Welcome to the first edition of **CeeZine** – the quarterly newsletter for members of the Advisory Group to the BRIDGE Civic Education Development Project (CEDP). The purpose of the newsletter is to keep you all informed about current planning, developments, issues and ideas.

Obviously, the first task of the Advisory Group is to come up with a *much* better title for our newsletter! The challenge is *gleeful* – the rewards and accolades will be *global*!

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### 1. Emerging Issues

By way of a ‘bridge’ between the Strategic Planning Meeting held in Brisbane in October 2008 and where we are now, we wanted to distil and capture some **emerging issues**.

Those achievable within the scope of the pilot project – this CEDP will:

- build on the existing reputation, professionalism, methodology and relationships of BRIDGE in the Asia Pacific region in a spirit of collaboration and sharing
- work in cooperation, not isolation – it will be most effective when delivery is contextually based and country specific – it will anchor itself to whatever already exists
- designate a high profile to gender issues initially and throughout
- develop an evaluation strategy – consult and test as much as the project allows.

Those outside the scope of the pilot project – this CEDP will not:

- work beyond developing and trialling a pilot training module and a set of materials and resources
- explore the benefits of and develop materials and resources to support a diverse number of delivery methods
- consider development of, and ongoing support for, a community of civic education practitioners
- develop a broader evaluation strategy that measures long-term impact and attitudinal change.

*Note: Issues will maintain a profile as a background to the project as it progresses – where appropriate, issues will be acknowledged and explored as part of the project’s reporting process.*
2. Confirmation of Pilot Project – ‘The Pilot’!

**Short description of project:** the creation of some professional development training modules for the adult sector for people who are working in the fields of democracy or governance, or for those who simply want to be more informed or engaged in the political life and or governance of the environments in which they live and work. The training aims to explore the concepts of democracy and good governance to increase participants’ knowledge, skills and attitudes about these concepts.

**Included audience:** To be determined. Potential audiences (as homogenous or mixed group) include: community organisers/leaders; study circle leaders; leaders of civil society organisations; local government councillors and officials; parliamentarians; policy makers and thinkers, business leaders; company workers and staff; political parties; professionals (teachers, clergy, planners, journalists, medics, and others), emerging young leaders (educational, religious and others) and so on.

**Project deliverables:**
- The development of a democracy and governance curriculum framework that is aligned with the BRIDGE Project V2 Curriculum Framework, and uses BRIDGE methodology
- The development of one unit of work/one module within this democracy and governance curriculum framework including: instructions for the facilitator and participant resources – e.g. a *Facilitator Handbook* and *Participant Handbook*
- The trialling of this module in at least one location within the Asia Pacific region
- The development and trialling of an example civic education evaluation strategy
- The inclusion of ‘lessons learned’ from this trial, into the finished module
- The development of a detailed plan for further development of other modules within the democracy and governance curriculum framework

**Project pilot workshop:** One pilot workshop (4-5 days duration) is planned to be run in an Asian or Pacific country (to be determined) – designed for nationals of that country.

3. Writers Team Established

We are delighted to announce the establishment of the first team of writers for the project. We are so lucky to welcome on board such a diverse group with unique and various skills and experience.

The writers are:
- Beatrice Barnett, Australia
- Ian Smith, Canada
- Helena Catt, Peter Northcote, NZ – applied and accepted as a team
- Marjorie Walla, Kenya
- Nicolas Garrigue, France – focus on evaluation
- Noel Matthews, Ireland and Cambodia – focus on broad curriculum
- Penny Bradford, NZ and Vanuatu
- Therese Laanela Pearce, Sweden – focus on editing
- Tina Harihiru, Solomon Islands

We are excited at the prospect of the first gathering of the group in January 2009 in Melbourne. We are still considering the inclusion of one more writer from an Asian or Pacific country. When the decision is made about the country in which the trial will be conducted we will also add at least two local writers/advisors to the team.

