

# Commonwealth of Learning

In association with the  
Commonwealth Youth Programme (S.I.)

## Strengthening Youth and Women Networks And Building Communities for *Learning4Peace*

The Commonwealth of Learning (COL) is the leading international organisation promoting improved access to open and distance learning, open educational resources and capacity building for Commonwealth countries. Under their Governance theme, COL has a programme entitled “Learning4Peace” which aims to build communities of women and youth to collaborate and develop open educational resources related to the theme.

In Solomon Islands, Isabel Province has been identified for a Learning4Peace pilot project that will initially focus on Youth (but involve women, too), because of the strong:

- Existing youth and women networks
- Existing Youth Policy
- Existing rural ICT networks including PFnet, DLC with broadband at Guguha, and FM radio stations

The project is building capacity of the Isabel youth networks and their communities to collaborate, using the existing intermodal communications networks of PFnet HF email stations, Distance Learning Centre and FM Community Radio stations to develop educational resources concerning the following topics:

- Leadership
- Human Rights
- Conflict Resolution
  - Sub-topic: Domestic Violence

As the focus is on youth, and the means of dissemination includes the 8 community FM stations, audio materials will be featured, plus articles created for COL’s Wikieducator website. This will be exciting to the young participants and can involve much creativity, for instance songs and debates related to the topic areas.

An expanded community of national and provincial (and even international) organisations has been built to support the collaboration. The project is working closely with Isabel Provincial Government (IPG) to link the activities to the Provincial Youth Policy Action Plan, and with participation of the Youth Council, area Youth Forums and Youth Parliament. The national Ministry of Women, Youth and Children’s Affairs and Isabel Ministry of Community Affairs (MWYCA) are also partners in the project governance.

Other partners include:

- Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP)
- Solomon Islands Development Trust (SIDT)
- People First Network (PFnet)
- Distance Learning Centres Project (DLCP)
- Community Sector Programme (CSP, Ausaid)

The Community Sector Programme (CSP) funded by Ausaid has granted SBD 121,000 (USD 16,000) to provide each of the Isabel "FM communities" with equipment to improve their capacity for community media programming. This assistance includes netbook computers, digital voice recorders, CD burners plus additional items.

The project is demonstrating the utility of the intermodal, community-based networks to the IPG. Through the Youth application, the wider potential of the integrated, inter-modal communications is becoming clear to IPG and they are increasingly seeing the potential benefits:

***The Isabel Province Minister for Community Affairs, Hon. Rhoda Sikilabu, and Youth Coordinator, Ellison Gito, have already noted the potential for cost savings and efficiency gains in the delivery of their Youth programmes under the Youth Policy and Action Plan. For instance, awareness campaigns can be conducted via email and Community Radio, saving on expensive and less effectual round-island canoe tours.***

The Permanent Secretary, IPG, has been briefed and has requested recommendations on the on going support and sustainability of the networks. The consultant David Leeming will be briefing IPG on 8th of June, 2009, to develop such recommendations in close collaboration with IPG.

Project resources include the use of the PFnet and FM stations, and the Guguha DLC as a production centre, workshop venue with the capability for online meetings, providing a broadband connection and with the services of a highly trained full time Supervisor. It is also hoped to recruit an Australian Youth Ambassador for Development (AYAD) who could be based in Buala or Guguha.

The project is in two phases.

1. A scoping mission, to identify the structures, participants and action plan
2. Building the networks, capacity building and development of open education resources.

As of May 2009, the following have been achieved:

- A 3-4 day planning workshop for Isabel ward Youth Coordinators with identification of youth-related themes for content development;
- A technical workshop held at Solomon Islands Development Trust in participatory programming for community media;
- An expanded community built with active email group including the rural communities via PFnet stations;
- Training in storyboarding given to three Isabel youth groups and communities;
- Development of storyboards for four specific community media program contents.

