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**SESSION 6 BACKGROUND PAPER**

**AGENDA ITEM 6(a) : EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION  
IN FORUM ISLAND COUNTRIES**

This paper has been prepared for the Forum Secretariat by consultants Dr Diana Guild and Mrs U.V.Tuivaga, with the support of UNICEF. It suggests some strategies for enhancing early childhood education for the consideration of Ministers.

**BRIEFING PAPER**  
**AGENDA ITEM 6(a) : EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION**  
**IN FORUM ISLAND COUNTRIES**  
[PIFS(02)FEDS.10]

**Purpose**

This paper provides Ministers information on the benefits of early childhood care and education (ECCE); its status in the Pacific region; and discusses the role of governments in reinforcing ECCE.

**Issues**

2. Evidence strongly indicates that high quality ECCE programmes can benefit countries by:

- Promoting intelligence of young children
- Increasing the efficiency of primary and secondary education
- Contributing to future productivity and income
- Reducing costs of health and other public services
- Reducing gender inequities
- Increasing female participation in the labour force

Integrated ECCE programmes may be the single most effective intervention for helping children, families, communities, and nations break the cycle of poverty.

3. A review of ECCE in FICs indicates that although all of the components of ECCE are addressed in some fashion by most governments, implementation of comprehensive, high quality ECCE programmes is still in the future of FICs.

- *Policies*  
Over 60% of the FICs have some sort of policy guidelines, ranging from very brief statements to comprehensive documents. Six FICs have a dedicated resource person for ECCE within Ministries, while half have ECCE/Preschool Associations.
- *Curriculum Development and Implementation*  
Most FICs have used the BELS *ECCE Curriculum Guidelines* to develop their own curriculum guidelines. Some national curricula are very brief and general, others are detailed and articulate. A few countries use United States or New Zealand curriculum documents. Two countries have developed curriculum documents in the vernacular.
- *Children's Enrolment*  
The percentage of the total age population served by ECCE programmes varies greatly, typically for an age range between the ages of 3-6 years.
- *Teacher Qualifications*  
Many teachers in FICs have little formal ECCE training and the requirements to be considered a qualified teacher vary. The funding of

teacher education and training also varies, but it appears that in many FICs governments take on a large portion of the responsibility.

- *Teacher Remuneration*  
Although there is little specific information available, it is apparent that teachers in FICs are in general poorly paid. Governments of six FICs take at least some responsibility for teacher remuneration, but typically remuneration is from a variety of sources, including teachers regularly volunteering their services.
- *Teacher-to-Children Ratios*  
Several countries' statistics indicate an optimum ratio of one teacher for fifteen children but the ratios vary widely, between ten and forty children.
- *Programme Operations*  
Most FICs have programmes that operate between three and five days per week, for half-day (3-4 hour) sessions. Responsibility for facility maintenance and educational resources and materials is divided between governments, development partners, management committees, and communities.
- *Facilities*  
There exist some purpose-built facilities throughout the region particularly in urban areas. However, access to working toilets and safe drinking water is a common problem.
- *Development Partnerships*  
Educational materials and equipment, facilities, curriculum development, and teacher training have all been addressed to some extent in many of the FICs. However, types of assistance received may not be in response to coherent plans of actions for ECCE development and FICs generally have accepted assistance in any area in which it was available.

4. Governments can play an important role in the implementation of high quality ECCE programmes in financially realistic ways. Formal, full, and complete acceptance of responsibility of ECCE is not necessary. The enhancement of ECCE programmes can be implemented in parts or phases. However, FIC governments must be very clear about the areas of responsibility that they will accept, and delegate remaining responsibilities to other groups. The identification of priorities for coherent ECCE development and clarification of government roles and responsibilities for ECCE are two of the most important things that governments can do.

5. Investment in ECCE should include promoting the development of integrated, multi-sectoral programmes which focus on the needs of young children. To be sustainable, such programmes must be an integral part of countries' overall strategy for developing human capital.

## **Recommendations**

It is recommended that Ministers consider:

- (a) Reviewing and strengthening national policies on ECCE.
- (b) Clarifying government roles and responsibilities for ECCE programmes
- (c) Undertaking a leading role in the coordination of development partnership assistance in order to create sustainable support and ensure follow-through of development plans.
- (d) Developing national plans of action on ECCE that identify the priorities and specific areas of development to include the following:
  - Appointing a national ECCE Coordinator and Area Advisors to provide advisory services, monitor development of ECCE programmes, and liaise between communities, PSAs, and governments
  - Prioritise curriculum development and implementation in their national education development plans
  - Undertake an analysis of teacher remuneration costs in order to inform governments' future discussions for the financial assistance of teachers' salaries
  - Prioritise the clarification of roles and responsibilities of providing teacher education and training in ECCE policy guidelines
  - Conduct an analysis of trained and untrained teacher needs in order to inform teacher education plans
  - Develop a consistent, ongoing programme of professional education utilising national and/or regional tertiary institutions
  - Initiate the collection of data in order to monitor ECCE programme operations and inform future plans for upgrading of ECCE services.
  - Develop policies on facilities, toilets, safe drinking water and educational material and resources for licensing and monitoring purposes

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## **Abbreviations and Acronyms used in this Report**

AusAid	Australian Agency for International Development
AVI	Australian Volunteers International
BELS	Basic Education and Literacy Support
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
EFA	Education for All
EU	European Union
FBEAP	Forum Basic Education Action Plan
FECA	Fiji Early Childhood Association
FICs	Forum Island Countries
HOPA	Honiara Preschool Association
LTC	Lautoka Teachers College
NKDT	National Komiunity Development Trust
MOE	Ministry of Education
NZAid	New Zealand Agency for International Development
NZODA	New Zealand Official Development Assistance
PSABV	Pri-Skul Asosiesen Blong Vanuatu
PPTC	Pacific Preschool Teachers Certificate
PSA	Preschool Association
SICHE	Solomon Islands College of Higher Education
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Social and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USP	University of the South Pacific
VSA	Volunteer Services Abroad
VSO	Volunteer Services Overseas

## Executive Summary

### *Purpose of study*

The objective of this report is to provide Forum island country (FIC) Ministers of Education information on the benefits of early childhood care and education (ECCE); its status in the Pacific region; and to outline the potential role of Pacific governments in supporting it.

### *Findings*

2. The main findings are that:

(a) High quality ECCE programmes can benefit countries by:

- Promoting intelligence of young children
- Increasing the efficiency of primary and secondary education
- Contributing to future productivity and income
- Reducing costs of health and other public services
- Reducing gender inequities
- Increasing female participation in the labour force

(b) The status of ECCE programmes varies widely among FICs in the following areas:

- Policies
- Curriculum development and implementation
- Children's enrolment
- Teacher qualifications and remuneration
- Teacher-to-children ratios
- Programmes
- Facilities
- Development partnerships

(c) FIC governments can play an important role in the implementation of high quality ECCE programmes in financially realistic ways. The identification of priorities for coherent ECCE development and clarification of government roles and responsibilities for ECCE are two of the most important things that governments can do at this time.

3. For the purposes of this report, the definition of early childhood care and education programmes will be narrowed to include centre-based day care and formal preschool programmes for children typically between two and six years of age. This is because these types of programmes form the majority of programmes in FICs.

4. This report summarises why investment in ECCE is worthwhile, inventories the benefits of investing in ECCE, discusses some basic elements of quality programmes, identifies costs associated with quality ECCE programmes, and discusses the implications of those costs and benefits for FICs. It provides an overview of a variety of components within early childhood education for each FIC. Lastly, this report examines the potential role of governments in ECCE and offers

financially realistic strategies to address the expansion and improvement of comprehensive ECCE programmes.

5. Investing in ECCE programmes is one of the best ways that countries can improve education and productivity. The early childhood years provide the foundation for all later learning and the development of life skills. ECCE programmes offer an extraordinary opportunity to avoid or moderate learning problems, and to bring lasting benefits to individuals and society. Research findings have demonstrated that support of early development yields rich benefits not only in immediate ways for the child and her/his parents, but also over time in terms of the child's ability to contribute to the community.

6. Evidence from the developed and developing world indicates that interventions can:

- Promote the intelligence of young children
- Increase the efficiency of primary and secondary education
- Contribute to poverty reduction by increasing future productivity and income
- Reduce costs of health and other public services

7. Indirect benefits from early childhood interventions can include:

- Reduction of gender inequities
- Increased female participation in the labour force

8. Good quality ECCE programmes seek to address all of children's basic needs. In addition to food, protection, and health care, ECCE programmes must also provide affection, intellectual stimulation, supportive human interaction, and opportunities and activities that promote learning.

9. Cost-benefit analysis of ECCE programmes is particularly difficult. First, all of the costs borne by the programme need to be computed from diverse sources of finance. Second, benefits are long-term and difficult to quantify. Not all of them are easily assessed in monetary terms. However, spending on ECCE programmes can reduce other costs, and overall expenditures may not increase (as, for example, when costs related to repetition in primary school are reduced or when early attention reduces health costs later on).

10. In light of available evidence of the effects of early childhood education, ECCE programmes in Pacific island countries have a number of crucial roles to play. The first and most obvious is to improve children's skills and energy to cope with the cognitive and social demands of formal schooling as a developmental setting to assure a more positive initial school experience. A positive initial school experience can boost a child's psychological capacity to cope with subsequent school demands, including those created by school system inadequacies.

11. The second is the potential role of ECCE programmes in FICs in promoting wider community development. In some countries, community involvement in preschool has become the entry point for parent education and community consciousness about health, sanitation, and nutrition.

12. Thirdly, quality ECCE programmes stress child development and broader intellectual growth. These skills may be vital in school adjustment as well as beyond the confines of the classroom.

