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CIVIL SOCIETY AS BASIC EDUCATION PROVIDER

The attached paper, prepared by the Forum Secretariat, presents an outline of the contribution of civil society organisations to basic education in the Pacific and related policy issues for the consideration of Ministers.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Civil society, the Church and the private sector, have contributed significantly to the provision and delivery of quality basic education in partnership with Governments in the region. Given the heterogenous reality of Pacific Island Societies, the difficulties of delivering basic education to distant islands or remote rural areas Civil Society Organisations are well placed to work with such communities. Civil Society Organisations have established links with existing communities and can effectively deliver basic education to such communities more effectively and efficiently than government. Of particular concern is the fact that schools find it difficult to respond to the different needs and circumstances of their pupils and to organise learning experiences that are sensitive to the social, cultural and economic environment.

2. There is value and urgency to develop the existing partnership between governments and CSOs in the delivery of basic education including early childhood, non-formal, primary and junior secondary education particularly given the youthful and growing populations of many Forum Island countries. A regionally recognised reality is that CSOs have won ‘grassroots’ confidence, and are effective in the delivery of people centred education. CSOs have important and distinct contributions to make to the reform of mainstream schooling and could help to open up the formal system from within.

3. The contribution made by civil society is often without any clear national policy or regulatory structure or framework and there is often little coordination or collaboration. Their contribution to basic education policy and curriculum planning and development has been limited, but there is scope for greater involvement. It would be useful to first clearly identify and record the involvement of NGOs and the type of skills training currently on offer in basic education and to document the range and type of arrangements that currently exist between governments in the region and CSOs. As with many other social sectors, policy development in this sector is hampered by the lack of accurate data on current programmes and arrangements.

4. The delivery of basic education can address a range of community and poverty issues. Maintaining education on international and regional agendas ensures continuity of effort towards raising competitiveness of FICs in the face of globalisation and more importantly to alleviate poverty and attain greater equity and quality livelihoods particularly between rural and urban centres.

Recommendations

5. Ministers may wish to consider the following recommendation:

- (a) In recognition of the partnership with CSOs and the private sector already in place in all Forum Island Countries in the provision and delivery of basic education, and to enhance the achievement of National, Regional and International commitments, direct the Forum Secretariat in association with other regional organisations and UN agencies to document, and quantify the contribution of Civil Society in the provision and delivery of basic education with the view to developing model enabling government/CSO partnership policies.

CIVIL SOCIETY AS BASIC EDUCATION PROVIDER

Purpose

There is a developing partnership between government and Civil Society in almost all Forum Island Countries (FICs). Civil society includes communities, community-based organisations, non-governmental organisations, the Church and the private sector. It is the purpose of this paper to discuss how governments and civil society can become more effective partners in basic education and training development. With robust partnerships between these broad community interests of our societies, the impacts of geographical, financial and human resource constraints on the provision and delivery of quality basic education for all can be reduced.

Introduction

2. The involvement of Civil Society Organisations in education tends to be poorly documented. Current and potential responsibilities in education they share with governments are not readily identified. This paper highlights:

- i) contributions of CSOs and the private sector to basic education;
- ii) constraints limiting efforts to implement an integrated approach to education development, and
- iii) policy options for governments.

Background

3. Civil society throughout the text refers to village, rural and urban communities and organisations. These are organisations not based in government and not created to earn a profit. CSOs can act as a bridge between the concerns of citizens and those of their governments. In this context these are communities and organisations that are often called upon to assist with School committees, School Administration and Parent Teacher Associations (PTA). Private sector schooling is sometimes difficult to distinguish from community-based organisations as although it may charge fees to cover costs, it is not necessarily profit driven. These types of schools are often managed and administered for church groups or sometimes distinct ethnic and/or business interests. Private business itself may provide training or schooling facilities for its employees and/or their families. The private sector also in a few instances manages schools and provides these on a profit-making basis. The focus of this paper will be largely civil society organisations as outlined above rather than profit motivated private sector interests.

