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NEWSLETTER OF THE PNG CHURCH PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM



At social concerts mime or song is used to raise awareness of issues in the community.

Peace Building Research Begins

A CPP Peace-building research project has begun with a workshop which took place in Mt Hagen, from 10-13 April 2007.

Sixteen people from five of the CPP Churches participated in the workshop – along with facilitators, Archbishop Douglas Young and Fr. Philip Gibbs. The first two days focused on Peace-Building, starting with “causes” of tribal conflict, moving on to look at Churches programs for resolution and reconciliation.



Archbishop Douglas Young at the workshop.

The second two days dealt with research methods that could be used in the Peace-Building study.

The intention of the Peace-building study is to research and document instances of Churches' involvement in peace-building in areas of tribal conflict, particularly during the election period, in the PNG Highlands. Election related behaviour sometimes sparks off violence which can escalate into tribal conflicts.

Committed Christian communities work for peace in such situations. The project hopes to document these efforts and to gauge how they can be effective and why.

We hope that the Churches which were unable to send representatives to the Mt Hagen workshop will still identify members who will contribute to the Peace-building research over the next four months till August.

The research project will thus in itself illustrate the potential for collaboration among the Churches and produce information that can enable further collaboration.

Creativity in Movement

The United Church has developed a new communication strategy following a pilot project designed and implemented by its Women's Fellowship.

The strategy, known as Creativity Movement, covers existing Church networks and is aimed at more effectively communicating issues of community concern, such as domestic violence, HIV/AIDS, drug abuse, alcoholism, teenage pregnancy and youth unemployment.

Social concerts are organised which rely on the traditional gifts and talents of people in performance, music, dance and drama. Mime or a song, for example, is used to raise awareness of the community issue. The concerts have recently been held in churches of the Poreporena Circuit of Port Moresby.

In preparation, the Women's Fellowship sewed uniforms for performers and culturally significant items such as grass skirts, traditional shell money and headdresses were gathered from local congregations and neighbouring churches in Kairuku District.

In the concerts, a mother's group sang and danced a string band song about how home brew and poverty are related. Other highlights were a traditional kitoro dance about AIDS and poetry readings in Motu language about the effects of drugs. One community leader commented “people got the messages loud and clear”.

The concerts are followed up by community discussions designed to come up with practical ideas to address the local issues. One significant outcome has been the formation of a Poreporena United Carers Association.



The Carers provide social counselling, particularly for HIV/AIDS but for other social issues as well. Another idea has been to draw girls away from nightclubs into a baby sitters club to provide baby-sitting services for working parents. After its great success, the Creativity Movement is being extended to other locations beyond Port Moresby.





Health volunteers in Misapi

By Esiah Eino

The Salvation Army has initiated a Village Health Volunteer (VHV) program in Misapi a remote part of the Eastern Highlands Province. The community there is isolated from the provincial capital Goroka and the normal basic services.

The Salvation Army operates a small health aid post in the village that serves some thousands of people. Since there are no basic health services the local Community Health Worker (CHW) has long been handling most of the medical cases. In cases where there is an emergency or other major health related issue, they are referred to Goroka. This sometimes does not work because there are no road networks that could easily serve the people and so it could take days to carry the sick to the nearest road to be transported to Goroka. Sometimes the patient does not reach Goroka alive.

Given such a scenario, with help from the CPP, a VHV program was initiated to help address some of the minor health related issues so the communities can help themselves. After attending training courses, the volunteers then raise awareness of health related issues and health care strategies in the villages.

After a year now I had the opportunity to interview some of the villagers that do participate in the VHV program. The reports were very positive and people say there is a very good impact on the community and the surrounding villages. It was reported that there is a significant drop



PHOTO: SALVATION ARMY PUBLICATION DEPT.

in the statistics of patients visiting the aid post. The community has Tuesday as their community working day and so on this day everybody goes out and does the community work. This includes cleaning roads, villages digging pit toilets and planting flowers and other related activities.

Pigs are now properly fenced and looked after unlike previously they roamed around the villages and polluted them. This has resulted in people respecting each other and looking after each other's property. Because of this there is a reduction in the health related issues for the villages.

It was also reported that because of the VHV program people have set up different committees to look into different issues. For example they have the law and order committees, Health Committees and community policing which is proving to be successful.

It was also reported that because of the VHV people now take ownership of some of the activities and are trying their very best to help themselves. One such example would be the rebuilding and revitalizing of a community school which was defunct for over 30 years.

