

May 2002 Issue

In this Issue

How War Affects Women and Children

"Women and Militarism," a speech made by Cora Weiss, President of the International Peace Bureau is poignant in this current climate of international conflict, war and terrorism as she reminds us that, "women and children, not soldiers, have increasingly become the victims of war since the end of the World War II; and... unless and until women gain -- not equality, but parity -- equal numbers in decision making, at all levels of society -- in governments, in delegations to the UN, in the UN bureaucracy, on negotiating teams, there will continue to be wars and women will be raped and tortured and killed and made refugees until the social fabric of entire societies is destroyed."

While the world today spends between \$750 to 800 billion per year on the military; she points out that the world-wide need for basic child health and nutrition, primary education, safe water and family planning could be had for a mere \$34 billion, according to the UN Development Program. "Years after the Cold War is over, the world's military budget equals the income of the poorest half of the world's people."

The International Peace Bureau (IPB) of which Cora Weiss is President is dedicated to supporting peace and disarmament initiatives taken by the United Nations. The International Peace Bureau was founded in 1892 and won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1910. It has 240 member organisations.

Women and Militarism

By Cora Weiss

Cora Weiss is President of the International Peace Bureau. She was international representative of Peace Action to the United Nations and is a Joint Principal of Japan's Peace Boat Global University.

A lifelong peace activist, she was a co-founder of Women Strike for Peace (1961) protesting atmospheric nuclear testing; a leader of the anti-Vietnam war movement, founded and directed the Committee of Liaison with Families of American Prisoners of War (1969-73), an experience in citizen diplomacy.

As a trustee of Hampshire College, she started the campus campaign to divest stocks

in companies doing business in South Africa during apartheid. She has a long record of support for the United Nations, is an activist in the women's and human rights movements, and founded and for ten years directed the Riverside Church Disarmament Program in New York. She is a frequent speaker at conferences around the world where she promotes the Global Campaign for Peace Education to be integrated into all schools. This is a joint effort of IPB and the Hague Appeal for Peace.

Women and Militarism

By Cora Weiss

April 2, 2002

"War," said Virginia Woolf, "is not women's history."

Thus in these days when women redouble our efforts for rights and peace, a struggle we should long ago have resolved, we are reminded of two factors: 1) women and children, not soldiers, have increasingly become the victims of war since the end of the World War II; and 2) unless and until women gain -- not equality, but parity -- equal numbers in decision making, at all levels of society -- in governments, in delegations to the UN, in the UN bureaucracy, on negotiating teams, there will continue to be wars and women will be raped and tortured and killed and made refugees until the social fabric of entire societies is destroyed.

The Persian Gulf War was perhaps the last military conflict of armies against armies, where a nation state invaded another for the purpose of eliminating its military power. Since then, conflicts have not been about armies of men going to defeat armies of men, but rather, conflicts are about destroying cultures, destroying the fabric of society.

Women and children bear a disproportionate burden of the consequences of this kind of war from beginning to end. First, women are not involved in the decisions that lead to war -- and don't tell me about Cleopatra, Golda Meir or Margaret Thatcher. I am talking representation of equal numbers of women, of people who are caring and nurturing, people who use both sides of their brain. Women are not engaged in the appropriation of funds that make weapons and war possible. The number of women in national legislatures has dropped to only ten percent globally.

Women are not engaged in the negotiations that might lead to resolving a war. When conflicts arise, usually over resources and who will control them, women and children, who once waited to bury their heroes and martyrs, now become a new kind of victim. Today, women stay home to protect the family, and resist the war, while their men, taking guns, either go to fight or to flee, as we saw in Bosnia and in Chechnya. And the women become victims of rape and torture, of brutalities suffered in front of children and the elderly in an effort to remove the glue that

holds the family -- the society -- together.

The new wars are about destroying ways of life: mosques are bombed, libraries burned to remove traces of history. When missiles and grenades are lobbed into a market place in Sarajevo, whom will they hit? Only women go to markets. Harvests are pillaged and crops burned. Starvation has always been a weapon. But new technology including dioxins, Agent Orange and defoliants, chemicals now prevent the reuse of healthy fields for many years, and cause miscarriages and deformities in newborns, as we know from Vietnam. War is no longer a matter of defeating an enemy and subjugating it to occupation, but of trying to wipe out a people, as we saw in Cambodia, Guatemala and El Salvador. As long as they have guns, men can hold up food aid, as in Somalia, or force women to become pregnant.

National military budgets discriminate against women. The world today spends between \$750 to 800 billion per year on the military; while the world-wide need for basic child health and nutrition, primary education, safe water and family planning could be had for a mere \$34 billion, according to the UN Development Program. In the U.S., only the military budget is a sacred cow and is, indeed, being increased, while all social services are on the chopping block.

Years after the Cold War is over, the world's military budget equals the income of the poorest half of the world's people. In some African countries military budgets are two to three times the budgets for health or education. While UNDP advocates a three percent reduction in military spending, some women's groups want to institute an across the board cut of five percent a year for five years of all national military budgets which will release, in the end, half a billion dollars per day that can be applied to human needs. At least one percent of those saved funds should be spent on needs defined by women.

Margaret Catley Carlson, the head of the Population Council, says that unless part of the \$2 million per minute that is spent on global armaments is diverted to women's reproductive health services, the world's future will be bleak.

source: <http://www.igc.apc.org/disarm/Pwomanabc.html>

How Children are Exploited in War

On the shocking issue of how children are used in wars, The Seattle Post Intelligencer's Mike Barber reported on 8 April 02:

"About 300,000 children are now primary combatants in more than 75 percent of the world's conflicts. Child soldiers are killing and dying in Colombia, Chechnya and Kosovo, in the Middle East and in Asia. More than anywhere else, they are fighting in Africa and Sri Lanka, where the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelaam has organized thousands of children into a "baby brigade" made up only of fighters 16 and

younger, according to Amnesty International and other groups."

"The rising tide of child soldiers has largely been a concern among humanitarian groups such as Amnesty International and the United Nations' child-advocacy organizations, which promote an international ban on sending children to war.

But as the U.S. military fights the war on terrorism unfamiliar battlefields, the likelihood that American troops will face armed children is getting serious attention at the U.S. Army War College, the prestigious training center for future generals and policy-makers, in Carlisle, Pa.

Child soldiers are "a reality of contemporary conflict for which the U.S. military is ill prepared," Peter Warren Singer, a Brookings Institute scholar, warned in a recent issue of the War College's scholarly journal, *Parameters*.

"No national security doctrine has been developed for dealing with the specific challenges and dilemmas that child soldiers present to mission planners or deployed units," Singer wrote."

To view the Article, Child soldiers a growing concern on foreign battlefields see:
http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/national/65670_childsoldiers08.shtml

Australia's Proposed Anti-Terrorism Laws

The Federal Government's "anti-terrorist" package of legislation is comprised of eight pieces of legislation. One of these bills has already been passed into law, while the remaining seven are currently the subject of three separate reviews by the Senate Legal and Constitutional Committee.

The bills collectively comprise over 100 pages of legislative text, and a further 100 pages of explanatory notes. There has been much controversy about the proposed amendments to existing laws as well as the manner in which the legislation was introduced with the Opposition and other parties in Parliament being given a total of 16 hours—including overnight—to examine the legislation before it was tabled in the House of Representatives and passed the next day.

The Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee began in April 2002 considering submissions from the public in relation to Australia's proposed Anti-Terrorism laws.

Featured below is a link to a Transcript of the ABC Radio National's The Law Report Broadcast with Damien Carrick on Tuesday 12 February 2002. He asked are Australia's proposed anti-terrorism laws, an appropriate response to a dangerous new post-September 11 world? Or, a dangerous over-reaction that tramples on civil rights?

Taking part in this discussion were, **Federal Attorney General Daryl Williams; Terry**

O’Gorman, Head of the Australian Council for Civil Liberties; **Chris Maxwell QC** Liberty Victoria; **Dr Jude McCulloch** Deakin University; **Dr Jenny Hocking** Monash University and **Clive Williams** from the Australian National University.

Chris Maxwell, QC, of civil rights group Liberty Victoria, disputes the need for separate offences relating to terrorism. Federal Attorney-General, Daryl Williams says the power to detain someone for questioning who may have information useful in countering any terrorist act for 48 hours without access to a lawyer will be rarely invoked. However Terry O’Gorman, President of the Australian Council for Civil Liberties, isn’t comforted by the Attorney-General’s assurances pointing out that new US laws allow for the indefinite detention of non-US citizens. In response to Daryl Williams' proposal, "What we are saying is if you are reasonably believed to have information, you have an obligation to answer the question, if you don’t answer the question you commit an offence which carries a penalty of up to five years’ imprisonment," Terry O’Gorman argues that there is nothing reasonable about throwing away the right to silence, a fundamental right, which is at the heart of our criminal justice system.

Dr Jude McCulloch, lecturer in policing studies at Deakin University says a power to detain for 48 hours incommunicado, won’t just affect the detainee but will also cause worry for loved ones. She points out that in other Western democracies, when detention without access to a lawyer has been allowed, abuse of processes followed.

Dr Jenny Hocking is the Head of the National Centre for Australian Studies at Monash University, and an expert on ASIO. She’s concerned the proposed laws blur the line between policing and intelligence gathering. She suggests that "the very extensive powers that ASIO already has ought to be sufficient for it to maintain intelligence and surveillance on any newly developing terrorist groups."

Clive Williams, Director of Terrorism Studies at the Australian National University Centre for Defence and Strategic Studies, feels that the proposed new powers are of practical use in preventing or solving terrorist crimes. He says, while nobody can know for sure, it is possible that organisations like Al Qu’aida do have cells in Australia. He says, "Well I think that the sort of proposal of having the ability to detain people for 48 hours is quite a good one really... And if you compare that with other countries around the world, I mean I don’t think that’s particularly draconian, because in Japan for example, you can hold someone for 23 days. In the UK I think it’s 7 days, in Singapore and Malaysia it’s 2 years. So many countries have these capacities. Of course the United States has now introduced that kind of capability too and has been detaining people for quite a protracted period, I’m not sure what the time frame is that they can hold them for, but they’ve already been holding those people for at least a month. So that kind of measure is not that sort of unacceptable, I think."

Terry O’Gorman ends the discussion of the Federal Government’s proposed anti-terrorism laws with this comment, "Innocent family members, who may have some

knowledge of the whereabouts of a suspected terrorist, could be held, neighbours could be held, arguably journalists could be held. Similar laws in less democratic countries have ensnared journalists. Lawyers could be held. Now the fact is that what Mr Williams won't acknowledge is a widespread recognition including from the former Director of the CIA, that the failure with September 11 was not a failure of the legal system, it was not the result of inadequate laws, it was not the result of police and security services not having the power to detain people incommunicado. Many CIA or ex-CIA operatives, including the former Director of the CIA, and a number of fairly convincing commentators in the US have said that the failure to detect those terrorists who flew those planes into the World Trade Center, was a failure by the security services to do their job and to act on existing intelligence which they simply failed to follow up. And the laws in the US, the Patriot Act, the laws in the UK, and the new terrorism laws in Australia are simply designed to exploit community concern after September 11. The reality is if the security services do their job properly, under existing ASIO laws in Australia, they have a wealth of power already at their disposal, and a wealth of power which I might remind you was increased considerably only two years ago for the Sydney Olympics."

To view the full Transcript click here:

Leadership in Action

With individuals and communities taking the initiative to set up Welcome Towns and Centres for Asylum Seekers and over 15000 people marching in Sydney and Melbourne on Palm Sunday on 24 March 02, to protest against the detention of Asylum Seekers, the issue of the treatment of Asylum seekers and, in particular the detention of children, continues to motivate many individuals in the community to demonstrate leadership and compassion. Below are links that capture the spirit of this leadership that is growing within different sectors of the community.

