

Cultural Diplomacy in the South Pacific

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1. Introduction

Overview of the South Pacific Region

The South Pacific is comprised of 20,000 to 30,000 islands which lie south of the Tropic of Cancer. The Pacific Island region covers 20 million square miles of ocean and 117,000 square miles of land, with a population of 8 million people. For the first time, the South Pacific region is facing urbanization, which has brought new challenges to this area. The rates of urban growth in the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, both in excess of 6 per cent per annum, are among the highest in the world.¹

The islands are commonly grouped into three different divisions; Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia. The inhabitants from each of these groups all differ by historical, geographical, language and physical characteristics. Polynesia is located in the south-eastern part of the region, Melanesia is found in the southwest, from the Arafura Sea to the western end of the Pacific Ocean and eastward to Fiji, whilst Micronesia lies in the north. The Pacific islands are classified into a high island group and a low island group. The low islands are atolls or reefs, and the high islands are primarily volcanoes. There are 14 independent states within the South Pacific region and are all democratic. Since gaining independence, human rights have been generally adhered to and elections have been reported to have been, fair and free.²

The South Pacific islands rely heavily on international governments for administration, defence and development assistance and to help maintain political stability. As a result there are four main spheres of influence within the South Pacific; American, Australian, New Zealander and French. Australia has launched peacekeeping missions to the South Pacific throughout the last ten years as an attempt to avoid social and economic collapse, and is calling for further international aid. With the exceptions of Fiji, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands, most of the countries within this region have limited natural and human resources upon which to launch sustained development.

The MIRAB model developed by Bertram and Watters has dominated the small island economy literature for two decades as well as its traditional distinction to SITE and PROFIT economies.³ Its main focus on Migrant/Remittances and Aid/Bureaucracy (MIRAB) in contrast to Small Island Tourist Economies (SITE) and countries which, through creative diplomacy and flexible policy, wrest local control from metropolitan powers over People (immigration), Resources, Overseas management (Diplomacy), Finance and Transport (Profit). While the PROFIT formulation highlights a dynamic private sector and domestic policy flexibility, a 'resourcefulness of jurisdiction' (Baldacchino, 2006), the SITE model emphasizes the role of tourism (McElroy, 2006).

In the last few years there has been a steady increase in soft power from China towards the South Pacific region. Both China and Taiwan are both economically and diplomatically active, embarking on high profile diplomatic visits and through the signing of 'China- Pacific Island Countries Economic Development and Coordination Guiding Framework.' China pledged \$375 million in developmental assistance for the Pacific Islands, as well as expressing an interest in a free trade agreement with the Pacific Island Nation. However in return for the aid China

¹ United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific; Managing the Transition from the Village to the City in the South Pacific <http://www.unescap.org/huset/pacific/pacific2.htm>

² U.S Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, 2005* (March 2005); *Freedom in the World 2007*, January 2007

³ David Barber, "It's Not Pacific in Pacific as Leaders Gather", German Press Agency (DPA) October 20, 2006

demands diplomatic recognition and support of diplomatic objectives.⁴

Within this report nine islands will be examined, specifically looking into what projects are being developed, how they are being implemented on these islands and their relevance to Cultural Diplomacy. Furthermore it will be interesting to examine how the size of an economy influences the countries' dedication to cultural diplomacy.

⁴ Thomas Lum, Bruce Vaughn; *The Southwest Pacific: U.S. Interests and China's Growing Influence*, CRS, Report for Congress July 6, 2007 <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL34086.pdf>

2. Methodology

The South Pacific region covers a great deal of territory and there are many ways to group the countries to define the territory. The scope of this ongoing research focuses on the countries which are a part of the Pacific Islands Forum, not including Australia and New Zealand, although the report tangentially addresses these two countries as the featured fourteen countries have close ties to these two neighbours. Currently, this report includes cultural diplomacy initiatives undertaken by ten of the fourteen countries. These ten include the Cook Islands, Guam, the Kingdom of Tonga, Niue Island, the Overseas Lands of French Polynesia, Papua New Guinea, the Republic of Fiji, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Republic of Palau, and the Republic of Vanuatu. The remaining four countries which will be included in subsequent reports are the Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Samoa, and the Solomon Islands.

The current focus of this research is on public initiatives in the field of cultural diplomacy over the past five years. The timeframe was to include as many current initiatives as possible while also taking into account that some projects do not take place regularly, but on a four to five year cycle. With the focus on the public sector, researchers looked to official government websites for information on initiatives either wholly or partially supported by the public sector in each of the included countries. Other websites used for subsequent information were located from the information on the government websites. The following is a preliminary list and will be added to in the future. Thus, conclusions will be basic and provide initial impressions, which will be used as a basis for comparison and challenged in subsequent reports.

3. Contemporary Examples of Public Sector Sponsored Cultural Diplomacy in the South Pacific

3.1 Cook Islands

The Cook Islands lie in the centre of the Polynesian Triangle, flanked by Fiji, Tahiti, Hawaii and New Zealand. In total, the Cook Islands cover an area of 93 square miles (240 square kilometres) and accommodate approximately 20,500 inhabitants. The official language of the island is English and the most common vernacular language spoken is Cook Islands Maori, also known as Rarotongan. Since 1965 the Cook Islands have been a self-governing, parliamentary democracy in association with New Zealand. The chiefs of State are the British monarch and the New Zealand High Commissioner.

New Zealand still retains primary responsibility for external affairs, with consultation with the Cook Islands government. The country has five embassies around the world, however, to deal with its consular affairs and is increasingly taking part in different initiatives to increase its visibility in the international sphere. The region participates in WHO and UNESCO, and is an associate member of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP). Lately, the government is also putting a large emphasis on promoting their culture and tourism to foster diplomatic ties with other nations.

This is evident by the content of "Living the Cook Islands Vision –A 2020 Challenge," which was conceived by the National Sustainable Development Plan (2007-2010). One of the goals stated in the report is: "The protection, preservation and promotion of our cultural resources, language traditional values, knowledge and practices are important to us as Cook Islanders."⁵ To this end, the Report highlights the government's plan to strengthen programmes emphasizing the Cook Islands' Maori language, traditional sports, performing and visual arts and recording of oral traditions. The government has set some targets such as:

- Increasing the number of Art and other Cultural Exhibitions;
- Recording and storing all national and cultural festivities in the National Archive;
- Promoting Cook Islands Maori Language, traditional sports, visual and performing arts and oral traditions during the festive periods.

The main actors involved in the sphere of cultural diplomacy in the Cook Islands are the Ministry of Culture, NGOs and other private organizations. At present, most of the projects are publically funded, both by the Cook Islands government as well as the governments of New Zealand, China, Australia and USA. For example, In June 2000 the Cook Islands signed the Cotonou Agreement, paving the way to important financial assistance from the European Union and its Asia, Caribbean and Pacific Group for development in areas such as education and healthcare.⁶ Hence, for a majority of programmes, the Cook Island government participates, but often is not the lead sponsor or initiator due to its struggling economy.

⁵ Policy, Central Planning and Policy Office (Office of the Prime Minister) and the Economic Policy Division (Ministry of Finance and Economic Management), Government of the Cook Islands. „Living the Cook Islands Vision – A 2020 Challenge.“ 2007.

⁶ Legislation, Europa - Summaries of EU. Cotonou Agreement. 2000.
http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/development/african_caribbean_pacific_states/r12101_en.htm.

In 2005, the Cook Islands were struck by five cyclones, which highlighted the environmental vulnerability of the economic and social infrastructure of the country. The Government recently acknowledged the need for consideration of a long-term national climate change adaptation strategy, and also decided to strengthen the capacity of the Ministry of Infrastructure and Planning (MOIP). Annually the government allocates \$2.4 million NZD for Outer Islands Infrastructure development. Furthermore, the government has joined hands with different countries to address climate change vulnerabilities. The unison not only brought them together in developing the measures to lessen the adverse effects of Climate Change but also initiated dialogue on several other issues.

TE MAEVA NUI

Project Details

Country: The Cook Islands
Telephone: None listed
Email: None listed
Website: <http://www.cookislands.travel/temaevanui>
Sponsored By: the Cook Islands Ministry of Cultural Development

Organisation Description

The government division that would become the Ministry of Cultural Development first began to take shape in 1975 under the Department of Internal Affairs. It later merged into the Tumu Korero Division, only to be re-established in 1992 as its own ministry in order to plan and host the 1992 Pacific Arts Festival. The Ministry has since expanded into five divisions which include the National Library, National Museum, National Archives, Anthropology Unit and the National Auditorium. Within these areas, the Ministry preserves and promotes the cultural heritage of the Cook Islands.

Project Description

The event is organized by the Cook Islands Ministry of Culture. It takes the form of a weeklong festival which spans from the 29th July to the 6th of August. The government allocates approximately USD 70k to fund the festival, and to pay the travel costs of outer islanders who are attending. The celebrations are normally held in the National Auditorium in Tupapa. The target audiences are the residents of all 15 islands of the region, as well as its neighboring countries and foreign tourists. Each year, performing artists from Rarotonga and the outer islands present new dances, songs, drum beats and costumes expressing the cultural theme chosen for that particular year.

The theme for the 2011 celebration is Te Akairo (the signs of my motherland). Teams from the outer islands will also be selling crafts and other produce from their home during island days throughout the festival. This year's celebrations are the biggest for many years, and mark the 46th anniversary of the Islands gaining independence. Other events during the festival include coconut husking, and a Maori food festival.

Aims of the Project

The celebrations are held in commemoration of self-governance in the Cook Islands. It provides a platform for all the islands of the group to showcase their creativity and hidden talents.

Relevance as Cultural Diplomacy

The project is a vivid example of celebrating cultural diversity within one state and showcasing it for the rest of the world. The festival not only provides a platform for artists to demonstrate their talents, but also gives the opportunity to engage with foreign audience and connect with them through the bonds of culture.