13. The overview of ECCE in FICs indicates that the status of ECCE components discussed varies throughout the region. The overview of ECCE in FICs shows that although all of the components of ECCE are addressed in some fashion by most governments, implementation of comprehensive, high quality ECCE programmes is still in the future of FICs.

- Although most FICs have some sort of *policy guidelines*, they range from very brief statements to detailed and comprehensive documents. Six FICs have a dedicated person within the Ministry of Education. Half of the FICs have ECCE/Preschool Associations.
- Most FICs have *curriculum guidelines*, though some are very brief and general, while others are detailed and articulate. Three countries use Head Start Programme and one country uses the *Te Whaariki* (New Zealand) early childhood education curriculum documents. Two countries have developed curriculum documents in the vernacular.
- The percentage of the total age population served by ECCE programmes varies greatly throughout the region. The typical age range of children enrolled in programmes is three to six.
- Many teachers in FICs have little formal *ECCE training*. Education and/or requirements to be considered a qualified teacher vary throughout the region. The funding of teacher education and training also varies.
- Although there is little specific information available, teachers in FICs are in general poorly paid. Typically, remuneration is from a variety of sources. There are indications that in a few countries, teachers regularly volunteer their services, or are remunerated in-kind.
- Several countries' statistics indicate an optimum ratio of one teacher for fifteen children (1:15). The ratios vary widely, with teachers having responsibility for between ten and forty children.
- Most FICs have programmes that operate between three and five days per week, for half-day (3-4 hour) sessions. Responsibility for facility maintenance and educational resources and materials is divided primarily between governments, development partners, management committees, and communities.
- There exist some purpose-built facilities throughout the region- particularly in urban areas, in each FIC. However, not all children and teachers have access to working toilets and/or safe drinking water.
- There is a wide variety of activities occurring within ECCE. However, types of assistance received may not be in response to coherent plans of actions for ECCE development. FICs appear to have accepted assistance in any area in which it was available, rather than focusing assistance from a variety of partners into one specific area.

14. The cost of implementing major changes to current ECCE programmes is believed to be financially unrealistic for most FICs. The inadequate support for ECCE programmes has been attributed to both financial constraints and a lack of knowledge about the impact of young children's experiences to later development and learning. In addition, many of the FICs are dependent on voluntary organisations and

communities to provide early childhood services. However, given the impact that good quality ECCE programmes have on children, their families, communities, and nations, it is imperative that governments renew their efforts in this area.

15. Expansion and improvement of ECCE programmes in a coherent, systematic way are the next tasks. To this end, governments may wish to assess the current situation, and include wide consultation with parent and community stakeholders. This consultation with stakeholders should result in a national “vision”. This vision would then form the basis for implementing the strategies listed below.

## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IN FORUM ISLAND COUNTRIES

“Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, specially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children”

(Goal 1 of the *Dakar 2000 Education for All Framework for Action*)

“While continuing with collaborative efforts with NGOs, church and community organisations in providing ECE to pre-school age children, governments should address resource requirements for ECE teacher training and assess how ECE teachers can obtain appropriate status and conditions of employment”

(The *Forum Basic Education Action Plan (FBEAP)*)

### *Purpose*

The purpose of this report is to:

- Summarise why investment in ECCE is worthwhile
- Inventory the benefits of investing in ECCE
- Discuss some basic elements of quality programmes
- Identify costs associated with quality ECCE programmes
- Discuss the implications of those costs and benefits for FICs
- Provide an overview of the status of a variety of components within early childhood education for each FIC
- Examine the potential role of governments in ECCE
- Offer financially realistic strategies for FIC governments to address the expansion and improvement of comprehensive ECCE programmes.

2. The World Bank estimates that in many countries, "the average dollar invested in Primary education returns twice as much as one invested in higher education" (UNICEF, 1990). But primary school may already be too late to start working toward a universal basic education. There is some evidence to indicate that the economic benefits to society of high quality early childhood care and education (ECCE) programmes can outweigh programme costs more than five fold. Research shows increasingly that the time to start is during the very early years of a child's life. A young child's mental and physical development is at its optimum in the early years. The basis of language is laid at this time. Attitudes and social relations are shaped. This is the "age of discovery" when the mind is at its most pliable, most receptive. It represents the optimum time for preventive work, which can save a lifetime of costly remedial efforts. Indeed, children who attend preschool demonstrate less delinquency, a lower school drop-out rate, or less need for remedial teaching or special education. They also enter the work force sooner and are less dependent on state.

3. Within the last two decades there has been a growing recognition in many parts of the world of the importance of early childhood education. Powerful social and political pressures have contributed to the interest in the expansion of educational facilities for children before entry to formal schooling. These pressures have included the desire to use early childhood education as a means of reducing inequalities in educational opportunity and of giving socially disadvantaged children a better start in

life; the increasing numbers of mothers of young children taking up employment outside the home; the changing attitudes of women to their own role in society; and the difficulties experienced in modern conditions of providing adequately for the social and intellectual needs of young children within the home.

4. Although attendance at primary school is compulsory in many FICs, some children leave schools without completing even the early years. In addition, the transition to primary school itself can be daunting, and securing a good education within a system that may be strapped for educational materials and resources can be difficult. The personal and social costs include high primary school repetition and drop-out rates, a high rate of illiteracy, and an expanding base of minimally flexible and adaptive people.

5. ECCE programmes in FICs can address these problems by assuring a more positive initial school experience, which can enhance children's ability to cope with difficult primary school experiences.

6. There are, too, other reasons for early education beyond the improvement of children's chances to enter and remain in school successfully. ECCE programmes that stress child development and broader intellectual growth provide skills that may be vital beyond the confines of the classroom. In addition, ECCE programmes can play a potential role in promoting wider community development. In some developing countries, community involvement in ECCE programmes has resulted in parent education and community consciousness about health, sanitation, and nutrition.

### **The Benefits of Early Childhood Care and Education Programmes**

7. The purpose of this section is to summarise why investment in ECCE is worthwhile. It will inventory the benefits of investing in ECCE, describe some basic elements of quality programmes, discuss their costs, and draw out the implications for FICs.

8. It is well known that the early years of life are crucial to the course of a human being's physical, mental, social, and emotional development. It is also clear that investing in ECCE programmes will provide children, especially the less fortunate, with opportunities to acquire the necessary skills for meaningful participation in society.

9. ECCE programmes offer a rare opportunity to address a number of intersecting concerns. Properly designed and implemented, they can have multidimensional benefits, including:

- Enhancing school readiness
- Increasing the efficiency of primary and secondary school investments
- Increasing children's prospects for higher productivity and future income (which reduces the probability that they will become burdens of public health and social service budgets)
- Fostering beneficial social behavior
- Enhancing the efficacy of health and nutrition initiatives
- Helping mothers become earners

### *Definition of Early Childhood Care and Education Programmes*

10. The literature concerned with benefits and costs of early childhood care and education refers to a variety of programmes, such as parental education, home day care or centre-based day care, nonformal or formal preschool, and social communications. However, for the purposes of this review, the definition of early childhood care and education programmes will be narrowed to include centre-based day care and formal preschool programmes for children typically between two and six years of age. This is because these types of programmes form the majority of programmes in FICs. The information and studies included in this report are based on these two types of programmes.

### *The Benefits of Investing in ECCE*

11. Investing in ECCE programmes can moderate learning problems and bring lasting benefits to individuals and society. Evidence from the developed and developing world indicates that some interventions can promote the intelligence of young children, increase the efficiency of primary and secondary education, contribute to future productivity and income, and reduce costs of health and other public services. Indirect benefits from early childhood interventions can include reduction of gender inequities, and increased female participation in the labour force.

#### Intelligence

12. Medical and education research has shown that the development of intelligence, personality, and social behavior occurs most rapidly in humans during their earliest years. It is estimated that half of all intellectual development potential is established by the age of four. Research has shown that ECCE interventions can have a lasting effect on intellectual capacity. For example, children who participated in ECCE programmes in Jamaica, Colombia, Peru, and Turkey scored higher, on average, on intellectual aptitude tests than did non participants. In addition, studies conducted on US Head Start preschool programmes have consistently found evidence of positive effects on IQ and cognitive development. ECCE programmes promote the intelligence of young children, helping to ready them for schooling and a productive role in society.

#### Schooling

13. By increasing children's desire and ability to learn, investment in ECCE can increase the return on investment in their primary and secondary education by making that education more effective. In both developed and developing countries, research suggests that participation in ECCE programmes can improve the child's school readiness skills, lower primary school enrolment ages, reduce repetition and dropout rates, and improve academic performance.

14. Several studies have found that children who attended US Head Start preschool programmes had better developed abilities at the point of entry into school, and greater achievement at the end of primary school. Studies in Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America confirmed that early intervention can increase school readiness, promote timely school enrolment, lower repetition and dropout rates, and improve academic skills. In Colombia, the Promesa programme cited significantly higher enrolment rates in primary school among programme children than among non

participants. In the Solomon Islands, preparatory education experience appeared to be a significant indicator of reading comprehension and mathematics in the early primary school years. Early research in relation to the *tok ples priskul* in Papua New Guinea suggested that children who attended *priskul* did better at primary school.

#### Future Productivity and Income

15. Investing in early childhood education generates higher economic returns than investments in primary or secondary schooling and reduces social costs. ECCE programmes increase both the prospective earnings potential from a given level of schooling and the net prospective benefits from additional education achievement.

#### Health and Other Public Services

16. Investment in ECCE can enhance other investments, such as health and nutrition programmes. Research suggests that health and nutrition are positively associated with physical and cognitive abilities, school readiness, and classroom behavior.

