The State of
PACIFIC YOUTH 2011

Opportunities and Obstacles

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Abbreviations and acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency syndrome
AUD	Australian dollar
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
FSM	Federated States of Micronesia
GDP	Gross domestic product
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus
MDG(s)	Millennium Development Goal(s)
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
PILL	Pacific Island Literacy Levels (tests)
PICTs	Pacific Island countries and territories
PRISM	Pacific Regional Information System
SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

Acknowledgements

Foreword

The exercise of taking stock of developments in the youth sector in the six years since *The State of Pacific Youth Report 2005* was published is a useful one. For development agencies, governments and administrations alike, reflecting on progress and obstacles serves to guide the direction of our investment in young Pacific Islanders. Over the last six years, the youth population has remained significant in its potential contribution to both economic and social development in Pacific Islands countries and territories – it thus remains significant as a cohort requiring dedicated investment. How this can best be done is explored in this analysis.

In 2011, important youth issues such as youth employment and urban youth and crime are on the agenda of high-level regional forums. Ultimately, each nation and territory is responsible for its own development priorities, but regional agenda can be instrumental in supporting strategic frameworks to assist national implementation and better coordinated donor agency assistance. *The State of Pacific Youth Report 2011* adds a body of evidence from which such strategic objectives can be formulated.

The continued collaboration between the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Pacific responds to the need to coordinate efforts to address the needs of young people in the Pacific region. Indeed, both agencies work collaboratively with many other agencies in the region to address youth issues through providing assistance in several areas including policy development, adolescent reproductive health, youth development and youth justice. The cross-sectoral nature of youth issues necessitates coordination and collaboration – between development agencies and between government ministries and departments. SPC and UNICEF Pacific acknowledge the contributions of regional youth stakeholders in shaping the scope of this analysis and reviewing drafts.

Finally, we thank the young people in several Pacific countries who gathered to discuss their opportunities and the obstacles they face. Together with the youth declaration endorsed at the Pacific Youth Festival 2009, their inputs have been fundamental to the issues prioritised in this report. The findings emphasise the need to institutionalise democratic structures to enable young citizens to engage with development agenda, and challenge duty-bearers to be accountable to those we recognise as our region's greatest resource.

Dr Isiye Ndombi
Representative
UNICEF Pacific

Dr Jimmie Rodgers
Director-General
Secretariat of the Pacific Community

Executive summary

The purpose of this report is to understand how young people in the Pacific have fared since 2005 using evidence from official sources, national population surveys and young people themselves. The earlier report, *The State of Pacific Youth 2005*, highlighted key economic and structural issues as underlying causes of the problems facing youth at the time. Overall, the situation of young people in the Pacific in 2011 has changed little. If anything, the challenges have become more critical since 2005.

Poverty, education systems focused on white-collar employment skills, stagnating economies that do not provide enough employment opportunities, and rural/urban inequalities are still the most significant underlying causes of youth problems. Continuing high population growth; rapid urban expansion; political volatility; under-performing economies, now further weakened by the impact of the global economic crises; and the rising cost of food point to a future for many young Pacific Islanders that holds an increased risk of entrenchment of poverty and broadening disparities, which will cause widespread discontent. Without a major investment in young people, they may well flounder as a generation, undermining the capacity of Pacific Island countries and territories to escape aid dependence, develop economically and, in some cases, even survive as viable societies.

The current youth generation, given the appropriate resources, skills and capacities, is well-placed to tackle these challenges. Pacific Island governments have invested heavily in children's access to education and health services. The need now is to continue investments in young people's development into their second and third decade of life. This includes improving access to opportunities for upper secondary, vocational and tertiary education; dedicating resources directed to improving learning outcomes at all levels of education; creating pathways to decent work; providing health facilities responsive to youth needs; and listening to the voices of young people.

Young people can only make their communities more productive and resilient if they have the opportunity to become better educated, healthier, express their voice and engage in useful work. This report acknowledges that young people have varying proportions of advantage and disadvantage that influence the nature of their transition to adult independence. To facilitate the process of identifying the range of needs for all young people, but particularly for the most disadvantaged, this report makes use of youth opportunity profiles. These social science devices help make sense of the complex set of opportunities and obstacles that young people in the Pacific face in their transition to independent adulthood. This report identifies three youth-in-transition opportunity profiles:

• young people who have benefitted from access to education and health care but who face difficulty in securing employment;

• young people who have been denied access to basic services and information;

• young people in special circumstances, such as those living with disability or a life-threatening disease, that can create a set of difficulties that further limit their opportunities.

An additional analysis, based on the geographical location of young people, is also included. Where young people live has a significant impact on their access to opportunities and resources. The differences between urban and rural residence are especially significant.

This review proposes principles and strategies to guide governments, multilateral agencies and donors in how they might set policy in relation to young people. These are articulated in a basic framework with three pillars – governance, data and analysis, and resources.

1. **Improve the governance of youth** through a) the development of specific strategies on youth employment, improved learning outcomes and youth engagement in development; b) regional coordination; and c) increased investment.

2. **Improve data collection and analysis of youth** by determining a set of key youth measures and conducting regular monitoring and analysis of youth.

3. **Mobilise resources for youth** through the establishment of a youth challenge fund.

Introduction

Young people account for a large proportion of the population of Pacific Island countries and territories (PICTs).[1] The youth age group of 15−24 years accounts for nearly two million people, which is close to a fifth of the regions's total population. Over a quarter of the total population are in the wider youth age grouping of 15−30 years. More tellingly, as many as a third of the adult working age population are aged 15−24 years. This sheer weight of numbers, and the particular challenges young people face in their transition to independence, creates pressures which demand responses from governments, regional agencies, donors and the wider community.

The purpose of this report is to present the available evidence on how young people in the Pacific have fared in the period 2006 to 2011. This will be done by assessing the nature and extent of the changes since 2005, the date of the previous report on the state of Pacific youth. This report has two key audiences: first, young people themselves and others interested in their day-to-day welfare; and second, policy makers in governments, international and regional development agencies and donors, as well as non-government organisations working with young people.

The report makes use of hard data from official sources and qualitative information from face-to-face focus group discussions and individual interviews. The official statistics include data provided by SPC's Pacific Regional Information System (PRISM), national census results and national population surveys such as the demographic and health surveys (DHSs) conducted in six Pacific countries between 2007 and 2009. The qualitative data on how young people have fared over this period is based on information gathered from consultations with young people themselves as well as interviews with key persons in government and regional agencies.

However, as no country in the Pacific nor any regional agency reports regularly on a standard set of youth indicators, it has been difficult to provide systematic evidence of the progress of young people in each Pacific country between 2006 and 2011.[2]

1.1.   Young people as a focus of public policy

Why should governments be concerned about what is happening to young people in the Pacific? Why should young people be a focus of public policy? Three arguments to support investing in young people can be offered. The first is that governments, multilateral agencies such as the World Bank and bilateral donors need to continue to invest in young people during their second decade of life and beyond to build on the gains

achieved over the last twenty years for children in early and middle childhood. The gains include the large reduction in child deaths and the improved access to primary schooling, safe water and medicine. However, the lack of resources devoted to young people in their adolescence and beyond to help them make a successful transition to adulthood is threatening to limit seriously the impact of these efforts (UNICEF 2011: 3).

If young people are given the means to become better educated, healthier, express their voice and to find useful employment, they are better able to make their communities more economically productive and socially resilient. Failing to build on initial investments will entrench poverty for a generation or more. The challenge for governments and donors is to work out how best to capture the economic and social benefits of the substantial public investment they have already made in young people's education, health, welfare and initiation into national culture.

The second argument is that there is a major gap in public policy between education and what lies beyond it. There exists only small-scale or no support for young people to help them make their way through the education system, enter the labour market, set up their own households and form families. Young people are often in situations where they sink or swim, drawing on the resources of their own families and networks to get by. They are sent forth from the education system with little or no information about what their job prospects are and with no clear pathways to carry them into the world of work. Vocational training options are limited and are not always tied to achieving employment outcomes. Information about available job vacancies or the skill requirements of employers is lacking. All this points to the need for governments to fill this gap by working out what mechanisms they need to put in place to ensure that their huge commitment of resources to education is delivering real outcomes which will benefit their economies and societies.

The third argument in favour of investing more in young people is the need for public policy to be more preventative in its approach to youth development, rather than merely reactive to specific youth problems. For example, girls and young women are rightly identified by their communities as being more vulnerable to HIV infection or adolescent pregnancy. However, directing assistance to pregnant teenagers does little to address the root causes of the problem. Adolescence is a pivotal period in a young person's life, a time when poverty and lack of opportunity may be passed to the next generation. This applies especially to adolescent girls who live in poverty and have little education. They are at risk of giving birth to undernourished children (UNICEF 2011: 3).

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[1] The countries and territories covered in this report are: American Samoa, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia Fiji, French Polynesia, Guam, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Caledonia, Niue, Northern Mariana Islands, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Pitcairn Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, and Wallis and Futuna.

[2] Nevertheless, with ten-yearly census results becoming available in 2011 for Federated States of Micronesia and the Marshall Islands, Kiribati and Palau, as well as forthcoming censuses in 2011 in Nauru, Cook Islands, Samoa, Tonga, Niue and Tokelau, it will be possible by the end of 2012 to show the extent of the changes between census dates. These include changes in educational attainment, changes in the proportion of young people in urban and rural areas, changes in youth employment in rural and urban areas, and youth literacy and disability rates.

Directing resources to these girls to enable them to continue their education is a powerful way of breaking this cycle of poverty. Substantial evidence exists to show that the more educated a girl is, the less likely she is to marry early, get pregnant as a teenager, be more knowledgeable about HIV and AIDS and have healthy children when she does become a mother (UNICEF 2011: 4).

Unemployed youth are often perceived as threats to the social order due to alcohol abuse and their readiness to resort violence. At the launch of a report *Urban youth in the Pacific: Increasing resilience and reducing risk for involvement in crime and violence* on 2 June, 2011, Ms Andie Fong Toy, Acting Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, noted the part young people have played in violence and social unrest in the region in recent years:

> Young people, although not leaders or necessarily instigators, were very much active in the Tensions in the Solomon Islands and the civil unrest in Nuku'alofa in 2006. They are active in both minor and serious crime. Inter-school fights and groups of young people involved in anti-social behaviour are a growing concern in Apia. Public safety is a major concern in urban centres such as Port Moresby largely due to the involvement of young people in crime and violence. In the North Pacific, alcohol and other substance abuse is taking its toll on young people and leading to the commitment of crimes. And of course domestic and sexual-based violence, with young people as perpetrators and victims, is a major human security concern across the region.

While there is need to directly address community concern about young people's increased involvement in crime and violence, governments also need to focus on addressing the underlying causes of this behaviour. These include: the lack of income-earning opportunities in urban and rural areas, education systems with poor learning outcomes, little vocational training with few links to employers, non-youth friendly health care, and political systems unresponsive to the voices of the young. The UNDP Pacific Centre's report Urban youth in the Pacific shows how many young people have become outsiders in their own communities and as a result are at increased risk of turning to crime. The key risk factors making young people outsiders that the report highlights are: the lack of employment opportunities and meaningful activity; alcohol and substance abuse, often with accompanying violence; disengagement from the political process; the lack of participation in community decision-making; and poor quality or irrelevant education (Noble, Pereira and Saune 2011: 9).

1.2.   Terms of reference

The purpose of this State of Pacific Youth 2011 report, according to its terms of reference, is to 'identify and analyse critical and emerging youth issues and assess them in relation to current regional issues'. These include economic, social, environmental and political factors

affecting young people, as well as regional security and governance, sustainable development, HIV & AIDS, and regional cooperation (see Attachment 1 for a more detailed outline of the terms of reference and the key issues raised by three important antecedent reports).

1.3.   How young people are defined in the report

Young people are not rigidly defined by age group, although the age group 15−24 years is often used in this report for statistical convenience. The age span covering youth, as a stage in the lifecycle moving from dependence to independence, varies. It can range from as young as age ten years to as old as mid-thirties, depending on the age at which some children have to start to fend for themselves and what society deems to be the end point of the transition. It is worth noting that the age range 15 to 34 years is used to define youth in the national youth policies of the Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Niue and Palau. In Kiribati, it is 15 to 30 years and in Papua New Guinea, it is 12 to 25 years. The broader age range used to define youth can be taken to reflect the extended time it takes, particularly for males in these societies, to find a reliable source of livelihood to support a family.

1.4   The framework of the report

Five principles guide the analysis offered in this report. First, rather than seeing youth issues as isolated events or stand-alone problems, it makes more sense to view what young people are going through as a connected series of changes as they move from one stable life stage, childhood, to another fairly stable stage, adulthood (Lloyd 2005: 24−27). These changes can include leaving school, leaving the parental home and finding a place to live, finding work or a reliable livelihood, managing new health risks and taking part in a political system (World Bank 2006: 5−15). With this perspective, the focus of public policy shifts away from treating youth problems separately and after they have occurred, and turns instead towards seeing the connections and offering support to young people to help them improve their chances of getting good transition outcomes.

Second, young people themselves are actively involved in working out how best to overcome the obstacles they face. The challenge for policy makers and for young people is to find ways to build their capacity, 'to lead lives they have reason to value and to enhance the substantive choices they have', as Nobel prize winner Amartya Sen puts it (cited in Lloyd 2005: 24). However, young people's efforts in trying to achieve satisfactory transition outcomes can lead to frustration and discontent if the obstacles they encounter appear insurmountable and if support from national and traditional leadership structures is not forthcoming.

Third, the number of young people going through these transition events at the same time affects their chances of making a successful transition. If many young people are looking for work at the same time, a young person's chances of getting a job are much lower. Fourth, it is important to recognise that the personal characteristics and social background of youths affect their chances of making a successful youth transition. So also do the economic conditions affecting their country and their community. Whether a young person is male or female, is from a well-off or poor household, or is living in a rural or urban area makes a difference. Other factors affecting their chances include whether a young person is literate or not, and whether he or she has HIV & AIDS or a physical or mental disability. These differences expand or narrow the range of opportunities available to a young person. They also determine what resources young people can call on to overcome the obstacles they confront in their efforts to become independent.

Fifth, a young person's relative success or failure in their transition has a strong impact on their later life outcomes. For example, a protracted period of looking for work and taking on temporary jobs is likely to discourage a young man or woman from leaving home and setting up their own household. Experiencing the frustration of being jobless for an extended time is also likely to sour young people's attitudes to life, government and their community.

1.5.   Factors shaping young people's opportunity structures

Young people face different challenges within the Pacific region. In Melanesia, high population growth, growing inequalities in urban areas, a weak distribution of benefits from resources-led development and few opportunities to work in high-income countries are some of the key elements. In Micronesia, on the other hand, geographical remoteness from major markets, population pressure on limited land resources, overfishing, environmental damage, climate change and exposure to natural disasters are all having a major impact on young people's prospects of earning a decent living. Polynesia has similar resource constraints. providing a narrow set of future economic options for the current youth generation.

A number of countries in the Pacific have among the highest population growth rates in the world. The Republic of the Marshall Islands is highest at 2.8 per cent per annum, followed by Solomon Islands and Vanuatu (2.5 per cent) and Papua New Guinea (2.2 per cent). These rates of natural increase, except for Papua New Guinea, are higher than the average for all least developed countries (2.3 per cent). The populations of these three Melanesian countries are expected to more than double by 2050 (Population Reference Bureau, 2010: 6−9).[3]

The governments of these countries need to respond to high population growth. For example, more children in the population require additional classrooms and teachers. More primary school leavers will mean a greater demand for places in secondary schools. More young people completing their secondary or tertiary education will result in more job seekers. A growing youth population also means more young people moving to live in urban areas to access secondary or tertiary education or to seek a job. Limited job prospects at home will also result in more young people seeking the skills and opportunities to work overseas.

A failure to respond to these pressures from an expanding youth age group is likely to create unwanted side effects. Denial of economic and social opportunities leads to frustrated young people. The result can be a high incidence of self-harm and anti-social behaviour, including a greater risk of social conflict and violence. In terms of their communities and countries, it means the loss of the productive potential of a large section of the adult population.

1.5.1   The existence of a large youth bulge

The term 'youth bulge' refers to the demographic phenomenon when the proportion of youths in the population is significantly larger than other age groups, both older and younger. Each of the sub-regions in the Pacific has a large youth bulge in the adult working age population. Across the region, the youth age group of 15−24 years accounts for a third of the working age population (15−59 years) (see Table A2.2 in Attachment 2). Eleven countries stand out with even more than a third of their adult working age populations in the youth age group. These are the Republic of the Marshall Islands (42 per cent) and Tonga (37 per cent), and Samoa, Tokelau, American Samoa and Kiribati, each with 36 per cent. The Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu have between 34 and 35 per cent of their working age population aged 15−24 years.

