

**Open Schooling as a Strategy for Second-chance
Education in the Pacific:
A desk study report**



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Investigating the Current Reality of a Three-phased regional Pacific
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by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS.....	8
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	3
INTRODUCTION.....	15
Appendices	
Appendix 1: Work Assignment.....	20
Appendix 2: Questionnaire	21
1. SECOND CHANCE EDUCATION, COOK ISLANDS	
1.1 Introduction.....	24
1.2 The Education System.....	24
1.3 National Policies, Strategies and Program.....	25
1.4 School System.....	25
1.4.1 Dual Pathways.....	26
1.4.2 Life Skills.....	27
1.4.3 Alternative pathways.....	28
1.5 Examples of Second Chance Education.....	28
1.5.1 Hospitality and Tourism Centre.....	28
1.5.2 Cook Islands Training Centre.....	28
1.5.3 Cook Islands Sports Academy.....	29
1.5.4 <i>Te Rakei Toa & Te Uki Tumanava</i>	30
1.5.5 Second chance education for Prison Inmates.....	30
1.6 The USP Cook islands Campus.....	31
1.7 Gaps and Constraints.....	32
1.8 Summary & Recommendations.....	32
References.....	33
2. SECOND CHANCE EDUCATION, FIJI	
2.1 Introduction.....	34
2.2 National Policies and Strategies.....	35

2.3	Education System.....	36
2.3.1	Education Statistics.....	37
2.4	Illustrative Examples of Second-chance initiatives.....	40
2.4.1	<i>MATUA Program</i>	41
2.4.2	Marist Champagnat Institute.....	42
2.4.3	Montfort Boys Town.....	42
2.4.4	Programs of the Ministry of Youth.....	42
2.4.5	Yellow Ribbon Campaign.....	43
2.5	University of the South Pacific.....	44
2.6	Constraints and Gaps.....	44
2.7	Looking to the Future.....	45
Appendices		
	Appendix 1: Losalini is proud dux.....	47
	Appendix 2: Mum of six tops class.....	48
3.	SECOND CHANCE EDUCATION, KIRIBATI	
3.1	Introduction.....	49
3.2	Education System.....	49
3.3	Policies and Strategies.....	51
3.4	Scope & Administration of Second-chance Education.....	52
3.4.1	Community High School Scheme.....	52
3.4.2	Community Institute for Curriculum Development.....	52
3.4.3	Santa Maria Vocational School.....	53
3.4.4	Continuing and Community Education.....	54
3.5	Constraints and Gaps.....	54
3.6	Looking to the Future.....	54
	References.....	55
4.	SECOND CHANCE EDUCATION, MARSHALL ISLANDS	
4.1	Introduction.....	58
4.2	Education System.....	58

4.2.1	Educational Issues.....	58
4.3	Nature and Scale of Dropouts.....	60
4.4	National Policies and Strategies.....	60
4.5	Second-chance Institutions.....	61
4.5.1	General Education Diploma.....	61
4.5.2	National Vocational Training Institute.....	61
4.5.3	<i>Waan Aelon in Majel</i>	61
4.5.4	ESD Program.....	62
4.6	Constraints and Gaps.....	62
4.7	Sustainability Issues.....	62
4.8	Looking to the Future.....	63
	References.....	64
	Appendix 1 Success Story.....	65
5.	NAURU REPORT	
5.1	Introduction.....	66
5.2	Education System.....	66
5.3	Enabling Policies.....	67
5.4	Looking to the Future.....	68
	References.....	69
6.	SEOND CHANCE EDUCATION, SAMOA	
6.1	Introduction.....	70
6.2	Education System.....	70
6.3	National Policies and Strategies.....	72
6.4	Nature and Scale of Dropouts.....	74
6.5	Scope and Administration of	74

6.5.1	Don Bosco Technical Centre.....	74
6.5.2	<i>Ulimasao</i> Centre.....	75
6.5.3	<i>TALAVOU</i> Program.....	75
6.5.4	Continuing and Community centre.....	76
6.5.5	Other Programs.....	77
6.6	Constraints and Gaps.....	77
6.7	Looking to the Future.....	77
	References.....	78
7.	SECOND CHANCE EDUCATION, SOLOMON ISLANDS	
7.1	Introduction.....	79
7.2	Education System.....	79
7.3	National Policies and Strategies.....	80
7.4	Nature and Scale of Dropouts.....	81
7.5	Administration of second chance institutions.....	82
7.5.1	Rural Training Centres.....	83
7.5.2	SICHE.....	83
7.5.3	UPNG.....	83
7.5.4	USP Campus.....	84
7.6	Constraints and Gaps.....	84
7.7	Looking to the Future.....	85
	References.....	85
8.	TOKELAU REPORT	
8.1	Introduction.....	86
8.2	Education System.....	86.
8.2.1	Enrolment Statistics.....	87
8.2.2	ICT.....	87
8.3	Dropouts and Out-of-school Youths.....	87.
8.4	Enabling Policies.....	88