17. ECCE programmes can be vehicles for extending primary health services. By providing appropriate activities, early childhood education programmes can enhance the efficacy of health care and nutrition initiatives by facilitating growth monitoring and provision of food supplements. They can also help ensure that children receive health care, including a high probability of immunization. Through the education of parents associated with many ECCE programmes, health care costs can be cut by preventative measures that reduce disease and accidents, thereby avoiding more expensive treatments.

18. Ample evidence suggests that investing in ECCE attacks some of the most entrenched causes of poverty. A large part of cognitive achievement differentials between lower socioeconomic and higher-income groups can be attributed to the malnutrition, lack of sanitation, and low levels of psychological stimulation common among poor children. All of these factors can be positively affected by education. ECCE programmes can help reduce societal inequalities rooted in poverty by helping to provide young children from disadvantaged backgrounds with a more equitable start in life and a foundation for further schooling.

19. In addition, ECCE programmes can play a role in assisting governments in reducing the need for public welfare expenditures later and cutting down on the social and financial costs associated with grade repetition, juvenile delinquency, and drugs.

#### Participation of Girls and Women

20. Indirect benefits from early childhood interventions can include reduction of gender inequities, increased female participation in the labour force, and increased community development efforts.

21. Girls derive considerable benefits from early childhood education programmes, for the barrier of gender inequality frequently affects them even before they enter school. Discrimination in education begins early in some cultures. Strategies to improve girls' participation in education include attention to their readiness for primary school. ECCE programmes are an important aid in assisting to overcome discriminatory barriers and gender inequalities that exist at the time of first

entry into school. ECCE programmes can also lower girls' repetition rates in primary school.

22. Girls with adequate education grow into women who have a good chance of being fully productive in the labour market. These women can then avoid work in the margins of the economy for little remuneration. In turn, better paying jobs allow mothers to purchase adequate childcare. With care available, women are mobile between the home and the labour market. Childcare is also a prerequisite to women's attaining some degree of equality with men in the labour force and to having time to pursue opportunities for additional learning and education. Moreover, the availability of childcare has the potential to increase the productivity of self-employed women as well as the productivity of those engaged in agricultural activities.

### *Quality Early Childhood Care and Education Programmes*

23. The effects of health care, nutrition, and stimulation on young children's mental, physical, and emotional growth are synergistic and cannot be broken up into separate domains. Therefore, good quality ECCE programmes seek to address all of children's basic needs. In addition to food, protection, and health care, ECCE programmes must also provide affection, intellectual stimulation, supportive human interaction, and opportunities and activities that promote learning. A good quality programme can be defined by the following characteristics:

- It is well managed and monitored
- Parents become partners with teachers in educating the child
- Children are taught, as much as possible, in their mother tongue
- Teachers are professionals, educated in early childhood care and education
- Competent, committed teachers plan and work together in teams to provide mutual support and individual attention to children
- A high degree of adult-child interaction
- The programme is organised around a specific curriculum appropriate to children's ages and stages of development
- There is an emphasis on concrete and exploratory, hands-on activities, rather than abstract ideas and rote memorisation
- Teachers are trained in the curriculum through ongoing inservice training
- A high teacher-to-children ratio, for example, one teacher for fifteen children

24. One of the most common misconceptions about ECCE programmes is that they should teach young children how to read, write, and do maths. In reality, young children are not ready developmentally for these abstract skills. A good ECCE programme provides the foundation for these skills and concentrates therefore on pre-literacy and pre-maths activities through a variety of concrete activities: blocks, drawing and painting, telling and listening to stories, patterning, counting and moving objects, etc. For an excellent example of such activities, please see the sample pages from Vanuatu's curriculum document included as Appendix 6.

25. Integrated ECCE programmes (those which address all of the components) may be the single most effective intervention for helping children, families, communities, and nations break the intergenerational cycle of poverty.

## *The Costs of Early Childhood Care and Education Programmes*

26. The benefits of ECCE programmes are clear. Children, families, and nations all gain greatly from investing in early childhood education. However, the question of financial costs to governments is always foremost when considering further investment in quality ECCE programmes.

27. The issue of who provides the financing and bears the costs becomes extremely important as ECCE programmes are implemented and expanded. In most ECCE programmes, the real costs are a shared responsibility. The most common sources of support for ECCE programmes are:

- Parents/families
- Communities
- Governments (at various levels)
- Private sector (employers, private providers, businesses)
- Social sector (churches, local development partnerships, early childhood education/preschool associations)
- International development partnerships

28. Although FIC governments all recognise the importance of good quality ECCE programmes, financial constraints and competing priorities from other education sectors occur. The financial constraints facing governments are an important factor when committing resources to the ECCE sector. These financial constraints can lead to a lack of subsidies for ECCE programmes, forcing parents to pay fees for attendance. This, in turn, makes it difficult for children of poor families to participate in ECCE programmes. Parents may find sending their children to an ECCE programme is more costly than primary or secondary education.

29. From an economic perspective, ECCE programmes can be considered a good investment if the ratio of benefits to costs is high. There are some studies from developed countries that indicate the cost-per-child of services. However, such information is mostly lacking for developing countries.

30. Cost-benefit analysis of ECCE programmes is particularly difficult because all of the costs borne by the programme need to be computed, regardless of the source of finance. In ECCE programmes, some costs are usually omitted (such as private costs, volunteer work, training, and/or turnover of staff), either because of the difficulty of assigning shadow prices to costs, or because the necessary information is not available.

31. In addition, in many cases it is difficult to determine the exact amount invested in early education, because no single ministry or institution is in charge of providing ECCE services. Rather, several ministries, private agencies, parents, and development partners shoulder various components, including sites and facilities, programme focus (direct or indirect services to children), equipment, food supplies, staff training and salaries, and programme evaluation. As a result, countries often offer a wide range of programmes, service delivery is fragmented, and the sources and systems of finance vary greatly.

32. However, early investment may save costs later on. The economic arguments for investing in ECCE programmes have gained force in relation to the broad shift in economic policy occurring world-wide. This shift emphasises open economies which require a well-educated and flexible labour force in order to compete globally. In light of this the need to improve the human resource base of a country is important. Improving that base is a process that begins well before children enter formal schooling.

33. Having a clear national vision, setting priorities and goals in consultation with stakeholders would assist in the definition of needs and cost-conscious organisational changes. Changes in organisation and management of ECCE programmes can help governments accurately identify and reduce costs in three main ways:

- Identifying and correcting the wasteful use of resources
- Changing programme design, organisation, and/or technology
- Realising economies of scale

#### *Implications for Forum Island Countries*

34. In western countries with their compulsory schooling systems, the vast majority of children have access to and remain in school until the end of the compulsory segment. There the issue for early education, particularly for low-income families, may be whether or not preschool can help to ensure a career of school enjoyment and achievement and help set the child on a road that will avoid disillusionment with school.

35. In FICs, however, consistent attendance at and completing primary school may be difficult due to personal, family, economic, or school circumstances. The personal and social costs of poor attendance and incomplete education for FICs include high primary school repetition and drop-out rates, a high rate of illiteracy, and an expanding base of minimally flexible and adaptive human resources.

36. In light of available evidence of the effects of early childhood education, ECCE programmes in FICs have a number of crucial roles to play. The first and most obvious is to improve children's skills and energy to cope with the cognitive and social demands of formal schooling as a developmental setting to assure a more positive initial school experience. A positive initial school experience can boost a child's psychological capacity to cope with subsequent school demands, including those created by school system inadequacies.

37. A second important role of ECCE programmes is that of promoting wider community development. In some developing countries, community involvement in preschool has become the entry point for parent education and community consciousness about health, sanitation, and nutrition.

38. Beyond the school success and community development justifications for ECCE programmes, a third role for programmes is to stress child development and broader intellectual growth. These are concerned with a group of skills that may be vital in school adjustment as well as beyond the confines of the classroom.

## Overview of Early Childhood Care and Education Programmes in Forum Island Countries: A Status Report

39. This section of the report summarises the current status of ECCE programmes within each of the FICs. Information was collected from a variety of regional programme documents, country reports, development partners reports, early childhood/preschool associations, and through communications with those partners. In addition, key ECCE personnel in each FIC were sent a questionnaire about ECCE in their countries.<sup>1</sup>

40. All FICs recognise that early childhood education can benefit society economically and socially. Over the past two decades, there has been a great expansion of educational facilities for children before entry to formal schooling. Information was compiled about a variety of ECCE programme components across the region:

- Policies
- Curriculum development and implementation
- Children's enrolment
- Teacher qualifications and remuneration
- Teacher-to-children ratios
- Programme operations
- Facilities
- Development partnership assistance

### *Government Policies*

41. Policies indicate government commitment to ECCE programmes. Through policies, FIC governments recognise the importance of ECCE and take responsibilities for some components of programmes, even if it is in an advisory capacity.

42. One important factor for this component was the existence of the Basic Education and Literacy Support (BELS) programme. Early childhood education was included in the programme as part of phase three from 1998-2001. The early childhood education portion included a prototype *Early Childhood Education Policy Guideline* (Appendix 4). This *Guideline* was intended to be used as a framework and adapted according to national situations. Eleven FICs were issued with this prototype policy *Guideline*.

43. The information below shows that nine FICs have some sort of policy guidelines. They range from very brief statements to detailed and comprehensive documents. In addition, six FICs have a dedicated person within the Ministry of Education. The responsibilities of these people may include coordinating ECCE programme activities; advising on issues; and liaising with teachers, communities, centre/preschool management committees, and development partners.

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<sup>1</sup> The information below is as accurate as possible given several limitations: a general paucity of data, no central database either regionally or within individual countries, and the difficulty of communication with countries and development partners spread throughout the Pacific region.