These concentrations of young people in the adult population are even greater in urban areas, as there is a strong youth bias in the age profile of those who migrate to towns in search of more education opportunities and access to jobs. A large urban youth bulge, together with few jobs, growing inequalities and government instability, produces conditions ripe for social conflict. An event such as a sudden increase in food or fuel prices can provoke protests and violent outbursts. The pressures of managing changes enforced by globalisation have erupted in the Pacific in recent times. Political instability in Fiji, Tonga, Vanuatu and Solomon Islands has precipitated greater unemployment and delayed the pace of economic and social development (UNICEF Pacific 2008: 6).[4]

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[3] The population of Solomon Islands will increase 2.3 times, Vanuatu 2.2 times and PNG 2.0 times.

[4] In late January 2011, five men in a Port Moresby marketplace were killed with machetes in an ethnic clash. Pacific New Bulletin, Radio Australia, 1 February 2011.

1.5.2. The potential impact of a youth bulge

The impact of a youth bulge in the adult population can be either beneficial or harmful, depending on how governments respond. If the economic opportunities are present or are created by government, a larger number of well-educated, healthy young people entering the workforce will be a huge boost to productivity and will deliver major economic benefits. On the other hand, widespread frustration is likely if educated young people with high expectations see themselves as trapped in economies with little or no job growth. Equally, such young people can become discontented if employers claim that job seekers do not have the skills they need and instead import foreign workers to do a range of jobs requiring low to middle skill.

This lack of opportunity for productive work creates a dependent population which itself becomes a major burden on communities and on government expenditure (Carling 2009: 84). Young people who are not engaged in productive activity are supported by older wage earners in their households but give back little or nothing in return. Working age dependants are at higher risk of turning to crime to get money to buy alcohol and drugs. Domestic violence is often caused by young men, with young women being their victims (Noble, Pereira and Saune 2011: 22).

Under certain conditions, these pressures can lead to major social upheavals. The events in Tunisia and Egypt in late 2010 and early 2011 were largely started by the actions of young people, many of whom had achieved high levels of education but were able to earn only low incomes in the informal sector. In both countries, the initial outbreaks of protest were fuelled by non-responsive, undemocratic rulers and, in the case of Tunisia, a violent overreaction by the authorities to the protests.

Research based on many countries shows that a large youth share in the adult population, together with other conditions, is strongly associated with a high risk of an outbreak of low-intensity conflict. This applies particularly in countries with poor performing economies and weak governments (Urdal 2006: 607−629). This research also shows that large, young, male population bulges are more likely to increase the risk of conflict in societies where the level of male secondary education is low, especially in low and middle-income countries (Barakat and Urdal 2009). These factors — unstable government, poorly performing economies and low secondary education levels — are common to a number of countries in the Pacific.

1.5.3. Acknowledging the cost of inaction

Governments can incur real costs by not responding to their youth bulges. The cost to government of a large, dependent population engaging in crime and violence include having to employ and pay more police officers, court officials and medical staff, as well as provide bigger gaols. Communities also have to bear the cost of living with higher levels of insecurity. In Solomon Islands, where young men played a prominent role in the civil unrest between 1998 and 2003 and again in 2006, four out of five Solomon Islanders in 2010 still do not feel safe in Honiara, with more than a quarter saying that they 'hardly ever feel safe', according to a recent survey (ANU Enterprise Pty Ltd 2011: 81). The survey found that residents of Honiara are the least likely to say they always feel safe. This feeling of insecurity has a major impact on the trust between communities, undermining such key institutions as urban food markets and cross-community sporting activities. Widespread feelings of insecurity also undermine the functioning of the economy and make it much harder to attract foreign investment to create jobs.
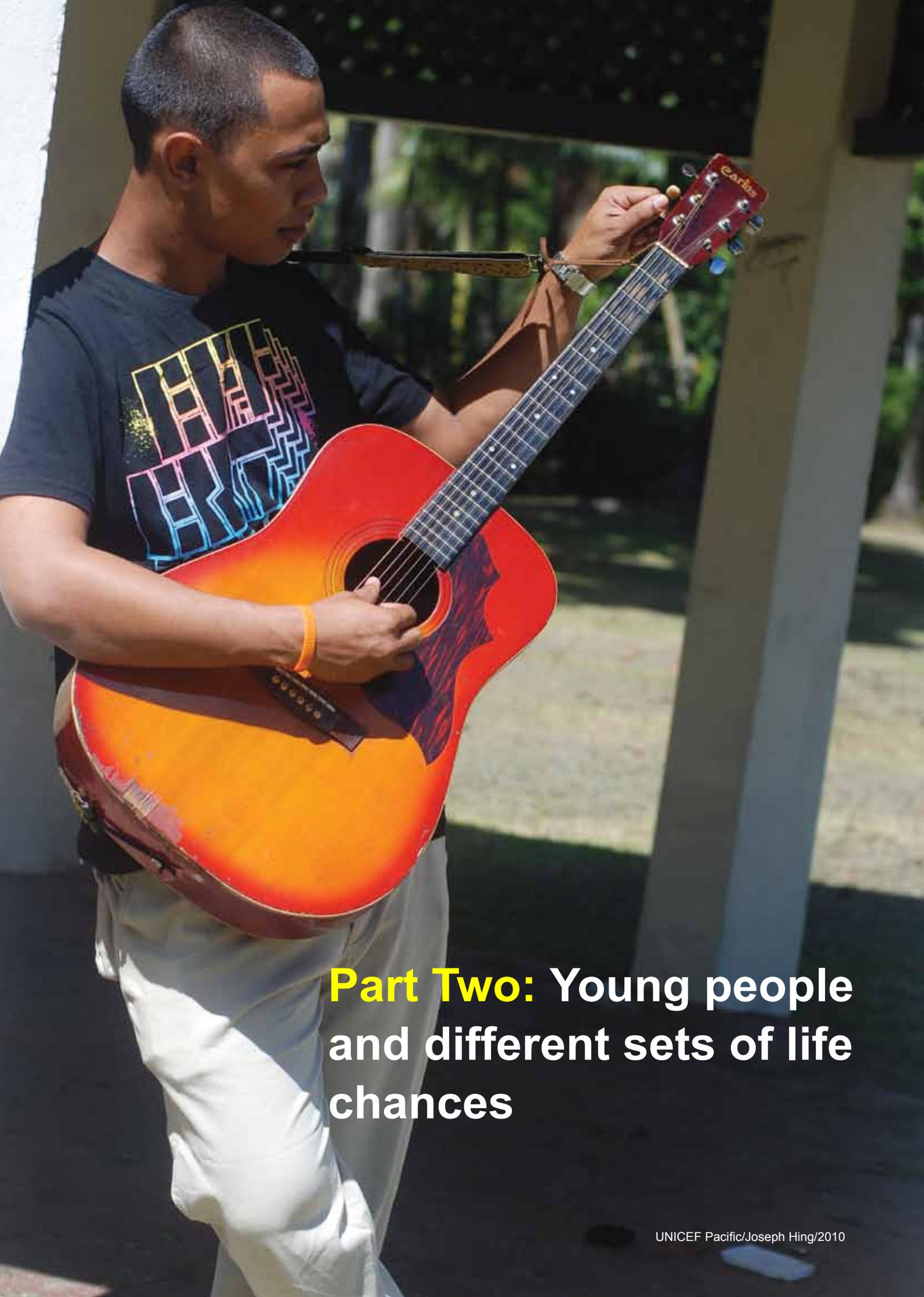
Part Two: Young people and different sets of life chances

2.1   Changes since 2005

Overall, the situation of young people in the Pacific region has changed little since 2005. Available evidence shows that poverty, hunger and lack of access to services in many Pacific island countries remain major factors, damaging many young people's chances of achieving their potential. In twelve PICTs for which data are available one in four young people are, on average, living below their country's national poverty line.[5] Many young people in a number of PICTs are exposed to high health risks due to lack of access to an improved water source or sanitation facility (ADB 2011).[6]

Youth illiteracy is a major problem in Melanesian countries. One in three young people aged 15−24 years are illiterate in Papua New Guinea, the country in the region with the largest youth population (ADB 2011).[7] Access to secondary education in many Pacific island countries is restricted by the limited number of places available, with girls in Papua New Guinea in particular suffering from inadequate access. The adolescent birth rate is considered high in the Melanesian countries (Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu and Fiji), the Micronesian countries (Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Kiribati and Nauru) as well as Samoa in Polynesia (see Table A3 in Attachment 3).

Pacific governments spend little on youth-related activities, apart from education. In Fiji, for example, funding for youth development over the last 15 years has been only around one per cent of the national budget (Carling 2009: 63). Other evidence of the lack of youth-focused services provided by PICTs is provided in UNICEF's 2008 surveys in Fiji, Kiribati, Vanuatu and Solomon Islands of compliance with the child protection provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNICEF Pacific 2010).[8] The surveys found major gaps in youth social welfare services, with these four countries in particular showing non-compliance or only partial compliance with the relevant indicators (UNICEF Pacific 2010: 5).[9]

It is worth noting at this point that since 2005, there has been significant investment in vocational education and training in the region. AusAID, over four years to mid 2011, spent AUD 149.5 million on the Australia Pacific Technical College, with branches in Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa and Vanuatu.[10] Stage II of the programme, from mid 2011, will cost an estimated AUD 152 million to produce 3,450 graduates with internationally recognised trade skills at a cost of AUD 44,000 per graduate.[11] This cost per graduate is comparable to the funding per graduate (AUD 52,430) that AusAID provides for 350 scholarships to study at the University of the South Pacific. While the depth of spending is impressive, the reach is small. The number of Pacific Islanders who are benefiting from this expenditure is likely to be less than one in ten of those who are eligible. The high cost per graduate means that only relatively few Pacific Islanders will receive this vocational training compared to the high level of demand for craft-level skills training.

In 2010 and 2011, the World Bank set up youth-focused projects in Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea. These are targeted at providing temporary work and job-ready skills for urban, unemployed youth and second-chance education opportunities for school drop-outs over a five-year period. However, compared with the size of the eligible target groups of young people in these countries, the funding for each of the three projects is small, and their reach, limited (World Bank 2011).[12]

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[5] Unweighted average for the proportion of the population under a national poverty line (latest available year) in the following countries: Cook Islands (28.4 per cent), Fiji (31.0 per cent), Papua New Guinea (30.2 per cent), Federated States of Micronesia (29.9 per cent), Samoa (26.9 per cent), Tuvalu (26.3 per cent), Palau (24.9 per cent), Solomon Islands (22.7 per cent), Tonga (22.3 per cent), Kiribati (21.8 per cent), Marshall Islands (20.0 per cent) and Vanuatu (15.9 per cent) (ADB 2011).

[6] MDG targets 7.8 & 7.9: Countries with a significant proportion of the population that does not have access to improved water sources are: Kiribati (23 per cent urban, 47 per cent rural), Papua New Guinea (13 per cent urban, 67 per cent rural), Solomon Islands (35 per cent rural) and Vanuatu (21 per cent rural). The proportion of the population with no access to improved sanitation facilities are: Kiribati (51 per cent urban, 78 per cent rural), Nauru (50 per cent urban), Federated States of Micronesia (39 per cent urban, 85 per cent rural), Vanuatu (34 per cent, rural 52 per cent), Papua New Guinea (29 per cent urban, 59 per cent rural), Marshall Islands (17 per cent urban, 47 per cent rural), Tuvalu (12 per cent urban, 19 per cent rural), Palau (48 per cent rural) and Solomon Islands (82 per cent rural) (ADB 2011).

[7] MDG target 2.3, Literacy rate of 15−24 year-olds, 2008, Papua New Guinea 66.5 per cent, Females, 68.5 per cent, Males 64.6 per cent (ADB 2011).

[8] Those surveyed were young people aged 7 to 18 years and above, as well as key informants from the courts; police officers; education representatives; health workers; civil society organisations; social welfare staff; youth leaders; and religious leaders.

[9] The relevant indicators on youth services are: 1. Community programmes and services exist to support children and adolescents, particularly children at social risk (e.g. peer and adult mentoring programmes, drop-in centres, recreational programmes, life skills programmes, employment programmes). 2. Where there are the above programmes, child protection policies exist and workers and volunteers have the knowledge, skills and motivation to identify and report suspected incidents of violence, abuse and exploitation to a dedicated reporting hotline overseen by a specialised agency for child protection and to action or refer any need for counselling or rehabilitation or suicidal threats or attempts by young people.

[10] The APTC offers Australian Certificates III and IV training in: Tourism and hospitality, Automotive manufacturing, Construction, Electrical trades, Health, and Community services.

[11] Information provided by AusAID in a letter to author, Richard Curtain, 8 February 2011.

[12] The World Bank is funding a temporary job creation programme in Honiara, Solomon Islands, involving road repair and maintenance, waste disposal, and city clean-up activities for the period 2010–2015, targeted at youth and women at the cost of USD 1.5 million per year. In Papua New Guinea, the World Bank has loaned the government funds for an Urban Youth Employment Project targeted at 'youth who may be at-risk of engaging in anti-social or criminal activities as a means to survive' to provide them with temporary work and training. The funding is for five years from 2011 at USD 3.5 million per year, providing temporary work in public works in Port Moresby for 17,500 young people aged 16 to 25 years. In Papua New Guinea, the World Bank has also set up the Flexible and Open Distance Education Project directed at helping out-of-school youth to gain recognised qualifications through the College for Flexible and Distance Education. The cost is USD 1.20 million over five years.

2.2.   How young people differ

Not all young people within any one country are the same in terms of their potential to make a successful youth transition. Their opportunities differ according to their household assets, the type and quality of services they could access when growing up, whether they are male or female, where they live now, what education level they have reached and what quality of education was provided, what ethnic or religious group they belong to and how healthy they are. Three different opportunity profiles have been identified. Opportunity profiles are social science devices to help one make sense of the complex set of opportunities and obstacles that young people face in their youth transition to independence. These three groupings are useful for the broad brush level of analysis used in this report. However, more specific information at the country level is needed to provide a more complete picture about what happens to young people once they complete their formal education; what sort of work they find, if any; how they are managing their health; if, when and under what conditions they are starting a family; and how well they are able to exercise their rights as citizens.

The first opportunity profile refers to those young people who have benefited from good access to education and health services. However, despite these benefits, they find it hard to get decent work, and achieve the economic security needed to start a family. Many in this group also feel frustrated at the lack of opportunity to have their voices heard in their local community and within the political system. The second opportunity profile applies to young people who have missed out on getting a basic education or have left school with little or no literacy. The third opportunity profile refers to those young people who are more severely disadvantaged than their peers in tackling their youth transition.

These profiles are followed by an analysis of geographical location: the impact of where young people live within a country on their chances of making a successful transition from dependence to independence. The growth of urbanisation in the Pacific over the last forty years has introduced new opportunities that urban residents enjoy as well as new disadvantages compared with rural residents. These differences affect young people in particular in their youth transition.

2.3.   Opportunity Profile 1: Young people who are educated and healthy but stalled

In most Pacific countries, over half of young people aged 15−19 years are in school. In Fiji, the gross upper secondary enrolment rate in 2008 for girls was 66 per cent and 59 per cent for boys. In Kiribati, the gross upper secondary enrolment rate (2008) was 78 per cent for girls and 65 per cent for boys. In the Marshall Islands, for the same year, the gross enrolment rate in upper secondary schools was 74 per cent for girls and 67 per cent for boys. Tonga (2006) had a gross enrolment rate of 97 per cent for girls and 85 per cent for boys (World Bank n.d.). However, according to data from demographic and health surveys of several PICTs (see Table 1), this was not the case for male and female teenagers in Nauru (28 and 39 per cent respectively) or the male teenagers in Tuvalu (37 per cent).

Table 1 also shows that, by age 20−24 years, only a small proportion of young people are attending an educational institution, ranging from 18 per cent of young men in Solomon Islands to 2 per cent of young men in Nauru. School attendance by year of age for the surveyed countries indicates that the age at which most young people leave school is 17 or 18 years of age, with males usually leaving a year earlier than females.