[Speeches by Sr Susan Connelly and Dr John Yu for Palm Sunday 2002, Sydney](#)

[The Big Lies of 'Border Protection' By Malcolm Fraser, The Age March 27 2002](#)

Australian doctors concerned over detention of children:

On 19 March 2002 ABC Lateline revealed that "almost every independent medical body is now calling on the Howard Government to remove children and their families from detention centres." However, in an interview with the Immigration Minister, Philip Ruddock has defended the detention of children.

To view the transcript from Lateline see:

<http://www.abc.net.au/lateline/s508624.htm>

Australia's Population Challenge

By David Buckingham

David Buckingham, former Executive Director of the Business Council of Australia for five years comments that the outlook for Australia's population is that the most respected projections have the Australian population peaking at about 24 million in 2028: peaking and thereafter beginning a gradual decline.

An ageing population, he points out is not a uniquely Australian problem, but for Australia " it means confronting the consequences of an indisputable fact: we face a long-term decline in population. The key concern is what this means for the Australian economy and society, our capacity to fund extra services for the increasing number of elderly, our capacity to keep our best and brightest young people in the face of a stagnating population scenario."

He makes particular reference to The Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering Report on Australia's population dilemma which sets out a series of practical ways in which Australia can increase its population without compromising its natural resources and living standards.

"This analysis gets to the heart of suggestions that Australia cannot sustain even the current level of its population. Australia's environmental problems are real but their solution does not lie in decimating existing Australian population levels; rather, as the Academy of Technological Science study argues, the solution lies in putting in place policy measures appropriate to the problem in question."



Australia's Population Challenge
By David Buckingham

Mr David Buckingham

David Buckingham is currently the Managing Director of Stratpol Consultants Pty Ltd and held the position of Executive Director of the Business Council of Australia for five years. Previously, he was the Executive Director of the Minerals Council of Australia and has held several senior positions with federal government departments.

Population is a matter of critical importance to Australia's future.

Briefly, the outlook for Australia's population is this: the most respected projections have the Australian population peaking at about 24 million in 2028: peaking and thereafter beginning a gradual decline.

As you would expect, the population ages dramatically. It is not a uniquely Australian problem: indeed, in sixty-one countries accounting for forty-four per cent of the world's total population, the basic fertility rate is below the level required for population replacement.

Elsewhere rapid population growth continues in parts of Asia, the sub-continent, parts of the Middle East and in parts of Africa. Alternatively the United Nations, aided by others including the World Bank and major aid organisations, are leading a coordinated attack to reduce population growth. The implications from both these scenarios are profound.

For Australia's part, it means confronting the consequences of an indisputable fact: we face a long-term decline in population. The key concern is what this means for the Australian economy and society, our capacity to fund extra services for the increasing number of elderly, our capacity to keep our best and brightest young people in the face of a stagnating population scenario.

We think that to have a prosperous, sustainable and confident society at the end of the twenty-first century, we need to have a growing, dynamic, well-skilled, internationally sophisticated population, rather than one that is shrinking and ageing.

Clearly a most fundamental and particularly difficult issue is the environment. The caring capacity of our country has been a matter of great conjecture for more than eighty years, with estimates ranging from Tim Flannery's widely publicised view of six to twelve million people, to other estimates up to some 400 million.

Recent research by emeritus professor Anthony Chisholm of La Trobe University said there is considerable potential for improving the efficiency of resource and environmental management in Australia, a view with which I strongly agree. But using a limit to population as a means of dealing with specific resource and environmental concerns is, in the words of Professor Chisholm, an extraordinarily blunt instrument. It is both illogical and inept.

The Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering has published a provocative report on Australia's population dilemma. It sets out a series of practical ways in which Australia can increase its population without compromising its natural resources and living standards.

The study says the predictions of environmental disaster in Australia arising from population growth are ill founded and arise from muddled and sometimes emotive thinking about the cause of environmental impacts. The report says, quite simply, "Australia can support a higher population".

Elsewhere it states: "A number of environmental issues previously thought to be connected to population growth can clearly be demonstrated not to be. Of those that are, there appears to be technical and behavioural methods of dealing with them over a fifty-year time frame".

Specifically, it rejects the often-expressed view that a higher population will contribute to a significant worsening in greenhouse emissions, globally. It also rejects

any suggestion that in parts of Australia there is a relationship between a higher population and land degradation.

This analysis gets to the heart of suggestions that Australia cannot sustain even the current level of its population. Australia's environmental problems are real but their solution does not lie in decimating existing Australian population levels; rather, as the Academy of Technological Science study argues, the solution lies in putting in place policy measures appropriate to the problem in question.

This is not to say that population growth has not in and of itself had implications for the quality of the natural environment. We do not in any way mean to dismiss these issues as superficial by saying we believe they can be managed over a fifty-year period.

Now I do not expect this view to be accepted by everyone. I would, nevertheless, press the case that the best guarantee of our future will not be to build walls around us but will be the reasoned and reasonable consideration of and response to the myriad complex issues before us.

Our future will depend on our worldliness and our integration with the world. It will depend upon sustainable progress, where companies and individuals focus on the triple bottom line, the economic, social and environmental implications of what is done, delivering what this forum has referred to as 'green growth'. We think it will be enhanced significantly by a young dynamic growing and vigorous population. *This is a summary of an address given by David Buckingham as Executive Director of the Business Council of Australia. David is now Managing Director of Stratpol Consultants Pty Ltd.*

Source: Living Ethics Issue 46 Summer 2002 of the St James Ethics Centre

Community Renewal and Social Capital

By Dr Jenny Onyx

Dr Jenny Onyx delivered this Keynote Address at the Annual Conference of the NSW Community Technology Centre program, COMnet@nsw 2001 Conference, at the University of Technology, Sydney on December 3, 01.

Dr Onyx introduces her address sighting the Community Technology Centre Program as being a good example of a new policy direction now being taken by state and Commonwealth Governments of all persuasions. In the context of analysing what is behind these changes, and what can be offered to communities struggling as society has been over the past 15 years, moving from the welfare state towards economic rationalism, she presents her intention to focus on a new form of partnership

between the state and civil society.

"The key ingredient in civil society, is social capital. Let me outline, very briefly, the core ingredients of that concept. The definitions most often used are those of Putnam as "those features of social organisation, such as trust, norms and networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions" (Putnam, 1993) or "that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives" (Putnam, 1995)"

"If you don't like formal definitions, think about your own life. Think about a place where you live, or lived, or worked, and the networks you formed there. Think about a problem that came up. Maybe you were in trouble and needed some help to solve the problem. Maybe the community had a problem, that could only be solved by people coming together to deal with it. A bush fire comes to mind for me. I am not talking about calling in the professionals, but using the informal networks to make things happen. That is social capital. At one level it is obvious. At another level it is new...and has never been formally recognized or accounted."

Onyx summarises the key propositions that have been made over the last 5 years' research on Social Capital. She proceeds to look at the question whether the Internet and other electronic networks contribute to the development of Social Capital. Further examining why Social Capital is important, she says, "As individual human beings, we need both bonding social capital and bridging social capital. The support of a close knit community of likeness (whether of family, friends, workmates, the local community) provides a sense of personal identity and support in adversity and meaningfulness in life. But bridging social capital allows growth, access to new knowledge and resources, tolerance, social justice and a sense of a common humanity. What both of these have in common is a sense of the "common good"."

In her exploration of the capacity of local rural communities to find new pathways to renewal, she focuses on Sweden as a Case Study.

"Rural Sweden is in much the same plight as rural Australia. Areas of north and west Sweden in particular have been faced with falling commodity prices, global competition making small scale production uncompetitive, industry restructuring, increasing unemployment, reduction in government welfare spending, closure of local public services, high levels of social distress and feelings of hopelessness. However, the Swedes have remarkably high levels of public participation in almost everything."

Arguing that community renewal depends on the voice of the community, she sets out 8 common principles which underlie the role of the community voice. Her conclusion, however, reminds one that, "There are other steps required in the process of community renewal, processes that go beyond the expression of voice. These include processes of education and training, and mechanisms of continued and sustainable development. Access to external resources is always important."



Community Renewal and Social Capital
By Dr Jenny Onyx

Community Renewal and Social Capital

Keynote Address by Dr Jenny Onyx

COMnet@nsw 2001 Conference at UTS on December 3, 01

The CTC program is a good example of a new policy direction now being taken by state and Commonwealth Governments of all persuasions. It is interesting to take a look at what is behind these changes, and what there is to offer to communities struggling to regain control of their own destiny. We have seen a move over the past 15 years, from the welfare state towards economic rationalism, and now beyond, to some new form of partnership between the state and civil society. The move away from the welfare state was driven, at least partly, by a belief that intervention by the state simply perpetuates a welfare dependency, a kind of passive, learned helplessness by the community, which then has to wait for the government to fix everything. The people then lose their capacity to take action on their own account.

The policies of economic rationalism turned attention from the state to the market. There was a discourse of privatisation and deregulation. Simply stated, economic rationalism is an ideology which rests on the free play of market forces. As public policy, the state adopted the mechanisms and principles of the market. The basic assumptions are that the individual citizen/ consumer should exercise their free choice in accessing goods and services according to their capacity to pay; the provider of such goods and services will continue to provide them as long as demand is strong enough and the quality of their services are sufficiently attractive. Quality is ensured through competition between providers. All agents are motivated by rational self interest. The philosophical position that justifies all this is a form of

liberalism which rests on the core value of individual rights and autonomy.

Some of the negative consequences of economic rationalism have now become only too apparent. The market does not necessarily provide appropriate solutions, especially for those who cannot afford to pay. Some get richer, but many get poorer. The so-called digital divide is one of many examples where those who are already disadvantaged in a free market become even more disadvantaged. However, one of the most serious critiques of economic rationalism is that it systematically undermined the values of community and the capacity to develop community. In particular, economic rationalist policies have the effect of drawing on existing stocks of social capital, without providing the conditions for its replenishment or growth. In the long term this is a recipe for disaster. Government programs are now in place...and this is one important example....to reverse this process. We cannot go back to the welfare state, but we know that the market, if left to its own devices will destroy community. The solution must be found in collaborative partnerships between community, state and market. However this will only work if communities take the initiative, participate actively and use the resources provided by state and market for their own collective well-being. Leadership must be returned to the people.

What is social capital?

Social capital can be developed and used wherever humans gather together for a common purpose. It is primarily associated with civil society. I follow Walzer (1991) in defining civil society as “the space of uncoerced human association and also the relational networks formed for the sake of family, faith, interest and ideology, that fills this space”. The key ingredient in civil society, is social capital. Let me outline, very briefly, the core ingredients of that concept. The definitions most often used are those of Putnam as “those features of social organisation, such as trust, norms and networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions” (Putnam, 1993) or “that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives” (Putnam, 1995)

If you don't like formal definitions, think about your own life. Think about a place where you live, or lived, or worked, and the networks you formed there. Think about a problem that came up. Maybe you were in trouble and needed some help to solve

the problem. Maybe the community had a problem, that could only be solved by people coming together to deal with it. A bush fire comes to mind for me. I am not talking about calling in the professionals, but using the informal networks to make things happen. That is social capital. At one level it is obvious. At another level it is new...and has never been formally recognized or accounted.

A lot of research and debate around the world has occurred in the past 5 years concerning social capital and what it does. Let me summarise some of that with a few basic propositions. There is some debate around each proposition, but together they are starting to add up to some very powerful ideas.