**Table 1: Government Policies and Personnel**

Country	Status of Government Policy	Dedicated Person in the Ministry to work solely for ECE	ECCE/Preschool Association	Comments
Cook Islands	General policies include preschool	Yes	Yes	Issued with BELS prototype National ECE Policy Guidelines
Fiji	Brief Policy Statement	Yes	Yes	Policy Statement from 1973 MOE also has Adviser for Suva region MOE provides advisory services Issued with BELS prototype National ECE Policy Guidelines
Federated States of Micronesia	No national policy	No	No	Head Start Programme
Kiribati	Policy Recommended 2001	A Trainer	Yes	Trainer provided by the Ministry of Education, Training and Technology 1999-2001 National Plan of Action exists Issued with BELS prototype National ECE Policy Guidelines
Marshall Islands	Head Start Policies		Director for Head Start	Head Start Programme Issued with BELS prototype National ECE Policy Guidelines
Nauru	Policy in Existence	Yes	Yes	Philosophies and Goals Statement exist Issued with BELS prototype National ECE Policy Guidelines
Niue	Policy in Existence	No Primary Principal is responsible for ECE. ECE teacher-in-charge	No	ECE included in 2001-2002 DOE Corporate Plan Issued with BELS prototype National ECE Policy Guidelines
Palau	Head Start Policies			Head Start Programme
Papua New Guinea				
Samoa	Policy in Existence	Yes	No	Advisory services provided by development partners and Preschool Council: ECE coordinator and district advisers Issued with BELS prototype National ECE Policy Guidelines
Solomon Islands		Yes	Yes (HOPA)	Advisory services provided by government: ECE coordinator and provincial advisers Issued with BELS prototype

				National ECE Policy Guidelines
Tonga	No policy	No	Yes	Issued with BELS prototype National ECE Policy Guidelines Tonga PSA has policy guidelines US Peace Corps Volunteer coordinates activities and teacher training
Tuvalu	Policy in Existence	Early Childhood Unit identified in policy	Yes	ECE considered non-government activity Issued with BELS prototype National ECE Policy Guidelines
Vanuatu	Policy in Existence	Yes	Yes	Advisory services provided through Provincial ECE Advisers, coordinated by PSABV and MOE Issued with BELS prototype National ECE Policy Guidelines

### *Curriculum Development and Implementation*

44. An appropriate curriculum steers children's learning and development in particular ways. Teachers draw on curricula to provide appropriate programmes and activities for children.

45. The information below indicates that many FICs were issued with the Basic Education and Literacy Support (BELS) prototype *National Curriculum Guidelines*. Most FICs have adapted the *Guidelines* and developed some type of curriculum guidelines, with governments and/or early childhood education/preschool associations taking responsibility for both development and implementation. The Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands and Palau use Head Start Programme curricula. Niue uses *Te Whaariki* early childhood education curriculum documents developed in New Zealand. Two countries, Samoa and Vanuatu, have curriculum documents in the vernacular.

46. The detail of curriculum documents varies throughout the region, from basic ideas to clearly articulated objectives, strategies, and activities and programme requirements.

**Table 2: Status of Curriculum**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Status of National Curriculum</b>	<b>Responsibility for Curriculum Development and Implementation</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Cook Islands	National curriculum	Government	Issued with BELS prototype National ECE Curriculum Guidelines
Fiji	No national curriculum	Teachers for individual preschools	Issued with BELS prototype National ECE Curriculum Guidelines
Federated States of Micronesia	No national curriculum	Head start staff and teachers	Head Start curriculum
Kiribati	National Curriculum Guidelines	Government Development partners Kiribati Teachers College	Issued with BELS prototype National ECE Curriculum Guidelines
Marshall Islands	National Curriculum	Government	Issued with BELS prototype National ECE Curriculum Guidelines Head Start Curriculum
Nauru	National Curriculum	Government	Components of a curriculum included in Philosophies and Goals statement Issued with BELS prototype National ECE Curriculum Guidelines Conducting review of curriculum to be used in 2003
Niue	National Curriculum	Government	Te Whaariki Curriculum Issued with BELS prototype National ECE Curriculum Guidelines
Palau	National Curriculum		Head Start Curriculum
Papua New Guinea			
Samoa	National Curriculum	Government Samoa Early Childhood Association	Developed by the Samoa Early Childhood Association In Samoan Issued with BELS prototype National ECE Curriculum Guidelines
Solomon Islands	No national curriculum	Government HOPA	Issued with BELS prototype National ECE Curriculum Guidelines National curriculum is being developed
Tonga	No national curriculum	Development partners Tonga Preschool Association	A curriculum was developed by the Tonga Preschool Association- used throughout the country Issued with BELS prototype National ECE Curriculum Guidelines
Tuvalu	No national curriculum	Teachers develop for individual preschools	Issued with BELS prototype National ECE Curriculum Guidelines Stated focus in policy
Vanuatu	National Curriculum		Developed by the PSABV In Bislama Includes specific activities and timetable Specific Language Programme Book Issued with BELS prototype National ECE Curriculum Guidelines

### *Children's Enrolment*

47. Early childhood care and education is vital for the growth and development of countries. It is therefore important that ECCE programmes reach as many children as possible. There is a paucity of information about the enrolment of children in ECCE programmes throughout the region. Based on the limited data below, it appears that the percentage of the total age population served by ECCE programmes varies greatly throughout the region. Although a few FICs provide ECCE services are to children aged 0-8, the typical age range is between the ages of 3-6. In some cases, the data did not permit disaggregation by gender. For those countries in which information was available, the data indicate that both genders are represented equally.

**Table 3: Children's Enrolment Statistics**

Country	Age Range	No. of Girls	% of Girls	No. of Boys	% of Boys	Total Number of Children	Total % of Age Group Population
Cook Islands	3-4	200	44	251	55	451	65
Fiji	0-8 (typically 3-6)	3489	50	3587	50	7076	
Federated States of Micronesia	3-5	1175	54	998	46	2173	
Kiribati	2-6					3036	
Marshall Islands	3-5	586	47	674	53	1260	30
Nauru	3-6	359	49	370	51	729	75
Niue	4-7	21	50	20	50	41	
Palau	3-5	253		256		509	30
Papua New Guinea	0-12 (especially in rural areas)					90,000 (1996)	
Samoa	2-6						
Solomon Islands	3-6					9301*	*Due to ethnic tension the total number of children is an estimate only
Tonga	3-5	491	49	514	51	1005	29
Tuvalu	3-5						90.5
Vanuatu	4-6	4246	49	4464	51	8710	22

### *Teacher Qualifications*

48. Early childhood care and education is a specialised area. Teachers must be well qualified to deliver high quality programmes, and therefore enhance the economic and social benefits that investment in ECCE can provide. Some FICs offer national ECCE education and training, for example, the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education (Solomon Islands) and Lautoka Teachers College (Fiji). In addition, some early childhood education/preschool associations offer training workshops that are recognised as providing qualifications for ECCE teachers (for example, in Samoa and Vanuatu).

*USP Early Childhood Education Programmes*

49. The University of the South Pacific (USP) has provided consistent ECCE teacher education programmes through distance education for many years. The University of the South Pacific offers three types of programmes for those persons desiring to acquire qualifications in the area of Early Childhood Education. The programmes are described in Appendix 5. Table 4 summarises the 2001 enrolments by level of programme and country.

**Table 4: 2001 Enrollments for USP Early Childhood Education Programmes**

Country	No. of Students Enrolled in PPTC	No. of Students Enrolled in Diploma
Cook Islands		
Fiji	13	22
Kiribati		2
Marshall Islands		18
Nauru	1	7
Niue		1
Samoa		4
Solomon Islands		4
Tonga	1	1
Tuvalu		4
Vanuatu		
TOTAL	15	63

50. The information in Table 5 below indicates that many teachers in FICs have little formal ECCE training. Education and/or requirements to be considered a qualified teacher vary throughout the region, from short one- to two-week courses, to possessing a PPTC from USP. The funding of teacher education and training also varies, but it appears that in many FICs governments take on a large portion of the responsibility, with development partners and private citizens also contributing to the cost.

**Table 5: Teacher Qualifications**

Country	Minimum Qualification Needed	% of Teachers who are qualified	Main Training Institution	Funding of Teacher Education	Comments
Cook Islands	Diploma from Cook Islands Teachers College, USP, NZ	51	Teachers College New Zealand	Government	33% of teachers have primary education in addition to ECE qualifications
Fiji	1-2 week basic training government course		LTC 1 year course USP	Government Development partners Private	45 teachers have completed the LTC Certificate in ECE
Federated States of Micronesia	Varies for states from no minimum qualification to AA degree	76-100	College of Micronesia Univ. Hawaii Univ. Guam	US Head Start Private Colleges	
Kiribati	No minimum qualification		USP Kiribati TC	Government	
Marshall Islands	PPTC	90	USP	US Head Start	
Nauru	PPTC	80	USP	Government	Government pays ½ of USP course fees
Niue	PPTC Diploma of ECE (NZ)	95	USP NZ educational institutions	Private	Supervisor has NZ Diploma ECE Primary school teacher development programme provides ongoing training
Palau		100		US Head Start	
Papua New Guinea					
Samoa	Year 12 Education and 9 months training		USP Samoa PSA	Private	No untrained person to be in charge of ECE group
Solomon Islands	No minimum qualification	73	SICHE Field-based training	Government Private	Due to ethnic tensions, percentage is estimate only
Tonga	No minimum qualification	18	USP Development partners	Development partners Private	Tonga PSA offers informal training at monthly meetings, 1:1 site training, and workshops. Tonga PSA considers qualified to be PPTC
Tuvalu	PPTC	17	USP	Government training budget	Focus of policy
Vanuatu	5 week Preschool programme	68 trained and qualified	Government and PSABV for training, USP for qualification	Government PSABV Development partners Private	Differentiates between trained and qualified. Qualified teachers have PPTC

## Teacher Remuneration

51. Although most parents recognise the importance of ECCE, one of the constraints to 100% enrolment in ECCE programmes is the cost to them through fees, donations, and fundraising activities. Fees may consist of money or the performance of in-kind services. Governments as well are often reluctant to take on the full responsibility on teacher remuneration because of the immediate costs. The lack of government subsidies for ECCE can make this a highly costly sector of education for parents. Although there is little specific information available, teachers in FICs are in general poorly paid. Governments of six FICs take some or full responsibility for teacher remuneration, but typically remuneration is from a variety of sources. There are indications that in a few countries, teachers regularly volunteer their services, or are remunerated in-kind.

