



The Pacific Regional Initiatives for the Delivery of basic Education (PRIDE) Project

BENCHMARKS FOR NATIONAL STRATEGIC PLANS

Fourth edition, revised November 2007

The Logical Framework Analysis annexed to the PRIDE Financing Agreement specifies under Result Area 1, Activity 1.1, that the PRIDE Project will: “Establish minimum benchmarks, principles and criteria to apply to national strategic education sector plans”.

The PRIDE team therefore developed a draft set of benchmarks derived from the Forum Basic Education Action Plan. In order to enhance the value of the benchmarks as a tool for planning, we sought clarity, brevity and simplicity.

The draft benchmarks were distributed prior to the first PRIDE Project Regional Workshop, held in Lautoka from 1 to 8 September 2004, and were fully discussed with participants. Meeting in small workgroups, participants reviewed the list, recommended changes and additions, and listed the benchmarks in order of priority. They also developed a set of specific indicators for each benchmark. The attached list of benchmarks, principles and indicators is the end result of their work, and was formally ratified at the second meeting of the PRIDE Project Steering Committee on 25 October, 2004.

It is intended that this be a working document, with regular opportunities for review and revision. In this spirit the benchmarks were revisited at the first regional workshops for PRIDE National Project Coordinators (NPCs) held in Suva from 12 to 16 September 2005, again at the second NPC workshop 2 to 6 October 2006 and finally at the third NPC Workshop 14 to 18 May 2007. On all occasions participants reviewed the benchmarks and recommended a number of small but significant additions and amendments. This document incorporates the recommendations arising out of the 2007 NPC workshop which were ratified at the meeting of the PRIDE Project Steering Committee on 27 of November 2007 in Auckland, New Zealand.

The PRIDE team is committed to using the benchmarks as part of a constructive and collaborative review of each country’s strategic plans. We seek to deliver the best possible support and training, thereby facilitating the development and implementation of national education plans in each country.

#	Benchmarks	Principles	Indicators
1	Pride in cultural and national identity	The Plan builds on a strong foundation of local cultures and languages, thus enabling students to develop a deep pride in their own values, traditions and wisdoms, and a clear sense of their own local cultural identity, as well as their identity as citizens of the nation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A statement demonstrating development and implementation of a national language policy, including vernacular language(s). ▪ A statement showing the development of policies and strategies for promoting and building character and citizenship. ▪ A specific objective or strategy in the Plan promoting the teaching and learning of local languages and the integration of cultural activities in the school curriculum. ▪ A strategy in the Plan promoting values (virtues), such as respect.
2	Skills for life and work locally, regionally, and globally	The Plan contains strategies for the systematic teaching and learning of literacy, numeracy, ICT, vernacular and English languages, together with life and work preparation skills, within a balanced curriculum framework, to equip all students to take their place, with ease and confidence, in their local communities, regional context, and global world.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clear statements of curriculum outcomes in the teaching and learning of literacy, numeracy, and vernacular and English languages across all levels and integrated across all learning areas. ▪ Clear statement on strategies for the development of life and work preparation skills, including TVET programs. ▪ Clear statement of promotion and incorporation of information literacy across the curriculum and supported by properly equipped and resourced libraries and learning centres to ensure access to and use of quality information. ▪ Clear statement on the integration of ICT in teaching and learning.

#	Benchmarks	Principles	Indicators
3	Alignment with National Development Plan and Regional & International Conventions	The Plan is fully consistent with the goals and strategies of the most recent National Development Plan, regional and international conventions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evidence of dovetailing of objectives and strategies with the most current National Development Plan ▪ The Plan contains a statement of commitment to regional conventions and frameworks, such as FBEAP and the UNESCO/UNICEF/SPBEA Literacy, Numeracy & Life Skills Framework, and international commitments such as EFA, Millennium Development Goals, Education for Sustainable Development, Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Biwako Millenium Framework + 5 (BMF).
4	Access and equity for students with special needs	In order to ensure access and equity, the Plan contains strategies for the teaching and learning of vulnerable and special needs students, including those from low socio-economic urban groups, those in remote and isolated areas, those with disabilities and school drop-outs and push-outs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A specific objective in the Plan referring to meeting the needs of vulnerable students, including the development of appropriate policies and/or legislation. ▪ Clear statement on strategies for the development of initiatives for marginalised communities and addressing gender disparities. ▪ Specific strategies for improving retention through partnerships with other sectors and agencies. ▪ Clear statements of strategies to improve educational opportunities for vulnerable students through more effective teacher training, improvement of infrastructure, resourcing and programs.

