal theme was societal transition.

Ware (2004) argues that instability will continue to threaten Melanesia for as long as economic growth fails to significantly outstrip population growth and thus to provide employment opportunities for a younger generation no longer satisfied with subsistence farming and fishing. It is pointed out that the constraint in the Pacific is not an inability to feed growing populations, but an inability to provide opportunities for earning cash to supply requirements beyond mere subsistence. It is further argued that emigration plays a crucial role in defusing potential conflict in Polynesia and has provided a safety valve for Fiji. As an indirect indicator of the pressures caused by unemployment: in PICs such as Tonga and Samoa whose citizens have relatively unrestricted immigration access to developed countries, more than 70% of the population are identified as migratory. (World Bank 2006b).

3. Causes

Much of the literature seems premised on the proposition that youth unemployment and the consequent social issues are the "problem". However, closer analysis of the "causes" reveal that youth issues are no more than a symptom of a wider, interconnected array of development issues which, as might be expected, have a more pronounced effect on youth. The main causes identified are inadequate economic growth, unsuitable education systems and a changing social and cultural environment which combine to result in a number of negative forces on significant numbers of young people.

Economic prospects

The ILO in its report "Global Employment Trends for Youth" (2008) observed that "without increased economic growth and employment content of growth, little will ever change in terms of youth employment opportunities. Also unfortunate is the fact that there is no magic formula to creating economic growth."

This is undoubtedly true and, as indicated previously, the projections for economic growth in the region indicate that the supply of labor will continue to outstrip employment growth. However, in the context of South East Asia and the Pacific, the same report goes on to say that: "Despite some recent positive signs, it is in this region more so than any other that policy-makers should come to terms with the fact that youth labor markets do not sort themselves out without assistance, no matter how great the economic growth. There needs to be a political decision to focus on youth as a vulnerable group and to formulate youth employment programmes and policies accordingly."

Other research also encourages that the problem needs to be approached from perspectives than a purely economic one. First, given that "there is no magic formula for creating economic growth", the idea that youth could be key actors in generating economic growth (World Bank 2006; "World Youth Report" UN 2007; UNICEF 2005) (rather than victims of low growth) is an attractive one. Second, the problems of youth are not limited to countries with poor economic prospects, indicating that the transitions of youth are worthy of attention in themselves and also that some of the issues need to be addressed in a human development context as part of a strong portfolio of development initiatives (Cunningham et al 2008).

Education systems

There is consensus in the literature that effective education systems at every level are critically important to achieving the human development transitions of youth. Their employability upon leaving school, income potential throughout life and the potential contribution to the economy and society are influenced strongly by the quality and extent of education, including vocational and skills training. Countries with predominantly low-skilled workers are doomed to stay behind, their citizens earning low wages, and continuing to miss opportunities to escape poverty and enjoy a better life. Ensuring that all children have the opportunity to learn critical skills at the primary and secondary level is paramount to overcoming skill barriers that perpetuate underdevelopment and poverty. (Cuadra et al. 2005; Cohen et al 2005; Abu-Ghaida and Connolly 2003; Vegas and Umansky. 2005).

However, schools may also play a vital role beyond the purely academic one, by providing a sense of connectedness through which youth tend to be motivated away from risky behaviors (Cunningham et al 2008; UNICEF 2005; Blum 2004). The range of programs undertaken by National governments and regional bodies in the Pacific seems to indicate that Education does indeed receive recognition as a primary issue[2]. However, the programs undertaken and the recommendations contained in the literature indicate that there are slightly differing views on

2 The Pacific Archive of Digital Data for Learning and Education (PADDLE). http://www.paddle.usp.ac.fj. Is a repository of publications relating to education policy, planning and development material from fifteen Pacific countries to facilitate the sharing of best practice and experience. It includes publications from the participating Ministries of Education such as strategic plans, education legislation, curriculum frameworks and school policies. It also contains national development plans, statistics and budget information for all countries.

what is wrong with Education in the Pacific and what may be done by way of remedy.

Education systems in the Pacific do not prepare students for the employment available

School drop-out rates and especially the poor transition rates from primary to secondary school are attributed at least in part to the fact that education systems emphasize curricula designed to prepare students for employment in the formal sector. As both parents and youth are aware of the dearth of jobs in that sector and the fact that, consequently, their education does not provide them with much advantage after graduation, there is little motivation to remain in school (UNICEF 2005; McMurray 2001). Duncan and Voigt-Graf (2008) point out that most PICs are characterized by large informal and subsistence sectors, and that this sector will continue to provide (or need to provide) income opportunities for a growing number of Pacific islanders. They argue that the situation for youth would be improved if school leavers were equipped with skills that increased their employability and prepared them for working in the informal sector and subsistence economy. The education systems at present leave them ill-quipped to take advantage of the opportunities that do arise even under current economic trends. This sets the scene for all types of risky behavior and their consequences. A further problem is that the TVET sector in many Pacific countries tends to be regarded as very much a second option, for those who 'fail' the mainstream schooling system.

The methods of teaching are also seen as being outdated and ineffective in achieving even basic learning outcomes, such as literacy and numeracy. Previous models of education and employment need to be challenged therefore and their appropriateness to the long-term sustainability of the country questioned (UNICEF, 2005; Chevalier, 2001).

Insufficient emphasis on skills and learning outcomes

Revamping education systems is widely acknowledged to be a priority, but the issues are complex and the proposed solutions and ongoing efforts appear to be based on slightly differing premises. A review of some 700 World Bank primary education projects around the world, from 1990 onward, reported that the main policy objectives of the sector since 1990 have been to expand primary school enrollments and completion, improve equity of access, and bolster learning outcomes (World Bank 2006e). About two-thirds of primary school investment projects included an expansion objective. About the same proportion covered equity of access (mostly for girls and the poor). Most projects also aimed to strengthen education sector management or governance. Regrettably, relatively few projects (less than 60 percent) had objectives to reduce school drop-out and repetition rates. Some 90 percent of the projects support quality improvements, usually in terms of better educational inputs such as books and teacher training, but only about 35 percent target and track improved student learning as made evident by, for example, better reading, writing and mathematical skills. The findings show that, whilst access has improved, learning has lagged; rapid expansion can put learning at risk.

These findings, though global, are relevant to the Pacific too and may account for the apparent lack of progress in indicators of learning outcomes reported in the literature. Much of the effort thus far has focused on improving infrastructure, capacity in education agencies and in providing better access. The documents contained in the the Pacific Archive of Digital Data for Learning and Education (PADDLE) repository, a part of the PRIDE[3] project are illustrative and provide a broad overview of recent or on-going efforts. For example, the objectives of PRIDE are: "To enhance the capacity of Pacific education agencies to effectively plan and deliver quality basic education through formal and nonformal means, and to improve the coordination of donor inputs to assist countries implement their plans". The expected outputs are: strategic plans for education in all of the fifteen participating countries; assisting countries implement, monitor and evaluate such plans by way of capacity building activities at the national and regional levels, particularly through distance learning programs utilizing existing video-conferencing and Internet technologies; encouraging effective donor coordination at national levels; development of an on-line resource center that will encourage sharing of best-practice and experience.

3 The Pacific Regional Initiative for the Delivery of Basic Education (PRIDE) http://www.usp.ac.fj/index.php?id=pride_home0

The World Bank (2006e) report also noted that little of the Bank's recent analytical work covering primary education has focused on learning outcomes and their determinants, suggesting that an adequate evidence base to inform efforts to raise learning outcomes is therefore often lacking. However it concluded that "A trade-off between improved access and student learning gains can be avoided with explicit planning for improved learning outcomes and strong political commitment to that goal"

Even in respect of other indicators, the data available do not present an encouraging picture. UNESCO (2009a) in its "Education For All, Global Monitoring Report 2009" reported that while the region as a whole continues to advance on most Education For All goals, wide disparities between and within countries are holding back progress. Enrollment in pre-primary education was low in Timor-Leste (10%) and Fiji (16%). Progress towards universal primary education remained relatively low in the Marshall Islands, Solomon Islands and Timor-Leste with the net enrollment ratio below 70% in 2006. The number of out-of-school children increased in the Cook Islands, Fiji and Vanuatu. The transition rate from primary to secondary education was under 75% in Tonga and Vanuatu. The number of illiterate growth increased in the Pacific (partly due to population growth) from 2000 to 2006; that trend is projected to continue at a slower pace to 2015.

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)and nonformal education opportunities are inadequate

Although TVET has an important place in the education system of any economy, in the Pacific there appears to be a notable lack of support. TVET is usually regarded as a second choice for people who fail to make it through the mainstream education system. For example in Fiji pupils who perform well in examinations progress through a formal education system geared towards white-collar work and tertiary education while those who perform poorly in secondary school are directed to technical and vocational education within their school or in one of 60 dedicated TVET centers This has led TVET centers to be labeled as the "drop-out schools" and for the pupils at these centers, or in TVET courses offered by secondary schools, to be regarded as failures. The notion of "failure" is so strong that except in the case of two secondary schools that have recently introduced a choice of streams, students in Fiji who achieve pass marks in the formal examination system are not admitted to TVET, even if they wish to obtain technical or vocational employment. Moreover TVET schools generally do not teach to standards agreed with industry, so TVET students are not regarded by industry as trained and employable (UNICEF 2005)

There is limited published data on programs designed to prepare youth for employment in the informal sector or even in the skilled trades although many sources highlight its importance and make recommendations.

