

PACIFIC REGIONAL OVERVIEW OF PROGRESS TOWARDS EFA SINCE DAKAR

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1. INTRODUCTION

This Pacific Regional Overview of progress towards EFA since DAKAR 2000 is designed to complete and enrich country level analyses to be carried out throughout the 2006 Global Monitoring Report.

There have been two recent regional syntheses related to EFA; the Survey Report Update on Planning and Implementing Education for All¹ and the synthesis of the 2004 Pacific EFA Plans ². These two syntheses established defined priorities, administrative processes, cross cutting themes, and issues facing EFA planning and implementation. In the preparation of this report both syntheses were found to include errors that stem from incorrectly reported data.

The report presents updated analysis of the EFA situation in the Pacific region. It focuses on the progress towards each of the six EFA goals, and a critical analysis of factors, policies and strategies responsible for progress or lack of it. The specific terms of reference are:

1. Identify evidence within the Pacific region that can be cited to demonstrate that there has been progress or lack of progress since 2000 as regards each of the EFA goals.
2. Analyse the regional patterns and progress towards the six EFA goals. Are there sub-regional patterns or specificities?
3. Provide critical analysis of what factors explain these trends.
4. Identify, analyse and evaluate policies and strategies mainly responsible of progress observed.

How comparatively successful have these been?

To what extent are they critical to sustain progress towards achievement of the EFA goals by 2015?

¹ UNESCO Division of Educational Policies and Strategies Education Sector 18/10/2004

² UNESCO Office for the Pacific Apia 2005

5. If possible, briefly analyse the status of EFA plans in the region.

Have they been finalized in all the countries in the region as requested by the Dakar Framework for Action deadline of end 2002?

Are they stand-alone document or are they part of the overall education strategies?

To what extent do they reflect each of the EFA goals?

6. What are the remaining obstacles in achieving EFA in the region?

What are the key challenges still associated with achievement of the EFA goals in this region?

On the basis of the Terms of Reference the study can be seen to have two levels of interest:

1. A macro-level interest in progress towards the achievement of EFA goals and the contribution of various strategies (ToR 1,2,3,4,); and an interest in exposing obstacles and challenges for further progress (ToR 6)
2. A particular interest in the role, scope and effectiveness of the national EFA plans (ToR 5).

It appears from the comments on Draft 1 of this report that there is an assumption that these two levels are not unrelated. The assumption appears to be that EFA plans are an integral part of national development strategies and priorities which would then result in the direction of resources and activities in such a manner that would result in progress towards the EFA goals. The EFA plans would then be seen as a substantial tool for organising and integrating the national effort to provide the environment to achieve the EFA goals.

This study has found that such close links and causality can not be easily demonstrated in the Pacific. In spite of the fact that increased participation, inclusiveness, and investment in education is observable within the South Pacific countries it is difficult to provide reliable statistical evidence due to poor record keeping and fragmented reporting. It is

more difficult to show that such developments are necessarily linked to the development and implementation of EFA plans that were developed as part of the UNESCO initiative.

EFA plans were frequently developed as yet another plan in a group of already existing plans linked to various development initiatives. This does not mean they were not seen as important. However it does mean that many focus on identifying processes and activities that would contribute to the overall national developments that were the sum of all initiatives. As a result the EFA plans are not necessarily seen as an important integrating tool but rather as a useful road sign pointing to policies that needed to be developed, or processes that needed to be put in place to develop or sustain an enabling environment. Such a perspective has had an impact on the way progress has been identified; statistics collected, collated and reported; and on the recognition of achievement of goals.

Notwithstanding these constraints this report attempts to describe progress towards the achievement of EFA goals within the South Pacific region. This report is organized in six sections. Section 2 provides background information on the Regional Context. Section 3 focuses on the Status of the Pacific EFA Plans. This provides the context for Section 4 reporting on Achievements and Challenges. Section 5 analyses the contributing effects of Policies and Strategies. Section 6 describes Remaining Challenges followed by the Conclusion

2. REGIONAL CONTEXT³

2.1 Demography

The Pacific countries form a unique geographical area. The region has 7,500 islands with fewer than 550 inhabited and its 30 million square kilometers cover more than one third of the earth's surface. Many countries are small and are made up of widely dispersed islands.

The islands of the Pacific are divided into three sub-regions. The Western region is called Melanesia (Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu), the Southeastern region is Polynesia (Cook Islands, Niue, Samoa, Tokelau, Tonga and Tuvalu) and the Central and Northern region is known as Micronesia (Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru and Palau). The division is generally based on ethnic, cultural and linguistic differences. All of the countries are covered in this report except Tokelau who has only recently (2004) participated in the Pacific regional meetings for EFA. Population information for Tokelau is shown because it has been included in the regional calculations.

According to recent estimates⁴, the population of the Pacific Islands reached 8.6 million in 2004. This represents an increase of about 1.7 million people over ten years and reflects an annual growth rate of 2.2 per cent. If this annual growth rate is sustained, the population will double in 28 years, to 17.2 million.

Relative population distribution has remained largely unchanged within the region, with the countries comprising Melanesia accounting for the majority (86.4%), followed by the countries of Polynesia (7.4%) and those of Micronesia (6.2%).

³ Sourced from the UNESCO Office for the Pacific, Apia 'Synthesis of the Pacific Education for All Action Plans' 2003, 2004.

⁴ Dr Gerald Haberkorn "Current Pacific population dynamics and recent trends" SPC Demography Population Programme July 2004

Population distribution within countries and the region creates difficulties. The Pacific nations' geography makes administration, communication and people's access to basic services complicated and expensive. The demographic statistics displayed in Table 1 are based on the countries' latest census. They do not show the distribution of people in some of the Pacific countries where populations are dispersed throughout huge areas on small isolated islands and atolls. For example, the Federated States of Micronesia consists of more than 600 islands spread out over an area of around 2.5 million square kilometers.

Pacific islands are vulnerable to natural catastrophes such as cyclones, hurricanes, tidal waves, and in some cases, volcanic eruptions. The atoll countries are particularly susceptible to rising sea levels. These factors affect development in the Pacific region.

The characteristics of Pacific countries affect development in the region. The flow of external development funding and investment is restricted due to the size and location of the countries. The Pacific region is at times bypassed by some of the major funding institutions. There are various explanations for this including the small size of populations in the region and a lack of understanding about development concerns in the Pacific. As well, compared to other developing countries around the world, social, economic and education indicators are rather high and only five of the Pacific countries having Less Developed Country (LDC) status. These are Kiribati, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.

2.1.1 Population Challenges⁵

Moderately high fertility rates and migration play a strong role in the population structures and distribution of Pacific countries. Rapid population growth is apparent in the countries' population structures with low median age and broad population base.

⁵ This section has been sourced from Dr Gerald Haberkorn "Current Pacific population dynamics and recent trends" SPC Demography Population Programme July 2004; and SPC "Pacific Regional MDG Report 2004

Fertility rates are of particular relevance to the population growth across Melanesia particularly Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. Migration on the other hand plays a more prominent role in the other Melanesian islands, namely Fiji Islands and New Caledonia. Sustained emigration from Fiji Islands followed political developments of the past decade. New Caledonia faces continued immigration from France. Throughout Micronesia and Polynesia, migration is the single biggest factor impacting on national population growth. Migration to metropolitan countries has been a feature of Micronesian and Polynesian countries in the last four decades resulting in low population growth rate in some island countries (Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Tonga), and actual population decline in Cook Islands and Niue.

Migration makes the biggest contribution to population distribution via rural-to-urban migration. Population growth throughout the region has been much higher in the urban than rural areas, except Federated States of Micronesia and Niue. This reflects sustained rural to urban migration over the last decade, which accounts for the rapid urbanisation taking place across the region. Seven out of the 15 Pacific Island countries have over 40% of their populations living in urban areas⁶.

Fertility rates and migration in the Pacific have meant a high percentage of youth in the population. The rapid growth of youth population in the Pacific is a major challenge to the education systems of the Pacific countries. The UN Human Development Report 1999 notes that 20% of the region's population is aged between 15 and 24 years. This is a total of 1.5 million, which is expected to rise by another 300,000⁷ by the year 2010. The birth rates throughout the Pacific region vary with Polynesian countries having the lowest rates.