1. Social capital, like other forms of capital, like money, is an essential ingredient in social action. Social capital does not refer to the social action itself but to the essential prerequisite of social action. If you want something done, you need more or less financial capital, natural capital, cultural or human capital, and social capital.
2. Any community of people who form networks of common interest can generate social capital. Social capital is not something that anyone can possess as an individual, although individuals may make use of it. Essentially social capital resides in the connection between people.

Social capital has a number of elements; it is not a unitary concept. It is about the connectedness between people, about networks and trust and the capacity to work together. In my work with Paul Bullen, we found eight elements of social capital, including four "building blocks" referring to 'Trust', 'Social Agency', 'Tolerance of diversity' and 'Value of life'. Underlying all these factors was the common or core ingredient of social connectedness. Other four factors referred to four distinct social arenas: 'Participation in the Local Community' (formal engagement with local community organisations), 'Neighbourhood Connections', 'Family and Friends connections', and 'Work Connections'.

This suggests that social capital may be generated in a variety of arenas, and that people may have access to, or be involved in the production of social capital in different ways. To access the scale we developed, go to Paul's web-site at:

3. .However, unlike other forms of capital, you don't need to be rich to acquire social capital. There is little or no correlation between material well-being and social capital except for the extremely poor and disadvantaged. For these groups the more social capital, the greater chance of material well-being and visa versa. Or put another way, without some minimal level of material well-being, it is unlikely that social capital will be generated. Without some minimal level of social capital it is unlikely that material well being can happen.
4. Like other forms of social capital, whether it is used for good or evil is up to those who use it. It is always used for the common good, but that leaves open the question of "whose common good" and "who decides". It is the case that there are nearly always winners and losers in the use of social capital, as with any other form of human activity.
5. Communities appear to be remarkably resilient. The denser the networks of connection and participation, the more resilient the community. The key always is in the relationships. In general, rural communities tend to have higher levels of social capital, at least bonding social capital.
6. There are two levels of social capital (at least). One concerns the bonding networks **within** communities, and the other concerns bridging links **between** different groups. The first is marked by what is termed "thick trust", the mutual support of insiders, the thing that holds a small community together in the face of fire or the loss of banking services for instance. Bridging social capital is not about social support, but about drawing on resources from other networks. It also requires trust, but of a different kind. While bonding is important for mutual survival, bridging is important for getting ahead, for creating new opportunities, new growth. We need both.
7. Another essential feature of social capital is social agency: the capacity of people working together to take the initiative. It is about people as active participants, not as passive victims or even as "customers" or "clients"

What about electronic networks

Social capital is basically about connections between people that are important to us. This is especially true for bonding social capital. That kind of connectedness requires face to face interaction, real people meeting real people. So what then of the internet, or the email, or other forms of electronically assisted networks? There are several answers to this question:

- At some point we need real, human, personal interaction for social capital to develop.
- But we do not need direct, person to person connection all the time. As long as we can meet in person sometimes, then we can also meet virtually sometimes.
- Did you know that something like 40% of all emails are trying to arrange face to face meetings? Electronic networks can be, and often are used to support face to face networks.
- All networks require a steady stream of information. Again electronic networks are the best, most effective means of getting information out to lots of people quickly. Social action depends on this.
- Electronic networks really come into their own with bridging social capital. Bridging means reaching out to other resources, other networks, other information that is outside the insider networks. For anybody this can be a daunting task. It is all the more daunting for those who are isolated by distance or other disadvantage.
- In general then, electronic networks cannot replace the work of real time, face to face connections. But they can assist and enhance the work of those personal networks. In lots of ways they can make the impossible happen, and on a global as well as a local scale.

Why is social capital important?

Social capital appears to be essential for the individual, and for the community at large.

A healthy economy, and a vibrant political democracy depend on a civil society with a strong stock of social capital. Basically, if any economic policy draws on, but does not replace the stock of social capital, it does so at its peril. When social capital becomes depleted, the capacity for society to pull together is reduced, as is the capacity for the community to support entrepreneurial activity of any sort.

As individual human beings, we need both bonding social capital and bridging social capital. The support of a close knit community of likeness (whether of family, friends, workmates, the local community) provides a sense of personal identity and support in adversity and meaningfulness in life. But bridging social capital allows growth, access to new knowledge and resources, tolerance, social justice and a sense of a common humanity.

What both of these have in common is a sense of the “common good”. Social life, even within a market economy, perhaps especially within a market economy, depends on the capacity to work together for the common good, as well as for individual gain. Short term altruism is necessary for long term personal gain. In simple terms, and as more than just a metaphor, if we do not get together to ensure clean air to breathe, well, before long we will all stop breathing. Social capital is a recognition that we are all in this together.

Community renewal

I want to explore the capacity of local rural communities to find new pathways to renewal. In doing so, I also draw on recent theoretical work relating to sustainable development, and in particular the analysis of Ann Dale (2000) who defines sustainable development as follows:

Sustainable development can be regarded as a process of reconciliation of three imperatives: (i) the ecological imperative to live within global biophysical carrying capacity and maintain biodiversity; (ii) the social imperative to ensure the development of democratic systems of governance to effectively propagate and sustain the values that people wish to live by; and (iii) the economic imperative to ensure that basic needs are met worldwide. (Dale, 2000, p110)

The central concepts of development revolve around the four capitals: financial capital, natural capital, human capital and social capital. In particular we need to revision the relationship between the four kinds of capital. Traditional approaches to development have heavily emphasised the use of financial capital and the

exploitation of natural capital. As the definition by Dale above suggests, we need to move away from thinking in insular, discipline specific, or institution specific terms, and move instead to more holistic thinking. The argument is that action taken with respect to any of the four capitals will have direct consequences for the others. If used correctly, the mobilisation of one form of capital can multiply the effects of another in a positive, or virtuous cycle. Equally, the misuse, or overuse of one can destroy another.

The United Nations 'Agenda 21' was a principle outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (the Rio conference) which sets the agenda "to reverse the effects of environmental degradation and to promote environmentally sound and sustainable development in all countries" (Robinson, 1993, i). This agenda includes empowering communities. Section 3.7 establishes:

Sustainable development must be achieved at every level of society. People's organizations, women's groups and non-governmental organizations are important sources of innovation and action at the local level and have a strong interest and proven ability to promote sustainable livelihoods. Governments, in cooperation with appropriate international and non-governmental organizations should support a community-driven approach to sustainability.."(p26)

To do this, we need to pay much more attention to social capital, because social capital enhances returns to investment in other forms of capital. The point being that these various forms of capital are not independent, nor are they alternatives. They are interconnected in complex ways, and likely to be complementary, rather than substitute. Thus for instance, to draw a rather obvious example, the investment in saw mills creates a capital asset which is of no use if the timber is all gone. An over-use of other forms of capital may well erode or destroy human and social capital, for example by processes of deskilling, and unemployment. A loss in these resources makes long term development unsustainable. Dale (1999) observes that 'communities, although at the base of the development chain, had become the

missing link in efforts to refashion relations between environment and economy' (pxiv).

We need to understand much better what the role of the local community is. How can the local community mobilize the productive use of social capital, and what effect does that have.

Sweden: A case study

It is always easier to look at how someone else has done it. Rural Sweden is in much the same plight as rural Australia. Areas of north and west Sweden in particular have been faced with falling commodity prices, global competition making small scale production uncompetitive, industry restructuring, increasing unemployment, reduction in government welfare spending, closure of local public services, high levels of social distress and feelings of hopelessness.

However, the Swedes have remarkably high levels of public participation in almost everything. Literally thousands of new community based organisations have emerged in the face of this crisis of the rural economy. All of these have been grass-roots driven. Often a small group of angry women start the process going, with a determination that their village is not going to die. With some help from professional advisers, and many months of discussion, they work out a plan of action, usually involving the whole community. New organisations are formed, often small cooperatives, or what they call "community businesses". These cover an enormous range of potential production or services. Many set out to develop tourist services, or market handicrafts, or set up an aged care service or child care. They may take over the local general store or bank if these are in danger of closing. They may form economic associations for the production of local meat or timber goods. They build houses, or form new eco-efficient forms of power distribution. They lobby government and form partnerships with the local industries.

The point is that all these ideas came from the community in question, not by government, not even by local government. The energy and the commitment came

from the community itself. They were able to mobilise the local networks. Of course they did not have all the knowledge and skills necessary, and seldom had much financial capital. But that didn't make them victims, or welfare recipients.

One thing they did have, was access to outside organisations that were willing to help with the necessary technical knowledge. Sometimes the municipal council provided that. Sometimes it was a peak body or a community development adviser from a state wide organisation. Sometimes it was a regional university. Financial capital sometimes came from local industry, or municipal council. Many groups were able to access a pool of state funding, not enough to run the service, but enough to get started. Most successful organisations (and they were mostly successful) used a complex funding arrangement which was part state funding, part market return for goods and services, and part community resourced (volunteer labour). However, it was always their show, never something imposed on them.

What did they gain? They gained a new sense of purpose and hope. Old people could 'age in place'. Young people could find employment. Many cooperatives were specifically designed by and for women with children so that they could gain an income while caring for children. Many created eco-communities so that they were able to rehabilitate their environment, find more effective methods of transport and heating. Above all they gained a strong sense of connection to each other and to the land.

What was the downside? Well several, depending on your point of view. Few if any got rich. We are talking here about collective survival and quality of life, not financial wealth. Some people, often the key initiators, felt burnt out. I know of several cases where the community funded key people to take a holiday. In social capital terms, massive bonding social capital was generated, but this did not always translate into tolerance for outsiders, or for minority groups. Although some of the best work involved groups of Sami people (Indigenous reindeer herders), sometimes there was ongoing conflict between different factions in the community, and where that was severe, little could be accomplished. I guess I would also have to say that this huge

community effort on its own could not counteract the negative effects of the loss of major industries. Nor could it replace government. But by being proactive and determined it was often able to bring the others into line.

The Principles of voice

In another paper, I have argued that community renewal depends on the voice of the community. There appear to be a set of common principles. These principles illustrate the crucial role of community voice, at several points:

1. An awareness of crisis, or in some discussions this is expressed as “a wake up call”. What appears to be important, is not so much the objective conditions of the crisis, but a sense of urgency expressed by the community itself, that something needs to be done before it is too late. This ingredient appears to be present in every documented case. It is the first expression of “voice” and means that the community owns and names the problem. The alternative responses are indifference, or resignation, or denial.
2. Some form of initial “call to action”. This is the second aspect of “voice”. The community, or some segment of it, takes the initiative. This expression of voice is one of proactivity. There is an awareness that someone has to do something, and that someone, at least in the first instance is the community itself. The effect of this awareness of crisis is to mobilise action. This raises the question of leadership. Leadership involves ordinary citizens. It may also include an outside change agent. However, successful community renewal is likely to be driven from below, and that means that leadership must essentially come from within the community itself. Quite often the initiating action is taken by a small group of women, who have standing in the community, but are not in positions of power. In my experience, they felt more able to act and to speak out because “no one could silence them” by threat of withdrawal of money or line management control. Ideally many members of the community in question take on leadership roles as necessary.