The people have constructed bush material classrooms and teachers houses and at present there are about two teachers and two volunteers already in the school and helping. This seems to be one of the milestone achievements for the community as they have never seen such developments for a long time.

I thought this was quite a positive story of a change in the community because CPP only started funding a VHV program and it has now triggered off other development initiatives and people are taking the initiatives to organize themselves and help themselves.

HIV VIDEO MAKING IMPACT

By Martina Darius

The recently produced HIV/AIDS video by Adventist Health Department in Papua New Guinea is having a lot of impact on the lives of the people who have viewed it.

The DVD was produced last year in Goroka and has been used extensively throughout the country by other Christian churches and has also been viewed in other Pacific Islands as well. It tells the story of a married couple with HIV who struggle to find a



home for their children as the couple develop AIDS and become terminally ill.

The DVD has been screened in most parts of the country and requests are pouring in for a follow up production that targets the youths and teenagers.

In Goroka a woman went to see Eastern Highlands and Simbu Adventist Health Director Nina Frazer to tell her what the DVD has done for her family.

The woman said that her husband has changed dramatically after viewing the video. He used to be a heavy drinker and spends most of his evenings away from home.

"But that has changed, he now comes home straight after work and has completely stop drinking and abusing me. Thank you so much for this production," she said.

CPP Health Program Manager James Gahare, who is also the production manager of the DVD, was approached by two sex workers who told him that they have stopped all their activities. Both women have young children and after viewing the video they vowed never to be involved in anything that would put the lives of their children at risk. There are a lot more positive change stories coming in from all over the country being reported to the production team in Lae and Port Moresby.

The DVD production was jointly funded by the PNG Church Partnership Program and Papua New Guinea Union Mission and edited by Higher Ground Ministry Media.

The video was directed by PNG Adventist Communication Director Pr Matupit Darius and script written and produced by Adventist Health IEC officer Martina Darius.

The whole cast and production crew of the DVD are from PNG and it was shot on location in Goroka, so people in the country relate to it very well as they have seen some of these activities in their own community. For more information on the DVD or to get a copy, contact Martina Darius or James Gahare on (675) 472 1488 or email mdarius@pngum.org.pg



CPP goes to Milne Bay

In the first week of March, around 40 CPP people from around PNG gathered for their six monthly forum in the beautiful Milne Bay town of Alotau. Hosted by the United Church, the forum was held at Masurina Lodge. Over three days, CPP representatives were joined by officers of AusAID and the national government to assess progress of the program and explore issues of development in PNG.

The forum was opened by United Church Bishop Bernard Siai who said that coming together was an opportunity to experience the Spirit of God who could empower us to continue Jesus' mission of bringing good news to the poor and setting people free.

The forum looked at how the Churches can continue and build their collaboration in areas such as health services, HIV&AIDS, microfinance, adult literacy, water and sanitation, and gender and violence issues. There were also explorations of how the CPP could cooperate with AusAID in developing its Democratic Governance Strategy and with the Department for Community Development in its newly launched Integrated Community Development Policy.

An update on how preparations for the national elections are going added to existing concerns about instability during this important period. CPP Church agencies determined to contribute where they can to assist the election process.

Amidst the presentations and discussions, there were good opportunities to catch up informally, a highlight being a boat trip to the other side of the bay.





CPP Bulletin Board

The CPP Mid-Term Review (MTR) is nearing its completion. The MTR has been proceeding since last November, examining the work undertaken by the CPP since it began in late 2004. The MTR has particularly been assessing the achievements of the CPP in its key areas of institutional strengthening, service delivery and governance.

It has also looked at CPP management and collaboration and how this can be strengthened. The information gathered will help guide the CPP in the remainder of this first phase of the program to mid-2009 and into the next phase. Linda Kelly has led the MTR and important contributions have been made by Jane Cousins, who has gathered baseline and comparative information about the Churches' development activities, and by Martin Brash who undertook consultations with beneficiaries of CPP programs in Goroka, Madang and Port Moresby.

As part of the participatory nature of the MTR, 30 CPP people will gather in Port Moresby in the first week of May to review the data collected and explore its implications for the future.