⁶ SPC 2004

⁷ Pacific Regional Strategy Paper 2002-2007 cited in the Synthesis of Pacific Education for All Action Plans 2004

Table 1. Demographic data for the Pacific by sub region (excluding Australia and New Zealand)

	Latest	Total	Mid-year	Land	Population	Mid-year	Annual
Region/	Census	population	Population	area	density	Population	Population
Country	Year	at last	estimate	(km ²)	Mid-year	estimate	growth
		census	2004(a)		2004(b)	2015(a)	rate
					(people/		(%)
					km ²)		(2004-2015) (c)
MELANESIA							
Fiji	1996	775 077	836 000	18 272	46	891,100	0.7
P.N.G	2000	5 190 786	5 695 300	462 840	12	5 873 600	2.2
Solomon Is	1999	409 042	460 100	28 370	16	589 700	2.3
Vanuatu	1999	186 678	215,800	12 190	18	267 600	2.7
MICRONESIA							
F.S.M	2000	107 006	112 700	701	161	129 000	1.2
Kiribati	2000	84 494	93,100	811	115	119,700	2.3
Marshall Is	1999	50 840	54 400	181	306	66 100	1.6
Nauru	2002	10 066	10 100	21	481	11 300	1.0
Palau	2000	19 129	20 700	488	42	25 900	2
POLYNESIA							
Cook Is	2001	18 027	14,000	237	75	12 100	-1.3
Niue	2001	1 788	1600	259	6	1200	-3.8
Samoa	2001	176 710	182,700	2 935	62	201,900	0.9
Tokelau	2001	1 537	1 500	12	125	1 500	0
Tonga	1996	97 784	98,300	650	151	95 400	-0.3
Tuvalu	2002	9561	9 600	26	369	10 000	0.4

Source: SPC 2004

Notes: (a) Population projections for 2004 and 2015 and projected age-sex pyramids are based on the latest available census results. In some cases the latest census was collected too recently for fertility, mortality and migration estimates to be available. In such instances the total count from the latest census is shown but the previous census was used as the basis for projections. This may result in apparent discrepancies between census population totals and estimated population totals in some cases. All projections and estimates except for Fiji Islands are SPC estimates. The estimated smaller populations in 2015 than in 2004 for the Cook Islands, Niue, and Tonga are based on recent SPC projections, drawing extrapolations (medium growth assumption) of recent international migration trends from these island countries. (b) All population density estimates are based on 2004 population estimates. (c) Average annual growth rates are derived from the most recent SPC population estimates and projections – see note a).

2.2 Poverty and Education in the Pacific

Poverty has historically not been a significant issue in the Pacific as people had access to subsistence resources and strong social networks. Poverty and income disparity however, are emerging concerns. People in the community considered to be disadvantaged or deprived are most commonly viewed as facing poverty of opportunity. This term has been adopted by Pacific Island countries as a multi-dimensional concept embracing a lack of education and health, lack of economic assets, employment opportunities, social exclusion and political marginalization.

The Pacific is particularly vulnerable to external economic shocks and natural disasters. There is a direct link between poverty and vulnerability as the latter threatens the sustainability of livelihoods. Cash poverty has begun to emerge as a problem. For most countries two decades of fairly rapid population growth, urban drift and economic difficulties have produced growing inequalities between groups of people. The traditional support mechanisms are under strain and, in some instances, they are breaking down.

For decades many Pacific nations have invested high proportions of their budgets in education as its crucial role in development is recognized. Donors have also given much assistance. Consequently, most Pacific countries are able to provide initial access to schooling. However, they continue to be concerned about the relevancy and quality of schooling provided. The education systems have been focused on the development of young people for the formal employment sector particularly the public sector.

Current demographics mean that young people are particularly at risk of underemployment. In most countries in the Pacific the number of young people seeking jobs each year exceeds to number of jobs available. The formal waged sector is unlikely to ever absorb all the surplus labour. The challenge for the Pacific is to meet the aspirations of an already substantial and for most countries still growing youth population. Much surplus labour is involved in the non-formal and informal sectors. Governments are attempting to stimulate these sectors to improve livelihoods and support the populations. The Pacific Forum Education Ministers acknowledge the need to refocus

the systems by emphasizing skills develop to improve products, improve productivity and to improve sustainability in the non-formal and informal sectors.

3. STATUS OF EFA PLANS

***Terms of Reference 5:** If possible, briefly analyse the status of EFA plans in the region. Have they been finalized in all the countries in the region as requested by the Dakar Framework for Action deadline of end 2002? Are they stand-alone document or are they part of the overall education strategies? To what extent do they reflect each of the EFA goals?*

3.1 The nature and situation of the Pacific countries' EFA Plans

In the UNESCO Survey Update on EFA Planning and Implementation 2004 all 14 countries in the Pacific Region⁸ said their EFA plans were a sector or basic education plan adjusted (updated) in the light of EFA goals. Examination by the author of the actual plans for 13⁹ of the Pacific countries showed that this was not the case. All countries have pre-existing national sector-wide education plans, and EFA plans were developed specifically to address the EFA goals. The EFA plans therefore were articulated as separate documents. Although they were standalone EFA Plans, they were said to complement or give support to the national education plans. The EFA plans cover 2000-2010. All plans, except the Cook Islands, have been approved by national authorities and are being implemented. Most plans were finalized by 2003. The Tuvalu plan has recently been reviewed as part of the national education sector review conducted in 2004.

The separate articulation of EFA plans has impacted on the degree to which they are implemented and monitored because of the additional demands made on limited resources. Their separation from national plans has made them vulnerable to marginalisation because they often need financial and human resources that are supplementary to the local recurrent budget. The situation is changing with the benefit of

⁸ For the purposes of this report, excludes New Zealand, Australia, Tokelau. Tokelau is excluded because they have only recently (Aug 2004) participated in EFA regional workshops.

⁹ Excludes Nauru whose plan is undergoing review as a result of their country's restructuring

experience and sector reviews. Tuvalu for example, has recently (June 2004) drafted its Education and Training Sector Master Plan in which the EFA goals are integrated. Samoa has accepted a recommendation¹⁰ that Samoa's EFA plan should be inter-sectoral, and be integrated in the relevant agencies' policies, strategic plans and action plans. The Cook Islands is completing a 15 year plan within which it will locate EFA actions.

3.2 The level of coverage of EFA Goals in EFA Plans.¹¹

Four of the Pacific countries cover all of the EFA Goals in their plans. Nearly 80 per cent of countries do not cover gender equity (Goal 5). Adult literacy (Goal 4) is not addressed by 1 country – Nauru. Goals 2, 3, 4, and 6 are covered by all countries. Table 2 summarises the level of coverage of the different goals.

All of the Pacific countries have had an expanded vision of EFA through the integration of the protection of basic human rights and basic health education into EFA action plans.

Table 2 The level of the coverage of EFA Goals.

	No. of countries	% in region
All 6 EFA Goals covered (Samoa, Vanuatu, Fiji, Solomon Islands)	4	28
Goal 2 not addressed (Nauru)	1	7
Goal 5 not addressed (Cook Islands, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, Niue, Tonga, FSM, Nauru, Palau, Tuvalu, Marshall, Kiribati)	11	78

Eleven countries do not address Goal 5 as they do not perceive gender inequality as a problem. It is true that girls and boys have equal opportunity for attendance at school and

¹⁰ From report of the UNESCO/IIEP 'Reinforcing /incorporating skills development in the Samoa National EFA Plan. Authors Afamasaga, G.T., Moli, S.F., Kruse-Vaai, E. March 2005

¹¹ This information was sourced directly from the Pacific EFA Plans.

to achieve academically. However, data from SPC monitoring of the Millennium Development Goals shows that the situation may not match the perception. Table 3 shows:

- that in primary schools the number of girls enrolled is less than the number of boys for all countries except for Nauru;
- that in the secondary schools the number of girls enrolled;
 - o exceeds the number of boys in 6 countries (FSM, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshal Islands, Samoa and Tokelau)
 - o that the proportion of enrolments of girls is higher in secondary schools than in primary schools in three countries even though the total enrolments are still less than boys (Cook Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu)
 - o that in five countries (Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands) the proportion of girls enrolled in secondary school is not only less than the boys but is also less than the proportion of girls that were enrolled in primary. Tuvalu has the same pattern but the report shows statistics with a nine year separation.

All of the Pacific countries have had an expanded vision of EFA through the integration of the protection of basic human rights and basic health education into EFA action plans. These figures show that at the most basic issue of enrolment there is an issue that is not being addressed in the EFA plans. It must also be noted that in a number of countries, while there may be more boys enrolled; there is also an emerging trend of underachievement by boys. This issue is also not addressed through the EFA plans.

