

Community Education Training Centre
2003–2005
Triennial Progress Report

1. PROGRAMME OVERVIEW AND HIGHLIGHTS

The Community Education Training Centre (CETC) is based in Narere, a suburb of Suva, Fiji Islands. It provides non-formal training for female community leaders and development workers. CETC was set up in 1963 as a home-economics training centre with a curriculum focusing primarily on home economics, food and nutrition. In the 1980s the focus switched to community development and has since continued to be adapted to meet the evolving training needs of Pacific Island grassroots women in the context of advances in technology and knowledge pertinent to sustainable livelihoods.

CETC's annual residential training course runs from March to October. Curriculum topics include community development, agriculture, food and nutrition, home economics, basic management, English, computing and multimedia, training skills and health, as well as a range of technical and life-skills electives such as fabric arts, tailoring, art and craft, catering and hospitality, fisheries, appropriate technology, floral arrangement and day-skippering.

CETC staff comprise the CETC Head, who also has a teaching load, a full-time Home Economics/Food & Nutrition instructor and a part-time agricultural instructor, who is also the hostel warden. The Head manages the programme and reports to the Senior Deputy Director-General.

Significant achievements during 2003–2005 include:

- the first summer module on Enterprise Development successfully trialled for three weeks in November 2004 and implemented in November 2005, involving a total of 32 participants from eight countries;
- the successful completion of the seven-month training programme by 95 women from 19 member countries and territories;
- a high percentage of graduates being in community work/paid employment after their training¹;
- the expansion of the very popular and effective community outreach module from one week to two weeks;
- significant upgrades of the CETC infrastructure (buildings, utilities and IT); and
- the securing of new funding partners.

¹ As confirmed from the 2002 CETC Review, the 2004 Tracer Study (with 17 participating countries), direct feedback from graduates and staff site visits.

2. THE SECTOR: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND PACIFIC WOMEN

Communities are the development units of a nation. Their welfare should be a primary concern of national development policies. The role of Pacific women in the development of communities continues to be crucial, and their empowerment through more equal opportunities is essential. This is the concern of one of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG 3), and of the Pacific Platform for Action (PPA). PPA aims to achieve equality between men and women in 13 strategic areas².

The development of vocational training institutions in PICTs addresses some of PPA's concerns, but it is generally acknowledged that technical and vocational education and training (TVET) has been neglected and under-resourced in the Pacific. An ADB report on Skills Development in the Pacific, for example, notes that skills training for self-employment and the informal sector will play an important role in future human resources development and that the greatest potential for employment generation in the Pacific may be in small manufacturing, tourism, agriculture and fisheries.

It is in this context that SPC, through its CETC, is making a difference to the lives of PICT women. During this triennium, CETC has continued to address training needs appropriately and strategically in critical community development areas.

3. NARRATIVE PROGRESS REPORT

3.1 *Overall priorities*

The priorities for CETC over the period 2003–2005 were to:

- deliver appropriate community development training courses;
- provide stronger post-training support to graduates, including alumni associations; and
- explore the viability of expanding the range of courses and broadening the range of participants eligible to undertake the training.

Delivery of appropriate community development training courses

CETC delivered a continuously revised curriculum to meet the training needs of member countries and territories in its core and elective curriculum areas (see also “Programme overview”).

² The PPA 13 key areas are: health, education and training, economic empowerment, agriculture and fishing, legal and human rights, shared decision-making, environment, culture and the family, mechanisms to promote the advancement of women, violence, peace and justice, poverty, and indigenous people's rights.

Stronger post-training support to graduates

Progress has been somewhat mixed under this priority. CETC has tried to provide post-training support to its graduates via the promotion of alumni associations, maintaining networks through newsletters and direct contact, as well as the establishment of a trust fund. However, due to resource constraints it has not been able to provide the desired level of in-country support and follow-up. National alumni chapters have generally not been active.

Expanding the range of courses and broadening the range of eligible participants

In response to recommendations of the 2002 review, CETC successfully introduced a new three-week course in Entrepreneurship. The course has been run twice, with a total of 32 participants trained in entrepreneurship knowledge and skills.

3.2 Progress against performance indicators

The goal of CETC is “Empowered Pacific Island women and young people and strong cultural identities”. The Centre’s single objective is “increased effectiveness of women in community development work”. There are two key performance indicators (KPIs) relating to this objective:

- communities reporting greater support from CETC graduate workers; and
- employers reporting improved performance from CETC graduates.

While no performance information has been collected that would allow progress to be measured against these two KPIs, there is evidence that the course is meeting the expectations and needs of communities and employers:

- Nominating authorities in PICTs continue to send trainees, and in some cases have wait lists.
- More than 700 members of five rural Fijian communities expressed “high satisfaction” with the livelihood skills they gained from the trainees’ community-outreach attachments.
- Feedback from the 2004 Tracer Study and employers indicates that graduates are effective in their community work and were recruited on the basis of their CETC qualifications. The Tracer Study identified “confidence in community work and community leadership” as the greatest skill graduates had gained at CETC. The majority of interviewees also agreed that the programme had resulted in much greater understanding of women and gender issues.

