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EDUCATION MINISTERS MEETING

Nadi, Fiji 26-27 September 2006

SESSION SEVEN

EDUCATION INITIATIVES UNDER THE PACIFIC PLAN

The attached paper, prepared by SPBEA, UNICEF and UNESCO, outlines a proposal to develop regional benchmarks in literacy, numeracy and life-skills and contains recommendations for the consideration of Ministers.

Setting regional benchmarks for literacy, numeracy and life-skills to monitor the quality of basic education in the Pacific region

This proposal for setting regional benchmarks for literacy, numeracy and life-skills and the resultant benchmarks have been guided by the principles of Education For all, the Millenium Development Goals and the wishes of Ministers of Education as reflected in the Forum Basic Education Action Plan (FBEAP). This collaboration also directly supports section 7.1 of the Pacific Plan: "harmonize approaches in the education sector" and "coordinating support for basic education through FBEAP.

In July, 2006, UNESCO, UNICEF, SPBEA, Government of Vanuatu and UNESCO Vanuatu NatCom collaborated to host a workshop to draft regional benchmarks for literacy, numeracy and life-skills. The draft benchmarks are appended and have been circulated to countries for comments. Member countries could use the benchmarks as the basis for measuring and/or monitoring the quality of basic education in the areas of literacy, numeracy and life-skills in their countries rather than against each other.

It is proposed that monitoring be obligatory at year 4 and ideally also at year 8. It is also recommended to have monitoring at year 2 as well so that the impact of preschool education in each country can be measured. Thus instruments could be developed and administered to students at years 2, 4, 6 and 8. One of the goals of the FBEAP states: "To ensure access and equity and improve quality and outcomes." In order to improve the quality of education we need to measure it, the benchmarks developed could perform that task.

There has never been a real measure of literacy, numeracy or life-skills in the Pacific Region¹. These regional benchmarks will be applied to students between the ages of 6 and 15 for those in the formal system. The literacy and numeracy levels of those outside the formal system will also need to be measured. For persons over the age of 15, stratified sample surveys will be conducted.

The benchmarks are the first step in a three step process, where we measure quality, then develop intervention strategies, and finally measure quality again to evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention strategies. This cycle should be repeated.

The four agencies, UNESCO, UNICEF, PRIDE and SPBEA will collaborate in areas where their mandates overlap to avoid duplication and confusion in countries and to bring about better donor harmonization. The aims of projects to be undertaken in such partnerships will be clearly defined with measurable outcomes resulting in quality education.

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¹ A common practice is to consider those with no schooling as illiterate and those who have attended grade 5 of primary school as literate.

Recommendations:

- 1. That the Ministers adopt the concept of regional benchmarks in literacy, numeracy and life-skills.
- 2. That the regional benchmarks be used as the basis for monitoring the quality of education at the country level using infrastructures/processes currently in place.
- 3. That the Ministers endorse household surveys of their countries to ascertain literacy levels for 15+ year olds (Funds will be sought to do this work if Ministers endorse it.)
- 4. That UNESCO, UNICEF, PRIDE and SPBEA collaborate to carry out this monitoring work at the national and regional levels.

PROPOSED PACIFIC DEFINITION OF LITERACY:

"Knowledge and skills necessary to empower a person to communicate through any form of language of their society, with respect to everyday life"

A person is considered to be functionally literate if she/he has acquired the necessary knowledge and skills to be able to communicate effectively through any form of language of their society, with respect to everyday life.

The literacy status of a person between the ages of 6 to 14 years will be determined nationally and regionally (if required) by referencing his/her literacy skills to the indicator outlined below. However, a person is considered to be functionally literate if he/she has completed four years of formal education and has met the indicator outlined for Year 4.

Skill Component	Year 2 Indicators (7 – 8 yrs)	Year 4 Indicators (9 – 10 yrs)	Year 6 Indicators (11 – 12 yrs)	Year 8 Indicators (13 – 14 yrs)
Listening	Understand and respond to texts	Listen, understand, respond and question texts	Listen, understand, respond and critically question texts/genre	Listen, understand, response and critically question an increasing variety and complexity of texts
Speaking	Understand, speak, question and respond to texts	Understand, speak, question and respond in various genres/texts	Understand, speak, critically question and respond in various genres/texts	Understand, speak, critically question and respond to an increasing variety of complexity and texts
Writing	Illustrate and write a story	Write and present ideas in a variety of genres/texts that demonstrate the basic use of writing mechanics	Writing and presenting ideas including critical analysis in a variety of genres/texts that uses writing mechanics (appropriately).	Writing and presenting ideas in a variety of genres including critical analysis Greater command of writing mechanics Using an increasing variety and complexity of texts
Reading	Read, understand and respond to texts	Read, understand, question and respond to a variety of genres/texts	Read, understand, question and respond critically to a variety of genres/texts	Read, understand, question and respond critically to an increasing level of complexity and variety of genres and texts

PROPOSED PACIFIC DEFINITION OF NUMERACY:

"Knowledge and skills necessary to empower a person to be able to use numbers in mathematical processes, as well as the language of mathematics, for a variety of purposes, with respect to every day life"

A person considered to be functionally numerate is therefore someone who has acquired the necessary knowledge and skills to be able to use numbers effectively in mathematical processes, as well as the language of mathematics, for a variety of purposes in everyday life not only within the society he/she lives but beyond.

The numeracy status of a person between the ages of 6 to 14 years will be determined nationally and regionally (if necessary) by referencing his/her numeracy skills to the benchmarks outlined below. However, a person is considered to be functionally numerate if he/she has completed four years of formal education and has met the numeracy benchmark outlined for Year 4.

C	Skill omponent	Elements	Year 2 Indicators (7 – 8 yrs)	Year 4 Indicators (9 – 10 yrs)	Year 6 Indicators (11 – 12 yrs)	Year 8 Indicators (13 – 14 yrs)
		Counting Objects	Represent number of objects using numerals from 1 to 20;	Represent numbers using numerals from 1 to 999;		
	NUMBERS	Recognizing Numbers	Identify and write numbers up to 99;	Identify and write numbers in numerals and in words up to 999;	Identify and write numbers in numerals and in words up to 9999;	Identify and write numbers in numerals and in up to 1 million;
	NUM	Place value		Identify and write 3-digit whole numbers and decimal numbers up to 2 decimal places;	Identify and write 4-digit whole numbers and decimal numbers up to 3 decimal places;	Identify and write whole numbers and decimal numbers up to 3decimal places;
					Round off numbers up to 2 significant figures and 2 decimal places;	Round off numbers up to 3significant figures & 3decimal places;

	Fractions & Percentages	to the Identi nume	e parts of an object whole; fy denominator & rator in a fraction; rate part of a whole raction and as a	Convert simple fractions to %;	Convert fractions to decimals, decimals to fractions, fractions to % & % to fractions;
NUMBERS (cont'd)	Relations	senter greate and ec	and write nces involving er than, less than qual to using ers up to 999;	Read, write and compare numbers using <, > and =; Identify, write and describe simple number patterns for factors and multiples;	Identify, write and describe other number patterns; Generate subsequent numbers or objects in a pattern;
NUI	Measurement	height 2. use	are; length and t of objects; e appropriate units asurement above;	Measure; length, mass, area, perimeter, angle	Measure; length, volume, perimeter, mass; Calculate: perimeter, area and volume of circles and regular shapes; Construct; angles and regular shapes;