Table 1. The gross education attendance rate of young people aged 15–19 and 20–24 years in selected countries in the Pacific, 2007–2009, percentage of each male and female age group

	Melanesia				Micronesia						Polynesia			
	Solomon Islands 2007		Kiribati 2009		Marshall Islands 2007		Nauru 2007		Samoa 2009		Tuvalu 2007	
Age years	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
15–19	58	43	54	63	56	60	28	39	59	73	37	53
20–24	18	10	9	14	13	9	2	3	11	10	7	7

Source: Demographic and health survey, specified years

More Pacific teenagers today are staying on in education than did those in older age groups. This means, in many cases, that young people in 2010 have gained more formal education than older age groups. This applies especially to young women who have completed secondary education or a higher level of education. In Samoa (2009) and Kiribati (2009), a higher proportion of women aged 20−24 years have completed secondary school or a higher level of education compared to the next oldest age group (61 and 60 per cent of 20−24 year-old women compared with 47 and 51 per cent of women aged 25−29 years in Samoa and Kiribati respectively).[13] However, the trend is less pronounced for young men. They have lower proportions with the same education level compared with young women and, except in the case of Kiribati, have not received more formal education than the next older age group.

This gender gap in education attainment in favour of girls also shows up in the above statistics on gross upper secondary school enrolments. However, other countries are lagging far behind. Solomon Islands (2007) has less than five per cent of the same age who have completed secondary schooling (Government of Solomon Islands 2006–2007: 26−27). The country has a gross enrolment rate for upper secondary school of only 16 per cent for girls and 22 per cent for boys (World Bank n.d.). In Vanuatu in 2009, the gross enrolment rate in upper secondary schools was 47 and 44 per cent for girls and boys respectively.

The current youth generation has benefited from better access to health services, resulting in fewer deaths in childhood and fewer illnesses, due to better water supply, better nutrition and immunisation against major diseases. In Vanuatu, for example, between 1979 and 1999, the crude death rate per 1,000 persons fell from 50–60 persons to 8 in 1989 and 6 in 1999 (Cox, Alatoa and Kenni et al. 2007: 15−16). These benefits include less

chance of mental harm due to malnutrition, and make it easier for young people to learn and cope with exposure to disease later in life.

2.3.1. Lack of jobs

More education and a healthier outlook have not resulted in more chances of finding paid work. All the consultations for this report highlighted the lack of jobs as a major issue for young people. In many cases, it came at the top of the list of problems that young people faced. National demographic and health survey (DHS) data for six countries, using a broad definition of working, shows large differences in the employment rate of teenagers and 20−24 year-olds compared to those aged 25−29 years (Table 2). The employment rates for the older age groups are higher still.[14]

It is possible to draw several inferences from the data presented in Tables 1 and 2. One is that a large proportion of young people in the 20−24 and 25−29 year age groups are neither working nor studying. While young women in this age group may be mothers or otherwise engaged in domestic duties, young men not-in-education or work may be contributing little to their community. The issue is particularly serious in Kiribati, Marshall Islands and Samoa, where around half or more of young men aged 20−24 years are not engaged in productive activity (58 per cent of males 20−24 years in Kiribati, 44 per cent in Marshall Islands and 46 per cent in Samoa). The problem of being jobless persists for 25−29 year-old men in Kiribati, Samoa, Marshall Islands and Solomon Islands where between a quarter and more than half the men in this age group (57, 44, 35 and 26 per cent in each country respectively) are out of work.

A second inference is that many young people endure a protracted wait before they find employment. This wait makes it difficult, for young men in particular, to

Table 2: Employment rate for young people aged 15–19, 20–24 and 25–29 years, selected Pacific countries and territories, 2007–2009, percentage of each male and female age group

Region, country and survey year	Melanesia		Micronesia						Polynesia			
	Solomon Islands 2007		Kiribati 2009		Marshall Islands 2007		Nauru 2007		Samoa 2009		Tuvalu 2007	
Age years	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
15–19	42	30	16	19	16	8	33	26	10	5	57	16
20–24	64	34	33	38	43	18	84	47	43	26	70	46
25–29	74	34	43	50	65	32	83	58	56	26	83	63

Source: Demographic and health survey, specified years

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[13] The information on age-specific education attainment has been taken from the demographic and health surveys of Kiribati, Nauru, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Marshall Islands and Tuvalu carried out in 2006–2009. The survey results show that three out of five young women aged 20–24 years in Samoa and Kiribati, and about two out of five young women in Tuvalu and Republic of the Marshall Islands have completed secondary school and higher. However, the pattern is not as strong for young men. Near to half (48 per cent) of men aged 20–24 years in Kiribati and only two out of five (40 per cent) of males aged 20–24 years in Samoa have completed secondary education and higher. Just over one third (36 per cent) of men aged 20–24 years in Marshall Islands and a quarter (27 per cent) in Tuvalu have attained the same level of education. However, some countries are lagging far behind. Few young people (less than five per cent) in Solomon Islands and only a fifth of young women and a sixth of young men in Nauru have completed secondary school or higher.

[14] In Samoa, three out of five men (59 per cent) aged 35−39 years are currently employed compared to 43 per cent of young men aged 20−24 years. In Solomon Islands, 89 per cent of men aged 30−34 years are currently employed compared with 64 per cent of young men aged 20−24 years. In Marshall Islands, 89 per cent of men aged 45−49 years are currently employed compared to 43 per cent of men aged 20−24 years. A similar but smaller age difference in employment exists for women.

complete the other elements of a successful youth transition — leaving their parental home, and setting up their own household and supporting a family. This protracted wait is not only due to slow jobs growth. It is also caused by the lack of mechanisms to link education to workplaces. It is usually beyond the mandate of education providers to continue support to their graduates once they have left school. There is little career counseling offered, and tracer surveys are rare in PICTs. Young job seekers usually have to rely solely on their own limited networks to find work.

A third inference that can be drawn is that younger age cohorts are finding it hard to find work due to the increased competition of the ever larger numbers of their peers seeking work at the same time − the so-called cohort effect. This larger number of job seekers chasing fewer jobs highlights the need for more mechanisms to improve the functioning of the labour market. These include better information about the requirements of employers, specific job vacancies, and ways for employers and job seekers 'to try before they hire'.

A fourth inference that can be drawn is that, in the absence of state-funded social security such as unemployment benefits, many young people in both urban and rural areas are solely dependent on older household members, usually their parents, for food and income. This can be a major source of tension within a household, creating uncertainty for all household members about having enough food and income to live on. This dependence is also a major cause of friction when parents seek to impose their authority on young people who are no longer adolescents and want to be given more autonomy.

Young people's lack of jobs: in their own words

Key youth issues/problems: *Lack of opportunities for employment*
Barriers: *no education qualification to get jobs*
Source: Solomon Islands focus group discussion, males 20−24 year-olds, out of school. 4 November 2010

List of problems: in rank order
- *Employment – difficulties getting jobs*
- *Delinquency – bad influence on the younger ones*
- *Lack of good education, low motivation leading to dropping out of school.*
Source: Focus group discussions: Youths under 20, men and women. 16 December 2010, Papeete, Tahiti

- *Employment (no jobs for the young, no experience, hard to secure the first job, little support for starting a new business)*
Source: Focus group discussions, youths 20−24 years old, men and women, out of school. 14 December 2010, Papeete, Tahiti

Education system/qualification is [too] low, e.g. Form 6 or even Form 7 students cannot find jobs. Lack of opportunities. We have a growing population but education and job opportunities remain the same.
Source: Solomon Islands focus group discussions, Form 4 students, females, in school, 15−20 years. 4 November 2010, Saint Nicolas Secondary School

There is also lack of opportunities and other activities for young people to engage in to improve their lives. Young people just hang out with friends, smoke, chew betelnut and wait for any chance to get some money and buy alcohol. There is nothing much for young people so we just take each day as it comes and not bother to do anything other than staying at home and hanging around with friends.
Source: Solomon Islands focus group discussion, females 20–24 year-olds, out of school.

Major problems faced by young people: employment, no jobs for the young, no experience, hard to secure the first job, little support for starting a new business.
Source: Focus group discussions 1 & 2, youth 20−24 years old, men and women, out of school. 14 December 2010, Papeete, Tahiti

Employment – difficulties getting jobs
Source: Focus group discussion 4, youth under 20, male and female, all school drop-outs. 16 December 2010, Papeete, Tahiti

Jobs/unemployment: no summer jobs available, no job prospects after graduation. No respect on the part of employers of fair employment criteria: who you know is often more important than what you know (cronyism)
Source: Focus group discussion 3, 20−24 year-old students (higher education), men and women. 15 December 2010, Papeete, Tahiti

Unemployment among the young: many young people cannot find a job, and cannot lead a normal life.
Source: Focus group discussion 5, 20−24 years of age, women, 10 January, 2011, New Caledonia

Unemployment was identified as an issue by young people between the ages of 20 and 24 years. Their suggestions to make the situation better include; providing more jobs, attracting overseas investment and retiring those who have completed 20 years of service for the government.
Source: American Samoa youth consultations – A Discussion, 10−13 December 2010

Young people consulted in Samoa (Savaii and Upolu) ranked unemployment as a priority issue... Young people suggested that more employment opportunities be provided on both Savaii and Upolu. On Savaii the young people mentioned their "God-given" natural resources, that they should be encouraged and motivated to utilise these.
Source: Samoa youth consultations – A Discussion, 29 November–7 December 2010

2.3.2. Too few young people go on to post-secondary education

Despite higher rates of secondary education completion, only some young people in the Pacific continue to tertiary education. Table 3 shows the tertiary education participation rates for young people for the seven countries for which data are available. The absence of data for recent years from 2006 onwards reflects a major gap in official statistics in these countries and in the other Pacific countries not shown in the table.

Only Palau has a tertiary participation rate (40 per cent) above that of middle-income countries, 20 per cent in 2005 (Table 3). Fiji, Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia have a lower rate than average middle-income rate, between 15 and 17 per cent. However, the tertiary education participation rate for Tonga and Vanuatu is below even that of the low-income country average. Data available for Vanuatu (2004) show that young women are significantly under-represented in tertiary education (SPC 2011a).

In Papua New Guinea, only one in twenty (5.3 percent) of the population aged 15 years and above had a tertiary qualification in 2000 (7.2 percent for males and 3.4 percent for females). The tertiary qualification rate for 25 to 29 year olds is only 5.7 percent compared with 8.4 percent for 40 to 44 year olds and 7.6 percent for 35 to 39 year olds (Papua New Guinea National Statistics Office 2000).

2.3.3 Remedial help needed for entrants to tertiary education

Young people who go on to tertiary studies encounter a number of difficulties. Despite meeting the entry requirements of these institutions, many still require remedial help to bring them up to the standard required. The entrance test results of secondary school leavers in Marshall Islands indicate that students are not receiving sufficient foundation knowledge and skills. Many entrants to the two-year Community College of the Marshall Islands do not have sufficient English and maths to undertake tertiary-level courses and are required to take a special intensive remedial training programme (Government of RMI 2003: 52). This situation has persisted for at least a decade.

The same difficulties have been experienced by Kiribati students attending the University of the South Pacific. With little access to remedial assistance, many were failing their first-year exams and returning home. Students from other Pacific countries are also experiencing difficulties in closing the gap between the language, science or mathematics skills they have acquired at secondary school and the requirements of studying for a university degree, especially in the more demanding technical subjects such as engineering (South Pacific Engineers Association 2010: 5).

Table 3: Participation in tertiary education in selected Pacific countries and territories, proportion of young people of tertiary education age cohort (20–24 years), available years

Country or region	Gross enrolment ratio in tertiary education							
	Percentage of tertiary education-aged young people							
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Fiji				15.5	15.5	15.4		
Marshall Islands		16.9	16.9	17.0				
Micronesia (F.S.)	14.1							
Palau	40.6	40.6	40.2					
Samoa	7.4	7.5						
Tonga	4.8	4.1	5.4	6.1	6.0			
Vanuatu	4.0	3.9	5.0	4.8	4.8			
Low Income	6.5	6.9	6.9	6.9	7.7	8.0	8.3	9.1
Middle Income	12.9	14.5	16.1	17.7	18.3	19.8	21.0	21.8
High Income	56.2	58.7	61.6	62.9	64.4	65.4	66.8	69.2
World	**18.7**	**19.8**	**21.3**	**22.4**	**23.1**	**24.0**	**24.8**	**25.5**

Source: UNESCAP n.d.

2.4 Opportunity Profile 2: Disadvantaged young people

A second group of young people can be identified who have a higher risk of not making a successful youth transition compared to their more educated and healthier peers. This group, due to their lack of education and poor access to health services, have fewer opportunities and face greater obstacles in their efforts to escape poverty. A defining feature of this group of young people is their lack of education. Due to their lack of literacy, they find themselves largely excluded from jobs other than manual labour. Even those with basic literacy are limited to a narrow range of unskilled jobs such as security guards and vehicle drivers. Another example of a clearly identifiable disadvantaged group of young people are teenage mothers. The following analysis uses available data to focus on young people with little or no education and teenage mothers.

2.4.1. Poor quality education fails many

In many PICTs, the problem for some young people is getting enough support from the education system to learn basic literacy and numeracy. The issue of 'dropping out' of school or 'failing at school' was highlighted in most of the youth consultations conducted for this report. The reasons young people gave for this were: pressure from parents to follow the studies chosen for them, lack of appropriate subjects that appeal to young people, and poor quality teaching. Other evidence shows that the lack of affordability of school fees is also important, especially for girls (ANU Enterprise Pty Ltd 2011: 68).[15]

Getting an up-to-date and comprehensive picture of education completion rates is difficult because many PICTs do not collect or make public data on their school drop-out rates and, for those which do, the data are usually out-of-date. In Fiji, in 2008, eight per cent of the relevant age group did not complete primary school. In Marshall Islands in 2009 it was six per cent. In Vanuatu, in 2009, it was 17 per cent, and in 2008 it was 22 per cent. In Samoa in 2009, the gross secondary enrolment rate shows that one in four young people did not go to secondary school. Gross secondary enrolment rates for 2008 for Fiji and Marshall Islands show that one in five young people do not attend secondary school. In Vanuatu, for 2009, over half of the relevant youth age (53 per cent) was not enrolled in secondary school (World Bank n.d.). The absence of 'second-chance' opportunities for school drop-outs makes it extremely hard for young people with little or no education to escape a cycle of poverty caused by having limited options to earn a livelihood.

The large number of school drop-outs points to a more fundamental problem: the education systems of the Pacific are, in many cases, not delivering good results. This causes school push-outs to leave because they

are not learning the basics. The Pacific Island Literacy Levels (PILL) tests show that many school students fail to acquire basic literacy and numeracy. Pacific-wide data show that one third of the students are at risk of failure in reading, writing and in basic numeracy (World Bank 2007: 30). Poor literacy applies to both English and to vernacular languages. However, only three countries have made their PILL test results public (Marshall Islands, Vanuatu and Solomon Islands).

Key problems faced by young people: lack of good education, low motivation leading to dropping out of school

Source: Focus group discussion 1 & 2, youth 20–24 years old, men and women, out of school. 14 December 2010, Papeete, Tahiti

Dropping out of school: this is of direct concern to adolescent school drop-outs. School is compulsory in New Caledonia until the age of 16. Among the young people participating in the discussion, some had left school at 16, some at 17, others later. They left school without any professional qualifications, feeling frustrated or even in rebellion against the school system, family and society. Among these young people, the reasons for leaving school were:

• The school system is poorly adapted to the reality of their lives, because it is based on the European (French) model.
• Their parents are not well aware of the school system, and are not in a position to help their children in their school work or in choosing the right direction for their studies.
• Living conditions in low-income housing projects are not conducive to scholastic success. Housing units are cramped, poorly suited to the traditions, customs and way of life of the Pacific.

Source: Report of Discussion Group N°2, male school drop-outs under 20, New Caledonia, 11 January 2011

Failure at school: These adolescent girl school drop-outs are unhappy about their academic failure. They feel many factors led to failure. The reasons they gave for their academic failure were the situation at home: their homes are cramped; parents cannot afford to buy the children books, computers, school supplies. Problems of domestic violence and alcohol are ruining the home atmosphere, fostering feelings of insecurity. Parents are uncomfortable with, and ignorant of, the western school system. Girls are not encouraged to continue their studies, not like boys. Many parents are often away from home, spending their time at the bingo parlour or the kava bar, and take no interest in their children's schooling.

Source: Report of Discussion Group N°3, girl school drop-outs under 20, New Caledonia, 27 January, 2011

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[15] A focus group discussion in Solomon Islands, conducted as part of the Solomon Islands People's Survey 2010, noted that: 'Meeting the cost of school fees was also seen as a major problem. One of the consequences of the rising cost of school fees is that girls may be kept at home while boys are sent to school. This is particularly likely to occur when girls attain high school age.'

