MINISTRY OF PACIFIC ISLAND AFFAIRS

Ala Fou – New Pathways:

Strategic Directions for Pacific Youth in New Zealand

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A Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs Report
August 2003
(With progress to November 2005)

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Ala Fou in 2005 - TWO YEARS ON…

Since the publication of Ala Fou in 2003, the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs has led the dissemination and discussion on the priority areas identified within Ala Fou. The purpose of these discussions was to raise awareness about the needs and issues raised by Pacific youth, and focus interagency thinking on the implementation of policies and strategies which address the needs highlighted during the Free II C Fonos.

- Increasing cultural and linguistic knowledge was an issue raised by Pacific youth as one way of strengthening their identity. In September 2005 the Ministry completed the pilot of the culture and language related project - **Mind Your Language.** The key outcome of this project is to build the critical mass of Pacific peoples able to hold an every day conversation in their mother tongue. The first phase of the pilot involved a series of Niue language classes and the development of appropriate resources with the Auckland Niue community. In October 2005 THE MINISTRY released a set of Niue language books targeting 3 levels of language competency, and accompanying CDs.

- The need for strong and supportive families and communities was also highlighted by Pacific youth. These matters have been incorporated within the Ministry of Social Development's Strategies with Kids – Information for Parents and Strategy for Preventing Violence in Pacific Communities. Both initiatives are currently being implemented in Pacific communities throughout the country.

- Ala Fou also provided guidance and information in the development of the Auckland focussed Pacific Youth Development Strategy launched earlier this year. The Ministry continues to provide support and advice for this strategy which represents a co-ordinated effort to develop and implement a range of innovative programmes for Pacific youth in the region. Youth stressed the need for effective mentoring services. Mentoring is a key milestone identified in the strategy.

- The Ministry has worked with the Village Community Services Trust who has received funding from the Department of Internal Affairs to develop a leadership programme for Pasifika Youth from 16 to 25 years of age. This responds to the need articulated by Pacific youth for support to become strong and positive leaders.

- The Ala Fou report highlighted the lack of knowledge by Pacific youth of opportunities available to them in business. Over the last three years the Ministry has worked with the Ministry of Education and the Pacific Business Trust to provide Business focused workshops at major Pacific youth expos to expose Pacific youth to business as an option.

- The Ministry has developed a relationship with Pacific achievers in the area of scientific research, technology and other innovative industries to provide a platform for them to share their stories with Pacific youth through visual and interactive workshops. The aim is to utilise Pacific role models to encourage Pacific youth to consider careers in the emerging industries.

- Ala Fou's findings have also assisted in the development of work such as the Department of Labour's Children's Employment Issues Workplan, the Ministry of Youth Development's Profiling Young Entrepreneurs project and the Ministry of Education's Schooling Strategy.

- Ala Fou was presented at the Commonwealth Youth Programme Regional Officials meeting in Fiji in 2005. The report and its findings were well received by delegates and it is hoped the findings in the report will give other countries a platform to follow.

- On a national level Ala Fou's findings have been shared with members of Christchurch's Pacific Youth Network, the Auckland Pacific Youth Development Strategy working group, central government agencies, and mainstream private sector audiences at regional economic development conferences.

Ala Fou began its journey in the voices of Pacific youth across the country two years ago, and continued on to live in strategies across Government. Following the Pacific Prosperity Conference, the priorities of Ala Fou will return to the heart of this Ministry's work in the development of a Pacific Economic Strategic Action Plan.

FOREWORD

To ensure that the future generations of Pacific peoples are able to enjoy the social and economic benefits of participating in a knowledge-based economy, this Government has begun to develop policies that will foster sustainable economic growth for Pacific peoples in New Zealand.

As part of this Ministry's commitment to reducing the social and economic inequalities that exist within our communities, educating and empowering Pacific youth have long been identified as key factors in addressing those inequalities and preparing the path for Pacific peoples' participation in the sustainable economic growth of our country.

The excitement and vigour of our Pacific youth will need to be harnessed and directed to face the challenges of this country's future economic development.

The burgeoning industries within ICT and emerging industries will require specialised training and industry development.

The Ministry's first national consultation fono, FREE II C, (Freedom To Choose) with Pacific youth was the first of its kind ever undertaken by a Government ministry.

Almost 40 percent of our total Pacific population are under the age of 15.

By 2051, 13 percent of the total workforce will be of Pacific descent.

FREE II C's primary aim was to encourage our youth to think beyond the traditional trades and professions considered by Pacific peoples.

Ala Fou - New Pathways, will be the Governmental blueprint for co-ordinating key strategic policies to achieve social and economic prosperity for Pacific youth.

Defining their own unique identity, articulating what their dreams and hopes are for the future and how they can best plan for their future successes, will be pivotal steps for Pacific youth. The *Ala Fou - New Pathways* report will reflect their aspirations, anxieties and solutions as they begin their journey.

Fuimaono Les McCarthy
Chief Executive
Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs

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To the Pacific Business Trust for their hands-on support and valuable input throughout the tour,

To the various government agencies, organisations and local councils which contributed financial support, advice, time and assistance in the planning and running of the tour and the provision of information stalls,

To the many talented Pacific role models and key note speakers from various fields who spoke throughout the tour and inspired and encouraged many Pacific young people around the country to raise their aspirations to become successful leaders and achievers,

To the staff from participating schools and tertiary institutions for their enthusiasm and support of the tour and for the ongoing service they provide to Pacific youth,

To the Pacific youth workers and community people who skilfully facilitated the sessions and successfully engaged Pacific youth throughout the tour, and who make work with Pacific youth their daily focus,

To the talented Pacific artists who entertained and helped create an atmosphere of pride and unity amongst the youth,

To the FREE II C Tour Master of Ceremonies, Lapi Mariner for setting the scene at each fono, promoting the key messages of FREE II C, entertaining and maintaining enthusiasm of all who attended,

To the families of Pacific youth for their sacrifice, provision, guidance and ongoing support for their youth and most of all, for their example of achievement and hard work,

And most importantly to the Pacific youth participants for sharing their thoughts and aspirations and for their enthusiastic and vital contribution towards building a better future for all Pacific peoples in New Zealand.

INTRODUCTION

Ala Fou – New Pathways: strategic directions for Pacific youth in New Zealand is an initiative led by the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs in partnership with Pacific youth, their families, schools and community organisations, as well as local authorities and government agencies. *Ala Fou* refers to the development of sustainable pathways for Pacific youth to ensure they reach their full employment potential and achieve their economic aspirations in the future. There are four objectives to the *Ala Fou – New Pathways* initiative:

1. To provide relevant and up-to-date information that will identify the influences and variables that impact on Pacific youth's career pathway choices;
2. To develop a set of key strategic priorities for government to work towards that will achieve social and economic prosperity for Pacific youth in New Zealand;
3. To coordinate existing government initiatives that contribute to achieving the key strategic priorities for Pacific youth *(see page 5)*; and
4. To provide a strategic direction for future policy development that responds to a dynamic and growing Pacific youth population.

Pacific communities identified youth as a key priority at the *1999 Pacific Vision International Conference*[1] and more recently through the *Pacific Capacity Building* process.[2] Pacific youth themselves have expressed concerns that often teachers, parents and youth workers would speak on their behalf, not allowing them to articulate their own needs and aspirations to Government. The *Ala Fou - New Pathways* initiative was a direct response to the request from Pacific youth for a forum where they could meet with their peers and discuss social and economic issues that were important to them.

Phase One: FREE II C Tour – consultation fono

The Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs in partnership with a number of government agencies, local authorities, schools and Pacific community groups, held 10 nationwide consultation fono between March and April 2003.

The nationwide consultation was entitled the FREE II C Tour. FREE II C stands for 'Freedom to Choose'. It recognises that Pacific youth need to be given the freedom to determine their future pathways. It also acknowledges that this can only happen when they are equipped with all the necessary information they need to make a truly informed decision on which pathway will best suit them and enable them to participate actively in New Zealand's future economy.

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[1] Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs conference held at Auckland's Aotea Centre in July 1999 to bring together Pacific community representatives, business leaders, politicians and government to develop a shared vision for Pacific peoples in the new millennium.
[2] A Cabinet directed three year pilot led by the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs as part of Government's work to reduce inequalities for Pacific peoples in New Zealand. Evaluation of the initiative will commence in December 2003.

The fono were held in the following centres:

Whangarei	Hastings
Auckland	Palmerston North
Hamilton	Wellington
Tokoroa	Christchurch
Rotorua	Dunedin

The aim of the fono was to discuss issues relating to economic development and gainful employment opportunities for Pacific youth.

Over 700 Pacific youth aged between 13 and 24 participated at the fono, with the majority of students nominated from their schools as 'future leaders'. Pacific youth participants represented various ethnic groups, New Zealand-born and Pacific Island-born groups as well as regional perspectives.

A series of workshops were held on the themes of
- Leadership;
- Identity; and
- Prosperity.

A number of workshop presenters were local role models for their communities and Pacific people who were prospering in a variety of sectors and emerging industries. Several fono also had a 'market place' where education and training providers, local businesses and government agencies could provide information on a number of different career opportunities for Pacific youth.

Phase Two: *Ala Fou – New Pathways*

The *Ala Fou – New Pathways* report outlines the key findings of the FREE II C fono and focuses on some of the key issues, barriers and solutions identified by Pacific youth that will help them to achieve their social and economic aspirations.

