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## Partnerships to Speed Up MDGs Achievement in PNG

Working together with the civil society will speed up the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The United Nations (UN) Resident Coordinator and UN Development Programme (UNDP) Representative in Papua New Guinea, David McLachlan-Karr made these comments at the 63rd Annual United Nations DPI/NGO Conference, held in Melbourne, Australia from 30 August to 1 September.

The conference which was on the theme "Advance Global Health: Achieve the MDGs", concluded with a declaration, supported by 1,600 participants representing over 350 NGOs from more than 70 countries, that underlined that "it is unacceptable that so many children and adults in low income countries continue to suffer preventable illness, disability and premature deaths each year".

Mr McLachlan-Karr saluted the work of the civil society organisations, faith-based institutions and NGOs in Papua New Guinea.

"A nation cannot sustain itself without the health of its people. While the Government has not been able to fulfil all of its obligations towards progressive realisation of its people's rights to health, CSOs in PNG – particularly faith-based organisations – have stepped in to support the role of government as a duty-bearer," he said. Mr McLachlan-Karr emphasised that the contribution of and partnership with civil society was of prime importance in the achievement of the MDGs.

"This is particularly critical in Papua New Guinea where Government is unable to deliver basic services to all its people and has relied on the resilience of faith-based organizations and other NGOs to do what it should be doing as a duty bearer. In fact, a partnership was signed last year between the Government of PNG and PNG Association of NGOs in recognition of the unique role they play in the PNG landscape."

Mr McLachlan-Karr pointed out that with the coming online of the Liquefied Natural Gas

(LNG) projects, there were opportunities provided by the presence of International NGOs (INGOs) to contribute to better health for the people of PNG.

"A number of INGOs are involved in projects on HIV, malaria, maternal health, water and sanitation, etc. The UN System has initiated a dialogue with some of these INGOs to better define our partnerships and comparative advantages so that these benefit the people and children of PNG, while being mindful of the 'Do no Harm' Principle."



David McLachlan-Karr, United Nations (UN) Resident Coordinator and UN Development Programme (UNDP) Representative in PNG, speaking at the workshop

The status of the MDGs in Papua New Guinea is characterised by slow and uneven progress. The health MDGs are particularly at risk: while on average infant and child mortality (MDG4) has registered a slight improvement, maternal mortality (MDG5) shows no decrease and features among one of the highest levels in the Asia/Pacific region at 733 per 100,000 deaths. Recent estimates put the incidence of HIV at less than 1%, which means that PNG has moved from a situation of generalised epidemic to a low prevalence country. However, while some provinces are showing a decreasing incidence of new HIV infections, in at least 5 of the 22 provinces, the incidence is increasing.

World leaders meeting in New York in September for a follow up on the progress of the MDGs also called upon "civil society, including non-governmental organizations, voluntary associations and foundations, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders at the local, national, regional and global levels, to enhance their role in national development efforts as well as their contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals by 2015."

# Addressing Delinquency Amongst Microfinance Borrowers

Microfinance is about providing financial services to people who would otherwise not have access to it through the formal financial sector. In Fiji, specialized microfinance institutions (MFIs) provide small loans to microentrepreneurs who need more capital for their businesses. Ideally, the borrowers invest the money and then repay their loans and interest on time, making a larger pool of money from which others can benefit.

However, the reality is far from this ideal. Delinquency, or when the borrowers fail to repay their loans on time, is a challenge with which many microfinance institutions in Fiji have to deal.

A recent study of five MFIs in Fiji, conducted by the Pacific Financial Inclusion Programme (PFIP) revealed that since the beginning of 2009, the total amount of loans offered has declined affecting the potential for MFIs to earn revenue this year as they have a smaller pool of money to lend. Further, the loans that were extended were not being paid back on time, with between 15%-85% of loans at different MFIs having repayments delinquent by over a month. This means that to keep lending at a similar level in coming years, a donor or the government will have to give money to the MFIs to replace the money lost in bad loans. This is unsustainable, and signals that urgent action needs to be taken since global best practice indicates that delinquency rates should be kept below 5% to ensure effecting functioning of MFIs.