3. The third element of renewal also concerns 'voice': a collective expression of solidarity and determination. The community must come together with a (re)assertion of their common identity and a commitment to survive as a community. The expression of solidarity may take many forms, but will involve a public display of mutual interdependency. It may take the form of public meetings, demonstrations, (re)activation of community festivals, or the initiation of a community project that involves many people. These should be as inclusive as possible; public expressions of solidarity that leave out significant sections of the community are likely to produce or reinforce divisions and dissension; the prognosis for future action in this case is not good.
4. The fourth element involves a formal expression of 'voice'. Often the local media provides the necessary publicity for community action, as well as notice of coming meetings and events. It is the formal instrument of the community voice. More than that, media staff can be a source of important media and marketing skills and information. The local media can also stimulate a sense of local identity and pride. And of course Community Technology Centres can play a role here as well.
5. The fifth element of 'voice' involves the expression and sharing of creative ideas for renewal. This involves breaking out of existing frameworks, or thought-worlds. It is a kind of expression of collective thinking 'outside the box'. It is response to the challenge "what can we do that is new or different". Expertise from outside the community may be necessary at key points. But the use of this expertise remains within the control of the local community. The means by which creative ideas are identified can be varied. It can be done through public revisioning workshops, or more formally constructed roundtables. It can be done using such public media as the local press or some sort of community display board. And it can be done through Community Technology Centres. The best ideas are likely to come from face to face discussion, such as 'study-circles'. As before, the best ideas will derive from a mix of people, as inclusive of all stakeholder groups as possible. The effect of this public release of creative ideas

is several-fold. It creates a pool of ideas to work with, not all of which will be feasible, but some of which certainly will be. It creates a sense of public engagement or ownership, not only with the problem, but also with the solution. Part of the release of creative new ideas involves an analysis of local advantages, or unique community assets. It entails an examination of available resources with a view to identifying new ways of working with old resources, or ways of accessing previously inaccessible resources. It may include an audit of the human assets, skills, talents of those in the community. It may include a re-evaluation of the natural resources of soil, forest, desert, sea, water, minerals. It is likely that these can be used in new, productive, and sustainable ways. Almost certainly that will involve new relationships of natural resources, and human ingenuity.

6. A sixth principle of voice is the capacity to make bridges to outside resources, and to link into higher levels of power, authority and sources of knowledge and funding from both the market (corporate bodies) and the state. In terms of social capital, economic and social renewal requires not only bonding, but bridging to get ahead.

It is particularly in this aspect that Community Technology Centres provide a huge advantage. Rural areas in particular are severely disadvantaged by their isolation, their inability to access outside resources. While rural centres often have good stocks of bonding social capital, they need to supplement this with good bridging and linking social capital. CTCs can provide this function, if used wisely by the community itself.

7. The engagement of local government is important. Local government can make or break community initiatives. Local government as such is unlikely to initiate community action, which may be seen as threatening to existing vested interests. However key individuals, either elected members or employees may do so, though usually at some risk to themselves. The function of 'voice' may be to debate, to contest, to advocate, to lobby. Ideally, local council takes a positive role as facilitator.

8. The continuation of an effective 'voice' requires some sort of periodic celebratory event. These events should be fun. They re-ignite community energy and enthusiasm, and they may be a source of new ideas and action. They serve to mark successes, to renew determination in the face of obstacles, and to keep the renewal action on the public agenda.

Conclusions

There are other steps required in the process of community renewal, processes that go beyond the expression of voice. These include processes of education and training, and mechanisms of continued and sustainable development. Access to external resources is always important. No community is an island unto itself. External sources of information, expertise and funding are crucial at key points in the development of the community. But in every case what is important is that the community itself must control the way that these are obtained and used.

I think we have much to learn from the Swedish example. But we Aussies can do things better than just about anyone else when we set our collective minds to it. The Sydney Paralympics demonstrated that. By taking a lead role in partnership with all levels of government (especially local government) and with local industry, and by drawing on our own energy, we can actually do the impossible. We do this not as victims but as the voice of civil society.

In this process, Community Technology Centres cannot take over from wider community involvement. But they can play an essential part in the process. They offer exciting and creative new options.

Source: COMNET@NSW <<mailto:COMNET@NSW>2001, the Annual Conference of the NSW Community Technology Centre program, Office of Information Technology

Tahmeena Faryal, Senior Spokesperson, Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan (RAWA)

Exiled in Pakistan, Faryal is a 23-year-old activist from the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan (RAWA). She is the heroic young woman who, a few years ago, secretly filmed a Taliban execution of women (for supposed crimes against "public morality"). This film footage dramatically alerted the world to the

plight of Afghani women, a plight that grinds on under the warlords of the Northern Alliance.

Born in Afghanistan in 1978, Faryal's primary education was obtained in Kabul, and after her parents became political refugees, continued until her graduation in 1996 at a RAWA school in Pakistan.

Bringing international attention to the human rights violations which plague her country's women and children, ethnic minorities and refugees, Faryal has represented RAWA in many countries, including the UK, Italy, Spain, Canada, and Thailand. From October to December 2001, she visited the United States, addressing the US Congress, the United Nations General Assembly, and the New York-based collective of non-government organisations working within the UN for the equal rights of women and the larger role for women in peace and reconciliation processes. Faryal cannot use her real name or be photographed as RAWA activists have become special targets of the Taliban and fundamentalists around the world.

RAWA, was formed in Kabul in 1977 as a way to promote women's rights through non-violent action. Since then, the organisation has evolved — it now runs schools, orphanages, mobile health-care units, self-help classes, and adult literacy classes and it also provides emergency relief in refugee camps. RAWA says the country's interim government includes war criminals who should be tried for past human rights abuses and that the international community made a mistake when it allowed the Northern Alliance - the dominant faction in the current administration - to return to power.

In the Tasmanian House of Assembly, following the speech by RAWA activist Tahmeena Faryal during International Women's Day events, Greens MHA Peg Putt moved the motion shown below. It passed with unanimous support.

Ms Putt has obtained an official Parliamentary certificate of the motion signed by the Speaker of the house. It will be sent to Tahmeena and RAWA.

NOTICE OF MOTION

Tuesday 12th March 2002

That this House acknowledges that oppression of the people of Afghanistan will not cease by virtue of the transfer of power from the Taliban to the Northern Alliance and that further steps are necessary to attain a transition to democratic representation and government.

Accordingly this House supports a United Nations supervised transition, requiring an increased presence of UN personnel and an augmented program in Afghanistan to set up and supervise free and fair democratic elections.

Speech by Tahmeena Faryal, Hobart,
March 8, 2002 at the Annual
International Day Breakfast in Hobart

Tahmeena Faryal, Senior Spokesperson, Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan (RAWA)

At the Annual International Day 2002 Breakfast in Hobart Tahmeena Faryal addressed the topic of women in Afghanistan after the Taliban.

On this great occasion of International Women's Day I greet you on behalf of RAWA and the women of Afghanistan.

You are aware that for the past 23 years Afghanistan has languished in the grasp of the most despotic and cruellest of regimes. Yes, first our people suffered enormous pain in the Russians' coup d'état, and suffered even more when the Russians openly invaded our country in 1979. After the Russian invasion and a decade of resistance war, we thought that a nation and its women could not suffer more than this. An example of the pain our people bore is that in 1979 the people of Kabul, who were counting seconds for the return of their loved ones, suddenly had to face a list of 13 thousands prisoners who had been massacred by the puppet regime. After the Russians left and their puppet regime collapsed in 1992, people thought that freedom will at last prevail and the darkness of the past ten years along with the brutalities and crimes will turn into a hopeful future. But contrary to our people's expectations, the vicious circle rolled on and on.

The domination of the Jehadi fundamentalist (the present "polished" Northern Alliance) was the second incurable wound. The Jehadi Islamic fundamentalist bands- which had been created, nurtured and equipped by Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Iran, US and its allies during the anti-Russian war- gave another meaning to crime, brutality and looting. They turned Afghanistan, especially Kabul, into a blood bath by committing unprecedented hair-raising crimes. Crimes which whitewashed the Russians and their puppets faces. They killed and raped thousands of girls, women and men. More importantly they were the first who imposed numerous restrictions on women including wearing the veil. Even the UN Special Envoy, Mr. Mehmoud Mestiri, rightly called them a batch of bandits.

And after the failure of the Jihadis to fulfil the vicious plans of their masters, another force was unleashed in the battle ground for the Afghan pie. In 1996, one of the most misogynist and brutal fundamentalist forces emerged on the surface of our planet, the Taliban. They surpassed their Jehadi brothers in their treatment towards women.

For five years under the Taliban in the name of religion, massacres of non-Pashtun

ethnics were carried out with extreme barbarity. New inhumane and sadistic techniques had been found for killing the people. Children were taught that the followers of every other religion are the enemies of Islam, that there can be no peace between Jews and Muslims, that democracy is against the tenets of the Qur'an, and that all thoughts and sayings that go against their decrees are evil.

Tragically the world was silent against all these happenings because there was not any loss of life in the western hemisphere of our globe until the 11th of September.

Tragically they didn't listen to the repeated warnings of RAWA about the danger of fundamentalism to the security and stability of the world. And it was only after the New York and Washington attacks that the US woke up and found about the danger of its own created and nurtured Frankenstein(s).

If the US hadn't supported the fundamentalists in Afghanistan during the cold war and if only it paid the least attention to the Afghan fundamentalists' human rights abuses, New York might never had to pay such a huge price and the innocent Afghan people might never had to face such a heavy air strikes with lots of civilian casualties and hundreds of thousands of internal and external displacement.

Though the recent developments removed the Taliban from the scene, it unfortunately wasn't the end of the horrible miseries of our tortured nation. Contrary to the aspirations of our people and expectations of the world's freedom loving people, the Jehadi Northern Alliance as the main part of the current interim government shattered the dream of our wounded people for liberation, peace and safety.

Speaking on behalf of RAWA and on behalf of the agonised women of Afghanistan I hereby would like to ask the great people of Australia, other human rights organizations, eminent personalities, intellectuals and all centres and gatherings of social activism to mobilise all the forces at their disposal, to utilise any available resource open to them to make sure that the fundamentalists of the Northern Alliance are not enabled once again to extend their sinister domination over Afghanistan. With this alignment you will be standing on the side of the people of Afghanistan and their aspirations for peace, democracy and an honourable place amongst the nations of the world.

We also want to say in a loud voice that the place of the leaders of the Northern Alliance is beside war criminals at the Hague Court, and not the seat of government in Afghanistan and issuing of order about our women. As long as they have not given an account to the people, and have not appeared at an international court, they have no right to rule over our people. As far as RAWA is concerned, our battle against these enemies of democracy and women, whose only difference with the Taliban is merely wearing Western clothing and neckties, will continue as before and may be in different forms. Did the world forgive Hitler, Franco, Suharto, Khomeini, and more recently, the Taliban and Osama? Why then should the Northern Alliance

be forgiven?

As the only humanitarian, political, democratic, anti fundamentalist and feminist organization, RAWA for years has been advocating for a democratic government as the only cure for the wounds of Afghan people and the real liberation of our women from the shackles and bonds of fundamentalism and similar mentalities.

The fundamentalists have sounded the drum of opposition to democracy in various forms, and many danced to that drum as well. RAWA, however, is proud that it was not intimidated even for one moment, and kept the banner of democracy raised without paying attention to threats from fundamentalist terrorists.

We also believe that Democracy without secularism would be incomplete. The fundamentalists and their partners have used as much as they can to frighten people and to rant against secularism. They have tried to misrepresent secularism purely and simply as a profane and un-Islamic form of government, while secularism is the only means of keeping religion free of the influence of fundamentalists and other opportunistic elements. A long history in Western countries, and even in some Islamic countries, proves the fact that in those societies where secularism governs as democracy's essential foundation, religion has by no means been destroyed.

For these and many other stand points we have always been told, and there are still people who continue to tell us that the word "Revolutionary" in our name sometimes scares people away. In response, we have always maintained that the struggle of women for liberty and democracy in a country suffocating under native and international terrorists, and in conditions of extreme oppression and persecution, cannot but be revolutionary. Being irreconcilable against fundamentalism is revolutionary. Standing up for democratic feminism under the shadow of a general death sentence issued against members of RAWA, was and is the highest criterion of being revolutionary. Practical experience has borne out the revolutionary nature of our viewpoints, policies and activities which has drawn the support and commitment of countless of freedom and justice loving national and international supporters towards our cause.

We hope the supporters of women's rights, human rights and democracy who are here today, by realizing the nature and danger of the NA and putting pressure on the international community, do not let the fundamentalists of any brand to rule Afghanistan any more and longer.

In an interview US play write Eve Ensler said: "Afghanistan is everywhere." But our Afghanistan is deadlocked, a deadlock that the late Ahmad Shamlu, an Iranian poet, powerfully describes:

In This Deadend

They smell your breath.

You better not have said, "I love you."

They smell your heart.

These are strange times, darling...

And they flog

love

at the roadblock.

We had better hide love in the closet...

In this crooked deadened and twisting chill,

they feed the fire

with the kindling of song and poetry.

Do not risk a thought.

These are strange times, darling...

He who knocks on the door at midnight

has come to kill the light.

We had better hide light in the closet...

Those there are butchers

stationed at the crossroads

with bloody clubs and cleavers.

These are strange times, darling...

And they excise smiles from lips

and songs from mouths.

We had better hide joy in the closet...

Canaries are barbecued

on a fire of lilies and jasmine,

these are strange times, darling...

Satan drunk with victory

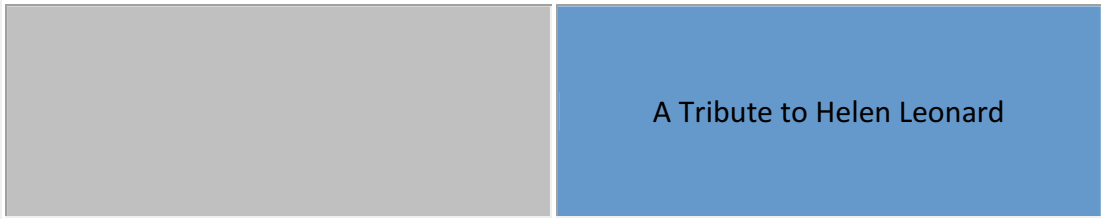
sits at our funeral feast.

We had better hide God in the closet.

This deadlock must be shattered. Our women must be at the forefront of the movement to shatter this humiliating deadlock.

Tahmeena Faryal was interviewed by Jana Wendt on Lateline on 27 March 2002. To view the transcript of this interview see: [Lateline with Tahmeena Faryal](#)

A Tribute to Helen Leonard



Vale Helen Leonard
7 March 1945 - 12 October 2001

Helen Leonard died suddenly in Canberra on 12 October 2001. Helen's inspiration, dedication and gentleness touched many thousands of lives. Helen Leonard was awarded the 2001 Community Award by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission. She was judged highly commended for her tireless commitment to the rights of women, and broader issues of social justice. Helen's friends and colleagues

celebrated her magnificent life and achievements in gatherings all over Australia.

Helen Leonard Obituaries by Marie Coleman

Condolence motion

Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory

Thursday, 13 December 2001

Tribute to Helen Leonard

Senator Trish Crossin

11 March 2002

Interview with ACTU President, Sharan Burrow

This interview was based on the speech Sharan Burrow delivered at the recent Population Summit held in Melbourne on 25 February 2002 in which she put women, fertility and paid maternity leave firmly back on the agenda.

What are the factors to consider in increasing Australia's population?

Any public policy response to Australia's future population levels must address the declining fertility rate; sustaining the environment; infrastructure and job creation for regional Australia; the sustainability of both business and employment; exposing the myths of immigration; acknowledging and planning for the domestic market of the ageing population.

What approach does addressing the above issues require?

To address such a broad range of public principles the solution is to have a bipartisan approach because it requires political courage, open minds, a commitment to public education and much more skilled research in addressing this priority area for Australia. It means taking a wholehearted approach to income security for women in terms of their core role in fertility. Paid maternity leave is a critical right supported by accessible child-care.

Open minds are required to dispel the myths associated with immigration. It is often raised that a popular concern is that migrants take jobs and economic resources away from Australians. The state of knowledge reflected in academic economic studies is that this is actually untrue. The ACTU has been quite vocal in arguing for a

system of universal paid maternity leave.

What challenges does Australia face in achieving this to address the declining fertility rate?

Sound public policy on work and family will do the trick to at least sustain fertility rates, let alone increase them. It simply is a disgrace that Australian women, 70% of them in the workforce, have no paid maternity leave or indeed income security while they provide a much valued population replacement. It's also appalling when you think that childcare is not becoming more affordable and more available, but on the contrary many of our women are working to take home \$70 to \$100 a week because the public policy is not there to support their endeavours. If we are really serious about fertility policy then we'll do something about it in a much more sustained and aggressive way.

What role will the ACTU take in addressing some of the other issues to increase Australia's population?

You have to actually look at the costs of the environmental sustainability. You can't plan in isolation for a population increase if we are not prepared to actually look at environmental repair. It is only right and proper to hand on a sustainable land to our children. I would argue as someone interested in jobs, because that's our business as unions, that green jobs, which equal sustainability, are actually economically viable.

In terms of increased manufacturing and technological production of green knowledge based exports we should be promoting vital opportunities for economic growth in these areas. You can't write these things off though, a land whether it's the richness of our topsoil, the salinity issue, whether it's a question of greenhouse gases, whether of course it's the very quality of the air in which we breathe or the use and the availability of water.

The issues must be upfront and at the centre in any debate or any plan about population policy. The question of infrastructure goes to the question of where people live. I don't think we can have an external population policy without looking at a population policy within regional Australia. We failed as a nation to date to have genuine population policies around where people live, infrastructure decision and the maintenance and creation of jobs and therefore economic prosperity.

There is no way we would support population policy that says we'll simply bring people to this nation who'll drive down wages and therefore drive up profits. We have to have the humanity of both human rights and labour standards in balance with our genuine ambitions for growth and prosperity locked hand in hand.

Source: ACTU Bulletin Work on Life - Edition 2, April 2002

Paid Maternity Leave

Australia and the US are the only remaining OECD countries without paid maternity leave laws, after New Zealand passed new legislation for maternity leave in the last week of March 02. New Zealand's Parental Leave and Employment Protection (Paid Parental Leave) Amendment Bill provides 12 weeks pay at up to NZ\$325 a week or 100% of weekly earnings, whichever is lower (see Related Article 1).

The \$325 maximum amount, according to a Government briefing paper, is equal to 53% of average weekly earnings or 70% of average female weekly earnings. Mothers must have worked for 12 months for an average of at least 10 hours a week with the same employer to receive the payment. The legislation predicts that up to half of women wage and salary earners will get 80% of their earnings and about 40% will get 100% when the law takes effect on July 1.

Democrats leader Natasha Stott Despoja said of the NZ model, "it provides a minimum payment for all working women, and it means the costs are shared between government, taxpayers, women and employers, without placing an unfair burden on business." The Democrats have proposed a similar scheme that would provide 12 weeks of government-funded leave at \$413 a week (the federal minimum wage).

Source: workplaceexpress.com.au

Although opinions differ over whether universal paid maternity leave should be met by government or employers, the ALP has indicated its support to widening its availability to private sector employees.

Australian workers are currently guaranteed a minimum 12 months unpaid parental leave for a baby's primary carer. The ALP has reiterated its commitment to paid maternity leave as an intrinsic advance for working mothers as well as an option to stem Australia's declining fertility rate.

Both Jenny Macklin and Wayne Swan recently signalled Labor's commitment to engage with industry, unions and employer groups on options to deliver paid maternity leave plus ongoing support to families until the youngest child begins school.

In her International Women's Day speech, Jenny Macklin pointed out that among industrialised nations, only Australia and the United States do not meet the ILO convention of granting a minimum of 14 weeks paid maternity leave with no length of service conditions. Less than a third of Australia's female employees have access to employer-funded paid maternity leave and these benefits are generally the preserve of women in the public sector and larger private organisations.

"There is little on offer to the large body of women who work in shops, offices, cafes and factories," Ms Macklin said.

"We have gone from baby boom to baby bust-almost-in the space of a generation,"

said Mr Swan in an interview on seven's Sunrise program, "The care of children ought to have a higher priority in our national economic and social agenda, and all I am saying is one of the issues-and it is only one-is paid maternity leave. But there is also paternity leave, there is also the early years agenda: what we do to support families when their children are young."

In her International Women's Day speech, Democrats Leader Natasha Stott-Despoja, asserts that a national system of paid maternity leave must be at the helm of Australia's assistance to working women. Many low-income women can take maternity leave only if they have an alternative source of income, and yet their access to paid leave is probably disproportionately low.

Recent reports of housing developer, Wintringham, offering 12 weeks fully paid parental leave to its male and female staff is being heralded as a breakthrough first.

For its part the ACTU points to the International Labor Organisation's convention¹⁸³ providing for fourteen weeks paid maternity leave as a minimum for Australia to adopt. The ACTU has called on the federal government to ratify this convention. In the meantime a bargaining kit provides affiliates with the arguments to support employer-sponsored leave. [Click here for more information.](#)

<http://www.actu.asn.au/campaigns/matleave/paidmatkit.pdf>

Source: ACTU Bulletin Work on Life - Edition 2, April 2002

Good Practice in Indigenous Consumer Education

A Consultation Paper on consumer education for Indigenous Australians was released in April 2002 by the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC). The paper is part of a project which aims to document what is known about consumer education relevant to Indigenous Australians and to identify good practice in the area.

Gordon Renouf, author of the Consultation Paper defined Consumer Education as being any activities or strategies intended to support Indigenous consumers take control of their own consumer activities.:

The Paper identifies Indigenous specific consumer education, consumer awareness and community legal education projects and programs, and discusses 'good practice' principles for Indigenous consumer education drawing on previous work in general and Indigenous specific consumer education, community awareness, community legal education and health promotion.

The purpose of this Consultation Paper is to obtain feedback from people involved with consumer education, health promotion, community legal education and adult education relevant to Indigenous people. ASIC intends to distribute revised and updated information about Indigenous consumer education projects and good

practice principles based on the feedback received on the paper.



Excerpt from Good Practice in Consumer Education for Indigenous People

Identifying Good Practice Principles in Indigenous Consumer Education

Why produce good practice principles?

When faced with the task of promoting or supporting consumer education for Indigenous people it was difficult for ASIC to find guidance about what was and was not good practice. The needs of Indigenous consumers are significant, and resources available are of course limited. ASIC is aware that a range of government agencies, community organisations and Indigenous organisations have undertaken or considered undertaking various forms of consumer education relevant to the particular needs of Indigenous people. It is important that resources put into consumer education be used effectively. Good practice principles that acknowledge the diversity of circumstances and potential projects may be useful in this endeavour.

It is possible to propose some principles of good practice in consumer education based on the literature reviewed, reports on activities and consultations with people experienced in Indigenous consumer education, community legal education or Indigenous health promotion. We hope that comments on this first draft of these principles will enable us to prepare a useful set of principles of good practice in Indigenous consumer education. First, however, we seek comment on whether or not this is a useful activity.

Question 2: Do you think it is useful for ASIC to work with other organisations to develop principles of good practice in relation to Indigenous consumer education?

Question 3: How should the principles of good practice be distributed? Would it be useful for them to be located on a web site? If so, which web site?

Identifying good practice principles

The suggested principles of good practice set out below draw on:

- good practice in consumer education generally,
- good practice in Indigenous health promotion,
- the limited literature available about effective Indigenous consumer education, and
- consideration of the activities and views of current providers of consumer education, consumer awareness and community legal education for Indigenous people.

Question 4: Are there any other fields of practice or groups of people that ought to be considered in developing good practice principles in consumer education relevant to Indigenous people?

