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SP Q 674.50990

BSE 1993

Received

18/10/93

Pro 2/18/4

Report on Joint UNDP/SPC Mission to South Pacific
24 March - 12 April

Western Samoa, Fiji, Vanuata, Marshall Islands,
New Caledonia, FSM, and PNG.

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September 1993

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Objectives:

- * to identify the issues within each country that may facilitate the spread of HIV and the impediments to effective strategies to reduce the transmission;
- * to promote the understanding that the HIV epidemic is a threat to development and not just a health problem;
- * to stimulate a multisectoral involvement in developing strategies to limit the spread of HIV and its potential effects;
- * to identify the potential economic and social implications of the epidemic;
- * to identify regional issues and individuals/institutions/organizations who could be included in a proposed sub-regional workshop on HIV and AIDS;
- * to acquaint the South Pacific countries with the regional HIV/AIDS project; its ongoing activities and future resources.

Western Samoa 3/24-3/26

Background

To date, 2 cases of HIV infection have been identified in Western Samoa, both citizens returning from abroad.

Western Samoa has a population of between 160-170K with 1/2 being young people; 80% still live in the villages. The church plays an influential role in the community; a large percentage of family income is given to the church. There is a fee for school along with associated costs of uniforms, transportation and food. A recent law has made education compulsory but no provision for either enforcing this law or addressing the issue of inability to pay fees has been made.

As is the case with many of the South Pacific island nations, Western Samoa is going through a transitional phase. The traditional tight controls of family, religion and the traditional leaders (matais) on society and the youth are lessening in the face of new western impulses reaching their island. In addition, youth are becoming dissatisfied with remaining in the villages and working the land. A gradual urbanization is taking place due to youth mobility and adult migration from the villages to Apia for employment. However the skills and style of work involved in taking care of the land are not conducive to meeting the more sedentary demands of office or factory work. Job shifting or unemployment are commonplace. There is an increase in alcohol use, particularly among the young people, school drop outs, hanging out in bars, sexual activity and resultant teenage pregnancies. There

is even evidence for the first time of street children.

Sex is a sensitive subject, not discussed in the home and only on a limited basis in school as part of a biology course for the older students. In Samoan culture, words describing sexuality have a negative connotation making it difficult to find the appropriate language for discussing HIV or sexuality. The taboo is stronger against discussing sex in mixed groups or between opposite sex siblings.

The Faafafine, who number approximately 50 (this is difficult to verify), represent a subculture viewed as a "risk group". The Faafafine have traditionally been discreet homosexuals tending towards transvestite behavior. They have recently become more overt in their dressing and behavior leading to increased discrimination directed towards them. In the past they were considered a tolerated segment of society. They are known to travel out of the country. They maintain their sexual relationships are not within their own group but with bisexual men in the community who have not disclosed their sexual status. This behavior is seen as a potential factor in transmitting the virus. Recently with the help of the health educator from the health department, the Faafafine have formed an NGO whose goal is to address how to protect their own group from discrimination and HIV infection.

On the positive side, the existing infrastructure of the society including a variety of strong youth, women and men's groups can be a resource in developing HIV prevention strategies. The role of the church and traditional leaders, although subdued can also be capitalized upon as an influence for education and behavior change. The small size of the country, interest of the various Ministries and donor community in addition to the enthusiasm of the health education department could be an asset in developing a coordinated and sustainable multisectoral approach.

In summary, the young age of the population, the economic problems, the lack of social controls against sexual experimentation and the tourism/migration scenario increase the vulnerability of the Samoans to HIV infection. The existing government and community resources must be used to foster the multisectoral approach. An initial step would be a dedicated donor coordination meeting attended by the NAC and the Health Department. This meeting would be the basis for identifying focal points, areas of intervention and a coordinated strategy.

Follow UP--All contacts were sent AIDS and Asia and where appropriate Community Responses to HIV and AIDS.

MINISTRIES:

1. Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ms. Noumea Simi

MFA coordinates all bilateral and multilateral external assistance; they are also responsible for issuing permits for all contract workers from abroad. There are presently less than 200 such workers in the public sector and a larger number in the private arena.

A new Australian factory employing approximately 1500 women began in 1992. These girls/women are primarily from the village and commute daily from their homes. Some have resettled into the city. At the moment training in health related issues has not been initiated into this industry. Samoa is attempting to attract new jobs; ventures like this will crop up again. It is essential that industries employing large numbers of people are reached.

Recommendation:

- a. The MFA can play a valuable role in the national AIDS strategy. They need to be made part of NAC or one of its committees and indoctrinated about how to review a proposal to ensure that an HIV component has been considered and/or integrated into the proposal.

2. Department of Youth, Sports and Culture, Mr. Magele Isaako, Assistant Secretary

This department is responsible for setting up youth programs: income generating, sports and cultural activities. They have developed a Family Welfare and Home Management Training Manual, a module to be used both to train youth leaders and to work with youth. It includes a brief section on AIDS. It is unclear how widely used the manual is. The Department sees its role as providing awareness training and counselling, however, their staff numbers only 5.

Recommendation:

- a. The staff needs more training in HIV education and prevention to be able to provide support to the various youth groups that exist and to train youth leaders to become peer counselors.

3. Department of Education, Director of Education, Mr. Tupae Esera

The education department does not have either a sex or HIV education program. There have been some workshops for teachers on HIV but no coordinated program at the teacher training college. In the higher grades, sex education is included in the science courses. Mr. Esera feels that societal taboos against discussing sex education with small children is too strong to start such a program. A UNESCO/World Bank review of literacy for grade six in 1990 revealed severe deficiencies in the educational process. A bill has now been passed to make education compulsory; however, no enforcement mechanism has been included or provision for those who cannot afford the fees.

Recommendation:

- a. Curriculum issues need to be addressed particularly as this subject is so sensitive.
- b. Parents and community leaders (religious + traditional) need to be involved in the discussion for such education. The family must be part of the educational process.
- c. Emphasis on education on "sexuality" needs to be made a priority in the Dept of Education.

4. Ministry of Women's Affairs, Ms. Foisafa Eteuati-Shon, Secretary

This is a fairly new department whose objective it is to encourage the development of self esteem and vocational skills for women. They offer workshops on food production and agricultural, cooking skills, sewing, health through nutrition, traditional skills, such as weaving, sanitation and beautification for their home environment. They are not part of the NAC.

Recommendation:

- a. They need to train their staff as peer trainers to encourage discussion of sexuality, family planning and STDS into their workshops and activities. Their activities need to be coordinated with NAC.
- b. They received a copy of the video, Positively Women, but were cautioned about using it before the discussion guide was made available. They have since been sent the discussion guide.

5. Visitor's Bureau, Mr. Vensel Margraff, General Manager

A total of 37,507 tourists visited W. Samoa in 1992; the majority, 11,869 from American Samoa but a substantial number from Australia and New Zealand, (combined total 11,146) and 3267 from the other Pacific Island Countries. The visits were mostly for holiday purposes but many came to visit family or relatives. This information is not broken down by age, or family status or sex. However it clearly points to an exchange of people from the islands and many returnees from the west.

The Visitor's Bureau is currently developing a master plan to promote the tourist industry.

Recommendation:

- a. Mr. Margraff was quite willing to offer brochures in his visitors bureau for tourists on the subject of HIV describing its modes of transmission and ways of preventing it. This was communicated to the NAC and will be followed up by them.
- b. Representation from the tourist industry at the workshop would be helpful to discuss intercountry issues, briefing of tourists - how and where, and integrated plans for tourism which will lead to ecologically and culturally sound tourism. However Mr. Margraff would appreciate information from the conference but would not like to attend.

6. Planning Division, Treasury Dept, Miss Lusia Sefo

Ms. Sefo was quite quick to grasp the role the Planning Division could play in encouraging HIV prevention planning throughout the Ministries. However having a small staff and being asked to represent other interest groups, such as environment, family planning, she recognized her limitations in being able to fulfill that role. Given the proper training on how to ensure that a HIV component is integrated into ongoing and new projects, Ms. Sefo would be a vital asset to the HIV strategy in Samoa.

Serving on the scholarship committee which awards students and trainees financial grants for study abroad, she can influence the pre-departure procedure to include counseling.

Recommendation:

- a. Include Planning on NAC Committee.
- b. Give training session on HIV and ways it can be integrated into Ministries.
- c. Ms. Sefo would be an excellent representative for a regional meeting. She was to be given a copy of the Economic Implications of AIDS in Asia by the UNDP Office.

7. Director-General of Health, Dr. George Schuster; AIDS Coordinator, Dr. Ata Matatumua, Ms. Palanitina Toelupe, Health Education Dept

The representatives from the Health Department presented their opposition to the new UNDP project stating it was a duplication of efforts and therefore a misuse of funds. They also felt slightly perturbed that the RR went to the New Delhi Conference without consulting or including them.

They have now tested 7000 people from among the following groups: blood donors, STD clinic patients, immigrants returning from Australia and antenatal mothers. They maintain they always obtain the full consent of the one being tested and provide pre- and post-test counselling.

The Health Department has a very active and effective education unit which is overstretched and stressed due to the magnitude of health issues they must deal with and the limited number of staff. Every Tuesday and Thursday, they visit the schools and Mondays and Wednesdays are reserved for visits to business and community sites.

Their recommendations for issues to be discussed at a regional meeting include:

- a. Need to develop a screening and education strategy for those emigrating for longer or shorter periods to NZ and Australia or those returning from these areas.
- b. A strategy for training health personnel on HIV is needed.
- c. Outreach to tourists, etc. by placing of brochures/posters in airports, tourist centers, needs to be coordinated
- d. The society needs to be taught about the importance of ensuring confidentiality and limiting discrimination
- e. Given the high rate of STDs, a policy on tracing of STD contacts needs to be developed.
- f. The economic reasons for commercial sex work and other acts which increase the vulnerability of people should be investigated.
- g. How to deal with the Faafafine as a subgroup who are potentially at greater risk of being infected.
- h. Youth issues need to be emphasized: out of school youth and school programs need to be addressed.
- i. Dr. George Schuster expressed an interest in attending any workshop that resulted from this mission.
- j. Ms. Palanitina Toelupe would be an inspirational selection, able to communicate enthusiasm and concrete ideas into the meeting.