A study conducted in the Solomon Islands to support the development of a national skills training plan (World Bank 2007) found that while there was significant unemployment, there was also strong demand for skilled labor in specific occupational areas in both the private and public sector. In Fiji, each year more than half of approximately 15,000 school leavers join the ranks of the educated unemployed (UNICEF 2005). At the same time, Fiji is experiencing a critical shortage of skilled tradesmen and has to recruit overseas workers at high cost to meet the demand. This reinforces the view that the available workforce does not have access to the kinds of high-quality skills training necessary for securing employment in these attractive occupations, in both countries.

In Vanuatu, Curtain (2007) reported that training options for young people were limited in terms of places and skills covered. A combination of Government and non-Government agencies were reported in 2000t to be providing provide TVET through about 70 training providers countrywide, servicing some 1,400 students in post-secondary, pre-employment programs. About 440 students graduate each year. Post-primary, pre-employment programs (rural training centers) were said to cater for some 2,650 students, producing about 1,010 graduates each year. Continuing education programs, mostly short, post-employment, upgrading courses are said to attract about 1,170 students each year.

The Asian Development Bank (2008)carried out a study from April 2006-September 2007 examining technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in 13 Pacific island countries. Skills development was reviewed according to five criteria: economic relevance, quality of skills training, equity and access, organizational and management effectiveness and finance and internal efficiency. TVET priorities were identified according to country groups in the Pacific: land-rich, low-income countries, with low social and economic indexes but positive agricultural potential—Papua New Guinea (PNG), Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu; small, vulnerable island states, which face severe economic constraints, few economic prospects, and issues of sustainability—Kiribati, Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Nauru, and Tuvalu; and "advanced" island states—Cook Islands, Fiji Islands, Palau, Samoa, and Tonga. The study concluded that top priority for the first group should be training for the informal sector. The informal sector was also a priority for the second group, but with special emphasis on delivering services to remote places and outer islands. Financial sustainability was another major challenge for this group, i.e. making TVET systems affordable in some countries (Tuvalu) and reducing dependence on external financing in others such as Kiribati, RMI, and FSM. Where possible, the report recommends that people should be trained so that they may migrate at higher wages than if they had received no training. The top priorities for the third group were seen as expanding training for the wage sector and filling of vacancies generated by emigration.

It is noteworthy that the World Bank (2006e) found that absolute increases in Bank financing for primary education were accompanied by substantial *decreases* in support for vocational education while funding for tertiary and secondary education remained steady.

There have also been calls to support nonformal[4] education opportunities in the Pacific. Cole (1996) argues for nonformal education to become an integral part of education planning in Melanesian countries so that, where mainstream education is inappropriate or unavailable, opportunities for self improvement exist alongside the formal education system. Nonformal education was reported to be thriving in at least four countries driven primarily by dedicated enthusiasts but it needed to be recognized by governments as a critical component in their respective countries alongside the well recognized formal education sector and to be reflected in policy and that polices should ensure that nonformal education is structured to enhance people's knowledge and skills and to give them a wider range of opportunities for livelihoods.

Wari et al (1995) provide an overview of formal and nonformal education in Papua New Guinea. The formal education system is judged not to be meeting the needs of youth, with serious wastage or 'voluntary drop-out' evident between primary and secondary levels. They found that Nonformal education, particularly when carried out by non-government organizations, has on the other hand played an important role in the past, often being more successful than better-funded government programs. However, since independence, government support for nonformal education has been mostly sporadic and disorganized The need for recognition by government is stressed, with a call for cooperation between non-government organizations and provincial and national governments.

Ghee (2002) reviewed good practices in the region, focusing in particular on the rural and traditional agriculture context within which the majority of youth in the region are to be found, and on the new information and communications technologies context that is reshaping the world. UNESCAP's use of the "Success-Case-Replication" methodology to promote sustainable employment is noted. This approach differs from conventional employment training in that it uses the successful villagers or groups to impart the training to the targeted poor.

There are few "second chance" programs

Given the inadequacies noted in the TVET and nonformal education sectors it is not surprising that there are few reports of significant "second chance" programs available to youth who drop out of the education system or suffer the consequences of risky behavior Given the reports of

4 A distinction is noted between Nonformal Education (NFE) and "Informal" education. NFE has been defined (Kleis. 1973. p. 6) as any intentional and systematic educational enterprise (usually outside of traditional schooling) in which content is adapted to the unique needs of the students (or unique situations) in order to maximize learning and minimize other elements which often occupy formal school teachers (i.e. taking roll, enforcing discipline, writing reports, supervising study hall, etc. Informal education is not necessarily part of a definite educational enterprise and may include for example, experience passed on by superiors in employment or by peers.

youth unemployment, school dropout rates and the resulting social issues (UNICEF 2005; World Bank 2008), this implies that there is already a population of marginalized youth, who currently have few avenues of escape from their circumstances and that this population is growing.

Yet there are indications that well conceived programs offer real benefits. The donor-funded 'Waan Aelon in Majel' (WAM) project in Marshall Islands, has trained 46 young people in outrigger canoe building, boat maintenance and repair, sailing and navigation - skills that are relevant to both current economic opportunities and traditional life in Marshall Islands. The original trainees were male school drop-outs who were previously involved in high-risk behavior, but later, girls also joined the program. Trainees market their work and generate income, speak in schools, bring children to observe boat building and involve parents and the community in sailing regattas. This outreach has included a further 4,800 students. A survey of alumni found that 76 per cent of the trainees were utilizing the hands-on and life skills they had gained during the program, and some had returned to their home islands or undertaken further study (UNICEF, 2005).

Curtain (2007) in a study based in Vanuatu categorized TVET and livelihood training programs into two streams: the first being bottom up, community-supported and driven, and cross-country in scale. Such programs have been operating for over many years (the Rural Training Centers), and has a sustained set of activities which are directly focused on community development and livelihoods. The other stream is top-down, largely donor-funded and directed, and is small-in-scale. This stream is based on activities that are intermittent, of short duration, narrow in focus and usually lack links to young people's wider interests in and concerns about their communities and their livelihoods. Curtain concluded that the first category could be sustained and have worthwhile impact on youth.

The social and cultural environment of PICs

Many sources allude to the constraints and issues resulting from the social and cultural characteristics of the Pacific and the need for interventions to be sensitive to them. However, it is unclear to what extent these considerations have actually impacted the design of programs reported. Indeed, little of the literature on youth or development cover this aspect in any depth. There is, however, a substantial body of anthropological research that deals with the subject. Although this review has not covered the area in full depth[5] it is evident that PICs have distinct social and cultural characteristics that may have a fundamental effect on the outcomes of many types of development interventions and therefore warrants careful consideration at the design stage.

Pacific Culture

What is known as "Pacific Culture" today is in fact a mix of traditional practices and the strong influence of European colonization that began two centuries ago (Griffen, 2006; Hezel, 1989). There is also considerable variation between countries and even within countries and therefore any discussion of "Pacific" culture can only touch on a few common themes.

Most Pacific societies and cultures experienced changes in land ownership, social relations and new or altered hierarchies, including changes in traditional leadership due to colonization. Pacific cultural practices, the use of labor, dress, social mores and relationships, were also changed by European colonial beliefs and, importantly, had a strong influence on concepts of key institutions such as the family. New laws affecting labor relations, land and inheritance, marriage and customs in Pacific societies, changed men and women's status and gender relations. For example, the rights to land and communal decision making that women traditionally held in many Pacific societies were lost due to these changes. Laws that are considered discriminatory in a modern context and have subsequently changed in the countries of origin, remain unchanged in the Pacific today. Certain indigenous customs and practices were resilient to these influences and remain part of the mix that is classified as Pacific Culture today, and sometimes even conflict with modern legal systems (Scaglion, 1985; Zorn, 1991).

5 A separate bibliography of this type of research in the context of PNG is provided in Appendix (A) as an example that may assist future work.

In the context of youth, education and employment, three broad areas may be identified as being highly significant:

- Changing social structures - extended families, clans, villages and chiefs giving way or struggling to retain their relevance in the context of urbanized, nuclear families.
- Monetization of the economy, leading to changes in the role and status of those who find employment, especially youth and women, attitudes towards sharing of income and property ownership.
- Status of women.

Changing social structures

In Pacific cultures, the extended family is common and its function, traditionally, is as a source of cultural affirmation and identity. It is expected to provide a secure, supportive environment for both children and for adults (Griffen 2006). For children, there are many caregivers and parenting can be done by other relations and adults. Other family members, siblings, and neighbors may be involved in monitoring and reinforcing culturally appropriate behavior in children. The values of sharing and caring for others in this network of family, was positively instilled as part of culture in many PICs (Morton 1996, Hughes 2002, UNICEF 2006, 2006c).

Hezel (1989) describes in detail how, within the broad outlines of a family system in Micronesia, child-rearing roles were distributed among a number of different individuals. There were persons who functioned as disciplinarians, others as advocates, and others who provided formal instruction in cultural matters. If a young man experienced what he felt was harsh treatment at the hands of one, he could usually find another to plead his cause. Or if the relationship deteriorated to the point where he was rejected altogether by his father's kin group, (in Palau and Yap) he always had recourse to his matrilineal relatives who would normally offer him refuge with no questions asked. The young person had older relatives with whom he could establish a more informal relationship, as was true most notably of grandparents in the Marshalls and Yap. Traditional systems therefore afforded youth, through the distribution of authority, numerous checks against any abuse of authority especially in the difficult years following adolescence. It provided a number of intermediaries to help resolve conflicts, and a wide safety net for those who found themselves unable to resolve such conflicts. Crucially, it also provided parents with a great deal of support in child-rearing through the experience and contributions of other adults as well as the established norms of society which would automatically be reinforced by growing up in a close family environment.