In Marshall Islands, test results show that up to three-quarters of Marshallese students are not learning to read and write (World Bank 2007: 30). The Solomon Islands Ministry of Education reports that, in 2004, only half the Grade 4 students could demonstrate literacy or numeracy (Government of Solomon Islands 2005: 21).[16] In Vanuatu, only two out of five Grade 4 students in primary school in 2003 could demonstrate literacy. The low pass rates for students at the Grade 6 national examination in Vanuatu (only 70 percent passed in 2006) also suggest that poor literacy is a major reason many do not go on to secondary education (UNDP 2007: 19).

> Key barriers extracted from male and female focus group discussions: highest rated barrier:
>
> *lack of higher education opportunities and poor quality of education (24 points, ahead of next highest rated barrier at 9 points).*
>
> Source: Solomon Islands focus group discussions Saint Nicolas Secondary School Form 4 students, males and females, in school, 15−20 years. 4 November 2010
>
> *The rate of school failure of Kanak and Pacific Islander children is a serious obstacle to their finding employment; the majority of these young people are under-qualified and cannot find a job; this leads to delinquency, itself an obstacle to change.*
>
> Source: Report of Discussion Group N°4 concerning young men 20−24 years of age, New Caledonia, 11 January 2011
>
> *The young people consulted [in American Samoa] identified the educational environment as an issue of concern. This position was strongly advocated by in-school young people. Some educational needs they referred to include; the lack of learning resources like text books; wobbly tables and chairs and the hot classroom conditions. Most aren't able to focus on their school work as a result of these. The young people also identified having unqualified teachers as an issue.*
>
> Source: American Samoa Youth Consultations – A Discussion, 10−13 December 2010
>
> *... students find teachers boring. A young man described a boring teacher in this way:*
>
> " *Say I'm so eager to go to school today, I'm so looking forward to what will be learning tomorrow, for example this thing new in biology which is going to be very interesting. So I come home I read my textbook, I go back in the morning and say to myself yes, I understand. So if the teacher is going to ask something, I would stand up and explain…but it is usually the case that the teacher just comes in, starts reading from a page..., sits down and goes back.* "
>
> *In-school young people are critical of teachers who don't perform their tasks satisfactorily. They have the opinion that teachers don't understand what it's like coming to school especially when life is very hard. To make things worse, students still receive harsh*

> *treatment. At times teachers might be having a bad day and they take it out on everyone. Students who receive such treatment, together with the experience of family problems, are often the first ones to drop out of school.*
>
> Source: Fiji Youth Consultation – A Discussion, 31 January–4 February, 2011

2.4.2. Young people who are illiterate

The right to education
The right to education is universal and applies to all children, young people and adults with disabilities. This right is enshrined in the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (1989) – Articles 28 and 29, which apply to young people up to age 18. The right to education is re-emphasised in significant, international declarations, such as the *World Declaration for Education for All* (1990) and the *Dakar Framework for Action* (2000).

The benefits of literacy
Lack of literacy is a major barrier to young people escaping poverty. A basic skill in literacy, such as the ability to write one's name, is not enough for most purposes. A working literacy is required. This refers to the reading, writing and numeracy skills needed to work effectively in a group or community (UNESCO 2005). Without basic literacy and numeracy skills, a young person's chances of finding paid work will be greatly reduced. Some degree of financial literacy, for example, is essential to manage savings and to make use of microfinance to startup a livelihood activity.

Literacy also has obvious benefits beyond economic ones. For example, there is a proven correlation between women's literacy and children's health, so improving basic literacy skills for women provides them with the ability to make use of information to improve the health and well-being of their children and themselves (WHO 2008a). A lack of working literacy also affects a young person's chances of participating in civic and political life and advocating for resources from government. Literacy makes is easier for the poor and excluded groups to take the necessary steps to ensure that their rights are not violated. These include the right to make decisions for themselves and their families, to use the legal system to protect themselves from illegal or unwarranted abuse and to participate in civic affairs to bring about social and political change (UNESCO 2002).

Numbers of young people who are not literate
In Papua New Guinea, it is estimated (2008) that one in three (34 per cent) of those aged 15–24 years are not literate. This refers in actual numbers to an estimated 450,000 young people in 2010 and this number is forecast to grow even larger, rather than decrease, by 2015 (UNESCO 2011: 274−277). In Solomon Islands, official figures show that 17 per cent of the youth population cannot read or write (2007) and in Vanuatu, it is 8 per cent (2007) (SPC 2011a). Unfortunately, most PICTs do not have recent data to report on the youth

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[16] Only 44 and 54 per cent respectively of Year 4 students were able to demonstrate literacy or numeracy.

literacy rate (UNESCO 2011: 274−277). However, basic data on literacy levels will be soon be available for countries which have recently carried out their census or will do so in 2011 or 2012.

Results from a simple test of literacy

Census results overestimate many young people's actual ability to read as they are based on the respondent's answer given to a simple question. Special surveys provide more accurate information because they ask respondents to read a sentence in the language of their choice. Table 4 presents the results of this basic literacy test from recent Demographic and Health Surveys for six countries. In Solomon Islands in 2007, over a quarter (26 per cent) males and nearly a third (32 per cent) females aged 15−29 years cannot read at all or can read only part of a sentence (Government of Solomon Islands 2006−2007 [17]).

In Marshall Islands, one in five (21 per cent) males aged 15−29 years cannot read at all or can read only part of a sentence. Of females in the same age group, just over one in ten (11 per cent) cannot read a full sentence or cannot read at all (Government of RMI 2007: 38−39[18]). In Samoa and Tuvalu respectively, seven per cent of males aged 15−29 years cannot read at all or can read only part of a sentence.

Table 4 also presents the literacy status of 15−19 year-olds, showing how the youngest post-school age group is faring. In three countries, Kiribati, Tuvalu and Solomon Islands, teenage males are more likely to be illiterate than the total youth age group of 15−29 year-olds. In Tuvalu, in particular, the situation facing teenage boys is worse than for the larger male youth age group. Over one in ten (12 per cent) teenage males are unable to read a whole sentence (Government of Tuvalu 2007: 31[19]). These results suggest for both the wider youth age group and the youngest age group that males in particular are having difficulty in acquiring or keeping their literacy and numeracy skills.

Table 4: Proportion of young people aged 15–29 years and 15–19 years in six Pacific countries and territories who cannot read at all or can only read part of a sentence, percentage of males and females in each age group, specific years, 2006–2009

	15–29 yrs		15–19 yrs	
DHS Country	**Male**	**Female**	**Male**	**Female**
Kiribati 2009	3.7*	3.6	5.5	2.6
Nauru 2007	3.7*	1.2	3.8	1.9
Marshall Islands 2007	20.8	11.3	21.1	11.5
Samoa 2009	6.9	1.6	8.4	1.2
Solomon Islands 2006–07	25.9	32.2	29.3	24.8
Tuvalu 2007	6.7	2.5	12.4	4.2

*excludes those who did not answer. If included as non-literate, the proportion of males 15−29 yrs in Nauru and Kiribati would rise to 7.5 and 5.9 per cent respectively

Source: DHS 2006−2007 Tables on literacy, women and men

2.4.3. Adolescent mothers as a disadvantaged group

Adolescent mothers are a disadvantaged youth group compared to their peers because the younger the adolescent giving birth, the greater the risk of her dying from complications and the lower the survival rate for her child. Also, teenage mothers are more likely than their peers to leave school early and experience poverty during their life-time. Adolescents under the age of 16 face four times the risk of maternal death compared with women over the age of 20. Babies born to adolescents face a 50 per cent higher risk of death than do babies born to older women. Adolescents who give birth when their own bodies are still developing have a higher chance of bearing low-birth weight babies, resulting in a higher risk of malnutrition, disease and death. Many countries with high adolescent birth rates also have high rates of infant mortality (WHO 2008b[20]).

Table A3 in Attachment 3 presents the most recent data for selected PICTs compared with Australia, Japan and New Zealand. The adolescent birth rate is highest in Marshall Islands (138 per 1,000) with a rate higher than Bangladesh (133) and or close to Laos (110), the countries with highest adolescent birth rates in the Asian region (ADB 2011). Then the rate drops for Nauru and Solomon Islands. In the middle range are: Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, Kiribati, Samoa, Federated States of Micronesia, Tokelau, Tuvalu and Cook Islands. At the bottom of the range, countries with the lowest adolescent birth rates are: Fiji, Tonga, Niue, and Palau, with rates better than New Zealand. Palau achieved the same rate as Australia.

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[17] Derived from Tables 3.3.1 & 3.3.2

[18] Derived from Tables 3.3.1 & 3.3.2

[19] Derived from Tables 3.4 & 3.5

[20] This publication deals with the health problems associated with adolescent childbearing include obesity, anemia, malaria, sexually transmitted infections, mental illness, unsafe abortion complications, and obstetric fistula.

A better understanding of who adolescent fertility involves is to look at the specific age the adolescent mothers gave birth. The 2007 Demographic and Health Survey of Marshall Islands shows that relatively few adolescents are pregnant at age 15, rising to one in ten pregnant at age 16, then increasing to nearly one in four at age 17, one in three at age 18 and nearly half at age 19 years. It is important to note also that the pregnancy rate for rural adolescents in Marshall Islands was double that of urban adolescents (Government of RMI 2007: 61).

As noted above, many countries with high adolescent birth rates also have high rates of infant deaths: Marshall Islands, Papua New Guinea, Nauru, Solomon Islands, Kiribati, Federated States of Micronesia and Tuvalu (ADB 2011). High adolescent birth rates also contribute to a country's high population growth. The following countries all have high fertility rates (total births per woman) of between 4.1 and 3.1: Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Tonga, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Tuvalu and Kiribati (ADB 2011).

The major differences in adolescent birth rates in PICTs show that it is possible for some governments and communities to set up the conditions and provide incentives that encourage adolescents to avoid pregnancy. There is considerable scope to identify and share good practices among countries. Long-term funding is needed to enable young people themselves to design and implement a large-scale campaign to reduce the incidence of teenage pregnancy, backed by appropriate support for teenagers who do get pregnant.

Youth consultations highlight the issue of teenage pregnancy

The high number of teenage pregnancies was a major issue raised in the youth consultations in the Cook Islands, New Caledonia, American Samoa, Samoa and Fiji. In the Cook Islands, this was identified as one of their most significant problems.

> *The problem of underage mothers is an obstacle, as many of these young women drop out of school to raise their children; not having a school degree, they cannot find jobs and become an economic burden on their parents, who are often in tight circumstances themselves.*
> Source: Report of Discussion Group N°4, young men 20−24 years of age, New Caledonia, 11 January 2011

> *The participants viewed teenage pregnancy as an issue at two levels: personal and social. At a personal level, teenage pregnancy is unplanned and unsafe; it is very expensive to care for a child when one does not have a stable source of income; a teenage mother is not mature and may lack an understanding of parenting. Some young mothers after giving birth return to school, but having to concentrate more on childcare often gets in the way of their school work. Girls from the outer islands who fall pregnant while attending high schools on Rarotonga often return home, signalling the end of their education. In some cases the young mothers don't feel good about themselves which might lead to abortion and suicide. At the social level, teenage pregnancy is frowned upon and at times the young mothers end up having strained relationships with their parents.*
> Source: Cook Islands Youth Consultations 7–11 March, 2011

> *Girls are not given enough information about the health issues associated with reproduction, which explains why so many find themselves pregnant. This raises problems: they have to bring up their children either alone and penniless, or within their families, which are themselves often short of money.*
> Source: Report of Discussion Group N°3 concerning girl school drop-outs under 20 years of age, New Caledonia, 27 January, 2011

> *Teenage pregnancy and other related issues such as being forced to marry the father of the child, or being a single parent and unable to provide for the baby's needs. This also puts a lot of pressure on parents as they have another child to support as most of the girls who get pregnant do not have a job. This can also lead to broken families and most young girls who end up in such situation come from broken families as well.*
> Source: Solomon Islands focus group discussion, female, 20–24 years old, out of school

Teenage births more likely to be unwanted

Teenagers are more likely to report that their birth was unwanted compared with women over the age of 20 years. Altogether, 62 percent of births to teenage mothers in the Marshall Islands were not wanted or not timely (43 percent unwanted and 19 percent wanted

later) (Government of RMI 2007: 109). These results indicate a considerable unmet demand for family planning assistance among adolescents.

> *There are existing awareness programs about the issue of teenage pregnancy. However, youths aren't listening to the messages nor do they care.*
>
> Source: Samoa Youth Consultations – A Discussion, 29 November−7 December 2010

> *The majority of the young people suggested that teenage pregnancy can be prevented with education programmes. Family education is important; parents need to be educated first to educate children. ...A young mother at the consultations attested to the absence of any sexual and reproductive health information as a contributing factor to her pregnancy. She stated:*
>
> " *I was curious. I have always heard; don't have sex but why not? My parents didn't explain the consequences, you get curious. No one talked me out of 'it'. It is common for old people not to talk to young people about sex, so young people like me go and experiment. The older generation need to find the courage to talk about sex to young people.* "
>
> Source: Cook Islands Youth Consultations 7−11 March 2011

> *Young people are of the view that these issues need to be discussed openly. This may even be more necessary when a teenager is pregnant. As a young person commented:*
>
> " *It's just sad to see a cousin of yours who's in school come and tell you herself, not even telling her parents that she's up.... if a young teenage girl has an incredible support system from home then it'll be okay. But we're talking about the majority who don't have support from home especially if you're a teenager, when you have big dreams and it's just gone like that…it's such a huge issue right now.* "
>
> Source: Fiji Youth Consultation − A Discussion, 31 January−4 February 2011

Forced sexual intercourse

Another aspect of adolescent pregnancy is forced sexual intercourse or rape. The consultations in Cook Islands, Fiji and Tahiti identified sexual abuse, sexual violence and rape as a major problem. A 2007 *Youth Risk Behavior Survey* for Marshall Islands shows that, as well as having the highest rate of adolescent pregnancy in the Pacific region, it also has a high incidence of teenage forced sexual intercourse compared to other PICTs. A quarter of female high school students in Marshall Islands had experienced 'dating violence' and a third had been physically forced to have sexual intercourse (Magna Systems 2009: 13).

The same survey also reveals that high proportions of female high school students in other PICTs had been physically forced to have sexual intercourse. In American Samoa, as many as a quarter of female high school students (26 per cent) had been 'ever physically forced to have sexual intercourse', in Palau it was 19 per cent, in the Northern Mariana Islands 18 per cent and Guam 17 per cent. These rates of teenage forced sexual intercourse are notably higher than the same survey results for female high school students in the USA (11 per cent) (Magna Systems 2009: 13).

> *According to the young people consulted, young girls are often the victims of sexual abuse and rape. In most cases this happens because young men can't take 'no' for an answer.*
>
> Source: Cook Islands Youth Consultations − A Discussion, 7−11 March 2011

> *With regard to abstinence, it is difficult to say 'no' because according to the young women, boys are very convincing. According to a young woman, "If we have to say no, we have to have a good reason".*
>
> Source: Fiji Youth Consultation − A Discussion, 31 January−4 February 2011

> *Barriers to addressing sexual abuse of children and young women lie predominantly with the protection of family pride. According to one young man: "This has to do with mothers…young girls are raped and mothers shut them down, they say that if you open your mouth you will get this…."*
>
> Source: Samoa Youth Consultations – A Discussion, 29 November−7 December 2010

> *The young people viewed protecting the family name as the biggest barrier to addressing the sexual abuse of young people. As one young person put it:*
>
> " *The biggest barrier is not talking about it, especially the shame it brings to the family, people don't say nothing, to protect themselves. But it affects the person in so many ways, in school and mentally. There is the need to break the silence.* "
>
> Source: Fiji Youth Consultation − A Discussion, 31 January−4 February 2011

2.5. Opportunity profile 3: Severely disadvantaged young people

The most disadvantaged young people are those whose situation is full of barriers which combine to restrict severely the range of life chances available to them. These young people run a great risk of living their lives in chronic poverty. They may have HIV and AIDS, or be physically or mentally impaired. However, the actual

impairment are often not the most important barrier they face. Greater difficulties can come from the lack of support they receive from their families and the wider community. They are also likely to experience the effects of direct discrimination by being denied their basic rights to access publicly funded services such as education and health care.