Skill	Diamonto	Year 2	Year 4	Year 6	Year 8
Component	Elements	Indicators (7 – 8 yrs)	Indicators (9 – 10 yrs)	Indicators (11 – 12 yrs)	Indicators (13 – 14 yrs)
NS	Addition	Know the symbols;+, -,=; Add two 1-digit whole numbers between 1-9;	Add up to three 1- to 2-digit whole numbers with multiple regroup; Solve simple problems on everyday use of addition;	Add up to three 1- to 4-digit whole numbers with and without regroup; Add proper fractions with 1- or 2-digit denominators that are equal or are multiples; Add decimal numbers with up to 2 decimal places; Know how to add '0' in both whole and decimal numbers; Solve simple problems on everyday use of addition;	Add up to 4-digit whole numbers with and without regroup; Add proper and improper fractions with same and different 1- or 2-digit denominators; Add decimal numbers with up to 3 decimal places; Solve problems on everyday use of addition to the level indicated above;
OPERATIONS	Subtraction	Subtract two 1-digit whole numbers between 1 and 9;	Subtract up to 2-digit from up to 3-digit whole numbers with and without regroup; Subtract proper fractions with 1- or 2-digit denominators that are equal or are multiples; Solve simple problems on everyday use of subtraction;	Subtract two 1- to 4-digit whole numbers with multiple regroup; Subtract proper fractions with 1- or 2-digit denominators that are equal or are multiples; Subtract decimal numbers with up to 2 decimal places; Subtract numbers involving '0' in both whole and decimal numbers with 2 decimal places; Solve simple problems on everyday use of subtraction;	Subtract two numbers up to 4-digits whole numbers with multiple regroup; Subtract proper and improper fractions with up to 3-digit denominators; Subtract decimal numbers with up to 3 decimal places. 4. subtract numbers involving '0' in both whole and decimal numbers with 3 decimal places; Solve problems on everyday use of subtraction;

cont'd)	Multiplication		Multiply 2-digit by 1-digit whole numbers with and without regroup,	Multiply up to 3-digit by 1- or 2-digit whole numbers with and without regroup; Divide 2-digit whole	Multiply up to 4-digit by up to 3-digit whole numbers with and without regroup; Multiply up to 2 decimal numbers by 1- or 2-digit whole numbers; Divide up to 3-digit whole
OPERATIONS (cont'd)	Divide			numbers by 1-digit factor; Use order of operations to simplify expressions involving 2 operations; 3. solve simple problems on everyday use of the four operations;	numbers by up to 2-digit whole numbers with and without remainder; Divide up to 2 decimal numbers by up to 2-digit whole numbers; Use order of operations to simplify expressions involving 3 operations; Solve simple problems on everyday use of operations;
MONEY	Recognize and use money	Recognize the face and relative value of common denominations;	Recognize the money value of items in shops, market, etc; Calculate costs of shopping with 2 items (in whole value only); Calculate changes from shopping;	Calculate total costs of shopping with 3 different items (include decimals); Calculate the change from shopping; Calculate the unit cost of items in shopping;	Calculate total costs of shopping with up to 4 different items (include decimals); Calculate the change from shopping; Calculate the unit cost of items in shopping given bulk cost; Solve simple everyday problems involving 2 operations;

Skill	Elements	Year 2	Year 4	Year 6	Year 8
Component		Indicators (7 – 8yrs)	Indicators (9 – 10 yrs)	Indicators (11 – 12 yrs)	Indicators (13 – 14 yrs)
TIME	Time	Associate daily activities with part of day e.g. morning, afternoon, evening, night with breakfast, end of school, dinner and sleep;	Identify short/long hand or 1st/2nd number (digital) with hour/minute; Understand am/pm in relation to time of day; Tell time from clock face or diagram (but limit to o'clock, quarter past/to and half past);	Tell time from clock face or diagram; Calculate time difference from clock; Solve simple everyday problems on time and duration;	Tell time from clock face or diagram (no limit); Identify start/finish time of events and calculate duration; Solve simple everyday problems on time and duration;
DATA	Data			Tally given sets of discrete data; Represent data on graph (bar or picture); Interpret data on graph based on heights of bars (bar graph) and number of pictures (pictograph); Know and calculate the average of discrete data;	Represent data on graph (bar, pie, column, picture); Interpret data on graph based on heights of bars (bar graph), area of sector and number of pictures (pictograph); Calculate the mean, median, mode and range of a set of discrete data;

PROPOSED PACIFIC DEFINITION FOR LIFE SKILLS

Practical knowledge, skills and behaviours which in conjunction with cultural rooted knowledge, attitudes and values empower an individual to live a happy, healthy and productive life in his or her community and beyond.