The modern reality, however, is that extended families, traditional households and village life in the Pacific appear to be changing (Griffen 2006, Hezel 1989, UNICEF 2005a, 2006c, 2002). Monetization of the economy, increasing mobility and the resulting rural-urban drift have resulted in many changes. Hughes (2002), concluded that families in many parts of Vanuatu are in turmoil and facing great difficulties. Kastom practices are taking place but in the context of urbanization, migration of men or both parents for work, changes in village life and difficulties of employment and income. In some settings, the "family" has changed in its configuration to one where parents are absent and the household consists of relatives and other adults and the child has no particular adult reference point. Even where the parents are present the trend towards nuclear families brings its own challenges. With the surrender of much of the authority that lineage heads once held, the father has become the master of his household in a way that was unthinkable only thirty years ago. The father has assumed final authority over his own children, even after adolescence, and is expected to care for their needs and discipline them when required. The lineage or kin group may still remain as a social unit: its head may often be consulted on a choice of a marriage partner and act as a spokesman for the entire kin group. But the household has attained a level of autonomy in daily life that has been described as "a social revolution" (Hezel 1989). Modern parents, who may have grown up in a more traditional context, are often unprepared to for the multiple responsibilities that they now face.

Where young people have themselves moved away, often to attend school or in the hope of employment, the challenges may be worse: Even well-meaning relatives cannot usually provide either the care or discipline that parents would. Relatives who are obliged due to

traditions of lineage to accept and care for young people of their clan may now be resentful of the imposition. Thus, girls living away from their parents may be at risk of exploitation and abuse, such as being forced to do long hours of housework for their relatives, or becoming victims of physical or sexual abuse (UNICEF, 2005). Boys living with relatives also have an increased risk of dropping out of school, becoming involved in substance abuse, crime or running away to live on the streets. Many children, when not cared for by biological parents, feel they are a burden and seek means of supporting the family or themselves, often through sex work (Griffen 2006). Removed from their familiar village environments, these young people are faced with the need to re-establish their sense of identity which, in the worst case, may be found in gangs and other risk-prone groups (Scambary 2006). There is increasing recognition that helping to establish (or re-establish) linkages with community and building social cohesion in a positive way could be vital factor that reduces the chances of youth actually engaging in risky behavior (World Bank 2007c).

The effects of monetization

The trend towards more urbanized, often mobile, nuclear families also brings a whole new set of challenges. Hezel (1985, 1989) develops a causal link between unprecedented levels of suicide in Micronesia and the significant changes in social structure that happened during the 1960s and 70s based on detailed analysis of anthropological and economic research over several decades. Monetization of the economy is seen as the most important agent that brought about this social change. Where land tenure systems and the allocation of resources within family groups had previously been the basis of social structure (Alkire 1977) but the growing cash economy and the ability to earn wages reduced dependence on the resources of the land. Thus the very basis of social structure was changed, rapidly, in the post-war period.

Hezel (1989) notes that while much of Micronesia already had a taste of money as early as the mid-19th century it did not, apparently, effect any lasting changes on the family structure because the income was distributed through the traditional chiefly networks. During the early post-war years Micronesians still relied almost exclusively on the fruits of their land, and the traditional family structure remained very much intact. Lineage groups, or other larger family units, regularly ate together and worked together, providing the labor and supervision for most of the daily tasks necessary for survival. But in the period 1950 to 1977, with the increase in employment among local people, real per capita income quadrupled. Thus the cash economy presented a real alternative to the land-based subsistence economy.

Where formerly the lineage head assigned and supervised the work of his juniors and presided over the distribution of food prepared from the land, as cash income increased and household heads (generally the fathers of nuclear families) retained their money and store-bought goods, and their dependence on support from lineage land decreased. Today the father of the family has principal responsibility (and the consequent stresses) for feeding his own household, even though there is still considerable sharing of resources with the extended family. In some cases this has a negative effect where one wage-earner is expected to share his or her earnings, however modest, but other family members have no particular motivation to find employment themselves. Similarly, for some Pacific communities, money is a relatively new concept. Its value and the need to manage finances are often poorly understood.

The research in Micronesia (Hezel 1985, 1989) shows significant circumstantial links between the changes in the economy, changes in social structure and suicide rates, especially among young males, during the period from 1950 to around 1980, providing an insight into the stresses of rapid social change. Importantly, based on similar evidence but not such detailed research, Hezel (1989) extends the argument to posit that the same effects were very likely at work in Samoa in the 80s and possibly elsewhere in the Pacific.

The status of women

Although practices differed between countries, many Pacific societies had a strong matrilineal base. Significant kin groups, land ownership and authority over youth, even males, were based around the mother's extended family, albeit counter-balanced in some aspects by the patrilineal group as well (Hezel 1985, 1989). Women, therefore, had both respect and security despite being usually required to be obedient to her husband and having little say in decisions

affecting the community. Changes to women's rights of inheritance under colonial influence caused significant imbalances in many Pacific societies, from Micronesia to PNG and Vanuatu (Hezel, 1989; Griffen, 2006). Monetization of economies exacerbated this effect, as land ownership reduced in importance as the primary source of food.

While women lost some of the rights, status and economic security that was part of the traditional culture, some traditional customs, including disadvantageous ones, remained. Women are sometimes the prime income earners of a household in the cash economy. Yet many women supporting their households and providing for children are nevertheless expected to be subordinate to men in the family and to perform many household tasks according to Custom.

The tradition of a "bride price" remains in parts of Melanesia, but the compensating social obligations that traditionally went with it may have diminished. While bride price has deep traditional social significance and reflects social bonding and the value attached to daughters it is sometimes associated with abusive marriages because 'purchase' of a bride can contribute to the view that she is her husband's 'property,' and so can be used in any way he wishes (UNICEF, 2008). Poverty increases the risk that the traditional custom of bride price could cause girls to be 'sold' into an abusive or exploitative sexual relationship. For example, selling daughters to foreign businessmen who paid substantial sums, but sometimes regarded the exchange as a form of prostitution rather than a marriage, and abandoned the 'wife' after a year or two.

The high level of violence against women reported in the Pacific, both domestic and otherwise, is often attributed to a traditional culture where women are supposed to be subservient (Ware, 2004). However there are equally strong opposing views that it is in fact the breakdown of societies and the failure to implement traditional practices that leave women without the protection they had in the past (in Griffen, 2006).

Influence of the global media

In addition to the changes that have taken place in traditional Pacific cultures, youth are increasingly exposed to the global media and receiving messages that are often in stark conflict with tradition. For example: individual rights as opposed to communal rights; democracy and legal systems as opposed to Chiefs and hierarchy; formal education as opposed to customary knowledge. Despite this tendency to be saturated with Western values via the media and urban life, many young people in urban areas still seem to value their traditional culture. For example, 81 per cent of youth interviewed in Port Vila saw "*kastom*" (custom) as important. Their reasons related directly to self-esteem and also to the economic potential *'Because kastom and culture is my identity – who I am and where I come from; You don't need money to learn it or to take part in it; Because there isn't work, so learning kastom is one way to make money'* quoted in (UNICEF 2005).

The role of youth in society and being able to influence matters that concern them is an important area that is in conflict with the traditional norms of obedience, silence and respect for elders. The World Bank (2008) studied the issue of youth marginalization in the Pacific in a survey that included a target group of young people aged 15-29 years, consulting 900 youth from six countries. It provides a snapshot of youth concerns about marginalization and social exclusion. The perception of being marginalized and voiceless without the ability to make any meaningful contribution to their country's future emerged as a key issue. The youth represented in the study felt that greater collaboration with decision makers and communities could help to better identify youth concerns and develop effective strategies to remedy them. All six countries reported strong community values and cultural norms that include a well-developed 'culture of silence' for youth. Young people are expected to accept authority without question, to the extent that they are discouraged from sharing their ideas and suggestions with elders. Respondents felt that they were not being included in decision-making processes, even those directly affecting their own lives. Ignorance and the unwillingness of parents and people in authority to understand the needs of young people were seen to limit youth participation in development. Even though many survey respondents believed that adults and community leaders are aware of youth concerns they were perceived as unlikely to prioritize them or take action to address them. The study found that failure to foster inter-generational

dialogue without fear and humiliation led to misunderstanding, frustration, low self-esteem, disengagement and apathy among youth. While traditional forms of problem solving such as village meetings do bring young people and older generations together, they may be restrictive, with young people often finding themselves being shamed or scolded about their problems.

As with women, changing cultural context and growing urbanization has youth in many countries without the support and nurturing they would have enjoyed in the traditional extended family. Yet some of the disadvantages of those very traditions have remained. Most notably the social status of young people stemming from the expectation that youth must be submissive to adult authority.

4. Current Policies and Programs

The overall picture that emerges in the Pacific is one of poor opportunities for youth due to inadequate economic growth, exacerbated by education systems unsuited to the environment and communities struggling to come to terms with societal change. There is no disagreement in the literature regarding the main problems and the urgent need for solutions. Many of these problems have been noted some time ago (UNICEF 1998) and many nations and regional bodies such as the SPC have initiated action (Secretariat of the Pacific Community, Pacific Youth Bureau, 2005). Judging by initiatives undertaken, such as the Pacific Youth Strategy[6] (SPC, 2008), there seems also to be some recognition among governments and regional bodies that youth issues require specific attention.

A number of different initiatives are planned, recommended or under way, but the main thrust of current and proposed solutions may be summarized in terms of four main ideas:

a) Implement educational reform.

b) Create mechanisms to engage better with youth so that they have a stake in their future.

c) Foster migration as a stop-gap to job creation.

d) Develop economic policies that help employment growth.