4. Churches as part of civil society are often registered education authorities (providers) with legislated authority to own and administer schools.

5. CSOs and especially the churches are major players in the provision and delivery of quality basic education throughout the Pacific. Governments are aware of their significant contribution to basic education for all. A major constraint however is the lack of clear mandates and policies within which civil society organisations can contribute to basic education in a creative manner and responsive to local needs and aspirations.

6. Why involve civil society organisations? It is now well documented that CSO capacity to reach the rural poor and outreach to remote areas is greater than the formal institutions of the state, particularly for the delivery of key social services. Although CSOs work in both urban and rural areas, they tend to focus on poorer communities that have few basic resources or infrastructure, are often located in areas with poor access where government programmes are limited or non-existent. CSOs are also usually themselves part of the population whose involvement is sought and they work with community groups as partners, emphasising local control. CSOs are largely voluntary in nature, use low cost technologies and streamlined services which enable them to operate efficiently on low budgets.

7. CSOs, being rooted in the communities they serve and orientated towards promoting initiatives, have a comparative advantage in identifying needs and building upon existing resources. More flexibly than government services, they can transfer technologies developed elsewhere and adapt them to local conditions, as well as work out innovative responses to local needs.

8. The World Education Forum held in Dakar in April 2000 reiterated the importance of working together, and made commitments to develop and strengthen the existing partnership between governments, UN bodies, Inter-governmental organisations (IGOs), the private sector and civil society, in the work to eradicate illiteracy. This commitment was reaffirmed through the Dakar Framework of Action adopted by participating governments including the FICs. A focus of the Framework is the need for consultation with a broad-based alliance of civil society to achieve goals agreed at the World Education Forum (paper PIFS(01)FEDN.09 refers).

9. Pacific governments recognise the importance of human resource development through education and training for sustained economic development (FEMM, Apia, 1999). However, their small budgets can not adequately meet all educational and training development needs, given the plurality of development priorities. FIC governments must therefore develop appropriate policies and strategies to foster effective and legitimate partnerships between the governments, their agencies and CSOs, traditional and indigenous institutions, community-based organisations, private sector, donors and other stakeholders. Such partnerships are crucial in creating and maintaining a concerted effort toward sustainable development.

Trends in Basic Education and Training Delivery in Pacific

10. FICS are finding it increasingly difficult to administer, control and finance their education systems. The strengthening and consolidation of existing partnership arrangements has therefore become unavoidable. In Fiji (as with most other FICs) the national government provide the following support to Schools (Education Commission Report, 2000):

- *Overall administration of and policy-making for the education system,*
- *Registering and monitoring schools and providing advisory services,*
- *Paying for tuition for the first ten years of schooling,*
- *Defining and designing curriculum and producing related materials,*
- *Setting and overseeing external examinations,*
- *Training teachers,*
- *Licensing and employing teachers,*
- *Providing grants for buildings and other purposes.(Education Commission report, 2000)*

11. The churches and communities, committees, councils and other private organisations administering schools tend to provide:

- *land for schools*
- *establish and build schools,*
- *equipment and maintenance of schools,*
- *control the finance of schools including government grants through school committees,*
- *pay for utilities such as electricity, water and telephone,*
- *resources such as text-books, library books and stationery,*
- *pay auxiliary staff such as cleaners, maintenance staff and secretaries,*
- *in rural areas, provide teachers with living quarters, and supply utilities,*

12. Roles and responsibilities of government and the community differ slightly between countries. Generally, there is more CSO and church participation in the provision and delivery of basic education in the bigger and more populous Melanesian countries.