Good practice in consumer education

Much of what is considered good practice in consumer education generally will also apply to consumer education targeted at Indigenous Consumers. The starting point is that all consumers have the right to consumer education and to information relevant to their needs. The United Nations has adopted similar rights¹[1]. Consumers' International promote these rights in the following form²[2]:

The right to consumer education - To acquire knowledge and skills needed to make informed, confident choices about goods and services, while being aware of basic consumer rights and responsibilities and how to act on them.

The right to be informed - To be given the facts needed to make an informed choice, and to be protected against dishonest or misleading advertising and labelling.

Principles of consumer education and/or community legal education practice are set out in a number of documents, including the *Guidelines for the Management of Community Legal Education Practice* prepared by the National CLE Advisory Group. They remain valid starting points in relation to Indigenous consumer education. The draft good practice principles set out below draw on those documents.

Particular Indigenous-specific methodologies

There are a number of agencies that have a long track record of providing Indigenous specific consumer education, consumer awareness and community legal education. Those that have come to the attention of this project to date are listed in Appendix A together with information about their methodologies where that information is

1[1] UN Guidelines for Consumer Protection A/RES/39/248

2[2] <http://www.consumersinternational.org/campaigns/wcrd/unguide.html>

3[3] Most recently the Declaration of the Fourth Conference on Health Promotion in Jakarta. The most relevant excerpts are set out in Appendix D.

4[4] The published work of ARDS (no date) and The Top End Womens Legal Service *Community Legal Education Manual* (TEWLS 1998) have been particularly useful. After noting the National Community Legal Education Advisory Group *Guidelines for the Management of Community Legal Education Practice* TEWLS go on to identify some specific additional principles that are relevant to community legal education for Indigenous women.

5[5] The National Community Legal Education Groups' *Guidelines* promote a similar understanding of community legal education: "[Community]legal education encourages a critical understanding of the law and the legal system and allows an assessment of its impact or usefulness. It is contended that education must be a mechanism for consciousness raising, not simply an unquestioning acceptance of the status quo."

6[6] Note the relevant comments of ARDS: "Yolgnu [ie Aboriginal people from North East Arnhemland] come from a **specific cultural background** and have their own cultural knowledge base (information that is commonly shared and believed to be correct and meaningful). Educational interventions should be developed having regard to what Yolgnu know and hold to be true around the issue." Flowers et al (2001:17-18) make a similar point in relation to education campaigns in relation to non-Indigenous members of the community.

7[7] The Aboriginal Resource Development Service puts it like this:

"Secondly, much of the education is aimed at individuals and not the community. This method 'loads up' the individual with 'training', only to send them back into their cultural group where they become strangers, different from their own people. At times the trained individuals challenge, sometimes by subtly undermining, the traditional leadership causing much stress, division and hopelessness within the community. This leaves the community broken, displaying many of the negative features that Aboriginal communities now display. The fate of the Western-educated and trained individuals and community leaders is failure - usually resulting in early deaths. This is not the way to develop any community but especially not indigenous communities. Any knowledge and information delivered to the people must be delivered to the whole cultural group so they learn together."

<http://www.ards.com.au/warriorsnextframe.html>

8[8] The Aboriginal Womens Outreach Project of the Top End Womens Legal Service project, which has been in place for six years and relies on employment, education and support of carefully selected locally based staff, appears to be a successful example of this approach.

9[9] See the description of ARDS practice in Appendix A. In the context of community legal education Goldie (1996) suggests: "In any community legal education process, include some learning objectives for yourself. Perhaps your objectives would be "To learn about the problems the community faces gaining access

available.

Lessons from health promotion and education for health

In many ways the objectives of health promotion activities are similar to those of consumer education, and the boundaries between health education and other areas of health such as policy development or assistance to individuals with a problem are fuzzy in the same way as they are in consumer affairs. Moreover, in both cases the objective of education can be seen from an individual change perspective or a community development perspective. Community development perspectives are now dominant in the health promotion field both nationally and internationally.

Health education has been the subject of a great deal of research, and good practice in health education is the subject of international agreements beginning with the Ottawa Charter in 1986[3].

The following excerpts from Territory Health Services *Bush Book* give an indication of currently favoured approaches to health promotion as practiced in Australia. Note that the *Bush Book* is written for health workers working in remote areas of the Northern Territory.

“Working in partnership, community development, participatory research, planning and evaluation, and education for health are the fundamentals for working in a health promoting way. These processes involve the transfer of skills and knowledge to community members. They are essential to strengthen people’s capacity to take control and improve their own health and well-being and need to be

to justice” and “to identify strategies for helping the community gain access to justice.”

10[10] “The experience of TEWLS workers suggests that one of the most appropriate and effective ways of implementing community legal education for Indigenous women living in remote communities is through the use of community based “face to face” activities” (TEWLS 1998:i). Support for the benefits of direct personal communication can also be gained from the work of the Arnhemland Resource and Development Service (see Appendix A) and from work cited in Flowers et al (2001).

Cahill et al (1998; see also Anon 1999) found that people with poor or low literacy skills relied on information that was communicated by a person.

11[11] See Streetwise and Mallee Family Care projects in Appendix A.

12[12] Advice from people consulted. Beware the risk however of something being unusable for many years in the event of the death of one of the people whose image has been used due to the strong taboos applicable in many communities on using images and sometimes names of people who have passed away.

based on a two-way learning process.

The needs, interests and priorities of individuals, families, communities and organisations are at the heart of education for health programs, and all education activities. Involvement and choice by people themselves are fundamental to effective education for health. Telling people to follow "good health behaviour" is not health education Listening to, talking with and learning from others is essential.

Possible Principles of Good Practice in Indigenous Specific Consumer Education

The following suggested principles have been drawn from the sources listed above and the reported work of a number of organisations that have worked closely with Indigenous consumers in a range of consumer education projects. 4[4] There are no doubt other organisations that have undertaken similar work and reflected on their experiences; the suggested principles are put forward tentatively, noting that they are based on a partial survey of literature and practice. We are keen to hear from others who have considered these issues.

The principles have been deliberately written up in an open-ended way. They will serve best as a checklist of issues to consider in while planning and implementing consumer education work strategies rather than as hard and fast rules. As can be seen from the descriptions of projects in Appendix A, various different approaches have produced successful results.

1. Understand the context

It is important to fully understand the context of the consumers who appear to need consumer education. It is also important to know what other organisations are doing and planning, any previous projects that are relevant and what existing materials have been produced.

Examples of elements of the particular context that should be taken into account in the delivery and design of community education strategies are that:

- in many areas there are particular communication difficulties to be overcome including high rates of hearing impairment and low levels of English language proficiency,
- communities have their own agendas and priorities which may compete with – or by complementary to – the concerns of particular consumer education activities, and
- some communities have existing adult education or training resources that may be willing to be involved in the project.

2. Work in partnership with Indigenous communities

Good practice in consumer education involves empowerment of the community/community members. Community participation in development and implementation of the education activity is essential (Goldie 1996; Flowers et al 2001). Empowerment also implies that the education will promote a critical understanding of the law and systems relevant to the consumer's circumstances⁵[5].

The need for, priorities for, nature of, and content of consumer education for Indigenous people should be assessed and developed in partnership with Indigenous consumers. The successful New South Wales Department of Consumer Affairs project (1994:2) emphasises that "genuine co-ownership between the Department and the community has been a prerequisite of the project from its outset, and the key to gaining the trust of community leaders and consumers alike".

3. Build relationships

Working effectively in cross-cultural contexts requires a relationship that is based on trust and respect. Building relationships and trust with partner organisations and with communities requires time and resources and the development of a good understanding of the cultural features and practical circumstances of the partner organisations and communities.

4. Use appropriate planning and evaluation

Good practice generally involves well-conceived and planned projects. One way to promote this is for projects to be organised in a series of steps:

- identifying the problems (as perceived by the relevant consumers) and determining whether or not education has a role to play in responding to them,
- developing the learning objectives, content and methodology,
- delivering the education, and
- evaluating the project (Goldie 1996).

Ideally planning will involve a partnership with representatives of the relevant community from an early stage. In any case plans should remain sufficiently flexible to remain open to amendment based on input or feedback from the community affected, from testing of the strategies proposed and from ongoing informal and formal evaluation.

Evaluation is best conceived as something that is undertaken as the plan is being implemented rather than only something that can happen in an expensive and formal way at the end of the project. In general the question to ask is: how is this project going from the point of view of the community that the education is intended for? Evaluation can be another step in the process of empowerment, a

continuation of the shared learning process between the community and the other people involved. Done well it encourages the ongoing participation of the community, develops rapport between the people involved, increases the sharing of knowledge and understanding, identifies new problems, generates new ideas and solutions, and may reveal how processes can be improved.

5. Acknowledge cultural diversity and existing knowledge

There must be recognition of and respect for Indigenous culture in the design and implementation of consumer education. This is likely to be achieved when there is community participation in the planning, delivery and evaluation of community legal education.

Delivery and design of community education strategies should take into account that there are many cultures not one Indigenous culture, and that Indigenous people have existing knowledge and values about what is important and true and what is not.^{6[6]}.

Community education strategies should consider the impact of education of individuals as opposed to communities. In many circumstances education should be thought of as for the benefit of the community rather than an individual. This can be particularly relevant in relation to remote communities.^{7[7]} On the other hand there are circumstances where learning for the community as a whole can build on knowledge transferred to appropriate individuals^{8[8]}.

6. Consider consumer's motivation to learn

Consumer education projects should consider the motivation of consumers to learn at a particular time – for example, does the consumer want to learn the skills or acquire the knowledge that is on offer (Flowers et al 2001)? Moreover, as Fitzsimmons (1997: 46) notes “People are only motivated to learn when their more immediate needs are being met and when they want to gain the knowledge and skills that you are offering because they believe it is useful or interesting to them.”

7. Two way learning is preferred

In most circumstances the people or organisations proposing to provide education have much to learn about the circumstances, culture, existing knowledge and priorities of Indigenous people relevant to the particular consumer issues involved. For this reason processes that involve an ongoing relationship, a cycle of learning, appraisal and more learning, or some form of dialogue are more likely to be successful^{9[9]}.

8. Strategies and plans must be flexible

Adaptability and flexibility are important. For example, although you may have the ‘perfect’ consumer education event planned, where it is possible be prepared to

accommodate other ideas/issues that people raise.

9. Use appropriate formats and distribution channels

The choices made about the most effective format(s) for education activities and the way in which the education content will reach the intended audience are interrelated. Both depend on the circumstances of the project, the information content and in particular the needs and views of the relevant Indigenous consumers. It is probably not possible to lay down guidelines on format and distribution which are relevant in all circumstances, however some common themes emerge out of past experience:

As noted above, where possible face to face communication is an important element of any strategy as it enhances the possibility of dialogue¹⁰[10].

On the other hand 'information only' products are more likely to be effective where they form part of a larger strategy that:

- considers whether or not consumers are likely to trust the information,
- uses information that is relevant to Indigenous consumers' real needs, and make sense to them given their existing knowledge and understanding of the world,
- provides consumers with opportunities to ask questions and engage in dialogue with the information, and
- is realistic about consumers' ability to implement the advice given in the material.

Visual material is generally received favourably¹¹[11], as is material that includes familiar images and people¹²[12]. Radio (for example in relevant Aboriginal languages) has been advocated as an appropriate format, however only some communities are strong users of radio. Regional television can also be used effectively.

10. Contribute to coordination, collaboration and networking

Consumer education initiatives should not be regarded as isolated projects. Information discovered in the course of one project may be relevant to the interests of other communities or other agencies. Therefore, as well as not unnecessarily duplicating initiatives currently available, agencies should look at who else may be interested in developing a response to an identified need, or what information they have gained which may be useful to make available to others.