Table 3 Millennium Development Goals Education Indicators

	year	percentage net enrolment in primary education	year	Percentage of pupils starting grade 1 who reach grade 5	year	Percentage Literacy rate of 15-24 year-olds	year	Ratio of girls to boys in primary school	year	Ratio of girls to boys in secondary school
Cook Islands	2001	92.26	1996	98.2	1996	93	2003	0.89	2003	0.94
Federated States of Micronesia	2000	92.3	2000	66.9	1994	71	2000	0.93	2000	1.04
Fiji Islands	2000	94.7	2000	88.4	1996	93	2000	0.98	2000	1.07
Kiribati	2000	93.5	1990	98	1990	92	2000	0.93	2000	1.14
Marshall Islands	1999	84.14	1999	86.05	1989	74	2002-03	0.83	2002-03	1.04
Nauru	2002	60.33	2002	92	n/a	n/a	2000	1.15	2000	0.84
Niue	2001	90.24	2001	90.48	2001	95	2001	0.85	2001	0.83
Palau	2000	76.19	n/a	n/a	1995	91	2000	0.97	2000	0.88
Papua New Guinea	2000	77.4	2000	56.8	2000	61.7	2000	0.86	2000	0.67
Samoa	2001	87	2001	84	2001	99	2001	0.93	2001	1.04
Solomon Islands	1999	56	1991	85	1991	62	1999	0.86	1999	0.7
Tokelau	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2003	86.5	2003	0.96	2003	1.12
Tonga	1996	89.4	1990-91	84	1996	99	2001	0.89	2001	0.99
Tuvalu	2002	100	1993	95.8	1991	95	2002	0.93	1991	0.86
Vanuatu	1999	78	2000	91.2	1989	34	1999	0.91	1999	0.93

Source: SPC PRISM (Pacific Region Information System Management) 2004

3.3 Prioritization of EFA Goals by Pacific Countries

Table 4 below represents the prioritization of the EFA goals by Pacific countries based on their EFA plans.

Table 4 Prioritization of EFA Goals by Pacific Countries¹²

Region/ Country	EFA Goals					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	ECE	Access	Life skills	Adult literacy	Gender	Quality
MELANESIA						
Fiji	1	4	2	5	6	3
PNG	2	1	3	4	5	6
Solomon Is	2	3	4	6	5	1
Vanuatu*	1	2	3	3	5	4
MICRONESIA						
F.S.M	2	5	3	4	6	1
Kiribati	5	2	3	4	6	1
Marshall Is	2	4	3	5	6	1
Nauru	2	5	3	4	6	1
Palau	2	4	3	5	6	1
POLYNESIA						
Cook Is**	1	1	1	1	6	1
Niue	4	5	2	3	6	1
Samoa**	1	1	1	1	1	1
Tonga	1	4	2	5	6	3
Tuvalu	4	2	3	5	6	1

* Vanuatu has chosen to make both EFA goal three and four their third priority

** Samoa has chosen to make all six EFA goals their first priority

A number of general observations can be made about the priorities for the Pacific countries.

- EFA Goal 1 focusing on early childhood and EFA Goal 6 on quality education have been highly prioritised by most Pacific Countries. Historically, early childhood education was the focus of mission activities, and communities and in many countries was not part of the formal education sector. With primary and secondary education

¹²Updated from Synthesis of the Pacific Education for All Action Plans 2004.

now relatively well established, the attention to early childhood recognises the importance of the sector and the need to standardise provision. The prioritising of EFA Goal 6 is consistent with ‘quality’ being one of the key concepts in national and regional educational plans.

- EFA Goal 4 focusing on adult literacy and EFA goal 5 on gender equity are not highly prioritized by almost all Pacific countries. As with most of the EFA actions, the focus of literacy intervention remains within the school sector. Based on the EFA plans, it would appear that inadequate attention is given to adult basic education in the entire Pacific. Gender disparity is not a major concern to most of the countries. Even though the enrolment of female and male students in the region is not balanced (Table 3). Moreover, studies have revealed that in the Pacific, the concern is with boys’ achievement which lags behind their female counterparts. Yet, the EFA plans do not explicitly address boys’ underachievement.
- EFA Goal 2 focusing on access and EFA Goal 3 on life-skills were rated on average, medium level priority by most countries. Broad-based provision of education in a few countries is a challenge because of the cost. The main reason given for lack of access to life skills programmes was the need for appropriate curricula. It is argued that the current curriculum does not fully prepare an individual to engage in a contemporary Pacific Island society and economy. Inappropriate curriculum has been identified as a key factor in the high drop out rates of students from secondary schools. While curriculum reform is adopted as the solution it is only one factor in what is a complex and multifaceted issue. Both Goal 2 and Goal 3 relate to some of the vulnerable populations in the Pacific and their need for inclusive education, and lifeskills education. The Pacific population is very youthful and nations are increasingly faced with the issues associated with out-of school youth. Labour market analyses show that the waged economy is unable to absorb the increasing numbers of out-of school youth throughout the Pacific. These conditions require a rethink of the priorities and a broadening of the strategies to include both the formal and non formal sectors. As a result countries are adopting a range of measures to increase the system responsive to

needs. The South Pacific Forum Education Ministers Suva Declaration set responsiveness to training needs for the non-formal sector as a high priority. Country programs include expansion of TVET provision with the consequential development of TVET policies, investment in new and expanded facilities and centres, increased numbers of TVET trainers, modularisation of programs, development of second chance pathways, new adult health education policies, programs and deliveries. Currently it is difficult to quantify the impact of such programs on participation and transition rates.

- The priorities indicate that there are weaknesses in the cause and effect analyses resulting in weakened links between proposed reforms, actions and the achievement of the EFA Goals. This also means there should be a continuous involvement of EFA Plans to take into account actions achieved and their impact on the goals. This is further discussed in the Comments section p 26.

4. ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES

Terms of Reference 1. Identify evidence within the Pacific region that can be cited to demonstrate that there has been progress or lack of progress since 2000 as regards each of the EFA goals.

Terms of Reference 2. Analyse the regional patterns and progress towards the six EFA goals. Are there sub-regional patterns or specificities?

Terms of Reference 3. Provide critical analysis of what factors explain these trends.

4.1 Methodology

As stated in the introduction to this report, the study has two levels of interest. One, progress towards the EFA Goals, and two the status and contribution of the EFA plans.

Constraints

Reporting progress towards the goals for the Pacific is problematic as the data is not accumulated on the basis of sector wide cross-cutting issues at either country or regional level. This is not to say the relevant data is not being collected but rather that it is not being accumulated and collated in a unified way that allows ready access and analysis towards each Goal. For example, the evidence of the contribution of different line

departments or agencies is held by those departments and is not held under a common point of access.

This situation is the result the EFA plans being seen as separate from the national plans and as a result were not embedded within national developments, the plans not being understood as involving the efforts of all related agencies of government to achieve the goals, and the EFA coordinators not being seen as the coordinators of a strategic cross-cutting initiative

The problem of presenting evidence on progress towards each of the EFA Goals is further confounded by not having monitoring systems in place that separate the administration inputs and functions from impact or goal measures. The inputs are important along the way, but of themselves, do not assure the achievement of the goal. The impact or goal measures remain to be clarified for all countries' EFA Plans. The information available through the EFA reporting mechanisms is biased towards reporting on actions and achievement of indicators. Notwithstanding this, the report attempts to describe progress towards the achievement of particular EFA goals where relevant data is available.

The report of progress towards achievement of EFA Plan indicators will be based on what has been generally achieved with reference to the administrative inputs of the EFA Plans, what is specific to the cases studies of respondent countries, and what regional initiatives are.

4.2 General progress based on the nature and situation of the EFA Plan

Based on the nature and situation of the EFA plans the following evidence is presented for progress towards the EFA Goals.

- All Pacific countries have succeeded in formulating and reviewing the plans for EFA in response to the Dakar Framework. The plans were developed subsequent to national sector-wide education plans and are supplementary to the national plans. As a consequence, the EFA plans by themselves, do not express a

comprehensive coherent sector-wide plan but when read in combination with the national sector-wide plans, they address the elements specific to EFA Goals. All plans are long term with a target of 2010, and all are now being implemented.

- The EFA Plans and preparation demonstrate evidence of:
 - *Political commitment* through policy papers on EFA goals; establishment of broad-based EFA forums involving high level policy makers and representatives from civil society; financial commitment in terms of internal funding committed to education within the formal and to an extent non-formal sector. The evidence in the Plans is documented commitments to investment. Evidence from national budgets to show changes since Dakar has not been made available by country coordinators.
 - *Broadbased-consultation and participation in EFA planning* that has included providers of all educational services from government, NGOs, community councils, religious denominations, business community; consultations and meetings with major stakeholders for consensus building on policies and strategies; consultation with donor community and their participation in problem analysis, planning, delivery
 - *Conformity with broader development frameworks*. The EFA Plans conform with macro-economic and social development frameworks within countries and the region for example, National Development Policies and Strategies, and the Pacific Forum Basic Education Plan.
 - *A degree of sector analyses* conducted prior to the formulation of the plans, were recently conducted, or are currently in progress in all the Pacific countries. Additional investigation and research focus on specific EFA Goals for the purposes of policy development for example, Non-formal education, Children with special needs, Language education, Enrolments
- All Pacific countries have had an expanded vision of EFA by integrating human rights protection and basic health education into their plans.