- **Early Childhood Education**

13. ECE enrolment in the region has increased and demand for it is growing. Until June 2000 ECE enrolment had increased by ten-fold within a span of three years in the Solomon Islands. FIC governments are slowly becoming engaged in ECE. CSOs, churches, community groups and volunteer organisations have been the pioneers and still the providers of ECE in many FICs except in Nauru, Niue, Cook Islands and to some extent Marshall Islands and recently Vanuatu that have state funded ECE systems. In other FICs, NGOs and community associations usually with assistance from donors, provide all ECE infrastructure. In these countries there is little or no recurrent budgetary provision for ECE, reflecting the perceived low status of ECE. Low pay is the norm for ECE workers, as most are paid by the voluntary sector through users' contributions, and probably because many of these workers are untrained (Tavola, 2000).

The Challenges

- growing demand
- workers are untrained
- lack of Government commitment
- mostly provided by churches, NGOs and volunteers
- not a priority in national education plans and budgets
- heavily subsidised by rural communities and donors
- workers have limited training opportunities
- policies are either unclear or non-existent
- uncoordinated
- little and unreliable data

- **Primary and Junior Secondary Education**

14. Marked progress has been made in the Pacific in primary school enrolment. There is conflicting information in the literature on enrolment rates in the Pacific. However, the average gross enrolment for the region is close to 80%. Throughout the region, governments take the lead in the provision and delivery of primary education, except in Fiji where the churches, NGOs, communities and private organisations provide for about 80% of primary

school enrolment. Most teacher costs, teacher training, and development and supply of curriculum materials are state funded. Student costs are also subsidized up to year 8 and 10 in most FICs, except in a few Melanesian countries where fees are charged from kindergarten. The land on which the schools are built is mostly customary (in rural areas), or government owned (in urban areas) and given rent free for school use, but usually not registered. Governments in the region are finding it difficult to provide quality primary education services to outer islands and distant rural communities. Generally, urban primary schools have better infrastructure, more complete curriculum materials and attract more and better trained teachers. There may be greater scope for the involvement of CSOs in the delivery of primary level education to these communities in particular where community support and involvement is crucial.

15. Secondary Schooling, on the other hand is often in short supply, particularly in isolated and remote areas of the Pacific. The lack of availability of boarding places in church run schools often disadvantages girls. Some church run boarding secondary schools provide fewer dormitory places for girls. Furthermore, if schools are available in remote areas, good teachers often do not serve there and if deployed, do not remain for long, while facilities, textbooks and other materials are often limited (UNICEF, 2000). In some FICs even though girls generally do better than the boys in the final primary school examination only half as many girls as boys gain access to places in senior secondary schools due to the unavailability of places.

COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL EXPLOSION IN SOLOMON ISLANDS

Under the world bank funded 3rd Education and Training Project, which ended in 2000, five pilot Day Junior Secondary Schools (DJSS) were constructed. The first of these were opened in 1994. This added only 116 secondary school places. Access to secondary schooling for the 8000+ student place seekers was then 29%. The five world bank built DJSSs cost about SBD\$1 million each but only accounted for about 1,050 secondary school places.

Political Will and People Power.

By late 1994, the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development received 9 applications from 9 primary schools wishing to expand their operations to include up to three years of Junior Secondary Schooling (form 3 or year 9) and approval was granted by the Minister of Education. By 1995 Community High Schools' (CHSs) enrolment had risen from 116 to 608 and by 1996, another 18 schools were opened. By 1998, enrolment had risen to 7,000 pupils.

In 1996 the Minister boasted that by the year 2000, Solomon Islands would attain a 50% transition rate from primary to secondary. This was surpassed as early as 1998. In less than five years CHS enrolment had risen from 29% in 1994 to 52.9% in 1998. The access rate as at June 2000 stood at about 60%. This could not have been achieved without the broad support from the community and various civil society organisations.

16. The above development has helped communities to have greater “ownership” of the school, and strengthened parent-community-school linkages. Moreover, the development of Community High Schools has resulted in increased participation of girls from about 30% in 1990 to 40% in 1998 (for cultural reasons, parents often hesitate to send daughters to boarding Schools). Moreover, where the community support and participation in education development has been strong, access to secondary education in those Islands and education authorities has also improved.