8. Ministry of Tokelau Affairs Dr. Iuta Tinieleu, Director of Health, Office for Tokelau Affairs

Tokelau is composed of two small atolls under the authority of New Zealand. The office coordinating programs on Tokelau is situated on Apia. The health system consists of 2 full time and 1 part time medical officer. Tokelau has a strong network of youth, womens' and mens' groups which could be more extensively targeted for HIV education and prevention programs. There are a number of students and job applicants traveling to Australia and New Zealand for short or longer term residency in school and employment.

Attempts have been made to integrate sex education into the schools but the cultural inhibitions have made the parents reluctant to accept this change. The size of the atolls, the lack of other activities, tend to increase the degree of promiscuity. There is a general embarrassment regarding the use of condoms.

Recommendations:

- a. Religious leaders on Tokelau due to their strong position in the community need to be helped to take an active role in the HIV educational process.

DONORS:

9. Australian High Commission Mr. John Hemsworth, Charge d'Affaires, AHC

The Australian High Commission was supportive of the mission plan to hold a seminar for the South Pacific Region. AHC would be willing to use their funds to support Samoan representatives to a regional meeting, however, they recommended we speak to AIDAB to find regional funding.

Most of AHC's projects are centered in utilities, road work, agriculture and education. They award scholarships to Samoans to participate in Australian universities and training schools.

Considerations:

- a. There is no pre-counseling program to prepare emigrants for their residency in Australia, psychologically or sexually. The drop out rate is high. Such a program should be integrated into the school transition program.
- b. Australia does ask for medical clearance before issuing a visa for study or employment. A procedure for how a HIV positive status is revealed to the individual concerned is not clearly understood by the staff at the High Commission. Has this procedure been communicated to the NAC/counseling staff?
- c. The AHC should be approached to consider how to integrate HIV education into their ongoing projects.

10. WHO, Mr. Joel Vanderburg

Mr. Vanderburg, represented WHO as the WR was on leave; he was quite receptive to the role UNDP was taking on in the HIV epidemic. He related that Dr. Nick Crofts, MacFarland Burnet Center for Medical Research (ACN 007 349 984) Fairfield Hospital Yarra Bend Rd, Fairfield Victoria Australia 3078 had done a report on the vulnerability of W. Samoa to the HIV infection. He spoke of the role of women's committees in improving community health and their usefulness in HIV education. He stated that confidentiality would be hard to maintain in such small communities, leading to discrimination -- all based on fear of AIDS.

A letter from the WR to the UNDP Resident Representative expressed dissatisfaction with the new regional project as it represented a duplication of activities. He suggested that UNDP confine its role to helping in sponsoring the publication of the WHO/UNESCO book on Understanding STDs.

- a. A follow up letter was written to Dr. Crofts requesting a copy of his paper. It has since been received.
- b. Mr. Vanderburg suggested the following contacts for preparing a paper on W. Samoa and HIV: Peggy Hamilton, USP, Faye Alaima, Sociologist.

11. UNV Doctors

A meeting with the UNV doctors found them in sharp disagreement with WHO. They refuted the notion that all blood was tested before use. Many patients bring family members to donate blood, their blood is not always tested. Many procedures which have been set on paper do not always work in practice, for example those related to sterilization procedures.

The chief of the village has strong influence over the villagers, even life saving operations have to wait for his decision. The level of medical care is still basic. Two WHO sponsored UNVs have responsibility for training the nursing staff; the remaining UNDP funded doctors provide medical care.

Consideration

- a. Need to integrate traditional leaders into AIDS education project.

12. Meeting with the New Zealand High Commission Mr. Adrian Simcock, New Zealand High Commissioner

The High Commissioner explained that country specific funds are committed three years in advance; however, talking directly with Wellington could lead to regional funding for a seminar. The High Commissioner was quite supportive of the regional seminar. He was intrigued with the notion of integrating HIV education into any programs funded by NZ, however the request would have to come directly from the Samoan government.

90,000 Samoans currently live in New Zealand providing remittances for their families, a smaller number reside in Australia. Although NZ does not have a restrictive AIDS immigration policy, a change in policy could have a dramatic economic impact on the country.

Considerations:

- a. A request to the Dept of Health to attend a monthly donor meeting should be made to discuss the present AIDS intervention initiatives and to enlist the support of all donors in this campaign. Analysis of donor projects could reveal the means of integration of HIV programs into the general programs. NZ has a project at the teacher training college as well as a forestry project which could be pilot projects for including HIV components.
- b. Again the issue of counseling students/trainees before departure from Samoa to NZ or to other locations funded by NZ looms.

NGOS:

13. Western Samoa Red Cross Society, Maka S. Sapolu Secretary General

The Red Cross is one of less than a handful of NGOs working with HIV in Samoa. They initially became involved because of their focus on recruiting blood donors; the publicity around AIDS coupled with the dissemination of false information created a dearth of blood donating volunteers. The Red Cross has worked out an agreement with the hospital to set up an office on their premises to recruit and counsel blood donors. Presently their activities involve teaching first aid in schools and youth groups. They have added AIDS education to the curriculum.

Issues for Regional Meeting:

- a. Confidentiality and discrimination -population needs to be helped to understand what AIDS is and to learn to accept people infected with the virus.
- b. Issues of language - Explaining sexually related issues is a problem in Samoa due to the negative connotation associated with the Samoan words for sex. However the media is helping by introducing the words into the news, newspapers and by slowly letting people grow accustomed to a more sophisticated usage of such words. To help in this matter, the Red Cross has translated the SPC publication, Understanding AIDS, into the Samoan language. However, more attention needs to be directed to this issue.
- c. This NGO would be a welcome addition to the workshop.

14. Western Samoa Family Health Association, Dr. A.K. Solomona

This NGO provides awareness raising programs, counselling and does social marketing of condoms. At the moment requests for 20-30 condoms a month in Apia are registered, while large construction projects, such as the privately funded dam project, request bulk quantities. The other source of condoms, other than the chemist, is the government run family welfare center which is not generally a choice alternative to young, unmarried Samoans.

Issues for Regional Meeting:

- a. How does the economy affect society: the poor state of the economy has lead to increased drinking, unemployment, prostitution which increase vulnerability to HIV.
- b. Immigration and tourist policies and programs -from island to island and to other parts of the world.
- c. Dr. Solomona expressed a desire to be part of the workshop.

15. National Council of Churches, Mr. Faletoes Auvaa, Secretary,

The Council of Churches covered 9 churches and 97% of the population in Samoa, only the Mormon Church was not included in its membership. The churches not only lead traditional Sunday services but run youth and womens' groups. The Council discusses policy issues and had already invited people from the health dept to speak at their meeting. A Pacific Conference of Churches Seminar is slated for July, to be held in Samoa. The organizer is Peter Salamonsen, 4 Thurston Street, Suva, Fiji (311277/302332). They have given thought to including HIV as a topic to be covered in the seminar. This should be reinforced. Clifford Chang of SPC was recommended as a possible resource for this session.

Issues for Regional Meeting:

- a. It would be important to include a diverse group of religious leaders in any planned seminar. Mr. Auvaa would be a sympathetic candidate.

Other NGOs visited were:

YWCA: Lupemataila Ival, Secretary, YMCA, Apia and National Council of Women, Mrs. Laufili Pativaine, Secretary. These groups can make substantial contributions by becoming trainers of trainers; they have access to youth, women and men. By training their own youth leaders in counselling and education techniques they could increase their coverage and support to their membership.

They advocated for discussion of the following issues at a regional meeting:

- a. Problems of youth in changing society: out of school youth, limited employment and recreational/social activities for youth
- b. Role of culture in the design of sex education programs for youth
- c. Policy on access to and promotion of condoms
- d. Growing problem of child neglect
- f. Women learning to trust women

Marshall Islands, Mission 31/4-5/4

The Marshall Islands is composed of 29 atolls, 23 of which are inhabited. They are spread over 750,000 square miles with only 70 square miles of land capacity, none higher than 10 feet above sea level. There is limited vegetation. In May 1979, the Marshall Islands became a republic signing a "Compact of Free Association" with the United States. In 1988 its population registered 43,380, 60% under the age of 18. The majority live on the islands of Majuro and Ebeye, the 2 urban centers. Migration to these two areas increases their problems of unemployment, poor sanitation and inadequate housing.

The Marshall Islands has a health insurance plan covering all citizens, the cost is borne by government, employees and employers. The government subsidizes it for all non-working Marshall Islanders putting in \$5M per year for the next four years.

The Marshall Islands face many of the same transitional concerns as Western Samoa. However, the size, distance between atolls and number of atolls, economy, in particular, its reliance on US assistance, status of women and health issues of the population put additional strains on the country. The Marshall Islands is growing at an annual rate of 4.2% which will double its population in the next 17 years, this will place enormous stress on the available land, infrastructure and services of the country.

The Marshall Islands is a matrilineal society, however women are clearly at a disadvantage in comparison to their male counterparts, in education, health, employment and social status. High fertility rates, incidences of diabetes, obesity, sexually transmitted disease, teenage pregnancies, malnutrition are some of the conditions plaguing women. On average, a woman has 7.23 children. The rate of STDs in the Islands is exceptionally high. Screening in 1990 revealed a 5.8% positivity rate, 58% of whom were female. The islands have a history of promiscuity which was culturally acceptable. Women are supposed to be the controllers of temptation, social rules were used to keep this behavior in check. The failing of these social controls has been blamed for the increased STD rate, pregnancy incidence and promiscuity.

There have only been 2 cases of AIDS identified on the Islands.

Meetings

Ministries

1. Ministry of Health Services, Donald Capelle, Secretary for Health and Environment.

Mr. Capelle has recently taken over his duties as Secretary for Health and Environment.

The Health Services Department consists of 2 urban health centers and 71 dispensaries on the outer islands. These dispensaries are manned by minimally trained health assistants. A Task Force on AIDS was set up in 1988 to consist of the Health Dept, Council of Iroij, Ministry of Education, Social Services, Interior Affairs, Ebeye Community, Women's Groups, Religious Community, Chamber of Commerce, Legal Services and one representative of the NYC. It is unclear whether this task force is still in existence. Few of these Ministries seem to know anything about it.

