

# RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

## Equality and the Economy in the Pacific

**Professor Katherine Gibson and Dr Gerda Roelvink from the Centre for Citizenship and Public Policy along with Dr Michelle Carnegie and Dr Katharine McKinnon from Macquarie University, Ms Claire Rowland from the International Women's Development Agency, and Dr Claire Slatter from the Fiji National University will be developing indicators to measure the gender effects at the community level of economic interventions in the Pacific. This research is funded by an Australian Development Research Award from the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID).**

'It is now widely accepted that investing in women in developing countries produces better results for the nation's economic growth, health and education' says Professor Gibson. 'At present we know little about how economic aid designed to benefit everyone affects men and women in the Pacific. Policy makers need to know what type of economic activities are taking place in communities, how men and women are involved in them and how they are affected by development interventions. Our research will attempt to develop community-based indicators of gender equality to be used in assessing the effectiveness of economic development projects.'

The research will take place in two communities within Vanuatu, Fiji and the Solomon Islands. The six sites will have previously implemented Non-governmental Organisation (NGO) programs aimed at improving women's well-being and enriching the livelihood possibilities for women and men. The researchers will be working with local NGOs and community participants in week long workshops taking an economy inventory (what are the ranges of employment for men/women, paid/unpaid and formal/informal), exploring gender (what are the communities understandings of gender and its economic affects) and identifying the



*Photo by Suzette Mitchell*

gendered impacts of economic development. Data from the communities involved will be analysed by the researchers and "translated" into indicators of gender equality and positive economic outcomes that are rooted in Pacific region experiences.

This research will allow policy makers and governments providing aid to understand how gender affects economic growth and stability within the Pacific. As a result governments will be able to provide aid on a more consistent and helpful basis, allowing the country receiving aid to prosper economically.

**Project Title:** Measuring gender equality outcomes of economic growth in the Pacific: working with communities to develop indicators that monitor change

**Funding has been set at:** \$241,688

**Contact Details:** [katherine.gibson@uws.edu.au](mailto:katherine.gibson@uws.edu.au)  
<http://www.uws.edu.au/ccpp>

**June 2010**