	Life Skills Indicators for years 4 and 8				
Components	Elements	Year 4 Indicators (9 – 10 yrs)	Year 8 Indicators (13 – 14 yrs)		
COMMUNICATION AND INTERPERSONAL SKILLS	1.Interpersonal communication skills	 Students express verbally by using the correct forms of language i.e. respect, vocabulary, etc. to use appropriate gestures i.e. signs to respond accordingly to the situation involved 	 Students respond appropriately to a variety of different audiences use verbal and non-verbal features appropriately when participating in different situations 		
INTER S	2. Empathy	 Students express themselves in what they are and who they are in comparison to others; show consideration for others 	 Students use a wide range of language and non-language features to allow children to express and compare themselves 		
ATION AND I SKILLS	3.Negotiation/ Advocacy Skills	Students are prepared to listen, share and arrive at a consensus learn to take turns during discussion, to help and/or support each other by persuading them to take part in discussions and activities	Students participate in groups to use a variety of communication strategies to negotiate e.g. seeking clarification, agreeing to decisions (same skills – further developed and practiced in the wider community)		
IUNIC,	4. Cooperation and Teamwork	Students work together as a team in whatever circumstances i.e. sports/group work	Students develop and understand various roles played in different groups in society		
СОММ	5. Refusal skills	Students are prepared to assert one's opinion	Students are prepared to assert one's opinion using a variety of strategies		

rical Thinking	1.Decision making	 Students can determine what the issue is Students can gather relevant information using a variety of sources and mediums Students can think through the information they have gathered Students can identify the options and consequences of alternate decisions and select appropriately 	 Students can determine what the issue is Students can gather relevant information using a variety of sources and mediums Students can think through the information they have gathered Students can identify the options and consequences of alternate decisions and select appropriately
TAKING AND CRITICAL SKILLS	2.Problem solving	 Students can determine what information is required Students can gather information using a variety of sources and mediums Students can think through the information they have gathered Students can identify the options and consequences of alternate decisions and select appropriately 	 Students can determine what information is required Students can gather information using a variety of sources and mediums Students can think through the information they have gathered Students can identify the options and consequences of alternate decisions and select appropriately
DECISION-MAKING	3.Critical thinking	 Students can recognise the influence of external factors such as the media, peers, the community, the church Students have the capacity to question and to think things through Students can make an informed choice for action 	 Students can recognise the influence of external factors such as the media, peers, the community, the church Students have the capacity to question and to think things through Students can make an informed choice for action

r skills	1. Self Awareness	 Students can identify their strengths, weaknesses and potentials Students know their rights and responsibilities and take appropriate actions in situations Students can express their thoughts and feelings in a constructive manner. Students know they are valued, recognize and appreciate their uniqueness. 	 Students are assertive with their strengths and acknowledge their weaknesses by following a leader as part of a team. Distinguish the difference between rights and responsibilities. Students can express their thoughts and feelings in a constructive manner. Eg. Resolve a conflict among peers.
ID SELF-MANAGEMENT SKILLS	2. Skills for managing feelings	 Students acknowledge their strong emotions/feelings such as anxiety, frustrations, loss, anger Students initiate and identify ways to manage their feelings in a culturally relevant manner. Students share and discuss their feelings openly with trust-worthy people. Students identify and utilize the different support services available to cope with critical situations such as trauma, abuse, loss, etc. 	 Students use a range of strategies to cope with demands/expectations placed on them from their parents, schools, peers and external pressures. Students identify and utilize the different support services available to cope with critical situations such as trauma, abuse, loss, etc.
COPING AND	3. Skills for managing stress	 Students identify sources of stress Students decide to take actions with regards to that stressful situation: avoid, Students recognise that recreational activities, spiritual and pastoral counselling can help managing stress Students recognize the importance of prioritizing tasks within a given time. Students develop positive thinking and make informed choices. 	