Dorinda Work, Manager of the Microfinance West Unit in Fiji realises that delinquency management is an important area of work in which MFIs in Fiji need to engage. She studied this topic during a three week intensive course on microfinance, at the 16th annual Boulder Microfinance Training Program, held in Turin, Italy, which was attended by 325 microfinance

practitioners from over 85 countries. Dorinda was amongst a group of seven Pacific Islanders to attend the training and her attendance was supported by a scholarship from the MasterCard Foundation and PFIP. One of the requirements of her



*Attentive: Dorinda (second from left) listens to members of the Boulder Team*

scholarship was that she share her knowledge on delinquency management with other practitioners, which she did at a MFI manager's workshop, jointly organized by the National Centre Small and Microfinance Enterprise development (NCSMED) and the Microfinance Unit.

"I feel that delinquency management is currently the most important issue that needs to be discussed seriously among microfinance practitioners in light of the recent developments in the microfinance industry in Fiji. The core issue facing MFIs is sustainability and this, I believe, begins with the effective management of the MFIs largest asset, the loans portfolio," said Dorinda.

Her presentation covered topics such as the causes and consequences of delinquency, the cost of delinquency, measuring delinquency and actions that need to be taken to address delinquency. She said some participants were not aware of the causes and costs of delinquency and one participant admitted that his MFI has not had any training on managing delinquent loans, provisioning for loan loss and how the portfolio at

risk (PAR) ratio is used to measure the quality of an MFI's loans portfolio.

The workshop concluded with a set of concrete actions, one of which includes staff attachments with larger MFIs, ensuring hands-on learning.

"After attending the Boulder Microfinance Training, I now have a broader knowledge of microfinance and have learnt that microfinance provides an avenue to effectively extend financial inclusion by empowering the marginalized members of the communities wherein we serve, creating opportunities to innovate and get involved with income generating activities. It is also true that the microfinance members need to have access to other services apart from savings and loans; which include insurance and money transfers," said Dorinda.

MasterCard Foundation also sponsored Lavenia Baro, representatives from the Fiji Council of Social Services Microfinance Unit. Representatives from Central Banks including Owen Kose (Bank of Papua New Guinea), Iosefo Bourne (Central Bank of Samoa), Noel Vari (Reserve Bank of Vanuatu), Neumi Usumaki (Reserve Bank of Fiji), Raynold Moveni (Central Bank of Solomon Islands) also attended the Boulder Training, supported by scholarships from the European Union and PFIP to learn more about designing regulation that preserves the financial security of their countries, while creating an enabling environment for extending financial services to low income and rural populations.

PFIP is funded by the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), European Union, and the United Nations Development Programme Pacific Centre.

# Time to Discuss Conflict in Resource Based Development in Fiji

Sitting together for the first time, representatives from 20 Government agencies, civil society organizations and non-Government organizations discussed the management and mitigation of resource based conflict in Suva in September.

After four days of reviewing the existing challenges participants developed a set of policy recommendations to be presented to the Prime Minister's Office.

Plans for dialogue were set in motion at a UNDP regional workshop for conflict prevention practitioners in Nadi in May 2010 when government and civil society representatives from Fiji indicated that looking at resource based disputes was a national priority for furthering Fiji's development.

Tracy Vienings UNDP's Conflict Prevention and Peace Building Expert highlighted the importance of gathering the stakeholders to address the key issues.

"To resolve resource based conflict,

there needs to be dialogue between stakeholders, a coordinated and strategic approach is required," stated Ms Vienings.

In his opening speech, Prime Minister's Office Permanent Secretary Pio Tikoduadua said the Government spends 70 percent of time and money on resolving development conflicts.