Educational reform

The emphasis on educational reform is logical, given the critically important role this plays in the development of youth and in reducing their vulnerability to risky behavior As observed previously however, the initiatives under way seem to emphasize access, institutional capacity and resources, without much emphasis on learning outcomes or indicators such as completion rates. There are, however, many recommendations in the literature that propose that emphasis, including vocational training options so that youth emerge from school with skills suited to the types of employment that is available, rather than the limited number of white-collar formal sector jobs (Duncan and Voigt-Graf 2008; McMurray 2001; ADB 2008) ensuring that there is better access to and better retention of youth within the primary and secondary systems (UNICEF 2005); addressing learning outcomes by reviewing teaching methods and teacher skills; ensuring that the educational outcomes also prepares youth for migratory employment (Chevalier 2001); and providing second chance education (UNICEF 2005) and nonformal opportunities (Cole 1996, Wari 1995, Ghee 2002). There are only limited reports on implementation of ideas such as nonformal and second chance opportunities, but the few programs reported do show encouraging results (UNICEF 2005; Cole 1996)

Create mechanisms to engage better with youth

The need for greater engagement and to provide youth the opportunities to take a hand in their own progress is emphasized by several authors. UNICEF (2005) provides a specific set of recommendations, including: coordination and planning of youth initiatives and other development initiatives; effective partnerships between governments, donors, NGOs, communities, churches and youth; supporting employment based initiatives and youth enterprises some of which have been successfully run by church-based institutions. Significantly, the UNICEF report also makes strong recommendations on ways of coping with young offenders - an area not extensively dealt with in other youth research in the region. It suggests that strategies must promote reform rather than repeat offenses and that "get tough" policies usually achieve the latter. These conclusions are strongly supported by other research (McLean Hilker & Fraser 2009; Bell 2006; Cunningham et al 2008; World Bank, 2007c). The report also recommends following up on the array of youth forums created around 2004 such as Fiji's youth parliaments, meetings such as the Pacific Youth Summit for MDGs held in Apia in 2005, the use of ICT based media such as e-forums.

6 Human Development Program - Strategic Plan 2008-2012, http://www.spc.int/hdp/index.php?option=com_docman&task=cat_view&gid=23&Itemid=44

The World Bank (2008) project came up with a number of recommendations based on consultations and focus groups, reflecting the priorities of youth in the six countries surveyed. They included governments establishing consultative mechanisms such as youth panels and focus groups comprising youth and officials that would utilize existing cultural practices to facilitate better intergenerational understanding and embed youth participation into the policy making process; providing feedback on the ideas discussed and how they were followed up; and building capacity among adults and institutions as well as youth, so that such participation may take place effectively.

The SPC (2008) Human development strategy also contains specific references to youth among its priorities: "mainstreaming youth, gender and culture in development and governance policy at regional, national and local levels" but does not articulate specific mechanisms or initiatives addressing youth issues.

Migration for employment

Migration as a measure to relieve the demand for employment opportunities is mooted by several researchers. The World Bank (2006a) in its is report on labor mobility in the Pacific makes detailed statistical projections that predict a significantly increased supply of excess labor in the Pacific by 2015 "creating a potentially serious problem, but also an opportunity to supply labor to those countries whose populations are aging". The United Nations "World Youth Report" (2007) which analyses the challenges faced by young people living in small island developing states notes the “poverty of opportunity” among youth and examines internal and international migration as a coping mechanism.

Maclellan and Mares (2005) suggest that seasonal work opportunities in other countries including Australia, could provide relief. Ware (2004) argues that emigration has played a crucial role in defusing potential conflict. Duncan and Voigt-Graf (2008) also note that emigration for employment is already taking place, but point out that the significant ‘brain drain’ that results may exacerbate the underlying development problems.

In order for migration to have a significant positive impact however, there are at least two important issues that need to be addressed: First, the citizens of many Pacific Island countries are restricted from migration to work in developed countries in the region (World Bank 2006b). The very high rates of migration from the few countries whose citizens have reasonable access indicate that this could be a significant barrier.

Second, except for unskilled labor in sectors such as horticulture and viticulture, migratory work requires skills in the various trades that are in demand. Providing opportunities to acquire those skills has already been highlighted as a major gap in educational systems at the moment. The migration option may therefore not be open to many youth, for precisely the same reason that they are unemployed at home.

Economic policies that promote employment growth

The ILO (2008) is unequivocal in its position that economic growth of the sort that promotes high employment growth is a necessary condition of sustained improvement in opportunities for youth. While acknowledging that there is no magic formula, it recommends: finding a proper balance between economic policies (macro, mezzo and micro); encouraging foreign direct investment; employment-intensive programs; promoting self-employment; reforming institutions; and promoting development in the formal sector, while extending social protection services to the informal sector.

Duncan and Voigt-graf (2008) point out that economic growth in PICs, especially the private sector, has been constrained by factors such as the role of the public sector in the economy, small local markets, distance from overseas markets, poor infrastructure, cost of communications, weak governance and traditional land tenure regimes, among others. Many of these issues can, it is suggested, be addressed through economic reform. More enabling business environments, especially in respect of administrative and regulatory procedures could also benefit, as demonstrated in recent years by Samoa.

5. Towards an Effective Strategy

Weaknesses in current policy

There is little published information regarding the success or otherwise of the policies adopted by PICs in respect of youth, except for a few specific cases. However the literature does reveal that the situation of youth is not improving but getting worse (UNESCO 2009a;UNICEF 2005; Duncan and Voigt-Graf 2008; World Bank 2008). The reasons for this lack of progress are not entirely clear. The inferences that may be drawn from the published information indicates that a combination of factors, including inadequate action and inappropriate strategies may be responsible.

Approach

The results of recent research both in the Pacific and elsewhere have led to the view that youth issues need to be addressed specifically and that general development efforts cannot in general be expected to resolve them. Moreover, policies and programs need to be based on the life transitions of youth and the special needs of youth at those times (Cunningham, 2008; UNICEF, 2005; ILO 2008). UNICEF (2005) suggested that policies in the Pacific had to date addressed the symptoms rather than the causes and made a number of recommendations based on a more specific youth-focused approach. Cunningham et al (2008) based on their work in the LAC region, go much further, providing comprehensive recommendations for a holistic policy framework that individually addresses both short term and long-term issues.

The current initiatives and recommendations pertaining to the Pacific appear to be based on broad agreement with regard to the main problems. However, there is little evidence of a cohesive strategy or policy framework that provides the basis for a coordinated set of programs. There is little evidence, for example, of implementation of the UNICEF (2005) recommendations which were perhaps the most comprehensive and progressive. In fact, even some of the initiatives that were noted as being promising at the time (such as the Pacific Youth Strategy and http://www.smallislandvoices.org) do not show evidence of much progress since then. The report itself notes that in the face of resource limitations, the priority given to youth issues relative to other development issues by governments may not have been adequate.

As noted earlier, much of the focus seems to be on primary and secondary education and this is mainly targeted towards strategic planning, institutional capacity and other input oriented programs with little emphasis on learning outcomes. Further, a comparison of the current programs and proposals in the Pacific with best practice elsewhere, reveal important gaps. Effective education is mooted as the key to making youth employable in the Pacific. In turn, it is implied that this, combined with various strategies to generate employment, will help avert the undesirable impact of large numbers of unemployed youth. However, Cunningham et al (2008) show that a number of factors working singly or in concert can negatively impact youth at transition points and tip vulnerable youth into risky behaviors with far-reaching, undesirable consequences for the individual as well as society. Among the significant findings of recent research is the view that a sense of "connectedness" (or its absence) to parents, other adults, or to the school, is strongly correlated to the likelihood of risky behavior Dropping out of primary school or failure to make the transition to secondary school is often indicative of future problems. The *quality* of education received is not significantly correlated to the feeling of connectedness and therefore to the propensity to drop out. This key aspect of human development and the strong role that schools could play in supplementing and / or replacing the connectedness to parents, is of vital importance, among a range of other factors and is currently missing from Pacific strategies. This lack of "connectedness" has been associated both in the Pacific (Scambary 2006; World Bank 2007a; World Bank, 2007c) and LAC (Cunningham et al 2008) with the motivation to join groups such as gangs which provide a degree of acceptance. The absence of specific polices to address the cause, therefore reduces the chances of success of initiatives to reduce crime and violence as well.

The Human Development Program Strategic Plan 2008-2012 (SPC, 2008) does seem to

indicate that regional agencies and governments have begun to see the need for a comprehensive policy framework, but there is as yet little detail or articulation of the high-level aims in terms of specific policies and programs. The need to convince governments on the strategic priority that should be accorded to youth and building a thorough and widespread understanding of current thinking and experience on the methods that work and those that don't, may be one of the most important and fundamental challenges ahead, and especially important in a resource-constrained environment such as the Pacific. The need to address country-specific issues as well as regional ones, adds further complexity.

Data and research

The lack of data and research that would assist evidence based decisions is widely noted as an issue. It is acknowledged as such by governments to the extent that the SPC (2008) includes "Improved data and research" as a key output in its Human Development Program Strategic Plan 2008-2012. Establishing reliable data collection mechanisms that provide data suitably dis-aggregated for the purpose, as well as conducting the required research, will be an important pre-cursor to effective program design, implementation and monitoring. Given the starting conditions, there is an opportunity to design data collection mechanisms of a relatively high-degree of sophistication in respect of the information obtained, possibly including appropriate ICT-based methods to counter the constraints of distances and cost.