2.5.1. HIV and AIDS and young people

According to the joint UN programme on HIV/AIDS *Report on the Global Aids Epidemic 2010,* the size of the HIV epidemic in Oceania is significant only in Papua New Guinea. In 2008, there were 5,169 new HIV diagnoses reported in PICTs, with Papua New Guinea accounting for 98 per cent of these notifications. Moreover, the number of people living with HIV nearly doubled between 2001 and 2009 — from an estimated 28,000 to an estimated 57,000 (Figure 1) (SPC 2010: 1).
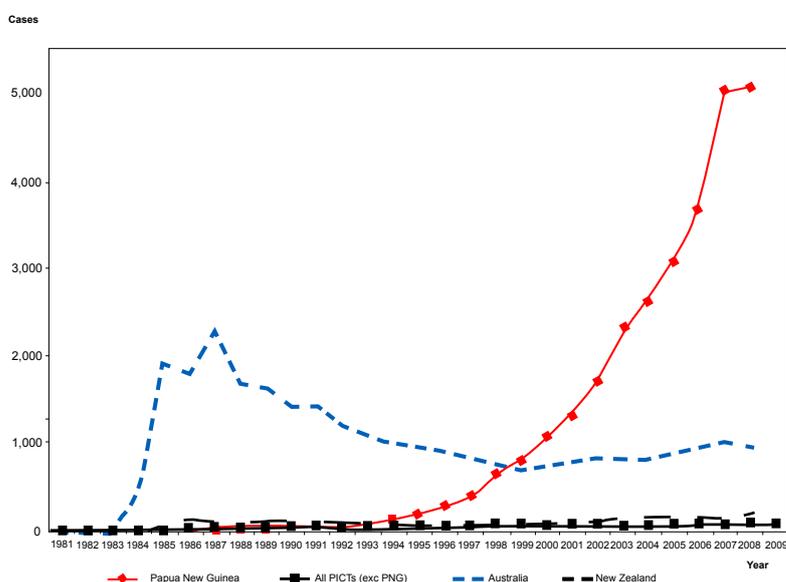
Figure 1: Annual reported HIV Cases: Papua New Guinea, Australia and New Zealand 1981–2008 and other PICTs 1981–2009 (SPC 2010)

This huge increase over time in Papua New Guinea is shown in Figure 2 (UNGASS 2010: 4). The reported prevalence rate for the age group 15–24 years in Papua New Guinea is high at nearly one in a hundred (0.79 per cent). The HIV epidemic in Papua New Guinea affects young women in particular, as unprotected heterosexual intercourse is the main mode of transmission. Three in five (59 per cent) cases of HIV are women with a median age 27 years and the peak reporting age is 20–24 years Commercial sex among mobile populations such as migrant workers, transport workers and military personnel is a major means of spreading the epidemic. Mother-to-child transmission of HIV is also a significant factor in Papua New Guinea, where nearly ten per cent of all people newly diagnosed with HIV have acquired it as babies (UNGASS 2010: 8). Figure 2 shows the greater increase in reported HIV infections among women in Papua New Guinea.
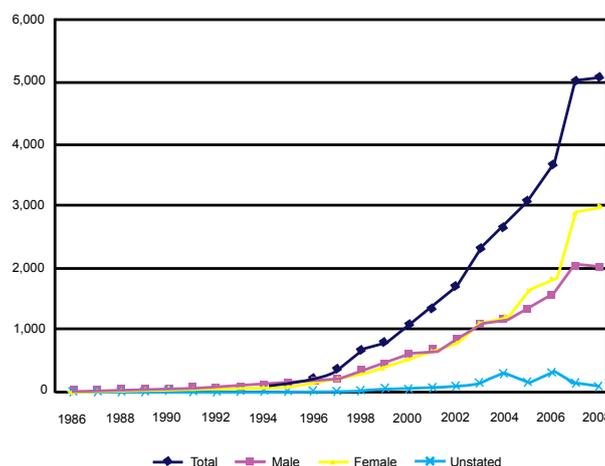
Figure 2: Number of annual HIV infections reported 1986 to 2008, Papua New Guinea

Young women with HIV & AIDS are particularly vulnerable to discrimination and have to live with the ever-present threat of physical violence. Research over a decade in a range of countries shows that violence against women is closely associated with HIV status, both as a cause and as a consequence. The research shows that the physical abuse of a woman feeds a vicious cycle, raising the risk of HIV infection as well as increasing the risk of exposure to further violence (WHO and UNAIDS 2010: 9−11).

Despite the HIV epidemic, few young people in Papua New Guinea (only one in five) in 2010 have a comprehensive knowledge of HIV & AIDS. High-risk sexual behaviour is also common: only two in five persons (39 per cent) aged 15−49 years who had more than one sexual partner in the last 12 months used a condom during their last intercourse (UNGASS 2010: 7; SPC 2011a). Elsewhere in the Pacific, the incidence of HIV is low, although it is probable that only a small number of cases are reported. However, these numbers may still be significant in small populations. In Tuvalu, 11 cases of HIV have been revealed by a recent survey, producing a high rate per head of population (The Age, 25 May 2010: 7).

In many countries, it is difficult to assess HIV incidence accurately because of under-reporting or individuals testing positive for the first time could have been infected many years previously. Moreover, a significant proportion of young people in the Pacific engage in high-risk sexual behaviour. A survey of youth in six PICTs found that 22 per cent had exchanged sex for money or a gift in the last year. The figure for Vanuatu is even higher, at 40 per cent. It is claimed that organised child prostitution networks and brothels exist in urban centres in Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Fiji (UNIFEM 2010: 2).

2.5.2. Disabled young people

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities states that 'persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in

society on an equal basis with others' (PIFS 2009: 4). A report on poverty in Fiji in 1997 found that many people with disabilities lived in poverty. The report also found that most disabled adults in Fiji had received only restricted formal education, their employment prospects were limited, very few services were able to meet their special needs, and they could qualify for financial assistance only if they were declared destitute (Government of Fiji & UNDP 1997 in JICA 2002a: 6).

Many individuals are born with a physical or mental disability, while others can become disabled later in life for a variety of reasons, including disease, chronic malnutrition, lack of adequate preventive health care and exposure to environmental pollutants. Other causes of disability that are increasingly common among young people world-wide are car and motor bike accidents, work accidents, inter-personal violence and wider social conflict (UNICEF 1999: 3−4; WHO 2007). Many mental health conditions appear during late adolescence or in the third decade of life.

Physical disabilities can refer to blindness (or a degree of visual impairment), deafness (or a degree of hearing impairment) and physical impairments that make it difficult to be mobile. Other disabilities are caused by life-threatening communicable illnesses such as HIV & AIDS and tuberculosis. By far the most common cause of disability in PICTs is disease, far ahead of other causes due to birth, accident or conflict. Factors contributing to this are the lack of treatment for chronic malaria and lack of vaccination in the past for diseases such as polio, tetanus, tuberculosis and hepatitis (WHO 2010; WHO 2011).

> *...young people with disabilities are generally looked down upon in society.*
> Source: Cook Islands Youth Consultations 7−11 March, 2011

Young people with HIV & AIDS experience sensory, physical and mental health impairments. They may also experience discrimination and be denied access to the services they need to prolong their life. An important subgroup of those with HIV & AIDS are the disabled. Disabled adolescents have a higher risk of getting HIV because they are often excluded from social activities, which lowers their self-esteem and makes it harder for them to learn to set boundaries about sexual behaviour (Gnoce 2005). A global survey shows that women with disability are up to three times more likely to be raped than non-disabled women (Gnoce 2005: 217). Boys and men with disability may run the same risk of rape and sexual abuse as disabled women. Many people with disabilities are physically unable to defend themselves; others must rely on attendants for part or all their physical care, making them vulnerable to sexual abuse (Gnoce 2005: 218).

> *The following were identified by young people in the Cook Islands as challenges to addressing the plight of young people with disabilities: limited mobility because of the absence of transportation for those with disabilities; most of the disabled continue to live in isolation and received very little specialised care; and there is not enough awareness on how to include them in mainstream society.*
> Source: Cook Islands Youth Consultations 7–11 March 2011

> *Young people with physical impairments often face discrimination in Fiji. According to one young person, "The more they are rejected by families and communities the more likely they are to attempt options like suicide." A young women gave an example of the hardships experienced by someone who is physically impaired in Fiji:*

> " *We have a friend who is in a wheel chair and because she is with us we see the hardship she goes through to get to certain places and the discrimination she faces in trying to get transport…people are not picking her up because of her disability…that is her right to move around…accessibility to building and things like that.* "
> Source: Fiji Youth Consultation − A Discussion, 31 January−4 February 2011

Young people with disabilities the world over are socially isolated, face discrimination and denied access to services that are available to most other young people (Gnoce 2005: 218). As the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, Article 23, highlights, adolescents with disabilities have the right to a full and decent life, to ensure dignity, self-reliance and active participation in their community. They have the right to education, training and preparation for life skills and employment. They also have the right to access health services, rehabilitation services and recreation facilities; and the right to special care and assistance, appropriate to their condition. Access to these services should be provided in a way that ensures their dignity, promotes self-reliance and makes it easy for disabled young people to be active members of their community. The goal should be to enable disabled young people to achieve full social integration; this should also include their cultural and spiritual development (UNICEF, 1999).

Protecting and promoting the rights of disabled young people is not only about providing disability-related services. It is also about adopting measures to change attitudes and behaviours that make outcasts of the disabled. This requires putting in place the policies, laws and programmes that remove barriers and guarantee the exercise of civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights by persons with disabilities. To achieve a genuine exercise of rights, the policies, laws and programmes that limit rights need to be replaced (UNOHCHR 2010).

Fiji adopted the following definition of disability after an extensive community consultation process.

> People with disabilities are those who cannot fully partici-pate in everyday life and society effectively, due to environmental and attitudinal barriers, as well as owing to physical, psycho-social, sensory and other impairments and who, because of their lack of inclusion in village life and society generally, do not enjoy their full human rights as citizens and participants in communities and families (Government of Fiji 2006, cited in Wilkinson 2009: 19).

In 2003, Pacific Islands Forum leaders endorsed the *Biwako Millennium Framework for Action: Towards an Inclusive, Barrier-free and Rights-based Society for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific* (BMF). The agreement sets out priority areas and strategies to promote such a society (Wilkinson 2009: 19). One of the Framework's targets has a specific youth focus: 'By 2010, at least 75 per cent of children and youth with disabilities of school age will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling' (ANU 2009: 138).

By 2009, seven Pacific Island countries (Cook Islands, Kiribati, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu) had developed national disability policy statements using the BMF model to guide the policy development process. As of 2009, four governments have formally endorsed the policy and two have committed additional resources to implement the policy (Wilkinson 2009: 19). The Pacific Disability Forum is a key regional organisation promoting and facilitating much of the regional cooperation and policy development on disability related concerns. The members are Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

The numbers of disabled young people
It is difficult to ascertain how many young people in the Pacific experience some form of disability. Census results and national surveys do not provide an accurate picture as definitions of disability vary, national survey samples are often too small, and interviewers are not trained adequately (PIFS 2009: 6). However, the World Health Organization (WHO) has estimated, based on available data, that 12.4 percent of the world's population has a moderate long-term disability and 2.9 per cent have a severe disability (WHO 2008c: 34). However, disability rates rise strongly with age, from five per cent in children aged 0−14 years, to 15 per cent in adults aged 15−59 years, and 46 per cent in adults aged 60 years and older. Moreover, at all ages, both moderate and severe levels of disability are higher in low and middle-income countries than in high-income countries (WHO 2008c: 34). The disability rate is also higher for women (ILO 1989).

The Table A4 in Attachment 4 applies these WHO disability rates to the youth population of the Pacific. The youth population estimates are presented for each country and territory as well as sub-region. The figures have been derived using a WHO-estimated disability rate of ten per cent and a severe disability rate of three per cent (WHO 2008c: Figure 19).[21] These estimates suggest that some 193,000 young people aged 15−24 years in the Pacific region are disabled, and about 58,000 young people are severely disabled. Melanesia accounts for most of these disabled young people. These estimates are confirmed by other age-specific data for Fiji and Tonga (FNCDP 2010: 20; Government of Tonga, 1999 in JICA 2002b).[22] However, not only are actual data on the incidence of disability among young people scarce or non-existent, also missing is information about their literacy rate, level of education attainment or access to basic health care compared with their peers.

> *Discrimination against those with mental illness is considered by young people a major issue. This stems from generational labelling and the stigmatisation of those who appear to be different in society. This was articulated by two young members of the Youth Champs for Mental Health, an organisation that works on raising awareness about mental illness.*
>
> " *I think it's something that you learn when you grow up… it's something that you see and you hear. When you grow up you get older and you understand issues like this, until and unless you are involved in workshops and you're able to be there then you're like 'oh wow this is an amazing place!' people come and get better, I think the mindset is always like that because it's with you when you're little.* "
>
> Source: young person, focus group discussion. 31 January 2011, Fiji
>
> *It's sort of integrated into everyday life. People tend to look at the victims differently even in the village, I'm sorry to say, but they get locked there, it's from that young age, these people are not like us, they are not normal, they are labelled.*
>
> Source: young person, focus group discussion 31 January 2011, Fiji

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[21] These two disability rates are based on estimates for 20-year-olds living in a low and middle income country, not in Africa, using Figure 19: Estimated prevalence of moderate and severe disability by region, sex and age, global burden of disease estimates for 2004.

[22] A baseline survey of Fiji National Council for Disabled Persons in 2010 identified 1,346 teenagers aged 14–19 years and 982 young adults aged 20–30 years who are disabled. This is less than the estimate of 4,667 severely disabled young people aged 20–24 years for Fiji. However, the survey did not cover all areas in Fiji. The 1999 Census for Tonga identified as disabled 463 aged 15–19 years and 404 aged 20–24 years, a total of 867 which is more than the estimate of severely disabled for 2010 (608) but less than the total estimate of disabled (2,028) for Tonga in 2010.

Analysis of another factor that affects all young people and that cuts across the three opportunity profiles is that of geographical location. This has a large impact on young people's access to opportunities and resources. A key reason urban areas develop is to concentrate resources. This advantage attracts even more resources so that, over time, large differences in access to services emerges in favour of those living in towns. The rapid growth in urban centres in all PICTs over the last 40 years has made it much easier, for young people in particular, to access senior secondary schools, tertiary education, high-quality health care, and improved water and sanitation services, as well electricity, mobile phones, television, live entertainment and employment opportunities. Even those with little or no basic education still have a better chance of getting work in a town than they have in the rural economy (Rallu 2007: 8−9).

Urban life also offers young people freedom from the constraints of village life and the wielders of traditional authority. These urban attractions are particularly appealing to young people in rural areas who, more than any other age group, respond by moving to town. This makes rural living seem dull and devoid of opportunities for those who stay behind.
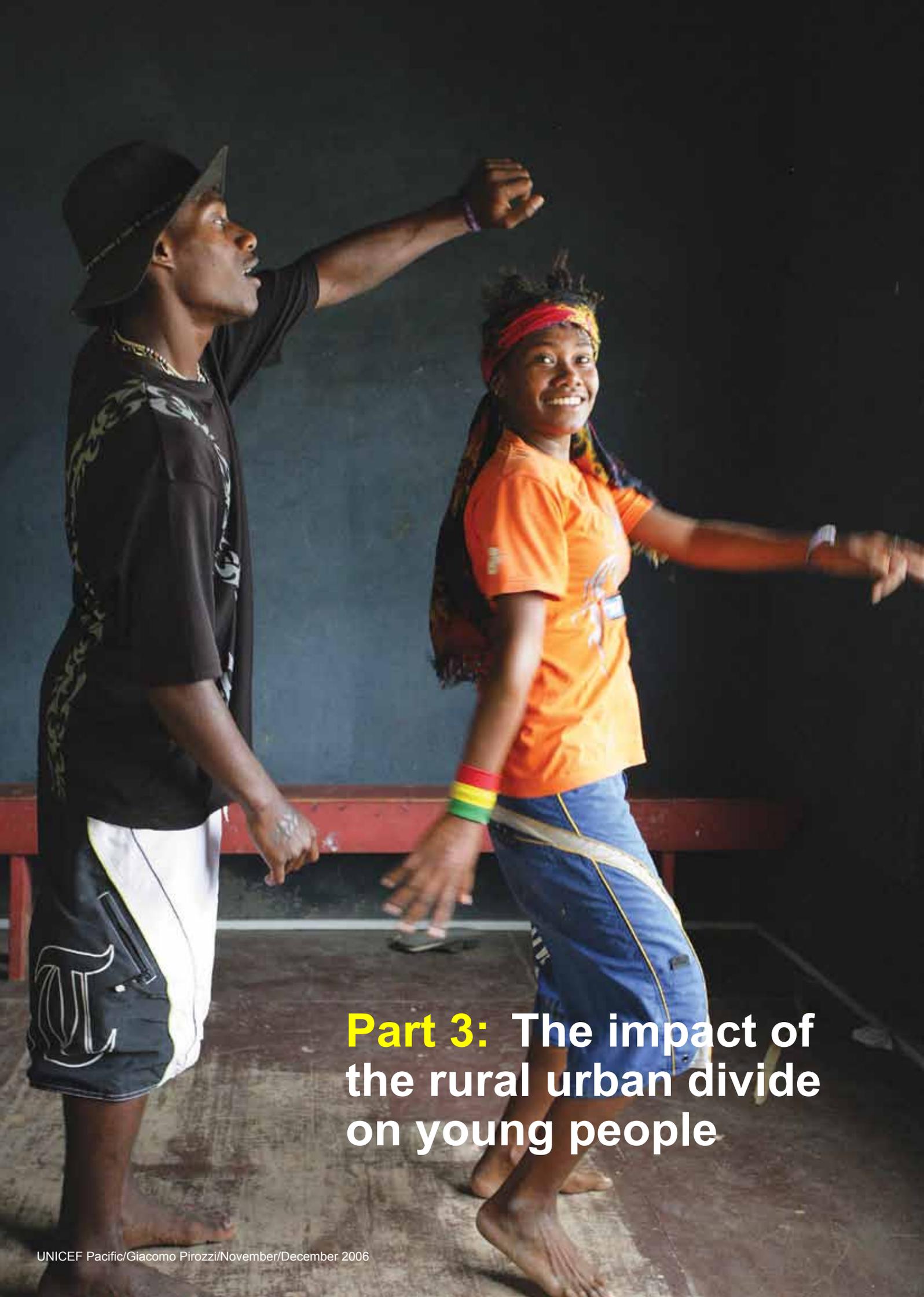
Part 3: The impact of the rural urban divide on young people

3.1. Emerging new urban youth identity

Many young people are attracted to the freedom of an urban youth culture and the chance to forge a new sense of personal identity. They are able to choose friends and social networks based on common interests and activities. However, many young people also want to keep their traditional values. So, in common with young people in other developing countries, they forge dual identities, switching from one to the other as the setting permits or encourages (Curtain 2006: 436). One identity is based on a culture of practices, styles and beliefs about freedom of choice and the rights of the individual. This identity is fostered by secondary and tertiary education, and is reinforced by the media, especially television, movies and the internet. The other identity is based on local traditions of family and community. Most young people in the Pacific, like their peers in Africa, Asia and Latin America, are concerned about protecting their unique cultures and way of life (Curtain 2006: 436−437).