Pacific youth participants at the fono came from different backgrounds, thus providing a diverse range of views on the issues discussed. It is therefore important to note that this report is a representation of the most recurrent views throughout the 10 fono and not necessarily an account of all views expressed.

Information from the consultation fono has been collated and analysed to develop a set of strategic priorities that were based on the common themes raised by Pacific youth.

Strategic Priorities

The following strategic priorities have emerged from the fono to give direction to government agencies, education and training providers, families and communities in the development of work plans, initiatives and programmes that will lead to greater social and economic prosperity for Pacific youth in New Zealand.

1. **Building cultural confidence and a positive sense of identity amongst Pacific youth in New Zealand.**
   Promoting the vibrancy and strengths of diverse Pacific cultures in New Zealand society so Pacific youth can contribute confidently to a stronger New Zealand economy.

2. **Developing strong leadership amongst Pacific youth in all areas of New Zealand society.**
   Growing and investing in the leadership qualities that Pacific youth already possess and encourage Pacific youth to take up positions of leadership and influence.

3. **Equipping Pacific youth with up to date information on the knowledge wave economy and future focused industries.**
   Providing adequate and accessible information to Pacific youth that will enable them to make informed decisions on career pathways for success and enjoy greater participation in jobs of the future.

4. **Promoting innovation, creativity and enterprise amongst Pacific youth.**
   Developing the unique skills and talents of Pacific youth to enable them to reach their full potential in knowledge-based and emerging industries and to sustain a competitive edge in a modern economy.

5. **Assisting Pacific families and communities to support Pacific youth in achieving their aspirations for social and economic prosperity.**
   Equipping Pacific families and communities with the knowledge, resource and capabilities to support their young people to make positive lifestyle choices and informed decisions about their future.

Phase three: A collaborative approach

There are a number of government strategies that contribute to the development of sustainable social and economic outcomes for Pacific youth. Issues relating to the education needs and skill shortages of the Pacific workforce are addressed in the:

- Employment Strategy
- Youth Development Strategy
- Pacific Education Plan; and the
- Tertiary Education Strategy

This initiative does not seek to reinvent the wheel or duplicate what has already been implemented, rather, it aims to provide a targeted approach by strengthening and building on what is working for Pacific youth.

The Ministry has already progressed work with government agencies on strategies and initiatives that respond to the strategic priorities that Pacific youth have set for themselves. This report will be used to assist in coordinating these strategies and initiatives. It is intended to provide guidance and focus for agencies as they set about identifying areas of priority in their future policy development around the needs of Pacific youth.

The strategic priorities identified in this report will also inform the development of a Pacific Economic Strategic Action Plan and other key policy projects that will promote economic development for Pacific peoples.

SNAPSHOT OF PACIFIC YOUTH

The Pacific youth population is an extremely fast growing and diverse group, particularly when compared to any other age group within the New Zealand population. The age group for youth, as defined through the work of the Ministry of Youth Affairs, is between 12-24. However statistics gathered by Statistics New Zealand do not cleanly measure this group, particularly within available Census information. In other information gathered, Statistics New Zealand use differing age groupings (0-14, 0-5, 5-9, 9-14, 15-19, 19-24 years). Therefore, with regards to this report, the Ministry will encompass the most information available, for the largest group available, and as a result, will define the term 'Pacific youth' as the group of Pacific people aged between 13 – 24 years of age.

According to the 2001 Population Census, there were less than 69,000 individuals aged between 12-24 years who identified themselves as being of 'Pacific' ethnicity. This number is almost one quarter of all Pacific peoples in New Zealand. When age ranges are widened to include those aged between 0-11 years, there are over 131,000 individuals who identified themselves as being of Pacific ethnicity. This new number is roughly 56% of the total number of Pacific peoples in New Zealand, indicating that the current Pacific population is very young. Since 1991, the number of Pacific peoples between 0-24 years increased from just over 98,000 to over 130,000 people. This strongly indicates that the Pacific population is a young, growing population. The fact that the median age for Pacific peoples is 21 years compared to 35 years for the national population reinforces this point.

The ethnic differences within the Pacific youth population are also of interest. All Pacific ethnic groups had populations with relatively larger proportions of those aged under 15 years than the national population. For example, Census 2001 showed that 39% of the Samoan ethnic group is aged under 15 years of age compared with 23% for the national population. Of all Pacific ethnic groups, Niuean and Tongan groups were the most extreme, with 43% of their populations comprising those under 15 years of age. The Fijian ethnic group was the most 'moderate' with 33% of its population under 15 years, which is still 10% higher than the national average.

The trend towards an increasing Pacific youth population is continuing. The Pacific Progress report[3] estimates that Pacific people aged between 0-14 will grow from 95,000 individuals in 2001 to 163,000 individuals in 2051.

Issues

The issues facing Pacific youth differ significantly from those facing the general youth population.

Housing
Pacific youth are more likely to live in households with larger family numbers. This can be either from more siblings in the family, or because of extended family members (e.g. grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins) living in the family.

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[3] A 2002 report by Statistics New Zealand and The Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs on the economic status of Pacific peoples in New Zealand.

Education

Pacific youth continue to underachieve academically when compared to the national population. Despite this, Pacific youth are continuing to improve achievement statistics, and are now entering tertiary study in increasing, though relatively small numbers. Note that a direct result of entering tertiary study is that Pacific peoples who take out student loans to fund tertiary study, have a higher mean loan balance than other ethnic groups.

In terms of post compulsory study, of the 13,080 domestic Pacific students enrolled at the end of July 2001, 9324 (71.3%) were attending Tertiary Education Institutions, such as universities, and 3,756 (28.7%) were attending Private Training Establishments.

Religion

Pacific youth continue to remain religious. The total number of Pacific peoples, aged between 0-24 years who indicated in *Census 2001* that they attend some religious activity, numbered just under 100,000 people. In particular, the Catholic, Presbyterian, Congregational and Reformed and Methodist religions amount to almost 66% of all Pacific youth that are religious. Given that the total number of Pacific peoples in these age groups is just over 130,000, a significant proportion of Pacific youth are affiliated to some sort of Christian religion.

Location

Pacific youth are very much more likely to reside in the North Island than in the South Island, with almost 94% of those aged 0-24 years indicating in *Census 2001* that they lived in the North Island. This reflects geographical concentration of Pacific peoples, particularly for those who arrived from Pacific islands during the 1960s – 1970s.

Within the major urban areas, Pacific youth are most likely to live within the South Auckland (43,000), Central Auckland (25,000), West Auckland (13,000) and Porirua (7,000) regions. *Census 2001* statistics count only 3,300 Pacific youth that live in Rural areas, including offshore islands.

Language

Language is a major issue facing Pacific youth. All six major Pacific ethnic groups have a minority of their New Zealand-born population who can speak their own language. In *Census 2001* the Samoan group had the highest level 47% of its New Zealand-born population who could speak their language. The Tongan group were the next highest, with 42% of New Zealand-born Tongans indicating they could speak their Pacific language. Tokelauan (30%), Niuean (12%), Fijian (7%) and Cook Island Maori (6%) made up the remaining statistics. In comparison between 1996 and 2001, the Samoan, Tongan and Fijian groups experienced increases in the percentage of their New Zealand-born populations speaking their language. New Zealand-born Tokelauans who could speak Tokelauan, fell from 38% in 1996 to 30% in 2001, while New Zealand-born Cook Island Maori remained stable at 6%.

Employment

It is expected that Pacific youth will make up an increasingly large proportion of the New Zealand labour force within the next fifty years. The future focus for Pacific peoples will be large numbers of youth entering the national labour force. With the current Pacific unemployment rate almost double the national rate (8.2% compared with 4.9% in December 2002), it is increasingly important that Pacific youth enter the workforce with the necessary skills for employment. By 2051, it is expected that Pacific peoples will account for 13% of the labour force.

The employment areas Pacific youth will enter into will be extremely important. *Census 2001* results showed that for Pacific youth aged between 15-24 years, the most common industries of employment were retail trade (17.9%), manufacturing (15.8%), and accommodation, café and restaurants (11.1%) which collectively accounted for almost 45% of all employed Pacific youth aged between 15-24 years. For the rest of the Pacific working age population, the three most common industries for employment were manufacturing (24.7%), property and business services (9.2%) and health and community services (8.25%). These three industries account for just over 36.66% of all Pacific peoples aged 25 years and older employed in industries.

On average, Pacific peoples over the age of 25 years made up 76% of the Pacific labour force as measured in Census 2001, while those between 15-24 years make up the remaining 24%. The most important aspect between the two groups is that the younger group is close to matching the older group in the areas of retail trade, and accommodation, café and restaurants, and cultural and recreational services. In these groups, those aged between 15-24 years made up between 35% to 45% of all Pacific peoples in these industries. This strongly highlights the movement of younger Pacific peoples away from the traditional areas of Pacific employment.

General note

The issues of Pacific self-identity and cultural preservation have emerged as key issues for Pacific people, particularly for Pacific youth. For some second-generation Pacific peoples, the bonds of Pacific culture are not as strong or dominant, and have resulted in a loss or weakening of Pacific identity, particularly for those of mixed marriages, who increasingly do not identify as Pacific. This has implications in terms of cultural and language preservation, Pacific identity and traditional Pacific values.