The outputs and KPIs related to CETC's objective are as follows:

Output 1: Increased capacity among women community workers in key community development skills

- At least a 90 per cent completion rate for the seven-month course
- High satisfaction rating by trainees

The Centre's records indicate that virtually all of the 95 course participants from 16 PICTs graduated. End-of-training evaluations by trainees have been positive. The Tracer Study reported that a majority (85 per cent) of those interviewed considered training delivery very effective and that it enabled them to become trainers and identify community needs upon return to their communities. The fact that many graduates have indicated a desire to return to undertake short courses such as the new summer courses is similarly indicative of satisfaction with the Centre's offerings.

Output 2: Networks of CETC graduates strengthened

- At least three active CETC alumni established per annum

Only the Solomon Islands alumni chapter was established, with members actively participating in various training activities.

Output 3: Networks with other training providers strengthened

- Increased level of collaboration with other technical providers

The level of collaboration between CETC and Fiji-based training providers has increased, as evidenced by the willingness of partners to release their staff and allow their premises to be used for CETC courses. Major partners include the Fiji Institute of Technology, the Centre for Appropriate Technology and Development, the Training Productivity Authority of Fiji and the USP School of Marine Studies. The National Centre for Microenterprise Development (NCMDE) is a new partner in delivering the summer enterprise module and provides trainers for the standard course.

At the regional level, CETC hosted in 2005 a regional consultation on TVET, organised by the new Pacific Association of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (PATVET).

4. MATRIX SUMMARY

Outputs and key performance indicators	Progress against performance indicators
Output 1: <i>Increased capacity among women in key community development skills</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 90 per cent successful completion rate for the seven-month course High satisfaction ratings of participants 	Exceeded: 95 Pacific women graduated Achieved
Output 2: <i>Networks of CETC graduates strengthened</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least three active CETC alumni associations established per annum 	Only one alumni chapter established (Solomon Islands), owing to resource constraints
Output 3: <i>Networks with other training providers strengthened</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased level of collaboration 	Achieved, in particular with Fiji-based partners

5. GENERAL COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS

Training programme

The current duration of the training programme is just about right, as evidenced from end-of course evaluations and from the Tracer Study. The Centre's approach of revising its curriculum regularly and improving its infrastructure has produced a robust, flexible and high-quality programme.

The situation and training needs of SPC members in the northern Pacific and how SPC can respond to them need to be studied further. Their representation has been relatively low, probably mainly due to high airfare costs.

A more effective and systematic mechanism to monitor and evaluate the impact of the CETC training programme needs to be put in place. The Centre should not rely solely on "one-off" reviews.

Recruitment

While the recruitment process works well most of the time, some inappropriate candidates were selected and there have been delays. There is thus a need to tighten the process to ensure that there is good representation from all communities or sectors (e.g. government and NGOs) and that candidates meet entry criteria, which in turn should probably be more rigorous.

The participation rate of SPC member countries and territories fell from 16 PICTs in 2003 to 11 in 2005.

To facilitate more focused recruitment and selection and also as part of building a support strategy for CETC graduates at the national level, a more effective information strategy is needed to improve awareness of CETC and its programme and requirements.

Post-training support and Networking

The idea of keeping alumni involved post-training is problematic if there are no other support mechanisms. “What is in it for us?” is the question often posed by graduates. Big countries such as Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu and Samoa would have problems of getting graduates together because of transport costs and travel time. There is a need to relook at how or whether alumni chapters can be usefully utilised as a support network for graduates and how they can assist the Centre to maintain relevant training activities. Other support mechanisms, such as the trust fund and links with employers and other training providers for refresher courses, and communication channels need to be explored properly and strengthened where appropriate in the next triennium.

Within SPC there is great potential for more synergy and collaboration between CETC and SPC programmes, such as the Pacific Women’s Bureau and the Pacific Youth Bureau, in terms of exchanging information and delivering training. This would enhance the overall SPC impact in its member countries and territories.

Facilities

In terms of the Centre’s capacity, there are physical, staffing and funding resource implications with the additional summer offerings and with the increasing demand for more advanced and technology-based electives, such as tailoring, that use heavy-duty industrial machines.

There have already been some major renovations to the new building. Quality, as opposed to just price, needs to become an important criterion for any future tender process.

The Centre’s capacity to attract some income during the non-training period will be improved if the old residential flats are upgraded.

Resources

Of the three professional staff, one is contracted on an annual basis for up to 10 and a half months and is also acting warden for the Centre. Having additional summer offerings would have wardenship implications and also result in an increased load for the other CETC staff.

6. FINANCES

CETC has been financed from SPC's core budget, programme funding and project funding. The move by New Zealand from project to programme funding has provided greater funding security.

Resources (Income budget)	2003	2004	2005	Total
Core budget	17,670,000	10,040,000	11,580,000	39,290,000
Programme funding				
Australia	6,500,000	14,000,000	14,000,000	34,500,000
New Zealand	–	9,160,000	9,160,000	18,320,000
Project funding				
Commonwealth Secretariat	–	770,000	1,870,000	2,640,000
France	1,350,000	1,280,000	129,000	2,759,000
New Zealand	9,210,000	31,700	–	9,241,700
Taiwan/ROC	2,930,000	–	–	2,930,000
Other	3,290,000	3,020,000	580,000	6,890,000
Total	40,950,000	38,301,700	7,319,000	116,570,700

Source: Revised budgets 2003 and 2004, Budget 2005

The decrease in core funding was matched by an increase in Australian programme funding. In consultation with the donor, SPC moved a CETC position from core to programme funding, which allowed it to move a position in another SPC programme in the other direction (from programme funding to core) – a simple swap to achieve more administrative consistency in the allocation of core and programme funding resources.