"This workshop is very timely. There are numerous resource based conflict cases currently with Government, and this is placing a heavy burden on our government machinery, our economy and our people," Mr Tikoduadua said.

The policy recommendations drawn up by participants advised the strengthening of the mechanism for implementing the rural integrated framework, empowering Divisional Commissioners to develop development plans and the use of traditional and local knowledge, building the capacity of resource owners to grow their investments and advocating for an enabling environment that

will recognize women's legal inheritance rights.

Deputy Secretary Prime Minister's Office Filimone Kau took on the commitment made by Mr Tikoduadua in implementing the policy recommendations in his closing speech.

"This is going to be a continuation of Prime Minister's focus on resource based conflict. We look forward to creating stronger partnerships with civil society organisations and private sector to ensure an integrated approach to development. This is a challenge for us and we are putting some efforts into the dialogue." Mr Kau said.

This forms part of UNDP's programme to strengthen capacities for peace and development in the Pacific, a regional project presently focusing on Fiji priorities. The workshop was organised jointly by UNDP and the Prime Minister's Office and facilitated by the Pacific Centre for Peace Building.

## Caribbean Delegation Visits Fiji

More systematic exchanges have now started through the project: "South-South Cooperation between Pacific and Caribbean Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) on Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Management". Put simply the project aims to encourage a systematic sharing of knowledge and experiences to strengthen community safety and resilience to a range of natural disasters in both regions.

As part of this exchange project, a Caribbean delegation made up of five specialists was in Fiji in August to attend the Pacific Disaster Risk Management Partnership Network meeting from August 12 -13. The delegation

consisted of: Dr Asha Kambon, the regional adviser at the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC); Carlos Fuller, the Deputy Director of the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre; Nicole Williams, the Disaster Management Officer for the International Federation of the Red Cross, Caribbean Regional Representation Office in Port of Spain; Tomás Gutiérrez, the Director General of the Institute of Meteorology and Permanent Representative of Cuba with the World Meteorological Organization; and Jacinda Fairholm, a regional program manager for the UNDP Caribbean Risk Management Initiative (CRMI) based out of the UNDP-Cuba office. In July a delegation from the Pacific visited four countries in the Caribbean. The project is funded by UNDP's Special Unit for South-South Cooperation and by the UNDP-Japan Partnership Fund, with in-kind contributions from UNDP Pacific Centre.



# Anti Corruption Efforts in the Pacific: PICs Learn More About UNCAC

Two Pacific Island countries are taking significant steps towards ratifying the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC).

This development occurred after the Pacific Meeting on the Ratification and Implementation of UNCAC, organised in July 2010 by UNDP Pacific Centre and the UN Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

It was attended by senior government officials from fourteen Pacific Island countries, as well as officials from the World Bank Stolen Assets Recovery Initiative, Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, Commonwealth Pacific Governance Facility, European Union and UNDP Country Offices.

Since the meeting, Vanuatu has advised that its Council of Ministers has approved accession to UNCAC, and the Convention will shortly be tabled in the National Parliament for ratification.

Following the meeting, Cook Islands has also re-convened the National Anti-Corruption Committee and intends to revise its Terms of Reference to focus on progressing ratification and implementation of UNCAC.

The objective of the Meeting was to raise awareness with senior Pacific officials on the usefulness of UNCAC as a guiding framework for strengthening Pacific Island Countries' national anti-corruption efforts and in so doing, to encourage more PIC's to sign on to the Convention.

To date, only three PIC's have ratified UNCAC - PNG in July 2007, Fiji in May 2008 and Palau in March 2009.

Samoa's Prime Minister, Hon. Tuilaepa Lupesoliai Sailele Malielegaoi, who officially opened the meeting said "Resources lost to corruption are resources lost to the poor. This in turn slows the progress

towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals."

"Tackling corruption, at all levels of government, is key towards meeting the national development goals that Samoa has set for itself," he said.