KEY THEMES

The themes of Identity, Leadership and Prosperity were discussed at all fono. While the key focus of the fono was economic development for Pacific youth, it was important to establish a strong foundation on which the success of Pacific youth could be built. It was also important to begin with topics that were familiar to the young people in order to stimulate their initial interest, input and engagement in the consultation process.

Identity

The purpose of this theme was to enable participants to discuss with each other issues of identity and how they might relate to economic development and prosperity. While some of the discussion touched on the challenges they face as New Zealand-born or raised Pacific youths, the overriding purpose was to highlight the strengths of being a Pacific person. It was also to help bring about a sense of affirmation and self-confidence in their abilities and contribution to New Zealand society as Pacific youth. Having established this they would be in a better position to discuss and address the themes of Leadership and Prosperity.

Leadership

This theme acknowledged the need to strengthen and increase Pacific representation at the leadership levels in all areas of New Zealand society. While Pacific leadership is prominent in certain areas such as sport, music, church and cultural/traditional fields, Pacific leadership is lacking in areas that are focused on future technologies and emerging industries. Given the youthfulness of the Pacific population it is important to develop Pacific leadership in the field of ICT, emerging industries and other areas of New Zealand society that are closely associated with economic development and sustainable growth. This theme also explored the barriers and needs of Pacific youth in relation to leadership development.

Prosperity

This theme explored the views and aspirations of Pacific youth in relation to prosperity and more specifically, economic prosperity. It explored the level of knowledge and awareness of Pacific youth of the opportunities available to them in the areas of business, ICT, bio-technology and other jobs of the future. The purpose was to expose Pacific youth to Pacific achievers in these fields and to stimulate discussion on how they saw their involvement in the future economy of New Zealand. It also looked at barriers to economic prosperity for Pacific youth and asked the young people to identify possible solutions that would enable them to better develop and achieve their aspirations for economic prosperity.

IDENTITY

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Sons of the Sea, daughters of the Pacific
My parents shape who I am
The smell of the Pacific, Frangipani, Coconut, Ocean
My language the mark of my heritage
Respect for my elders
Aiga, whanau, those who support me
Mataqali
I serve my family, kin-not just me
Eyes diverted, I do the Siva
No money for my services, just gratitude for my nature
Food, a lot of it, a token of my culture
Development of culture, transformation
Belief in God it runs through our veins,
We may not appreciate it now, perhaps later
Hitting equals love, even though I cry
Always remembering family back in the islands
The environment I now live in, please
Make it "me" the Pacific.

(This poem is the combined expression of a group of students who attended the Wellington FREE II C fono. It was constructed from points raised by group members, by one student.)

Key points:

- Pacific youth have many strengths which need to be better utilised to help them achieve economic prosperity.
- Pacific youth want to learn more about their culture and Pacific languages.
- Family is a major priority and a key source of strength for Pacific youth.
- Pacific youth need to be supported to communicate their aspirations to their parents.
- Church has a strong influence in the lives of many Pacific youth.
- Media plays a key role in creating positive self-perception amongst Pacific youth and dispelling negative stereotypes.

Pacific Pride

Throughout the 10 fono, there was generally a very strong feeling of pride in being a Pacific person and an equally strong desire to know and learn more about their Pacific cultures and languages. Pacific youth had no trouble listing the strengths of being a Pacific person in New Zealand and the advantages they had over non-Pacific people by virtue of their Pacific identity. There was an overwhelming expression of the attractiveness of Pacific cultures and values. In some groups, a strong perception emerged that Pacific peoples had an edge over Palagi (European) because of their collective strengths, natural sporting and musical abilities and cultural values.

We are very well respected, multi-talented, sports achievers, good musicians, dancers and cooks, lots of good cooking...

The participants felt that there was much that Pacific people have to contribute to New Zealand society. They noted the following as the key strengths of Pacific communities:

- Strong, vibrant and diverse cultures;
- Strong and supportive extended families;
- Strong family and church values;
- Spirituality;
- Hospitality;
- Respect for elders and discipline;
- Traditions;
- Naturally talented in sports, music and arts;
- Collective strength - *Whenever we get together we are really strong;*
- Socially adaptable;
- Good at networking; and
- Humour and good looks.

There was widespread awareness that Pacific peoples and cultures were becoming more and more visible in New Zealand. The most obvious was through the prominence of Pacific peoples in the sporting arena. Participants noted with pride the Pacific representation in teams such as the Warriors, the All Blacks and the Silver Ferns. The second area of rising Pacific influence was in music and the performing arts. Participants named groups such as *Nesian Mystik, Jamoa Jam, Pacific Soul, Che Fu* and *King Kapisi* as Pacific representatives who together with the sports stars are bringing Pacific culture into the limelight and helping to build a strong Pacific identity for young Pacific New Zealanders to relate to with pride.

Pacific youth enjoyed the fact that non-Pacific people were enjoying various aspects of Pacific culture. They noted that it was becoming more common to see 'Palagi' wearing Pacific inspired fashion and listening to Pacific music. They also noted the greater visibility of Pacific motifs and designs in advertising and interior design and décor.

It was clear that greater visibility and adoption of Pacific concepts and culture in mainstream New Zealand gave Pacific youth a strong affirmation of their place in New Zealand Society.

We have a lot of pride in the things that we do. Palagis are now taking on parts of our culture.

It's good to see non-Pacific Islanders wearing PI fashions.

It's an honour and a privilege to be a Pacific person in New Zealand.

A rise in 'Pacific popularity' in mainstream helped Pacific youth to become more interested in learning more about their island cultures, genealogy, island histories and myths.

> *Culture will become more important in the future. Culture will become more valuable.*

A few of the Pacific youth noted that times were better now in New Zealand for Pacific youth than they had been in the past.

> *PIs are luckier today in New Zealand in terms of strategies than in the past.*

> *I feel privileged to be a PI, there are more opportunities growing up in New Zealand.*

> *It's easier for us because there are opportunities there.*

> *Teachers are changing their attitude towards PIs.*

It must be noted however that while Pacific youth were aware of greater acceptance and visibility of Pacific peoples and cultures in mainstream New Zealand society, this was limited to certain sectors and focused mainly on sport, music and fashion.

American Influences

A popular perception and commonly expressed generalisation is that Pacific youth in New Zealand have adopted black American culture and made this a major part of their identity at the expense of retaining their own cultures and identities. Many of the young people listed various American 'hip-hop' artists as influencing their identity.

The views of most of the young people revealed that while they related to black American culture, they remained strong in their identification with their own Pacific cultures and were able to use hip-hop as a contemporary way of expressing their 'Pacificness'. Although Hip-hop was the form of expression, the context remained Pacific. This was evident in many of the centres where the young people would perform raps and modern songs and dances incorporating various components of their Pacific culture both in word and action. The essence of their identity was strongly Pacific.

Groups such as *Nesian Mystic* were touted as role models that were able to express the reality of Pacific youth living in New Zealand society as diverse Pacific cultures who could unite through their commonalities. Groups like *Jamoa Jam* contributed to the revival of more traditional songs that were contemporised so that both old and young could enjoy them.

In saying this, it was also evident that Pacific youth are diverse in their tastes, 'adaptable' to what they are exposed to and are products of their environment. Not all are into hip-hop, and the appreciation of music went beyond their personal choices. From hip-hop to classical music, the key observation on the tour indicated that Pacific

youth react positively to, and are motivated by things of excellence that reflect a part of them.

Knowledge of Pacific Languages

Knowledge of Pacific languages varied throughout the country. In terms of ethnic groupings the knowledge of languages showed patterns that were consistent with census statistics on knowledge of Pacific languages by Pacific youth.

In most groups, about half or less than half of the participants stated that they could speak their Pacific languages. Samoan and Tongan participants tended to report a greater knowledge and understanding of their Pacific languages.

There was however a general interest amongst most of the participants, regardless of the ethnic background, to learn or improve their knowledge of their Pacific languages, as well as an acceptance that their Pacific languages were an important part of their identity. Many of the participants who expressed knowledge of two languages (English and their Pacific language) said that this was an advantage. In some groups where most could not speak their Pacific language, all wanted to learn.

> *Like to learn more about our culture and language so we can communicate our culture and to our parents...*

Some noted that a greater knowledge of their language contributed to strengthening their sense of identity not just as Pacific people but more specifically, their separate identity as a Samoan, Niuean, Tongan etc. It gave them a stronger sense of pride and a feeling of being unique, especially when they could speak it with each other at school as another way of expressing and representing their culture. They also saw it as important in helping them to maintain links with their families back in the islands.

> *It's important so you can identify what country you are from.*

> *So you can keep in touch and keep the culture alive.*

> *Important so you can pass it on to your whanau and speak to the family when you go back to the islands...*

There were different reasons for wanting to learn their Pacific languages. Some found it embarrassing not being able to speak their language, particularly around elders. Others mentioned that they were ashamed when they were not able to speak their language and their parents would call them 'valea' (Samoan term for stupid). In some cases, their inability to speak their Pacific language created a gap between them and their elders because they were limited in how they could communicate.

> *The language is very important. It is a very important part of who we are but not the only part. Those of the older generation look down at those of us who don't really have a full understanding of the language.*

Pacific youth noted that Pacific grandparents are a valuable resource of knowledge and skill in terms of Pacific languages and culture, and are in a good position to influence responses from the Pacific community that will encourage the learning of Pacific languages by Pacific youth.