**Table 6: Teacher Remuneration**

Country	Avg. Remuneration for Qualified Teachers	Avg. Remuneration for Unqualified Teachers	Comments
Cook Islands	According to civil service rate \$15,972 per year	\$10,992 per year	Government pays for state preschools. Boards of trustees pay for private preschools.
Fiji	Varies, no salary structure	FJD\$30 per week	Fundraising and parent fees; government provides salary grant towards 263 rural preschool teachers' salaries
Federated States of Micronesia	US\$4608 per year	US\$4176 per year	Head Start programme dependent upon US Federal Grants, laws, and regulations
Kiribati	A\$100 per fortnight (Tarawa) \$18 per fortnight (outer islands)	A\$40 per fortnight (Tarawa)	Fundraising and parent fees Island Councils
Marshall Islands	US\$500 per month	US\$380 per month	Head Start programme dependent upon US Federal Grants, laws, and regulations
Nauru	According to civil service rate \$10,815.22 per year	\$10,729.94 per year	Government funds and operates centres. Kayser ECE Centre salaries paid by government at 80% civil service rate. Location Preschool salaries paid by Nauru Phosphate Cooperation
Niue	According to civil service rate \$10-813-13,383 per year	\$7029-9918 per year	Government funds and operates centres
Palau			Head Start programme dependent upon US Federal Grants, laws, and regulations
Papua New Guinea			Department of Village Services provided some funding for teacher salaries (1992)
Samoa			Policy states that "ideally government should pay salaries", and assigns responsibility for employment and payment of salaries to ECE Management Committees. Curriculum Guidelines state government will assist in teacher remuneration
Solomon	\$314.29 per month	\$225.98 per	Centre owner and parent fees. Government pays

Islands Tonga	0-\$30 Pa'anga per week	month 0-\$30 Pa'anga per week	teachers who have trained at SICHE Fundraising and parent fees; Teachers often volunteer their time to teach preschools
Tuvalu	Varies	Varies	Fundraising, island council and parent fees; government contributes \$67 monthly for qualified teachers and \$40 monthly for unqualified teachers, to salaries of up to 3 teachers per preschool. Policy states it will review teacher salaries.
Vanuatu	Urban: V\$25,000 per month Rural: V\$3,000 per month	Urban: V\$16,000 per month Rural: V\$3,000 per month	Fundraising and parent fees; Teachers often volunteer their time to teach preschools

### *Teacher-to-Children Ratios*

52. A high teacher-to-children ratio indicates children are receiving good quality attention and that teachers are able to meet individual needs. A common ratio given as the optimum for children between three and six years of age is one teacher to fifteen children (1:15). Although there is little information available about the teacher-to-children ratios within the FICs, several countries' statistics indicate an optimum ratio. The data below indicate that ratios vary widely, with teachers having responsibility for between ten and forty children.

**Table 7: Teacher-to-Children Ratios**

Country	No. of Teachers	Avg. Ratio of Teachers to Children	Avg. Ratio of Qualified Teachers to Children	Range of Qualified Teachers to Children for individual preschools
Cook Islands	37	1:14	1:14	
Fiji	558	1:19		
Federated States of Micronesia	224	1:10	1:10	
Kiribati		1:15	1:15	1:10-17
Marshall Islands	22 trained	1:21		
Nauru	45	1:15	1:15	1:15
Niue		1:20		
Palau	55	1:10	1:10	1:10
Papua New Guinea				
Samoa		1:15	1:15	
Solomon Islands	366+	1:25	1:15	1:15
Tonga	96	1:11	1:13	
Tuvalu	47	1:29	1:14	0 to 40:1
Vanuatu	689	1:10	1:10	1:10

### *Programme Operations*

53. Most FICs have programmes that operate between three and five days per week, for half-day (3-4 hour) sessions. Responsibility for facility maintenance and educational resources and materials is divided primarily between governments, development partners, management committees, and communities.

**Table 8: Programme Operations**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Days and Hours of Operation</b>	<b>Maintenance Of Facility</b>	<b>Educational Materials and Resources</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Cook Islands	2 hours per day 5 days per week	Government	Government	ECE centres attached to primary schools
Fiji	Varies from half to whole day programmes	ECE Management Committees	ECE Management Committees	Government licences preschool centres by physical facilities only
Federated States of Micronesia	4 hours per day 5 days per week	US Head Start	US Head Start Parents Teachers	Materials and resource provision varies according to state
Kiribati	2-3 hours per day 5 days per week	Parents	Parents Development partners	Model preschool at KTC has closed
Marshall Islands	4 hours per day 5 days per week	US Head Start	US Head Start Churches Parents	Head Start Programme Has basic equipment list
Nauru	5 days per week 3-4 hours per day	Government Parents Committees	Government Parents Committees	A few preschools attached to primary schools
Niue	1 day per week 3 hours per week	Government	Government	Four preschools each operate one day per week, all state funded and operated
Palau	4 hours per day 4 days per week	US Funds	US Funds	Head Start Programme
Papua New Guinea				
Samoa	3-5 days per week 3 hours per day	ECE Management Committee	ECE Management Committee	Suggestions for resources and materials in Policy Guidelines
Solomon Islands	5 days per week 3 hours per day	ECE Management Committee	ECE Management Committee	
Tonga	5 days per week 3 hours per day	Parent fees Fundraising	Parent fees Fundraising Development partners Gifts from overseas Communities	Parents often donate time to maintain the facilities themselves.
Tuvalu	3-5 days per week 6-10 hours per week	Teachers and Community		
Vanuatu	4 hours per day 5 days per week	Development partners and communities, private owners	PSABV, development partners and communities, teacher-made	Government provides guidelines for operation. Preschools are attached to Government Primary Schools in urban areas. Urban centres have second afternoon session.

## Facilities

54. Facilities built specifically for early childhood care and education allow teachers to store, access, and display educational materials and resources easily. Purpose-built facilities are also necessary for health and safety reasons- including child-sized toilets, low sinks, protected electric outlets, etc. The minimum requirements for facilities should include a permanent building, working toilets, and safe drinking water. The information below indicates that there are some good facilities throughout the region- particularly in urban areas. One country, Fiji, licenses its ECCE programmes based on physical facilities, thus ensuring that all its basic facilities requirements are adhered to.

**Table 9: Facilities**

Country	No. of Public Preschools	No. of Private Preschools	Total No. of Preschools	Permanent Buildings	Working Toilets	Safe Drinking Water
Cook Islands	18	6	24	All	All	Most
Fiji		494	494 (379 operational)	All	All	All
Federated States of Micronesia	13		41	Most	Few	Some
Kiribati	0	181	181	Few	Few	Few
Marshall Islands	44	6	50	All	Most	Most
Nauru	5	2	7	Some	Some	None
Niue	1		1	Some	Some	All
Palau		20	20			
Papua New Guinea				Some	Some	Some
Samoa				All	All	Some
Solomon Islands	0	326+	326+	Some	Some	Some
Tonga	0	48	48	Most	Most	All
Tuvalu			17	Some	Few	Some
Vanuatu	0	658	658	Few	Some	Some

## Development Partnerships, 1999-2002

55. ECCE has for many years been considered outside the formal education sector and the responsibility of communities. To this end, the early childhood education/preschool associations have been invaluable to the development of ECCE in the FICs. These organisations have often taken the lead in starting centres, training teachers, developing curriculum, working with families and communities, and encouraging governments to include ECCE in legislation and policies. They have also played a key role in working with development partners- often as the focal organisation through which financial or material assistance is funnelled.

56. For at least a decade, a variety of development partners have committed themselves to collaborating with FICs to improve the status of ECCE programmes. Two partnerships in particular, have had important roles to play in the development of ECCE programmes: UNICEF, and the UNDP/UNICEF/UNESCO/NZODA/AusAID

group responsible for funding the BELS programme, of which early childhood education was a focus from 1998-2001.

57. In the late 1980s and early 1990s UNICEF began assistance in providing certificate level inservice training for preschool and in-country assistance to additional ECCE activities in many FICs because of the following major issues:

- The need for relevant community based ECCE programmes.
- Inadequate inservice training opportunities and support for preschool teachers.
- Inadequate culturally and pedagogically relevant instructional materials and equipment.
- The importance of forging stronger links between education at all levels and the identified needs of families and communities.

58. UNICEF is mandated by the United Nations to advocate for the protection of children's rights. It is guided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child. UNICEF's continuing assistance and coordination of projects with other donors strengthens early childhood education through technical assistance, inservice training, and community mobilisation UNICEF has been the principal organisation contributing to the development of early childhood care and education for many years. Its primary goal has been to strengthen national and community capacities to support the ECCE programme, which emphasises family and community-based approaches. To date, UNICEF achievements include:

- The completion of the Non-Formal ECCE Project (1992-1997) with Continuing Education, USP
- Development of the Diploma Course in ECCE with USP (1997)
- Implementation of a two year ECCE project within the BELS Programme (1999-2001)
- Technical assistance provided toward development of model centres
- Preparation of draft regional early childhood policy guidelines in association with the BELS Programme to be adapted and finalised by Pacific island countries
- Publication of an early intervention book in ECCE for teachers, colleges, students, and trainers

59. Basic Education and Literacy Support (BELS) Programme

The BELS Programme began in 1993 and concluded in 2001. This multi-donor regional initiative, jointly funded by UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF, AusAID, and NZODA, aimed to improve the quality of basic and primary education. During the third phase, between 1998 and 2001, early childhood education was included within the Community Support area, and linked to literacy education. The BELS Early Childhood Education Specialist worked with Pacific Islands Governments to establish national policies and curricula. The BELS Early Childhood Education component aimed to enhance children's learning and development in their early years by ensuring that quality programmes are provided by capable teachers and empowered communities.

60. The information gathered about partnerships between the FICs and development partners indicate that there is a wide variety of activities occurring

within ECCE. Educational materials and equipment, facilities, curriculum development, and teacher training have all been addressed to some extent in many of the FICs. The information leads to the observation that the types of assistance received may not be in response to coherent plans of actions for ECCE development. Rather, that FICs have accepted assistance in any area in which it was available, rather than focusing assistance from a variety of development partners into one specific area.

**Table 10: Development Partnerships**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Development Partner</b>	<b>Type of Assistance Received</b>
Cook Islands	UNDP/UNICEF/UNESCO/NZODA/AusAID	BELS Programme
Fiji	UNDP/UNICEF/UNESCO/NZODA/AusAID NZAid AusAID Save the Children/FECA/MOE/NZAid/ British High Commission NZ High Commission	BELS Programme Equipment for rural preschools Lomavuna preschool LTC upgrade Mobile Playgroup Support for the Kalabo Child Care Centre
Federated States of Micronesia	US Federal Funds	Head Start Programme
Kiribati	UNDP/UNICEF/UNESCO/NZODA/AusAID CIDA Red Cross UNICEF NZAid Canada Fund AusAID Save the Children British High Commission	BELS Programme Funds for preschool facility Operation of 2 preschool centres for children with disabilities Tarawa model preschool Preschool teachers and parents training workshops Revision of Kiribati Preschool Association Action Plan 2001-2010 Curriculum guidelines Developed curriculum for teacher trainees at KTC, preschool activities, resources, books
Marshall Islands	UNDP/UNICEF/UNESCO/NZODA/AusAID USP/Head Start US Federal Funds	BELS Programme Teacher training programme Head Start programme
Nauru	UNDP/UNICEF/UNESCO/NZODA/AusAID	BELS Programme

Niue	UNDP/UNICEF/UNESCO/NZODA/AusAID NZAid	BELS Programme Teacher education, curriculum development, infrastructure support
Palau	US Federal Funds	Head Start Programme
Papua New Guinea		
Samoa	UNDP/UNICEF/UNESCO/NZODA/AusAID EU AusAID Canada Fund UNDP UNDP/UNESCO UNESCO	BELS Programme Water tanks, toilets, buildings, renovations for 13 preschools Playground at Toamua preschool Equipment for Sogi preschool Toilets for Saumalu preschool Strategy implementation under policy recommendations Augmenting Institutions for General Attainment in ECE Associated Schools Project
Solomon Islands	UNDP/UNICEF/UNESCO/NZODA/AusAID NZAid UNICEF	BELS Programme Teacher training Curriculum development for teacher trainees at SICHE Salary support for coordinators Curriculum and resource materials development Field-based teacher training Resource development workshops for SICHE diploma course Establishment of model centres
Tonga	AusAID TAFE Global UNDP/UNICEF/UNESCO/NZODA/AusAID US Peace Corps Canada Fund UNICEF	Teacher training workshops with Tonga PSA Teacher training workshops with Tonga PSA BELS Programme Volunteer to coordinate activities and train teachers School building and renovations Teacher training workshops, assistance for Tonga PSA conference
Tuvalu	UNICEF Canada Fund	Policy and curriculum development, advocacy and awareness training workshops Preschool buildings with Government Published ECE books

	NZAid UNESCO UNDP/UNICEF/UNESCO/NZODA/AusAID	EFL Programme Equipment and curriculum workshops  BELS Programme
Vanuatu	NKDT UNDP/UNICEF/UNESCO/NZODA/AusAID Canada Fund UNICEF Save the Children British High Commission NZ Christian Children's Fund AusAID NZ High Commission VSA/VSO/AVI Rotary International Mormon Church	Curriculum to integrate literacy  BELS Programme  Provision of materials and equipment  Teacher training and outreach community-based programmes with PSAVB Pilot project linking ECCE and primary schools  Printing of materials  Funds for VSO  Teacher workshops  Funds for volunteers, computer monitor  USP courses for coordinators  Volunteers  Provision of materials  Provision of materials

*\*BELS ECE finished in 2001.*

### **Potential Role of Governments**

61. Within the past decade, leaders of FICs have indicated a growing recognition of the importance of early childhood education. In *the Forum Basic Education Action Plan*, Ministers of Education reaffirmed commitment to the expansion and improvement of comprehensive early childhood care and education.

62. The cost of implementing major changes to current ECCE programmes is believed to be financially unrealistic for most FICs. The inadequate support for ECCE programmes has been attributed to financial constraints, competing priorities from other education sectors, and a lack of knowledge about the impact of young children's experiences to later development and learning. In addition, many of the FICs are dependent on voluntary organisations, such as churches and early childhood education/preschool associations, and communities to provide early childhood services. However, productive improvements may be possible for relatively modest investments, especially compared to current expenditures within the formal education, health, and welfare sectors. Given the impact that good quality ECCE programmes have on children, their families, communities, and nations, it is imperative that governments renew their efforts in this area.

63. This section discusses potential roles for FIC governments in each of the components presented above. It offers financially realistic strategies to address the expansion and improvement of comprehensive ECCE programmes. The strategies are based on the discussion of the benefits of investing in ECCE programmes, the current status information of ECCE programmes in FICs, and the questionnaires returned by key ECCE personnel within the FICs.

64. All FICs have ECCE programmes. Expansion and improvement of the components in a coherent, systematic way are the next tasks. To this end, governments may wish to assess the current situation, and include wide consultation with parent and community stakeholders. This consultation with stakeholders should result in a national “vision”. This vision would then form the basis for the identification of priorities and specific areas of development in ECCE; the clarification government roles and responsibilities, particularly in the area of teacher education and training; the analysis of teacher remuneration costs; the extension of existing curriculum guidelines to include programme activities; and the assumption of a leading role in the coordination of development partnership assistance.

### ***Strategies to expand and improve ECCE programmes***

#### **Policies**

65. Policies are the most important area in which FIC governments can extend their commitment to ECCE. Government policies can be comprehensive or narrow, but in both cases they should be thorough for the areas to which the government contributes. Governments must clarify their roles and contribution to ECCE, and ensure that stated policies will be carried out.

66. Formal, full, and complete responsibility for ECCE currently falls outside many of the Ministries of Education in FICs. Governments may take formal responsibility for some components, others may be considered to be a responsibility of communities. It therefore suffers from a lack of direction and unity. Although most FICs have ECCE policies, they vary in scope and detail.

67. In most FICs, responsibilities for ECCE programmes are shared by:

- Parents/families
- Communities
- Governments (at various levels)
- Private sector (employers, private providers, businesses)
- Social sector (churches, local development partners, early childhood education/preschool associations)
- International development partners

68. Development of ECCE policy documents is not necessarily the issue anymore. Planning, prioritising, and ensuring follow through to stated policies is now the direction in which FIC governments need to move. By planning, prioritising, and ensuring follow through, governments provide sustainable support for their policies.

69. The role of an ECCE coordinator may be most useful for those FICs that have not already appointed one. An ECCE coordinator’s role and responsibilities should be detailed in the government ECCE policy document. This person may be responsible

for the planning, prioritising, and ensuring follow-through, as well as working with teachers, communities, ECCE associations and development partners in each of the other components. She/he becomes the focal point for all communications about ECCE programmes. An ECCE coordinator's role and responsibilities should be detailed in the government ECCE policy document.

70. ECCE should be included in national education development plans, along with specific roles and responsibilities for turning these documents into action. Strategies to achieve this include:

- Identify the priorities and specific areas of development in ECCE
- Clarify government roles and responsibilities for ECCE programmes
- Ensure sustainable follow-through for ECCE policies
- Appoint a national ECCE Coordinator and Area Advisors to provide advisory services, monitor development of ECCE programmes, and liaise between communities, PSAs, and governments

#### Curriculum Development and Implementation

71. Most FICs have some type of curriculum document available for ECCE. These documents range in scope and detail. Information gathered from the questionnaires from key ECCE personnel in each FIC has indicated that curriculum development and implementation is a high priority for those countries that have minimal guidelines. Therefore, two strategies for FICs with no or basic curriculum guidelines are to:

- Prioritise curriculum development and implementation in their national education development plans
- Extend existing curriculum documentation to include programme activities

#### Children's Enrolment

72. The lack of information about children participating in ECCE programmes contributes to the poor provision and management of services, teachers, facilities, and materials and resources, and any future analysis of the benefits of attending ECCE programmes. FIC governments can extend their role in the following way:

- Initiate a plan to gather information on children's attendance in ECCE programmes in order to monitor and plan for focused assistance

#### Teacher Qualifications and Remuneration

73. Well-educated teachers provide better services. They add value to the established positive relationship between attending ECCE programmes and future benefits to children, their families, communities, and nations.