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5	Partnerships with communities and stakeholders	The Plan shows clear evidence that it was developed using consultative and participatory processes within the sector and inter-sectorally, as well as in the broader context of civil society, including parents, students, private providers of education, NGOs, employers, donors and other community and private sector groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strategies outlining the most appropriate and effective consultative processes with key community and stake-holder groups, and within the sector and inter-sectorally. ▪ Strategies outlining participation of all sectors, stakeholders and the community in education policy development, implementation and evaluation. ▪ Strategies outlining resource sharing among key partners and development agencies.
6	A holistic approach to basic education	<p>(i) The Plan addresses the challenges of effective articulation between each level of education; from pre-school/early childhood to elementary/ primary, from elementary/primary to secondary, and from secondary to TVET</p> <p>(ii) The Plan addresses the challenges of articulation between education and the world of work, not only in the context of paid employment but also of self-sufficiency, self reliance and self-employment.</p> <p>(iii) The Plan demonstrates effective articulation between formal and non-formal education.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The written curriculum framework states the linkages between early childhood and primary sectors, between the primary and secondary sectors and between the secondary and post-secondary/tertiary sectors and employment. ▪ TVET oriented programs are included as part of the school curriculum. ▪ An adequate supply of appropriately qualified and trained teachers is available for different school levels ▪ Pathways between school and post-school are clearly articulated through programs and a quality communication strategy ▪ National curriculum provides for education from early childhood to secondary that can be used in the formal and non-formal sectors ▪ Recognition of the complementary nature of non-formal education through identified activities and/or strategies. ▪ Specific strategies developed to cater for appropriate curriculum interventions, especially in the classroom context.

#	Benchmarks	Principles	Indicators
7	Realistic financial costing	The Plan has been carefully costed and is realistic in terms of current and projected levels of national budgets and donor funding for the education sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evidence of robust budget preparation, i.e., costings, cost-sharing, consultation, analysis. ▪ Evidence of an efficient financial management system in place, e.g., disbursement, accountability, monitoring, cost-sharing. ▪ Evidence of cost saving and cost effectiveness strategies to sustain educational development
8	Use of data and research information in educational planning	The plan is based on recent educational data and research findings that have been systematically collected, analysed, managed and reported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evidence of a sufficient number of trained data management officers within the data unit to ensure its sustainability ▪ Existence of an Education Management Information System (EMIS) ▪ Evidence of research findings and educational data used in plans ▪ Existence of a research unit/officer
9	Effective capacity building for all education personnel	<p>The implications of the Plan for the training of education personnel are addressed and effective training strategies developed, especially for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the pre- and in-service education of teachers and other instructional staff, including librarians; (ii) education <i>leaders</i> from teachers to CEO level, with a focus on ensuring that staff are conversant with and committed to the Plan; (iii) education planners; and (iv) data managers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Indication of levels and numbers of education personnel to be trained ▪ Clear strategies for both pre- and in-service teacher training, including capacity building for librarians and other school personnel associated with student learning. ▪ Evidence of an HRD policy and capacity building programs in place ▪ Evidence of NPC capacity to manage and work on sub-projects ▪ Clear statement on the use of ICT to enhance management capacity

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10	Framework for monitoring and evaluation	The Plan contains a monitoring and evaluation framework that allows outcomes-based judgments to be made about the effectiveness of education provisions at all levels, and in all areas of the curriculum.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evidence of a national assessment framework to assess student achievement ▪ Evidence of achievement of the strategic objectives of the Strategic Development Plan ▪ Evidence of a performance based appraisal system for staff ▪ Evidence of a reporting mechanism.
11.	Integration of Health and Physical Education in the curriculum and school activities	The plan recognises that health and physical education is an essential element of growth, learning and education.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A specific objective in the plan of integrating health and physical education into education as a whole ▪ Clear statement of promoting health in schools, including prevention of HIV/AIDS and other lifestyle diseases ▪ Strong emphasis on creating a supportive environment for diet, physical activity and health

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Pacific Regional Initiatives for the Delivery of Basic Education

The PRIDE Project is implemented by the Institute of Education at USP and is jointly funded by the European Union and New Zealand Aid through the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat

PRIDE serves Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu