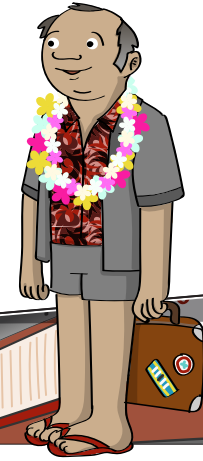




ARRIVING WITH CARE



Ideas to strengthen your research practice and support to the people who you work with in the Pacific.



For more information, see www.landcareresearch.co.nz/being-manuhiri

Racism and colonialism have been a part of international development assistance and research since its inception. Relying on western ways of knowing and doing things can create contemporary inequalities and reinforce the potential for harm for those that western trained researchers work with.

Countries in which development projects are undertaken are often portrayed only as places with problems and where communities lack agency to solve these themselves.

There is growing international recognition that western trained researchers need to take a decolonising approach to how they practice and provide support to the people who participate in their research projects or programmes.

Decolonising western practices requires an understanding of the legacy of colonialism and its ongoing impacts. It requires researchers to critically reflect on their positionality (the various identities such as gender, race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, ability, power they hold, etc.) and committed action to change their approaches to ensure they work ethically in Pacific Island countries and with Pacific partners.

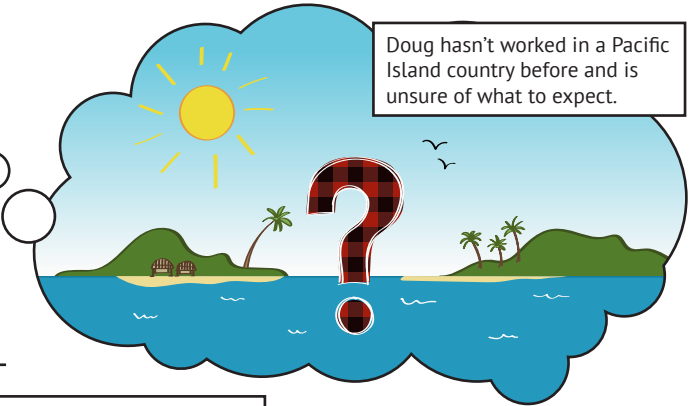
Despite the best intentions western trained researchers do arrive with privileged mindsets. Reflecting on this is important so that they don't reinforce colonial practices and continue to cause harm.

There are many cultures and countries across the Pacific, and although they share similarities, they are also different from each other. Decolonising your thinking includes acknowledging the uniqueness of each country and community independently, instead of applying a one size fits all approach.

Ensuring their research is underpinned by Pacific values and principles is one way in which they can contribute to the decolonising process.

Hi, I'm Doug. I'm going to conduct research in a Pacific Island country.

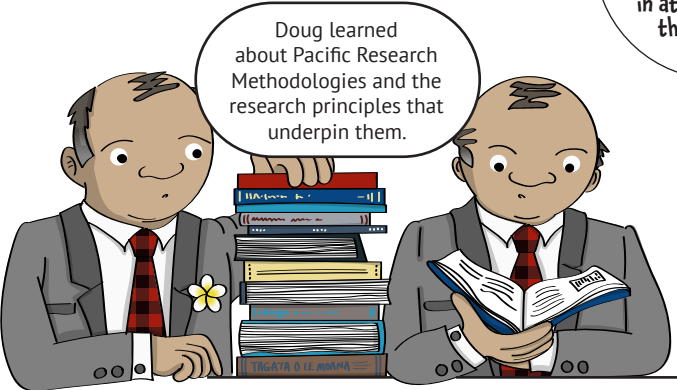
Doug hasn't worked in a Pacific Island country before and is unsure of what to expect.



Doug realised that Pacific research can be dominated by western thinking – marginalising Pacific perspectives. He talked to his colleagues about positionality and power relations in cross-cultural research.



Doug committed to learning about Pacific worldviews, values, and perspectives. He read outside his scientific field – listening to Pacific voices.



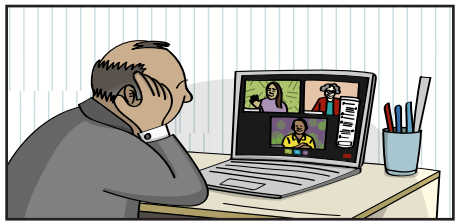
Doug learned about Pacific Research Methodologies and the research principles that underpin them.

Genuine participation means bringing Pacific scientists, communities, and other Pacific partners in at the start of the research process



Doug attended Pacific Cultural Intelligence workshops.

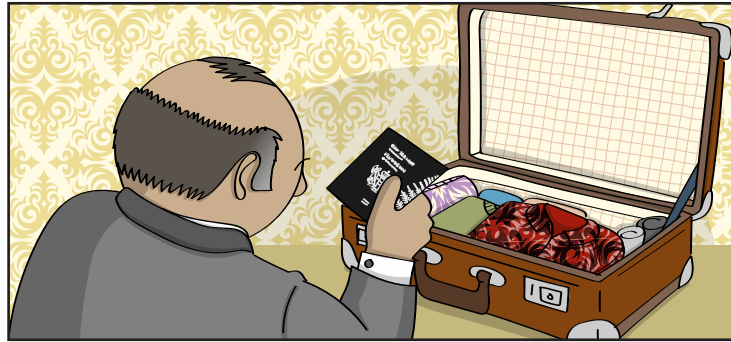
Our aim for today is to better understand the diverse Pacific culture and history