74. The majority of the ECCE teachers in FICs possess little or no training. This area is probably the most difficult in which to make decisions. First, governments must weigh the costs of educating teachers in a national institution, or paying them to pursue educating through USP extension. Of course, FIC governments may choose not to pay for education at all. They may decide that contributing to teachers' salaries in an amount that would entice people to pay for their own training is more cost-effective.

75. Second, there is the question of pay parity with primary teachers. If the qualification for teaching primary school is a certificate, then governments will need to discuss the “equal pay for equal qualifications” issue. Both of these topics rest on policy decisions. They are important, and FIC governments must make the commitment to tackle them in the near future. Therefore, strategies to address teacher qualifications and remuneration are to:

- Undertake an analysis of teacher remuneration costs in order to inform governments’ future discussions for the financial assistance of teachers’ salaries
- Prioritise the clarification of roles and responsibilities of providing teacher education and training in ECCE policy guidelines
- Develop a consistent, ongoing programme of professional education utilising national and/or regional tertiary institutions
- Plan and implement nonformal training and workshops for teachers

#### Teacher-to-Children Ratios

76. A common ratio given as the optimum for children between three and six years of age is one teacher to fifteen children (1:15). Teacher-to-children ratios have an impact on the number of teachers needed to provide good quality ECCE programmes, which in turn has an impact on policies in teacher education and remuneration, as well as facilities. Not all teachers of a given ECCE classroom need to be qualified, but at least one should be in order to provide good programming and meeting individual needs. Governments may want to revisit the idea of qualified teachers supervising unqualified teachers or parents.

77. Information provided indicates that most FICs are working toward this goal, with several having achieved it already. Therefore, linked strategies that may facilitate the achievement of this goal are to:

- Clarify their policies on teacher-to-children ratios
- Conduct an analysis of trained and untrained teacher needs in order to inform teacher education plans
- Work with communities to identify appropriate assistants

#### Programme Operations

78. There is a variety of ECCE programmes throughout the region. Because most programmes are community-based, governments have little information about what actually occurs within the early childhood education setting. One strategy to gain an accurate picture of ECCE programmes is to:

- Initiate the collection of data in the areas of days and hours of operation, activities, and teacher-child ratios in order to monitor ECCE programme operations and inform future plans for upgrading of ECCE services

#### Facilities

79. In many FICs, early childhood education services and activities in both urban and rural settings for the most part lack basic materials and resources, and often do not have drinking water or toilets available. Strategies to improve facilities are:

- Develop policies on facilities, toilets, safe drinking water, and educational material and resources for licensing and monitoring purposes

- Include and utilise communities and teachers in the developing of resources and building centres.

### Development Partnerships

80. Assistance from the development partners provides governments with the ability to implement plans for the development of ECCE programmes. Analysis of the status of assistance from development partners indicates a lack of coherent plans of action for ECCE development. Plans of action are based on strong and clear government policies. Two strategies that may improve ECCE programme development are:

- Prioritise needs in ECCE development
- Undertake a leading role in the coordination of development partnership assistance in order to create sustainable support and ensure follow-through of development plans

### **Conclusions**

81. There are several firm conclusions that can be made from the information contained in this report.

82. **First**, evidence presented strongly indicates that high quality ECCE programmes can benefit countries by:

- Promoting intelligence of young children
- Increasing the efficiency of primary and secondary education
- Contributing to future productivity and income
- Reducing costs of health and other public services
- Reducing gender inequities
- Increasing female participation in the labour force

Integrated ECCE programmes may be the single most effective intervention for helping children, families, communities, and nations break the intergenerational cycle of poverty.

83. **Second**, the overview of ECCE in FICs indicates that the status of ECCE components discussed varies throughout the region: The overview of ECCE in FICs shows that although all of the components of ECCE are addressed in some fashion by most governments, implementation of comprehensive, high quality ECCE programmes is still in the future of FICs.

- *Policies*

Over 60% of the FICs have some sort of policy guidelines, ranging from very brief statements to detailed and comprehensive documents. Six FICs have a dedicated person within the Ministry of Education. Half of the FICs have ECCE/Preschool Associations.

- *Curriculum Development and Implementation*

Most FICs have used the BELS *ECCE Curriculum Guidelines* to develop their own curriculum guidelines. Some national curricula are very brief and general, others are detailed and articulate. A few countries use Head Start Programme or

*Te Whaariki* (New Zealand) early childhood education curriculum documents. Two countries have developed curriculum documents in the vernacular.

- *Children's Enrolment*  
The percentage of the total age population served by ECCE programmes varies greatly throughout the region. Although some FICs provide ECCE services are to children aged 0-8, the typical age range is between the ages of 3-6.
- *Teacher Qualifications*  
Many teachers in FICs have little formal ECCE training. Education and/or requirements to be considered a qualified teacher vary throughout the region. The funding of teacher education and training also varies, but it appears that in many FICs governments take on a large portion of the responsibility, with development partners and private citizens also contributing to the cost.
- *Teacher Remuneration*  
Although there is little specific information available, teachers in FICs are in general poorly paid. Governments of six FICs take at least some responsibility for teacher remuneration, but typically remuneration is from a variety of sources. There are indications that in a few countries, teachers regularly volunteer their services, or are remunerated in-kind.
- *Teacher-to-Children Ratios*  
Several countries' statistics indicate an optimum ratio of one teacher for fifteen children (1:15). The ratios vary widely, with teachers having responsibility for between ten and forty children.
- *Programme Operations*  
Most FICs have programmes that operate between three and five days per week, for half-day (3-4 hour) sessions. Responsibility for facility maintenance and educational resources and materials is divided primarily between governments, development partners, management committees, and communities.
- *Facilities*  
There exist some purpose-built facilities throughout the region- particularly in urban areas, in each FIC. However, not all children and teachers have access to working toilets and/or safe drinking water.
- *Development Partnerships*  
There is a wide variety of activities occurring within ECCE. Educational materials and equipment, facilities, curriculum development, and teacher training have all been addressed to some extent in many of the FICs. However, types of assistance received may not be in response to coherent plans of actions for ECCE development. FICs generally have accepted assistance in any area in which it was available, rather than focusing assistance from a variety of development partners into one specific area.

84. **Third**, FIC governments can play an important role in the implementation of high quality ECCE programmes in financially realistic ways. Formal, full, and complete acceptance of responsibility of ECCE is not necessary. The enhancement of

ECCE programmes can be implemented in parts or phases. However, FIC governments must be very clear about the areas of responsibility that they will accept, and delegate remaining responsibilities to other groups. The identification of priorities for coherent ECCE development and clarification of government roles and responsibilities for ECCE are two of the most important things that governments can do at this time.

85. Costs, too for ECCE programmes can be shared. As FIC governments clarify policies and their own roles and responsibilities to ECCE, a coherent plan of support can be addressed. Financial commitments can be determined, and the roles and responsibilities of parents, teachers, communities, and development partners can be identified.

86. Early childhood care and education programmes promote the learning and development of young children, helping to prepare them for further schooling and a productive role in society. The social and economic benefits of ECCE programmes reach far beyond individual children to their families and to nations as a whole.

87. Investment in ECCE should include promoting the development of integrated, multi-sectoral programmes which focus on the needs of young children. To be sustainable, such programmes must be an integral part of countries' overall strategy for developing human capital.

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## **Appendices**

Appendix 1: Terms of Reference

Appendix 2: Case studies:

- Mobile Playgroup – Save the Children, Fiji
- Early Childhood Education Curriculum and Educational Resource Development in Vanuatu
- Head Start Programme In The Marshall Islands

Appendix 3: Sources of Information for the Overview of Early Childhood Care and Education in Forum Island Countries - A Status Report

Appendix 4: BELS Prototype National Early Childhood Education Policy Guidelines

Appendix 5: USP Early Childhood Education Programmes

Appendix 6: Sample Pages from *Kerikulum: The Early Childhood Care and Education Curriculum Document from Pri-Skul Asosiesen Blong Vanuatu*

## **Appendix 1**

### **Terms of Reference**

The objective of this report is to provide Forum island country (FIC) Ministers of Education information on the status of early childhood care and education (ECCE) in the Pacific region; the benefits of ECCE; and to outline the potential role of Pacific governments in supporting it.

The specific responsibilities of the consultants were to:

- Update the status report on early childhood education in Forum island countries, including best practice case studies
- Undertake a literature review of the benefits of early childhood education, particularly in relation to the Pacific context
- Examine the potential role of governments in early childhood education in terms of policies, enrolment of children, teachers' qualifications and remuneration, curriculum, programme operations, and development partnership participation

#### *Note on limitations to this study*

There was one limitation to the full and complete accomplishment of the first task. Accurate information about ECCE policies, enrolment of children, teachers' qualifications and remuneration, curriculum, programme operations, and development partnership participation was difficult to obtain. Information was collected from a variety of regional programme documents, country reports, early childhood education/preschool associations, international development partnership reports, and through communications with those partners. In addition, key ECCE personnel in each FIC were sent a questionnaire about ECCE in their countries (please see appendices 1 and 2). However, complete and accurate information in some areas for some countries was unavailable.

The information that was collected nonetheless portrays the status of ECCE in the Pacific region. Some analysis has been conducted based on the information provided. The information included in the overview, combined with the summary of the benefits of ECCE (task two), lead to important strategies for the potential role of governments in ECCE (task three) and for the future growth of ECCE in FICs.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Case Study 1**

#### **MOBILE PLAYGROUP, SAVE THE CHILDREN FIJI**

The need for early childhood educational enrichment opportunities for disadvantaged children is well understood by many agencies concerned with children in Fiji, including the Fiji Early Childhood Association, the Ministry of Education, UNICEF, and Save the Children Fiji. Save the Children Fiji research indicates that disadvantaged families are generally less able to afford quality early childhood education services, which has a negative effect on both the young children and the older children who may have to leave school to care for them.