> *Grandparents want kids to learn the language - older folks play an important role in influencing…*

A majority of the participants felt that it was important for Pacific languages to be taught at all levels of education from pre-school to university.

> *We lose our language because it is not used in schools.*

In order to support the learning of Pacific languages by Pacific youth they felt there was a need for:
- Pacific languages to be an option at more secondary schools as is the case for French and German;
- More Pacific languages taught at universities; and the
- Availability of more Pacific language immersion classes.

Pacific Parents

The dominant view among participants was that they come from families that are supportive and caring. Family was a major source of strength for most participants and rated the highest amongst their priorities in terms of what was important to them and where they were affirmed and able to develop and express their Pacific identities. However, the participants also expressed a number of views that highlighted the diversity of their home backgrounds and experiences.

One commonly expressed view was that Pacific parents put a lot of pressure on their children to achieve. There were positive and negative ways of looking at this. Some felt that Pacific parents had high expectations of their children but did not necessarily listen to their opinions and were too strict. They also highlighted the difficulties of communicating their own aspirations to their parents, especially in cases where these were contrary to the plans their parents had for them.

> *They push us into corporate positions – it's a matter of pride for them.*

> *If you are not happy where you are, you will not achieve much – we find it really hard to talk to our parents about what we really want.*

An alternative view expressed by a minority of participants was that their parents did not share their desire to further their education to tertiary level.

> *Parents need money right away and make us work after high school.*

While lack of communication between Pacific youth and their parents was a recurrent theme, many of the participants said they enjoyed good communication with their parents. Most of those who noted communication gaps between them and their

parents, still felt their parents were supportive and wanted the best for them. They felt that there was still room however to bridge the communication gaps and that they needed help in this area. It was felt that this help could come from church ministers, Pacific teachers, Pacific role models and leaders who could relate to both Pacific parents and young people.

> *Our parents will support us either way, they know what we're good at and they'll be with us all the way.*

> *They'll understand because they love us but we just have to get it through to them.*

There was a general acknowledgment that Pacific parents did have skills and abilities that Pacific youth did not have. Such skills include language and oratory skills, traditional crafts, organising and coordinating large cultural, family and community events and festivities and traditional food preparation. In one group of boys it was felt that Pacific parents had better all round survival skills than Pacific youth of today because of their upbringing in the village and their transition into New Zealand society. Participants also acknowledged that they enjoy more luxuries than their parents did and are generally more fortunate and spoilt in comparison. They also felt that as a result of this, their parents have a tendency to compare their own background and experience with that of young people today. In many cases this resulted in parents making decisions for their children and *'forcing us to live their dreams instead of our own'*.

While acknowledging the support and guidance that Pacific parents give, the participants did express that there were limitations in terms of the assistance their parents could give them and that their parents also needed support as well. Some stated that parents just pushed education because they knew that it was a pathway to a 'better job', but were not able to offer advice beyond that.

> *Parents can't help because they don't know themselves.*

Some said they did not like the pressure but many conceded that their parents had their best interests at heart.

> *We don't enjoy the pressure parents put on us. Yet we ourselves would like our kids to have a good education.*

> *Pressure is the way parents support us.*

There was a general acceptance amongst the participants that respect for elders is a key part of their identity as Pacific youth. Many felt however that there was an expectation amongst Pacific elders that this respect required Pacific youth to accept their decisions without question or argument. They expressed a need for adults to encourage Pacific youth to participate more in their own decision- making.

> *A strong part of our identity is our respect for elders. Sometimes however the elders think they know it all and don't allow us to have our say.*

At the end of the day there was generally a strong feeling of loyalty to their parents. Pacific youth said that they would be caring for their elders/parents in the future.

Church

Most of the participants mentioned church as an important contributor to their identity. The spiritual aspect was important and particular mention was made of the various activities that are connected with the church such as youth groups, dancing groups and sports events. They also felt that the common belief in God brought about unity amongst the various Pacific groups.

Some mentioned that there were negative aspects to church and that outside of the fun group activities it could sometimes be boring for youth. One of the reasons given for this was the language barrier however many, especially the girls, mentioned that they felt guilty if they did not attend church. There was widespread agreement especially amongst the girls that they would continue to go to church as they grew older and that they would also bring up their children in the church.

Another aspect about church that was mentioned by some, was that '*parents see it as the ultimate priority'*. There were varying opinions on whether this was negative or positive. Some felt that their religious background was diminishing in priority in their lives.

Negatives

Bad media and negative statistics

In terms of explaining the down side of being a Pacific young person in New Zealand, most of the participants spoke about the negative public perceptions about Pacific peoples. It was felt that this was to a large extent fuelled by negative media coverage which had the result of reinforcing negative stereotypes of Pacific youth. Many felt that the strong influence of media on Pacific youth could either positively or adversely affect the self-perception of Pacific youth depending on the types of messages that were being communicated.

> *There is also a down side and a real need to tidy up the image associated with living in South Auckland.*

> *Some people look down on South Aucklanders.*

> *We are seen as factory workers and labourers.*

> *There is an attitude that we don't have academics and that we are criminals.*

Many of the young people were only too aware of the negative statistics surrounding Pacific peoples in New Zealand and found this embarrassing. They also alluded to the history of overstaying and the difficulty of shaking off these perceptions by other people and the extent to which they allowed these perceptions and stereotypes to affect their own ability to see themselves more positively.

Participants said they wanted to see more positive images of Pacific peoples portrayed through the various forms of media. This would serve to challenge negative stereotypes of Pacific peoples and encourage Pacific youth to achieve higher, and to be confident of their contribution to New Zealand society.

Other negative points raised by some participants about being Pacific were:

- Eating too much fatty foods;
- Wagging;
- Don't care about school;
- Teenage pregnancy;
- Strict discipline;
- Racism;
- English is no good and we don't like studying;
- We don't try at studying or education;
- We always try to be staunch / don't like listening;
- We don't ask for help;
- Ma / shyness;
- Tend to keep to ourselves; and
- It's a Palagi world.

Culture
While the overall feeling was one of pride in their cultural identity the young people also expressed negative views on certain aspects of their culture.

> *Sometimes the Samoan way is good but in a bad way. A wrong thing about the culture is that they can be so judgemental.*
>
> *Fa'a Samoa is really bad. It's really discouraging to see and know that families are second to the needs of others. Culture is first before anything else.*
>
> *Hard work – having to work twice as hard, sometimes living two lives, satisfying the cultural requirement of family and Pacific community life as well as living in a Palagi world.*

The most negative aspect of Pacific culture that was voiced by Pacific youth was the extensive giving of money to the church and other Pacific events such as funerals and weddings.

On further discussion of some of the above comments what was most evident was:

- The lack of communication between the youth and their parents;
- The lack of knowledge and understanding by Pacific youth as to the significance of particular cultural practices; and
- The difference in experience and understanding between Pacific youth and their parents on collective/community values and responsibilities.

Gender

In a number of the groups made up of young women the participants referred to the inequality of gender roles as a negative aspect of being Pacific. More specifically there was a perception that girls in Pacific families were treated differently than boys and didn't have the same freedoms. Many felt that due to traditional views held by their parents on the role of women they ended up having more responsibilities around the home. They felt that this affected the opportunities available to them.

> *We are not allowed to go out at night* (reference to the strictness placed upon girls) *We have to do everything at home because we are girls...we have no time to study.*

In one region the majority of a group of girls said there was cultural conflict that existed between them and their parents. Some said they would sneak out or were scared to tell their parents things because they knew that they would not understand.

Regional Views

While the majority of issues covered on the topic of identity were similar for Pacific youth throughout the country there were a number of comments made on what it was like being a Pacific person in a particular region.

The following paragraphs touch on some of the issues that were brought up in reference to the particular region the participants lived in. They are by no means representative of the views and experiences of all the participants but were issues that, when voiced in the group, received general agreement from most if not by all of the group.

***

Many of the **Auckland** participants talked about the stigma of living in South Auckland and the constant media coverage that portrayed South Auckland in a negative light. Even those who lived in other parts of Auckland made regular reference to the stigma of South Auckland and drew a distinction to their own experience as Pacific youth living centrally or 'out West'. There were similar issues around the stigma that resulted from negative statistics and 'bad media' about PI and there was an overall feeling that this created bad public and self-perceptions that were inaccurate, exaggerated and to a degree, oppressive.

While the majority who were from South Auckland were proud to live in South Auckland because of the strong sense of community and culture, some felt that they had to leave South Auckland to get the jobs and opportunities they wanted.

One of the good points noted about South Auckland was the new developments such as the new shopping areas and changing physical environment.

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A young woman who had moved from South Auckland to **Dunedin** said:

> *I have learnt more about my identity here in Dunedin. You take for granted your identity when you are with your people in Auckland but when you're away from your people, say here in Dunedin, you want to work hard to hold on to it - need to identify.*

> *Hard to identify as a Pacific person here in Dunedin when people think you are Maori.*

<div align="center">***</div>

> *People presume we do certain things because we are islanders here in **Whangarei.***

> *There are a few of us but it's ok because we get on with other locals.*

> *We don't feel lonely or isolated (for those of us who were born here) but it's nice going to Auckland where there are more islanders like us.*

> *Islanders stick together around here.*

> *We need to be separate and maintain that uniqueness.*

> *We are special and rare because there aren't many of us here in Whangarei.*

<div align="center">***</div>

> *All islanders in **Hamilton** get on. We're close with each other.*

<div align="center">***</div>

> *We're called bungas; we're dissed by Maori, different from Auckland where you don't have Maoris (**Rotorua**).*

> *We have to be staunch.*

> *Pacific groups get along here in Rotorua.*

A group of girls in Rotorua said there was a definite difference between Pacific youth that lived in the provinces and those who lived in the regions or main centres. They felt that Pacific peoples in Auckland could just be themselves and feel free to openly express their culture, however in Rotorua, money talked and you needed money to look and be cool.

<div align="center">***</div>

The atmosphere amongst the youth in **Tokoroa** was vibrant. Most of the young people felt that their Pacific community was strong and island groups were 'tight'.

There was a strong sense of community support, unity and cooperation amongst the various ethnic groups.

> *Attitudes between PIs in Tokoroa is good...not competitive with other islands.*

> *PI in Tokoroa get on well with each other.*

> *It's safer to live in Tokoroa...Auckland is rough and territorial.*

> *Schools help and are involved with families coz there are smaller numbers of PIs.*

<div align="center">***</div>

A group of **Wellington** students expressed the perception that Pacific people in Dunedin didn't know about their cultures, that Auckland was very multicultural and that there was already a lot happening in Wellington

> *Our colour and race is the only difference we have between island groups, we are all the same.*

> *There are no advantages or disadvantages; the only difference is where we are brought up - the bigger the town the more the advantages.*

Summary of 'IDENTITY' issues and solutions

There was a general feeling of Pacific pride expressed by the Pacific youth that attended the 10 fono. The strength of the collective was highlighted as well as the positive effect that this had not only on those who were already secure and confident in their identity but also for those who entered the fono less assured of the benefits and strengths of their Pacific heritage. Highlighting Pacific strengths served as an empowering reminder to participants that Pacific peoples have endured and achieved much to reach their current place in New Zealand society, managing throughout to retain the best parts of their culture and pass aspects of this onto mainstream New Zealand to enjoy. Pacific youth felt that more of this positive reinforcement was needed at all levels of New Zealand society.

It was felt that Pacific role models in the area of sport and music were doing a lot to promote Pacific identity in New Zealand society however more work was needed to reverse the continual stigma and negative stereotypes generated by media. Furthermore the prominence of sporting and music achievers could also be seen to perpetuate limiting stereotypes of Pacific people. It was felt that this affected the way society saw them as well as their own perceptions of who they were and in what areas they could achieve.

Knowledge of and connection with their Pacific culture came through strongly as a key factor in building their confidence and contributing to their likelihood of success.

Pacific youth made the following suggestions for addressing the key issues relating to identity:

- While Pacific youth are proud of their ethnic specific identity, it is important to acknowledge they face many common issues as 'Pacific' young people.

- Pacific youth would like to learn more about their Pacific cultures and languages.
  - *More creative resources on line;*
  - *More school and community/parent support for cultural groups;*
  - *Address Pacific language issues through the school curriculum, resources, development and support; and*
  - *More opportunities to learn about Pacific languages and culture at school.*

- A positive sense of identity is a major contributing factor to the success and achievement of Pacific youth.
  - *Address and promote Pacific values and culture throughout the education system in New Zealand (e.g. teaching Pacific history).*

- Family and culture play a crucial role in developing strong identity among Pacific youth.
  - *Preserve family values and culture to retain Pacific identity;*
    - *Mentoring support systems (big buddy type system);*
    - *Promote families as important Pacific role models; and*
    - *Encourage and support traditional culture outlets e.g. church, sports teams, and culture groups.*

- There is a need to promote positive self-perceptions and awareness amongst Pacific youth.
  - *Encourage positive Pacific self perceptions and understanding of Pacific identity;*
  - *Promote the development of positive images of Pacific culture through business and creative industries e.g. culture groups, Dawn Raid, Black Grace and other visual arts; and*
  - *Promote positive Pacific images through the media.*

- Pacific youth need regular exposure to and contact with positive Pacific role models from a greater variety of fields.
  - *Develop more mentoring programmes for Pacific youth;*
  - *More school partnerships with business and private sector.*

- Pacific youth need support to balance their Pacific values and upbringing with life as New Zealand-born Islanders.
  - *Develop more cultural resources e.g. Samoana video;*
  - *Education on major issues e.g. Family violence consultation / community education programmes; and*
  - *Develop Pacific providers to train in Pacific culture (e.g. PAF - Pacific Analysis Framework).*

- Pacific youth need to be supported in communicating their aspirations, goals and needs to their parents.
  - *More mentoring programmes that involve both Pacific parents and young people together.*

- Pacific parents must be supported to assist their youth to reach their goals and learn their culture.
  - *Positive parenting classes;*
  - *Education for parents on issues such as gender, family violence etc..; and*
  - *Positively encourage the speaking and learning of Pacific languages at home.*

LEADERSHIP

Without vision our youth will perish.

Key points:

- There is a need to strengthen relationships between Pacific cultural and traditional leaders and Pacific youth.
- Church plays a major role in developing leadership among Pacific youth.
- Pacific youth need to be acknowledged as strong and potential leaders.
- Pacific youth need to be given more opportunities to take on leadership positions.
- Pacific communities must encourage leadership and participation by their youth.
- Pacific youth need to be actively supported to develop their leadership potential.
- Pacific youth need more exposure and interaction with Pacific leaders in innovative and emerging industries.
- Pacific young women must be supported in their development as leaders.

The issue of leadership was discussed with questions focusing on the qualities of leadership, what kinds of leadership positions they occupied, who they saw as their leaders, what kinds of leadership positions they aspired to and what they saw as some of the barriers to leadership.

While Pacific youth were good at describing leaders and the qualities leaders must possess, many did not necessarily identify themselves as leaders nor recognise or acknowledge the leadership qualities they possessed within themselves.

Who are their leaders?

Most of the youth acknowledged their parents as leaders in their lives and acknowledged the gains their parents had made and the hardships they had overcome to make it to where they are today.

The other most commonly mentioned leaders, stemmed from areas of society where Pacific youth felt that Pacific people tended to dominate or lead the rest of New Zealand society, that is, sport and church. People such as Michael Jones, Tana Umaga, *Jamoa Jam*, church ministers, youth group leaders and culture group tutors were often mentioned. Many said they looked up to their older brothers and sisters. They were also familiar with Pacific political leaders in New Zealand.

Cultural leaders

While conscious of the need for innovative leaders who would take Pacific peoples forward, Pacific youth said there was a need for stronger relationships between them

and traditional leaders and Pacific elders. They saw this as a necessary requirement to enable them to hold onto their cultural heritage. Pacific youth wanted more opportunities to learn and lead in the area of Pacific culture and language.

Church

Pacific youth said that church was a good place to train and develop leadership skills amongst Pacific youth. There was much opportunity to build confidence and exercise responsibility through the various church youth activities and this was a positive aspect of church that needed to be encouraged more throughout all churches and extended out to the wider community.

> *The church is the best way to promote role models and growing leaders.*

Current leadership positions

The process of selection for participation in the fono was in most cases left to the discretion of the school or nominating community organisation. The common criteria used focused on young leaders however this was not exclusively the case. Some were chosen because it was felt that they would benefit from the fono and gain more confidence and inspiration.

Evident among most groups was the presence of student leaders, head prefects, youth group leaders and sports captains. This was balanced however by a large percentage who simply possessed leadership qualities, which was evident in their conduct and input throughout the day, as well as those who did not see themselves as leaders. For many the fact that they were chosen to attend made them feel a sense of importance and a need to represent their culture or their school well.

> *I got selected to come to this conference - was proud to be selected to come here as a potential leader.*

Those who were in leadership positions spoke of the benefits of being in those positions. They spoke about how the opportunity of taking on the responsibility of leadership had enabled them to grow in confidence, recognise their abilities and attempt new challenges.

> *My role as sports captain gave me confidence.*

> *I am a prefect at boarding house - I want to be a role model to my youngest....*

> *Leadership in Air Corps has been useful.*

> *A lot of older kids are given the responsibility of looking after youngsters - therefore the development of our leadership starts at an earlier stage.*

Lack of vision

Pacific youth agreed that there was a lack of vision and forward thinking in terms of their going into leadership positions. Most of them had not thought about long-term leadership aspirations past school. They identified that not enough of them were thinking big and positioning themselves on where they wanted to be, rather they were focused too much on where they were.

Another interesting point that was brought up was the lack of vision that schools had for Pacific youth. Some felt that schools were just trying to move Pacific students into the 'bare minimum' job or to get a 'C' pass rather than pushing them to reach their absolute full potential. They felt that it was not only their own mindsets that had to change but also the mindsets of schools with regard to their Pacific students.

> *It seems as if there's no high expectations of us, they automatically think we're average or below. If people were more positive about us it would contribute to us excelling as Pacific youth…contribute to our prospering.*

Participants identified that Pacific youth need to be encouraged to set their sights higher in terms of taking on leadership positions. They also felt that schools need to recognise more the leadership potential of Pacific youth and provide them with more opportunities to model their leadership abilities.

Lack of confidence

Low self-confidence and self-esteem was seen as a major barrier to taking on leadership positions. Amongst the groups of young males it was a common finding that most of them had not thought about being Pacific role models or leaders, in fact it was a 'novel' idea that they would be leaders in their families or communities one day.

Many thought that shyness was an issue and this stemmed more from a Pacific attitude of being humble. They felt that it was important for non-Pacific to know this and not to misinterpret humility as a sign of weakness or an inability to lead. For others it was a matter of *'getting out of your comfort zone'* and learning to be more outspoken. It was also a matter of recognising that they do already possess leadership qualities in the current roles they played in their schools, amongst their peers and with their younger siblings.

Some of the things listed as affecting their confidence to aim for leadership positions were: embarrassment, negative attitudes, peer pressure, fear of failure and fear of being singled out from the group.

They felt that Pacific families should encourage and support the decisions of Pacific youth and spend more quality time with each child to help raise their confidence. They also felt that there was a need for Pacific communities to encourage Pacific youth to participate more in community affairs.

Lack of support

Many Pacific youth said that there was insufficient support available to them both in terms of developing Pacific youth leaders as well as nurturing those who were currently in positions of leadership.

Many felt that leadership was not encouraged enough amongst Pacific youth. Despite this, a popular viewpoint was that Pacific youth were burdened with a number of leadership roles (both formal and informal), responsibilities and expectations. As a result of this they were at risk of *'burning out'* from the pressure, or not being able to perform all their tasks well. They felt that better support would result from an increased understanding by parents and schools of the many demands they faced as Pacific youth. As a possible solution, Pacific youth expressed the need for closer relationships to be developed between parents, teachers and churches.

Lack of innovative Pacific leaders as role models

Most of the leaders that the young people were exposed to were in the more traditional roles such as church minister, matai, and elders. For many this provided them with a narrow view of Pacific leadership and what it entailed. For many, it was not something they could relate to.

Outside of this they saw sports people and musicians as leaders. It was felt that Pacific men lead in physical areas such as sports but are lacking in economic areas such as business. They felt there was a need to know more about Pacific peoples who were leading the way in areas other than the more traditional fields mentioned above. They also said there was a need for the kind of leadership that was appealing and relevant to them and took into account current Pacific youth issues making them aware of new fields that most of them had little or no experience or knowledge of. Pacific youth said they needed to see and hear more from the types of leaders who spoke at the fono. Many were not aware that there were Pacific peoples in these areas of work who held leading positions in their field and were demonstrating innovation to mainstream New Zealand in areas where Pacific peoples did not traditionally participate. (Prior to the FreeIIC tour most of the youth did not even know what biotechnology meant let alone being able to name a Pacific scientist.)

Barriers to leadership for women

Many of the girls felt that family obligations and traditional gender roles created a barrier that prevented or made it difficult for Pacific women to work towards positions of leadership. It was felt that the role of women in Pacific families meant they put their family before their own career. There was also the perception among a few that women who pursue their careers are likely to 'lose their traditions'.

An alternative view amongst some was that while in many Pacific cultures leadership was more the domain of males, it was Pacific women who were going to be the Pacific leaders of tomorrow. A lot of the young girls felt that Pacific women were natural leaders and would be the future leaders of the Pacific because they were better at organising and getting things done.

Summary of 'LEADERSHIP' issues and solutions

Pacific youth made the following suggestions for addressing the key issues relating to leadership:

- Lack of vision (attitudes)
  - *Inspiration and goal setting classes for Pacific youth;*
  - *Change of mindset for Careers advisors and Pacific youth; and*
  - *Mentoring.*

- Lack of opportunities for Pacific youth to take up positions of leadership or develop their leadership skills
  - *More leadership courses and forums like Free II C;*
  - *Encourage greater youth participation in leadership positions and leadership development initiatives; and*
  - *More Pacific leadership camps.*

- Lack of confidence , self esteem and motivation
  - *Promote positive peer pressure;*
  - *Confidence building courses for Pacific youth;*
  - *Greater utilisation of Pacific role models and mentors; and*
  - *Community mentoring programmes.*

- Lack of support and encouragement
  - *Schools to support Pacific students in areas other than sports and cultural events;*
  - *Greater support mechanisms for Pacific youth leaders;*
  - *Establish closer relationships between parents, teachers and churches; and*
  - *Mentoring.*

- Not enough 'New Pathway Leaders'
  - *More forums like Free II C focussing on new pathway leaders and role models;*
  - *Show case Pacific leaders in the field of business and economic development;*
  - *Pacific scholarships as incentives to enter ICT and other emerging industries; and*
  - *Specific workshops on career pathways for emerging industries.*

- Barriers to leadership for women
  - *Initiatives to encourage and support young Pacific women to take up positions of leadership.*

- Lack of resources
  - *More scholarships for Pacific youth; and*
  - *More funding for Pacific youth leadership initiatives.*

- Lack of knowledge and relevant information
  - *Availability of better careers advice from schools and greater accessibility to careers advice/services.*

PROSPERITY
_____

Prosperity - top priority is my relationship with my family - I would like to take this strength of relationships out to other areas of my life and community.

Key points:

- For most Pacific youth, prosperity is about strong and healthy families and relationships.
- Pacific youth must be supported to develop their aspirations for economic prosperity in the context of their family and cultural environment and values.
- Pacific youth need to be taught the benefits of business and how they can pursue it and sustain it.
- Pacific youth must be supported to overcome barriers and fears that would prevent them from considering business as a potential option.
- Pacific youth need more exposure to Pacific business mentors.
- Pacific youth need more up to date, accessible and relevant information on the knowledge wave economy, ICT and the types of related career options that are available to them.
- Pacific youth would like more regular exposure to and interaction with Pacific leaders, mentors and role models in the area of ICT and business.
- Pacific youth need more scholarships and access to computers.

What does prosperity mean to you?

When asked for their views on prosperity the initial response from participants indicated that most were not familiar with the term. After those who did have an idea volunteered various definitions, the following types of responses were received:

> *Prosperity is about happiness.*

> *It's about my happiness and everything that I want to do, not everything that I need to do.*

> *Social prosperity is more important for PIs as opposed to economic prosperity.*

> *Prosperity is about having a family, job, being strong in church and being able to do things for youth.*

> *It's hard for PIs to aim for prosperity - looks selfish and individualistic to our elders, like thinking like a Palagi.*

> *It's about moving from where your parents were.*

While many mentioned financial wealth and all that goes with it, the most interesting feature of their responses was the tendency to view prosperity in terms of family wellbeing and community.

In some areas there was a strong sense of social prosperity. By way of example, in Tokoroa, a group of young teenage boys felt that socially they, as Pacific Islanders were very prosperous and there was a strong sense of community and positive wellbeing in Tokoroa. They stated however that Pacific Islanders in Tokoroa were not economically prosperous, that they made enough money for themselves and sometimes sent some home to the islands for relatives. They attributed their social prosperity to the fact that all Pacific groups got on well and there was a lot of family support and role modelling through the church. They also felt that Tokoroa was a safe environment compared to other places.

For many, prosperity merely meant being comfortable and having just enough.

Prosperity, Family and Pacific Culture

Family and culture were seen as both a barrier and aid to achieving economic prosperity.

Pacific youth felt that sometimes family practices based on certain cultural values were a hindrance. Traditional Pacific values of contributing financially to major family and community and church events (i.e. *fa'alavelave*) were mentioned as a major obstacle to any plans for prosperity. For some, these values determined their concept of prosperity. One person's definition of prosperity was *'having enough money for fa'alavelave'.* In addition to the financial obligations, the demands of time and responsibility over younger siblings often got in the way of their study or future planning.

Despite the identified obstacles relating to family and culture, the young people also saw family as a strength and a key source of support and motivation for them to do well. They felt that their aspirations often differed from what their parents wanted of them and the key challenge lay in effectively communicating the message of success and prosperity that would result from them pursuing their own pathway.

> *Need to find a way to inform parents of what those jobs of the future are.*

Many young people felt their parents had a narrow view of what pathways would lead to prosperity.

> *I was obligated [by parents] to go to university, NOT polytech but I changed my mind because it's not for me…I found that I work better doing practical things therefore I cancelled out university and did polytech.*

> *A real barrier is changing our parents' mindset and perspective about university and polytech: 'University versus Polytech'.*

In terms of getting these messages across many felt they needed assistance from outside of the family help to them convince their parents.

> *Utilise people who are influential in our communities to get the message across to our parents - pastors, youth leaders, role models.*

They felt that greater parental support would result from greater awareness on the part of their parents.

Business

Very few Pacific youth expressed an interest in getting into business. Most had not even considered this as a career option. They were easily able to identify the benefits of being in business and mentioned the attractiveness of being their own boss, controlling their own time, being able to provide for their family, to have their family work for them and to express their culture. Many however felt it was not an option that Islanders would generally go for.

> *We need to be taught more about the benefits of aiming for business and how we can get into it and set it up. The idea at first seems a bit foreign because we are Islanders.*

The small minority who had given some thought to business stated their main reasons as being: to motivate other Pacific Islanders, to be in control of their lives and to provide for their families. Most did not know what area of business they wanted to get into and of those who did, few had a clear idea of where they could go to for advice.

Amongst the minority of young people who said they would be interested in going into business the popular choices were in the area of fashion, entertainment (i.e. nightclub), tourism, retail and food, sports and recreation.

A few of the young people were able to identify the benefits of being part of a culture that was a niche market into which they had first hand knowledge and experience. This was seen to be a possible advantage for particular types of business.

Barriers to business

After discussing the benefits of being in business most of the participants said they were open to the idea of getting into business but felt that there were a number of barriers that made this a less attractive career option for Pacific youth. Amongst the barriers noted were:

- *No networks* - They felt they did not know the right people who could help them to get started in business.

- *No money* - The perception that you need to have lots of money before thinking of going into business made it a less attractive option to seriously consider in the first place.
- *Too hard* - Most of the participants felt that starting and running a business required more effort than a 'normal' job.
- *Too risky* - Many of the young people did not have much faith in the stability of businesses. Some felt that it was too risky and many businesses close down soon after they start.
- *Competition* - Associated with the risk of business was the fear of competition and the belief that other PIs were better than them and would do better in business.
- *Lack of information* on how to start their own business - Most knew nothing.
- *Lack of knowledge* on the basics of running a business - Young people felt they did not know enough about some of the basic aspects and key components of running a business.
- *Lack of confidence* in their own ability to run a business / too shy / 'no confidence to be hard' / fear of failure.
- *No active or positive promotion of business as an option* (or teaching of business principles).

Pacific youth said it would be useful to hear more from a variety of successful Pacific business people about their personal backgrounds and experiences in business.

Future Aspirations

The general impression received was that the Pacific youth did not set high economic aspirations for themselves. While many were able to mention their career goals, few demonstrated any planning of steps that they had to take to meet their aspirations for prosperity. On the face of it, most of them had dreams and they were able to list a great variety of careers that they wanted to pursue. However, further enquiry revealed that while they might have known where they wanted to go, they didn't actually know the specifics of how to get there, only the kinds of subjects they had to take.

Obvious interest areas for future careers were centred on the creative industries, performing arts, hospitality and travel, and views of success pathways pointed towards traditional professions such as law, teaching and counselling, etc. Feedback did not however reveal any clear favourites in terms of future professions.

While Pacific youth on Free II C were interested in a wide range of professions, areas such as biotechnology, ICT and other knowledge based industries did not come across as very appealing to them. Many felt that these were boring areas of work to get into. This was largely due to their lack of knowledge of the area. Inspiring sessions given by Pacific role models provided participants with interesting examples of careers that were less traditional. The young people found these sessions new and enlightening and said that more had to be done to make knowledge-based industries more attractive for them.

Knowledge Wave Economy

When questioned on their understanding of the 'Knowledge Wave' economy, a majority of the participants in most of the groups reported that they did not know what it was or had never heard of it. For some this was more a lack of familiarity with the term. For those who did have a vague idea of what it meant, they did not seem to be able to connect the relevance of it to everyday life or see the importance of it for the future.

Information Communication Technology (ICT)

Few of the participants had mentioned ICT as a pathway to prosperity. Students felt that ICT should be promoted more in schools and from a young age. They suggested that this could be done by incorporating it as part of the NCEA accreditation system and using Pacific people to promote it. Of particular use would be people who already had careers in the ICT area who through their work could demonstrate the usefulness and appeal of ITC for Pacific students. They also said that they wanted more access to computers and computer programmes that are user friendly, cheap and relevant to their field of interest. Many were interested in the idea of having a Pacific ICT conference for youth, attending more ICT expos and having access to more exciting information at school on ICT.

Availability of information

What was clear throughout the fono was that Pacific youth made decisions about their futures based on the information that was available to them. The most common finding in all centres was the lack of knowledge of ICT, business and emerging industries. Students felt that there was not enough information available to them on opportunities in the area of ICT, business, research and other emerging industries.

> *There is no general information on the sorts of jobs that are going to be around in the future.*

The young people were able to identify in general terms the types of places they could go to for help such as careers expos, websites, elders, friends and relations. However, in terms of the effectiveness of these avenues, the low uptake by students suggested that there is more to be done in terms of more effective targeting of Pacific youth.

Careers advisors

While some mentioned the careers advisor as a source of information and assistance, many said that they did not use the careers advisors, many did not know about the careers advisors and some felt that teachers were more helpful to them than careers advisors. One of the barriers to utilising the careers advisors was the need to make

appointments to see them, whereas teachers were more accessible. Some students were fortunate to have the benefit of extra attention from helpful teachers who went the extra mile to assist them with choosing their career pathways.

Students also said that the kind of information and advice they received from careers advisors was limited and they wanted to know where else they could go to get all the information they need. They also felt that some careers advisors had low expectations of them and as a result tended to recommend options based on these low expectations.

Culture and Education

While there is earlier mention in this report on views expressed by Pacific youth about teachers changing their attitude towards them (in a positive way), many Pacific youth felt that teachers discriminated against them as Pacific students and stereotyped them as non-achievers. They felt that there was poor communication between teachers and Pacific students and that the teaching styles did not suit their way of learning. They expressed a need for more Pacific teachers because they were easier to relate to. Pacific youth also said that teachers could play a major role in motivating them to go to class. Many stated that they would go to class based on the personality of the teacher.

Pacific mentors and role models

Pacific youth throughout the country emphasised the need for more Pacific role models, greater access to these role models and more mentoring programmes for Pacific youth. They said mentoring programmes were an effective way of getting Pacific youth to change their mindsets and raise their aspirations. They made the following comments and suggestions about the roles and benefits of mentors:

- *Pacific mentors that come in and give careers advice are more effective than those that just address the whole school.*

- *Pacific mentors that come into schools and talk to the kids need to talk to the parents on behalf of the kids - kids have specific needs that must be addressed and are different from parents needs.*

- *Mentors, we need to bring them into our schools, have them show their faces and show us it can be done.*

- *Ministry of Education should provide each school with a list of possible role models and speakers who can also be mentors to encourage tertiary education.*

- *Role models - if role models have achieved then it is more believable for the younger generation to take on*

- *It was great hearing the Pacific role models talking because it made me think it's real and it can happen and I can do it. He brought it across as being so simple.*

Although most Pacific youth said they could relate best to Pacific mentors they also said that non-Pacific mentors who had a sincere interest in helping Pacific youth were just as important in helping them to get out of their comfort zones, broaden their experience and raise their aspirations.

Inadequate Resources

Pacific youth said that they do not have adequate resources to access pathways that would lead to prosperity. Many said that the student loan was a deterrent to entering tertiary studies. They said there was a need for more scholarships as incentives to undertake further studies.

Many felt that not having the money to go to the best schools or afford the latest equipment placed them at a disadvantage. While many had access to computers few had computers in their home and had to use a school computer or go to an internet café.

Summary of 'PROSPERITY' issues and solutions

Pacific youth made the following suggestions for addressing the key issues relating to prosperity:

- Pacific youth do not generally have high economic aspirations.

- Pacific youth do not have a clear idea of the pathways to achieving their economic goals.

- Pacific youth know very little about ICT, business, emerging industries and jobs of the future.

Key areas of need and possible solutions

1. More access to Pacific role models in the area of business, ICT and emerging industries
   - More hands on/one to one support for Pacific youth;
   - More mentors - not necessarily business minded;
   - Mentors for 6th and 7th formers;
   - More access to Pacific role models through forums like Free II C where young people can come together for encouragement and motivation;
   - More shadow days (day trips with Pacific professionals); and
   - More Pacific mentoring programmes that work with Pacific parents.

2. Development of clearer pathways to success
   - More courses and work experience for Pacific students;
   - More work choice days; and
   - Careers advisors and schools working closely with Pacific mentors and role models.

3. Greater encouragement and support
   - Increase in the number of Pacific liaison staff at tertiary and secondary institutions;
   - Motivation and self esteem classes for Pacific youth;
   - Greater access to language learning opportunities; and
   - Effective partnerships between families, schools, churches, Pacific communities and government.

4. Adequate and accessible information
   - More information on the knowledge wave economy and careers in emerging industries to be made available in schools through careers advisors;
   - Pacific Business Trust to go around to schools, churches and youth groups promoting business as a career option;
   - More information and practical opportunities in schools on starting and

running a business and making it sustainable; and
- More ICT training in schools for Pacific youth.

5. Regular follow up
   - Ongoing follow up services for Pacific students; and
   - Effective partnerships between Pacific families and schools leading to greater involvement of Pacific parents in schools.

6. Resources
   - More scholarships for Pacific youth as incentives to enter into studies that will equip them for the jobs of the future.
   - Pacific leadership camps.
   - Teacher training
     - Teachers should be selected on the basis of their ability to work effectively with Pacific youth.

What is the best way of informing Pacific youth?

There are a variety of ways to communicate effectively to Pacific youth. Those who attended the fono listed the following as effective methods of outreach to Pacific youth:

- Careers Expo
- Videos
- Promotions at schools with programmes taken to the schools instead of expecting the students to come to them
- Work experience days
- Conferences that target younger students
- Roadshows
- One to one sessions
- Work with families and friends
- Television
- Radio programmes for Pacific youth
- Internet
- Newspaper
- Pacific youth magazines
- Career guidance / advice
- Schools
- Churches - information is always passed on at church
- More Free II C forums in the future
- Participation at community meetings

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND PATHWAYS

Information from the consultation fono highlighted key issues and concerns of Pacific youth and more importantly it provided a clear indication of their limited knowledge of economic prosperity, lack of vision and aspirations for economic development and lack of awareness of clear pathways to economic prosperity. As such, the following strategic priorities and possible pathways have been developed to provide directions for work on economic development for Pacific youth.

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1. Building cultural confidence and a positive sense of identity amongst Pacific youth in New Zealand.

Promoting the vibrancy and strengths of diverse Pacific cultures in New Zealand society so Pacific youth can contribute confidently to a stronger New Zealand economy.

Possible goals:
- Reduction in the loss of language and displacement of culture by Pacific young people.
- Improved self-esteem and self-worth of Pacific young people.
- Increased levels of confidence leading to improved education and employment outcomes.
- An inclusive New Zealand society where Pacific cultures become embedded as part of New Zealand's heritage as a Pacific nation.

Possible pathways:
- Increased opportunities for Pacific youth to learn more about their Pacific cultures and languages.
- Maintain and develop positive self-perceptions and self-esteem amongst Pacific youth.
- Pacific youth need regular exposure to and contact with positive Pacific role models and mentors from a greater variety of fields.
- Pacific youth need to be supported in communicating their aspirations, goals and needs to their parents.
- Remove stigma connected with being a Pacific person in New Zealand.

2. Developing strong leadership amongst Pacific youth in all areas of New Zealand society.

Growing and investing in the leadership qualities that Pacific youth already possess and encourage Pacific youth to take up positions of leadership and influence.

Possible goals:
- Improved representation of Pacific peoples on boards and in management positions.
- Greater involvement of Pacific peoples in decision-making processes.
- Increased Pacific leadership in business, ICT and other emerging industries.

Possible pathways:
- Increase the opportunities for Pacific youth to take on leadership positions.
- Build confidence amongst Pacific youth to take on leadership positions.
- Increase and develop support structures and initiatives for Pacific youth leaders.
- Increase the opportunities for Pacific youth to interact with and learn from Pacific leaders in business, ICT and emerging industries.
- Greater support for Pacific young women in developing their leadership skills.
- Increase the number of scholarships and funding for Pacific leadership programmes.

3. Equipping Pacific youth with up to date information on the 'Knowledge Wave' economy and future focused industries.

Providing adequate and accessible information to Pacific youth that will enable them to make informed decisions on career pathways for success and enjoy greater participation in jobs of the future.

Possible goals:
- Increased awareness of the jobs of the future.
- Greater participation and representation of Pacific people in all areas of New Zealand's workforce.

Possible pathways:
- Provision of adequate, current and accessible information on ICT, business and emerging industry opportunities.
- Increased opportunities for Pacific youth to interact and learn from Pacific leaders in the area of business, ICT and emerging industries.
- Availability of culturally relevant information that is easy to understand.
- Identify clear career pathways and goals for Pacific young people to work towards, from pre-school level until workforce entry.
- Regular and ongoing follow up for Pacific youth in the development of their career pathways.
- Improve coordination and encourage efficient use of resources between agencies.

4. Promoting innovation, creativity and enterprise amongst Pacific youth.

Developing the unique skills and talents of Pacific youth to enable them to reach their full potential in knowledge-based and emerging industries and to sustain a competitive edge in a modern economy.

Possible goals:
- Pacific people utilising their unique talents to compete on an international scale.
- Pacific people succeeding in innovative business enterprise and creative industries.

Possible pathways:
- Greater access to Pacific role models in the area of business, ICT and emerging industries.
- More innovative initiatives in schools that will stimulate innovative thinking.
- More effective partnerships between schools and business/ private/ICT sectors.
- More resources to support and encourage active youth involvement and participation in New Zealand's future economy.
- Promotion of goal setting and planning amongst Pacific youth from an early age.

5. Assisting Pacific families and communities to support Pacific youth in achieving their aspirations for social and economic prosperity.

Equipping Pacific families and communities with the knowledge, resource and capabilities to support their young people to make positive lifestyle choices and informed decisions about their future.

Possible goals
- Reduced communication barriers between parents and young people.
- Greater understanding by Pacific parents of the knowledge wave economy and jobs of the future.
- Increased involvement of Pacific parents in career development for Pacific youth.

Possible pathways:
- Pacific Capacity Building for Pacific young people.
- Effective and ongoing relationships and interaction between Pacific parents and schools relationships between Parents and schools.
- Pacific church and community initiatives that support Pacific young people to make positive lifestyle choices.
- More community based parents support initiatives.

NEXT STEPS

The Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs will work with government agencies to develop an action plan that will respond to the priorities that Pacific youth have set for themselves.

A Pacific youth reference group will be formed from representatives of Pacific youth who attended the Free II C tour. This group will assist the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs and government agencies in the identification of ways to best develop the strategic priorities and give further consideration to the necessary actions that will meet the needs of Pacific youth as identified throughout the consultation. Participants will be updated on progress.

As a result of the Free II C tour, useful networks have been established with key Pacific youth providers and Pacific leaders in the field of business, ICT, biotechnology and other future industries. These networks will also be utilised in the development of an effective action plan for Pacific youth.

To date the Ministry has enjoyed ongoing engagement with various youth providers and will utilise these networks to coordinate innovative initiatives for Pacific youth.

An action plan will be completed in February 2004.

The strategic priorities identified from the Free II C tour will also contribute to wider government policy in the area of economic development.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

The Pacific Population in New Zealand

Historical context
Pacific peoples have been in New Zealand for more than 100 years, and their growth in New Zealand has been one of the defining features of New Zealand society in recent decades. In 1945, Pacific peoples comprised 0.1% of the national population, or 2,159 people. By Census 2001, Pacific peoples in New Zealand numbered almost 232,000, making up 6.5% of the population.

Population count
In 2001, one in 16 or 231,801 people in New Zealand were of Pacific descent, an increase of 39% from the 1991 Census. The majority (58%) were born in New Zealand, and over 40% have an average age of 16 years or younger. Pacific peoples' high rate of children bearing has played an important role in the past decade, with a fertility rate of 3.2 births per woman, compared to 2.0 for the national population.

Pacific peoples are truly a diverse population made up of many different ethnic groups occupying a range of social and economic positions. The Samoan ethnic group continues to be the largest Pacific ethnic group, numbering 115,000 in 2001. The order of Pacific ethnic groups in terms of population numbers remains unchanged since the Census started collecting Pacific statistics. They are: Cook Islands Maori (52,569), Tongan (40,716), Niuean (20,148), Fijian (7,041) and Tokelauan (6,204). Note also that Tuvaluans (1,965), Society Islanders (1,200) and I-Kiribatian people (648) have also increased in size.

Population
Almost six in ten Pacific peoples in New Zealand were born in New Zealand, bringing different dynamics to an already diverse population. The average age of a Pacific person born in New Zealand is 12 years, compared to 37 years for a Pacific person born overseas. Note there are specific ethnic distinctions within the Pacific population; while seven in ten people of Cook Islands Maori and Niuean ethnicity were born in New Zealand, only three in ten people of Tuvaluan ethnicity were born in New Zealand.

Location
Two-thirds of all Pacific peoples in New Zealand reside in the Auckland urban areas alone, while the remainder of the North Island accounts for almost 30%, and the South Island accounts for most of the remaining 7%. Subsequently, Pacific peoples are highly urbanised, with 98% living in urban centres, compared to 85% of the national population. Manukau City has the largest Pacific population with 72,378 or one in four people within Manukau being of Pacific descent.

Demographics

Pacific statistics are poor, highlighting continuing inequalities. The health of Pacific peoples is extremely poor compared to the national population, with Pacific peoples dying earlier and from more preventable causes, than the national population.

Pacific education statistics show that progress in addressing inequalities is continuing to be made although at a slow rate. In the compulsory education sector however, not only are more Pacific children entering the school population (an increase from 6.9% to 8.1%), but they are also staying at school longer (in 1996, 56% stayed at school until age 17 years; in 2001, this figure was 64%). The numbers of Pacific peoples participating in tertiary education has also increased. The proportion of Pacific peoples having a university degree has increased from 1.4% to 3.9% from 1986 to 2001, however this is still considerably lower than the national figure of 11.8%.

Pacific peoples are less likely to own their own home than the national population. Following the national trend, the proportion of the Pacific population living in their own home has also decreased, while there has been a rise in the proportion of Pacific peoples renting their homes. In addition to this, Pacific peoples have higher bedroom occupancy rates than the national population. Pacific peoples statistics in the justice areas show that Pacific peoples are over-represented in some areas and under-represented in others. Economic development for Pacific peoples is continuing to improve although levels in areas such as employment and income have not yet reached mid-1980s levels when Pacific peoples were largely employed in elementary and manufacturing sectors.

Appendix 2

Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa

The Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs assisted the Ministry of Youth Affairs in their consultations with Pacific youth towards the development of the Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa. The Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa noted some of the issues that were highlighted for Pacific Youth.

Key issues identified for Pacific youth included:

- Acknowledging the different Pacific communities.
- Recognising Pacific youth in the context of their families.
- Recognising first-generation cultural issues - New Zealand-born and Island-born.
- Promoting opportunities for retaining language and culture.
- Using appropriate methods and learning styles for engaging with Pacific youth.
- Promoting and using mentoring programmes and role models.
- Working alongside the strong church connections in Pacific communities.
- Providing culturally appropriate services in schools.
- Empowering Pacific youth with opportunities to participate in decisions affecting their lives.
- Supporting Pacific community-based youth programmes.
- Promoting exchange programmes for Pacific youth between New Zealand and the Pacific Island nations.
- Providing opportunities for Pacific youth to develop and express their talents and skills, for example, through scholarships.
- Increase cultural understanding by non-Pacific people of Pacific cultures and values and how they are brought up.