KIA ORANA- Cultural Exchange Programme

Project Details

Country: The Cook Islands
Telephone: +613 9364 3680
Email: trapatai@teroopuatawhai.com
Website: http://teroopuatawhai.com/?page_id=241
Sponsored by: Te Roopu Atawhai

Organisation Description

The Cook Islands- Cultural Exchange Programme has been organised by a non-profit organisation, called Te Roopu Atawhai (TRA). TRA was established in order to address the growing demand for Polynesian services in Victoria, as well as to provide a suitable avenue to highlight and voice the needs of the Victorian Polynesian community, by preserving and promoting a vibrant cultural heritage. In turn, this strengthens the integration of the community into the local environment and society.

Project Description

The Project is designed for the education sector and enables cultural workshops and exchange programs for schools both at primary and secondary level.

Aims of the Project

The aims of the project are:

- To foster mutual understanding of the Cook Islands culture, and to understand and respect diversity;
- To engage audiences with traditional Cook Island songs, dance, language and customs;
- To encourage audience participation in traditional Cook islands song and dance;
- To present live demonstrations and displays in Ancient Cook Islands weaponry and Cook Islands Martial Arts;
- To facilitate and support an inter-cultural dialogue with students and teachers regarding all aspects of the Cook Islands and the Cook Island Culture;
- To enable students and teachers to appreciate the Cook Island culture;
- To provide a forum to challenge established perceptions of the Cook Islands and the Cook Island Culture.

Relevance as Cultural Diplomacy

The project scores highly in the sphere of cultural diplomacy; more so because it takes place at a grass roots level, and is therefore accessible and inclusive. The continuous influx and outflow of teachers and students between the Cook Islands and Australia will assure a positive cultural exchange between the two countries. The project also enables a direct exchange of ideas, information, art, lifestyles, values systems, traditions, beliefs and other aspects of cultures. The initiative is an excellent example of how education can provide a lead when it comes to forging new relations between countries on the basis of culture.

SOUTH PACIFIC MINI GAMES

Project Details

Country: The Cook Islands (Host country)
Telephone: (682) 24-098 / (682) 25-098 (Sonny Williams, Director of Operations)
Email: sonny@2009pacificgames.co.ck
Website: http://www.sportingpulse.com/assoc_page.cgi?c=2-4592-0-0-0
Sponsored by: the South Pacific Games Council

Organisation Description

The South Pacific Games Council was founded by the South Pacific Commission in 1962, with the aim of creating closer bonds amongst people of the various countries of the Pacific region through sports. Every four years the countries in the South Pacific come together to participate in this multi-sport event, which is both a celebration of sport, culture and the common bonds which unite these communities under one banner. The South Pacific Games became so popular that in 1981, the Commission founded the South Pacific Mini Games, which also take place every four years, falling in the two year mid-point between the South Pacific Games.

Project Description

First introduced in 1981, the Cook Islands hosted the most recent South Pacific Mini Games in 2009. The games are hosted by those countries without the finance/facilities to hold the full-scale South Pacific Games; according to a statement issued by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Sir Terepai Maoate, the government had contributed well over NZ\$13 million toward infrastructure in support of the event. The government also managed to secure a loan for US\$10 million from the Chinese government to finance the building of a stadium.

Aims of the Project

The event aims to showcase the country's dynamic culture.

Relevance as Cultural Diplomacy

Sports encourage team spirit and feelings of unity. This project, built along such lines, involves teams and players from different countries, and aims to forge bonds between different nations on the sports field. The event was established with a view to creating bonds of kindred friendship and brotherhood amongst people of the countries of the Pacific region through sporting exchange without any distinctions as to race, religion or politics.

WORLD YOUTH CHAMPIONSHIPS: Cook Island 2009

Project Details

Country: The Cook Islands (2009)

Telephone: 68225494

Email: emci@pmoffice.gov.ck

Website: http://www.sportingpulse.com/assoc_page.cgi?c=1-2376-0-0 0&SID =69727

Sponsored by: The International Netball Federation and the Government of Cook Islands

Organisation Description

The WYNC 2009 Board is a mix of Cook Islands Netball Association (CINA) members, the private sector, CISNOC and Cook Island Government Ministers. The current chairman of the Committee is Hon. Wilkie Rasmussen, Minister of Foreign Affairs & Minister of the Games.

Project Description

The World Youth Netball Championships is the world championships of netball for national U21 teams, with all players being aged 21 years or younger. The event started in Canberra in 1988, and has been held roughly every four years since. The most recent tournament was held in July 2009 in the Cook Islands. The International Netball Federation supported the government for hosting the event; the Chinese government also stepped in and gave a loan to the country of NZ\$9.3 million to help pay the costs for constructing the facilities. Teams from 20 different countries (Australia, Barbados, Botswana, Cook Islands, England, Fiji, Jamaica, Malawi, Malaysia, New Zealand, Northern Ireland, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Scotland, Singapore, South Africa, Trinidad & Tobago, USA, Vanuatu, and Wales) participated in this international event.

Aims of the Project

The aim of the event is to promote the game in the participating countries.

Relevance as Cultural Diplomacy

As a host nation, this event provided a chance for The Cook Islands to not only improve their infrastructure but also to display their culture and traditions to the other participating nations.

VOLUNTEER VACATION COOK ISLANDS-Teach Children to Read and Assist Island Families

Project Details

Country: The Cook Islands
Telephone: (800) 487-1074, (651) 482-0915
Email: email@globalvolunteers.org
Website: <http://www.globalvolunteers.org/cook/default.asp>
<http://www.globalvolunteers.org/media/ITN.pdf>

Sponsored by: Global Volunteers

Organisation Description

Global Volunteers is an independent non-profit organization, funded by volunteer contributions. For the last 30 years they have carried out projects in various developing countries.

Project Description

The project is designed to gather volunteers from different nations and carry out community service / development projects (such as teaching and healthcare) in the Cook Islands. As the project is carried out by a non-profit organisation, the volunteers pay a fee of around \$50 to \$3,000, with a stay period of around 3 to 4 weeks. If volunteers intend to stay longer they are paid a stipend.

Aims of the Project

- Contribute to the successes of local development work.
- Share cultural insights with like-minded team mates.
- Employ the talents and skills of the volunteers in an unconventional setting.
- Experience a foreign culture from inside the community

Relevance as Cultural Diplomacy

The project gives ample opportunities to explore the islands and work one-on-one with local people. It is a two-way process where the volunteers contribute in the development of a region but also simultaneously gain an insight in the region's culture and traditions.

3.2 Guam

The Island of Guam has undergone deep cultural changes in its history. In 1668, it was colonized by the Spanish, who later ceded control to the United States after the 1898 Spanish- American war. During the Second World War it was captured by the Japanese, only to be transferred back to American control at the Battle of Guam (on a 21st July which later became *Liberation Day*). It has remained under American rule ever since, although this situation has grown strained with autonomy remaining a key issue. On March 5th 1949, the Guam Congress Walkout resulted in Guam becoming an unincorporated territory of the United States, transferring their administration from the US Navy to the US Ministry of the Interior. The Guam legislative parliament of 15 members is autonomous, and they elect their own governor –although their delegate to the Chamber of Representatives has no voting powers.

The American presence remains very strong, with Guam serving as one of the largest military bases in the Pacific, comprising one third of the island's territory. This represents a considerable increase of the island's population (47%)⁷ and a strain on the island's resources, although it is an excellent opportunity for the local economy, which relies heavily on touristic activities and the third sector.

With this diverse historical context, the culture of Guam stands out as a unique feature. Before the Spanish colonization, the Chamorro (or Chamoru) culture existed for 4,000 years, and is very particular to the Marianas (of which Guam is a part, along with the Northern Marianas). This identity is very deeply anchored in the minds of the population: the Chamorro national movements have always been very strong, and they continue to push for more political independence. The main counterpoint to the Chamorro culture is immigration: although the indigenous population is the largest minority on the island (43%) it remains a minority, as Filipino, Chinese, Japanese and American diasporas are very strong.

As a result, local institutions are promoting the local culture in a very dynamic way: numerous governmental agencies are dedicated to this task (the Guam Preservation Trust, the Guam Council on Arts and Humanities Agency, the Department of Chamorro Affairs, and many other smaller institutes accountable to these main three agencies), and initiatives stemming from the civil society are working to keep the Chamorro culture alive. Over the last 50 years the island has become more autonomous, and cultural initiatives have been sustained. In the last 20 years there has been a revival of the Chamorro identity at a cultural level (through the promotion of the Chamorro language and culture in schools, of apprenticeships) as well as at a political level, and in the 1980s and early 1990s a significant political movement sought more autonomy, demanding that Guam become a Commonwealth; this demand was rejected on constitutional grounds.

Despite Guam's political difficulties, however, the Chamorro identity remains quite vibrant: the initiatives mentioned in this report are representative of the cultural involvement of all strata of the indigenous population in the pursuit of international recognition.

⁷ Prof. Catherine Lutz, "American Military Bases on Guam: the US Global Military System," August 2, 2010, available at <http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid=20405>

GUAM COUNCIL ON THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES (CAHA)

Project Details

Country: Guam, U.S.A.
Telephone: +1 (671) 475 2781 / 2782 / 3661
Email: info@caha.guam.gov, kaha1@guam.net
Website: <http://caha.guam.gov>
Sponsored by: Guam Ministry of Tourism and Culture

Organisation Description

The Guam Caha (or KAHA in Chamoru) was originally created as the Insular Arts Council in 1967 as part of the University of Guam. In 1975, Governor Ricardo Bordello incorporated it into the executive office, and it is now a part of the Ministry of Tourism and Culture, with its Executive Director appointed by the governor. Guam CAHA handles over \$1 million, spent on projects, grants and management.⁸ It is part of the U.S. National Assembly of State Arts Agencies.

Project Description

Guam CAHA offers support to individual projects, as well as to more sustainable programmes through grants, sustained funding and logistical support. The projects supported by Guam CAHA are quite diverse and include folk art projects, theatre, musical productions and visual arts displays. The agency collaborates with the public as well as the private sectors to promote its projects. It has developed an Art Bank of over 300 pieces, displayed in various museums and governmental agencies. Through CAHA's work, the art is thriving on the island of Guam, and is freely accessible.