- All of the Pacific countries have included target indicators for monitoring and evaluation of EFA goals and have made projections in terms of required costs. (see example in Appendix 1)
- All Pacific countries have established institutional arrangements for the co-ordination of EFA that include an EFA Co-ordinator and / or Secretariat within government institutions. A number of countries make use of pre-existing representative bodies for steering and monitoring EFA Goals.
- EFA Plans are dynamic in nature and evolve with changes to national and sector plans.

4.3 Progress as reported by 4 Pacific Case Studies

Achievement of EFA Plan indicators

Progress towards each of the EFA Goals is reported for each country based on the progress in achieving of the EFA Plan indicators, that is the completion or not of activities against the indicators in their EFA Action Plans. Progress is judged to have been made if the indicators have been met and action is complete, or if action has begun, or if the action is on-going. Table 5 shows the overview of progress for each of the goals across the 4 countries that have reported as part of this exercise. Progress is quantified as the number of indicators that have completed actions, started actions or where actions are on-going, and shown as a percentage of the total indicators in the Plan for each goal.

The following information can be highlighted as the state of progress towards each of the EFA Goals.

Progress has been made by all 4 countries towards EFA Goal 6 – Quality Action Plan indicators, and EFA Goal 3 – Lifeskills Action Plan indicators. EFA Goal 6 is a high priority with all four countries, and EFA Goal 3 is a medium level priority.

Except for Palau, all countries have made progress on each of the EFA Goal Action Plan indicators that feature on their EFA Action Plans. Palau has not made progress on EFA

Goal 1 Action Plan indicators which is a level 2 priority for them, and EFA Goal 2 Action Plan indicators which is their level 4 priority. A key reason for Palau's situation is lack of funding.

Cook Islands and Tuvalu are both undergoing or have recently undergone a sector review which has affected the implementation of their EFA Action Plans.

Table 5 Percentage of indicators in the EFA Plans showing Progress in actions towards each EFA Goal for 4 Pacific Countries

	Percent of indicators where progress has been noted (includes ongoing)	Percent of indicators where there has been no progress	Percent of indicators Deferred eg. due to sector review
Goal 1 Early Childhood			
Cook Islands	35	41	24
Palau	0	100	0
Samoa	67	33	0
Tuvalu	62	38	0
Goal 2 Universal Education			
Cook Islands	43	57	0
Palau	0	100	0
Samoa	100	0	0
Tuvalu	52	5	43
Goal 3 Access to Life Skills			
Cook Islands	69	31	0
Palau	64	36	0
Samoa	73	36	0
Tuvalu	25	50	25
Goal 4 Adult Literacy			
Cook Islands	14	86	0
Palau	100	0	0
Samoa	50	50	0
Tuvalu*	0	0	0
Goal 5 Gender Equity			
Cook Islands*	0	0	0
Palau*	0	0	0
Samoa	60	40	0
Tuvalu*	0	0	0
Goal 6 Quality			
Cook Islands	60	40	0
Palau	89	11	0
Samoa	58	42	0
Tuvalu	79	16	5
* These EFA Goals are not a feature of these countries EFA Plans			

Table 6 below presents the progress information by country for the four respondent countries.

Table 6 Country profile of progress towards each EFA Goal

		Percent of indicators where progress has been noted (includes ongoing)	Percent of indicators where there has been no progress	Percent of indicators Deferred eg. due to sector review
Cook Islands	Goal 1	35	41	24
	Goal 2	43	57	0
	Goal 3	69	31	0
	Goal 4	14	86	0
	Goal 5*	0	0	0
	Goal 6	60	40	0
Palau	Goal 1	0	100	0
	Goal 2	0	100	0
	Goal 3	64	36	0
	Goal 4	100	0	0
	Goal 5*	0	0	0
	Goal 6	89	11	0
Samoa	Goal 1	67	33	0
	Goal 2	100	0	0
	Goal 3	73	36	0
	Goal 4	50	50	0
	Goal 5	60	40	0
	Goal 6	58	42	0
Tuvalu	Goal 1	62	38	0
	Goal 2	52	5	43
	Goal 3	25	50	25
	Goal 4*	0	0	0
	Goal 5*	0	0	0
	Goal 6	79	16	5

* These EFA Goals do not feature as part of their EFA Plans

- Countries are diverse in terms of the EFA Goal that has made the most progress. The Cook Islands has made the most progress in EFA Goal 3, Palau in EFA Goal 4, Samoa in EFA Goal 2 and Tuvalu in EFA Goal 6. At this point, there is no discernible relationship between the ranking of EFA Goals in terms of progress so

far and the order of priorities, except in the case of Tuvalu where the most progress is made on their highest priority EFA Goal 6.

Types of evidence

The evidence of progress towards the EFA Goals can be grouped into 3 categories: (i) Inputs, (ii) Processes, and (iii) Impact or Outcomes.

Input evidence

The evidence of inputs includes all the investments in the EFA Goals through the commitment of finance, human resources, infrastructure, curriculum reform, equipment, student text materials, technical assistance, audio visual materials, language specific materials, and the resourcing of other partners such as NGOs.

Table 7 shows the emphasis of inputs planned under the EFA Plans. The Table shows the frequency with which each kind of input was noted by the four reporting countries as having been utilised in the implementation of their EFA Plans.

Table 7 Evidence of Progress Towards the EFA Plan Indicators – Types of investment inputs in the EFA Goals.

	Frequency	%
Human resource development*	34	52
Human resources appointed	11	17
Infrastructure	5	8
Curriculum reform	5	8
Equipment	3	5
Student texts	2	3
Technical assistance	2	3
Audio visual materials	1	2
Finance	1	2
Language specific materials	1	2
Resourcing other partners eg NGO	1	2

* includes professional development of central ministry staff, in-service training of teachers, scholarships, pre-service, teacher upgrading

All four countries have invested heavily in human resource development and have appointed appropriate personnel to key areas of the EFA Framework. Investments have

also been made in infrastructure, curriculum reform, and materials development and resourcing NGO partners.

Quantitative data showing the levels of investment over time and the consequential issues of pupil/teacher ratios, percentage of trained teachers, average teacher salaries, and ratios of pupils to educationally relevant resources and equipment are collected within the information systems of the regions countries. However, they have not been reported to the reviewer nor are they readily available through published data.

Process evidence

The evidence of processes followed in the implementation of the EFA Goals is outlined in Table 8. There are processes associated with policies and legislation, organizational changes, programme planning and services, information finding and recording, and consultation. The three most frequently used processes across the case studies are policies review and formulation, establishing consultation structures and processes, and reforming assessments. The policies and legislation processes are substantive statements of political commitment. The consultation structures and processes involve high level policymakers and representatives from civil society as well as other providers of educational services such as NGOs, community councils, religious denominations, and business community. Such processes illustrate a bottom up participatory approach for consensus building on policies and strategies.

Table 8 Evidence of Progress Towards the EFA Indicators - Processes utilised to achieve the EFA Goals

	Frequency	%
Policies in place or being developed	11	20
Consultation structures and processes*	9	16
Assessment reforms	6	11
Programme review	4	7
Research studies	4	7
Legislation development and reforms	3	5
Home school partnerships	3	5
Reform of secondary education structure	3	5
Skills-based approach to training	3	5
Organisational structural review and restructure, sector planning	2	4
Tutoring services	2	4

Monitoring attendance	1	2
Alternative programmes for adults	1	2
Database development	1	2
Establishment of Qualifications Authority	1	2
Aids Awareness	1	2

* Includes advisory committees, advocacy groups

Samoa has revised the legislation related to education drafting new legislation to replace the 1957 legislation. The new legislation includes ECE into the formal education sector. Countries are revising and expanding policies related to TVET.

Impact evidence

Evidence of impact of the inputs and processes on the achievement of each EFA Goal has not been identified by any of the four countries in the case studies.

Reasons for progress or lack of progress

Table 9 and Table 10 show the range of reasons given for progress or lack of it by the four reporting countries. Reasons for progress are to do with financial availability, collaboration across sectors, donors, and local communities, having people on board and systems in place. The two most frequently given reasons for progress towards the EFA Goals are the availability of external funding and inter-sectoral collaboration.

Table 9 Reasons for progress of EFA plan indicators

	Frequency	%
External funding available	15	47
Inter-sectoral collaboration	8	25
Donor co-operation	2	6
Strong links with local communities and NGO	2	6
Government / NGO / Donor collaboration	1	3
Government priority and funding	1	3
Developers on board in central ministry	1	3
Systems in place in central ministry	1	3
Organisational restructuring	1	3

Notably, the most frequently given reason for lack of progress is a limited internal budget and the need for external funding. The limited quality and quantity of human resources is

the second most frequently given reason for lack of progress. Other reasons given include changes that are taking place within ministries such as having a sector review, changing the approach and focus.