The aim is to have one module written in this first phase of the project (until the project completion date in July 09), and to trial this module somewhere in the Asia Pacific region. Possible locations under consideration are East Timor and Vanuatu, and a few other places. We will hopefully know the trial location before the end of the year.
4. Project Timetable

The current schedule of events is:

- **Writers Meeting** (4 days)
  Melbourne, Australia (20-23 January 2009)

- **Development Meeting** (4 days)
  Venue to be advised, somewhere in Asia Pacific – preferably in same place as the first trial is to be conducted (17-20 March 2009)

- **Trial of First Module** (4 days)
  Venue to be advised, somewhere in Asia Pacific (5-8 May 2009)

*Note: the bulk of the curriculum writing will take place between January and February.*

We are very keen to have BRIDGE partners’ involvement in this development phase of the CEDP. Partner organisations will be invited to come to observe and or participate in the first trial in early May.

5. Advisory Group Forum – Hot Topics This Month!


Contribute to discussion about project issues, or start your own discussions and ideas. The project team will be regularly monitoring and contributing to the forum, and it’s a great way to communicate with others in the Advisory Group.

You can also contact the project team by emailing us at civics@bridge-project.org – we’ll post open feedback received by email on the forums as well, unless you state in your email you would prefer not to.

**Hot question this month:** What is most needed in civic education in the region?

6. The Stakeholder Relationship-Building Phase

When the pilot country has been identified, a stakeholder relationship-building mission will be conducted by a member of the project team to: meet with key stakeholders of civic education (in the adult sector, informal educational settings) to assess the provision of existing civic education projects, and to meet with civic education providers and target stakeholders, to determine where the CEDP pilot workshop would be best targeted, and to liaise with potential partners and implementers.
7. More About the Audit

Before the Brisbane meeting, the project team conducted an audit of civic education programs and related curriculum materials in the Asia Pacific region as the first stage of the CEDP. The aim of the audit was to get a picture of existing and recent civic education projects (of whatever size) in the region to provide a context for the design of the CEDP, and to identify what has been done and what needs to be done in the area.

Methods and Parameters

As the initial research began, it became clear that the audit would be a relatively restricted exercise. There was limited publicly available information on civic education projects in the region (in contrast to Africa, where there is a comparative wealth of information on civic education projects) and to properly investigate what projects exist would involve much more time and resources than we had available.

We had access to a prior audit conducted by UNIFEM as a resource, but most information was gleaned from online sources such as reports, organisational websites, and in a handful of cases, civic education project websites. Communication with our own contacts and networks also added to our data.

The online research was done with the following parameters in mind:

- a focus on the Asia Pacific (although significant projects from other regions that we came across were noted)
- a focus on projects with a broad governance objective rather than, e.g. a narrow voter education focus
- a focus on projects with a broader community and geographical scope, rather than projects focusing on e.g. one village.
- a focus on projects outside the formal school curriculum or formal educational qualifications, e.g. on adult learning projects rather than school curricula or university degrees
- a focus on projects that were current or have taken place in the last ten years
- a flexible list of search terms, with the understanding that 'civic education' has many guises, forms and labels

The audit was restricted to information on projects that was available in English, although in many cases the projects themselves may have been run in other languages.

Results and Conclusions

The audit identified 23 relevant projects in the Asia Pacific region, ranging from in-country outreach programs using delivery methods such as drama and learning circles, to regional and international programs with a capacity development focus. It also identified selected projects from other regions.

Many of the projects were difficult to confirm as being current or active, or were proposals for projects that could not be identified as having successfully taken place.

The audit also identified organisations involved in civic education, although few were actively involved in current civic education projects, often through lack of resources.

Our conclusions from the audit were:

- most civic education projects in the region appear to be ad hoc, short-term and done in isolation
- there is a lack of coordinated, sustained programs in civic education in the Asia Pacific
- it is difficult to find further information on civic education projects
- there is very little publicly available curriculum, or project curriculum is difficult to obtain from project managers
- there is little communication and coordination between (and sometimes within) civic education projects and organisations in the Asia Pacific