Therefore, a pilot mobile playgroup project was initiated to provide a low-cost, community-based pre-school programme and family support service in identified squatter settlements in Suva and Labasa. The mobile playgroup project was developed and is coordinated by Save the Children Fiji in conjunction with the Fiji Early Childhood Association and the Ministry of Education. Early childhood educators, seconded by the Ministry of Education, and field workers use a van filled with resources to regularly visit preschool children that do not have access to early childhood education.

The objectives of the project are to:

- Increase access to quality early preschool learning opportunities for financially disadvantaged children and prepare these children for formal education
- Provide mothers and other caregivers with information and support on a range of family issues
- Enhance the quality of parenting and reinforce the need to create a stimulating and secure environment for children
- Trial an integrated approach to early childhood education and family support

The project has now been operating for 5 months in five communities in the Suva area, and will begin to serve Labasa in early 2003. Interest and participation from the communities has exceeded all expectations.

Parent participation is an important aspect of the mobile playgroup project. Project staff discuss health and nutrition issues with parents. Staff observed an early, marked improvement in the venues used for the playgroup as well as a steadily increasing parent participation rate. In addition, the mobile playgroup is inclusive- children, regardless of abilities or disabilities are welcomed. Children with special needs are referred to appropriate services.

This project is supported by NZAid, the British High Commission, and the Canada Fund.

## Case Study 2:

### **EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION CURRICULUM AND EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT IN VANUATU**

“KERIKULUM: Ol samting we ol pikinini oli save lanen long ol Kindi, me ol wei we tija I save givhan long ol pikinini, blong lanem ol samting ia”

The Pri-Skul Asosiesen Blong Vanuatu (PSABV) has developed a comprehensive curriculum for ECCE programmes. Children between the ages of four and six attend ECCE programmes. The *Kerikulum* is written in Bislama. It includes information on growth and development and the vision for young children of Vanuatu. It also includes:

- Language development
- Sensory development
- Holistic growth and development: Strategies and activities for language development, large and small muscle strength and coordination, pre-reading and writing, cognitive development, music, and social development
- A timetable for programmes with one or two teachers
- A five-week activity plan for preschools

Teachers throughout the country use this document as their guide to good teaching. Although it is a slim document, it is full of exciting, important ideas and activities for positive early childhood experiences for young children. Samples of the *Kerikulum* can be found in Appendix 4.

PSABV also conducts a national early childhood education community-based training programme involving four weeks working in different communities. During part of this four week training, PSABV works with the nominated community to build an early childhood education centre and furniture, and develop educational resources and materials from local materials such as logs, bamboo, and sand. Responsibility for the building, furniture, and resources is given to the community that is receiving the early childhood education centre. PSABV works closely in this endeavour with the Ministry of Education and the Rural Training Centre.

Funding for this programme is provided by the government of Vanuatu, UNICEF, and the communities themselves.

### **Case Study 3:**

#### **HEAD START PROGRAMME IN THE MARSHALL ISLANDS**

The Republic of the Marshall Islands uses the Head Start early childhood education programme. Head Start is a comprehensive child development programme that started in the US. It is based on the philosophy that an effective early childhood education programme should address children's needs in all areas of development- physical, social, emotional, intellectual, language, creativity, and foster an appreciation of ethnic, cultural, and linguistic diversity. It should provide support and assistance to all those who affect the child's development. Head Start's five programme components (parent involvement, health and nutrition, social services, special needs, and education) reflect this.

The child development principles adhered to by Head Start are universal. They apply to children regardless of the children's gender, race, culture, or country of origin. The principles include an understanding that:

- Patterns of growth and development are orderly and sequential
- Human growth and development goes from simple to complex
- Learning is influenced by the child's social and cultural context

The five main aims of Head Start are to:

- Strengthen families as the primary nurturers of their children
- Provide children with educational, health, and nutritional services
- Link children and their families to needed community services
- Ensure well-managed programmes that involve parents in decision-making
- Enhance children's growth and development

Head Start curriculum is based on programme performance standards and sound child development principles. The performance standards require that the curriculum include:

- Goals for children's development and learning
- Experiences through which they will achieve the goals
- Roles of teachers and parents in assisting children to achieve the goals
- Materials necessary to support the implementation of the curriculum

The Head Start programme in the Marshall Islands is supported by US funds.

## Appendix 3

### Sources of Information for the Overview of Early Childhood Care and Education in Forum Island Countries- A Status Report

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## **Appendix 4**

### **BELS Prototype National Early Childhood Education Policy Guidelines**

*The University of the South Pacific,  
Institute of Education*

#### **Basic Education and Literacy Support (BELS) Programme Phase III Early Childhood Education (ECE) Sub-Component**

##### **Regional Policy on Early Childhood Education**

###### **1.0 RATIONALE**

It is widely recognised that the early childhood years are crucial in a child's later development and learning. Moreover, it is also viewed as an integral part of basic education as this is where foundations are established for the development of skills, knowledge and attitudes which will enable them to achieve as well as survive in later years. Therefore, from the early years, children need to be carefully nurtured and supported in the development of their physical, intellectual, social and emotional skills if they are to make sense of their world. Similarly, as learning begins at birth and sets the stage for later development and learning, the care and education of children at this level ought to be the primary responsibility of all nations. At the same time, the role of parents, caregivers and families as primary caregivers and first educators must be acknowledged and supported.

In many developing countries, including the Pacific, government's thrust in education has been concentrated on primary, secondary and tertiary levels. The inadequate support for early childhood education has been attributed mainly to financial constraints as well as a lack of awareness on the impact of the early years' experiences to later development and learning. Many island countries are dependent on voluntary organisations and communities to provide early childhood services for children and their families as well as promoted advocacy in this crucial area of education. In fact, only very few island country governments in the Pacific fully support early childhood education. However, given the impact early childhood experiences have on later development, learning and subsequent achievement, it is imperative that governments make a commitment towards its promotion if they are to provide quality education for their children who will, after all, be their future citizens.

The main areas which governments could offer their assistance in would be in training, advisory services, book and equipment production and payment of salaries. The community could be responsible for the management of pre-school centres as well as the provision and maintenance of buildings and other infrastructure including the outdoor playground.

###### **2.0 GOVERNMENT POLICY ON EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES:**

Whilst Government fully recognises the importance of the early years to a child's later development, learning and subsequent achievement, it is unfortunately, not in a position to fully support early childhood services in the country. It is, however, committed to assisting in some areas while it relies on the community to assist in others. Government therefore, through its limited resources, will assist in the following areas:

- 2.1 Training for ECE teachers, both pre-service and in-service; management training for ECE controlling authorities or committees.
- 2.2 Advisory services- appointment of a national ECE Coordinator and Provincial/Divisional/District ECE Advisers to provide advisory services to ECE service providers as well as monitor development of ECE services in the country.

- 2.3 Production of appropriate ECE materials and equipment utilising local environmental materials as much as possible.
- 2.4 Putting in place guidelines and regulations on the establishment and operation of ECE centres.
- 2.5 Creating community awareness through meetings as well as the media on the impact of early childhood experiences.
- 2.6 ECE teachers' remuneration in the form of allowances, grants or salaries befitting the hours of work put in.
- 2.7 Establishment and operation of model centre(s) in both rural and urban areas for observation, demonstration and practicum purposes.

Government, however, will rely on the community to be responsible for the provision of buildings, other facilities including outdoor play areas, furniture, educational equipment and maintenance of same as well as in management of early childhood centres.

## Appendix 5

### USP Early Childhood Education Programmes

- *Pacific Preschool Teachers Certificate*

The Pacific Preschool Teachers Certificate (PPTC) is offered through Continuing Education. It consists of three non-credit courses, with each course covering one semester of study through the distance learning mode. Minimum qualification required for enrolment is at least two years secondary education (Form 4 level).

- The three courses are: *Exploring Early Childhood Education*, *Growing Up in a Pacific Family*, and *Skills in Managing Your Early Childhood Centre with Family and Community*. The revised third course that will be offered in 2003 now has a practicum component to enable students to have hands-on experiences in observing children, as well as in planning and implementing programmes for young children.

- Students that successfully complete the programme with a minimum B+ grade are eligible to enrol for the Diploma in Early Childhood Education offered by the School of Humanities. The PPTC programme has graduated more than 500 certificated students since it was first offered in 1982.

- *Diploma in Early Childhood Education and Development*

- This programme is offered through the Department of Education and Psychology in the School of Humanities at USP. The subjects taught are at degree level standard. The programme is available in the extension mode although subject options may be taken through on-campus teaching.

- To enter the Diploma in Early Childhood Education, candidates must obtain:

- A pass in the senior Leaving certificate or meet equivalent entrance requirements as determined by the Senate
- At least a B+ grade or above in the PPTC plus a Bin LLF11 (foundation course in Communications) or LL114 English for Academic Purposes.

- The programme consists of eight subjects. Students study five core units in early childhood education plus three electives.

- *Bachelor of Education in Early Childhood Education*

- The new Bachelor of Education in Early Childhood degree will commence in 2003. Students are eligible who have completed the Diploma in ECE or an equivalent qualification and have been teaching for three years.

**Appendix 6**

**Sample Pages from *Kerikulum*: The Early Childhood Care and Education Curriculum  
Document from Pri-Skul Asosiesen Blong Vanuatu**