The project includes:

- Individual festivals and exhibitions such as the Agat Mango Festival (May 2011);
- A Master Apprenticeship programme, which develops cultural practitioners in order to preserve the traditional crafts and practices;
- A grant cycle to support initiatives from organizations.

Aims of the Project

Guam CAHA strives to develop programmes in music, visual arts, cultural heritage, literature, and arts education both domestically and abroad. To that end, its goals are:

- To develop public interest and preserve the high artistic quality in the territory;
- To heighten public awareness over arts education and its essential role in quality formative education;
- To bring arts to all communities;
- To promote the Chamorro heritage through various programs and to all communities of the island;
- To promote cultural exchange.

Relevance as Cultural Diplomacy

Guam CAHA offers support to artists, giving them the opportunity to develop a unique style to display throughout the world. In particular, the support offered to Chamorro initiatives helps to sustain this very ancient, lively and unique identity.

⁸ Guama CAHA budget, 2011, available at <http://budget.guam.gov:9995/gateway/retrievegovguambudget.do?deptcode=40>

PA'A TAOTAO TANO

Project Details

Country: Guam, U.S.A.
Telephone: +1 (671) 475 4722
Email: info@paataotaotano.org
Website: <http://www.paataotaotano.org/index3.html>

Sponsored by: Federal and governmental grants, private donations, and fundraising efforts. The association has also benefited from three multi-year federal grants from the Administration of Native Americans.

Organisation Description

Pa'a Taotao Tano, which means in Chamorro "the way of life of the people of the land," was created in 1998, but was officially incorporated in November 2001. It has benefited from the support of the Administration of Native Americans, and other federal and local grants, as well as through its own fundraising efforts. Pa'a Taotao Tano has many achievements and engages in diverse activities: one of its recent initiatives was to initiate a 2010 Chamorro Language Assessment Survey to consider the need for improving the teaching of the Chamorro language.

Project Description

Pa'a Taotao Tano has a membership of more than 600, which is mainly based in Guam, but also exists on the western coast of the U.S. Pa'a Taotao Tano aims to sustain strong ties within their communities and to educate others about their culture, notably through the formation of "Masters of Chamorro Culture," a title launched by the organization and taken over by other groups and agencies as a quasi-official label.

The project includes:

- Over 600 cultural practitioners, mostly members of dance groups but also visual artists, who perform at annual dance festivals (including the opening of the 1999 South Pacific Games, hosted by Guam),
- The formation of Masters of Chamorro Traditions through an apprenticeship programme;
- The placement of these cultural instructors in elementary, middle and high schools to teach about Chamorro traditions;
- Research on the usage of the Chamorro language, and its promotion through cultural events such as musicals.

Aims of the Project

This non-profit organisation aims to preserve, perpetuate and promote the cultural traditions of the indigenous people of Guam and the Marianas, through performances and exhibitions by Chamorro cultural practitioners. Its mandate also encompasses more institutional actions such as cooperating with schools to provide an academic footing to the language and culture. Thus, it helps to build strong communal ties through the promotion of their cultural identity.

Relevance as Cultural Diplomacy

Through its very diverse and sustained initiatives, Pa'a Taotao Tano makes sure the Chamorro identity survives the waves of globalization by making sure traditions are passed on to the new generations, and also by fostering a sense of community, which extends to all those who have an interest in the Chamorro culture.

GUAMPEDIA FOUNDATION INC.

Project Details

Country: Guam, U.S.
Telephone: None listed
Email: [via website \(http://guampedia.com/contact-us/\)](http://guampedia.com/contact-us/)
Website: <http://guampedia.com>
Sponsored by: the National Endowment for the Humanities, U.S. Department of the Interior, Bank of Guam, Gannett Foundation, Guam CAHA, Guam Preservation Trust, among others.

Organisation Description

The Guampedia project was first launched by the Guam Humanities Council in 2002, following a call for proposals from the National Endowment for the Humanities, and received the support of governmental agencies, non-profit organizations (Guam CAHA and Guam Preservation Trust) and some private partners such as the Bank of Guam, Gannett Corporation (parent company of the local Guam Newspaper, Pacific Daily News). It was later incorporated and became independent in 2009, still receiving support from the government of Guam, but also supporting its activities through historical and cultural consulting. The Guampedia Foundation's total budget is currently \$160,000 per year; the organisation employs four full-time staff, and relies on volunteers for contributions.

Project Description

Currently, the encyclopedia holds approximately 815 entries, and over 2,000 media files. All articles are written by specialists/academics, and are peer-reviewed. The encyclopedia functions as the main open source of information regarding the island.

Aims of the Project

The Guampedia project aims at creating an online repository of all important facts, dates and events in the formation of Guam's Chamorro culture and history. Through this encyclopedia, a broad audience can learn about Guam, not only visitors of the island but also the local population seeking to learn more about their own ancestry.

Relevance as Cultural Diplomacy

The Guampedia project offers the world a very rich and educational insight into the island of Guam, and in particular, the Chamorro minority native to the island. This repository of knowledge ensures that the historical and current contributions of this minority identity are preserved and remain included in the overall collective knowledge on Guam.

HAGATNA CHAMORRO VILLAGE

Project Details

Country: Guam, U.S.A.
Telephone: +1 (671) 475 0375 / 0378
Email: chamvilg@ns.gov.gu; chamorrovillage@dca.guam.gov (Marcos Gerardo, Program Coordinator)
Website: <http://ns.gov.gu/market.html>;
<http://www.dca.guam.gov/Default.aspx?tabid=3542>
Sponsored by: The Department of Chamorro Affairs and the Guam Department of Commerce

Organisation Description

Created under the Guam Department of Commerce in 1978, the Chamorro Village (Sengsong Chamorro in the Chamorro language) was transformed from a livestock market into a facility primarily focused on culture. Since its creation, the facility has developed a great deal, most notably due to Gov. Joseph F. Ada's Public Market Development plan, which expanded it into a \$10-million facility. Each year, the Chamorro Village is responsible for almost \$400,000 in revenues, mainly from rental stalls.

Project Description

The Chamorro Village is a very popular place for local families and visitors to discover the cuisine, crafts and arts and entertainment of Guam. The project includes:

- Ancient cultural dances, reggae and live bands, demonstrations by master crafters, costumes and exhibitions by Guam's youth;
- Promotion of local craftsmanship through demonstrations, and the possibility for local entrepreneurs to take part to the island's economic activity.

Aims of the Project

The Chamorro Village has two main goals. The first has an economic focus and it is to encourage local entrepreneurs and provide them with a facility that helps them promote Guam's products and local arts and crafts. The second goal goes beyond economic considerations, and focuses on cultural exchange with foreign tourists, thereby enhancing the vibrancy of the Chamorro community through such lively activities as arts performances and commerce.

Relevance as Cultural Diplomacy

The variety of entertainment, cuisine and crafts provided at the Chamorro Village are very popular and offer knowledge about the local culture to all who seek to experience it. This is a unique opportunity to take a step away from one's own cultural perspective immerse oneself into a new lifestyle.

3.3 Kingdom of Tonga

Tonga is an archipelago of about 170 small islands in the South Pacific. The islands are scattered over 700,000 square kilometers, and only 52 are inhabited. Tonga has a rich and intense cultural heritage, traces of which can be found in most socio-political spheres within Tongan society. The island has a rare history, in that it has not been colonized by any Western countries.

Tonga is the largest and last remaining Polynesian Kingdom in the South Pacific. The Royal Household of Tonga, headed by the King of Tonga carries out all socio-political and administrative responsibilities in the country. The Royal Household has maintained its strong cultural sovereignty, which is reflected in the fact that it is one of the few South Pacific countries to have a Ministry for Culture, as well as the Tongan Traditional Committee. The Royal Household of Tonga carries out the important part of the maintaining international cultural relations. In 2010, Tonga took a decisive step towards becoming a fully functioning constitutional monarchy after legislative reforms paved the way for its first fully representative elections.

LAKALAKA DANCE PROJECT

Project Details

Country: Kingdom of Tonga
Telephone: Not Listed
Email: Not Listed
Website: <http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/en/RL/00072>
Sponsored By: UNESCO and The Tongan government

Organisation Description

UNESCO is an arm of the UN, dedicated to promoting culture as a means for dialogue among communities around the world. UNESCO works with governments to develop means of preserving national heritage, both tangible and intangible, as well as developing programmes to share the knowledge that the heritage encapsulates.

Project Description

This traditional dance deals with themes of Tongan history, legends, social structures and values. It is a group dance which is performed by both men and women standing up and by generally just using arms. The project in focus is the Implementation of the National Action Plan for the Safeguarding of Lakalaka, Sung Speeches with Choreographed Movements, a UNESCO Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity.

Aims of Project

This project is implemented by the Tonga Traditional Committee, which aims to keep Tongan traditions and customs alive in the country. The state dances are generally funded by the Royal Household and also by UNESCO Tonga.

Relevance as Cultural Diplomacy

The Lakalaka dance is an example of cultural diplomacy from Tonga. The dance project is used as a tool to promote national harmony, and is recognized by UNESCO. The dance is generally presented at Royal functions, coronations and anniversaries of the constitution. It is regarded as the national dance of the country and is a socio-political expression of Tongan culture.

SILENCE AND HIV/AIDS (2010)

Project Details

Country: Kingdom of Tonga

Telephone: None listed

Email: None listed

Website: <http://tongaeducation.gov.to>

Sponsored by: UNAIDS & UNFPA, Kava Palm Guesthouse, TCC, SPC, CPS, Sunrise Poultry, PIAF, Tonga Leiti Association, Avis, Star Printers, Tupou High School, Tonga National Cultural Center, Tonga Family Health Association, Adiloo's, Tonga Water Board, Ministry of Health, Asia Pacific Leader's Forum, Ministry of Education, Women's Affairs and Culture.