The old and the new

The survival of traditional and cultural values is more critical in urban centres. Many young people equate urban life with 'freedom' and a release from the expectations of rural and island life. In urban centres, western values and ideals take precedence over traditional values and expectations and this can be more so for many young people who have never been to their 'place' of origin and who do not maintain any links with their traditional kinship group.

However, youth delegates at the 2009 Pacific Youth Festival did highlight the importance of traditional values and cultures to young people living in urban centres. At a regional level, young people's participation at events like the Festival of Pacific Arts contributes to their awareness, connection and the regeneration of their traditions and cultures.

Such initiatives show what can be done to mitigate the disintegration of traditional values and practices. These initiatives further illustrate that young people of the Pacific can, with the necessary support, adapt well to globalisation. Perhaps local initiatives of cultural awareness and adaptations in the home, schools, churches and communities need to be shared as examples of best practice to avoid the spread of a global culture that is in total contrast to 'traditional' culture.

The Fijian youth consultations noted that many young, rural people experience culture shock when they come to town. They are said to lose track of what they are there to do: whether it is to study or work. Other young people want to escape traditional obligations and customs that they see as not fitting in with living in a more open society, as the following statement from a Solomon Island consultation shows:

Culture – people use it to promote gender inequality, like in the village, girls are not allowed to go to school because they are expected to help the mother in the garden. Culture also does not recognise youth, young people are not allowed to participate in important development matters and decisions that affect their lives.

Source: Solomon Islands focus group discussions, Form 4 students, females, 15−20 years, 4 November 2010, Saint Nicolas Secondary School

Urban centres did not exist in the Pacific before the colonial era so, of their very nature, they are places which are forging a new culture, based on a mix of imported and traditional values. Often there is a clash of values. People imbued with a culture based on the needs of small, close-knit communities, dependent on frequent group activity for survival, have to make sense of life in an urban society where the mutual obligations are not clearly spelt out and are easy to evade. For some young people, this evolving and uncertain situation can be liberating. For parents, the challenges thrown up by urban living to traditional family structures causes confusion and generates strong tensions within the household. This can often result in extreme behaviour involving alcohol and drug abuse, and for some can lead to attempted suicide or death.

> A short walk on the streets of Suva reveals a new youth culture, steeped in baseball hats, popular music and the joys of urban life. The Village Six cinema, the many night-clubs and video/CD outlets are prospering. Many boys and girls are fashion conscious, wear the latest clothes and carry mobile phones. The pressure on young people to participate in this materialism and display is as powerfully played out in Fiji as elsewhere (PCD−F, FSM, FSPI, 2005: 17).

Urbanisation in the Pacific has allowed young people to 'live' and 'act' out new identities. New urban youth cultures are lived out in the identities and activities of street children and shoeshine boys in Fiji, rascals in Papua New Guinea and Masta Liu in Solomon Islands (Chevalier 2000; Vakaoti 2007). Other Pacific Island countries are also seeing the emergence of youth sub-cultures with their own urban spaces. However, these youth groups are viewed by mainstream society as a problem and not as meaningful actors in their own right.

Nevertheless, Pacific urban spaces today are far more youth friendly than in the past and offer young people the opportunity to form and exist as sub-cultures in their own right. In more developed urban centres of the Pacific, there is a proliferation of urban youth cultures, evidenced in young people's consumption patterns and indulgence in popular culture. In Solomon Islands, there is growing acknowledgement of the identity of urban 'teenager', "whose life is far removed from the lives of their parents at the same age and also from that of their rural peers" (Donnelly and Jiwanj 2010:72).

Political conflicts in some Pacific countries have had far reaching implications for young people and their sense of identity. This is most evident in the case of the Solomon Islands 'tensions' of the late 1990s and early 2000s, which involved many child and youth combatants. In the post 'tension' era, these former young combatants have been left all on their own. Many are neither in school nor employed and now channel their once acknowledged zeal and power into growing gang-related lawless behaviour (Donnelly and Jiwanji 2010: 40).

Some of these young people, who grew up in the poorer neighbourhoods of Noumea, are searching for their cultural identity. Living in such an environment, they lose their cultural references and experience a malaise which they find difficult to overcome.

Source: Report of Discussion Group N°2 concerning school drop-outs under 20 years of age, New Caledonia

The highest level of education provided by outer islands schools [in the Cook Islands] is Grade 10. Because high schools do not offer boarding facilities, young people moving to Rarotonga are often billeted with relatives and families. This experience of leaving with host families for the purpose of attaining an education has not been a good experience for many. A young woman who had just completed high school had this to say:

" *At home I am used to being spoilt. When I came here I felt like a servant. It is not like how you live with your parents. Here they like to talk about you more then their kids…After school I have to work, I am usually tired….the best time to do my school work is one o'clock in the morning because that is when everyone else is asleep.* "

Source: Cook Islands Youth Consultations 7–11 March, 2011

The case of 'billeted children and young people', has often escaped scrutiny in the past. A few studies (Mills and Davies 1998; UNICEF 2005; Vakaoti 2007) have highlighted the risks and implications of children being billeted with adults. With growing urbanisation and rural-urban disparities, more children and young people are moving into billeted arrangements. Research therefore, needs to focus on their experiences of living away from home because evidence suggests that billeted children and young people have an increased risk of deserting their host families and finding solace and comfort on the streets (UNICEF 2005; Vakaoti 2007).

3.2.   The downsides of urban life

Urban life has its downsides for young people. In the major urban areas, big differences between the rich and the poor are all too evident, especially compared with village life. These differences affect the quality of schooling and access to community facilities such as sporting and recreational outlets. Congested and often unsanitary living conditions for those on low incomes are a major threat to health and well-being. Urban life in many Pacific countries can be threatening and often violent. A survey of high school students in Marshall Islands, for example, highlighted a significant reason why children did not go to school was because they felt unsafe at school or on their way to and from school in the past 30 days. (Magna Systems 2009: 15).

Violence was often a result of the use of alcohol and drugs; resorting to theft was often due to being unable to find a job and having no money.

Source: Focus group discussion 1 & 2 − youth 20−24 years old, men and women out-of-school. 14 December 2010. Papeete, Tahiti

Young people made the observation that there was a link between drug and alcohol abuse and increasing violence and crime.

Source: Samoa youth consultations – A discussion, 29 November−7 December 2010

Unemployment among the young tends to lead to delinquency, particularly in the low-income neighbourhoods of Noumea. This trend is getting worse. Gangs of youths have been formed, and roam the city. According to the young participants in the group, this is a consequence of a system that doesn't know how to tackle the problems encountered by such youths.

Report of Discussion Group N°2 concerning male school drop-outs under 20 years of age, 11 January 2011, New Caledonia

Many parents set their children a poor example. Alcohol abuse and domestic violence are very common, ruining family harmony. The young are well aware that these behaviour patterns are the consequence of difficult living conditions (job insecurity, unemployment, cultural uprooting, crowded living quarters, etc.). Children and parents suffer from these conditions, and this encourages people to turn to drinking and marijuana smoking.

Source: Report of discussion Group N°3 concerning female school drop-outs under 20 years of age. 27 January 2011, New Caledonia

3.2.1   Urban poverty

Poverty in urban areas is not only caused by a lack of income. It is also caused by inadequate access to low-cost public transport, good schools and health care and land for food gardens or cash crops (Abbott & Pollard 2004: 8−12). It is common for large urban households to be dependent on one or two wage earners whose incomes are often not enough to cover all the costs of urban living such as electricity bills, school fees and community obligations. In the absence of a system of government-funded social protection, urban residents have to rely on informal social networks for support. However, if household income levels are low, those in need are not able to get enough support.

A particular problem highlighted in the consultations is the precarious position of teenagers who come to town to stay with relatives to get better access to schooling. They are often not properly cared for, having to seek out sources of income in the informal sector, which often means missing school or dropping out altogether (Copland & Roberts 2010: 7).[23]

As noted above, young people who are not in school and unemployed make up a large number of the non-child dependants within an urban household. The result is that, in many urban areas in the Pacific, the incidence of poverty is just as high or higher than it is in rural areas. Based on now dated evidence, the incidence of urban poverty ranges from near to one in four persons in Samoa, Tonga and Tuvalu to more than one in four in Fiji and the Federated States of Micronesia and as much as half of the urban population in Kiribati (Abbott & Pollard 2004: 28).[24]

> *...young people see their peers who are not employed and hanging around so they also join them and cause them not to be bothered to find a job. They enjoy staying at home and hang out with their friends during the day and night. Some young people also depend a lot on their parents and as long as they are fed and clothed, they feel that they do not need to find a job.*
>
> *Low-self esteem also affects young people, young people feel that they are not qualified or fit to apply or find jobs. They feel that they do not have the qualification to be accepted if they apply.*
> Source: Solomon Islands focus group discussion, females 20–24 years old, out of school
>
> *Youth issues/problems: Family problems which result in youth getting involved in illegal activities. No support from parents due to family problems.*
> Source: Focus group discussions, Form 4 boys, St. Nicolas Secondary School

3.2.2. Alcohol and drug abuse

While urban life offers freedom from traditional constraints and controls, without a regular source of income, it offers few chances to exercise choice. One of the benefits of urban life is the easy availability of alcohol. Most youth consultations highlighted alcohol abuse as a major problem. It was noted as a problem for young people in Cook Islands, by each of the five different groups of young people in New Caledonia and Tahiti (out of school youths under 20, and 20–24 year-olds, male and female), American Samoa and Samoa. Survey data for 2007 confirm this finding about young people and alcohol abuse for other countries; binge drinking is common in Micronesia. Between one quarter and one fifth of high

school students in American Samoa, Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, the Marshall Islands and Palau admitted that they had had five or more alcoholic drinks in a row in the past 30 days (Magna Systems 2009: 22).[25]

> *Alcohol and marijuana abuse are among the obstacles to change; a young generation which is under the influence of alcohol and marijuana cannot be productive; alcohol and marijuana contribute to the risks of road accidents, leaving many young people maimed or paralysed, a great burden on the budget of the community's health services.*
> Source: Report of Discussion Group N°4 concerning young men 20–24 years of age, 11 January 2011, New Caledonia
>
> *According to the participants, alcohol, marijuana and tobacco are very much in use among young Kanaks and Pacific Islanders, more so than among other communities. Unemployed youths are particularly vulnerable to this problem. The girls consume as much alcohol and marijuana as the boys, particularly in low-income neighbourhoods.*
> Source: Report of Discussion Group N°3 concerning girl school drop-outs under 20 years of age, 27 January 2011 New Caledonia
>
> *Marijuana and Kwaso (homebrewed alcohol). This is a big problem in the community here [Solomon Islands] as young people are involved in producing kwaso and selling it... Easy access to alcohol – this is also another thing that causes young people to take alcohol and causes problems such as fighting in the community. There are some black market outlets here and because Kwaso is brewed here in the community, young people can easily get alcohol.*
> Source: Solomon Islands focus group discussion, female 20–24 years old, out of school

According to those consulted, many young people in the Cook Islands consume alcohol, including those under the legal age of 18 years. A major reason is that alcohol is cheap and most shops sell it. According to the participants, alcohol consumption amongst young people results in the high rate of unprotected sex and sexually transmitted infections. Alcohol abuse is also responsible for many motorcycle accidents causing death and injury. According to some participants, young people drive recklessly on their motorcycles when they are intoxicated.

In Noumea, a gang culture is said to encourage the use of alcohol and marijuana and poverty exacerbates the problem. It was claimed that alcohol abuse is common in the housing projects where many young Kanaks and Pacific Islanders live. According to the focus group participants, alcohol-related street fights are frequent, causing a great deal of distress to the other inhabitants of the neighbourhood. Alcohol abuse was also identified as a cause of domestic violence. A young women aged 20–24 years in New Caledonia noted: 'The problem of

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[23] Families hosting multiple children face challenges in coping and attempting to organise the household economy. Hosted children are sometimes engaged in informal labour and removed from school at times of particular economic hardship.

[24] Based on the population below the basic needs poverty line in urban & rural areas. As noted in Footnote 5, the proportion of the urban population in poverty is higher than in rural areas in Fiji (1990/91), Kiribati (1996), Samoa (2002), Tonga (2002) and Tuvalu (1994).

[25] Chart 17: Marshall Islands – 27 per cent, Northern Mariana Islands – 26 per cent, Palau – 23 per cent, Guam – 19 per cent and American Samoa – 18 per cent

alcohol in the family is an obstacle to change, as it results in domestic violence against mothers and children; the children are traumatised, fail at school and slide into abuse of all kinds'.

> *Many parents give their children a poor example. Alcohol abuse and domestic violence are very common, ruining family harmony. The young are well aware that these behaviour patterns are the consequence of difficult living conditions (job insecurity, unemployment, cultural uprooting, crowded living quarters, etc.). Children and parents suffer from these conditions, and this encourages people to turn to drinking and marijuana smoking. Problems of domestic violence and alcohol are ruining the home atmosphere, fostering feelings insecurity.*
>
> Source: Report of Discussion Group N°3 concerning girl school drop-outs under 20 years of age, 27 January, 2011, New Caledonia

3.2.3.   *Youth suicide and attempted suicide*

A separate but related issue is youth suicide. A survey of high school students of countries in the north Pacific showed that over one in four respondents in four countries said they had attempted suicide in the past 12 months.[26] This compares with a US rate of only seven per cent (Magna Systems 2009: 20).

Suicide continues to exist as an issue of concern for the young people of the Pacific. The State of Pacific Youth 2005 noted that suicide rates are high in Pacific compared to other parts of the world, although trends are difficult to identify because of under-reporting. There is no known recent study of youth suicide in the Pacific. However, young people themselves have identified this as an issue of concern, linking it with mental illness. Contributing factors continue to grow in complexity with change, urbanisation and development.

According to the young people consulted in the Cook Islands, most youth suicides are related to relationship and family problems. Specifically, family problems often stem from the lack of communication and understanding between parents and young people. In American Samoa, out-of-school young people identified youth suicide as a major problem. In identifying the reasons for suicide, one young person said, 'It is quite a sensitive issue but top notch in terms of causes is relationship problems, when they feel unwanted and rejected.' In Samoa, those consulted offered the following reasons for why they thought their peers attempted and committed suicide. These were: changing values; unhealthy family relationships; and young people's inability to deal with frustration, anger and shame.[27]

In Fiji, the young people consulted identified suicide as an issue. They noted that suicide in most cases stems from relationship issues. As one young person put it, 'Relationship problems are a big issue for young people. I think when you get older you think differently but for young people when they break up; it's like the end of the world…that's the issue.' It was also mentioned that there is an ethnic element to youth suicide. Young Indo-Fijians are considered to be most at risk.[28]

3.3.   **The impact of climate change on young people**

A 2010 report on climate change adaptation assessment for the Asia-Pacific Region noted that, in the Pacific, in addition to the impact on people's livelihoods and natural resources, urban areas in particular are vulnerable: 'In an increasingly urbanised Pacific, with many people residing in informal settlements, under very crowded conditions, poor housing and limited access to basic amenities, climate change is expected to place a major burden on an already stressed urban management' (USAID 2010: 27). The following assessment of the impact of climate change on young people by the President of Kiribati highlights the nature of the impact:

> For adolescents in the Republic of Kiribati, climate change is not up for debate – it is real and it is happening now. Our young people feel its impact whenever high tides flood their houses; they taste its effects as their drinking water becomes salty. Rising sea levels, which have already brought pools of brackish water to the doorsteps of many homes, are consuming our tiny islets, contaminating our vegetable gardens and poisoning our freshwater wells (Tong 2011: 47).

Climate change was also identified as an issue by the young people consulted in Fiji. While the discussions did not make any immediate mention of the issue in Fiji, the young people were conscious of climate change and its impact in the region. Some young people suggest that their peers need to be informed about the causes and implications of climate change. Possessing relevant information will allow young people to make responsible decisions. A participant in the Fiji consultation described why climate change should be taken seriously, especially by young people:

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[26] The countries surveyed were: American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Marshall Islands, and Palau.
[27] Samoa Youth Consultations 29 November–7 December, 2010.
[28] Fiji Youth Consultation − A Discussion, 31 January−4 February, 2011

Climate change in the Pacific for young people should be a priority because it's happening right now…I think it's a threat to national security as well…in terms of like Tuvalu right now you can see it, the effects of it happening…you watch documentaries about it. Their leader is pleading with world leaders and they not really…they have a say on it but they are not concerned. As Pacific Islanders we should talk to our neighbours…because it's going to happen, back in the days it was a myth or a legend but climate change is real and it is a threat to national security just like terrorism is.

Source: Fiji youth consultation – a discussion, 31 January−4 February, 2011

A 2010 report on *Climate Change and Children in the Pacific Islands* commissioned by UNICEF Pacific quotes Tarusila Bradburgh from the Pacific Youth Council saying: 'I think there is a certain group of young people who understand, but a large group who do not understand.' The report noted that some young people have good access to information, either through their schools or through youth forum attendance. However, it concluded that a large number of young people do not understand or are even unaware of the issue. This was felt to be the case, especially for rural and outer island youth.

The report offers details of young people's involvement in climate change activities and advocacy in the Pacific. However, it was noted that young people who had had the chance to travel to conferences to advocate for climate change often felt frustrated at the lack of resources they had for follow-up activities. This was the case for the youth delegates to the Copenhagen Climate Change Conference, sponsored by UNICEF Pacific. Another young climate activist in Fiji is quoted as saying: 'There is a lack of funds for youth initiatives. If we initiate a project, we have to cut out 90 per cent of what we want to do because we don't have any funds. We rely on [our own] human resources.'

Part 4: Proposed strategies

It has not been possible to offer country-specific recommendations, due to the large number of countries and territories (22) involved, with their widely differing physical, economic and social conditions. However, it is possible to propose some principles and strategies to guide governments, multilateral agencies and donors in how they might set policy in relation to young people.

The following proposed strategies are grouped under three broad clusters: (1) governance issues related to young people, (2) data collection and analysis of the obstacles young people face in their youth transition, and (3) the need to mobilise more resources for young people and for more investment in young people as key assets.

Strategies relating to governance include the need from regional organisations and agencies to adopt a more coordinated approach, to align better their youth-related objectives, and show a stronger commitment to addressing the needs of young people identified in this report. In particular, regional agencies need to pay closer attention to ensuring that youth needs are reflected in their sectoral strategies as well as implementing specific strategies on key youth issues.

Strategies relating to data collection and analysis involve the need to adopt a set of key youth measures, to produce youth-in-transition profiles from census data and to conduct ongoing national surveys of young people, with a particular focus on how they fare once they enter the labour market. Specific data also needs to be collected about the most disadvantaged young people so that youth development support can be directed at their specific needs.

Strategies to mobilise more resources for and greater investment in young people require both increasing the funds for existing youth activities as well as funding new initiatives. In particular, a proposal for a regional youth fund is outlined.

4.1. Governance issues: the need for a more coordinated approach focused on youth transition

The State of Pacific Youth 2005 pointed out that issues relating to young people in the Pacific are often treated by governments and others in a stand-alone manner, unconnected to other issues. That report highlighted how governments and regional agencies focussed on high-profile youth problems, rather than seeking to look deeper and address the underlying causes of the problems. Funding is often made available to help young people after a problem has shown itself, but not to developing a comprehensive preventive strategy. For example, pregnant teenagers are provided with assistance but little is done to work out what causes teenage pregnancies in the first place and how best to reduce their incidence.

Governments, donors and regional agencies need to adopt a more coordinated approach to youth issues by aligning more closely their youth-related objectives. They also need to show a stronger commitment to addressing the needs of young people by monitoring, evaluating and reporting regularly on how successful their programmes have been.

A public policy perspective requires going beyond viewing 'youth problems' as isolated issues, unconnected to other events affecting young people. The transition to adulthood is better understood as a series of interconnected events in the efforts of young people to stand on their own feet in their communities, given the assets they have and the opportunities available to them. This requires identifying and addressing the obstacles young people face in making a successful move from dependence to independence. This report has shown how the youth transition differs, not between countries, but between young people with different levels of education and access to other public services. In other words, young people with similar characteristics, regardless of the country they live in, are likely to encounter a common set of obstacles.

Governments, regional agencies and donors need to adopt the youth transition as a specific focus for policy and programmes, distinct from but closely tied to sectoral strategies in education, health and agriculture. Rather than focusing on improving the performance of existing institutions in these sectors, key stakeholders need to focus on finding out how individual young people are coping with inter-connected difficulties and supporting them in an appropriate way. The difficulties are those they face when, with little or no support, they have to find work, locate suitable accommodation, form new relationships, learn how to manage new health risks and gain access to politicians to have their voices heard.

Once young people leave school, they may be left on their own, with little or no information about where the jobs are and how best to approach employers. They are also often overlooked by providers of health or agricultural support services as a target group because they are no longer living in their parental home, are mobile and have few assets. A youth-in-transition focus requires that governments, donors and regional agencies pay closer attention to ensuring that young people interconnected set of needs are addressed in their sectoral strategies.

4.2. Governance issues: the need for specific strategies on key youth issues

As *The State of Pacific Youth 2005* noted, much of the expenditure by governments and others on young people addresses the symptoms only, avoiding the larger investment needed to implement long-term preventative strategies. Governments need to work out, in consultation with young people, carefully-thought-out strategies.

Examples of youth-related key strategies needed are:

- a youth employment strategy for each of the three groups of young people identified in the opportunity profiles, encompassing school-to-work links, access to work in high-income neighbouring countries, second-chance options for school drop-outs and access to basic, secondary and further education for the disabled;
- a strategy to improve learning outcomes at each level of the education system, based on simple outcome measures, carried out regularly by a third party and made available to parents and students;
- a strategy to improve the literacy levels of young people, with a focus on school-leavers with little or no literacy, providing them with financial literacy and livelihood options in the informal sector;
- a strategy to give opportunities to young people to engage with their communities by providing support for volunteer activities though non-governmental organisations such as the Red Cross;
- a strategy to improve the lives and livelihoods of disabled young people based on identifying, measuring and achieving specific targets in relation to literacy, access to health care, education attainment, mobility and the capacity to earn an independent livelihood.

4.3.   Governance issues: the need to scale up existing youth activities

The consultations and interviews conducted for this report provided some examples of youth-focused initiatives. However, governments' and donors' levels of expenditure on youth-specific programmes remain small-scale. Small projects with time-limited funding have a place in demonstrating the need for a specific intervention, but they need to be expanded if they are to be part of a wider strategy and if independent evaluations have shown they are cost-effective.

Census or other nation-wide data need to be used to identify the overall size of a specific target population for an intervention. This will allow specific targets for programme penetration to be set so that, over a specified time, most of the target population can be reached. For example, a programme to address the literacy needs of out-of-school youth needs first to work out its target population in terms of their level of literacy. This requires finding out how many have little or no literacy, how many have basic literacy and how many have a Year 9 level of literacy, and setting targets to reach each of these groups.

4.4.   Data collection and analysis: a proposed set of key youth measures

Major gaps in the available data on young people in the Pacific pose one of the biggest challenges to promoting their rights. If a key, youth-related issue cannot be measured and progress monitored, governments and donors will not take the matter seriously. The absence of up-to-date and reliable information about the youth-related Millennium Development Goal targets may be one reason for the lack of apparent improvement in the situation of young people in the Pacific since 2005.

This report has repeatedly pointed to the lack of any data and the lack of recent data on young people in the Pacific. This applies particularly to information about the delivery of key government services such as primary, secondary and tertiary education completion rates. Also missing is information about the learning outcomes of students at the end of primary school, and at the end of Years 9 and 12. Also unknown is what happens in terms of labour market outcomes to those who complete secondary school, vocational training and university. Information is also needed about the size and literacy status of the out of school youth population. Information on the type and incidence of disability by age is needed, as well as the literacy rate, levels of educational attainment, and access to health care of the disabled population.

Indicators are also needed to identify gaps and track progress in services for young people (UNICEF 2011: 63). Measures are needed of the population's age-specific access to health care facilities and improved water and sanitation. This information needs to be available by sex, five-year age groups, geographic location and household asset base. Not least, information is needed on the nature and level of young people's participation in community activities and the political process. The following are proposed as key measures of youth progress in the Pacific.

Employment

1.   The full-time employment rate for young people, male and female, whether disabled, aged 20−24 years not-in-full-time-education compared with 25−29 year-olds and 30−34 year-olds, on a yearly basis;

2.   The full-time employment rate for young people, male and female, whether disabled, aged 20−24 years who have completed either (1) senior secondary (high) school, (2) post-secondary vocational training or (3) a university degree; six months after the end of each school year;

3.   The youth jobless rate: the proportion of out-of-school young people, male and female, whether disabled, who are without paid work, aged 10−14, 15−19 and 20−24 years of age, on a yearly basis;

4. The youth informal sector employment rate: the average income, distribution and income source of young people, male and female, whether disabled, who are not in formal sector employment, aged 10−14, 15−19 and 20−24 years of age.

Education and learning and employment outcomes

5. Educational achievement: the proportions of young people, male and female, whether disabled, who have completed (1) primary, middle secondary (Year 9) and secondary (Year 12), (2) post-secondary vocational training or (3) a university degree;

6. The learning outcomes achieved by young people, male and female, who complete primary, middle secondary (Year 9) and secondary (Year 12) education;

7. The post-school labour market status of young people, male and female, whether disabled, who have completed secondary education by individual high or secondary school, six months after leaving school;

8. The post-school labour market status of young people, male and female, whether disabled, who have completed whole or part of a tertiary education qualification, six months after leaving the institution;

9. Employment outcomes achieved by graduates, male and female, of each vocational education provider, six months after graduation.

Community and political engagement

10. Community engagement: proportion of young people, male and female, 15−19 and 20−24 years of age, engaged in (1) activities involving mainly young people and (2) activities involving mainly the wider community;

11. Political responsiveness: proportion of young people, male and female, 20−24 and 25−29 years of age who are (1) registered to vote, and (2) voted in the last election in which they were eligible to vote;

12. Political engagement: proportion of young people, male and female, 20−24 and 25−29 years of age who (1) were involved in a political activity related to a youth issue in the past 12 months, and/or (2) have taken part in an

opportunity to consult with community, regional or national decision- makers on any issue in the last 12 months, and (3) have ever taken part in a decision-making process in their local community.

4.5. Data collection and analysis: developing a profile of youth-in-transition based on 2010–2011 census results

One reason that many PICTs lack good information about the situation of young people is the absence of recent census or national survey data. The availability of once-in-a-decade census results in 2011 and 2012 for many Pacific countries presents a rare opportunity for them to provide country-specific, detailed profiles of young people. These profiles can focus on how their transition outcomes such as employment rates differ in terms of a range of factors such as gender, education level, disability status and geographical location.

Census results will become available in 2011 for Federated States of Micronesia and Marshall Islands, Kiribati and Palau, and there forthcoming censuses in 2011 in Nauru, Cook Islands, Samoa, Tonga, Niue and Tokelau. A number of PICTs are also undertaking demographic and health surveys, which will yield valuable information. It will be possible by the end of 2012 to provide a profile of how young people have fared between census dates.

It is proposed that governments prepare a census profile of young people, which will be released with the census results. This needs to include the differences between data from the last census and data from the latest one, reflecting the changes in educational attainment, in the proportion of young people in urban and rural areas, in the proportion of youth employment in rural and urban areas, and in the youth literacy and disability rates. Recent census data are also valuable for identifying the geographical location of specific target groups of young people for programme interventions.[29]

4.6. Data collection and analysis: the need for ongoing national surveys of young people

Changes over time can be gauged only from longitudinal studies. A UK-based survey called Young Lives is under way in four developing countries, surveying 12,000 children and adolescents. It is both a quantitative survey and participatory qualitative research, with a strong link to policy analysis. It is funded by the UK Department for International Development and the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Young Lives n.d.).[30]

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[29] For example, for 'second-chance' livelihood or education programmes, relevant groupings by location might be: youth aged 10−14 and 15−19 years who have not attended school or who have left before they are likely to have achieved literacy, those with basic literacy (primary school completed or some secondary schooling) and those with some senior secondary schooling (Years 9 to 11).

[30] Young Lives is a collaborative partnership between research and government institutions in the four study countries, the University of Oxford, the Open University, other UK universities, and Save the Children UK. Young Lives is core-funded from 2001 to 2017 by UK aid from the Department for International Development (DFID) and co-funded by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs from 2010 to 2014. Sub-studies are funded by the Bernard van Leer Foundation, the Inter-American Development Bank (in Peru), the International Development Research Centre (in Ethiopia), and the Oak Foundation.

The focus of the survey is on the causes and consequences of childhood poverty, whether specific policies are improving the well-being of the young, and how best to develop and implement policies and practices to reduce poverty in children and young people.

It is important that a national youth survey not be an academic exercise, producing results only for an academic audience. The research needs to be grounded in each country's political context, asking questions that policy makers want answered. The research should be undertaken by an in-country organisation in partnership with the relevant policy makers, involving them in the research process (Porter 2010: 2). One way to create a demand for evidence-led policy change on youth issues is for a donor to fund the setting up of independent think tanks in PICTs. Their roles could be to research major public policy issues, evaluate programmes and carry out accountability functions (RNZI 2011).[31]

4.7. Mobilising more resources: the need for a regional youth challenge fund

The absence of available resources is a major reason for the lack of progress at the regional country level in addressing youth issues. One mechanism for addressing this gap is for a regional agency such as the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) to set up a regional youth challenge fund. The fund could call for proposals from governments, non-governmental organisations, churches and youth associations to address the issues highlighted in this report in relation to each of the three broad types of youth-in-transition opportunity profiles. Specific projects could be funded to improve female and male access to higher levels of education or basic literacy, or providing more educational or livelihood opportunities for young people with HIV & AIDS, or physical or mental disabilities.

Specific attention should be given to providing opportunities for young people themselves to propose projects which have a strong community focus. This could be done through schools as community service learning projects, which are closely tied to the formal curriculum and involve working closely with partners in the community, such as local government and church groups. Alternatively, the projects could be proposed and run by youth-led associations involving school-leavers. The creation of links between communities should be an

important focus to lift the level of social trust with and between communities rather than fund activities that are limited to one community.

Such a fund could be based on the models provided by two successful regional funding mechanisms. One model is the New Zealand-based Oceanic Football Confederation's Football-for-Life grants programme (Oceania Football Confederation 2011).[32] The other is the Pasifika Partnership Fund.