The Prime Minister specifically noted that UNCAC is a useful tool that can assist Pacific Island countries to ensure that they comprehensively tackle corruption, in all its forms, in a coordinated way.

During the meeting, participants were given an overview of the newly endorsed UNCAC Review Mechanism.

This mechanism requires approximately 35 States Parties to UNCAC to undertake an UNCAC Self-Assessment each year, utilising a new computer-based UNCAC Self-Assessment Checklist.

Designed by UNODC, the Checklist tracks compliance (eg. legislative gaps, successes and technical assistance requirements).

## PNG Government develops a National Anti-Corruption Strategy

*PNG was the first country in the region to ratify UNCAC in July 2007. The Government of Papua New Guinea launched the National Anti-Corruption Strategy (NACS) Framework on 9 December 2009, International Anti-Corruption Day.*

*The Strategy is an important component in achieving the vision of the National Strategic Plan 2010-2050. In 2010, the Government circulated the draft NACS for public comment. It is understood that a NACS Implementation Plan will be subsequently be developed.*



*PNG delegation: Christopher Asa, Mark Jumogot, Matthew Damaru, Raphael Luman and Susan Sellick*

Under the new UNCAC Review Mechanism, States Parties will then have their UNCAC Self-Assessment reviewed by two Peer Reviewers (ie. randomly selected States Parties).

The new UNCAC Review Mechanism was finalised in July 2010, such that

Pacific participants were the first in the world to receive training from UNODC on the process.

The UNCAC Review commenced in August 2010 with the random selection of countries for review. In 2010/11, both Papua New Guinea and Fiji were selected for review.

Support will be provided by UNODC and UNDP for completion of the UNCAC Review.

Notably, UNCAC is a particularly useful Convention for PICs because of its international cooperation provisions.

These provisions call on States Parties to share information relating to corruption investigations, as well as allowing for extradition and prosecution of criminals without the need for additional bilateral agreements between countries.

UNCAC's asset recovery are also particularly noteworthy, as they require States Parties not only to confiscate or seize assets resulting

from the proceeds of crime, but also to return them to the originating country once reasonable proof of the corrupt money trail is shown. This is a huge benefit for PICs with limited resources.

Tim Steele from the Stolen Assets Recovery (STAR) Initiative (a partnership between the World Bank and UNODC) advised that STaR works with developing countries to investigate complex money laundering cases and can help facilitate the systematic return of stolen assets.

STAR also provides training, and facilitates information exchange between ratifying states to UNCAC.

At the conclusion of the meeting, countries identified their priorities for action following the meeting.

For most countries, this included taking an initial assessment of their own accountability framework and awareness-raising with key stakeholders on the benefits of accession to UNCAC.

UNDP and UNODC will continue to collaborate in future to support PICs to pursue their national anti-corruption priorities.

## South-South Sharing on Anti-Corruption

*The Caribbean and Central American Region as well as the Pacific region face a range of similar challenges in acceding to and implementing UNCAC and the meeting brought practitioners together from both regions to share good anti-corruption policies and practices, in order to assess the status of implementation of the Convention and to promote its accession.*

*"The Cross-Regional Workshop to Promote the Ratification and Reporting on Implementation of the UNCAC", organised by UNODC last year, was attended by delegations from Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Solomon Islands and Marshall Islands.*

*The Pacific delegations produced an outcomes document highlighting their priority technical assistance needs, including support for local awareness raising activities and UNCAC legislative gap analyses.*

## International Consultation on India Right to Information Act

*In 2005, India enacted a comprehensive Right to Information Act (RTI Act) that purported to entrench its one billion citizens' right to access information from government bodies and other bodies receiving substantial government funding.*

*The RTI Act came into force in October 2005, and four years later the Government of India and UNDP ran an international consultation to reflect on implementation challenges and successes.*

*The Pacific Centre's Regional Legislative Strengthening Expert, provided technical advice to the UNDP India Country Office for the meeting, as well being a resource person.*

*Officials and NGOs were able to share their experiences, and draw on the global lessons learned and good practice.*

## Launch of Pacific Info

PacificInfo ([www.Pacificinfo.org](http://www.Pacificinfo.org)), a customized database that provides Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) data on 15 Pacific Island Countries – Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Tokelau and Vanuatu – was launched in Suva by Garry Wiseman, the Manager of the United Nations Development Programme's Pacific Centre.