Organisation Description

Numerous national and international organizations/institutions sponsored this performance. Each is joined by a common mission to promote intercultural dialogue and shared values of health and prosperity for all communities. This begins with access to sound information in order to make healthy lifestyle choices. The involved organisations were able to combine their diverse resources to make this performance possible.

Project Description

Silence and HIV/AIDS is a Fijian production of dance, drama and choral pieces, which has been performed in Tonga and commissioned by the Tongan State. The performance, which took place in August of 2010, explored the complexities of AIDS whilst also engaging with tradition and symbology such as waves and the ocean, an important part of Tongan culture.

Aims of the Project

The aim was to raise awareness on the prevention, protection, treatment, care, support, policy making and most significantly empowerment of the most vulnerable HIV/AIDS victims in Tonga. The original production is from Fiji, but the 2010 production was commissioned by the Tonga State in an effort for inter-cultural dialogue. The production offered silence as a metaphor to highlight the need for more dialogue and discussion about sexuality, sexual behaviour and the reality of HIV in the Pacific today.

Relevance as Cultural Diplomacy

At the inaugural speech the Director of Education, Women's Affairs and Culture in Tonga, Dr. Viliami Fukofuka paid tribute to the team from USP Fiji. She welcomed the team as not just a form of improving diplomatic and cultural ties, but also for demonstrating the importance of art in society for creating dialogue around sensitive but important issues.

UNESCO IN TONGA: 2011 Visit of Pacific Resident Director Dr. Pongi

Project Details

Country: Kingdom of Tonga
Telephone: None listed
Email: None listed
Website: <http://www.pmo.gov.to/international-relations/112-state-visits/2841-unesco-resident-representative-in-the-pacific-pays-courtesy-visit-on-new-tongan-government>
Sponsored by: Ministry of Education and Women Affairs and Culture Tonga

Organisation Description

The Tongan Ministry of Education, Women Affairs and Culture is involved in numerous initiatives that fall under the broad headings contained in its name: education, legislation and events particularly pertaining to women, and matters relating to preserving and promoting the Tongan cultural heritage.

Project Description

From the 6th-12th of August 2011, UNESCO Pacific Resident Director Dr. Visesio Pongi visited Tonga and met with Prime Minister of Tonga Lord Tu'ivakano to discuss UNESCO's mandate in Tonga and associated UNESCO projects and conventions.

Aims of the Project

The purpose of this visit was to highlight intercultural diplomatic ties, and raise the profile of cultural programs in Tonga.

Relevance as Cultural Diplomacy

The main message from this meeting was the increased profile of cultural exchange and diplomatic relations. Dr. Pongi highlighted the importance of intercultural dialogue and cultural tolerance. Dr. Pongi said "It is much preferred that the door is always kept open for dialogue. UNESCO from time to time hosts dialogues and exchanges between cultures and creeds, and is increasingly involved in settling disputes and conflicts throughout the world".⁹ Hence, this trip served as a tool for improved importance for soft power and cultural diplomacy in the South Pacific.

⁹ Quote taken from the Tongan Ministry of Information and Communications website: <http://www.pmo.gov.to/international-relations/112-state-visits/2841-unesco-resident-representative-in-the-pacific-pays-courtesy-visit-on-new-tongan-government>

FRANCE AND TONGA: Improving Cultural Ties

Project Details

Country: Kingdom of Tonga
Telephone: None listed
Email: None listed
Website: <http://www.pmo.gov.to/international-relations/112-state-visits/2734-french-senators-learn-about-tonga-on-first-ever-visit>
Sponsored by: The French and Tongan governments

Organisation Description

This visit was made possible by the French Senate, the French embassy in Tonga, as well as various ministries within the Tongan government, such as the Office of the Prime Minister of Tonga, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Ministry for Education, Women and Culture, the Ministry for Training, Employment, Youth and Sports, and the Ministry for Tourism.

Project Description

The 22nd July 2011 marked the date of the first official visit to Tonga by French parliamentarians since the two countries established diplomatic ties with a Friendship Treaty, signed in 1855. The group held talks with the Prime Minister of Tonga and Minister for Foreign Affairs Lord Tu'ivakano, as well as the Minister for Education, Women and Culture, the Minister for Training, Employment, Youth and Sports, the Minister for Tourism and several members of Parliament. Upon returning to France, the Senators will present a report of their visit to the French Parliament. The visit was arranged by the French Senate and facilitated by the Honorary French Consul Mrs. Tupou Pasikala Fiu.

Aims of the Project

The aim of this visit was to enable representatives of the French government to learn about the social, cultural and political lifestyle of the country in order to improve cultural ties.

Relevance as Cultural Diplomacy

Of the visit, Senator Jean-Pierre Demerliat said:

We wanted to see first-hand the local institutions, economic activities, how society works, and gain a better understanding of the country's plans and aspirations. We were happy to receive our visitors who come with great experience and knowledge of political and democratic development. The main point we hoped to convey was that ours was a peaceful political transition, thanks to the endorsement of His Majesty the King, the hard work of the previous government, our development partners such as Australia and New Zealand, as well as aspirations of the Tongan people.¹⁰

Thus, this diplomatic mission, a project in itself, provides a valuable tool to improve state sponsored cultural diplomacy.

¹⁰ Quote taken from the Tongan Ministry of Information and Communications website:
http://www.mic.gov.to/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2734&lang=es

3.4 Niue Island

Niue is an island country in the South Pacific Ocean and one of the smallest self-governing states in the world. For this reason Niue is in free association with New Zealand, which means that most diplomatic relations are conducted by New Zealand on Niue's behalf. Niue has its own government, however, and during the past few years it has begun to establish formal diplomatic relations with [many](#) states.

In 2000, Niue established a permanent Embassy to the European Communities in Brussels. As a result, the member states of the European Union and the Africa-Caribbean-Pacific Group of States signed the Cotonou Convention on June 23, 2000. The Cotonou Agreement covers the period from March 2000 to February 2020 and includes economic and political partnerships between the two regions. Additionally, the island has a representative mission in Wellington, New Zealand and it is a member of the Pacific Islands Forum and a number of regional and international agencies.

As majority of the countries of the South Pacific region are small both in terms of population and size, cultural diplomacy initiatives are mainly conducted through joint cooperation between the governments of these countries, or between the government and the private sector.

NIUE CULTURE AND ARTS FESTIVAL 2011

Project Details

Country: Niue Island
Telephone: 09 2700268
Email: vilisoni-heather@infogen.net.nz
Website: <http://niuefestival.com/>
Sponsored by: Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs in New Zealand

Organization Description

The aim of the organization is to provide policy advice, information and assistance to the Minister of Pacific Island Affairs. The organization runs several programmes aimed at fostering cooperation between the countries in the Pacific region.

Project Description

The Niue Culture and Arts Festival 2011 was dedicated to Niuean traditional and contemporary music, dance, arts and national food. The week-long festival included a variety of song, dance, film, cultural, sports and language workshops. The festival is one of the largest events held in Niue, and thus contributes to Niue's future development of cultural tourism.

Aims of the Project

The aim is to encourage Niueans in New Zealand to reconnect with their homeland, take the opportunity to experience Niuean culture, and establish links with their home of origin. An additional aim of the project is to encourage Niuean artists to bring their work out and make them available for the public, as well as bind together culture, people and livelihoods in sustaining Niue.

Relevance as Cultural Diplomacy

The festival is a vehicle of diplomacy; it showcases the rich artistic culture that Niue has to offer as well as foster a closer relationship between Niue and New Zealand.

IAAF KIDS ATHLETICS

Project Details

Country: Niue Island
Telephone: None listed
Email: chrishipa@niue.nu (Des Hipa)
Website: http://www.sportingpulse.com/assoc_page.cgi?c=2-3851-0-00&slD=134809
Sponsored by: Niue Athletics Association

Organisation Description

The aim of the Niue Athletics Association is to run more activities that will help promote athletics on Niue, and to showcase their potential athletes in the national, regional and international arena. It receives support from both the public and private sector.

Project Description

"IAAF Kids Athletics" is a programme designed to assist the development of children in athletics. On the 7th July 2010, the Niue Athletics Association in the South Pacific held an athletics event facilitated by famous local sportsman Emani Fakaotimanava-Lui. Numerous similar events have been held on Niue since then, but this was the first opportunity to hold the workshop to pass on the knowledge to others. NAA will continue to develop Kids Athletics through the school programmes.

Aims of the Project

The aim is to popularize athletics in the six areas through a programme of several competitions. NAA aims to promote sports through the schools and has been successful at doing so for the past several years.

Relevance as Cultural Diplomacy

Sports provides a sense of cohesion and shared identity. It provides an opportunity for young people all over the Niue island to come together and engage with one another in a positive, structured environment. Additionally, as sports is so international, the programme supports rising Niue athletes in the hope that Niue will become more recognized in the global community.

3.5 Overseas Lands of French Polynesia

The territory of French Polynesia consists of five archipelagoes (Society Islands, Marquesas Islands, Tuamotu Islands, Austral Islands, and Gambier Islands) under French administration. Each island group displays a variant of the Polynesian cultural tradition and all are united by over a century of colonial administration, while inhabitants maintain cultural identities specific to the home archipelago. Gradually, however, and as a result of modern transportation, trade, education, and communication networks, these localised identities are beginning to merge into a general national identity. French Polynesia includes 121 islands scattered across almost one million square miles (2.5 million square kilometres) in the south Pacific.

Cultural diplomacy—the ability to improve knowledge, understanding, and cooperation between states—has played an important role in French Polynesia. The pursuit of further cultural diplomacy in the archipelago promises to improve economic and political relations between French Polynesia and other states. From the beginning of 2006, several projects related to cultural diplomacy have taken place in French Polynesia. In March 2006, the Anthropology department of Hawaii's Bishop Museum initiated a programme on the origin of Polynesian ancestors. The Heivai Tahiti celebration, begun in June 2010, has initiated numerous festivals and events over the last couple of years. The International Oceania Film Festival's screening of documentaries about Oceania has led to a number of different projects throughout the year in different regions of French Polynesia. All of these events ultimately share a common purpose—to raise cultural awareness in French Polynesia and the outside world. By supporting and organising cultural projects, they seek to improve relations and understandings between the different islands in the South Pacific.

ANOTHERPOLOGICAL/ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH

Project Details

Country: French Polynesia
Telephone: 847.3511
Email: education@bishopmuseum.org
Website: <http://www.bishopmuseum.org/>
Sponsored by: The Darwin Initiative for the Survival of the Species and the Tropenbos- Guyana Programme, U. S. National Science Foundation, National Geographic Society

Organisation Description

Cultural programmes have played an important role in Hawaii's Bishop Museum since its founding in 1889. Over the past 120 years, the Museum's scientists have acquired 24.7 million items which are used to illustrate the historical context of Hawaii and the Pacific. These items include over 1.3 million cultural artefacts representing native Hawaiian, Pacific island, and immigrant life deriving from the museum's rich legacy of research into Hawaii and the Pacific. The care of and access to the cultural collection is carried out according to local, national and international laws and regulations governing cultural property and natural heritage.

Project Description

In March 2006, the Anthropology department of Hawaii's Bishop Museum initiated a programme on the origin of Polynesian ancestors in March 2006 in China. The project is one of a number of initiatives under way in the department, and is being carried out in coordination with the government of French Polynesia.

Aims of the Project

The main aims of the programme are to:

- Create a better understanding of the cultural traditions of the islands in French Polynesia;
- Investigate the long term history of Hawaii, the Pacific Islands, and their more distant Southeast Asian homeland;
- Preserve the material heritage of cultures across Oceania.

The agreement that was signed in 2006 by Dr. Yosihiko Sinoto, a senior archaeologist and member of the French Polynesian government, provides a framework for the sharing of knowledge between the Bishop Museum and the French Polynesian Ministry of Culture and Education, and includes conducting joint research, providing technical training and logistical assistance, and cataloguing cultural artefacts.

In addition, the Bishop museum in Hawaii carried out another programme in May 2011 that examined four broad themes:

- The origins of the Hawaiian peoples, examined by tracing their ancestry back through their Austronesian and Polynesian ancestors;
- How first settlers to island groups adapted to their new island environments, both from a social organization and subsistence perspective;
- The development of social complexity through time, in particular, through detailed comparison of Eastern Polynesian cultures;
- The role of interaction and exchange in Oceanic island societies.

Other goals of this programme were to:

- Provide research on how to preserve water, cope with environmental pollution and prevent species extinction;
- Assist in the nomination of Opoa on the island of Raiatea as a World Heritage site, a UNESCO designation as the location of the most sacred marae (temple) in French Polynesia;
- Develop strategies to cope with climate change in French Polynesia.

Relevance as Cultural Diplomacy

By doing research and providing information about the origins, culture, and environmental changes of Hawaii, the Bishop museum seeks to develop better community relations with French Polynesia.

HEIVA NUI/ANNUAL CULTURAL FESTIVAL IN FRENCH POLYNESIA

Project Details

Country: French Polynesia
Telephone: 689-50-31-00
Email: com@heivanui.pf
Website: www.heivanui.com
Sponsored by: La Brasserie de Tahiti, Air France, Vini, Black Pearl Design, Aloha Hula Supply, the Polynesian Cultural Center, Tahiti Imports, and the Golden Nugget

Organisation Description

Tahiti Nui International is a cultural organization founded for the purposes of preserving, promoting, and sharing the cultures, arts and crafts of the 5 groups of Islands of French Polynesia, commonly known to the world as Tahiti. Tahiti Nui collaborates with the government of Tahiti and the French Polynesia Ministry of Culture. Tahiti Nui also hosts programmes and festivals carried out in other parts of the world, such as Las Vegas and Japan. One of the largest annual cultural festivals in Tahiti is the *Heiva i Tahiti* 2011, which takes place at To'ata Square in Papeete, Tahiti.

Project Description

The Heivai Tahiti festival takes place every year in the month June and July. During the festival, the islands commemorate their cultural traditions and values. The Dance Schools Heiva, the music and art school of Tahiti & Her Islands at To'ata, and the Heiva tu'aro maohi, or traditional sports are the most important participants during this festival.

The project includes:

- Opening ceremony of the Heiva i Tahiti 2011
- Dance Schools Heiva
- Orero contest of the primary schools at To'ata
- Music and art school of Tahiti & Her Islands at To'ata
- Miss Tahiti 2011 pageant
- Heiva Va'a i Tahiti
- Heiva i Tahiti Dances and songs contests
- Heiva tu'aro maohi or traditional sports
- Heiva i Tahiti Awards Ceremony for dances and songs
- Heiva i Tahiti Winners

Aims of the Project

The main aim of the festival is to:

- Maintain cultural tradition and identities within the island with the people of French Polynesia;
- Demonstrate the cultural and historical richness of French Polynesia;
- Organize regular cultural educational events such as but not limited to Heiva, art festivals, competitive sports, dance and music;
- Provide equal opportunity for access;
- Contribute to the higher educational development through scholarship funds;
- Establish a library or centre of learning by organizing, filtering, selecting, documenting and filing all data, events, research and new findings, resulting from the work done from any or all of these events.

Relevance as Cultural Diplomacy

The events that take place during the Haiva Tahiti festival such as the dance and music workshops, language seminars, and the varieties of lecture are all important examples of how French Polynesia promotes its cultural traditions.

FIFO/ FILM FESTIVAL IN OCEANIA

Project Details

Country: French Polynesia
Telephone: [689] 544 536
Email: info@fifotahiti.org
Website: <http://en.fifo-tahiti.com/>
Sponsors: Air France, EDT, OPT, Bank of Tahiti, and Groupe ACCOR Polynésie, and administered by the government of French Polynesia, the General Secretary of the community of the South Pacific (CPS) and the minister of overseas affairs, Brice Hortefeux.

Organisation Description

The International Film Festival of Oceania organises different projects throughout the year in different regions of French Polynesia. The festival is carried out in cooperation with four other intergovernmental organisations: The France television station in French Polynesia, la Maison de la culture, L'Institut de la Communication Audiovisuelle (ICA), and Heiva Nui.

Project Description

The project includes:

- Introductory audio-visual editing workshops
- General Public workshops
- Pacific Television Conference
- Present films and television professionals

Aims of the Project

The main ambition of FIFO is to raise cultural awareness among the population of French Polynesia by organizing film festivals and showing films. The following purposes of FIFO are:

- Highlight the quality of national and international productions so as to promote the best ones and make it easier to market them internationally;
- Bring together all film and television professionals of the region, and foster the development of joint projects and information exchange on current issues;
- Create a market between Pacific documentary producers and world documentary buyers.

Relevance as Cultural Diplomacy

Apart from this, the films and documentaries give young people the possibility to become more familiar with the culture, history, and the various challenges facing the nation and the international community.

3.6 Papua New Guinea

The islands of Papua New Guinea (PNG) form one of the most heterogeneous countries in the world. With over 800 languages and ethnic groups, the Independent State of Papua New Guinea is a very clear example of peaceful co-existence amid numerous cultures. Despite the large number of languages, there are three official languages –Tok Pisin, Hiri Motu and English. These languages are used for official communication and education.

During the relatively brief period of colonization, PNG was governed in turn by Great Britain, Germany and Australia. In 1975, the Independent State of Papua New Guinea was proclaimed, however Queen Elizabeth II remains Papua New Guinea's head of state under the Commonwealth realm. Currently, PNG cooperates closely with Australia and New Zealand, as well as with Japan, China and other regional powers. There are a number of cultural and scientific projects held between universities in Australia and PNG. Additionally, the country is a member of intergovernmental organizations based in the South Pacific, such as the South Pacific Forum, Council of regional Organizations of the Pacific.

Papua New Guinea takes part in all of the major Pacific sport and cultural events, among them the Festival of Pacific Arts and Pacific Games. PNG is also a popular tourist destination. The tourism infrastructure development is of major importance to the country. The general level of education remains low and for this reason, many international NGOs are particularly focused on this area, helping to organize educational activities and institutions. There is some presence of higher education with six universities based in PNG.

PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM MEETING: Port Moresby, October 2005

Project Details

Country: Papua New Guinea
Telephone: 679 3312 600
Email: info@forumsec.org.fj
Website: <http://forum.forumsec.org/>,
Sponsored by: Members of the Council of regional Organizations of the Pacific

Organisation Description

The Council of Regional Organizations of the Pacific (CROP) was established in 1988, with the mandate to improve cooperation, coordination, and collaboration among the various intergovernmental regional organizations, and to work toward realizing the common goal of sustainable development in the Pacific region. CROP is made up of the heads of the intergovernmental regional organizations in the Pacific.

Project Description

CROP developed the Pacific Plan at the Pacific Islands Forum Meeting in October of 2005. The Plan proposes a new and innovative approach to the common challenges that Pacific Island countries face. The approach was based on a framework of greater regional cooperation and integration through establishing stronger regional partnerships, regional volunteer/exchange programmes, and building the relationships between governments as well as between other sectors of society such as business, academia, the media, and civil society.

Aims of the Project

Through establishing clearer, stronger mechanisms for exchange, the individual communities of each island country would be enhanced through economic growth and better mutual understanding of what each island nation uniquely has to offer.

Relevance as Cultural Diplomacy

Though the inception of the project was several years ago, it constitutes a long-term venture and thus its implementation and impact continues through the present day. The Plan seeks to unite the Pacific Island region and use its diversity as tools for building mutual prosperity. The Plan not only includes public officials, but also representatives from many sectors, thereby utilizing as many perspectives as possible. These types of meetings and the proceeding action provide models for peaceful exchanges that are mutually beneficial.

SOUTH-WEST PACIFIC HERITAGE TRAINING PROGRAMME

Project Details

Country: Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu Island.
Telephone: +61 2 6125 4297 (Dr. Stuart Bedford)
Email: glenn.summerhayes@stonebow.otago.ac.nz, stuart.bedford@anu.edu.au
Website: <http://arts.anu.edu.au/swp/>
Sponsored by: Sasakawa Pacific Islands Nations Foundation

Organisation Description

The programme was conceived by Dr. Glenn Summerhayes (Australian National University) and Dr. Stuart Bedford (NZ Historic Places Trust) and financed by the Sasakawa Pacific Island Nations Fund.