There is also an AIDS Program Committee whose tasks are to oversee ongoing educational, testing and blood bank activities, disseminate information on AIDS, help draft legislation and report on AIDS activities. Presently the Committee is awaiting a new leader and meetings have not been consistent.

Mr. Capelle felt the following issues need attending in the regional meeting:

- a. Problems in maintaining confidentiality and preventing discrimination
- b. How to cover the cost of caring for those falling ill, and the general economic consequences
- c. Currently they have contact tracing legislation for STDs enabling public health to protect the well being of the general public, but a policy issue remains of how to enforce this legislation particularly as it relates to HIV.
- d. The role of the church must be emphasized.
- e. HIV intervention must be evaluated in light of the number of other health problems facing the country.

Follow up

A NTSC version of the video was sent to Mr. Capelle.

2. Ministry of Resources & Development, Robert Muller, Chief of Trade, Industry & Tourism

Mr. Muller's department has responsibility for the development of a tourism plan and for overseeing the use of outside workers. ADB is interested in helping RMI to encourage tourism as a income generating industry. Programs to train workers in the service industry in catering, health and sanitation and worker productivity are underway; these are funded by ADB, ILO, etc. and can easily include HIV as a component of the training.

Issues:

- a. Policy on skilled and unskilled contract workers, particularly from Philippines, regarding counseling, condom availability and screening.
- b. High unemployment and its sociological consequences among locals
- c. Tourism should be represented in NAC
- d. Many MI go to states (Hawaii, California) for employment particularly with new Compact and return for visits, again counseling program needs to be initiated. As of now identified cases of HIV are from returning citizens.
- e. More work needs to be done with visiting ships/crew. Women greet sailors at dock, the health department has started a procedure of greeting them with a letter and condoms but the practice is not consistent.

3. Women Interest Office, Ministry of Social Services, Evelyn Lanki, Chief, Meral A. Capelle, Program Coordinator, Tanella Lokeijak, women Affairs Office

They feel it is important to integrate health services into workshops on home and household technology which are run out of their office. They also see need to train trainers particularly in the youth groups. Men still control birth control methods and are seen as decision makers. It is difficult to bring men into the program.

Issues:

- a. Family Issues
- b. Training/including how to reach men
- c. Inclusion of church run youth groups in the training process.

4. Office of Planning and Statistics, Mr. Gunesakara

OPS is responsible for coordination of development planning activities, for development of statistical data and advising on and developing the five year plans; they work with the donor agencies, e.g., World Bank, IMF, ADB. In addition, they maintain a system of baseline data on the socio-economic condition of the Republic and its population to assist in planning and decision making tasks.

Mr. Gunesakara is convinced of the importance of looking at the economic impact of the epidemic on the small population of the Marshall Islands. They advocated for their inclusion in population projects such as the UNFPA project since it is vital to integrate the information on rapid population growth into overall planning for the country. They feel the effects of HIV on the population must also be included in their planning scheme.

Unemployment is high, skill level of Islanders is low and the economy is stagnant. The following projects try to address this problem, UNDP has a skill training project for 100 school dropouts a year using 5 UNVs, they also have a tourism project; ADB maintains a fisheries training school (management and repair of boats) which has place for 100 youth; CMI maintains a vocational training program as well as a teacher training program. The Office of Planning and Statistics could ensure HIV education is incorporated into all projects reaching the designated target audience.

Regional Issues:

- a. Economic impact of HIV
- b. Exchange/movement of population across islands and out of islands
- c. Legal and ethical issues
- d. Use of NGOs
- e. Mr. Gunesakara could prepare a paper on the economic implications of the epidemic or be a panel to discuss the role of planning in the epidemic.

5. Internal Affairs, Carmen Bigler, Secretary

The Marshall Islands has 24 local governments each with its own Mayor, the Office of Internal Affairs is responsible for overseeing activities involved with outer island development and coordination between national and local government as well as providing technical assistance to local governments to provide more effective and efficient self government, organization of workshops and seminars for local government officials.

The atolls range in population from approximately 100 to approximately 2000; the largest population (66.8%) resides on Majuro and Kwajalein as of 1988 census. More than half the population is under 14.

- a. A serious issue in the Marshall Islands is the coordination of activities from the Capital to the 24 atolls. This issue faces many of the other Island nations.
- b. Strong support could be gotten from women's and youth groups.
- c. Recommendations for people who could make a positive contribution: Alvin Jaklik, Former Mayor of Kwajalien Atoll, now serves on the Health Education Committee.
- d. A representative from Internal Affairs could highlight the issues of coordination that affect planning/programming in these island nations.

6. Ministry of Social Services, Charles Muller, Secretary, Anna Lehman, Assistant Director of Community Development

This Ministry is responsible for coordinating and implementing community and social service programs. They collaborate with other Ministries, e.g., health, education. Under their own Ministry, they have, among other divisions, the Office of Youth Affairs, Women Affairs and Family Food Production.

Social problems plaguing the Republic range from alcoholism, to undernutrition of infants, growing child abuse, too few opportunities for social and recreational activities. This creates problems among youth: drops outs, juvenile delinquency, unemployment and teenage pregnancies. Women are faced with divorce, wife beating and lack of child support.

Social Services recently hired a Director of Youth Program to strengthen the youth council. They run boy scout troops, women's groups. They also deal with population issues, education particularly with regard to family life issues, aging and family gardening.

- a. The Ministry of Social Services needs to be represented at a workshop because of their target audience dovetailing with those groups vulnerable to HIV infection.
- b. The Director of Youth Services or a comparable person involved in youth affairs would be an important representative.

7. Ministry of Foreign Affairs,

This is the focal point for all Ministries, all proposals to foreign donors (ADB, Australia, Japan, Britain, EEC, US, Korea and China) and the representative of the country in other forums. They hold a Minister's Coordination Meeting every month.

Recommendations:

- a. Although in some cases their role is rubber stamping proposals, the Ministry should be given a strong role in ensuring that HIV intervention programs wherever possible are included in proposals to foreign donors. In addition, a Coordination Meeting could be used to identify focal points in other ministries and to discuss a Multisectoral strategy.

Offices:

8. Legal Aid Office, Rosalie Konou

This organization is funded by RMI and handles mostly child support and wife beating incidences, although clients are reluctant to come forward. Custom or traditional law is much stronger than western law just as the family is more likely to be turned to than the police force.

Ms. Konou is an example of the inequality of women in public office. As the only female attorney she receives neither the same pay nor the same recognition as her male counterparts. She is involved in Women's Groups to attempt to change this mentality.

9. Mayor of Majuro, Madame Elizabeth (Amatline) Kabua

Madame Kabua is the daughter of the President as well as one of the few female elected officials in government. She would like to see better coordination between the national and local government. Many activities occur without her knowledge. She is also very involved in women's interest issues.

She recommends including the Secretary of Education, The Health and Ed. Committee Representative, Evelyn Konou and to enlist the support of the prestigious women's groups: Majuro Tennis Club and Women's Athletic Club.

NGO:

10. Youth to Youth in Health, Darlene Keju-Johnson, NGO

NGO began 8 years ago under Family Planning. Ministry of Health now funds Darlene and provides additional support, 7 remaining staff are under NGO funding. NGO works with local communities through the medium of songs, video, radio spots, health days, skits to develop new knowledge and awareness about youth health and societal problems. Their goals are to train throughout the country 100 peer motivators through youth leadership seminars, expand community outreach activities, produce media material to raise awareness about the role of youth in improving society, establish a weekly adolescent health clinic, work together with international organizations to gain further training. The volunteers work together with the Health Assistants. New volunteers are trained every summer.

Regional issues:

- a. Breakdown of family has led to teen suicide, depression, school dropouts due to inability to cope with the materialism generated by Western society. Issue of new role of youth in modern society needs to be discussed as well as how youth can pass on the message to other youth.
- b. She recommends Marie Maddison to do a paper on women and children for use in the workshop.
- c. This NGO, at a regional meeting, could demonstrate the wide range of activities that can be used to pass the message.

11. Pastor Enos, Rita Protestant Church

The Pastor is worried about potential fear and ostracism against people with HIV which would lead even their families to ostracize them. The Church runs bible studies, Sunday Schools, special services for young people and groups for men and women as well as their own private school.

The National Council of Churches which began last year, runs a monthly meeting. Rev. Jude Samson, Protestant Church and Father Jim of the Catholic Church are leaders in this Church and could discuss the role the church could play in the strategy for HIV prevention. The Church continues to play a vital role in the culture of the Marshall Islands.

Issues for Regional Meeting:

- a. How to lessen fear and ostracism displayed by population towards people who have HIV.
- b. Advocate for Role of Churches in information dissemination
- c. Any of the three religious leaders mentioned above would be appropriate for this meeting.

12. Marie Maddison, Office of Land Grants, CMI

Marie has been involved in social science research in RMI. She authored a paper on Women of the Marshall Islands -- Their Status outlining the issues of discrimination and the present role of women in RMI. She would be willing to do a paper for the workshop discussing the role of women and children or research on a similar theme, e.g., family life.

Issues for regional Meeting:

- a. Strengthening family life
- b. Mainstreaming women in Development Planning
- c. Determining the role of men in reaching other men for HIV education and prevention.
- d. How to reach outer islands, message is different.
- e. Economic Impact
- f. Participants suggestions: Internal Affairs Coordinator; Rev Enos; Evelyn Konou, Min. of Health Services

Mission to Federated States of Micronesia, 5 April -- 7 April

FSM is composed of four, diverse and geographically separated, formerly distinct entities: the states of Yap, Chuuk, Kosrae and Pohnpei where the federal capital also lies. Many of these islands have populated atolls surrounding them. Currently 2 cases of AIDS have been identified on FSM.