Outcomes are expected to include:

- Strengthened women and youth networking
- Improved awareness and knowledge in the project theme Learning4Peace
- Youth Policy objectives advanced
- More utilised and sustainable ICT networks
- Demonstration of ICT networking contributing to an improved Provincial Communications Policy

More information:

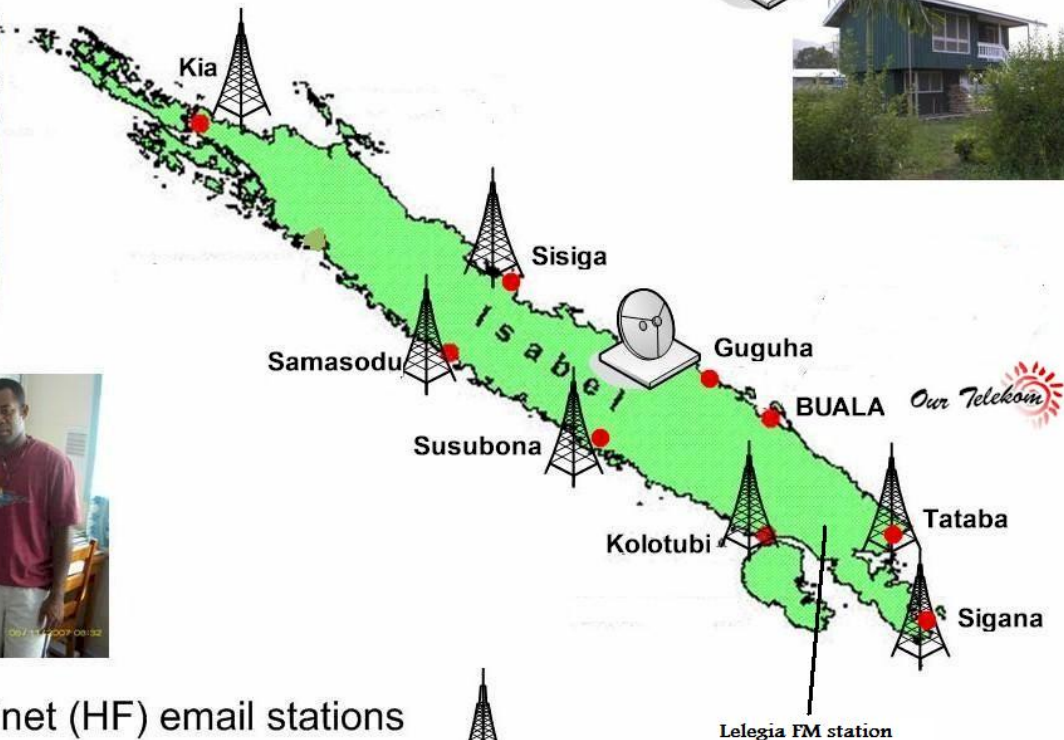
- [http://www.wikieducator.org/Learning4Peace/Solomon\\_Islands](http://www.wikieducator.org/Learning4Peace/Solomon_Islands)
- [http://www.wikieducator.org/Learning4Peace/Solomon\\_Islands/Storyboards](http://www.wikieducator.org/Learning4Peace/Solomon_Islands/Storyboards)

Contact:

- David Leeming, Coordinator and consultant for COL, and Technical Advisor, PFnet [david@leeming-consulting.com](mailto:david@leeming-consulting.com) Tel: +677 76396
- Afu Billy, Regional Director, CYP [regionaldirector@cyppsp.org.sb](mailto:regionaldirector@cyppsp.org.sb)
- Paul Peteru, Programme Manager, CYP S.I. [paul.peteru@cyppsp.org.sb](mailto:paul.peteru@cyppsp.org.sb)
- Dr Tanyss Munro, Education Expert (Governance), COL, [tmunro@col.org](mailto:tmunro@col.org)

# Community ICT facilities in Isabel

Guguha Distance Learning Centre



7 combined PFnet (HF) email stations and community FM radio stations:  
"Community Communications Centres"