Project Description

The project took place from 2001-2003 and included training programmes aimed at maintaining an efficient cooperation between cultural management representatives of Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu Island. The funding for this project came from the Sasakawa Pacific Islands Foundation (as part of the Sasakawa Peace Foundation, which was established in September 1986). The representatives of local, national and provincial government levels participated as trainees of the programme. During 2001-2003, the SW Pacific Cultural Heritage Training Programme (SWPCHTP) ran workshops in both Vanuatu and Papua New Guinea. The Papua New Guinea islands that were particularly involved in this project were Kavieng (2001), Tatau (2001), Buka (2002), and Manus (2002).

Aims of the Project

One of the main objectives of the programme was for the participants to come into closer contact with their cultural heritage and thereby become more intimately familiar with it. The programme particularly focused on cultural heritage sites, archaeological surveys, as well as more metaphorical heritage artifacts like plays dealing with the impact of the colonial period. The programme was designed to facilitate a higher level of awareness of common cultural heritage, as well as provide the impetus and training for local governments to be able to preserve this heritage.

Relevance as Cultural Diplomacy

The training programme addresses a range of cultural heritage issues that binds the heterogeneous population of PNG together. The project was aimed to help the representatives of PNG cultural organizations to develop new effective strategies, thereby maintaining the historical circumstances of PNG's cultural diversity and preserving it so that future generations can engage with and learn from it.

3.7 Republic of Fiji

Fiji is comprised of more than 300 islands and has a population of about 840,201 (based on a 2004 census, the most current figure provided by the government). The largest island is Viti Levu (10,429 km²), which covers 57% of the total area, and Vanua Levu, which covers 5,556 km². Viti Levu is the political and economic centre of Fiji as it is the site of Suva (the capital), Nadi (the center of tourism), as well as extensive farm land. Over 90% of the population, both rural and urban, is situated in coastal areas and make up several ethnic groups, the most populous of which are Fijians, Indo-Fijians, Europeans, and Chinese. Tourism is now the most important area for economic growth. The industry provides employment directly and indirectly to an estimated 40,000 people (15% of the labour force) and contributes approximately 17% of total production in the economy.

Various projects in the field of cultural diplomacy are currently being carried out in the Republic of Fiji. Among them are projects such as the Label of Authenticity, the Melanesian Arts and Cultural Festival, and the Oceanic Conference on Creativity and Climate Change. The label of Authenticity is a joint venture by the Institute of Fijian Language, the Fiji Trade and Investment Board, the Fiji Visitors Bureau, the Fiji Arts Council, the Department of Culture and Heritage, the Ministry of Fijian Affairs, and the Fijian Trust Fund. The aim of these projects is to raise awareness and promote indigenous artists. The Melanesian Festival arose in 1995 with the objective of bringing Melanesian countries together under the same cause of preserving, protecting and promoting their indigenous cultures. The Festival is held every 4 years.

The 3rd Melanesian Festival took place in Fiji, and was made possible through joint efforts of the Department of Culture and Heritage of the Republic of Fiji and the Government of the Republic of Fiji. The Oceanic Conference on Creativity and Climate Change was carried out by School of Language, Arts and Media (SLAM) and the Faculty of Arts and Law at the University of South Pacific (USP), the Oceania Centre for Arts, Culture and Pacific Studies (OCACPS) and the USP Book Centre. Its aim was to bring together writers, artists and environmental activists in providing an alternative culture that could develop responses to issues like climate change. Apart from these projects, the Republic of Fiji also takes active part in organizing other joint events in the sphere of cultural diplomacy in collaboration with other countries in the South Pacific region.

LABEL OF AUTHENTICITY

Project Details

Country: The Republic of Fiji
Telephone: (679) 3319637
Email: info@itaukeitrustfund.com.fj
Website: <http://fijianstrustfund.com.fj/>
Sponsors: Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Commerce, Prime Ministers Office and Sustainable Development Unit, Institute of Fijian Language, Fiji Trade and Investment Board, Fiji Visitors Bureau, Fiji Arts Council, Department of Culture and Heritage, Ministry of Fijian Affairs, Fijian Trust Fund.

Organisation Description

Numerous national and international organizations/institutions sponsored this project, each of which is based on the shared values of cultural heritage, with a particular focus on indigenous art.

Project Description

The Label of Authenticity is a seal that was developed to support works of traditional and indigenous artists. Products marked with the seal denote genuine indigenous works. The Label of Authenticity also ensures that cultural expressions in the form of arts are protected by a recognized authority. Officially identified wholesalers and retailers will sell the products, and marketing and promotional campaigns will steer tourists and the general public to these identified outlets. These ensure that the buyers are buying authentic products made by local artists and thereby, the artists are acknowledged and receive a fair price for their craftsmanship.

Aims of the Project

The Label of Authenticity is a project aimed at raising awareness, ensuring the successful promotion and recognition of indigenous artists. Through the input of all involved parties, the awareness programme will also ensure that the Label of Authenticity promotes and recognizes those who support and provide opportunities to indigenous artists.

Relevance as Cultural Diplomacy

Through this programme, the Fiji government is acknowledging the value of local artists and their crafts, and wishes to protect both the product as well as the artist. This is important to maintaining the current generation of artists in Fiji who contribute to the cultural heritage of the country. Additionally, tourists from all over the world are given a clear way to access the artists and their work, thereby ensuring more genuine cultural exchange.

THE THIRD MELANESIAN ARTS AND CULTURAL FESTIVAL

Project Details

Country: The Republic of Fiji
Telephone: (679) 3316-955
Email: Inawalowalo@connect.com.fj
Website: <http://www.women.fiji.gov.fj/culture.shtml>
Sponsored by: Fiji Ministry of Women, Culture & Heritage, and Social Welfare

Organisation Description

The Department of Culture and Heritage is a subset of the Fijian Ministry of Women, Culture & Heritage and Social Welfare. The Department is tasked with preserving and promoting cultural and natural heritage.

Project Description

The Third Melanesian Arts and Cultural Festival was based on the theme of "Living Cultures & Living Traditions." The Festival brought together indigenous people from the Melanesian Spearhead Group to exhibit their cultures, exchange, share ideas and encourage respect for and appreciation of the diversity and innovation of Melanesian crafts people, culinary artists, performing artists, traditional herbalists, and musicians.

Aims of the Project

The Festival aimed at giving an opportunity for indigenous expressive arts to be identified as an integral part of national identity, as well as the potential the arts offer as an alternative source of income and employment. The Festival's goal was to offer a unique opportunity for the promotion and marketing of indigenous culture. It was also an opportunity for artists to showcase their talents and creativity.

Relevance as Cultural Diplomacy

The Festival is an excellent demonstration of the recognition of the intrinsic value that the arts have for building local identities, as well as providing overall links of commonality between larger communities. This value has great financial potential as well, as the arts can also provide a valuable source of income. In other words, this programme demonstrates that the arts can have both intangible returns by strengthening ties of commonality among different communities as well as develop capital of each. Thus, these communities are stronger under the banner of cultural unity than they are apart.

3.8 Republic of Palau

The Republic of Palau, situated east of the Philippines and north-east of Indonesia, is a nation state consisting of more than 250 islands stretching over 650km with a population of approximately 20,800 inhabitants. Palau, known also as Belau, was first settled between 4,000-4,500 years ago. In its more recent history it has experienced Japanese and American occupation, and in 1978, it gained independence and established its own constitutional government. The Republic of Palau is currently a Constitutional Republic in free association with United States and is divided into sixteen regions, each administered by an elected governor and a legislature. Since independence and its admittance to the United Nations, Palau has established diplomatic relations with Japan, Australia, Taiwan, The Republic of the Philippines and Korea, and signed several international agreements. The adoption of an active foreign policy demonstrates the importance Palau places on international political, economic and cultural exchange as part of its development.

Palau's economy remains dependent on foreign funding assistance even though statistically it is one of the most prosperous of the Pacific island economies. The Palauan Government has established a number of programmes to foster economic development and diversification, most of which focus on tourism and climate change policies. The unique cultural heritage, together with natural sites, native arts and crafts, and ethnic traditions has made Palau a popular tourist destination. With its rich history and natural beauty, Palau attracts thousands of visitors every year, offering the opportunity to experience first-hand the local lifestyle and to gain a deeper insight into Palauan traditions and values.

The government has embraced Palau's status as a tourist destination, and has used it as a vehicle of cultural exchange within the South Pacific. For this reason the Republic of Palau has been making every effort to develop new initiatives that aim to share the core values of Palauan people with the international community. For example, the government, together with the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, has been running a series of cultural events, such as the traditional Olechotel Belau Fair and the Pacific Island Archaeology Conference in Belau.

BELAU NATIONAL MUSEUM

Project Details

Country: Palau
Telephone: (680) 488-2265
Email: bnm@palaunet.com
Website: <http://belaunationalmuseum.org/obf/index.htm>
Sponsored by: The Palau Ministry of Community and Cultural Affairs

Organisation Description

The Palau Ministry of Community and Cultural Affairs is the government branch entrusted with the responsibility of administering services that improve the wellbeing of the community as well as protecting and promoting Palau's cultural heritage. The Ministry has seven bureaus/divisions: Bureau of Community Services, Division of Parks & Recreation, Division of Youth, Women's Resource Centre, Bureau of Arts & Culture, Palau National Archive, and the Ageing Programme.

Project Description

The Belau National Museum (BNM) is a non-profit quasi-autonomous non-governmental organization (QANGO) financed by the government. It offers a glimpse into Palau's rich past by offering permanent exposition of shell money, costumes, domestic utensils, weapons, tools and ornaments, but it is also a venue for temporary regional exhibitions.