There is general agreement however, based on available data and detailed projections, that the problems related to youth in the Pacific are urgent and will assume crisis proportions in many countries, within a very few years. This points to the need for some high-impact short-term measures as an immediate priority, which may have to be undertaken with no more than the best data currently available as the basis for decisions.

Gender issues

There is a substantial body of literature that deals with the issues of women in the Pacific and there is no doubt that the issues present in other parts of the world also exist in this region. Where the Pacific is distinct however, is in the cultural practices and traditions as they apply to women and the high levels of violence that is suffered by women in some Pacific countries. Some of the literature links this violence to certain cultural aspects while others take the opposite view that it is caused by the breakdown of traditional systems. A brief review of the key points is provided here. A separate bibliography is provided in Appendix (A) giving some indication of the main issues in the context of PNG and the body of research available.

Cultural context

The prevailing culture across much of the Pacific lays emphasis on male authority and privilege, both in the household and in the extended family. Traditionally, there seems to have been a delicate balance in many cultures, especially through matrilineal inheritance, but these have largely been eroded (Hezel 1989). Even in countries where women (especially those of noble rank) receive respect from men they are still expected to be subservient to their spouses. For example, in Tonga, the traditional social order allocates a higher rank to daughters than to sons, and females are said to be more eiki (chiefly). They do not, however, have any real authority over their brothers, so this ranking relates only to respect. After marriage, Tongan women become subordinate to their husbands and usually relinquish any rights to their family lands, which are always inherited by the male heir (UNICEF 2006c).

As indicated by a series of "Situation Analysis" reports published between 2002 and 2006 (UNICEF, 2006, 2006c, 2005a, 2005b, 2004, 2004a, 2004b, 2004c, 2003, 2002), cultural practices vary among countries. In Kiribati, the status of women is changing, but they are generally treated as subordinate to men. Notably, women can inherit or own land in I-Kiribati tradition, but they usually still have less access to modern types of resources. The position of a woman in I-Kiribati society is largely defined by her age and marital status. A married woman with children has prestige but her husband holds considerable authority over her, and this has much bearing on the freedom she can exercise to take part in activities. Within the household, women are largely responsible for domestic work including cooking, cleaning, child care and

overall family welfare. Within the village community, women are often responsible for meeting the village contributions, often for food, money or entertainment. This can be quite a heavy obligation, for giving and meeting social obligations is a matter of community pride. There are nevertheless a growing number of women working in skilled and professional jobs, including at the highest levels of government. (UNICEF 2002). In the Cook Islands, until recently women were largely restricted to the household. Most family and community decisions were made by men, and it was considered culturally correct and proper behavior for women to passively accept these decisions (Kingston, 1999 in UNICEF, 2005a). Gender equality is relatively advanced in that by tradition women have more or less equal inheritance of land and rights of land use. The principle of no discrimination by sex is also enshrined in the Constitution. However the report also noted that "the (remaining) limitations are self-perpetuated as many women continue to cling to strongly-held views regarding their 'proper' role in the community."

In Samoa the traditional balance between men and women seems to have been retained more successfully. the traditional the status of wife is much less than that of a sister, but a woman who marries and stays in her own family with her husband has a much better status than a woman who marries and moves to her husband's family - another example of the matrilineal tradition which is studied in the Micronesian context by Hezel (1989). The *pule* or authority is held by the brother and the *mamalu* or dignity of the family is with the sister creating a very strong model for female-male relationships. These complementary roles produce a special form of control that allows women to assert influence within the family's decision making process whether it is in the bestowing of titles or in resolving conflicts. Notably, the endurance of these village traditions helps to safeguard the positive aspects of the place of children, young people and women in the Samoan Culture. In villages where traditions are strong, children are nurtured and well cared for, all people work together for the good of the village and maintenance of law and order under the Village council is upheld. Although, the status of a woman is high as a daughter in her own village, this is not necessarily the case if she lives in her husband's village. They may encounter added pressures from the expectations of 'service' that they are expected to perform for their in laws. However, women marrying into a village who are wives of *matais* (Chiefs), or notably, those with high educational, economic or social status may encounter very few problems in her husband's village. However, as more residential areas open up with people living on free hold property and more villages are formed that do not have a traditional or cultural basis, traditional values begin to break down. Lawlessness is more evident as seen in the increase of violence and the increased rate of crimes carried out by young people (UNICEF 2006).

In other countries women reportedly fare worse. In PNG and Vanuatu, for example, the loss of rights to land are seen to result in much more disadvantage. In Vanuatu men are considered superior, women are there to support their husbands, maintain the household, look after children and tend to the family garden and animals. Men have superior status and power, which is exercised over women in families, in communities and in traditional institutions. Girls and boys, through socialization, learn their gender roles and also the fundamental basis of gender relations. A teenage boy in Vanuatu is quoted in Griffen (2006):"*…girls will get married and go away but boys will stay and inherit land therefore they're more important than the girls".*

Some sources cite the high incidence of violence against women in several Pacific countries, both domestic and external, as being indicative of male-biased societies and in some cases attribute it to the current interpretation of cultural practices. Ware (2004) based on previous surveys reports that in Papua New Guinea 66% of wives said that they had been hit by their husbands and 60% of men said that they had themselves participated in gang rape; in Fiji 48% of wives said that they had been forced to have sex with their husbands and 34% of women had been hit whilst pregnant; in Samoa 17% of women interviewed said that they had been physically abused by their partners, and concludes that "These very high levels of violence are the result of cultures where such violence is accepted as normal". Griffen (2006) reports up to forty per cent of women experience violence and abuse based on studies such as the Samoan Family Health Study.

Violence against girls

Griffen (2006) reports cultural acceptance of some reasons for child sexual abuse in some cases. As with domestic violence, where one of the main reasons given was when a wife refused to have sex with her husband or could not, child sexual abuse is considered "understandable" in the culture if a woman does not fulfill her marital role or a man does not have a wife to do so. Incest with daughters is justified and the mother may not protect her daughters. The rights of men to use violence for sex, including in marriage, is based on the notion of male sexuality being uncontrollable and men's superior position giving a husband the right to have sex with a wife at any time. This is reinforced by the different standards to sexual behavior applied to boys as opposed to girls. The virginity of girls is highly valued and protected. As such their behavior must conform to expectations of modesty and chastity. For boys on the other hand having many sexual encounters with the opposite sex is regarded as part of manhood and masculinity. Griffen (2006) argues that "the freedom of expression allowed male sexuality produces a lack of any cultural notions of a distinction between consensual sex and sexual use of girls and women. The tolerance of expression of male sexuality, without any restraints or cultural opprobrium seems central in Pacific attitudes to sexuality and is having serious consequences for girls and women."

This view, however, is not universal. Dame Carol Kidu, (quoted in Griffen 2006) addressing Papua New Guinea Parliament on the gang rape of schoolgirls, declared that there was no word in the Motu language for rape and that traditionally, women and girls were protected by various customs. She noted it was a sad sign of the social breakdown of society, if men did not speak out against these crimes. She reaffirmed that culture and customs can and did *protect* women and girls and that these protections were no longer being applied by the society and community constituted a breakdown of culture. Goddard (2004) in a study of women's treatment in Village Courts in PNG, argues on the basis of observations, that the views expressed by several authors regarding the application of "customary law" by these courts was discriminatory towards women was based on misinformation and certain misconceptions regarding both current laws and "custom".

Several sources suggest that girls in many Pacific countries grow up with a sense of inferiority regarding their position in society (Ali, 2006; Griffen, 2006). This clearly has an impact on both expectations and motivation to obtain an education and employment. Notably, reports from countries such as Tonga, Samoa and Cook Islands indicate that a higher level of education and economic status is one way of overcoming the lower status that traditional systems may bestow on some women due to their marriage status, for example (UNICEF 2006). Factors that impede young girls from taking these opportunities are therefore of prime concern in developing policies for youth.

As discussed above, the prevalence of sexual abuse combined with a culture where virginity is prized, leaves a significant proportion of girls at considerable risk of early pregnancy, sexually transmitted disease, social ostracism and poor economic prospects. UNICEF (2008) reports in detail on child sexual abuse (CSA) and commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) in the Pacific and examines the various causal factors as well as potential solutions. Cultural aspects, poverty, and the influence of poorly regulated commercial activity are identified. UNICEF (2008) also classifies arranged child marriages for a bride price, under CSEC. While this may be controversial in a cultural sense, it does highlight an issue that places these girls at a disadvantage in the context of education and employment. A youth worker in Tanna, Vanuatu, quoted in Griffen (2006) illustrates the issue: *"Plenty of us young people, because of our customs, our parents are forcing us to get married. We don't have a choice…they choose who we are going to marry. But some of us want to go to school, want to work – we want to be able to choose what we do."*

Thus many girls may be prevented from improving their circumstances, by obtaining an education and employment thereafter, due to conditions that place them at a disadvantage when compared to boys, and this would have to be a key consideration in developing an effective set of youth policies and programs.

Access to education

Despite the cultural and social disadvantages facing women, statistics show that in many PICs primary and secondary school enrollments, the number of females is higher than males (UNESCO, 2009). Appendix (B) provides summarized data for primary and secondary education in the Pacific; much more detailed information is available in the UNESCO database. Primary enrollments are equal or higher for females in six of the 15 countries included in the database and two - Fiji and Vanuatu - are close to gender parity at 0.98. Of the remainder, Solomon Islands, Nauru and Micronesia have no disaggregated data; Tuvalu scores lowest on gender parity (0.72); Timor-Leste, PNG, Tonga and Samoa score from 0.89 to 0.96. It is noteworthy that in all but five countries for which data is available, primary completion rates for females is higher than for males (i.e. GPI[7] scores greater than 1.0). However, of those five countries, three (Niue, Cook Islands and Palau) have GPI's greater than 1.0 for enrollments, with Niue scoring 1.34. Of the other two countries, Tonga's gender parity improves from 0.92 to 0.97 by the end of primary school, but PNG drops even further, from 0.90 down to 0.85.

Secondary school enrollment data shows changing patterns with 10 of the 15 countries listed scoring GPIs of 1.0 or higher. However, those that score lower show pattern of steadily worsening gender parity in education enrollment Tokelau drops from an extraordinary 3.81 at primary completion to 0.88; Tuvale and Vanuatu respectively from scores of 1.10 and 1.04 to 0.88 and 0.86; Solomon Islands to 0.84 and PNG from 0.85 to 0.67. Data on Tertiary enrollments is limited to Tonga and Vanuatu, which score 1.68 and 0.59 GPI respectively.

Thus conditions appear to vary considerably from country to country and even the pattern of change varies significantly. However, there seems to be in general a tendency for more females to remain in education, once enrolled, than males. This excludes the countries noted above, where the gender ratio worsens steadily as these youth progress through the educational system. These figures seem consistent with, for example, the observation that in countries such as Tonga and Samoa where educational achievement and employment status can enhance a woman's social status, even within the cultural context (UNICEF 2006, 2006c). There is currently little detailed research that examines the causal links. Yet the trends in educational enrollment and retention represent both evidence of problems in some countries as well as an opportunity for meaningful intervention, and therefore merits further research.

Institutions

In common with other countries, the issues of youth in the Pacific and the programs that impact upon them cut across several major ministries and government agencies such as Education, Labor, and Finance. Many Pacific countries also have dedicated youth ministries. Many have combined roles such as Youth and Sports or Youth, Children and Women's Affairs. The effectiveness and coordinating capabilities of these institutions, however, is unclear. Most projects reported under "youth" tend to fall under ministries such as Education, Health and Labor.

Table (7-1) - Youth Ministries in Pacific countries[8]

Country	Agency
Cook Islands	Ministry of Youth & Sports
Fiji	Ministry for Home Affairs, Immigration, Youth, Employment Opportunities and Sports
PNG	National Youth Commission (Ministry for Community Development)
Samoa	Department of Youth, Sports & Culture
Solomon Islands	Ministry of Youth, Women, and Children Affairs

7 GPI: Gender Parity Index

8 Source: http://www.bizconnections.com/

Tokelau	Education and Women's Affairs,Youth and Sport
Tonga	Ministry of Training, Employment, Youth & Sport
Vanuatu	Ministry for Youth & Sports

At a regional level the SPC[9] appears to be the main entity coordinating policy and action with regard to youth. National Youth Ministries also appear to be important contact points for youth activities within SPC. The Pacific Youth Bureau[10] (PYB) and the Pacific Youth Strategies 2005 and 2010, respectively, are among the most significant of these initiatives. The role of the PYB was to: "..coordinate the implementation, monitoring and review of the Pacific Youth Strategy 2005 (PYS2005) which aims at creating and maintaining genuine opportunities for young people to play an active role in the economic, social, cultural and spiritual development of their societies." While a section of the SPC website is devoted to the PYB and there is varied content right up to the development and adoption of the Pacific Youth Strategy (PYS) 2010, in December 2005, there is little apparent activity since then, which raises questions as to its impact and current status. Indeed, the "PYS 2010" is now contained within the Strategic Plan 2008-2012 of the SPC Human Development Program. The Human Development Program (HDP) is described on the SPC web site as being "..part of the Social Resources Division of SPC. It was formed by a merger of the Community Education and Training Enter (CETC), and the former Cultural Affairs Program, Pacific Youth Bureau and Pacific Women's Bureau"

Several sources indicate that NGOs, CSOs and Church based organizations play a significant role in youth work in many countries (Cole 1996, Curtain 2007). This is also consistent with experience reported from the LAC region and elsewhere (World Bank, 2006f; Cunningham. 2008). In LAC, local government agencies proved effective in some cases, and it would be useful to consider this possibility in the Pacific as well. UNICEF, which has reported widely on work related to children, youth and women throughout the Pacific, has published a list of its partner institutions in the Pacific including a range of government agencies, CSOs and NGOs. This is attached for reference at Appendix(C). Apart from these organizations, developing consensus on an effective and consistent set of policies will probably also require engagement of the major donor agencies such as AusAID, NZAID and the ADB who are all active in the region.

Priorities

Growing marginalization of youth emerges as the most important issue throughout the literature. Each year school drop outs as well as graduates who do not find suitable employment add to this number, yet there appear to be few initiatives to assist these youth out of their circumstances. Thus, the body of marginalized youth grows steadily each year.

Reports of undesirable outcomes such as crime, violence, suicides and even social and political instability, indicate that the social pressures are growing correspondingly and, left unchecked, would soon grow to crisis proportions in many Pacific countries.

The priority issue therefore must be the provision of a "relief valve" for the rapidly accumulating pressures resulting from marginalized youth. This requires not only that the increase in their number be arrested (by improving school retention rates and the type of education delivered) but most importantly, that effective policies and interventions that help steadily *reduce* the number of marginalized youth be adopted and implemented. This must be combined with suitable policies to address the issues of youth that have already fallen into patterns of risky behavior including crime, substance abuse, and gang membership, and have already experienced the effects of criminal justice systems.

Options such as TVET and "second chance" programs are therefore likely to be of high priority

9 http://www.sidsnet.org/pacific/spc/index-2.html

10 http://www.sidsnet.org/pacific/spc/Youth/index.html

as well as other forms of youth engagement that have proven useful elsewhere. For example, the 'Waan Aelon in Majel' (WAM) project in Marshall Islands (UNICEF 2005), which trained people in skills that are relevant to both current economic opportunities and traditional life in Marshall Islands, demonstrated positive results in engaging with youth that are already engaging in risky behavior. Scambary (2006) also reports on voluntary, community based groups, often supported by NGOs, that appeared to have strong potential to reduce violence and gang activities in Timor-Leste. The LAC region has created a set of alternative training programs for at-risk youth, commonly referred to as Jóvenes programs (Cunningham et al 2008). These programs are implemented by NGOs and the private sector, regulated by the government. They focus on developing the person as a future worker, rather than limiting the training to technical skills. This method has been shown to increase youth employment better than traditional technical and vocational training. Colombia's Empleo en Acción is a workfare program, providing a stipend in exchange for short-term work on public projects. Young people participate in this program but gain little besides an income for six months while performing unskilled labor. Processes have also been developed to increase the voice of young people in government. Brazil's Vozes Jovens works with the Brazilian government to prepare a youth agenda for the country, and Peru's Voces Jóvenes gives regular feedback to the Peruvian government on its policies. These may provide useful comparisons with the Fiji Youth Parliament and similar youth forums developed in the Pacific.

Migration is mooted by many authors as a potential relief valve, which despite its limitations is worthy of consideration. While it may not initially have any effect on already marginalized groups, it could well reduce the addition to their number. As it would create demand in specific skill areas, it could also have a positive influence on educational policies, especially TVET and second chance policies and programs.

Best practice

Among the main weaknesses of current initiatives in the Pacific is that they do not seem to be grounded in a holistic policy framework incorporating the best international practice. The World Bank sponsored work in LAC (Cunningham et al 2008) is arguably the most comprehensive research on youth in the context of development presently published. Being founded on a sustained and coordinated program of research that has attempted to investigate the various inter-related issues over a period of several years, the research outputs as well as the resulting policy recommendations (a "Policy Framework for Youth") provide a valuable starting point for policy development in other regions and economic contexts as well. Importantly the frameworks are based on identifying practices that are proven to work, those that are ongoing and appear to have good chances of success and others that are recommended but as yet unproven, so that informed choices may be made in a budget constrained environment. Other work in Timor-Leste has built directly upon these concepts (World Bank, 2007c) and the recommendations of the UNICEF (2005) reports are also similarly founded. An important aspect of current thinking is the need to consider positive social and community linkages which create a sense of connectedness in youth and tend to neutralize the factors that seem to motivate certain youth to engage in risky behavior

The urgency of the situation in many Pacific countries, weaknesses of approach observed in current and previous initiatives, lack of relevant data and local research, and limited resources, all suggest that any intervention needs to be quick and effective. Given the lack of data and baseline research it may not be deemed feasible to undertake the comprehensive analytical work that would normally be required in preparation, and that would incur some risk. Weighed against this however are the risks associated with delay or inaction. As such the "Policy Framework for Youth" does offer a sound practical basis upon which a Pacific Youth Strategy may be built. Though based on the LAC region and aimed at middle income countries, much of the work is based on human development perspectives of individuals going through the main life-transitions from childhood to adulthood. While culture and local environment may influence some of the outcomes, many of the principles developed there draw support from a variety of geographies and sources and therefore should be amenable to adaptation in the Pacific. The differences that exist between countries and between the Pacific and LAC regions are likely to

be most relevant at the individual program level rather than at the strategy or policy levels.

The Policy Framework proposes both short term and long term measures, recognizing the need for a multi-pronged approach to address marginalized youth as well as those at risk of becoming marginalized. In adapting the framework to the Pacific, it will be important to assess the weight and urgency given to each of these aspects in the light of local realities.

6. Implications for the Youth Engagement Strategy (Y E S)

Policy Framework

That Youth is an area of deep concern that needs to be addressed as a priority in the Pacific emerges as a clear message throughout the literature. Current thinking recommends a cohesive set of policies that specifically address the issues of youth from a human development perspective, cutting across several key sectors such as education, labor, economics and health. As such the YES is a timely and appropriate response which has the potential to become an overarching framework for an effective portfolio of Bank programs in the Pacific.

The lack of a policy framework that specifically addresses youth issues and has the capability to link the work of many sectors and agencies within a widely accepted approach, is one of the main weaknesses currently observed in the Pacific. Whether in the context of short or long term solutions it will be important to select the most effective policies and to prioritize initiatives accordingly, especially in view of limited resources. The YES currently represents a certain level of consensus on appropriate strategy for the Pacific within the Bank. Current best practice as embodied within the "Policy Framework for Youth" developed in LAC, and subsequent work in the region, provides a basis for development of the YES into a comprehensive policy framework.

Given the multi-sectoral approach that would be required, and the lack of a well-established entity focused upon youth, the development and adoption of single policy framework to which the many stakeholders subscribe, will be challenging. Notably, even organizations such as AusAID and ADB, that have been active in this area, have no dedicated youth themes or sectors. The lack of adequate data and research that establishes a solid base of evidence in the Pacific may further hinder the building of consensus. However, the YES and the Pacific Youth Team (PYT), which currently functions as a productive forum for youth issues within the Bank's EAP region, does provide a potential basis from which to begin that process of policy development. This will necessarily be an ongoing process that will continue to be informed and refined by emerging data and research from the region. Individual programs and research may then address specialized areas, but still be part of a logically cohesive set of initiatives.

Consultations and policy dialogue

While thinking among experts within the Bank and elsewhere including organizations such as UNICEF and ILO on effective policies appear to be converging, there is no evidence that governments and regional agencies subscribe to the same concepts. Many development agencies, including the Bank, have made recommendations on the need to change direction in designing interventions for youth (ILO, 2008; UNICEF 2005; World Bank, 2007c; World Bank 2007). Judging by work planned and under way, however, few of these have been adopted and even fewer have been evaluated. Most programs continue to focus on areas such as strengthening the education or health infrastructure, with little apparent impact on youth issues. It may be inferred that a lack of awareness of current thinking, especially among government agencies, and the lack of broad-based support across key sectors contributes to this effect. Successful interventions will therefore require substantive dialogue among the various stakeholders - government agencies, the SPC and regional entities, donors and other partners such as NGOs and CSOs, to develop a policy framework that enjoys broad-based support and ownership, ideally within an agreed time-frame.

Implementing such a process will be challenging and time-consuming. Yet it is likely to be a critical success factor in developing a cohesive portfolio of effective interventions. Among the strengths of the LAC research is the identification of policies that have been proven to work, often including information on specific projects, locations and the institutions involved. This experience could potentially be leveraged through carefully designed forums and processes for cross-regional peer interaction and knowledge exchange between stakeholders, especially government agencies. With the ICT facilities available to the World Bank such interactions could be implemented at relatively low cost. This may include, for example, a combination of interactive video-conferences and a focused, easily accessible set of Internet based knowledge

resources and tools, as a supplement to the usual in-country missions.

Current knowledge gaps

The Pacific context

In order to adapt the lessons learned in other regions to the Pacific region, it will be necessary to understand the social, cultural and economic context in depth. While there seems to be a substantial body of literature available, it will be necessary to analyze this in the context of the policy recommendations that may be considered for adoption, in order to identify areas in which the differences between regions may significantly affect those policies. As conditions do vary significantly even across the Pacific, this may need to be undertaken for individual countries.

The analysis would need to include the similarities or differences in respect of institutional capacity and evaluate the structure, roles and orientation of key agencies to the extent that they may have an impact on policy. For example, in some LAC countries, the tendency to de-centralize service delivery led to some youth initiatives being led by local government institutions. Whether such an approach would be effective in Pacific countries is currently not evident and needs to be explored.

Inadequate data.

The sources of data revealed by this literature review are inadequate for effective policy development, monitoring and evaluation and little is available at the level of disaggregation recommended by the LAC experience (Cunningham et al, 2008). Further, a cursory analysis of the main sources show both gaps and probable inaccuracies. For example, unemployment in PNG, Vanuatu and Kiribati are reported at less than 3%; data on tertiary education enrollments and completion in most Pacific countries are not available; there is no data on second chance programs or even TVET programs in most countries among the sources examined here; crime and violence data tends not to be disaggregated in a way that would inform youth policies. Thus it will be useful to research the available data sources and to make assessments of their accuracy as early as possible. Similarly, establishing baselines in areas of interest and identifying appropriate data collection mechanisms that have good prospects for being sustained, would be invaluable.

Effective mechanisms for data collection and research to inform decision-making as well as monitoring and evaluation will also be required as part of the implementation of the Policy Framework. The SPC database[11] currently attempts to capture and improve the collection of data across the Pacific, and UNESCO[12] and ILO[13] databases also maintain data, largely based on census information. This could therefore be an important part of effective long-term engagement and is consistent with regional policy objectives as expressed in the Human Development Program Strategic Plan 2008-2012 (SPC, 2008). Innovative, ICT-supported options may need to be considered, in view of the constraints of cost and distance, as indeed the SPC and UNESCO have begun to do.

Situation analyses

While the main issues are generally true across the Pacific, the situation differs from country to country, even in respect of major indicators such as employment, educational achievement, and health. The UNICEF Situation Analyses (2002-2006) have made attempts to analyze individual countries and other studies including some by the Bank have made detailed analyses in specific countries. In many cases, however, these studies tend cover the breadth of issues pertaining to youth and do not necessarily provide sufficient insight into specific areas (such as education or employment trends, for example) as required to make comparisons, establish

11 SPC Demographic data - http://www.spc.int/demog/en/index.html

12 UNESCO Institute for Statistics http://stats.uis.unesco.org/unesco/TableViewer/document.aspx?ReportId=143&IF_Language=eng

13 ILO http://laborsta.ilo.org/STP/guest

priorities within the region, or to inform the design of programs. What there is tends to be scattered among numerous sources and subject areas. Some detailed research may therefore be required in countries identified as priorities, as a precursor to program design. Such research could, in combination with the currently available sources, be used to develop an easily accessible knowledge resource encompassing the areas required by a youth portfolio that would, due to its multi-sectoral nature, also assist several key sectors other than youth on an ongoing basis.

Impact of programs

While there is a substantial amount of diagnostic work reported in the literature and many recommendations for changes in approach to the problem, there is little information on the programs actually undertaken and even less about their outcomes. Thus there is little basis for evaluating the effectiveness or otherwise of recommendations. A survey of the interventions already undertaken and ex-post evaluations of at least a selected set may provide useful insights into what works and what does not.

Among the recommendations in the literature, migration stands out as an area of significance. Many authorities propose it as a strategy for employment in the context of Pacific economic prospects. This is largely based on economic research. However, there are others who note the disadvantages in terms of social effects, especially on families (UNICEF 2005b, 2006c). As there are already some PICs where significant migration has taken place, targeted research may yield invaluable information on both social and economic effects and influence policy on what could be a vitally important area.

Priorities

The strategic imperatives with regard to Pacific youth may be viewed in terms of two key aspects:

a) Short-term solutions targeting marginalized youth, designed to help them emerge from that situation.
b) Long-term solutions that reduce the numbers being added to the "marginalized" category and assist youth to fulfill their potential.

Short-term solutions

The YES currently has three areas of focus: educational, economic and welfare, and social/political. All three address the needs of marginalized youth, or short-term solutions.

This is justified by the urgency of the problem observed throughout the literature, described as a "crisis" in many countries by some authors (World Bank, 2007c). The imperative for immediate action, may therefore need to precede consensus on a policy framework. Indeed the Bank and other donors already have several projects in progress, or in the pipeline, that focus on second chance programs, the rapid creation of employment and training opportunities and other initiatives that address youth that are already marginalized (For example, the Rural Service Delivery and Local Governance projects - in PNG and Timor-Leste; Rapid Employment Program - Solomon Islands). This may be justified, as the extent of the problem is such that there are many areas in which relatively obvious gains may be made. There are in fact, quite specific recommendations in respect of Timor-Leste (World Bank, 2007c) and most countries in the Pacific (UNICEF, 2005) which seem not to have been implemented as yet. Further, the LAC framework as well as other work in the Asian region (Stavreska, 2006) provide good general guidance on the type of interventions that are known to work, and may be judged likely to be applicable regardless of local cultural context. If designed and executed in the context of emerging policy and best practice, these short-term initiatives could both be effective and provide valuable insights that guide policy development.

Long-term solutions

While broad acceptance of a policy framework need not be a pre-condition to commencement

of useful short-term interventions, it will be an important factor in developing and implementing effective long-term solutions that address the root of the problem. Consultation and policy dialogue that leads to building awareness, capacity and ownership of a new and effective policy framework among the various stakeholders will need to be advanced to a reasonable degree in order to initiate action on effective long-term solutions.

Addressing the long-term issues will require a multi-sectoral approach and possibly encompass initiatives already under consideration or implementation in sectors such as education and health. However, as pointed out elsewhere, there are issues very specific to youth that may often be missed in conventional sector programs. These are the social and human development aspects such as the role of schools vis a vis the quality of education, for example. It will fall to the YES, to identify these gaps, to work with other sectors and ensure that they are addressed, and also to ensure that the required institutional linkages, especially between implementing agencies, are developed.