The Challenges

- Poor state of physical infrastructure
- places are in short supply
- lack adequate supply of trained teachers
- curriculum materials are in short supply
- provision of places often inequitable
- community involvement in schools often limited
- Inconsistent teacher in-service training and monitoring.

• Non-Formal Education

17. “The traditional education system right across the pacific is already in great flux. Government education departments without exception realize that no matter how much money, personnel and technology they pour into their systems, most peoples’ education opportunities lie outside traditional structures” (John Roughan, Adviser to the Solomon Islands Development Trust). Non-formal education is growing in recognition and is largely supplied by CSOs: “It should be seen as an education system more clearly identified with the needs of the rural economy, but not to the exclusion of the growing groups of urban dwellers.” (Cole, 1996).

18. Adult and community and non formal education in the Pacific is largely conducted by CSOs with increasing Government involvement on issues such as health, environment, women, business, nutrition, agriculture, literacy, numeracy and life skills. Typically CSOs have urban and rural-based networks and their programmes are delivered in a wide variety of forms including advocacy, drama, print materials, workshops, and seminars. The enthusiasm of the communities to work with CSOs has made this education process effective. In Papua New Guinea where there are over 800 distinct languages, the programme on literacy in community was said to be costing very little as a result of combined efforts of provincial and CSOs.

The Onesua Vocational centre , Vanuatu

Responding to the challenge presented by children pushed out from primary education, the Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu established training centres with the following objectives:

- To offer the young people of Vanuatu skills, motivation and self-respect that can lead to them becoming productive citizens within their home environment
- Encourage the development of leadership skills so that youth might reach their full potential as members of the community
- Merge an understanding of tradition and culture with new methods of construction, horticulture, nutrition, sanitation and home economics to improve quality of life
- To encourage citizenship and participation in regional and national development.

The principle centre Onesua, located on Efate Island, provides training for both young men and women between the age of 17-25 years. Before entry, it is essential they should have the support of their parents as well as village leaders and the community generally.

The girls centre opened in 1982, and has to date provided training for 218 students in activities designed to assist income generation as well as providing leadership in community education programs directed at women’s and youth groups. The boys centre opened in 1991, and has provided training for 48 young men in building and furniture making. This involves the construction of cement blocks and tanks, smokeless stoves, toilets and community buildings. Although the number of entrants is low in relation to the emerging needs of the drop-out population in Vanuatu, this is an important component of the total effort being provided by non-government organisations. A recent review by an independent consultant commended the work being done at these two centres.

Source: Pacific 2010; Opportunities for NFE in Melanesia, (R.V.Cole, 1996).

The Challenges

- Lack of adequate policy framework
- Women and rural communities are well placed to benefit but often not included
- Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms lacking
- Procedures for ensuring accountability of funds and material resources lacking

Policy Issues in the Delivery of Basic Education

19. Emerging from the discussion above are some distinct issues in delivering basic education and training in the Pacific, notably the key education policy issues of access, quality and equity.

• Enhancing access to education

20. Access to basic formal education is a problem more associated with Melanesia than Polynesia or Micronesia. On average about 40% of children, mostly girls, in Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu never actually enroll in a primary school, (compared to about 6% in Polynesia and about 16% in Micronesia). In Melanesia, of those that are able to attend the sparsely located primary schools, about 24% have opportunity to enter secondary school, (compared to 55% in Polynesia and 43% in Micronesia). Lack of confidence in the ability of the formal education system to address livelihood issues, high school fees, concerns with the curriculum have tended to discourage particularly rural participation.

21. Throughout the region, the involvement of CSOs, churches, and local communities is significant. Church, private and public schooling have co-existed for decades. The churches were the first to introduce schooling in the Pacific. The governments soon became involved but concentrated their efforts mainly in the secondary sector. School providers and the government became partners in the ownership, administration and financing of education. In Fiji, the government owns 0.4 % of the 710 primary schools and about 8 % of the 154 secondary schools (Fiji Government, 2000). While in Solomon Islands, the government owns close to 90% of the 556 primary schools and more than 70% of the 100 secondary schools.