FSM has signed a Compact of Free Association Agreement with the United States which has significantly lowered its funding from the U.S. Population, which is estimated to be around 100,000 is increasing at a rapid rate (3%), however out-migration (2%) is offsetting its impact. Out-migration has increased since the signing of the pact and is mostly to the neighboring countries, Guam, Saipan, Hawaii and the US mainland. Although this has a beneficial effect on ultimate population growth it has an adverse effect on the economy as the skilled labor force is drained and unskilled emigrants are not able to provide needed remittances to increase the economic advantage. The island with the largest population is Chuuk 48.7%, followed by Pohnpei with 33.1%, Yap, 10.8%, Kosrae with 7.4%.

Women continue to bear an average of 5-6 children. The greatest increase in population will be among the 15-24 year old age group. The group from 10-24 will make up 70% of the population putting a large number of people in the statistically vulnerable group for HIV infection. This will also put strains on the country for meeting the health, educational, employment and social and recreational needs of this group.

Unemployment is growing, statistics are not entirely accurate but register 8.3% for males, 21.8% for females. It is particularly high among the younger age groups. Major occupational areas are fisheries and agriculture followed by government employment. Public sector employment is coming to a standstill. In addition, expatriate workers make up a significant portion of the work force, 1036 in 1991 distributed throughout the four islands, the majority from the Philippines.

Diseases affecting the population include malnutrition and respiratory problems for the children along with obesity, diarrhoeal disease and diabetes and heart problems for the adult population. A high incidence of STD is another problem for health services and a vulnerability issue for HIV transmission. There is an increase in mental health problems, drug and alcohol abuse as well as child abuse and suicide. This has been attributed to the change in values from the traditional controls to the western social system.

1. Meeting with Ben Jesse, NAC Coordinator

\$78,000 was provided for the NAC for the first year. The NAC Committee consists of Representation from Human Resources, Health (Federal and State) , Education, Public Information, Tourism, Security, Medical Administration, Foreign Assistant Coordinator. The actual National AIDS Task Force is mainly represented by Health Related services and one officer from Youth Affairs. Meetings have been difficult to coordinate due to logistical questions of money, transportation, time. Most government sectors are not aware of their agency's involvement on an AIDS Task Force which indicates a lower level representation which is not communicated to the higher officials.

Ben also mentioned the proposed workshop entitled "Today's Decisions to Protect Future Generations, HIV Strategies in the Pacific" scheduled for 19-22 July at Palikir, Pohnpei, FSM. Funding for the workshop is to come from Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) with some support from the Hawaii Dept. of Health and SPC. Participants will include church leaders, health educators, representatives from family planning, women's health, youth, substance abuse and education. The meeting will be open to countries from the Pacific arena but exact participants were not available. This meeting should be followed up on.

2. Meeting with Members of Health Services and Multilateral Representatives (UNICEF, UNDP)

There is a strong maternal and child health program which does not presently coordinate with the NAC. In addition a UNICEF funded teacher-child-parent educational program does not have involvement with NAC.

Ministries:

3. Department of External Affairs, John A. Mangefel, Deputy Secretary

This organization is the focal point for proposals to foreign donors, manages the records of those emigrating either for work or study, and approves of visitors from abroad.

Recommendations:

- a. Training from NAC to help them evaluate how HIV interventions could be included into proposals being presented to foreign donors.

4. Department of Transportation & Communications, Jolden J. Johnnyboy, Division of Communications

This department covers fisheries, agriculture, commerce and industry, tourism and labor. They run staff training programs for ship crews. Condoms are sometimes placed on board ships but the policy is not consistent. They also hire overseas workers.

Other projects which could include AIDS coordination are beginning plans for tourism promotion through ADB assistance and Japanese, US and Australian help. In addition, an environment project out of South Pacific Environment Program could also look at the issues of HIV prevention.

- a. Many ships call on FSM and crew is given shore leave to visit country, bars, etc. It is important to work with ships and FSM tourist site to prepare proper reception, e.g., brochures, condom availability, etc.
- b. A national workshop could help the country focus on a multisectoral approach.
- c. Each state has a different cultural bent; this needs to be taken into consideration when culturally sensitive prevention program is devised.

5. Office of the President, Bermin F. Weilbecher, Chief of Staff and Special Assistant to the president on Information

This office is concerned with affairs of the President as well as communication to the general public.

There are state radio stations where health/AIDS related messages are passed along; the Baptist Church has its own station; the Catholic Church provides What's News. In addition, bimonthly newsletters, daily press releases are provided. Each morning, the state run program, Good Morning FSM airs. It is a half hour program in English and the local language which includes public service information.

A healthy system of women's groups, youth groups and Chambers of Commerce can also be relied upon to help with informational messages. Men typically congregate in local Sakau Bars rather than becoming involved in formal groups.

Recommendations:

- a. Monthly cabinet level meetings are held by the President. The Department of Health Services, could advocate for a multisectoral approach to HIV management and ensure that a recognized focal point from each Ministry was appointed. This could be the start of a policy formulation for the country.

6. National Women's Advisory Council, Lerina Nena, National Women's Association Committee, Kosrae, Eleanor Sepety, NWAC, Yap, Terry Gamabruw, NWAC, Yap, Tina Takashy, NWAC, Chuuk

This recently created Council is responsible for overseeing issues of concern to women and helping to organize the state advisory councils. Women's committees exist on each of the islands, many of them are church related. The Fiji Women's Crisis Center is providing assistance to the FSM Network Association to work with battered women. Ann Hall is directing this office but was not available for this meeting.

Issues for Regional Meeting:

- a. women are seen as caregiver rather than caregiven.
- b. women are less educated than male counterparts
- c. the prior controls of society, family are no longer functional, parents are paying less attention to children as both partners are beginning to be part of the workforce. The former network available from the extended family needs to be explored for its positive control and caretaking possibilities.
- d. decision for birth control usage still rests with males and is strongly influenced by the church.

7. Meeting with Office of Planning and Statistics, Marcelino K. Actouka, National Planner and Director

This office, with a staff of 30, has responsibility for maintenance, planning, statistics and construction and administration. They draft national and sectorial plans, and advise the President and other officials about medium and long term development policies. They keep a record of all ongoing construction and development projects; these projects have potential for integrating HIV components. Two particular projects deal specifically with women's role in society, women in development and women in agricultural. They should be a strong target for integrating HIV education.

Recommendations:

- a. This office has a keen desire to be involved with national planning on HIV intervention and prevention programs and needs help to analyze and define their role.

NGOS/Colleges

8. Meeting with College of Micronesia, Joe Habuchmai, Micronesia Bound, Morena Retina and Youth Coordinator for the Department of Education, Sosiro K. Yamamura

The College of Micronesia has developed a proposal to be submitted to UNFPA for a teacher's guide for population education and family life/sexuality education, particularly for the elementary grades. A program to integrate the same into the secondary schools is nearing completion. The proposal centers on the development of materials during a summer workshop using selected educators/trainers. The College has also provided courses on AIDS education to many teachers; it is now a required course for teacher training.

Micronesia Bound or Aramas Kapw is an NGO working with high school dropouts referred by the courts. They are generally youth on parole who must do alternative sentencing--community services, public health, public safety. They participate in an outward bound program. A state AIDS coordinator provides information on AIDS prevention. A component of the program is to help the youth return to school, vocational training or to get a job. The NGO also works with the family.

The Youth Activities Coordinator helps to develop income generating projects, beautification and environment related projects and projects for out of school youth.

Issues for Regional Meeting:

- a. How to increase community acceptance of teaching sexuality in schools. How to help schools understand importance of teaching of sexuality.
- b. How to integrate population projects with HIV/AIDS component.
- c. Discussion of lack of recreational alternatives for youth as well as general lack of focus on youth.
- d. Problem of substance abuse--peer pressure and need for parental supervision.
- e. Need for additional media materials to present information clearly and sensitively.

9. Meeting with Community Mental Health Center, Mr. Macgarry Miguel,

They work with referrals for mentally health problems, substance abuse, and alcohol problems. They give preventive talks in the schools on alcohol and drug abuse. A special speech contest was held to air the issues regarding family problems. A system of part time community workers have been hired and trained to organize meetings in the communities on social problems.

- a. A statewide Task Force for Pohnpei has just been initiated to coordinate the work of all agencies and to promote training and outreach. It is called IEIAS MWAHU (Good Health) and is under the auspices of the Health Services. This is a excellent vehicle to develop expertise and coordination for the state program on AIDS and should be followed up on.

10. Baptist Mission, Pastor Welles

Pastor Welles does try to provide guidance to his parish and students regarding proper moral behavior to avoid HIV infection. The Church runs a school, sunday school as well as traditional church services and a Baptist Radio Station. He believes in encouraging the concept of one partner and refraining from sinful behavior, this would ultimately lead to a moral, HIV free existence.

11. Catholic Mission, Father John F. Curran

The Catholic Mission runs a school, mission and outreach programs to the village. The Protestant and Catholic Church combined cover 90% of the population. Mobile teams made up of congregation members go to the villages and discuss Christian themes such as teen age pregnancy, and relationships between adults and children.

Issues for Regional Meeting:

- a. The problem of increasing pregnancy in teenage girls
- b. Rise in suicide rate among youth
- c. High STD rate
- d. Denial, ostracism and lack of confidentiality among population when dealing with HIV

12. Micronesian Seminar, Father Francis X. Hezel

This is a research pastoral institute started in 1972 to look at the issues facing society in light of the rapid modernization that is taking place. They have reviewed political options, school and youth policy, the problem of alcohol and the growing suicide rate, psychosis in males, child abuse and runaways. The Seminar has also held conferences bringing together business, government and church leaders to discuss these issues. Father Hezel has written several research papers to further probe the situation. The Seminar maintains a resource library and delivers public education on a regular radio program.

In 1985, Youth Link, funded by the governments of FSM, Palau and the Marshall Island and affiliated with the Micronesian Seminar began to assist youth agencies to develop a regional network.

Issues for Regional Meeting:

- a. Judicious distribution of condoms, particularly to high risk groups
- b. How does large emigration from islands to schools, colleges and jobs change the nature of society.
- c. Father Hezel would be willing to prepare a paper for the workshop on either religious issues or problems of youth.