Supported by the government, the Museum activities mainly focus on promoting local culture and preserving national heritage, as well as safeguarding traditional and historical values. Initiatives that have taken place in the museum, like the Pacific Festival of Arts, as well as conferences and temporary exhibitions, have been highly subsidized by the government and the Ministry of Cultural Affairs. In honour of the Pacific Island Archaeology Conference in Belau, the Belau National Museum mounted an exhibit entitled "Micronesian Archeology." The aim of the exposition was to bring people from around the South Pacific together and to highlight how natural heritage studies and archaeology might provide the tools for exploring avenues of sustainable development that promote and conserve the Pacific's resources.

Aims of the Project

The Museum, while providing a range of products and service, aims to preserve and protect the nation's cultural heritage through collection, identification, documentation, interpretation and exhibitions.

Relevance as Cultural Diplomacy

As Palau embraces international cultural initiatives, it has shown a particular attitude in developing friendly relations with its neighbours, not only based on economic and financial cooperation, but also on cultural exchanges and on accepting diversity.

OKAYAMA UNIVERSITY AND PALAU: A Collection Partnership

Project Details

Country: Japan and Palau
Telephone: 0081-86-251-7037
Email: Kokusai@cc.okayama-u.ac.jp
Website: http://www.okayama-u.ac.jp/en/tp/profile/overseas_projects.html#1
Sponsors: Okayama University in collaboration with Palau's Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment & Tourism

Organisation Description

Based in Japan, Okayama University is dedicated to being a world-class institution for education and research. Palau's Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment & Tourism is dedicated with protecting Palau's natural resources.

Project Description

Like the other Pacific island nations, The Republic of Palau is suffering from the many environmental problems related to global warming, rising sea levels and environmental degradation. For this reason the Palauan government has been taking measures to protect the island from further damages by implementing international policies. Among these kinds of initiatives is a partnership signed with the Okayama University in Japan.

This programme is mainly focused on increasing knowledge about the surrounding environment, improving education on sustainable development, and mutual cultural understanding. For this reason the Republic of Palau's UNESCO Chair has signed a collaborative agreement with the Okayama University, in Japan. This agreement constitutes a formal partnership between the two countries with the aim of achieving the following goals:

- Harmony and cooperation between human society and the natural environment;
- Economic independence built on a foundation of environmental preservation;
- The provision of environmental education.

Aims of the Project

To contribute to the environment knowledge, to develop a more international outlook as well as an appreciation for and understanding of foreign cultures.

Relevance as Cultural Diplomacy

Cultural diplomacy is what is known as "a two-way street," or, in other words, it is about mutual exchange to the benefit of all involved actors. As such, the partnership agreement that the Japanese University and the Republic of Palau has developed a means of collaboration that offers potential benefits to both communities.

3.9 Republic of Marshall Islands

The Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) is situated in the west-central Pacific, and occupies a land area of only 66 square miles, but a total ocean area of 780,000 square miles. The RMI displays a series of unique characteristics which impact its approach towards cultural diplomacy. With a mean age of 21.8, the RMI is one of the youngest countries on earth, and as such, much of the funding available for fostering inter-cultural exchange is aimed at young people. Moreover, with a population of less than 60,000 people and an estimated GDP of \$149.6 million (source: RMI Department of Insular Affairs) much of the funding for cultural interaction is derived from inter- and non-governmental organizations, as well as foreign governments and charities.

While the RMI has been a sovereign nation state since 1986, it exercises its independence within the limits of its status as a freely associated state per the Compact of Free Association (COFA) the RMI has with the U.S. This agreement signs over defence of the region to the U.S., and leases land for military use in return for aid. As a result of these political, economic, and historical ties, the U.S. remains the RMI's most prominent international partner for cultural exchange.

The U.S. is not the Marshall Islands only ally, however. The RMI retain close ties with other regional Pacific nations. It is a member of the Pacific Islands Forum as well as the Secretariat of the Pacific Community. It also maintains economic and cultural relations with ROC (Taiwan) and Japan, which include programmes of cultural exchange. The RMI are facing considerable challenges on a number of fronts including a slow economic decline, relatively high levels of emigration and high levels of climate change. In the face of such issues, hard questions have arisen of where cultural integrity and preservation fit into the national agenda.

WAAN AELON IN MAJEL (WAM)

Project Details

Country: Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI)
Telephone: None listed
Email: info@wamprogram.org
Website: <http://wamprogram.org/>
Sponsored by: RMI government, UNESCO, U.S. and Australia governments, private donors, among others

Organisation Description

Waan Aelon in Majel is a non-governmental, not-for-profit organisation which provides vocational training in both traditional and modern boat-building, as well as carpentry and administration. Naturally, as it is surrounded by water, boat-building has immense historical and contemporary cultural significance.

Project Description

WAM is organised and run by volunteers, and receives funding from the RMI government as well as international bodies such as UNESCO, foreign governments including the U.S. and Australia, and private donors. WAM engages in numerous educational programmes. Every year, WAM invites over 1000 students to its facilities for educational visits that explore Marshallese culture and heritage. Additionally, the organisation takes on approximately 70 trainees each year to learn both historical and contemporary techniques. WAM also is heavily involved in organising national festivals, boat races, and it participates in international events.

Aims of the Project

WAM's general aim is maintaining and communicating the importance of boat and canoe building. It teaches both the theory and practice of boatbuilding, and in doing so it brings together people of all ages to share in this collective cultural tradition, as well as pass on vocational skills. These skills are then demonstrated on the international scale through participation in cultural festivals and boat races such as the International Canoe Festival in Maui and the Festival of Pacific Arts.

Relevance as Cultural Diplomacy

By keeping traditional skills alive and teaching them alongside contemporary boatbuilding skills, WAM ensures that an important aspect of Marshallese culture remains relevant and is passed down through generations. The programme provides participants with vocational qualifications, whilst fostering an appreciation of indigenous artisanship and heritage. Moreover, through its participation on the international stage, WAM serves to spread the cultural values and traditions of the Marshall islands and draw international attention to Marshallese craftsmanship. This, in turn, increases the profile and reputation of RMI as a centre of technical excellence and innovation as well as a popular travel destination. An excellent example of this is the RMI National Cup Race, which is set-up by WAM and sponsored by the Outrigger Marshall Islands Resort. The Race is quite popular and attracts media attention and tourism to the islands.

YOUTH BRIDGE GLOBAL

Project Details

Country: RMI and U.S.
Telephone: None listed
Email: davidyorio@gmail.com
Website: <http://www.ybglobal.org/>
Sponsored by: Dartmouth University and the RMI Government

Organisation Description

Youth Bridge Global (YBG) is a non-profit organisation founded by the Chair of Dartmouth University's Education programme in 2004. The Dartmouth programme supports organisations around the world that teach drama to children.

Project Description

This is an exchange programme through which students from the US come to teach at RMI schools during the summer and participate in a variety of cultural/political activities. In the course of supporting dramatic enterprise and education, YBG has put on numerous adaptations in Marshallese schools, with a particular emphasis on Shakespearean adaptations. For instance, YBG staged productions of a Comedy of Errors in 2008, and Hamlet in 2010. In addition, participants take part in courses aimed at exploring the practical and theoretical sides of writing, screenwriting, and literature.

Aims of the Project

Youth Bridge Global's stated aim is to effect cross-cultural understanding and community reconciliation in regions of poverty and conflict, and in doing so foster student activism and leadership. As an example of its local impact, a recent group of students involved in the project secured RMI government funding to organise a youth parliament, the participants of which travelled to North Carolina to take part in an international YMCA conference.

Relevance as Cultural Diplomacy

As an international non-profit organisation receiving RMI government support, the YBG provides a clear example of the potential for cultural diplomacy to improve cross-cultural relations. The adaptation of Western dramatic works to make them relevant to local communities serves as a translation of cultural values and norms across the two societies. The benefit of hosting an educational exchange programme is most evident through spin-off events such as the above-mentioned YMCA exchange, which was inspired and organised by a Youth Bridge participant in coordination with the RMI parliament.

3.10 Republic of Vanuatu

Vanuatu, like many other South Pacific countries, is a recently established state struggling to establish and reinforce its political institutions, the sources of its economic stability and its cultural identity. Due to its geographical situation (12.190 km², distributed in 83 islands and 24 nautical miles of territorial sea), Vanuatu depends on international trade, tourism and open relations with other nations. It has become increasingly evident that a friendly and distinctive image abroad could facilitate and enhance Vanuatu's presence in the international community, and has the potential to provide a solid basis for internal political and social development. For this reason, the promotion of the unique characteristics of Vanuatu has become a priority and an important part of the governmental strategic planning in terms of budget and policy.

National image acquires a very important role in this respect, since it can be used both for the protection of Vanuatu's cultural sovereignty and its resources and for the completion of economic and political goals. In order to achieve these objectives, vehicles of cultural diplomacy are consistently used by the government in order to enrich Vanuatu's image abroad. Consequently, cultural exchanges and intercultural dialogue are the two main pillars of Vanuatu's foreign policy. In the field of governmental and intergovernmental cultural relations, the central authority in Vanuatu supports various cultural diplomacy organizations through its ministries. Nevertheless, very few projects in this field are entirely governmentally subsidized. The majority are partially funded by the government and partially funded by various NGOs and international organizations.

The practice of cultural diplomacy in Vanuatu includes a broad range of activities targeted at the wider population rather than at the elite. The programmes and events classified as cultural diplomacy in Vanuatu involve a varied range of cultural exchanges, including the cooperation between archeological museums, artistic presentations of Vanuatu's performers abroad, reestablishment of traditional festivities and cultural tourism. The National Cultural Centre of Vanuatu, which functions under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Trade, Tourism, Commerce and Industry, plays a prominent role in this respect. Vanuatu's embassies abroad are also relevant vehicles of cultural diplomacy; their presence in thirteen countries facilitates cooperation through arts, tourism and sport.