LIHOOD SKILLS	1.Technical/ Vocational skills	 Students demonstrate that they can use appropriate knowledge and skills competently in the relevant skills areas Students learn and apply all required skills and knowledge in any given situation both within and outside the school environment Students recognize and safely use basic tools to produce products e.g handicrafts Observe and follow instructions to complete a product Basic techniques in weaving, sewing and cooking Draw simple designs of any product 	 Students use simple techniques to make joints and cuttings Students apply production techniques & team work to construct any product Students undertake management practices to grow crops, raise animals, fish breeding for both subsistence and commercial Students assessing products for improvement purposes
PRACTICAL/ LIVELIHOOD	2. Traditional knowledge and skills	 Students can identify the key traditional values of their society Students can demonstrate their knowledge of a traditional skills 	 Students can identify key cultural traditions and how they use them in their daily lives Students can identify key cultural values and how they affect their learning and behaviour Students identify, analyse and critically evaluate their own beliefs and knowledge and how these affect how they learn in classrooms Compare traditional with modern cultural beliefs & practices Utilise modern technology to enhance performance of traditional cultural performances

		Describe characteristics of well-being (clean, happy, confident, safe, secure, pain-free, sociable)	Describe the pertinent features of elements that threaten their well-being (HIV, STI, poor nutrition, substance abuse etc.)
	1. Health	Identify behaviours that can threaten their well-being (smoking, excessive sweets, poor nutrition, lack of physical activities, discruptive, uncooperative, sexually inappropriate actions)	To explain the benefits of practices that promote good health Demonstrate good decision-making skills
Q		Confide in appropriate persons when they feel threatened, basic information about nutrition; sexual education	that enhance well-being
CONTEXTUAL/ ISSUE BASED	2. Gender awareness	 Students use non-stereotyping and respectful verbal and non verbal communication skills. Students actively listen to each other and participate fully in mixed gender groups and share leadership roles. Students identify stereotypes while appreciating complementary of all in traditional and modern societies. 	 Students take part in activities in the classroom traditionally regarded as the role of the other gender. (eg, technology, cleaning up of the classroom) Students accept and appreciate others ideas beyond who and what they are. Students encourage the full participation of all citizens in society.
CONTEXTUA	3. Civic Education/ governance	 Able to recite and sing the national anthem Respect for and observe the flag raising ceremony Show respect for their school and class mates Maintain a clean environment in the classroom, whole school and beyond Be able to converse in a language of another cultural group 	 Participation in oral and public speaking on peace themes Organise and participate in campaigns towards a clean and healthy environment in school and outside Public display of pride in being a citizen of their country in various ways Observe and show support of multiracialism through participation in cultural activities of other cultural groups Show understanding of the basic principles of human rights Students observe the rules and regulations of their school and society

CONTEXTUAL/ ISSUE BASED (cont'd)	4. Environment	 Students investigate, develop and apply local knowledge and understanding in managing and conserving the flora, fauna, land and water in the local context. Students investigate the causes of air, land and water pollution; extinction of species; identify preventative measures that can be used in the local context. Students identify or investigate into alternative strategies to manage and conserve flora, fauna land and water. To apply waste management and recycling procedures. Students identify value and apply local/traditional protection laws, government policies and recognize international conventions 	As in year 4, but emphasis on management and conservation
ONTEXTUAL/ IS	5. Entrepreneurial & Financial Management skills	Explain and demonstrate efficient & effective resource utilization Explain and demonstrate efficient & effective marketing strategies Explain and demonstrate risk-taking skills	Demonstrate and apply efficient & effective resource utilization Demonstrate and apply efficient & effective marketing strategies Demonstrate and apply risk-taking skills Assess Risks
S	6. Sports/ Physical Education	 Students appreciate participating in activities whether they win or lose Students understand the rules of the activity Develop skills Develop skills in teamwork Students appreciate that participating in activities will require fitness training 	All indicators in Y4 plus: Students should appreciate that developing more complex skills will require continuous participation and training