11. Consider partner organisation's resource limitations

Where community based organisations are involved in a strategy it is important to consider their resource needs. These roles may range from being equal partners in

planning and implementing a strategy to one of many organisations asked to help out with a local launch of a national campaign. While the local organisation may be more than willing to be involved they will often need more time, or support with resources in order for the required work to be done effectively. Similar issues can arise in other arrangements; for example, where funding bodies call for submissions for consumer education projects they might consider providing small amounts of financial support to selected potential applicants to put in the work needed to develop proposals.

If you are interested in providing any feedback on the Paper or obtain a copy of the Paper, contact Gordon Renouf:

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Source: ASIC

Good Practice in Youth Development - A Framework of Principles A Discussion Document

By AUSYOUTH August 2001

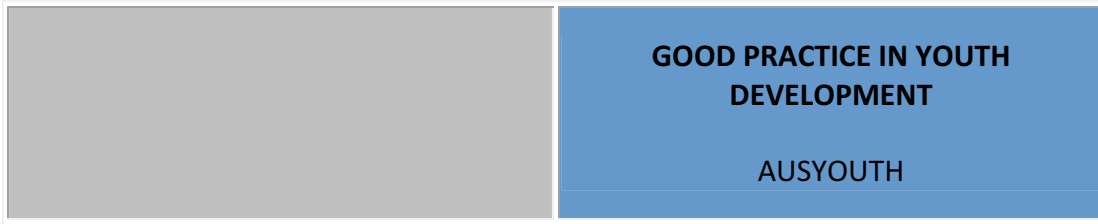
"This 'good practice guide' is a contribution to the advancement of youth development in Australia.

The identification of good practice is critical for quality outcomes in youth development to be achieved. It is also fundamental to the development of a shared understanding of the purpose and outcomes for young people of youth development activity. By engaging in a process of continuous improvement and reflection on good practice, youth development in Australia will be enhanced.

The framework of principles for good practice in youth development is aspirational. It has not been devised as a set of standards. The framework is likely to confirm some current practices and challenge others. It is intended for the consideration and use of policy makers, organisations and communities currently involved in youth development or with an interest in becoming involved in youth development.

Professional development, strategic planning, policy development, program planning and review activities all provide opportunities for considering good practice and this guide provides a focus for these discussions. It is envisaged that there will be numerous ways that this good practice guide can be utilised to reflect on and enhance practice in youth development." (Ausyouth, Good Practice in Youth

Development)



Excerpts from GOOD PRACTICE IN YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

A FRAMEWORK OF PRINCIPLES – A DISCUSSION DOCUMENT

By AUSYOUTH

August 2001

FRAMEWORK OF PRINCIPLES FOR GOOD PRACTICE IN YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Good practice in youth development calls for a *COMMITMENT to the OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES* of EMPOWERMENT and CONSCIOUS ENTERPRISE which are embedded in the *UNDERPINNING PRINCIPLES* of :

1. Strengths based, positive youth development as the foundation for policy and program development.
2. Participation of young people in all levels of planning and decision making.
3. An inclusive ethos.
4. An experiential model of learning that builds on capabilities and skills while maximising opportunities for fun and recognising age and developmental phases.
5. Respecting community voice and identity.
6. Encouraging communities to value and engage young people.
7. Partnerships.
8. Quality outcomes.
9. Encouraging and respecting choice.
10. Recognising the contribution of all stakeholders.
11. Promotion that is ethical, honest and non-patronising.
12. Providing opportunities for service to the community that are meaningful for both young people and the community.
13. Maximising formal and community recognition of learning outcomes.
14. Strengthening the interconnectedness of social networks.

Three Key Environments

Three environments (policy, organisation and program) provide an important focus for further strategic work in youth development. These contexts provide different youth development opportunities and

experiences for young Australians. Jurisdictions, organisations and communities may place different emphasis on these environments. Young people will benefit most where there is sustained attention to all three.

Youth development initiatives need to respect the diversity of communities and young people and recognise community voice at all stages. Youth development initiatives which are characterised by effective partnerships and recognition of the multiple stakeholders are most likely to achieve sustained success and community support. If young people are to play decisive roles in

shaping the development of the communities in which they live;

the organisation in which they are involved; and

directing their own personal growth,

then youth development initiatives also need to embody the processes for democratic decision making. They will model and enable active citizenship for the young people who participate.

It is important that these environments are not considered in isolation and that the interrelationship of the environments provides opportunities to advance and enhance good practice in youth development.

Outcomes for Young People

For every young person who participates in the process, youth development provides enhanced opportunities for

active, empowered citizenship;

enhanced self identity and self efficacy;

commitment to voluntary action and the responsibilities of choice;

enhanced self esteem, self reliance and self confidence;

acknowledgment and acceptance of differing views and ways of doing things;

effective membership and leadership of team and group;

enhanced skill development;

participation in different and challenging activities and experiences;

and

connection and contribution to the community.

These outcomes focus on enhancing young people's existing capacities and capabilities. They reflect the individual growth and development that young people can anticipate from involvement in youth development activities, contributing to the enrichment of young people's lives, as well as increasing the likelihood of improved well being in adulthood.

Conclusion

and strengths-based approach to the support and engagement of young people in their own development and in the development of their communities. Youth development affirms the value of young people as young people, as valued participants in their community and as contributors to their communities. The reciprocal focus in youth development on young people and their communities means that both benefit.

The framework of principles outlined in this publication provides a common starting point and focus for reflection and discussions about good practice in youth development in Australia. It is an invitation to take up the challenge of good practice in youth development – to consider, explore, try, experiment and innovate so that youth development in Australia is at the leading edge of good practice.

This is only the first step in the building and sharing of knowledge about good practice. There is much more to be done to ensure quality outcomes for youth development.

Strategies for implementing the principles and indicators need to be explored and tried. The principles are interrelated and cumulative in effect. Work might focus on different principles at different times and in different locations but the maintenance of a holistic perspective that pursues these principles in relation to each other (and the monitoring of progress across them) is most likely to yield the greatest benefits for government, organisations and young people who are involved. The application of the principles to specific environments or specific groups of young people also needs further exploration. For example, youth development and Indigenous young people or the school environment.

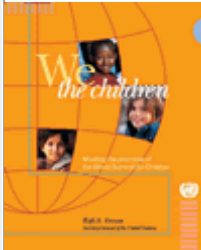
The feedback loop between implementation in practice and the evolving nature of the indicators, in particular, needs to be vigorous and strong. A number of the indicators need further expansion and discussion. For example, what does it mean to provide a safe environment and at the same time offer activities that challenge? It is intended that a series of companion implementation or 'how to' guides, focussing on specific principles, indicators or environments, will be developed over the next year.

Australian young people deserve the best from youth development. Embracing good practice in youth development by all who are involved will ensure that young people and their communities gain the maximum advantage from youth development

Source: **AUSYOUTH 221 Wakefield Street, Adelaide SA 5000 Phone: (08) 8463 4890**

We the Children -

Meeting the promises of the World Summit for Children



We the Children: Meeting the promises of the World Summit for Children is a landmark report issued by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan. The report assesses the progress made in meeting the commitments made to the children around the globe at the 1990 World Summit for Children. It also includes best practices and lessons learned, obstacles to progress, and a plan of action for building a world fit for children.

We the Children will be particularly useful to policy-makers, researchers, journalists and students as a reference tool and a study of the progress that can be achieved through goal-oriented development planning.

We the Children: Meeting the promises of the World Summit for Children

http://www.unicef.org/specialsession/about/sgreport-pdf/sgreport_adapted_eng.pdf

Source: UNICEF

National Review of Group Training

Group Training is an arrangement whereby an organisation employs apprentices and trainees under an Apprenticeship/Traineeship Training Contract and places them with host employers. The organisation provides for continuity of their employment, additional care and support and manages their training.

A comprehensive review of group training is underway to ensure that it remains a key feature in the employment and training scene in the years ahead. A final consultation report by ANTA - the National Review of Group Training Consultation Draft - was released on 13 February 2002 and views are now being sought from interested parties on the report. Consultation forums will be held throughout Australia in the coming months.

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[**Executive Summary of the National Review of Group Training Consultation Draft**](#)

Executive Summary of the National Review of Group Training Consultation Draft

Introduction

1. Group Training has been a strong and enduring feature of Australia's apprenticeship and traineeship system for over 20 years. In particular, its

support for small and medium sized companies, its promotion of training in the traditional trades areas and its achievements in employing teenage apprentices and trainees have made group training a highly valued service. Whether industry specific or regionally focussed, Group Training Organisations (GTOs) often form strong connections with their communities and have a commitment to achieving successful outcomes.

2. Since the 1970s when first GTOs commenced, the economic and employment and training environment in which they operate has changed significantly. GTOs have variously diversified, focussed, grown or contracted to respond to these changes.

3. It has been almost four years since group training arrangements were last reviewed nationally. It is timely now to evaluate the achievements of group training and set directions for a strong basis for the future growth and stability of group training.

Group Training in Australia

4. The following key trends demonstrate group training's contribution to Australia's vocational education and training (VET) system:

- group training apprentice and trainee numbers have doubled over the period 1995-2000;
- over the same period, GTOs increased their market share by 1%, a considerable achievement considering this occurred during a period of rapid growth in the sector as a whole;
- the majority of host employers serviced by GTOs are small or medium

sized businesses;

- group training apprentices and trainees are more concentrated in the traditional trades than are apprentices and trainees overall. The length and level of training reflects this with most group training apprentices and trainees being in contracts of training of more than 3 years;
- GTOs are the biggest employers of teenage apprentices and trainees and account for almost half of school-based apprenticeships;
- completions in GTOs have grown at a slightly higher rate than completions overall; and
- job outcomes from group training apprenticeships and traineeships are high and comparable with job outcomes from apprenticeships and traineeships in general.

5. Some of these strengths of group training are subject to emerging pressures as the apprenticeship and traineeship system continues to innovate, expand and diversify. Group training will need to position itself carefully to capitalize on future opportunities. During the Review, three major issues emerged as primary areas for attention. These are:

- defining a future role for group training to guide government purchasing of group training services;
- the need for nationally consistent standards to assure quality outcomes from group training, financial viability of GTOs and confidence in the group training brand; and
- establishing future funding arrangements to target specific

outcomes and provide a more stable basis for the further development of group training.

Group Training Activities and Goals

6. It became apparent early in the Review process that a clearer articulation of a vision for group training was required. This vision is relevant for GTOs, whether or not they are not-for-profit organisations and whether or not they receive government funding support through the Joint Group Training Program, through DEST's Targeted Initiatives Program, through employer incentives or through all of these sources. By defining a clearer vision, group training will be more distinguishable as a unique employment and training option and will be a more identifiable label with employers, employees, governments and the community.

7. The following definition, goals and key features are to unequivocally clarify governments' interest in group training and to confirm the basis on which governments will purchase group training services in the future. It is acknowledged that individual organisations providing group training services will extend this definition and goals to reflect their own individual organisational requirements.

Definition

Group Training is an arrangement whereby an organisation employs apprentices and trainees under an Apprenticeship/Traineeship Training Contract and places them with host employers. The organisation provides for continuity of their employment, additional care and support and

manages their training.

Goals

The goals of group training are to:

- create additional apprenticeship and traineeship employment opportunities;
- provide for continuity of employment of apprentices and trainees through to the completion of their Apprenticeship/Traineeship

Training Contract; and

- improve the quality and breadth of training available to apprentices and trainees, particularly in the small to medium business sector.

Key Features

To achieve these goals, providers of group training services:

- employ apprentices and trainees and place them with host employers;
- are responsible for meeting the obligations of the employer as outlined in the Apprenticeship/Traineeship Training Contract and managing and monitoring arrangements with host employers; and
- provide for care and support throughout the apprenticeship or traineeship.