Meetings in W. Samoa

Ms. Sarwar Sultana, RR a.i., UNDP
Mr. John Hemsworth, Charge d'Affaires, AHC
Mr. Lupematasila Ivala, Secretary, YMCA
Ms. Noumea Simi, MFA
Mr. J. Vanderburg, WHO (gave eco book)
Mr. Faletese Auvaa, Secretary, National Council of Churches
Mr. Magele Isaako, Asst. Sec, Dept of Youth, Sports and Culture
Mr. Maka Sapolu, Secretary, Red Cross
De. Apulu Karene Solomona, Family Health Association
Mr. Tupae Esera, Director of Education
Dr. George Schuster, Director-General of Health
Ms. Palanitina Toelupe, Health Education Dept
Dr. Ata Matatumua, NAC Coordinator
Mr. Vaegaau Sootaga, National Youth Council
Mrs. Laufile Pativaine, Secretary, National Council of Women
Ms. Lusie Sefo, Planning Division, Treasury Dept (requested she receive eco book from UNDP, need to check)
Ms. Foisaga Eteuati-Shon, Sec, Ministry of Women Affairs (gave video)
Mr. Vensel Margraff, General Manager, Visitors Bureau
UNDP: Mr. Sealii Sesega, AIDS Focal Point, Ms. Faga Tuataglaoa-Matalavea, Mr. Kurt Kristensen, JPO

Meetings in Marshall Islands

Mr. Donald Capelle, Secretary of Health and Environment (given video)
Ms. Justina Langedrik, Health Prevention Services (temporary NAC Coordinator, one to be appointed shortly)
Robert Muller, Ministry of Resources & Development, Chief of Trade, Industry and Tourism
Darlene Keju-Johnson, Jodrikdrik Nan Jokdrikdrik Ilo Ejmour, Youth to Youth in Health
Evelyn Lanki, Chief Women's Affairs
Tanella Lokeijak, Director, Women's Affairs Office
Mearl A. Capelle, Program Coordinator, Women's Affairs Office
Al Tate, Micronesian Legal Services Corporation
H.M. Gunesakara, Planning and Statistics Office (gave eco book)
Carmen Bigler, Secretary, Internal Affairs (Formerly Interior & Outer Island Affairs)
Charles Muller, Secretary Ministry of Social Services
Anna Lehman, Assistant Director, Chief of Community Development, Ministry of Social Services
Rosalie Konou, Legal Aid Office
Madame Elizabeth (Amatline) Kabua, Mayor of Majuro
Pastor Enos, Rita Methodist Church
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Secretary Kabua
Marie Maddison, Office of Land Grants, CMI
Lela Folkers, WHO, Suva Office
Mr. Alan Kondo, UNESCO, Suva Office

Meetings in FSM

Dr. Abraham, Assistant Secretary Department of Health Services
Ben Jesse, NAC
Aileen Goodwin, Unicef
Swanhilda Robonei, FHP Coordinator
Dr. Steve Auerbach, Epidemiologist USPHS
Jeff Benjan, Health Planer
Robert Goodwin, CTA
Midsen K. Iohp, STD
John A. Mangeful, Dep. Sec, DEA
Robert Welbecher, Asst Sec, Sec. of Transportation
Sterio Takesy, Sec of Resources and Development/Tourism
Terry Gamabruw, Special Asst to the President for Information
Hermin F. Weilbacher, Chief Staff, Office of President
Dancee Murray, Attorney General's Office
Merina Nena, National Women's Association Committee, Kosrae
Eleanor Sepety, NWAC, Yap
Terry Gamabruw, NWAC, Yap
Tina Takashy, NWAC, Chuuk
Marcelino K. Actouka, National Planner and Director
Corehna Retin, Exec Dir, Micronesia Bound
Joe Habuchmai, Community College of Micronesia
J. K. Yamamura, Dept of Ed. Youth Program
Mr. Pelerino Mudong, Exec Director, Pohnpei Community Action Agency
Mr. MacGarry Miquel, Community Mental Health Center
Pastor Welles, Baptist Mission
Father Hezel, Micronesian Seminar
Father John Curran, Catholic Mission

UNDP REGIONAL HIV/AIDS PROJECT
SOUTH PACIFIC FACT FINDING MISSION
MARCH-APRIL 1993

Submitted by: Joyce V. Lyons, CTA

COUNTRY: FIJI (March 26-30)

Mr. Chris Wheeler, First Secretary, AIDAB Regional office

AIDAB has been actively supporting NGO implemented activities such as street outreach programs; national training for NGOs in Fiji and Vanuatu. Capacity building for the regional NGO support networks has included support for the development of an ASAP data base, support for AFAYO NGO coordinator and co funding, with USAID, of a South Pacific Commission small grants program. Their largest initiative is support for Project EXCELL which provides 3.5 million Australian dollars to develop family planning/STD and HIV services within the region.

Regarding issues of importance related to HIV/AIDS and the proposed regional meeting, Mr Wheeler highlighted importance of country level economic studies particularly in the sectors which earn foreign exchange which for Fiji include; agriculture, tourism and gold. He noted that remittances from overseas employment remains an important source income for many families. He discussed the importance of involving journalists in shaping community response to the epidemic and for raising awareness to HIV as a potential problem of the Fijian population rather than a problem of outsiders. He noted that STD prevention as an extremely high priority due to reports of high rates of infection throughout the island nations of the Pacific.

He recommended emphasis on increasing private sector commitment to addressing prevention activities; trade commission, chambers of commerce, south pacific alliance for public health and suggested that attention to Legal dimensions of the epidemic was also important.

UNICEF, Bruce Kennedy, Assistant Representative, Regional office covering 13 countries.

UNICEF has focused their efforts on support of curriculum development, emphasizing integration of STD and HIV issues into the basic primary and secondary school curricula. Their budget for education is expected to grow and they will continue their efforts to use basic education and literacy as avenues for improving awareness and prevention messages.

Mr. Kennedy believes that NGOs play an important role in many aspects of community development and recommended the involvement of the following organizations in any regional program: Council of Churches, particularly the education component both formal and informal; Save the Children Fund and Rural Development and Training Centers in Vanuatu and Solomon islands; Foundation for the South Pacific. The Canada Fund also an important and interested donor.

3. David Calder, USAID, Regional office

Although the Regional office has little money available for direct support to country programs, USAID is providing SPC with funding to implement a small grants program for NGOs in the region.

Mr Calder recommended that we contact the following people in the region.

Cathy Fry, FSP/Vanuatu Port Vila
Office 678 22915 Res 678 22170
Andy Andrews, Asia Foundation
Fiji Womens Rights Movement*
David Wyler, FSP
Joseph Sequano Vice Chancellor UPNG
Carol Jenkins Institute of Medical Research, PNG*
Jim Rogers, Sec of Health Solomon Isl. prepared HIV/AIDS policy
Jerry Gallo , FPA, Solomons
Anne Johnston AIDAB Sydney responsible for AIDS/FP*
*These people were subsequently interviewed

4. Roberto Rensi, Economic Advisor, European Community Regional Office

Mr. Rensi is concerned about the potential impact of HIV/AIDS in the region and had earlier begun to develop a project to support HIV AIDS prevention activities of the MOH, Fiji. Unfortunately the funds were redirected to meet the needs created by recent typhoons. He continues to be interested in providing support for HIV programme activities and would like to attend the proposed regional meeting.

Mr. Rensi recognizes the need for further social and economic analysis to assist the countries of the South Pacific to plan for the impact of HIV/AIDS. Further, he recognizes the need for integration of HIV education/prevention elements into portfolio of development projects and would be interested in learning more about how to design such projects. To date no specific request for money to support the HIV/AIDS program has been made to his office.

Follow-up

Send Eco book

Keep him informed of meeting plans for the proposed Pacific Regional Meeting i.e. date and venue. He is interested in attending.

5. Dr Mridulla Sainath, Pvt Physician and former head of the STD service.

Dr Sainath is one of the few practitioners in Fiji who has provided clinical care and social support for HIV positive people and their families. She feels that community organizations such as church groups have made an important contribution to the well being of her patients. Dr. Sainath is an ardent advocate for human rights protection of HIV positive people. She is active within the medical community as a voice for the concerns of HIV/AIDS patients.

Dr Sianath is prepared to develop a paper for the proposed conference. In particular, her insights into community support strategies for HIV positive people could be an important contribution. She may be interested in cooperating with an NGO representative to prepare a paper on how clinical care and community support can work within the Fijian society.

Follow-up: send a video, a list of publications, and a copy of the project HIV reference list.

6. Fasal Abdel Gadir, Director UNFPA Regional Office

UNFPA does not currently have a specific project on AIDS but most health education and in-service training projects for PHC workers contain an HIV/AIDS component. Mr Gadir advocates an integrated approach to HIV prevention activities and has supported the integration of HIV/AIDS education as a component of the FP motivator training organized by the Fiji Womens Movement. UNFPA has provided additional supplies of condoms in response to requests from countries concerned about the epidemic.

Regarding the proposed regional meeting, he highlighted the economic vulnerability of small countries with fragile economies to the consequences of HIV/AIDS. He recommended that operational research be supported to assist with program and policy decisions and he indicated the willingness of UNFPA to provide technical and financial support for the meeting.

Follow-up: send copy of the economic book and list of publications

7. WHO: Dr Ahn, World Health Representative and Dr. Katsanori Osuga, GPA medical officer

We discussed the purpose of the fact finding mission and WHO's interest in supporting this UNDP Regional Project activity. Dr. Ahn was interested in being informed about the mission's conclusions and recommendations. The mission report will be advanced to the Fiji UNDP office for further distribution. Informal exchanges with Dr. Georg Peterson, WHO Regional office in Manila will also continue.

8. Dr. Patrick Spread, Central Planning Unit

The team introduced the purpose of the FF mission and discussed the importance and potential role of CPU in stimulating interest among the non health sector ministries to address the HIV/AIDS issues. Dr Spread views the HIV/AIDS issue as the responsibility of the MOH although he acknowledges that a multi-sectoral approach has logical advantages. Regarding economic analysis, he noted the low prevalence status of Fiji and indicated insufficient data were available for calculating the costs. He suggested that Fiji could learn about costs of HIV from the work of other countries. He highlighted the need to conduct cost effective analysis of prevention strategies.