"PacificInfo measures the eight goals of the MDGs for all the 15 countries through a wide range of indicators. It also provides a Monitoring and Evaluation framework, using MDGs indicators and Pacific Plan indicators, for United Nations Development Assistance Framework, a framework setting out what the United Nations agencies, collectively and individually, will support in the 14 Pacific Island countries (PNG is covered separately) using MDGs indicators and Pacific Plan indicators," said Mr. Wiseman.

The launch took place during a week-long training for Pacific journalists on reporting on the MDGs.



**PacificInfo time:** Journalists attending the regional media training browse the database. Solomon Islands Vincent Obimae is at the computer as Vanuatu's Claudia Shema looks on. Cook Islands Ana Pokino (R) is in discussion with Garry Wiseman

## New MDGs Team Leader

Ahmed Moustafa is the new Macroeconomics and Poverty Reduction Regional Advisor and MDGs Team Leader at the Pacific Centre. He replaced David Abbott who retired in earlier this year.

Ahmed has over 20 years of experience in advisory, policy development and management for over 50 projects in developing countries in Africa, Central and Eastern Europe and Middle East.

He has worked for UNDP, UNCTAD, UNIDO, World Bank, FAO, African Development Bank and private clients and has extensive multi-sectoral experience in regional development, social policies, local development, macroeconomics, poverty reduction, political economy, international economics, finance for development, banking, industrial policies, restructuring and planning, trade policy and institution building. Ahmed has authored, co-authored and contributed to several policy oriented and academic publications including two Arab MDG reports (2007 and 2010), the Arab Human Development Report (2009) and a two volume report on Development Challenges in Arab Region.



**5Ws and H of MDGs:** Ahmed Moustafa (R), new MDGs Achievement and Poverty Alleviation Team Leader presents on the MDGs at a regional media training

He holds a PhD in Economics from the New School of Social Research in New York and has held several teaching positions in American universities.

## CPR Staff on Detail Assignment

Two staff members from the Crisis Prevention and Recovery Team are in different parts of the world sharing Pacific knowledge.

Disaster Risk Management Specialist Moortaza Jiwaji is in Pakistan for two months to support the UNDP Country Office relating to the recent flooding events. This detail assignment is part of an overall SURGE capacity being provided to the Country Office, given the overwhelming demand for work relating to the relief and recovery efforts.

Crisis Prevention Specialist Thomas Shanahan is in Nairobi, working for UNDP Somalia for a 2 month detail assignment to support the development of outcome strategies and regional implementation plans for the new Country Programme Document (CPD) 2011 - 2015. The new country programme document uses a number of conflict analyses in its final formulation.

The training was organized by the United Nations in partnership with the Secretariat of the Pacific Community with support from the Forum Secretariat, PINA, SOPAC and the Pacific Disability Forum.

Journalists, journalism students and government information offi-

cers from the Cook Islands, Fiji, Niue, Palau, Republic of Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu attended the training.

The training included presentations on the eight MDGs from speakers from UN and regional organizations. Participants also produced a story each based on the MDGs which were presented at the last day of the training.

## Australian Volunteer Working Towards More Effective Aid Delivery in the Pacific

How does a large development partner like the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) make sure the work it does is effective and efforts are not duplicated? Sharing knowledge, experience and lessons learnt and building partnerships and promoting south-south exchanges to improve the design and coordination of development programs can go a long way to achieve this.