Table 10 Reasons for lack of progress EFA plan indicators (Four reporting countries)

	Frequency	%
External funding needed, limited internal budget	20	44
Quality and quantity of human resources	13	29
Sector plan being reviewed	5	11
Focus on other aspects of the area	2	4
Low status of teaching, difficult to recruit	1	2
Language of text is English	1	2
Incomplete prior steps e.g. locating special needs	1	2
Change of approach	1	2
Cannot legislate	1	2

COMMENT

On the basis of the Pacific case studies' evidence of progress, a number of observations can be made.

The first is that the proposed reforms and actions in the EFA Plans are steps along the way addressing some of the contributing factors to the issues. On their own, these steps contribute partially to the achievement of the EFA Goals. For example, curriculum reform may result in the identification of relevant content, knowledge and skills. However, if the assessment regime, recognition of learning and progression policies remain unchanged, and pathways within the senior secondary and post-secondary continue to focus narrowly on the academic track, the education system will continue to push out more and more students that are inadequately prepared to cope with life in both the traditional or modern economy. In this case, the goal of 'equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes' has barely been scratched because the systemic structures that act as barriers remain untouched. The EFA Plans therefore need to be viewed as non-static and must through close monitoring be regularly reviewed with a focus on the EFA Goals.

The second point to be made is that the logical connections between some of the EFA Goals, problem, proposed solution and actions are weak or implicit. The analysis of cause and effect that contribute to the EFA Plans needs to be robust resulting in a comprehensive and holistic approach to the issues. The EFA Plans will therefore evolve through the implementation of an integrated programme of actions. There are instances in the current EFA Plans where a high rate of progress on the actions and indicators may not necessarily indicate a positive gain towards the EFA Goal because the initial cause and effect analysis was inadequate. In other words, there isn't a straightforward correspondence between a high rate of achievement of indicators and the achievement of the EFA Goal.

The third point is that all Pacific countries need to put in place within an overarching national monitoring system, adequate information systems that allow specific monitoring of EFA progress and that separate the administration inputs and processes from impact or goal measures. Current reporting of progress is limited to what inputs have been made, processes that have been followed or structures that have been established. As stated earlier in the report much information is held at the level of specific line departments and at a country level. The bigger questions are how and to what extent these contribute to the achievement of the EFA Goal. This can only be answered by setting up suitable information systems collection and reporting for administrative outputs, and also for impact on each EFA Goal and that integrates with an annual update of the EFA plan. Having the accumulated data available through one accessible point such as the SPC Millennium Development Goal monitoring web site would be valuable.

The fourth point is that the formal sector alone will not achieve the EFA Goals. The case studies' progress reports are essentially located within central ministries. While EFA planning has involved broadbased-consultation and participation, the emphasis is on the formal sector as indicated in the cross cutting themes in the EFA plans which are Teacher quality and quantity, Facilities, Curriculum, National Co-ordination policies, Access to schools, and Management of Schools. Evidence of the achievement of EFA Goals can be found also within other sectors such as the non formal education sector, other ministries,

non-government organisations and civil society, particularly as it relates to some of the key target groups such as out of school youth, and women. Table 8 showed that the second most frequent reason for progress after external funding is inter-sectoral collaboration. Holistic EFA planning should capitalise on cross-sectoral linkage, in working towards the EFA Goals as well as establishing a national cross-sectoral monitoring system. An important element in ensuring the credibility and sustainability of the countries' respective plans is having viable information and monitoring system. Data analysis based on reliable information ensures planning is sound. A national cross sectoral monitoring system ensures the EFA Plans are updated and necessary adjustments are made to policies and strategies.

The fifth point is that the absence of EFA specific monitoring mechanisms has made it very difficult to ascertain the evidence of progress. It raises the issue of sustainability and continuity of EFA Plans particularly as it relates to those that are confined to one sector such as the formal education sector, and those plans that are articulated separately from the sectors' operational plans. The separation of the EFA Plans from the sector plans requires human resource inputs among others that small island nations are unable to sustain. It may be more efficient to integrate the EFA strategies within the national long-term sector plans and medium-term plans with a specific EFA monitoring track. The annual reports by different parts of the sector will then account for the achievement of the EFA Goals whose strategies are located within their division. In this way, monitoring is systematic and reporting more focused. A number of Pacific countries indicate a change in their approach to EFA Planning and implementation following recent or current sector reviews. Tuvalu's EFA Plan is an example of EFA Goals being integrated into the sector plan. Cooks Islands is completing its 15 year plan within which it will make adjustments to its EFA Plan.

5. POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

Terms of Reference 4. Identify, analyse and evaluate policies and strategies mainly responsible of progress observed. How comparatively successful have these been? To what extent are they critical to sustain progress towards achievement of the EFA goals by 2015?

5.1 Policies and strategies

From the 4 case studies, national level policy reforms include

- Amendments to the Education Ordinance of 1959 (Samoa) to reflect macro-economic, social development frameworks, and education policies. The amendments further empower the central ministry to include early childhood in its jurisdiction.
- Compulsory Education Act
- Early childhood policies
- Special needs education policies
- Language policies
- HIV and Health education policies
- Policies on a viable alternative to formal secondary education
- TVET Policy
- Adult Literacy Policy.

The policies provide valuable guidelines on expected standards and procedures. Their impact on the EFA Goals is yet to be realised with full implementation.

Some of the strategies responsible for progress so far on the EFA Goals have been highlighted in the discussion on inputs and processes. Another very important strategy for EFA progress in the Pacific is regional collaboration in the formulation and implementation of the Forum Basic Education Action Plan.

It remains to be demonstrated how critical these policies and strategies are to achieving the EFA goals.

5.2 Forum Basic Education Action Plan, EFA and PRIDE

EFA is at the forefront of regional planning structures, financial and monitoring mechanisms. The Pacific Forum Ministers of Education adopted in May 2001 the Forum

Basic Education Action Plan (FBEAP) at the Ministers meeting in Auckland New Zealand. Ministers from the Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, New Zealand, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Samoa, and Tonga, attended the meeting with Australia, Nauru, Palau, Tuvalu and Vanuatu also represented.

Forum members recognized that development of basic education takes place in the context of commitments to the world community and meeting the new demands of the global economy, which should be balanced with the enhancement of their own distinctive Pacific values, morals, social, political, economic and cultural heritages, and reflect the Pacific's unique geographical context.

The following vision and goals were agreed upon for the Forum members:

Vision¹³

Basic education as the fundamental building block for society should engender the broader life skills that lead to social cohesion and provide the foundations for vocational callings, higher education and life long learning. These when combined with enhanced employment opportunities create a higher level of personal and society security and development.

Goal

To enhance universal and equitable educational participation and achievement.
To ensure access and equity and improve quality and outcomes.

In adopting this vision, Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to the Dakar 2000 Education for all Framework for Action goals. In addition Ministers committed themselves to the following specific strategies:

- The promotion of different forms of secondary and vocational education
- To review the curricula of training centres and non-formal education programmes to match skills taught (outcomes) with the requirements for employment and livelihood in the traditional subsistence economy

¹³ Pacific Forum Secretariat "Forum Basic Education Action Plan – 2001" Auckland New Zealand 15 May 2001

- Develop non-formal education and work-based programmes in co-operation with civil society and the private sector.
- Promote the role of civil society in providing non-formal skills training.

Key components outlined in the FBEAP include National and Regional Development Context – policy and planning frameworks, Delivery and Resourcing Basic Education, Improving Quality in Basic Education, Technical and Vocational Education (TVET), Financing Education, Developing Partnerships, Gender and Equity Issues, and Teaching of Governance and Civics. It can be seen from the details that EFA Goals are embedded in the FBEAP. Annex 2 includes a copy of the FBEAP.

To support the implementation of the FBEAP, the Ministers and the Forum Secretariat in cooperation with relevant Pacific organizations involved in education, including UNESCO, developed the Pacific Regional Initiatives for the Development of Basic Education (PRIDE). PRIDE is funded by the European Union under its 9th EDF and by NZAID. Launched in May 2004, PRIDE is expected to run for 5 years to the end of 2008.

PRIDE's focus is to implement the Pacific Vision for Education outlined in the 2001 FBEAP. By so doing, it seeks to improve the quality of basic education in fifteen Pacific countries by strengthening their capacity to plan and deliver quality education through formal and non formal means. The project assists countries¹⁴ to develop strategic plans for education as well as to implement, monitor and evaluate their plans, providing capacity building activities for educators at national, sub-regional and regional levels. The benchmarks, principles and criteria developed by PRIDE to apply to national education sector plans are derived from the Forum Basic Education Action Plan, and are explicitly linked to the EFA Goals.