Dr Spread indicated that he would respond to an invitation for either a member of his staff to attend the regional meeting and would consider attending himself.

Follow-up: send Eco book

9. N. Plange, Professor of Sociology, School of Social and Economic Development Univ. of the South Pacific, Fiji Campus

Professor Plange began his involvement with the national AIDS program in 1988 and he has subsequently conducted a KAPB for Fiji. Unfortunately, the results are not compiled. Has consulted for GPA and WIPRO (KAPB for Solomon Islands) and currently assists the social science group at GPA in formulating the GPA guidelines in this area. He noted that the social scientists at GPA are less able to influence decisions than the physicians involved in clinical aspects of the disease.

Regarding social and economic dimensions of the epidemic, Prof Plange emphasized the following areas for discussion at the regional meeting:

- a) Socio-cultural barriers to HIV education, i.e., taboos, and analysis of sexual interactions particularly as applied to young people. STD rates are very high within the adult population of Fiji but more alarmingly, the rates for adolescents are among the highest.

b) Economic issues related to productivity but particularly regarding cost of care and who will pay for care and support.

c) Legal and ethical considerations particularly issues surrounding maintenance of confidentiality and the need for MOH policy statements in this area.

d) Prof Plange is also concerned that the current program is largely focused on the urban population and believes it is important to address AIDS prevention for rural populations.

Follow-up

Prof Plange offered to prepare an abstract for a paper on S-C issues to be presented at the Regional Meeting. He has also offered to propose names of people who may be interested in and capable of conducting research into social cultural dimensions of the disease.

The project will send a copy of the Eco book, selected articles on Women and AIDS and Video

10. FORUM SECRETARIAT: Mr. Tabia, Secretary General, Mr. William Sutherland, Deputy Secretary General (Policy and Services). GPO Box 856 Suva, Fiji

The Secretariat is a regional agency set up to support economic development activities. The forum is supported with funding from metropolitan and South Pacific countries. The metropolitan countries include Australia and New Zealand which contribute the largest portion of the budget though all countries in the region are assessed. Mr. Tabia believes that since the South Pacific Commission has been given the mandate for social sector issues including HIV/AIDS, the Forum Secretariat should not initiate any HIV/AIDS programs/projects.

Follow-up: eco book

11. Mr. Joe Ratuvuku, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Rural Development, Endeavor House, Gordon Street. P.O. Box 2219 Gov't Bldgs, Suva Tel: 3135588

The Ministry of Regional (Rural) Development coordinates community input to national planning process. The ministry conducts development planning meetings at village (takina), district and provincial levels to obtain views on community needs. The structure for organizing community input follows: the 116 Takina councils whose members are village headmen meet 4 times per year; the 14 provincial councils meet twice per year; the provinces are organized into 4 divisions which meet once per year. The information collected through this process is submitted to the national planning body.

The Ministry of Regional Development provides financial and program support for these planning meetings. In the opinion of the Deputy PS, this forum could easily be used to introduce the issue of HIV/AIDS and its social and economic consequences.

A representative from this ministry should be considered as a participant in the proposed regional meeting.

Follow-up: send list of project publications and a copy of the economics book.

12. Fiji Women's Rights Movement, Penny Moore

This organization has been using theatre performances at communities and schools to convey messages about the rights of women and children with regard to domestic violence, child abuse, and rape. They recently became interested in HIV AIDS education and will prepare a production on the subject. Members will attend a training seminar in Vanuatu where the Won Smol Bag (one small bag) theatre group will assist them to develop their skills in theatre production and guide them in the development of a play on HIV/AIDS. This activity is supported by SPC. The group publishes a newsletter and plans to include a section on HIV covering such issues a legal implications.

This group has good experience with women's issues and could be an important advocate for greater attention to prevention strategies for women.

A copy of Positively Women was given to Penny Moore who agreed to copy it to share with other NGOs.

Follow-up: Send a note to Kazumi indicating which documents on HIV/AIDS (womens issues) are to be copied and given to this organization.

13. Ministry of Women and Culture, Mr. Rishi Ram, Permanent Secretary and Mrs Serima Lomaloma, Director of Department of Women and Culture FAX 679 303 829 TEL: 312260/312908, Raojibhai Patel Street, Suva

The Ministry has 24 field offices staffed with women who cover all issues related to women including health and family planning. The ministry recognizes the importance of preparing field officers to answer questions about HIV/AIDS. Although the original role of the field officers included training, their responsibility for training community members is decreasing and emphasis is shifting to a more limited interaction with community leaders. Recently the field officers have received para-legal training and plans exist to prepare them for counselling on violence against women.

The Ministry has provided small amounts of grant support to NGOs including 500 dollars to the Women's Crisis Center and an annual allocation to the Songo Songo Fijian Womens Organization.

Ms. Seriema prefers that the Ministry not assume primary responsibility for addressing HIV/AIDS since their staff lack expertise and since she perceives that focusing the issue within the Women's Ministry will minimize the importance of the problem. The ministry staff and field workers would require training before providing substantive support in areas of HIV prevention, counselling or support.

They made the following suggestions for topics to be included at a regional meeting. Sensitivities of women in traditional cultures to discuss sexual matters and strategies for approaching both urban and rural women. Ms. Seriema noted that the concept of "women as individuals" and consequently their right to control how their bodies are used is a new idea within Fiji.

Mrs Sierema may be an excellent choice to co author a presentation describing partnerships between government and NGOs for womens education and support programs. The Ministry has established a particularly good cooperation with the NGO, the Women's Crisis Center.

Follow-up: send list of publications available from Project

14. Ms. Nazhat Shameem, Deputy Director of Public Prosecution

Ms. Shameem is a government lawyer who is interested in the public policy issues related to HIV/AIDS. Legal and ethical dimensions have not yet become an issue in Fiji but given the growing number of cases in Fiji it was agreed that Ms Shameem should attend the UNDP Regional consultation in Cebu on HIV Law and Ethics. This experience should prepare her to participate in the proposed South Pacific Regional Meeting, in particular she would like to prepare a paper for the meeting. After the meeting plans are more concrete, her involvement should be confirmed.

Follow-up: Make arrangements for her participation in "The Law Ethics and HIV Seminar" planned for September.

15. Ms. Shameema Ali, Fiji Women's Rights Movement, Ellery St.

Since 1984, the Movement has been providing counselling and support services for women and children who are victims of domestic violence, battery and sexual abuse. The Movement has worked closely with the Ministry of Women and culture and recently completed a paralegal training for community level workers. There is potential for Shameema and Mrs. Seriema to co author a paper on how partnerships of Government/NGO can respond to the issues related to providing education care and support for women.

Shameema has recently (Nov 1992) presented a paper at the AFAYO supported Seminar Women, HIV/AIDS and Development in Sydney.

Follow-up

Send Video, articles of Women and AIDS, and the list of articles contained in the Project Library.

16. Ms. Lusiana Dauchkacaka, Vivita Devo, Tulia Koroi, of Sogosoqo Vakamarama Nabua (Fijian Womens Organization)

This grassroots Fijian womens organization has community representation among Fijian women throughout the country. Originally a community development/social services organization SVN started providing information about Family planning in 1982. The organization is closely tied to the government and provides access to the 1500 villages throughout the country e.g. a recent health education program on the topic of STD/AIDS was coordinated by SVN and the Ministry of Health provided trainers. UNFPA has also worked with this group in the past and intends to continue.

During this mission it was difficult to identify a representative of SVN who could prepare a paper for presentation at the proposed S.P. Regional meeting.

17. NATIONAL AIDS COMMITTEE MEMBERS PLUS NGOS

This meeting was scheduled and chaired by Dr. Nemani Seru the Director of the National Aids Programme (see attachment for a list of participants). The purpose of the mission was explained by the Project CTA and the group's comments and suggestions for the proposed meeting were solicited. Comments included:

* A weakness of many regional meetings is the lack of country level follow-up.

* The meeting should not duplicate the biomedical meetings that have been sponsored by WHO in the region.

* The following topics have not been emphasized in earlier meetings; a) individual vs community rights b) confidentiality c) involvement of the church community in a holistic approach to HIV prevention d) the role of NGOs in national programs. e) strategies for involving the non health sectors in HIV prevention and support programs f) need to strengthen the capacity of NGOs to contribute to HIV/AIDS prevention, care and support activities- g) concern about strategies for reaching youth.

*The meeting should lead to greater access to bilateral funding support for HIV/AIDS activities in the Pacific.

Other comments

The Fijian Medical Association announced the construction of an AIDS education center with a 24 hour hotline by January 1994.

The Red Cross representative requested UNDP to consider funding a consultant for six months to conduct a strategic assessment of NGOs and suggest means for capacity building.

Follow-up: Send the economics book to Dr. S Mudalair, President of the Fiji Medical Association, PO Box 10316, Nabua Fiji.

18. Dr. Forsyth Chairman Department of Economics Univ. of South Pacific, Laucala Bay Road, Suva

The purpose of the mission was explained and Dr Forsyth was asked to consider preparing a paper on economic implication of the epidemic for presentation at the proposed regional meeting. He was given a copy of the book and will send his CV.

Follow-Up: The project should maintain contact with Prof Forsyth and assist him to prepare the paper.

19. Reverend Finau, Secretary General, Fiji Council of Churches Box 2300 Government Buildings, Fax (679) 300802 Home Phone 387270

The Reverend stressed the importance of using the church network in providing HIV AIDS education. The opinions of the Church are sought by government and the Church is therefore a powerful force in shaping social and political reaction to issues. The Church network covers half the population of the country and includes the Salvation Army, Baptist, Presbyterian, Congregational, Church of Christ, and Church of God.

Reverend Finau is concerned about discrimination against HIV positive people and expressed his opinion that the Church could be a powerful force in shaping a positive community response toward people living with HIV/AIDS.

20. Briefing with UNDP Resident Representative Mr Somsay Norindr and staff Mr. Alam and Ms. Kazumi Ikeda

During the final briefing of the UNDP staff the following items were discussed.

Donor Interest: The donor community, including multilateral and bilateral agencies have supported and will continue to support HIV/AIDS activities. There is some concern among donors that too much money is available and that the absorptive capacity of the government and NGO community is currently stretched to its limit.