COMPONENT STATEMENTS FOR EACH PACIFIC LIFE SKILLS

A) Psycho-social Behavioural Skills

- I- Communication and Interpersonal Skills:
 - **Interpersonal communication skills**: Enable children to interact verbally/nonverbally with others through active listening and by expressing feelings and feedback constructively
 - **Negotiation/refusal skills**: Enable children to deal effectively with conflict they encounter in their daily lives, firmly, decisively and confidently
 - **Empathy**: Being able to empathise involves understanding others; anticipating and predicting their likely thoughts, feelings and perceptions. It involves seeing things from another's point of view and modifying one's own response, if appropriate, in light of this understanding
 - **Cooperation and Teamwork**: Enable children to respect each other's ideas abilities, values, contributions and different styles when working together. They use these skills to support, share and learn from each other
 - **Advocacy Skills**: Enable children to champion ideas while actively working with others. They use these skills to influence and persuade others to investigate/consider different ideas, strategies, solutions and values and share ideas openly

II- Decision-Making and Critical Thinking Skills:

- **Decision making skills:** Enable children to develop decision making skills by gathering, evaluating and analyzing information and determining solutions to the problems
- **Problem solving skills:** Enable children to develop decision making skills by gathering, evaluating and analyzing information and determining solutions to the problems
- **Critical thinking skills:** Enable children to develop critical thinking skills in analyzing influential factors and how they impact on their lives

III- Coping and Self-Management Skills:

• **Self awareness**: Enables children to understand, accept who they are and have a healthy self-image. They use this understanding to organize themselves, set goals and plan their learning to meet everyday challenges.

- **Managing Feelings**: Children use a range of strategies to recognize and cope with their feelings. They know when, where and how to get help. They can use this to maximize their behaviours and to regulate their learning. They demonstrate resilience in the face of difficulties.
- **Managing Stress**: Children use a range of strategies to cope with demands/expectations placed on them from their parents, schools, peers and external pressures.

B) Practical/Livelihood Skills

- Technical/ Vocational skills (Including Agri/Aqua-culture/Cooking/Computer Literacy/ Science): To enable students to acquire specific and practical knowledge and needed skills which are appropriate and relevant for their competent use in their daily lives.
- Traditional Knowledge and Skills (eg. Arts & Crafts, traditional medicine, recognizing diversity rooted in identity, traditional notions of land and sea etc.): Enable children to appreciate and understand their values, knowledge and skills learnt from previous generations and to be able to use these as a basis for survival in their own changing environment.

C) Contextual/Issue based

- **Health**: To enable students to acquire specific and practical knowledge and needed skills which are appropriate and relevant for their competent use in their daily lives: recognize and appreciate the elements and importance of well-being; make informed decisions for healthy actions and behaviours; apply skills to manage pressures/challenges/ threats that impact on their well-being (such as substance abuse, all forms physical, verbal, sexual abuse, sexuality, relationships, violence, nutrition, NCDs); advocate good health.
- **Gender**: Enable children to relate to genders by recognizing their own roles while at the same time appreciating the differences between the genders. It involves being open-minded and accepting full participation in all situations
- **Civic Education/ Governance**: The creation of an awareness in children of their duties to their countries, and knowledge of the processes of governance. To take pride in being a citizen of their country and to learn to behave in a manner that helps promote their civic duties, a love for a clean and healthy country, maintenance of peace, observance of law and order and the rights of other people.
- **Environment**: Enable children to acquire and apply knowledge, demonstrating an understanding of the environment (flora/fauna/water/air/land). Developing an awareness and respect to manage and

conserve ensuring sustainable use of resources through balanced traditional and modern practices.

- Entrepreneurial & Financial Management Skills: Enables children to utilize resources efficiently and effectively producing marketable commodities/ services and to take risks in the business environment so as to generate maximum profit.
- **Sports and Physical Ed**: Children to be able to appreciate/ take part in physical activities including traditional games and develop their skills by knowing the rules, teamwork and individual skills, fitness training and good sportsmanship during school years and beyond