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Appendix (A)

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APPENDIX (B)

Primary and secondary school enrollment data

TABLE 1: PRIMARY EDUCATION Enrolment and completion

Country or territory	Year	Entry to primary education				Completion of primary education			
		Gross intake ratio[1]				Gross intake ratio to the last grade of primary			
		MF	M	F	GPI[2]	MF	M	F	GPI
East Asia and the Pacific									
Tokelau	2005	78	48	109	2.28	98	40	152	3.81
Niue	2005	81	69	93	1.34	97	107	87	0.81
Cook Islands	2005	68	67	70	1.04	92	93	91	0.98
Marshall Islands	2000	120	119	122	1.02	...	...	...	…
Kiribati	2005	120	119	121	1.02	125	124	126	1.02
Palau	2000	117	116	118	1.01	99	107	90	0.85
Vanuatu	2000	114	115	113	0.98	86	84	88	1.04
Fiji	2005	102	103	101	0.98	101	101	101	1.01
Samoa	2000	106	108	103	0.96	95	93	96	1.03
Tonga	2005	116	121	111	0.92	137	139	134	0.97
Papua New Guinea	1995	93	98	88	0.90	52	56	47	0.85
Timor-Leste	2005	112	118	105	0.89	...	...	...	…
Tuvalu	2005	102	118	85	0.72	111	106	116	1.10
Micronesia (Federated States	2005	...	...	...	…	...	...	...	…
Nauru	2005	...	...	...	…	...	...	...	…
Solomon Islands	1995	117	…	…	…	70	...	...	…

Notes:

1. Gross Intake Ratio — The Total number of new entrants in the first grade of primary education, regardless of age percentage of the population at the official primary school-entrance age.

2. Gender Parity Index (GPI) — The ratio of females to males

TABLE 2: SECONDARY EDUCATION Enrolment

Regions	Year	Gross enrolment ratio			
		MF	M	F	GPI
Country or territory					
East Asia and the Pacific					
Kiribati	2005	88	82	94	1.14
Nauru	2005	41	39	44	1.14
Samoa	2005	81	76	86	1.13
Fiji	2005	86	83	89	1.07
Micronesia (Federated	2005	83	80	86	1.07
Niue	2005	99	96	102	1.07
Marshall Islands	2005	76	75	78	1.05
Tonga	2005	94	92	96	1.04
Cook Islands	2005	72	71	74	1.04
Palau	2000	86	85	88	1.03
Timor-Leste	2005	53	53	53	1.00
Tuvalu	2000	84	87	81	0.93
Tokelau	2005	101	107	94	0.88
Vanuatu	2005	40	43	37	0.86
Solomon Islands	2005	30	32	27	0.84
Papua New Guinea	1995	13	15	10	0.67

Appendix (C)

UNICEF Pacific Partner institutions

GOVERNMENT	NGOs	CIVIL SOCIETY
COOK ISLANDS Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Immigration Ministry of Health Ministry of Agriculture Ministry of Finance and Econ. Man National Advisory Committee for Children Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Immigration Ministry of Health Ministry of Education Ministry of Agriculture Ministry of Finance & Economic Management Division of Women and Youth **FIJI** National Centre for Health Promotion National Food & Nutrition Centre Ministry of Finance Ministry of Health Ministry of National Planning Min. of Women, Social Welfare and Poverty Alleviation Ministry of Youth, Employment Opportunities & Sports Levuka Public Secondary School Fiji Police Force St. Giles Hospital Magistrate's Court Fiji School of Medicine Ministry of Education Ministry of Primary Industries OMEP Fiji **FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA**	**COOK ISLANDS** Cook Islands Learning Disability Association Cook Islands Women Counselling Centre Cook Islands Child Welfare Association **FIJI** AIDS Task Force of Fiji Pan Pacific Southeast Asia Women's Associaton Community TeleVision Womens Action for Change (WAC) Foundation for the Peoples of the South Pacific - Fiji Project Heaven Fiji National Council for Disabled Persons Association Fiji Women's Crisis Centre Centre Fiji Community Education Association Save the Childrens Fund Fiji Museum United Nations Development Program Pacific Islands News Association (PINA) Fiji Red Cross Society United Nations Development Fund for Women Homes of Hope Fijian Teacher's Association The South Pacific Games Organising Committee National Council of Women, Fiji Live & Learn Training Productivity Authority of Fiji Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat Institute of Education Fiji Association of Social Workers Magistrate's Court	**FIJI** Fiji Pre-School Association National Food and Nutrition Committee National Council for Disabled Persons Nursing Mothers' Association of Fiji Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Fiji Pacific Pre-School Council (Fiji) Fiji College of General Practitioners Pasifika Communications Ltd **KIRIBATI** Kiribati Pre-School Association Nei Tabera Ni Kai - I Kiribati Video Resouce Unit **NIUE** Niue Youth Council **SOLOMON ISLANDS** Solomon Island College of Higher Education **REPUBLIC OF MARSHALL ISLANDS** The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahai of the Marshalls **TOKELAU** Department of Health

Pohnpei Dep. of Health, Education, Social Affairs

National Advisory Committee for Children (FSM)

Chuuk Dep. of Health Services

Kosrae State Government General Account

Department of Health (YAP-FFPN) FFPN

Ministry of Social Services

DEPT.OF HEALTH (KOSRAE,FSM)

Dep. of Health Services - Kosrae

KIRIBATI

Name

Ministry of Finance & Econ. Plan

Ministry of Health

Ministry of Education, Training & Technology

Kiribati National Advisory Committee for Children

Min. of Environment & Social Development

Kiribati HIV/AIDS Desk (Min of Health)

NIUE

Department of Education

Office of the Premier

Committee on the CRC-NIUE

PALAU

Ministry of State

Palau National Committee on Population and Children

Palau - Ministry of Health

Ministry of Justice

SAMOA

Ministry of Womens Affairs W. Samoa

Fiji School of Medicine

Fiji Human Rights Commission

Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC)

Fiji Women's Rights Movement

Fiji Law Reform Commission

Regional Rights ResourceTeam

World Health Organisation

United Nations Development Programme

United Nations Volunteer

NZ Overseas Development Agency - Fiji

Project Heaven Inc.

University of the South Pacific (USP)

FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA

Micronesian Seminar

Micronesia Red Cross Society

Island Food Community of Pohnpei

KIRIBATI

Foundation for the Peoples of the South Pacific

Marine Training Centre

Kiribati Counsellors Association

PALAU

Name

Palau Community Action Agency

SAMOA

Samoa Umbrella for Non Government Organization

Mapusaga o Aiga Inc

Bahai Charitable Trust for Social & Economic Development

TONGA

Tonga Pre-School Association

Free Wesley Church

TUVALU

Tuvalu Family Health Association

VANUATU

Wan Smolbag Theatre

Vanuatu Kaljoral Senta

Pre Skul Asosiesen Blon Vanuatu

Vanuatu Womens Centre

Ministry of Agriculture W. Samoa Children's Coord Comm.-SAMOA Ministry of Youth, Sports & Cultural Affairs Ministry of Education Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ministry of Health Ministry of Finance Ministry of Agriculture, Forests & Fisheries National Youth Council National Council of Women **SOLOMON ISLANDS** Ministry of Health and Medical Services Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development Department of Home Affairs Malaita Provincial Govt. Youth and Sports Division Solomon Islands National Advisory Committee on Children Ministry of Women, Youth and Sports Ministry of Development Planning **REPUBLIC OF MARSHALL ISLANDS** Ministry of Internal Affairs - RMI National Coordinating Body (RMI) Ministry of Education, RMI Ministry of Social Services RMI-Ministry of Health and Environment Department of Health, Education and Social Affairs Department of Health Services Mission Pacific **TOKELAU** Department of Health Department of Education	Samoa Red Cross Society Samoa Pre-School Association Samoa Institute of Early Childhood Education Association Western Samoa Family Health Association USP - Alafua Campus Young Mens Christian Association Women in Business Foundation UNDP Samoa Secretariat of the Pacific Community United Nations Education, Scientific & Cultural Organisation **SOLOMON ISLANDS** Family Support Centre Community Based Rehabilitation Programme Solomon Islands Christian Association Save The Children Fund Australia Diocese of Ysabel, Church of Melanesia Church of Melanesia Solomon Island Development Trust Solomon Island Family Support Centre **REPUBLIC OF MARSHALL ISLANDS** RMI-Youth to Youth The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahai's of RMI **TONGA** The Church Leaders Forum Tonga Pre-school Association Tonga National Youth Congress Catholic Women's League	

Children's Coord Comm.-TOKELAU **TONGA** Ministry of Health Central Planning Department National Coordinating Body (TONGA) Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ministry of Education Ministry of Youth **TUVALU** MFA/MIN.OF RES. & DEV., TUVALU Ministry of Health Department of Agriculture WOMEN DEVELOPMENT DIV. (TUVALU) National Coordinating Body (Tuvalu) Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ministry of Education Ministry of Natural Resources & Environment Tuvalu National Council of Women Minsitry of Health, Women and Community Affairs Department of Community Affairs Ministry of Finance Ministry of Home Affairs & Rural Development **VANUATU** Early Childhood Care and Education Ministry of Health Department of Economic and Social Development National Coord. Body for Child. (Vanuatu) Vanuatu National Council of Women Department of Public Health -	**TUVALU** Tuvalu National Council for Women Tuvalu Association of Non Government Organizations Tuvalu Red Cross Society USP - Funafuti **VANUATU** Vanuatu Society for Disabled People CUSO Vila Young People's Project National Kommunity Development Trust FSP Vanuatu Save the Children Fund Australia - Vanuatu National Childrens Committee Vanuatu Young People's programme Univ. of the South Pacific (Vanuatu)	

Vanuatu National Children's Committee Ministry of Education - Vanuatu Department of Women's Affairs Ministry of Youth Department of Foreign Affairs Ministry of Internal Affairs Police Service Commission		