Regarding the proposed Regional meeting the European Economic Community representative has expressed interest in participating and the UNFPA regional director may funds to support the meeting.

Program Content: The primary purpose of this mission is to clarify the need, objectives and content of a SP Regional meeting. Discussions in Fiji have highlighted the need to address the social and economic aspects of the epidemic, to highlight the importance of a multi-sectoral involvement in prevention, support and care. There is consensus that sufficient attention has been given to meetings which convey the basic medical information about transmission and prevention. Although there is support for holding a regional meeting, most informants share the Project CTAs concern that the meeting should be designed to make some lasting contribution to national programming in the region.

Resource Papers for the Regional Meeting: The mission team was able to identify people who may be able to develop background papers on HIV/AIDS issues specific to the Pacific region. Background papers dealing with economic, legal, religious, and womens issues would be appropriate for the proposed meeting. The following people may be available and qualified to prepare papers but further follow-up will be required: Ms. Nazhat Shameem, Legal and Ethical Issues; Ms. Shameema Ali, Womens Crisis Center and Ms. Seriema Lomaloma, Min of Womens Affairs, NGO Gov't partnerships; Prof. Forsyth, Univ. South Pacific, economic implications; Dr. Mridula Sainath, community care and support for people with HIV/AIDS.

MTP reviews in 1993: The Medium Term Plans for many of the Pacific countries will be completed within the next year. New strategic plans to guide national aids programs will be formulated during this year to replace the expiring MTPs. UNDP may wish provide some direction and support for the development of the new strategic plans. The RBAP should be approached to clarify the role of the new regional Project RAS92-008 WHO in providing such assistance.

Results of NAC meeting: Although consensus developed for support of a regional meeting, participants of the NAC meeting had some real concerns about the value of such a meeting. Some cautioned that regional meetings are frequently attended by the wrong people, i.e., people who are next on the list for a trip rather than people who have programme or policy responsibility for the subjects under discussion. Others commented on the lack of country follow-up resulting from regional meetings both in terms of knowledge sharing by participants and programme impact.

Follow-up: Send a copy of RAS92-008 to Mr.Norindr

NOUMEA, NEW CALEDONIA (April 1)

South Pacific Commission Staff; Steven Vete, Health Information officer, AIDS Project; Salinga Kofe, Chief Economist; Jill Embuson, Women's Communication officer; David Rosario, health education officer, Community Health Services; Jean Turac, Youth Development Officer. Ms. Fusi, Director of Services.

The SPC staff listed above met with the Project CTA to discuss the proposed South Pacific Regional meeting, the work of the various departments of SPC and the potential role of the SPC in providing support for the proposed meeting. The SPC staff are all from the region, are experienced and have excellent networks.

Although Clifford Chang and Steven Vete are the only SPC staff currently working on the HIV/AIDS project, involvement of other staff as part of an interdisciplinary task force could enhance the planning and implementation of the meeting. Specifically the SPC staff could assist resource people to prepare working papers for the meeting, provide pre-conference administrative liaison and support; serve as resource people during the conference; and support follow-up activities.

If a sub contract with the SPC is to be considered it will be necessary to discuss the suggestion with RBAP, to specify the tasks to be completed by the SPC team and prepare the terms of reference for the inter-organizational agreement. Ms. Fusi, Director of Services expressed SPC's interest in exploring this matter further.

Clifford Chang is the ideal technical focal point for any cooperative agreement with SPC and he has the full support of SPC management.

Follow-up

Continue discussions about the merits of this arrangement after the meeting is confirmed.

PORT VILA, VANUATU (April 2-4)

1. Myriam Abel, National STD/HIV/AIDS Programme Coordinator, PM Bag 009, PV, Vanuatu

The National AIDS Prevention and Control Programme in Vanuatu is staffed by Ms. Abel one assistant and a VSO technical advisor. The overall policy direction for the programme is provided by the National AIDS Committee which has multi-sectoral representation and was established in 1987. Unfortunately the committee is not highly active. The national programme is formulated in a Medium Term plan which is largely focussed on health education and training and is wholly funded with 92,000 US dollars from WHO/GPA. At the end of 1992, no person with HIV infection had been identified as a result of 5,711 HIV tests conducted on blood donors, STD patients, antenatal attenders and inpatients.

Ms. Abel is has developed a very active programme, has a well established network in Vanuatu and is recognized as the driving force behind the HIV/AIDS programme.

2. Honorable Hilda Lini, Minister of Health

The Minister is concerned about the potential threat of HIV infection in Vanuatu particularly since tourism and seafaring are major sources of economic activity in the country. In addition there is a substantial community of Vanuatu in New Caledonia where HIV infection has been identified. The Minister is interested in finding ways of identifying HIV positive people before they can enter the country. A draft policy on HIV has been developed by MOH and will be presented for discussion at the council of Ministers. She recommends involvement of traditional rulers, and church representatives in implementing HIV/AIDS programs. Regarding the regional meeting she suggests inviting high level participants from government and the NGO community. She advocated for the involvement of the Forum Secretariat in such a high level conference and recommended structuring the meeting to coincide with another regional meeting such as SPC or Forum Secretariat.

3. General Meeting of Government and NGO community

The meeting was chaired by Ms. Abel who explained the purpose of the visit. Joyce Lyons presented the mission background and the findings to date (see the annex for a list of those present).

The group supported the proposed regional meeting but suggested that government and NGOs be invited. There were no concrete suggestions for objectives or content. Some concern was expressed about the prevalence of regional meetings and the need to ensure country level follow-up when planning regional meetings.

4. Prof. Patterson, Chairman of the Department, Law School, Univ. of the South Pacific Vanuatu campus and Prof. Mary Pulea, law professor with a special interest in family law.

The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the potential legal and ethical issues surrounding HIV and to identify lawyers who may be interested in writing about these issues in the context of the South Pacific. Both Professors were unaware of the need to address the issue but were eager to learn more.

Follow-up

The project CTA requested that Mary Pulea consider attending the Cebu conference and offered to send Project documentation on legal issues and HIV infection.

5. Mr. Savenaca Siwatibau, ESCAP Pacific Operations Center (EPOC), Private Mail Bag 004 Port Vila Vanuatu, TEL: 678 23458, 23459 FAX 23921.

Courtesy visit to inform the representative of the project mission and to enquire about the potential of economists who are active in the region. He supports the need for an advocacy meeting on the social and economic dimension of the epidemic for high level decision makers.

Follow-up

Mr Siwatibau agreed to send a list of economists.
Project to send a copy of the Economics book

6. Dr. Cuboni, Country Liaison Officer, WHO.

Dr Cuboni's experience with regional meetings has been negative and he discouraged the project from supporting another such meeting. He agrees with the need to emphasize the development of a more comprehensive/multidisciplinary programme base and encouraged the project to support country level meetings as a means of achieving the same. He stressed the importance of involving tribal chiefs and the attorney generals office in such meetings.

7. Venue for the Regional Meeting

During the mission to the South Pacific, Clifford Chang and I discussed the various options for locating the proposed meeting and decided on Vanuatu after ruling out other options for the following reasons.

Fiji: too many conferences

Noumea: too expensive

Samoa: poor facilities

PNG: too far away, too expensive

FSM: no facilities, too far away

The Le Lagon resort at Port Vila, Vanuatu is an ideal place to conduct the South Pacific Regional meeting. Although the Island is plagued by cyclones, the weather in the month of November is reported to be perfect.

While at Vanuatu the mission visited Le Lagon which has a spacious conference facility accommodating approximately 100 people. This facility is available at no cost if rooms are guaranteed but it is also available for a nominal fee 10,000 Vatu per day. The resort is located somewhat out of town, but easily accessible by a 15 minute bus ride. Most participants are likely to stay at less expensive accommodations in town. Hotel information is in the Project files. Contact people at La Legon are Mr Peter Dutton, Director of Sales and Walter Sauer the food and beverages director.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA (April 4-8)

The UNDP RR Mr. Siba Das, the Deputy RR Mr Kirdar and the AIDS focal point Mrs Dorothy Ortlauf are all deeply interested in supporting HIV/AIDS programming in PNG. The mission was well briefed upon arrival, and is extremely grateful for the efforts of Mrs. Ortlauf who prepared a comprehensive mission programme and accompanied the mission to all meetings (see the annex for a list of contacts). The UNDP supported multi-sectoral workshop completed in February 1992 has catalyzed interest in the non health dimensions of the epidemic. During the summer of 1993 AIDAB is funding follow-up workshops addressing the development dimensions of the epidemic with the objective of duplicating the earlier national level workshop at the provincial level. AIDAB is also developing project to provide substantial support for NGO involvement in HIV/AIDS programs.

The Government of PNG has an active HIV/AIDS programme that includes testing and surveillance; health education; training of health workers and involvement of NGOs. The programme follows the WHO MTP format and is funded primarily by WHO. In addition to the MOH, the Ministry of Home Affairs and the NGO community are active in conducting awareness raising programs. Despite the involvement of the non health sectors, there is some concern that the National AIDS committee is medically biased and the Director of the Programme, Dr. Clement Malau is currently working with government planners and others to expand the programme to expand multi-sectoral involvement. A new strategy for addressing the epidemic is emerging which includes establishment of a secretariat within the Prime Minister's office which is intended to: facilitate involvement of the non health sector; broaden the base of programme support; encourage the development of programs among non health sectors of the government; improve the coordination of programme activities. This effort is also being encouraged by Mr. Camillus Midire and his staff at the Department of Finance and Planning, Social Affairs Planning Division.

Non Government Organizations:

1. PNG TRUST P.O. Box 279 University NCD, Papua New Guinea. Phone (675) 261 737/ 260 631 FAX (675) 261 731

NGOs have been providing prevention education for their respective audiences. Of note is the work of PNG trust which has begun to use HIV/AIDs educational information in community based programs for "critical literacy". The contact people at PNG trust include Moira Bloom and Vincent Manukayasi. The UNDP Regional Project should monitor the work of this group and explore opportunities to share the PNG Trust experiences with others in the region. Currently PNG Trust is conducting training of community based, literacy trainers to improve their awareness and knowledge of HIV/AIDs. The goal of their community based AIDs programs is to create a supportive community environment for people living with HIV/AIDs.