VANUATU CULTURAL CENTRE

Project Details

Country: Vanuatu
Telephone: (678) 22129
Email: vks@vanuatu.com.vu
Website: www.vanuatuculture.org
Sponsored by: The Ministry of Internal Affairs

Organisation Description

The Vanuatu Cultural Centre is Vanuatu's national cultural heritage management body, and is comprised of all the major cultural heritage institutions: the National Museum, the National Library, the National Film and Sound Archive and the National Cultural and Historic Sites Register.¹¹ The Centre functions under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Thus, it is primarily funded by the state, although it also generates its own revenues and accepts contributions from private donors.

Project Description

The Vanuatu Cultural Centre sponsors a variety of intercultural programs intended to promote Vanuatu's culture abroad and to preserve traditional cultural practices. The Cultural Centre is in charge of the National Cultural and Historic Sites Register, the National Museum and the National Library. All these institutions carry out activities and programs intended to strengthen Vanuatu's image abroad. The Cultural Centre sponsors artists from Vanuatu and arranges performances in cultural institutions, art galleries and universities overseas. It has also been responsible for establishing programmes specially directed to women, children and young people inside and outside Vanuatu. These initiatives include exchange programmes, vocational and leadership workshops, etc.

Aims of the Project

The Cultural Centre was created in 1988 by the Vanuatu National Cultural Council Act, which established the initiative with the objective of "providing for the preservation, protection and development of various aspects of the rich heritage of Vanuatu, for the provision of public libraries and for the preservation of public records and archives."¹²

Relevance as Cultural Diplomacy

Officially, the Vanuatu Cultural Centre is the institution most concerned with fostering and supporting cultural diplomacy activities in the island. As a government institution, it carries out the culturally related objectives of the state by engaging in programmes that help promote Vanuatu's interests and image.

¹¹ UNESCO: Country Report, Vanuatu, „Summary situation report on the preservation of and access to the documentary heritage“, November 2005

¹² Taken from the mission statement on the Vanuatu Cultural Centre website:
<http://www.vanuatuculture.org/site-bm2/organisation/>

MALAMPA SAND DRAWING FESTIVAL AND NATIONAL ACTION PLAN

Project Details

Country: West Ambryn, Vanuatu
Telephone: (678) 22129
Email: vks@vanuatu.com.vu
Website: www.vanuatuculture.org
Sponsored by: UNESCO, Japan Funds-in-Trust, the Vanuata Cultural Centre

Organisation Description

The Malampa Sand Drawing Festival was held for the first time in 2004, and has become an annual festival that takes place in the region of West Ambryn. The festival gathers people from around the world and has a special relevance for the South Pacific since the festival creates the space for other local cultures to get together and learn from each other. The festival is sponsored by UNESCO, the Japan Funds-in-Trust for intangible heritage organization, and the Vanuatu Cultural Centre (under the Ministry of Internal Affairs), which provides the funding for the event and related activities. In 2005, the Government increased the project funding in recognition of its successful work in safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage of Vanuatu.

The National Action Plan was established in 2003, and provides the framework for the Sand Drawing Festival. The plan was drafted in order to reconcile issues of national cultural politics with the interests of those wishing to preserve sand drawings. The plan encompasses the following activities: promotion and transmission of sand drawing skills, organization of public events and performances, legal protection and guidelines for sand drawing commercial use.

Project Description

Sand drawing is a fundamental form of traditional communication in Vanuatu, and plays a central role in the country's cultural identity. Sand drawing is considered to be a form of writing composed by geometrical lines traced on volcanic ashes, which together compose graceful and symmetrical patterns. This graphic tradition is a foundation for 80 language groups native to Vanuatu. The nature of the sand drawings make them very fragile and difficult to preserve, and for this reason are in danger of disappearing. In order to prevent this, the Sand Drawing Festival and the National Plan were created.

The Festival includes presentations of traditional music, dance, theatre, story-telling, textile weaving and sand drawing demonstration. Delegations from ethnic communities in the South Pacific also attend and are an active part of this cultural exchange. The national plan is an ongoing programme which attempts to preserve and regenerate the deeper significance of sand drawing as part of Vanuatu culture and community relations.

Aims of the Project

The project intends to rescue the traditional festivities of Vanuatu as a way of strengthening the country's cultural identity and national pride. The promotion of the Sand Drawing Festival is a way of promoting Vanuatu's culture and heritage and of exporting a strong and united image abroad. The festival aims to foster cultural understanding and diversity awareness in the country.

Relevance as Cultural Diplomacy

The festival shows the importance that cultural heritage can have for a country. Cultural heritage is crucial to bringing people together in mutual respect and understanding, and to promote the rich cultural diversity of a nation.

VANUATA EXCHANGE

Project Details

Country: Vanuatu
Telephone: None listed
Email: admin@vanuatuexchange.com
Website: www.vanuatuexchange.com
Sponsored by: Vanuatu government and private donors

Organisation Description

'Vanuatu Exchange' is an independent, privately funded fair trade organisation. The organisation is administered privately, but depends on the support of the government and Vanuatu's Cultural Centre. The state's involvement is more in terms of institutional cooperation (between the National Cultural Centre and its museums and Vanuatu Exchange), advertising and logistical support, rather than direct financial support. The project is funded by the contributions from tourists, students and other participants in the initiative.

Project Description

Vanuatu Exchange is a micro-tourism project created in order to attract visitors to the most secluded regions of Vanuatu. The project includes a cultural exchange programme where the participants are invited to be part of the day-to-day life of a community, and to contribute with their skills and expertise to improve the village. Participants in the programme pay a fee, which is then invested in health infrastructure improvements for the village. The exchange programme targets students, tourists and representatives from academic institutions who may wish to incorporate this programme into their curriculum.

As part of the Vanuatu Exchange project, there are secondary initiatives that occur parallel to the 'Cultural Exchange' programme. These include the Art & Music Program (to support local artists), the Film Project (which promotes cultural diversity and sustainable development) and the Agricultural Exchange Programme. This last programme was created in order to increase Vanuatu's long-term food security by introducing new cropping options for local consumption and future export opportunities. The project also offers an "exchange store," where people can buy locally produced crops in bulk.

Aims of the Project

- The project has three main objectives:
- To promote a self-sustaining economic model that will allow communities in Vanuatu to improve their living conditions according to the needs of their communities, and without disturbing their traditional ways of living;
- To promote sustainable tourism and to direct financial gains to the grassroots in order to improve the quality of life of the traditional communities in Vanuatu;
- To foster cultural dialogue and understanding of different and alternative ways of life.

Relevance as Cultural Diplomacy

This programme fosters cooperation through intercultural understanding. The initiative is relevant since it uses culture as a constructive instrument to achieve further goals. The government's involvement in this project shows the importance that cultural promotion has in the state agenda.

CHINA-VANUATA FRIENDSHIP EXCHANGE FUND

Project Details

Country: Vanuatu-China
Telephone: None listed
Email: vanuatuembassybj@yahoo.com.cn
Website: www.vanuatuembassy.org.cn/english
Sponsored By: The Vanuatu government, the CPAFFC, the CFFPD, private donors

Organisation Description

The Friendship Exchange Fund was created in 2005 as a result of the increasing trade relations between Vanuatu and China. The programme was also established with the objective to promote friendly cultural exchanges between the people of China and the people of Vanuatu. The programme is primarily funded by the government of Vanuatu, the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC), and the China Friendship Foundation for Peace and Development (CFFPD). An important part of the funding is raised through donations from members of the society.

Project Description

To further the friendship and cooperation between China and Vanuatu, the Vanuatu Embassy to China proposed the establishment of the China-Vanuatu (South Pacific) Friendship Exchange Fund. This Fund aims to encourage and facilitate interaction at the non-governmental level, with the purpose of creating a solid basis to increase mutual economic cooperation in agriculture, fishery and tourism. The Fund is intended to be a platform to promote friendly cultural and intellectual exchanges, mutual understanding and cooperation between NGOs.

The project includes the creation of the *Sino-Vanuatu Forum* where representatives of different areas come together, interact and take part in the various programme activities, which can include exhibitions and film shows, seminar and lectures, trade fairs, and occasionally high level visits and performances of Vanuatu's cultural organizations.

Aims of the Project

This project aims to encourage and facilitate interaction between Vanuatu and Chinese non-governmental and governmental organizations with the long-term aim of promoting trade, economic and tourism cooperation, and other exchanges at various levels in different areas.

Relevance as Cultural Diplomacy

The China-Vanuatu Exchange Fund is a good example of cultural diplomacy, as the governments of both countries have decided to adopt a cultural approach in order to foster friendly relations as the basis for further economic cooperation.

4. Conclusion

This report highlights some of the larger cultural diplomacy initiatives undertaken by ten of the countries that comprise the South Pacific region. The current research is focused on public sector involvement, either as the sole sponsor, or in partnership with a combination of civil society and private actors. This region is uniquely positioned politically and culturally due to its geographic location and landscape composition. The island nations have powerful neighbours such as the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, and China, who exercise a great deal of influence on the international stage. Therefore, while these island nations in the South Pacific are small and exercise very little influence on their own, the current cultural diplomacy initiatives that have emerged in the last ten years appear to be primarily focused on two key areas:

- Strengthening ties with international community, particularly economically and politically powerful neighbours: This is evident in such programmes as The Vanuatu-China Friendship Exchange Fund, The Youth Bridge Global Project, the Okayama University-Palau Partnership, IAAF Kids Athletics, France and Tonga relationship building visits, the Guampedia Project, and the The Cook Islands- Cultural Exchange Programme.
- Maintaining and promoting cultural heritage : This is evident in such programmes as Vanuatu Cultural Centre, WAM, The Belau National Museum, The Third Melanesian Arts and Cultural Festival, The South West Pacific Heritage Training Programme, The International Film Festival of Oceania, The Niue Culture and Arts Festival, among others, as well as UNESCO's involvement in many of these countries.

Maintaining and promoting cultural ties has opened possibilities for collaboration with large international actors, as well as providing considerable tourism revenue. In the future, it is hoped that this research will continue to develop to not only include public programmes, but also to begin analysing the extent to which civil society and the private sphere are involved in the South Pacific region.

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Bärenfänger, Clarissa
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