Providers of group training services may also:

- assist apprentices and trainees to make a successful transition into the skilled workforce;
- assist in providing access to VET for those disadvantaged in the labour market; and

· provide services to the community which will contribute to the promotion of VET and employment growth.

Assuring Quality

8. During this review there was overwhelming support from GTOs across all States and Territories for a formal framework to promote national consistency and quality for group training.

9. In response to this a set of quality standards for GTOs has been developed to provide a national quality assurance framework for GTOs. A key objective of the *National Standards for Group Training Organisations* is to strengthen the brand name and the performance of GTOs in achieving the three goals of group training, that is to create additional apprentice and trainee employment opportunities, to provide for the continuity of that employment and to improve the quality and breadth of training available to apprentices and trainees. The Standards provide the ongoing basis for a nationally consistent, robust group training service brand; they assist GTOs monitor and improve their organisations' strategic, operational and financial planning and performance; and they provide governments with a consistent basis for the recognition, support and monitoring of government-funded GTOs.

10. A copy of the *National Standards for Group Training Organisations* is at *Attachment C*. The Standards draw on a set of draft standards prepared three years ago, as well as from relevant sections of the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) Standards for RTOs. While the draft

standards were not endorsed at the time, all STAs currently have recognition arrangements that are consistent with the draft standards.

11. The Standards cover the following areas:

- systems for group training services including management of hosting;
- compliance with Commonwealth, State/Territory legislation and regulatory requirements;
- effective financial management procedures;
- effective administrative and records management procedures;
- effective corporate governance;
- access and equity;
- the skills of GTO staff; and
- ethical practice.

12. An Implementation Plan (provided at *Attachment D*) has been developed to facilitate smooth transition to the new Standards. Funding has been identified to support this transition.

Government Funding Support

13. Government funding is available to GTOs from a range of Commonwealth and State and Territory programs, although there are four main sources:

- the Commonwealth Government, through ANTA, and States and Territories provide funding for a Joint Policy Program, involving matched funding arrangements totaling approximately \$19m annually;

- the Group Training New Apprenticeship Targeted Initiatives

Program administered by DEST. Annual funding allocation for this program is approximately \$4m;

- Commonwealth New Apprenticeships Incentives Program is administered by DEST. This program is available to all eligible employers, including GTOs, who take on New Apprentices. These incentives include commencement, and in some cases, progression and completion payments. As well, GTOs are also eligible to receive an additional trainee commencement payment. There is no equivalent additional commencement payment for apprentices. In 2000/01 GTOs were paid \$58.21m in total employer incentives. Of this, \$13.37m was for the Group Training Special trainee commencement incentive; and

- State/Territory incentives and subsidies associated with the employment of certain types of apprentices and trainees.

14. Of the 181 GTOs currently operating throughout Australia, 113 receive government Joint Policy funds and 39 receive funding via the Targeted Initiatives Program. Of these 39 GTOs, 30 are also in receipt of Joint Policy funding. Accordingly, there are approximately 59 GTOs that do not receive either Joint Policy or Targeted Initiatives Program funds.

15. The current programs are separate but operate in linked ways. The New Apprenticeships Incentives are the direct lever to encourage employers to commence New Apprentices and progress them through to successful

completion. The Joint Policy funding assists eligible providers of group training services by supporting and rewarding overall growth, with some capacity to target priority areas. The Targeted Initiatives Program concentrates on the establishment of sustainable markets in priority areas via the contestable allocation of program funds to organisations that are best able to deliver on desired outcomes.

16. A number of key issues in relation to gaining greater leverage from the package of government funding programs have emerged:

- the funds available under Joint Policy funding have been predominantly provided to the same GTOs as four years ago and have been used to support and reward growth generally with some scope for targeting specific outcomes. However, it is difficult to attribute the availability of Joint Policy funds as the reason for achieving growth and many GTOs regard these payments as recurrent base funding. Furthermore it is not clear that the use of weightings under this program has always had an impact on increasing numbers in targeted areas. It would be more beneficial to purchase targeted outcomes, based on a price determined by the State or Territory Training Authority (STA) that better reflects a realistic contribution to the cost;
- access to Joint Policy funding has remained limited despite the intent of the National Funding Model to open up funding to other players in the market;
- there is a need to clarify what governments wish to purchase.

Commonwealth, State and Territory governments have identified areas of particular need that require priority attention. There is a case to develop a more streamlined approach to the provision of funding programs to ensure complementarity;

- there are issues in relation to the financial viability of some GTOs.

Weaknesses in management expertise and corporate governance have put a number of GTOs at risk. Additional issues in relation to tax rulings, preferred creditor status, employment program eligibility criteria and the cost of insurance premiums have also impacted on the financial viability of many GTOs;

- there are two Commonwealth employer incentives that apply differently for group training than for other employers of apprentices and trainees. Not-for-profit GTOs are currently not eligible for completion incentives. GTOs targeting the traditional trade areas which employ mainly apprentices rather than trainees miss out on the extra support that the GTO traineeship commencements attract. There is significant support for reviewing these incentives to resolve the issues relating to the differential impact on GTOs in terms of disadvantaging not-for-profit GTO and skewing the market towards traineeships.

17. Five clear national principles have been proposed for the allocation of funding under the jointly funded government program. The principles build on the strengths of the existing Joint Policy and Targeted Initiatives

Program arrangements. It is proposed that the new program be called the Joint Group Training Program. The five principles are:

1. All not-for-profit organisations that meet the *National Standards for Group Training* would be eligible to apply to the STA for Joint Group Training Program funding.

2. Purchasing targeted outcomes, not necessarily all outcomes, is to be determined by each State or Territory within government priorities.

Targeted outcomes are to be purchased from within the following nationally agreed priority areas:

A skills needs (e.g. emerging industries, skill shortages, higher level skills, traditional trades, emerging and restructuring industries);

B disadvantaged groups (eg Indigenous, non-traditional, disabilities, out-of-trades, NESB);

C rural and remote (as published by an individual STA); and

D other government priorities (eg developing new, sustainable employment markets in communities under pressure, schoolbased New Apprenticeships);

3. Purchasing under the Joint Group Training Program is within a framework of national priority areas agreed annually with individual States and Territories taking their priorities from this framework and determining any other requirements such as minimum thresholds.

4. Price is determined by the STA and could include a different rate for lower priority outcomes.

5. Matched funding (STA and ANTA) is maintained within agreed budget capacity.

18. An annual process of priority setting is to be established. This would involve identifying specific areas to be targeted under Principle 2. States and Territories would then develop priorities statements which would be published annually and available nationally. This document will be the trigger for the allocation of funding under the Joint Group Training Program. It is recognised that appropriate arrangements would need to be incorporated to allow GTOs time to plan for any forthcoming changes affecting their operations.

19. In light of the proposed focus of the new Joint Group Training Program on priority areas, synergies which build on the complementarity of this program with other Commonwealth programs merits further investigation.

The realisation of such synergies would result in funding arrangements which:

- enable a more strategic approach for allocating monies under the Joint Group Training Program within States and Territories by targeting priority areas and encouraging sustainability in new markets;
- enable the Commonwealth to focus on priorities and issues of national significance, for example examining good practice or undertaking specific research or projects on a cross-border or national scale;

· preserves the "matching arrangements" of the existing Joint Policy arrangements under the new Joint Group Training Program.

Future Consultative Arrangements

20. It will be important that effort is directed to implementing the recommendations of this Review to ensure that group training's potential is achieved consistently across Australia to the extent that the brand name Group Training is synonymous with excellence in employment and training.

21. The implementation of the new arrangements will be overseen by the existing Steering Committee during the early phases. Following this, it is anticipated that this function will be undertaken by industry consultative arrangements developed by the ANTA Board in the area of New Apprenticeships.

Draft Recommendations

In relation to a vision for group training:

1. that the group training definition, goals and key features as outlined in paragraph 7 above, be agreed to;

2. that the definition, goals and key features replace the policy statements on group training incorporated in reports endorsed by ANTA MINCO in 1995, 1997 and 1998;

In relation to assuring quality:

3. that the *National Standards for Group Training Organisations* as outlined in *Attachment C* be agreed to;

4. that STA quality arrangements for group training will be the *National Standards for Group Training Organisations* (it is noted that some STAs may have additional recognition requirements);
 5. that the *National Standards for Group Training Organisations* will take effect from 1 January 2003 for all GTOs, except for those GTOs that have recently been audited against similar standards. For these organisations, a "gap" audit will be undertaken by 31 December 2003;
 6. that STAs be responsible for implementing an evaluation and independent audit program to ensure compliance with the *National Standards for Group Training Organisations*;
 7. that the *National Standards for Group Training Organisations* be reviewed 12 months after implementation;
 8. that the Implementation Plan for *National Standards for Group Training Organisations* – Information and Training Schedule as outlined in *Attachment D* be agreed to;
 9. that the *National Standards for Group Training* take the place of the Joint Policy Principles 5, 6 and 7 relating to data and audit;
- In relation to government funding support for group training:
10. that the Joint Policy Principles relating to funding and the National Funding Model be replaced by the principles for the Joint Group Training Program outlined in paragraph 17 above;
 11. that implementation of the Joint Group Training Program commence

in a phased manner beginning in 2002/2003;

12. that a review of the Joint Group Training Program be undertaken in 2005;

13. that the relative strengths of the Joint Group Training Program and other Commonwealth funded programs be further explored by ANTA and the Commonwealth to realise gains from greater synergies, including using more consistent eligibility criteria for funding;

14. that the issues raised regarding the Commonwealth New Apprenticeships Incentives Program be referred to the Commonwealth to be considered as part of the wider incentives review. In particular, request that consideration be given to making the completion incentive available to not-for-profit GTOs and modeling options for the application of special traineeship incentive;

15. that the issues raised in relation to the impact of GST, preferred creditor status in bankruptcy and Job Matching arrangements in respect to group training outcomes be referred to the relevant Commonwealth agencies for consideration;

16. that the issues raised in relation to State and Territory incentives and subsidies be referred to the States and Territories for consideration;
and

17. that States and Territories be requested to consider the impact of the rising cost of workers compensation premiums and various liability

insurance premiums on the viability of GTOs.

To view the full Report see:

"Online Training in an Online World"

In response to the recent explosion of online training in work-related settings, a Web-based survey was conducted during April and May of 2001 that was completed by 201 respondents. "Online Training in an Online World" looks at the types of training offered online, organisational factors limiting the adoption of e-learning, preferred e-learning instructional approaches, and e-learning assessment. This Survey focuses on e-learning in the corporate world and other training settings. The Survey attempted to understand some of the pedagogical tools and mechanisms that could benefit online trainers and learners. With respect to engaging online learners, terms such as relevance, feedback, goals, interactivity, and choice were deemed important to the respondents.

The survey was completed in April and May 2001 by 201 trainers, instructional designers, training managers, and human resource personnel. Many types of organizations were represented in this survey. The largest percent of respondents were from the field of education (20 percent). Other respondents worked in areas such as information technology (15 percent), financial services/insurance (13 percent), consulting or contracting (11 percent), industrial/manufacturing (10 percent), or government (7 percent) settings. A few worked in health services (5 percent), military institutions (3 percent), non-profit associations and organizations (2 percent), hospitality (2 percent), transportation (1 percent), and retail management (1 percent).

While there was significantly greater interest in e-learning than actual commitment to it, the survey findings confirm that the Web is flourishing as a training delivery mechanism. Due to the recent emergence of this delivery method, however, more than half of the surveyed institutions outsourced aspects of their Web-based training needs.

To view the Executive Summary "ONLINE TRAINING IN AN ONLINE WORLD" see:

http://publicationshare.com/docs/corp_summary.pdf