Table 2. Enrolment by Type of Schools

Country	Youth Est. 1998	Primary Enrolment %	Secondary Enrolment %	NFE Enrolment %	Literacy Rate %
Cook Is.	2 850	100	49		94
FSM	23 950	83	44		72
Fiji	159 360	89	43	20	86
Kiribati	15 340	77	44		79
Marshall Is.	13 260	79	49		74
Nauru	2 000	96	34		95
Niue	240	96	53		98
PNG	894 220	31	23	1.3	28
Samoa	37 100	94	70		96
Solomon Is	86 080	85	26	2.2	30
Tonga	20 130	90	67		99
Tuvalu	1 720	88	34		95
Vanuatu	36 360	72	22	0.83	34

Source: Human Development Report, UNDP, 1999; State of the Pacific Youth Report, 1998; The World Bank Report, 2000

22. CSOs' tend to dominate the provision of non-formal education in the majority of rural communities focusing on a wide range of livelihood and skills training programmes. Government involvement in community education programmes in FICs is an opportunity to strengthen and integrate these CSO programmes and provide coordination in order to ensure the limited funds available are put to effective use. There is also greater potential for the private sector to assist in this area by providing supporting funds to carry out integrated community education training and programmes in related fields. For example, food processing industries can help fund food and nutrition awareness raising and practices; general merchandise and accounting businesses can assist in running small income generating training, credit and saving schemes. Similarly, handicraft industries can help out in quality handicraft production; companies operating sustainable forestry harvesting assist in environmental and reforestation awareness programmes; tourism investors in eco-tourism ventures etc.

- **Enhancing quality of education**

23. Many claim that private and church schools are generally of better quality than public schools (cf. Gannicott 2000, Bray 1996 and Tedesco 1997).

24. Involvement of Churches and the private sector and other CSOs in education enhances teaching and learning practices. In the formal sector, studies have associated private schools with quality education. Many examples exist of public schools that deliver comparable quality education. This is readily evident in public schools where government financial support is high. Moreover, schools, whether private or public, that receive adequate community support with better facilities and are adequately equipped with teaching and learning materials, also produce good results.

25. Other factors which are often associated with good results from community, church or private schools in the Pacific include improved parental monitoring of child progress and teacher performance, good management and greater accountability to the local community. (UNICEF/PIC, 1993).

26. The shortage of teachers especially in ECE is a common issue as national teacher training institutions have limited places for annual intakes. A shared responsibility between government, CSO and the private sector to address this deficiency is feasible, where the latter helps out in training and providing teacher training facilities to complement the former who is also responsible for teachers salaries. Similarly, private companies can assist in funding and sponsoring training of teachers for schools they establish for their employees' children. The Melanesian countries where large logging and mining companies are operating could explore this.

27. A number of researchers have found many schools in FICs have partly or unqualified teachers, especially in ECE and primary school levels. This is a result of a shortage of teachers for fast growing populations. Ongoing pressures for increasing numbers of classroom teachers results in few of the untrained teachers being able to undertake formal teacher training. In Tonga, access to the PEACESAT network has helped primary teachers, and the Commonwealth distance education programme has assisted the Solomon Islands to upgrade their teacher basic literacy and numeracy levels.

28. Policy and curriculum development that includes CSOs can result in tangible improvements. Without any mechanism for participation in policy, curriculum planning and design, CSO contributions may never be fully exploited. Their contributions in the shaping

of formal school curriculum have produced good results in some FICs. Health, food production and nutrition, home economics, which dominate topics of community education programmes, have been integrated into core curricula of both primary and secondary schools in some countries (UNICEF, 1993).

29. Other community/adult education programmes carried out by CSOs have positive impacts on the livelihoods of community members. Workshop programmes such as entrepreneur skills, small income generating activities, savings schemes are useful to rural communities in meeting the demands of a subsistence economy. In societies where women are the main food producers for households, they have tended to become more involved in small income generating activities. This, in turn, has helped them to provide basic education for their children. Governments can be active partners with CSOs in this basic but vital area for rural subsistence communities to ensure their sustainability.

30. Related to this is the growing acknowledgement among educationalists that conventional school systems fail to help children pick up basic skills and competencies crucial for continued learning and for coping with diverse forms of change. This is only partly due to unsuitable content; it has also much to do with unsuitable teaching-learning methodologies and with the difficulties of schools to effectively assist different categories of youngsters. The pedagogical critique is that schools cannot handle diversity among their (potential) clientele: in terms of background, circumstances, age and gender, learning styles and specific learning needs. The schools' response is to expect children to blend into the existing system without structurally adapting the system to their specific needs. In this situation the central issue is that basic education no longer bridges the cultural and social gap between the school and the community. The disjunction between (western) school culture and (local) popular culture is seen to contribute greatly to poor pupil learning and the persistence of one-sided expectations regarding educational benefits.¹

• **Promoting Educational Equity**

31. Acquiring of quality basic education should not be restricted to traditional classroom settings or to a particular age range or stage of life (Tedesco, 1997). Education is a human right for every child, youth and adult. However, the limited capacity of some FIC governments to provide adequate basic education for their youth is of concern. This is a more serious issue in the Melanesian countries with larger and more youthful populations, and high illiteracy rates.

32. Formal Education, though an important process with functional and intrinsic values, is not, as noted above, a solution to all problems, nor is it an alternative to other development programmes or structural change" (ASPBAE, 2000). Some countries in the Asian region have effectively linked literacy with poverty alleviation, gender issues, health education, water and sanitation issues, savings and credit schemes as well as human rights awareness. Many CSOs are carrying out similar programmes in the Pacific particularly rural areas and outer islands. Governments can and should consider actively supporting the CSOs in these interventions. Integrated efforts by all actors including government, CSOs, the private sector and churches can also address lifelong learning opportunities, protect the right to education and the exclusion of disadvantaged groups. The reasoning, or rationale, here is that the "poor" need to participate more fully in "growth" and their concerns reflected in development planning. Universal notions of growth ignore local perspectives of what constitutes needs and priorities, and what is defined as "progress" and "advancement". The

¹ Nonformal Education, Distance Education and the Resturucturing of Schooling: Challenges for a new Basic Education Policy, by Wim Hopper in *International Review of Education*, Vol 46, No.1, 2000.

importance of articulating such perspectives as a basis for enhanced local participation leads to an interest in what knowledge, norms and values schools actually disseminate. Findings in this regard do not correspond with what is regarded as essential for promoting local economic initiatives. Education does not deliver the goods.²

Policy Issues

33. The long-standing involvement in education of CSOs has been identified as a contributing factor to improved access, quality and equity. The international focus on the participation of civil society in education through various conventions and declarations is now increasingly reflected at the national level. Many FICs have placed, as a matter of policy, developing partnerships with all other stakeholders in the delivery of education. Likewise, CSOs are calling for more participation in making education more relevant to enhance sustainable social and economic development. FIC governments should now give due consideration to strengthening this invaluable participation as an option in education delivery by creating and developing enabling policies.

34. A few FICs have policy statements that explicitly demarcate cost sharing responsibilities between the government and CSOs. In the Cook Islands, for example, the policy states that NFE is the responsibility of CSOs. The coordination of Non Formal Education (NFE) is through the Cook Islands Association of Non-governmental Organisations (CIANGO). CIANGO has some 50 member NGOs, many of which have been involved in providing basic life skill training with donor funding assistance. Countries around the world have developed other models of state/CSO cooperation.

35. Fiji and Solomon Islands are in the process of developing NFE policies, which explicitly acknowledge and encourage CSOs, private sector and community participation. Fiji has a policy objective to set up the Fiji Council of NFE, a voluntary council to encourage, reinforce, network and moderate NFE programmes and services (*Ministry of Youth, Employment & Sports, National Policy on NFE in Fiji, Draft II, 2000*). Papua New Guinea has a National Training Policy that emphasises partnership between public and private sectors, churches and NGOs in planning, delivery and evaluation of training and similarly stated in its draft policy formulated in 1995, called 'Community Education and Literacy' (CEL). Other FICs with national policies yet to be developed have written statements that emphasize partnership between the public and private sector, churches, NGOs and civil society.