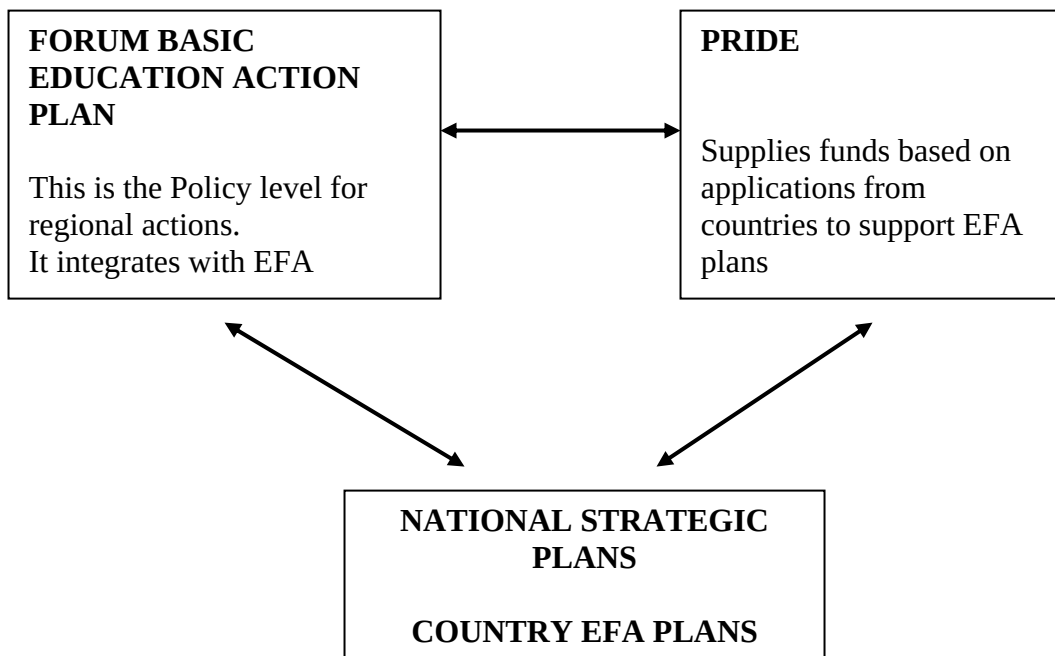
The Forum Basic Education Action Plan and PRIDE are Pacific regional initiatives that are fundamental to the achievement of the EFA Goals. They are indicative of a strong political commitment at the highest levels of government in co-operation with civil

¹⁴ 15 countries are served by PRIDE are Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu

society, to policies and strategies to achieve the Dakar Framework. The financial and technical support available through PRIDE (see Figure 1) provides real and enabling support to the implementation of individual country's National Strategic Plans and EFA Plans. The FBEAP is reviewed annually by Ministers of Education of the Pacific Forum. In its recent review in January 2004 in Apia, the ministers agreed to reactivate a subcommittee established in 2002 to monitor regional activities including PRIDE.

The Pacific Forum Ministers of Education through its planning, financial and monitoring structures is fundamentally important to the achievement of the EFA goals.

Figure 1: Relationships between FBEAP, PRIDE and Country EFA Plan



6. REMAINING CHALLENGES

Terms of Reference 6: *What are the remaining obstacles in achieving EFA in the region? What are the key challenges still associated with achievement of the EFA goals in this region?*

The synthesis of the Pacific countries' EFA Plans 2004 identified four principal challenges faced by the region with regard to each of the EFA Goals. These are

- Human resource challenges in terms of the quality and quantity available
- Physical resource challenges in terms of facilities and equipment
- National Governance and administration challenges in terms of policies and co-ordinating mechanisms
- Community-level challenges such as awareness and linkages

The proposed reforms and actions target these challenges and progress has been made at the level of inputs and processes as illustrated in Tables 7 and 8.

The key challenges associated with the achievement of the EFA Goals in the region can be grouped under

- The nature and situation of the EFA Plans
- The level of coverage of the EFA Goals
- Resourcing
- Co-ordinating mechanisms
- Monitoring and Evaluation

The nature and situation of the EFA Plans

While all of the Pacific EFA Plans are intended to be sector-wide long term plans, the emphasis is on the formal sector. The problem-solution analyses highlight reforms in human resource quality and quantity, improvements in infrastructure, curriculum structures and materials, policies and administration, and community participation in the formal education sector. Yet if we note the target groups in each EFA Goal, these are:

- EFA Goal 1 - ‘especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children’
- EFA Goal 2 – ‘all children, particularly girls (or boys in the case of many Pacific nations), children in difficult circumstances, those belonging to ethnic minorities’
- EFA Goal 3 – ‘all young people and adults.. through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes’
- EFA Goal 4 – ‘adult literacy, especially women.. access to basic and continuing education’
- EFA Goal 5 – ‘gender equality..ensuring girls’ full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality’

- EFA Goal 6 – ‘recognised and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all especially literacy, numeracy, essential life skills’

The target populations in the EFA Goals are not only in the formal sector, many may well have been pushed out by the formal sector or as a result of circumstances have not entered the formal sector. The achievement of the EFA Goals will be enhanced for the Pacific through assessments that identify the target groups and an approach that focuses on a diversity of provision and delivery modes in education within an integrated and holistic education system. The total needs of a population can be met only through many modes and it is acknowledged that the formal sector alone is not adequately meeting the needs of diverse populations. Non-formal education should be seen as an integral part of a holistic education system capable of delivering basic education through a diversity of ways to different groups.

Consideration of the non-formal sector allows cross-sectoral linkages that all contribute to the achievement of the EFA Goals. Besides the education ministries, there are other ministries, non-government organisations, and civil society organisations whose policies and strategies are directly linked to the EFA Goals. These cross-sectoral linkages need to be made explicit in the EFA Plans, implementation, monitoring and evaluations.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The difficulty in obtaining progress reports for this overview highlights a key weakness in the EFA developments. While EFA Plans have included monitoring indicators, the indicators need to be measurable, and the mechanisms to systematically track performance need to be operational. To be effective, a monitoring and evaluation system needs to

- be based on a sound problem analysis and establishment of the cause-effect relationships between the problems
- have specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and timely indicators
- include a focus on process indicators

- separate monitoring of achievement of actions from the evaluation of impact on the EFA Goals
- establish structures, roles and responsibilities for steering, monitoring and evaluating EFA Goals
- have a reliable information and data management system
- have clear specific scheduled reporting procedures and follow through for accountability
- have financial backing

The level of coverage of EFA Goals in EFA plans

Adult education, gender equity and skills development are areas that generally do not feature highly in the EFA Plans for the Pacific. The youthful nature of the Pacific's population and the inability of the waged employment sector to absorb high numbers of school leavers have been key considerations in the Forum's Basic Education Action Plan. A review of the EFA Plans to align with the Forum Basic Education Action Plan should advance the achievement of the EFA Goals.

Resourcing

Although the Pacific EFA Plans are partly implemented through external funding and partly through internal funding there is an ongoing need to secure adequate financial resources, and technical support for the implementation of the EFA Plans. It is difficult to supply detailed information on the level of GNI given to education in the various countries as the data has not been made available by national reporting systems. Institutional capacities in terms of the quality and quantity of people, and having systems in place also hamper the smooth implementation of EFA Plans.

Co-ordination

The institutional arrangements for EFA co-ordination mostly include an EFA coordinator and an EFA forum. The effective functioning of these mechanisms is variable. The coordinators have full time roles in the ministries and EFA is an added responsibility. The

EFA forums have been active in the development phase of the EFA Plans but have not been as active in the co-ordination and monitoring of implementation.

The separation of the EFA Plans from the National Plans (be these long-term strategic plans or medium-term action plans) that is observed in the case of the reporting countries is undesirable because it creates another level of administration requiring additional human resources in countries where resource constraints is a real obstacle. The countries are slowly moving towards integration with national plans in fully developed sector wide approaches. However, the evolution is very slow and there is a need for acceleration.

The Forum Basic Education Action Plan articulates the Pacific Vision for Education and integrates the EFA Goals fully. If National Plans are aligned to the FBEAP, and therefore incorporate the EFA Goals, a workable mechanism for the coordination of EFA may well be using the existing ministries' organisational planning structures so that the goals and strategies are part and parcel of the relevant divisions' outputs and budgets, and importantly in the monitoring and annual reporting of outcomes. The EFA coordinator's role is important for administration and maintaining cross-sectoral linkages. The EFA forum is important for steering, coordinating, and monitoring progress. The EFA Plans however could be more efficiently implemented and monitored as part of the outputs of line ministries and other relevant organizations within a national monitoring and evaluation framework.