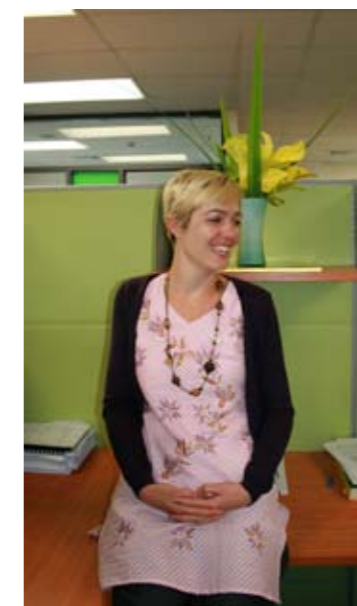
Helping such a large organisation reach this important objective, the UNDP in the Pacific has benefited from the work of an Australian Volunteer. Corinne Roberts, an Australian Youth Ambassador for Development is working in Fiji at the UNDP's Pacific Centre, a regional centre supporting the work of UNDP in fifteen Pacific Island Countries.

The centre is part of the Asia Pacific regional network, with a major centre in Bangkok, that has been established with high level technical expertise in the core areas of UNDP's work, to provide support to the UNDP offices in Port Moresby, Suva and Samoa as well as a sub-office in Solomon Islands in the design and delivery of country activities as well as the delivery of regional initiatives designed to promote regional cooperation and integration and effectively advocate for progress in the Pacific around poverty alleviation and MDG achievement; good governance; crisis prevention and recovery; environment and energy and financial inclusion. The centre draws in regional and global knowledge and promotes policy changes to enhance development in the Pacific.

Since beginning her twelve month placement with the Pacific Centre, Corinne has been looking at ways the UNDP staff in the Pacific can better learn from each other and share experience. This is no easy

task given the Pacific Islands are spread over one fifth of the world's surface; flights between countries are expensive, often transiting through Australia and New Zealand and across different time zones all contributing up to make communication a challenge.

In response to such difficulties experienced both in the Pacific and in other regions, UNDP has developed an online space for better knowledge sharing. The custom built platform, Teamworks, has been modeled off social networking sites. It provides staff with an opportunity to engage with those working in similar focus areas across the globe to share their experiences and learn from each other in instant real time commu-



nication. It also serves as a unique storage space for UNDP to gather knowledge from projects being implemented globally to improve its understanding of development and share this knowledge across the organisation with other UN agencies and the broader development community.

Corinne, took the opportunity Teamworks presented for the Pacific and lead its introduction to the region. This was a first for UNDP, which

had yet to launch the online space in a regional context. The experiences in the Pacific were observed by UNDP headquarters in New York and due to its success promoted as an example for other regions in their implementation.

The Pacific launch had staff compete in an online game over four days to introducing them to the tool. The innovative approach resulted in almost full participation of despite the constraints of working across the region. Manager at the Pacific Centre, Garry Wiseman spoke of the benefits Teamworks could bring for the region.

"With the launch of this knowledge sharing space, there is considerable opportunity for a strengthened UNDP in the Pacific – a UNDP that is more dynamic, responsive and one that emphasizes the value of learning from each other" he stated.

As well as being a part of UNDP's efforts for more effectively delivery of its aid, the Australian Youth Ambassador for Development program has given Corinne a unique opportunity to work within the UN. The UN is an important global mechanism delivering aid partially funded by the Australian tax payer, giving young Australians a foot in the door is a major benefit of the Ambassador programme. Corinne spoke of the benefits of the program.

"Through the Youth Ambassador experience I have learnt not only about the work UNDP delivers but about its relationships with donors, governments, UN agencies and other partnerships. This has provided me with an invaluable insight into the international development environment, not otherwise possible", she stated.

- Corinne has completed her one year placement with UNDP PC

# Knowledge Management

## Exchanging Solutions Across the Pacific and Beyond

Practitioners across the Pacific and abroad will now have the opportunity to connect with, share and learn from each other on how to better address development needs with the launch today of the Pacific Solution Exchange Development Effectiveness Community (PSE\_DEC).