2. The Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific, PNG P.O. Box 1119 Boroko, NCD Papua New Guinea Phone 25 8470 FAX 252670. David Vosseler, Director.

Originally US based NGO founded by catholic priest and a movie actress and supported by metropolitan countries including; U.S., Australia, Canada and UK. Now a branch office legally registered and financially independent. FSP/PNG is a full service development agency interested in providing management services and developing the management skills of NGOs. This group has an association with various theatre companies such as the Awareness Community Theatre which perform drama and musical productions to educate the general public about HIV/AIDs.

3. Catholic Education, Brother Knight

The National Education Secretariat for the Catholic Church has been actively promoting HIV/AIDs education and awareness with the nation-wide catholic school system. Their programs are directed at the young adults attending high schools and community schools as well as the teachers college. The church supports 65 health centers and 5 major hospitals in the country. The womens desk of the church is now considering the role of the church regarding support and counselling for HIV infected individuals and their families. The church's counselling institute prepares groups of women in the use of counselling techniques. Men are invited but do not attend the meetings which concerns the church leaders. The church is working with youth to encourage them to change premarital behaviors. A club "the anti-AIDs club" has been organized among the church youth which calls upon members to follow the following guidelines: abstain from intercourse prior to marriage; inform others and offer care and support to HIV positive people. In PNG as in other Pacific Island nations, the Catholic Church could be a strong component of

the national programme of education, support and care. The church is an integral part of community life and has extensive social infrastructure which could explore alternatives for community based support of individuals and families affected by the epidemic.

Brother Knight suggested that the following issues be discussed in regional meeting: legal and ethical aspects of testing; counselling skills, in particular "how to reach the community";

for future reference, Mrs Anne Keripia at the women's desk of the Melanesian Council of Churches may be a good contact.

Napoleon B. Liosi, National President, Waigani, Box 965 Boroko, Office Location: PSA Haus, Port Moresby.

The Public Service in PNG employs approximately 50,000 workers of which 22,000 are represented by the Public Employees Union; the remainder are unrepresented. The members are a significant proportion of the educated population and are readily accessible for awareness and behavior change efforts through workplace programs.

The union will need assistance to understand its role in exerting influence on workplace policy through the negotiation process. Before workplace education and service activities are initiated, attention should be directed to the education of senior union officials. At present the senior union cadre are not aware of the potential problems associated with confidentiality, testing and discrimination. They will also need assistance to recognize the power and importance of their own behaviors and attitudes as models for others.

Government Meetings

Secretary of Health Dr. Isaac Ake, Dept of Health Hohola, TEL: 48606

The Secretary is aware and concerned about the prevalence of HIV infection in PNG, particularly in view of the high reported rates of STDs and the prevalence of multiple partner sexual behaviors. He recognizes the importance of behavior change but is concerned about the difficulty of changing sexual mores. He believes that PNG's young people are particularly vulnerable and would like the regional meeting to include: addressing behavior strategies for young people; studying sexual behaviors of youth, particularly those away from home; and better targeting of messages.

The Ministry national HIV/AIDS program is supported by a number of international donors and lenders. The World Bank recently integrated an AIDS component into an existing project. AIDAB has provided grants and is currently preparing a large scale project which will call upon NGOs to assist with service delivery. The Secretary emphasized the importance of involving the private voluntary sector in promoting HIV/AIDS programs.

Secretary for Religion, Home Affairs and Youth, Ovi Lavi Haus
Boroko. Mr. Bill Kua TEL: 255924. Department of Womens Affairs,
Mr. Mrs. Moli, and Program officer Ms. Sabina.

This Ministry, particularly the Department of Women's Affairs has been very active in HIV/AIDS prevention activities. The Department is planning the Third Womens National Seminar on Behavior Change to be held outside of the capital in Boroko. The meeting will attract social scientists, social workers and nurses and representative of NGOs from 19 provinces. Although the Department has no program money this year they have raised money from the international community to support the workshop and is seeking additional funds to print case studies of seven HIV/AIDS projects, one from each region of PNG. The Department is also preparing a newsletter which will receive support from the Government of New Zealand.

The Women's Department director explained that women in PNG have no voice in family planning matters and men refuse to use condoms. They believe that women's groups are a potential avenue for raising womens awareness and supporting participation of women in reproductive decisions. Womens groups are not yet addressing these issues.

The Secretary, Mr. Kua, is also responsible for coordination of inputs from both international and local NGOs. He would like the proposed regional meeting to provide a forum for discussing the relationship between NGOs and Government. He suggests that papers be prepared and presented which provide examples of NGO/Gov't initiatives from each country.

Follow-up

Send a copy of Positively Women and put the Ministry on the Project mailing list. Send a set of readings on Women and HIV to the Department of Womens Affairs.

The DOWA staff may be interested and able to prepare a paper on women's issues for the regional meeting.

3. Department of Finance and Planning, Social Affairs Division, Mr. Camilus Midire and Staff.

Members of this Division became aware of the need to address HIV/AIDS as a multi-sectoral issue at the UNDP sponsored meeting earlier in the year. They are seeking to build additional support and understanding within government for their plan to create a multisectoral planning and management body for the National AIDS Program.. They are supported by Clement Malau, the Director of the AIDS program, who agrees that HIV/AIDS is a multidimensional issues that requires a mulitsectoral response. The Division members feel that the government has not yet acknowledged the seriousness of the problem and that additional political advocacy is required. They hope that grass roots, i.e., provincial support and involvement will be engendered at advocacy workshops which are planned for the provinces. These workshops are being modeled on the UNDP sponsored national workshop.

The Division is working with MOH and advocacy groups in seeking endorsement for the establishment of a council and secretariat to guide the program. The role of the secretariat would be to coordinate and advise donors to maximize program effectiveness. The proposed council, consisting of 14 government, nongovernment and employer/union members, would offer program and policy guidance.

Follow up: Send multiple copies of the Eco book.

4. Department of Labour and Employment, Port Moresby. Mr. George Vaso.

The Department of labour and Employment does not have any HIV/AIDS personnel policies for the government or private sector. Mr. Vaso looks to the Department of Health for guidance in this matter and was also interested in receiving any documentation from the ILO or the UN agencies to guide the development of such policies. Since this Department also has a role in resolving workplace disputes, it may be useful to invite representatives in any local programs for HIV/AIDS awareness raising.

Follow-up: Provide the Department with UN HIV/AIDS personnel policy and ILO documentation.

5. Employers Federation of PNG. Mr Tau Nana, Executive Director and Staff including Mr. Max Kep and Mr Raga Maro.

Mr Nana and his staff suggested that the Employers Federation has an important role to play in promoting HIV/AIDS workplace education in PNG. They are interested in learning more about the problems and issues that may arise in the workplace and about how they can contribute to ensuring that rights of HIV positive workers are protected. They would like to host workshops to assist in dissemination of policy and program information to employers and would be happy to include basic information in their member's bulletin.

Follow-up: Ms.Ortlauf will share basic information, UN personnel policy for HIV/AIDS and films, particularly Its Not Easy. A representative should be considered for inclusion in the regional workshop if workplace issues are included on the program.

6. Debriefing

A debriefing meeting at UNDP included: Mr. Kidar, Dr. Clement Malau, Mrs. Dorothy Ortlauf, Mr. Clifford Chang and Joyce Lyons

The team expressed their appreciation to the UNDP office and to Dr Malau for their active interest and support of the mission. The mission team reviewed the results of their earlier country visits and presented the major findings of this mission.

a) PNG is far ahead of other countries in the South Pacific in organizing its response to the epidemic. Despite being more advanced, government and NGOs alike saw value in the prospect of a regional meeting. Subjects suggested for inclusion in the meeting similar to the suggestions those of other countries and included: NGOs strategies for education and care; ethical and legal issues; the church role and interest in addressing HIV/AIDS issues; concerns for the protection of women. For obvious reasons PNG and Fiji were the only countries expressing concern about providing workplace education.

b) Public/Private sector employment is an important area of focus for future program activities. The organizations that have access to employers and employees are largely uninformed about the epidemic and totally unaware of the need to develop workplace policies to guide the management of HIV in the workplace.

c) Support is growing for the movement to create a multisectoral response to the epidemic. Implementation of the proposed plan for restructuring the national program leadership would be a major achievement and provide a model for the rest of the region. A description of the structure and the process of its development should be included in the program of the regional meeting.

d) The women's affairs department program is also noteworthy for taking leadership in conducting HIV/AIDS education for women leaders throughout the country.

e) PNG Trust is implementing a very promising approach to HIV/AIDS education by integrating information into their community based critical literacy programs. A presentation of their efforts should be considered for inclusion in the regional meeting.

f) The regional project will invite a lawyer and an economist from PNG to participate in two separate regional activities planned for later this year in the Philippines; the Ethics Law and HIV meeting in May and the Economics meeting in September.

AUSTRALIA: SYDNEY AND CANBERRA April 12-14

Courtesy visits were made in Sydney and Canberra. In each instance the CTA described the work of the UNDP regional project, reported the findings of the mission and solicited suggestions for and opinions about the proposed South Pacific regional meeting. AIDAB kindly organized a brown bag lunch discussion. AIDAB was grateful for news of the UNDP regional activities and suggested that more frequent communication would be beneficial to both agencies. The project will send a few copies of the Eco book to AIDAB in care of Alan March and will send all contacts a list of project publications.

The following people were contacted:

Russell Rollason, International Council of Voluntary Agencies
Margaret Conley, Executive Director, Public Health Association of Australia
Dr. John Ballard, The Australian National University
Diane Proctor, Executive Director, Family Planning Federation of Australia
Kevin Conlan, Projects Manager, Unicef Australia
John Kaldor, Deputy Director and Head, Epidemiology Unit, national Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research

AIDAB

Alan March, Pacific Island Section
Nic Norarpietro, Women, Health and Population Section
Jane O'Donohue, Women in Development
Cynthia Burton, Health and Population Section
Anne Johnston, Women in Development, Health and Population Pacific Regional Team, Centre for Pacific Development and Training