7. CONCLUSION

Five years after Dakar, the 14 countries of the Pacific region demonstrate evidence of a strong commitment to the EFA Goals as a region and as individual countries. The adoption in 2001 of the Forum Basic Education Action Plan (FBEAP) reaffirmed the region's commitment to the Dakar 2000 Education for all Framework. The adoption of the Pacific Regional Initiatives for the Development of Basic Education (PRIDE) is a resourcing mechanism that ensures the FBEAP, and therefore EFA is operational.

All of the Pacific countries are at the stage of implementing their EFA plans approved¹⁵ by relevant national authorities. The implementation is aided by a commitment of inputs and processes that range from financial, human and physical resources, legislation and policy reforms to alternative programme designs and delivery. The extent to which these inputs and processes contribute to the achievement of the EFA Goals is not easily verified at this point. Although EFA Plans include indicators, some of these need adjustments so that they are measurable with specific timeframes. Further the reforms and indicators address part of the total package which means the EFA Plans should be seen as dynamic and evolving. A number of challenges remain to be sorted to advance progress towards the EFA Goals by 2015. These are:

- increasing the internal sustainability of the EFA and credibility of the EFA plans by implementing viable information, data management, monitoring and evaluation system
- using a holistic education system approach that integrates the formal and non-formal sectors in the planning and implementation strategies
- collaboration across sectors on all the EFA goals and mapping out coverage of EFA in each organisation's strategies
- to increase efficiency and sustainability, explore the strengths of working off one planning document – the National Plan, which integrates the Forum Basic Education Action Plan and therefore the EFA Goals, with a specific tracking mechanism for EFA indicators
- clear statements of target populations as identified in the EFA Goals or as appropriate in the local contexts
- the need for skills development perspective to be included within every goal

¹⁵ Cook Islands maintain their plan has not been officially signed off.

- rethinking the level of coverage of EFA Goal 3, Goal 4, and Goal 5 given the nature of Pacific populations
- providing technical support to each country to design and implement monitoring and evaluation systems, which the EFA co-ordinators report against.

There appears to have been a significant misunderstanding about the nature and status of EFA planning in the Pacific. The current separate existence of EFA plans from national plans and the focus of the content on reforms and actions necessary to progress towards the goals put the stress on monitoring of subordinate indicators rather than on the achievement of goals. This needs to be rectified. It is evident that the EFA coordinators did not understand that their brief includes monitoring and evaluation of the progress towards goal achievement.

A regional monitoring system, consistent with the focus on goals and progress from the baseline, needs to be designed to provide clear, accessible information. The mechanism could be similar to the MDG reporting arrangements facilitated by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community through a contract with UNDP and link EFA with MDG in line with the Forum Basic Education Action Plan.

APPENDIX 1:

EXAMPLE OF EFA ACTION PLANS INDICATORS FROM TWO OF THE REPORTING COUNTRIES:

COOK ISLANDS

PALAU

COOK ISLANDS ACTION PLAN 2003

EFA Goal	Proposed reforms	Actions	Indicators
EFA Goal 1. Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children	1. .1 Inform parents on mental development of a child before, during and after pre school	(i) informing parents on mental development of a child before, during and after pre school	Information pack on pre-natal, post-natal during pre-school development in place and distributed to parents 90% of parents or potential parents are aware of developments before birth and can positively participate in those developments
	1.2 Promoting activities parents can do at home to develop the foundations of literacy and numeracy	(ii) promoting activities parents can do at home to assist their children develop the foundations of literacy and numeracy	Strategies promoted through the most effective means; television, radio and brochures. 1. 90% of parents take advantage of simple home activities to develop basic literacy and numeracy skills. 2. improved achievement levels at G2, G4 and G6 monitoring tests
	1.3 parents and teacher roles are better defined and partnership formed	(iii) parents and teacher roles are better defined and partnerships formed	1. policy on school committee developed 2. policy guidelines for schools on strengthening "Home and School" partnership Relationship and partnership between parents and school improved
	1.4 develop resources to assist	(iv) develop resources to assist	Dialect resources for preschool

	parents form foundations of literacy and numeracy at home	parents develop early literacy and numeracy skills	developed distributed 90% of students at pre-school have good foundations in literacy and numeracy
	2. Ensure teachers are better trained and qualified to teach at preschool level by;		
	2.1 Promoting qualifications available for pre-school teaching	(i) Promote qualifications available for pre-school teaching	Promotion programs to target pre-school teachers
			Learning achievement of preschool students improved- reflected in the G2 monitoring tests
	2.2 Ensure regular up-skilling of current pre-school teachers	(i) regular up-skilling of current pre-school teachers	Monthly information sharing with Pre-school teachers; Regular revision of delivery methods through pre-school association
			Standard of education at preschool level improved
	2.3 Ensuring teachers are trained to identify children with special needs at an early age	(i) Ensuring teachers are able to identify students with special learning needs at an early level	Programs to identify children with special learning needs included in the education system
			90% pre-school teachers are able to identify and manage children with special learning needs
	2.4 media campaign to entice people into taking ECE teaching as a career	(i) promote ECE teaching as an attractive and rewarding career	People are aware of the ECE area and have between 20-30 applications for scholarships
	3.1 Develop and identification and support system in partnership with other	(i) develop identification and support system in partnership with other stakeholders	System to identify and support in place

	stakeholders		
			100% participation at pre school level
	4. equip schools with resources to assist with the educational development of children		
	4.1 The school committee, parents and the school will work together to ensure ECE classes are well resourced (this activity will include research on the appropriate types of resources for cognitive development in children) and to also ensure maintenance of these equipments	(i) appropriate resources are developed and maintained for children at ECE level	All Early Childhood Education center are equipped to accommodate the educational needs of young children
	4.2 the Ministry of Education will ensure appropriate ECE resources are developed to promote literacy and numeracy skills for use in schools	(i) produce reading books and other resources to develop language and number skills	20 reading books of each type and in both languages (English and Cook Islands Maori) are available in each ECE enter
			90% children are able to meet the learning outcomes of literacy and numeracy as stated in the Early Childhood Education Curriculum Framework

EFA Goal	Proposed reforms	Actions	Indicators
EFA Goal 2 Ensuring that by 2015 all children have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality.	1. Enforcement of the Education Act		
	1.1 Appointment of Truancy officers for Education	(i) Appointment of Truancy Officer	All truancy problems are investigate and resolved, and attendance of primary school students in close to 100%
	1.2 Work in partnership with Social Welfare to ensure other issues associated with truancy are resolved;	(i) work with Social Welfare agency to ensure support is provided for truants	All social issues relating to the cause of truancy are appropriately addressed
		(i) Establish mobile resources for vulnerable and disadvantaged children	Mobile resources developed transport and manpower purchased.
			Those who have difficulty accessing education in the short term can have access to resources and continue with education
	4. Provision of quality teachers and education for children with special needs		
	4.1 all teachers at all levels be properly trained to accommodate the needs of children with special learning needs and special needs	4.1 teacher training to cater for the needs of children with special learning needs and children with special needs	Teacher training program in place
			70% of children with special learning needs participate at various levels of society.
	4.2 schools work in partnership	Parents are educated on how to	Parents education program ready

	with parents to help them with the learning needs of their children	assist with the education of their children with special learning needs and special needs	for delivery
			90% of parents participate in the education of their children
	4.3 guidance counselor for primary and secondary school students	Employ a Guidance Counselor for primary and secondary school students	Guidance counselor employed with conditions of employment included in performance contract
			That 100% of children with special needs are able to take part in the learning process.
	5. Parents participation in the education of their children		
	5.1 Encourage and strengthen partnership and good working relationships between teachers and parents to ensure parents have full information about the education of their children through regular meetings like parents evenings or individual meetings or other avenues	5.1 regular parents/ teacher meetings and monthly publication of educational newsletter	Regular newspaper and television clips prepared.
			50% more parents are aware of activities they can do to develop education skills