Arising from the CPP commitment to Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E), a two-week M&E Mentoring project was undertaken with CPP agencies in March. Leading the project was Briony Menchin who was previously CPP Coordinator for the Catholic Church and now works with the consultancy firm SMEC in Canberra. Briony visited the workplaces of five CPP agencies: the Salvation Army, United Church, Seventh Day Adventist Church, Lutheran Church, and Catholic Church.

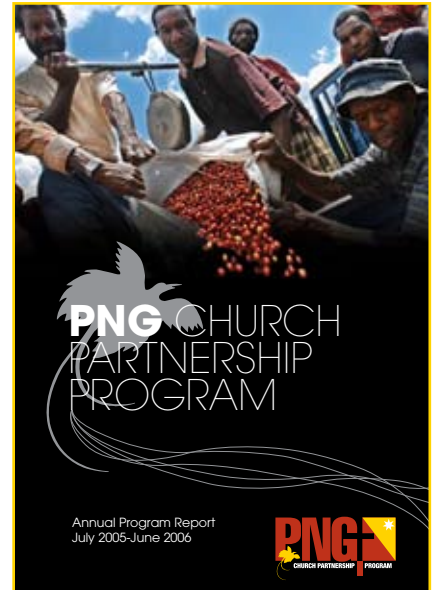
She worked with staff of each to assess their M&E systems, annual reporting processes, use of the Most Significant change methodology and M&E training needs. Some immediate practical training sessions were held and plans for ongoing improvements were developed. Out of the project have also come some recommendations that will help all CPP agencies in improving M&E capacity.

CPP People News

The Baptist Union is farewelling Rita Maripa who has been their CPP and Community Development Coordinator since mid last year. Rita has resigned to take up a management position with CARE International PNG in Goroka. She has expressed her gratitude for her time working with colleagues in the CPP and said, "I will truly treasure the development work of the Church agencies". We wish her well in her new role.

Now taking up the CPP role with BUPNG is Esther Nokolu. Esther is from Erave in Southern Highlands Province. After graduating in 1990 as an Environment Health Officer, Esther obtained a position with the American Oil company, Chevron Niugini in the Kutubu and Gobe oil fields. She worked as a health officer and then moved over to the Community Affairs Department within the company as Community Development Officer. In this role, she worked closely with women's groups by teaching women self-reliance in village development activities, small income generation projects, and promoting awareness and community participation in improving quality of life in the villages. As part of this, she assisted in assessing health needs of rural communities and make recommendations to solve health problems at village levels. Esther has two children aged 6 & 3. We look forward to getting to know Esther and to the contribution she will bring to CPP.

On March 31st, Mr Bravy Towika, the National Lutheran Education Secretary, passed away suddenly to the shock of staff in the Lutheran Education Department as well as to all staff in the ELC National Office. Mr Towika was very proud of his department's involvement in CPP and the many improvements that had resulted from the capacity building, organizational development activities and strategic planning processes introduced through CPP. Raene David, well known in 'foundation' CPP circles, has been appointed as Acting National Secretary.



CPP Annual Report

The CPP Annual Report for 2005-2006 is now available online at the site of the Australian Council for International Development.

The web address is:
<http://www.acfid.asn.au/what-we-do/countries-regions/png-pacific-solomon-islands/papua-new-guinea>

The report covers the achievements and challenges of the CPP across its broad range of development activities.

Election Posters

Using CPP funding, the Evangelical Lutheran Church has produced and is distributing an election poster (pictured) which carries the heading "Tingting gut na makim lida long taim bilong 2007 eleksen" [Think carefully and vote for a LEADER in the 2007 election.]

This election awareness poster presents ten principles that voters should consider when deciding on potential political leaders. These posters will be delivered throughout the ELC network using its District/Circuit/Parish and Congregation network.

The ELC Bishop, Chief Rt Rev. Wesley Kigasung, will also share the ten principles of the poster with FM Radio audiences. Two Melbourne newspapers have also interviewed him after reading of the posters' production and launching in an article printed in the PNG newspaper, The National, dated Monday April 23, 2007.



Retaining Girls in Lutheran Agency Schools

For some time, the Lutheran Education Department has wanted to tackle the issue of the problem of retaining girls in their Lutheran Agency Schools, as well as addressing the matter of the lack of female teachers in agency schools in remote areas.

With CPP funding, an investigatory process is currently underway with the planned outcome being the preparation of a strategy that can be implemented to endeavour to address the "girls in education retention" issue. This strategy will be trialed in a pilot community, reviewed and then implemented throughout the Lutheran schools system.