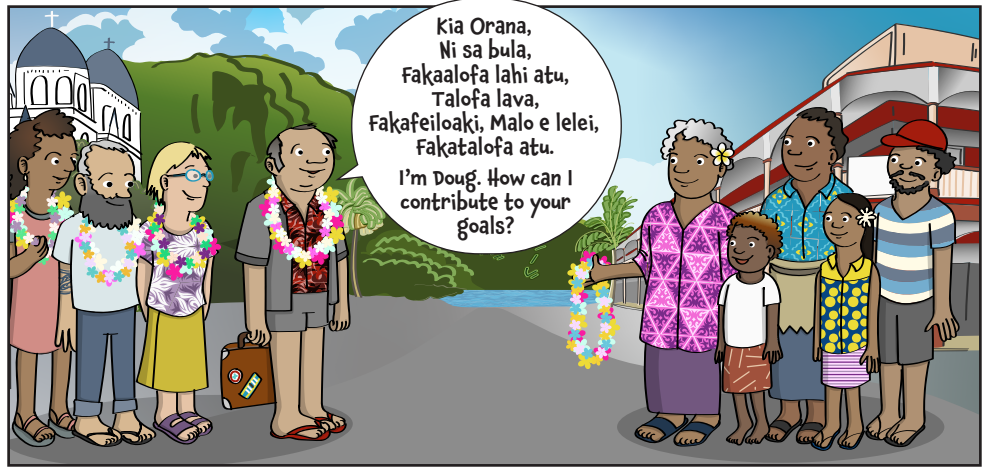
Doug sought advice from Pacific researchers and from those who had experience of working in Pacific Island countries.



All these helped Doug reflect on and challenge his own notions of how research should be conducted.



Doug realised that while this did not in any way make him an expert – and that this was just the start of his learning experience – he felt more confident about going to a Pacific Island country and showing respect for the cultural processes and protocols associated with his research.



Kia Orana, Ni sa bula, Fakaalofa lahi atu, Talofa lava, Fakafeiloaki, Malo e lelei, Fakatalofa atu. I'm Doug. How can I contribute to your goals?

Points for discussion

- Are you building a culture of sharing and giving up power – is your work encouraging a shifting of power?
- Are you planning for or with the Pacific?
- Are you aware of the colonial history of where you are working and the inequalities this has produced?
- In what way is colonisation an ongoing process and how does that perpetuate and reinforce injustices?
- Are you sufficiently highlighting the expertise held within the countries in which you are working?
- Are you doing work that someone local could be doing?
- Is your work supporting the goals outlined by your partners – is the well-being and resilience of partners at the forefront of your outcomes?
- Doug undertook a number of activities himself before he sought advice from Pacific researchers – what is the significance of that?
- Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities are rarely involved in the initial stages of projects, including the project design, setting of objectives and the designing of methods. Their involvement in the analysis of the data collected and its use in making management decisions is also low - What's the same or different about the approach your group is taking to the research projects you are involved with?

Suggested Readings/Resources

- Development Policy Review. Special Issue: Aid in the Pacific. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/toc/14677679/2023/41/S2>
- Flavell, M., & Cunningham, E. (2023). Engaging in research with Pacific communities as a non-Pacific researcher: reflecting on lessons learnt. *Kōtuitui: New Zealand Journal of Social Sciences Online*, 18(2), 153-170.
- Guttenbeil-Likiliki, O.-K.-L. (2022, December 15). Enough is enough: Audaciously decolonising the development and humanitarian nexus. 1–4. <https://devpolicy.org/decolonising-the-development-and-humanitarian-nexus-20221215/>
- Hardin J, Enari D, Phillips T, et al. (2023). Developing Trust in Collaborative Research: Utilizing Indigenous Pacific Methodologies to Create Dialogue Within Research Teams. *Asia Pacific Journal of Public Health*. doi:[10.1177/10105395231204809](https://doi.org/10.1177/10105395231204809)
- Hird, C., David-Chavez, D. M., Gion, S. S., & van Uitregt, V. (2023). Moving beyond ontological (worldview) supremacy: Indigenous insights and a recovery guide for settler-colonial scientists. *Journal of Experimental Biology*, 226(12).
- Massey University Pacific Research and Policy Centre. (2017). *Pacific Research Guidelines and Protocols*. Massey University. https://www.massey.ac.nz/documents/1055/PRPC_Pacific_Research_Guidelines_2017.pdf
- Scheyvens, R. (Ed.). (2014). *Development Field Work: A Practical Guide* (2nd ed): Los Angeles: SAGE. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781473921801>
- Taylor, D. M., & Middleby, S. (2023). Aid is not development: The true character of Pacific aid. *Development Policy Review*, e12745. <https://doi.org/10.1111/dpr.12745>
- Thompson, K.-L., T. Lantz, and N. C. Ban. (2020). A review of Indigenous knowledge and participation in environmental monitoring. *Ecology and Society* 25(2):10. <https://doi.org/10.5751/ES-11503-250210>
- Turreira-García, N., J. F. Lund, P. Domínguez, E. Carrillo-Anglés, M. C. Brummer, P. Duenn, and V. Reyes-García. (2018). What's in a name? Unpacking "participatory" environmental monitoring. *Ecology and Society* 23(2):24. <https://doi.org/10.5751/ES-10144-230224>