The Football-for-Life Programme uses football networks to deliver education and raise public awareness about social issues. The Oceanic Football Confederation conducted a Pacific Youth and Sports Conference in 2010. The purpose of the conference was to identify youth and sport networks from PICTs and plan ways to increase young people's participation in society through sport. In particular, the aim of the conference was to link more closely youth associations, government institutions and sports organisations (Oceania Football Confederation 2010).[33] Groups of young people aged 15–34 years who took part in the conference have been encouraged this year (2011) to develop proposals which will be selected on merit and funded in 2012. The focus of the proposals is left entirely to each group to decide, based on a priority listing of key issues for young people in their country. The funding and monitoring procedures are being tested and refined during 2011 through New Zealand-based networks.[34]

The Pasifika Partnership Fund was set up in 2009 by TEAR FUND New Zealand and TEAR Australia.[35] The fund supports the Ola Fou ('new life') Pasifika Youth and Community Development Project, based in Fiji, to provide Pacific youth workers with leadership skills and enable them to gain a qualification based on their work with young people in the community.[36] In total, some 90 youth workers from eight PICTs are involved in different stages of the training. Two courses, each 15 months' duration, offer a certificate and a diploma qualification, recognised by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority. The courses are delivered by Praxis, a New Zealand registered private training provider specialising in training youth and community workers. They work in partnership with churches, mission organisations and community groups at local, national and international levels.

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[31] Moves are under way to develop an informal Micronesia policy network in Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia and the Marshall Islands. Leaders from those three countries gathered in Pohnpei earlier this month to discuss strategies for strengthening local public policy processes. The Pacific Institute of Public Policy, which facilitated the meeting, says a number of strategies were identified, including policy design, monitoring and evaluation, and accountability functions.

[32] The fund was launched in 2007 to help the victims of the tsunami that hit the Western Province of Solomon Islands. In 2008, Oceania Football Confederation partnered with UNAIDs to organise and promote 'STOP HIV Day'. A series of initiatives and dedicated messages were included in the programme of the Olympic Football Tournament held in Fiji. Football for Life also funds the distribution of equipment bags to primary schools across the region. The packs promote physical activity for kids aged six to 13 and encourage community involvement.

[33] The conference was based around four central themes: health, education and training, citizenship and good governance, social integration and anti-discrimination.

[34] Personal communication, Vania Kenning, consultant to Oceanic Football Confederation, 20 November, 2010.

[35] TEAR Fund stands for The Evangelical Alliance Relief Fund, an organisation formed in Britain in the 1950s in response to African famine. It later became a permanent organisation. The TEAR Australia website notes that TEAR Australia is a movement of Christians in Australia responding to the needs of poor communities around the world. Priority is given to those programmes that strive to involve the most marginalised and exploited members of each community, regardless of their religious or political beliefs. http://www.facebook.com/tearfundnz and http://www.tear.org.au.

[36] See the Ola Fou Pasifika Youth and Community Development Project website http://olafou.blogspot.com/2009_12_06_archive.html.

The courses combine formal group training with supervised assignments in the students' home country. The focus of the assignments is to identify the needs of young people in their community and to respond through developing opportunities in employment, education and community building. The more advanced diploma course focuses on developing social entrepreneur skills.[37]

Four major design features of a regional youth challenge fund can be identified from these two models. First, established organisations should be asked to prepare proposals, and be provided with seed funding to do so. An alternative approach, used by the Oceanic Football Confederation, is put time and effort into preparing youth groups to participate. This involves bringing them together to help them prepare proposals and to develop their capacity to account for funds and monitor performance. Second, the fund needs to work through recognised intermediary organisations, with staff who have the skills to advise on the viability of proposals, the use of social marketing techniques and how to mobilise communities. Third, sufficient resources need to be allocated to ensuring that good feedback loops are set up and appropriate on-site mentoring provided. Fourth, a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system needs to be put in place from the very beginning of the operation of the fund. The M&E system should focus on providing short-term feedback on progress, as well as long-term results in terms of outputs and outcomes.

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[37] Personal communication, Sereki Korocowiri, Pacific Coordinator, Ola Fou Pasifika and Lloyd Martin, Coordinator of Praxis, http://www.praxis.org.nz/Site/About_Praxis/Praxis_People.aspx#H56240-1.

Part 5: Conclusion

An underlying theme of this report has been that young people in the Pacific are not all the same. This refers to their starting points, and the nature and range of the obstacles they are tackling in their efforts to stand on their own feet. Three broad types of youth opportunity profiles were identified: the employment problems faced by educated and healthy young people; the major hurdles facing those young people who have missed out on basic entitlements to education; the discrimination and denial of services experienced by those young people stigmatised by HIV & AIDS or a physical or mental disability. Young people face different opportunities depending on whether they live in rural or urban areas.

Many young people in the Pacific region have benefited from major government investment in education and health. Nevertheless, despite their promise, many lack the opportunities and resources to make productive contributions to their economies and communities. Young people with higher levels of education attainment have expectations of good future prospects. However, in many cases, they have been frustrated by their failed attempts to find suitable work. Joblessness among secondary educated young people will not, of itself, produce social unrest and violence. However, if other conditions in a country are conducive to unrest, such as poor governance, a weak economy and a sudden economic or natural shock, the situation may turn out to be very different. The existence of a large young, educated but disenfranchised class without access to employment opportunities will create frustration and contribute to growing social tensions.

Other young people, most notably those in rural Melanesia, face even bigger hurdles in their efforts to escape poverty. They have missed out on their entitlement to a basic education, good health and access to improved water and sanitation. As a result they are illiterate and/or suffer from poor health due to the effects of malnutrition or diseases such as malaria. Alternatively, they are young people who have not received the support they needed to stay in school, and have achieved only basic literacy. Teenage mothers who are often less educated than their peers were also identified as having greater obstacles to overcome in achieving independence, due to the increased health risks they and their baby face and diminished options for earning a livelihood. The group of young people identified as having the fewest options and resources are those who suffer from a stigma imposed on them by their families, wider communities and government through its denial of services. They may be experiencing a social stigma because they have HIV & AIDS or have a physical or mental disability.

The prolonged and frustrating efforts of many young people in the Pacific to overcome multiple, overlapping hurdles to achieving independent adult status will have long-lasting effects. These include a general despondency about the future, a lack of resilience to cope with the unexpected and a general disillusionment with the role of government. The opportunities and resources the current generation of young people can access will determine the Pacific's capacity to prosper, overcome poverty and avoid its consequences.

Attachment 1: Outline of the terms of reference

The terms of reference requested that due attention be given to the issues identified in three reports: *The State of Pacific Youth 2005, Pacific Youth Strategy 2005–2010,* and *The Suva Declaration from the 2nd Pacific Youth Festival*

The State of Pacific Youth 2005 report notes that too much attention had been directed by governments, UN agencies and donors to addressing the symptoms rather than the causes of the problems faced by young people.

> These 'problem behaviours' − which have even led some people to say that young people themselves are the problem − are actually symptoms of social and economic factors that are beyond the control of the young people they most affect (UNICEF, SPC and UNFPA 2005: 11).

Addressing the root causes, the report argues, requires that governments, UN agencies and donors adopt long-term preventative strategies which treat youth as a resource for development. Little benefit comes from relying on low-cost, short-term responses to specific youth problems.

The State of Pacific Youth 2005 identifies the underlying causes of youth issues as: poverty and hardship; education systems focussed on white-collar employment skills; a scarcity of employment opportunities; rural/urban inequalities; the conflict between traditional and modern cultures; authoritarian parenting methods; and discrimination on the basis of gender, sexual minorities and disability, youth with special needs and youth who are 'different'.

The *Pacific Youth Strategy 2005−2010*, with its major theme of 'youth empowerment for a secure, prosperous and sustainable future', identifies seven issues for action: accessing integrated education, nurturing sustainable livelihoods, promoting healthy lifestyles, building stronger communities, strengthening institutional capacity, youth and identities, and research information and data on youth. These seven areas provide an important frame of reference to assess how much the situation of youth has changed and where major attention is still needed.

The *Suva Declaration from the 2nd Pacific Youth Festival* (2009), based on issues identified by over 200 young people in the Pacific region, highlights the need for action under five broad headings: promoting healthy lifestyles; supporting Pacific identity; improving climate change adaptation; fostering good governance, peace and security; and providing more opportunities to gain skills for life.

The terms of reference for *The State of Pacific Youth 2011* also ask for analysis on how the UN recognised human rights to 'participate in, contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development' apply specifically to young people and how these rights relate to the above issues raised in the *Pacific Youth Strategy 2010* and *The Suva Declaration from the 2nd Pacific Youth Festival.*

The terms of reference also highlight the problems young people face due to urbanisation. These include youth unemployment and education focused on 'white collar' jobs; and limited or no access to resources and services in informal urban settlements. Also highlighted is the need to identify a harmonious balance between Pacific traditions, and cultural and religious values with modern Pacific lifestyles, based on new knowledge about mental health, sexual and reproductive health, human rights, sexual minorities and environmental breakdown. Associated with this is the need for governments, UN agencies and donors to recognise the value of an emerging 'urban youth culture' and urban social networks, and the impact of these on young urban peoples' sense of identity. Also needing to be recognised is the role the lack of development in rural and outer islands plays in motivating young people to move to urban areas, with the resulting loss of traditional values and practices.

Attachment 2: Youth age profile of countries in the Pacific region

Median average age

A simple indicator of the youthfulness of a population is the median average age. This refers to the midway point in terms of age which separates the first half of the population from the second half. Table A2.1 shows the median age of the three sub-regions. Melanesia has a much younger population than Micronesia and Polynesia.

Table A2.1: Estimated median age 2011, Pacific sub-regions

Sub-region	Median age
Melanesia	21.6
Micronesia	24.9
Polynesia	24.5

Source: World Population Prospects, 2008 Revision, UN Population

The median age for the Pacific will get older over time as population growth slows. The median age in 2030 for Melanesia is estimated to be 25.5 years and for Micronesia and Polynesia 30.9 and 30.6 years respectively. Over the next 20 years, the current youth share of the population will decline for Micronesia and Polynesia but for Melanesia it will remain close to the current level. By 2030, the UN estimates the youth share of Micronesia and Polynesia will fall from 19 to 16 per cent of the total population, but that the youth share for Melanesia will remain at 19 per cent. As the size of the Melanesian population is much larger than the other sub-regions, this means that the overall youth share of the population for the region will remain high for the next 20 years.

Important country differences

The youth share of age profile of specific countries varies widely (see Table A2.2). The countries with the lowest proportions of 15−24 year-olds in their total population (between 16 and 18 per cent) are the Northern Mariana Islands, Palau, Niue, Guam, New Caledonia and Fiji. The countries with the highest share of young people (21 to 23 per cent) are to be found in American Samoa, Kiribati, Nauru and the Marshall Islands.

Can these differences be explained? One factor is the high rate of out-migration for young people from some of these countries. As a general trend, those countries with special access to the high-income labour markets of France, New Zealand, the USA and Australia (through skilled migration entry only) have lower proportions of 15−24 year-olds in their resident populations. The exceptions to this trend are the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia. Both these countries have open access to the USA but also have high youth shares in their resident populations. When faced with a highly competitive labour market for low-skilled workers, young people from these countries without the skills needed to get work may be reluctant to migrate to live in a high-cost economy on a low income. The policy implication to be drawn is that opening up opportunities means little, if many young people do not have the capacity through lack of an appropriate education to respond.

Table A2.2: Youth share (aged 15–24 years) of the populations in countries and territories in the Pacific region, 2010

Sub-region and country/territory	Estimated population in mid 2010			
	Total	15–24 yrs	15–24 yrs as prop of total pop %	15–24 yrs as prop of total adult population 15-59 yrs %
MELANESIA	**8,641,883**	**1,695,272**	**19.6**	**33.7**
Fiji	847,793	155,555	18.3	28.9
New Caledonia	254,525	44,853	17.6	27.5
Papua New Guinea	6,744,955	1,337,953	19.8	34.4
Solomon Islands	549,574	104,910	19.1	35.0
Vanuatu*	234,023	45,423	19.4	35.1
MICRONESIA	**547,345**	**106,838**	**19.5**	**32.1**
Federated States of Micronesia*	102,624	12,170	20.6	35.1
Guam	187,140	32,134	17.2	27.5
Kiribati	100,835	21,222	21.0	35.6
Marshall Islands	54,439	12,384	22.7	42.1
Nauru	9,976	2,106	21.1	34.2
Northern Mariana Islands	63,072	10,191	16.2	23.9
Palau	20,518	3,365	16.4	23.3
POLYNESIA	**663,795**	**127,871**	**19.3**	**32.3**
American Samoa	65,896	13,602	20.6	35.8
Cook Islands	15,529	2,937	18.9	31.5
French Polynesia	268,767	50,088	18.6	28.3
Niue	1,479	253	17.1	28.9
Pitcairn Islands	66			
Samoa	183,123	35,899	19.6	36.0
Tokelau	1,165	228	19.6	35.9
Tonga	103,365	20,281	19.6	36.5
Tuvalu	11,149	2,152	19.3	32.3
Wallis and Futuna	13,256	2,432	18.3	31.0
Total population	**9,853,024**	**1,929,981**	**19.6**	**33.5**

Source: SPC Pacific Island Populations Estimates and projections of demographic indicators for selected years, 2010. * The data for Vanuatu are based on the 2009 census. The data for the Federated States of Micronesia are based on the preliminary results of the 2010 FSM-Wide Census.

Attachment 3: Adolescent birth rate, Pacific Island countries and territories, Australia, New Zealand and Japan

Table A3: Adolescent (15–19 years) birth rate, selected countries and territories, Pacific region, rate per 1,000 females aged 15–19 years

Country/territory	Rate per 1,000	Reference year
Marshall Islands	138	2007
Nauru	69	2007
Solomon Islands	67	2007
Papua New Guinea*	65	2006
Vanuatu	64	2009
Kiribati	51	2009
Samoa	44	2009
Federated States of Micronesia	44	2006
Tokelau	43	2001
Tuvalu	42	2007
Cook Islands	42	2009
Fiji **	30	2008
Tonga	30	2008
Niue	28	2006
Palau	18	2007
New Zealand	32	2007
Australia	18	2008
Japan	5	2007

Source: SPC, 2011: PRISM MDG Spreadsheet (January 2011 Draft Release) Goal 5, Indicator 5.4

*Government of Papua New Guinea

** UNICEFn.d.: Fiji/Statistics

Attachment 4: Estimated youth disability rates by individual Pacific Island country and territory

Table A4: Estimates of the numbers of young people aged 15–24 years who are disabled and severely disabled in the Pacific region, by sub-region and country

Country/territory	Disability	Severe disability
	10 %	3 %
MELANESIA	169,527	50,858
Fiji Islands	15,556	4,667
New Caledonia	4,485	1,346
Papua New Guinea	133,795	40,139
Solomon Islands	10,491	3,147
Vanuatu*	4,542	1,363
MICRONESIA	10,684	3,205
Federated States of Micronesia*	1,217	365
Guam	3,213	964
Kiribati	2,122	637
Marshall Islands	1,238	372
Nauru	211	63
Northern Mariana Islands	1,019	306
Palau	337	101
POLYNESIA	12,787	3,836
American Samoa	1,360	408
Cook Islands	294	88
French Polynesia	5,009	1,503
Niue	25	8
Samoa	3,590	1,077
Tokelau	23	7
Tonga	2,028	608
Tuvalu	215	65
Wallis and Futuna	243	73
	192,998	57,899

Source: Author's (R. Curtain) own calculations, based on each country's estimated youth population 15–24 years, 2010.

Attachment 5: Youth-related Millennium Development Goals and indicators

Table A5: Youth-related Millennium Development Goals and indicators

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)	
Goals and Targets (from the Millennium Declaration)	Indicators for monitoring progress All indicators should be disaggregated by sex and urban/ rural as far as possible
Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger	
Target 1.B: Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people	• Growth rate of GDP per person employed • Employment-to-population ratio • Proportion of employed people living below $1 (PPP) per day • Proportion of own-account and contributing family workers in total employment
Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education	
Target 2.A: Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling	• Net enrolment ratio in primary education • Proportion of pupils starting Grade 1 who reach last grade of primary • Literacy rate of 15−24 year-olds, women and men
Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women	
Target 3.A: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015	• Ratios of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education
Goal 5: Improve maternal health	
Target 5.A: Reduce by three quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio	• Maternal mortality ratio • Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel
Target 5.B: Achieve, by 2015, universal access to reproductive health	• Contraceptive prevalence rate • Adolescent birth rate • Antenatal care coverage (at least one visit and at least four visits) • Unmet need for family planning
Goal 6: Combat HIV & AIDS, malaria and other diseases	
Target 6.A: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV & AIDS	• HIV prevalence among population aged 15−24 years • Condom use at last high-risk sex • Proportion of population aged 15−24 years with comprehensive correct knowledge of HIV & AIDS • Ratio of school attendance of orphans to school attendance of non-orphans aged 10−14 years

Source: Official List of MDG Indicators, 15 January, 2008

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