Constraints in Integrated Education Development

36. With or without policies to legitimize their involvement, CSOs, Churches and the private sector have been involved in the provision and delivery of basic formal education and skills training. Key constraints have tended to be:

- **Lack of enabling conditions**

37. Despite the extent of CSO participation in basic education, there is still little recognition of this on the part of the state. This is characterised by the absence of formal structures and policy conducive to an integrated approach for basic education development. While education is a core responsibility of the state, it needs to encompass in its structural development the reality of the much-needed contribution of all other stakeholders.

² *What is Education Worth? From Production Function to Institutional Capital, Human Capital Development Working Papers*, No 75, The World Bank, Washington, November 1996.

- **Lack of Coordination**

38. Efforts to coordinate the involvement of CSOs and the private sector are evident in some FICs. The lack of coordination in other FICs has led to wastage and duplication. Coordination entails putting in place mechanisms for collaboration/consultation/networking, monitoring and evaluation. Moreover, any coordination effort must ensure establishment of mechanisms that would enable the production of monitoring data to inform policy and action plans.

- **Lack of data**

39. Sustainable development depends on availability of credible data and data analysis. Crucial data on civil society involvement is limited. The lack of adequate information has greatly hindered the employment of integrated approaches to basic education. Analysis and assessment backed up by statistical data of past policy efforts to determine future policy approaches to education delivery are important. Such information would be useful under limited education budgets of FIC governments to avoid wasteful duplication.

- **Coordination**

40. There is need for a regional coordinating body or mechanism for education in the Pacific (Tavola, 2000). Much Pacific literature highlights the weakness in coordination of training programmes and pilot projects carried out in the region. This is exacerbated by the absence of structures to perform the coordinating role in most FICs (G N Bramford, 1986). This problem has been more obvious in non-formal and early childhood education. There is a need at national and regional levels, to establish coordinating mechanisms for basic education.

Mechanisms for Developing Partnerships in the Delivery of Basic Education

41. **Partnership Strategies** – Further research needs to be undertaken on community basic education needs, particularly in the rural and outer islands and mechanisms developed to enhance CSO, Church and private sector participation in the delivery of basic education. Governments will need to address the need to develop enabling conditions for the active participation of CSOs including the Church and private sector in basic education.

42. **Community Level** – There is already considerable diversity in the range and quality of training programmes on offer (Cole, 1996), what is required is the creation of a directory of basic education and training programmes at the community level. Local demand for such programmes is a good signal of what can be further developed and sustained. However, alongside this, community and/or national coordination mechanisms will need to be addressed.

43. **Sub-national or Local Government level** - At the sub-national or local government level, mechanisms for decentralisation enhances community participation and relevance of educational programmes based on local conditions. Educational interventions based on social issues facing the community can also be carried out by local groups, this can empower communities and build capacity at the local level.

44. **National Level** – At the national level, constructive partnerships between all stakeholders ought to be developed. They should all be involved in the education process, from planning to delivery and evaluation. Benchmarks and targets should be established and

indicators of progress agreed with the stakeholders. This will be strengthened if effective research networks are established involving CSOs, the private sector and regional educational institutions to develop appropriate and relevant teaching and learning practices in basic education. Good data and analysis will inform and make policy more effective and relevant.

45. Regional and International Levels – At the regional and international level, structures and mechanisms to facilitate partnerships (such as global and regional conferences, inter-government and inter-institutional dialogue and consultations) should be facilitated. Maintaining education on international and regional priority agendas ensures continuity of effort towards raising competitiveness of FICs in the face of globalisation and more importantly to alleviate poverty and attain quality livelihoods for all people.

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