EFA Goal	Proposed reforms	Actions	Indicators
EFA Goal 3 Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met	1.1 develop and deliver appropriate life-skills courses for young people like agriculture, domestic skills, basic maintenance skills, healthy	1.1 Develop and deliver life-skills programs	The development of various life-skills programs complete

through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programs	living, technology and computer skills, arts, crafts and culture		
			Young people are able to perform various skills to support themselves
	1.2 programs for people with a disability	1.2 develop and deliver programs for people with disability	The development of programs for people with disability complete
			Young people with disability are able to participate in various levels of society
	1.3 mobilize resources for delivery of programs	1.3 Mobilize resources for delivery of programs	Resources are available for the provision of the above programs
	2. Ensure access for everyone to life-skills programs	2. Media campaign to raise awareness	Media strategy complete. Campaign started
			95% of eligible young people apply and are accepted into a course
	2.1 media campaign to raise awareness	2.1 Mediation with various organizations/business in the community to provide lifeskills progs	All young people, regardless of islands of residence acquire a skill to generate employment or to survive in a modern world.
	3.1 Develop and deliver targeted educational programs to educate parents on effective strategies to bring understanding and stimulate discussions about sexual issues with their children	3.1 Educate parents and provide them with resources	80-90% of parents are able to educate their children at home on healthy social behaviour
	3.2 Develop a system to follow up and monitor existing community health programs	3.2 Monitor community programs	Community programs are continuously improved to meet the changing needs of the community
	3.3 Employ a Counsellor to work	3.3 counselor for healthy behaviour	At risk young people are helped to

	through sports, church organizations and parent groups to train them to advise and educate young people on the value of healthy behaviour	in schools	curb risk-taking behaviour
	3.4 alert children to healthy sexual behaviour at a younger age than secondary school students	3.4 alert children to healthy sexual behaviour at last year of primary	Health educators prepare and deliver health awareness progs in primary schools
			Greater awareness of changes to human body before changes take place

EFA Goal	Proposed reforms	Actions	Indicators
EFA Goal 4. Achieving a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.	1. Criteria for identifying and assessing literacy must be developed. The criteria must include speaking, reading, writing and understanding either English or Cook Islands Maori (including any one of the Cook Islands Maori dialects)	1. criteria for identifying and assessing adult illiteracy	Comprehensive criteria are developed to identify and assess illiteracy rate amongst adults
	2. there need to be strategies developed to eliminate the stigma of being illiterate through		
	2.1 media promotion	2.1 Media promotion	Media strategy complete. Campaign started
	2.2 community awareness programs to generate acceptance of people who are illiterate	2.2 community awareness programs	Community awareness program in place
			3 community programs conducted in each Vaka on Rarotonga and 4 on each of the respective islands
			Communities are aware of the

			problem and will positively contribute to the encouragement of people who are illiterate to seek help
	2.3 developing and delivering educational programs to address the various illiteracy problems of adults	2.3 develop and deliver literacy programs	80% or more increase of literacy rate among adults
	3. Evaluate the project to check that an 90% improvement is achieved on the adult literacy rate	3. Monitor and evaluate project to ensure target is achieved	The target of 90% or better of people who took the course has been achieved

EFA Goal	Proposed reforms	Actions	Indicators
EFA Goal 5 Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equity in education by 2015, with a focus on girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality.	NOT A FEATURE OF THE ACTION PLAN		

EFA Goal	Proposed reforms	Actions	Indicators
EFA Goal 6 Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of education with measurable learning outcomes	1. Develop appropriate resources for the improvement of literacy and numeracy skills	1. develop dialect readers to improve literacy and consequently, numeracy skills	Literacy and numeracy resources developed
			All schools have appropriate resources for the development of literacy and numeracy skills
	2. Empower Curriculum Advisors to advise and train teachers on the development of literacy and numeracy skills	2. Empower Curriculum Advisors to monitor and train teachers to teach literacy and numeracy skills	Program for empowerment complete
			By 2005 all curriculum Advisors know how to teach and develop effective strategies for developing literacy and numeracy skills
	3. Develop a pre-service training program for teaching literacy and numeracy	3. Develop a pre-service training program for teaching literacy and numeracy	Programs for developing literacy and numeracy skills is included in the Cook Islands Teachers College Curriculum Framework

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EFA Goal	Proposed reforms	Actions	Indicators
EFA Goal 6. Priority 1 Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognised and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills	a. Provide training to classroom teachers to improve their teaching capabilities	(i) determine appropriate training for classroom teachers	Training need assessment reported
		(ii) design appropriate training programs for classroom teachers	Training programs approved
		(iii) Provide appropriate training for classroom teachers	Enrolment list of classroom teachers in training
	b. Provide counseling services to all elementary school students	(i) prepare office space and work plan for school counselors	Office space and work plan approved
		(ii) Hire three professional counselors to serve elementary students	Personnel actions for counselors in personnel file.
		(iii) Provide counseling services to elementary school students	Record of counseling sessions and number of students served.
	c. Provide tutoring services to	(i) prepare office space and work	Office space and work plan

	students at Palau High school, which is the only public secondary school in Palau	plan for tutors	approved
		(ii) hire three tutors to serve students at Palau High School	Personnel actions for tutors in personnel file
		(iii) provide tutoring services to high school students	Record of tutoring sessions and number of student served

EFA Goal	Proposed reforms	Actions	Indicators
EFA Goal 1. Priority 2. Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children	a. establish public kindergarten programs at the public elementary schools so that all children in Palau will have free access to early childhood education at kindergarten level	(i) build and equip kindergarten classrooms	Classrooms inspected and certified
		(ii) develop curriculum for kindergarten program	Curriculum approved
		(iii) provide free kindergarten program for all children	Enrollment list of children in public kindergarten
	b. provide educational programs on childhood development, care and education for educators, parents, and other adults	(i) develop curriculum on submitted childhood development, care, and education	Curriculum And approved
		(ii) prepare childhood education materials based on curriculum	Materials printed and ready for use
		(iii) provide education programs to educators, parents & community	List and number of people receiving educational programs

EFA Goal	Proposed reforms	Actions	Indicators
EFA Goal 3 Priority 3 Ensuring learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programs	a. It is proposed that a One-Stop Education Information Center be established to serve as the center for all information about all educational programs and opportunities for the young people as well as adults	(i) prepare site for information center	Information center on Ministry chart
		(ii) equip center with personnel & equipment	Personnel and inventory listing
		(iii) collect and process information on educational programs	Files at the center show information
		(iv) Disseminate information to public	Number of inquiries about programs
	b. Develop and implement alternative and innovative educational programs to meet the learning needs of students, especially at risk, drop outs, and retained students, as well as adults	(i) conduct survey of learning needs	Results of study published
		(ii) develop alternative educational programs for students and adults	Description and schedule of programs available
		(iii) Recruit students and adults for educational programs	Registration records indicate students and adults recruited
		(iv) implement programs for student and adults	Number of students and adults enrolled in the educational programs
	c. provide more effective training	(i) provide training to training cadre	Training agenda and reports on file

	on current HIV/AIDS issues and refined HIV-AIDS policies and procedures to the training cadre, students and staff, parents teachers associations (PTA) young adult and the general public	and policymakers	
		(ii) refine current HIV-AIDS policies and implement health related school policies	Revised HIV/AIDS policies and health related school policies at schools and offices
		(iii) conduct training on policies to students, staff, PTAs, and public	Training schedule agenda, report and attendance sheets on file.
	d. implement skills based activities into classroom instruction to promote healthy living and prevention of important health problems	(i) develop skills based activities for health education	Documentation of skills based activities on file.
		(ii) provide training to teachers on skills based activities	Training agenda and participants attendance sheet
		(iii) implement skills based activities in all public schools	Lesson plans and class observations reflect skills based activities.

EFA Goal	Proposed reforms	Actions	Indicators
EFA Goal 2 Priority 4 Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete free education compulsory education of good quality.	a. to develop and implement a system for tracking students and handling student absenteeism and non-compliance of compulsory education	(i) create an office to track students	Memo creating On file

		(ii) design tracking system for students	Tracking system approved
		(iii) implement the tracking system for students	Absenteeism and non compliance reports
	b. increase equitable access by children in difficult circumstances, including ethnic minorities and handicapped children, to primary education	(i) increase communication capability for remote schools	Short-wave radio installed
		(ii) provide computer technology education to ethnic minorities	Laptop computers at remote schools
		(iii) build access ramps and related features for handicapped children	Access ramps and related features installed

EFA Goal	Proposed reforms	Actions	Indicators
EFA Goal 4. Priority 5 Achieving a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.	a. provide basic literacy program for adults	(i) conduct a survey on basic literacy needs	Results of survey analysed
		(ii) develop basic literacy program for adults	Basic literacy program approved
		(iii) implement basic literacy program in the states	Adult portfolio for the program
	b. provide basic and continuing education to adults in the outlying states of Palau	(i) analyse survey made for literacy program	Analysis report on survey filed

		(ii) design basic and continuing education programs for adults	Basic and continuing education plan approved
		(iii) provide basic/continuing education programs at outlying states	Enrollment listing of adults in the programs

EFA Goal	Proposed reforms	Actions	Indicators
EFA Goal 5 Priority 6 Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equity in education by 2015, with a focus on girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality.	DOES NOT FEATURE		

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