The PSE\_DEC is a facilitated knowledge service initiated by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in partnership with the Pacific Island Forum Secretariat (PIFS), Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the University of the South Pacific (USP).

"Through this partnership, the PSE\_DEC aims to strengthen coordination and cooperation for improved development effectiveness and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in the region", said Mr Knut Ostby, UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative. He added, "the UN brings to the discussions global experience and expertise, however, we recognize that it is the people and the national institutions themselves who will lead the development process."

The knowledge service draws together a broad range of stakeholders from government, civil society, private sector, academia, regional organizations and development partners to share experiences and seek their views via a facilitated mail group on development topics specific to the Pacific, like climate change resourcing, addressing the needs of the poor and the vulnerable, and achieving the MDGs. The establishment of the PSE\_DEC follows discussions at the Pacific Regional Aid Effectiveness Workshop and the Pacific Partners (PIC Partners) Meeting held in June 2010 in Nadi, Fiji.

Secretary General of the Pacific Island Forum, Tuiloma Neroni Slade envisages that the facilitated community will become a mechanism for knowledge sharing and a coordination tool for sharing lessons and exchanging solutions.

"It could also be used to share findings from the Cairns Compact processes such as the peer review of countries' national plans. Forum Member countries that indicated interest at the meeting include the Marshall Islands, Palau, Nauru, Tonga, Tuvalu, Samoa and Vanuatu," said Mr Slade.

Offering further support for the initiative, ADB's Regional Director, Keith Leonard said, "This initiative has the potential to act as a cost-effective platform to improve the frequency and timeliness of knowledge sharing among Pacific practitioners."

The Vice-Chancellor and President of the University of the South Pacific, Professor Rajesh Chandra, further stated that the "Pacific Solution Exchange will enable development practitioners to discuss and debate substantive issues in an informative environment, outside the usual parameters of meetings and conferences. It should encourage a steady flow of ideas and solutions for the issues that are most timely in the Pacific."

Commencing in October with a six-month trial phase based on UNDP's proven methodology known as Solution Exchange, members will be engaged in e-discussions via email supported by a team of facilitators. The approach is hoped to initially help members to better share their views and opinions. Based on the feedback from the trial, the Community's services could then be extended to allow members to ask queries and help each other by sharing knowledge and experience around common development challenges.

UNDP Deputy Resident Representative, Toily Kurbanov added, "There is a lot of knowledge in the Pacific as to what type of solutions to complex development issues work best in the island countries context. However that knowledge is diffused across islands, as well as across government agencies, civil society and development partners. Pacific Solutions Exchange will leverage new technologies to bring that knowledge together and to nurture communities of practice."

*To join or find out more about the Pacific Solution Exchange Development Effectiveness Community, please go to [www.solutionexchange-un.net/pacific](http://www.solutionexchange-un.net/pacific).*

**PASIFIKA Focus** is a publication of the UNDP Pacific Centre.

UNDP Pacific Centre focuses on specific issues within the practice areas of UNDP that impact on small vulnerable island countries of the sub region. The primary focus of the Pacific Centre is to deliver policy and technical advice and build capacity of Pacific Island countries to respond more effectively to the development challenges of the region.

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## Upcoming Events

### Medium Term Strategy for Financial Inclusion Conference

Honiara, Solomon Islands  
18-19 November 2010

The joint Pacific Financial Inclusion Programme (PFIP) and Central Bank of Solomon Islands workshop will involve government policy makers, private sector managers, civil society organizations, donors, and other stakeholders who have a role to play in the extension of the financial sector to low income and rural populations.

Approximately sixty participants from different parts of Solomon Islands, as well as some international experts brought in to help facilitate sessions and share lessons from abroad will attend the conference.

The first day will be dedicated to educating stakeholders on financial inclusion, looking in-depth at the situation in Solomon Islands, and the second day will be designed to formulate a strategy and action plan from the information and discussions of the first day.