

TITLE: "Reaching Communities Who Hear With Their Hearts" - Pacific Peoples Project For Water Safety New Zealand

Theme: Community Showcasing

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This paper describes a water safety project designed to raise awareness of water safety issues amongst Pasifika communities in New Zealand. Water Safety New Zealand (WSNZ) developed a national Pacific Peoples Water Safety Strategy 2007 – 2010, providing direction to meet its mission for Pasifika families and communities: *Through water safety education prevent injury and death*. The Strategy called for the development of a three-year Pacific Communications plan 2008-2011. Fundamental to the success of this plan is the need for WSNZ to consult Pacific communities and involve them in efforts to address water safety issues in New Zealand. Caution around alcohol consumption when swimming, boating or engaged in water activities is embedded in the key water safety messages. Key goals focus on raising awareness through engagement with media and networks including Churches and Community Roadshows. A DVD, *Without A Father*, was developed specifically for the roadshows. The documentary focuses on the impact of drowning on 'real' Pasifika families, living with 'real' consequences and evoking 'real' emotions within Samoan and Tongan communities specifically. Produced in the mother tongue, the DVD demonstrates the need for collective responsibility. It is inherently emotional and contributes to the desired behavioural change. It presupposes that Pasifika communities hear with their hearts, so will ultimately achieve the desired outcome. Launched in March 2008, this community development project will be evaluated to gauge the level of awareness and behaviour change in the Pasifika community.

BIOSKETCH

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Ben Penita Taufua, currently contracted to Water Safety NZ and Managing Director of *Tautua Synergy Consultants™*, is a native speaker of the Samoan language with National Australian Accreditation for Translations & Interpreting (NAATI) qualifications. Born in Samoa he emigrated to New Zealand as a teenager. Shortly after his theological training at Faith Bible College in Tauranga he migrated to Australia. A career in youth work developed whilst he was training in the Australian police force.

Ben is exceptionally well connected in Pasifika communities, he is a School Board of Trustees member, part-time lecturer with University of Auckland Faculty of Education Teacher Education programme and former senior manager of Pasifika Health at Middlemore Hospital, Counties Manukau District Health Board.

He is currently completing his PhD in Economics looking at the relationship between Pasifika culture and understanding of economics in the area of Traditional Healing. He was also the Pasifika representative and speaker with the NGO New Zealand team that spoke in Geneva on the NZ government's response to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCROC) in 2004.

Ben is an applied researcher experienced in ethics processes, milestone reports and representing projects to Ministry officials. He has the ability to develop projects through collaborative approaches as well as a gift for original thinking founded in evidence.

Word Count: 218