8.4.1	Community Education Training Centre.....	89
8.5	Looking to the Future.....	89
	References.....	89
9.	SECOND CHANCE EDUCATION, TONGA	
9.1	Introduction.....	90
9.2	Education System.....	91
9.3	Nature and Scale of Dropouts.....	92
9.4	National Policies and Strategies.....	93
9.5	Open Schooling Opportunities.....	92
9.6	Looking to the Future.....	94
	References.....	95
10.	SECOND CHANCE EDUCATION, TUVALU	
10.1	Introduction.....	96
10.2	Education System.....	97
	10.2.1 Primary Education	
	10.2.2 Secondary Education	
10.3	Second chance Education Services.....	98
	10.3.1 Community training Centres	
	10.3.2 Vocational Studies.	
10.4	National Policies.....	99
10.5	Looking to the Future.....	100
	References.....	10
11.	SECOND CHANCE EDUCATION, VANUATU	
11.1	Introduction.....	101

11.2	Education System.....	101
11.3	VESS & VERM.....	102
11.4	Scope and Administration of Second chance Education.....	104
11.4.1	Vanuatu National Training Council.....	104
11.4.2	Rural Training Centres.....	104
11.4.3	USP Distance programs.....	104
11.4.4	Francophone Second-chance Program.....	104
11.5	Constraints and Gaps.....	105
11.6	Looking to the Future.....	106
	References.....	106
12.	A REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE TO OPEN SCHOOLING	
12.1	Introduction.....	108
12.2	Regional Governance of Education in the Pacific.....	109
	PRIDE Project	
	Pacific Development Framework	
12.3	Pacific Education, MDGs and EFA.....	110
12.4	Open Schooling.....	112
12.5	Open Schooling & The University of the South Pacific.....	112
12.5.1	Open Schooling at USP.....	113
12.6	Schooling Challenges, Dropouts & Unemployment.....	115
12.7	Open Schooling in Pacific Island Countries.....	117
12.7.1	Complementary types.....	117
12.7.7	TVET in PICs.....	117
	Alternative types.....	119
12.8	TVET in Pacific islands countries.....	120
12.9	Looking to the Future.....	120
	References.....	121

LIST OF TABLES

1. Effective full time student at..... At U.S.P Campus	31
2. Primary and Secondary dropouts by gender.....	39
3. Kiribati Enrolment by class levels and gender..... 2007	50
4. Education for all indicators- G.E.R & N.E.R 2007 – 2010	50
5. Transition Rates to JSS AND SSS by gender..... 2006 – 2009	51
6. Total School enrolments by grade level and gender..... 2005- 2006 to 2009 – 2010	59
7. Dropout Rates by grade level and gender..... 2005- 2006 to 2007 – 2008	60
8. Enrolments for all school levels..... 2008	67
9. Ratio of school attendance..... Age 5- 19 2006, 2010	73
10. Reasons for not for attending school..... 2006	73
11. Enrolment by education level, province and gender..... 2009	81
12. Dropout Rates by education level, province and gender..... 2009	82
13. Enrolment Rates, Survival Dropout..... 2005 – 2009	92
14. Primary enrolment..... 2001 – 2007	97
15. Matufort Enrolment..... 2000 - 2006	98

LIST OF FIGURES

Fig 1. School enrolments by levels..... 2005 – 2010	26
Fig 2. Cook Island Enrolment rates (secondary)..... 2000-2009	27
Fig 3. Percentage retention Years 10-11 and Years 11- 12..... 2001 – 2011	27
Fig 4. Promotion rate form 3- 5 by gender.....	38
Fig 5. Repetition rate by gender forms 3-6.....	39
Fig 6. Survival rate for the 1994 cohort of students.....	40
Fig 7. Primary and secondary Enrolments.....	115
Fig. 8 Unemployment rate.....	116

ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	-	Asian Development Bank
ACITI	-	Association for Cook Islands Tertiary Institute
APTC	-	Australia Pacific Technical College
AUSAID	-	Australian Agency for International Development
BOCODOL	-	Botswana College of Distance and Open Learning
BED	-	Bachelor of Education
BCITO	-	Building Construction Industry Training Organization
CCE	-	Community and Continuing Education
CCEC	-	Centre for Community and Continuing Education
CEO	-	Chief Executive Officer
CETC	-	Community Education Training Centre
CFDL	-	Centre for Flexible and Distance Learning
CFS	-	College of Foundation Studies
CHSS	-	Community High School Scheme
CICD	-	Community Institute for Curriculum Development
CIIC	-	Cook Islands Investment Cooperation
CITTC	-	Cook Islands Trades Training Centre
CISA	-	Cook Islands Sports Academy
CLIS	-	Certificate in Library/Information Studies
COL	-	Commonwealth of Learning
COMOSA	-	Commonwealth Open Schooling Association
CTC	-	Community Training Centre
CTCS	-	Certificate in Tertiary and Community Studies
DESD	-	Decade of Education for Sustainable Development
DFLSC	-	Distance and Flexible Learning Centre

DLIS	-	Diploma in Library/Information Studies
ECE	-	Early Childhood Education
EE	-	Enterprise Education
EFA	-	Education for All
ESD	-	Education for Sustainable Development
EU	-	European Union
FEEdMM	-	Forum Education Ministers Meeting
FBEAP	-	Forum Basic Education Action Plan
FIT	-	Fiji Institute of Technology
FJC	-	Fiji Junior Certificate
FESP	-	Fiji Education Sector Program
FSFE	-	Fiji Seventh Form Examination
FSLC	-	Fiji School Leaving Certificate
FNU	-	Fiji National University
GDP	-	Gross Domestic Product
GED	-	General Education Diploma
GER	-	Gross Enrolment Rate
ICT	-	Information and communications technology
ITO	-	Industry Training organization
JSS	-	Junior Secondary School
KEMIS	-	Kiribati Education Management Information System
KIT	-	Kiribati Institute of Technology
KNS	-	Kiribati Nursing School
KPC	-	Kiribati Protestant Church
LLL	-	Lifelong Learning

LMS	-	Learning Management System
MDG	-	Millennium Development Goal
MESC	-	Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture
MIHS	-	Marshall Islands High School
MSS	-	Motufoua Secondary School
MWCSD	-	Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development
NAMCOL	-	Namibian College of Open Learning
NCEA	-	National Certificate in Education Achievement
NCPF	-	National Curriculum Policy Framework
NEAP	-	National Education Action Plan
NER	-	Net Enrolment Rate
NFE	-	Non-formal Education
NGO	-	Non-government Organization
NIOS	-	National Institute of Open Schooling
NPE	-	Net primary enrolment
NSDS	-	National Sustainable Development Strategy
NTC	-	National Training Centre
NUS	-	National University of Samoa
NVTI	-	National Vocational Training Institute
NYC	-	National Youth Centre
NZPTC	-	New Zealand Pacific Training Centre
NZAID	-	New Zealand Agency for International Development
NZQA	-	New Zealand Qualifications Authority
OER	-	Open Educational Resources
OS	-	Open schooling
OUM	-	Oceania University of Medicine

PATVET	-	Pacific Association of Technical and Vocational Education & Training
PIOSP	-	Pacific Islands Open Schooling Project
PEDF	-	Pacific Education Development Framework
PIC	-	Pacific Island Country
PIFS	-	Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
PRIDE	-	Pacific Regional Initiative for the Delivery of Basic education
PSU	-	Pre-degree Studies Unit
PUB	-	Public Utility Board
RCCEC	-	Regional Community and Continuing Education Centre
RMI	-	Republic of the Marshall Islands
RTC	-	Rural Training Centre
SDS	-	Strategy for the development of Samoa
SISC	-	Solomon Islands School Certificate
SICHE	-	Solomon Islands College of Higher Education
SPBEA	-	South Pacific Board for Educational Assessment
SPC	-	South Pacific Commission
SQA	-	Samoa Qualifications Authority
TEPF	-	Tonga Education Policy Framework
TMPI	-	Tonga Maritime Polytechnic Institute
TPAF	-	Training and Productivity Authority of Fiji
TTI	-	Tarawa Technical Institute
TSC	-	Tuvaluan School Certificate
TVET	-	Technical and Vocational Education & Training
TPAF	-	Training and Productivity authority of Fiji
UNESCO	-	United Nations Education & Scientific, Cultural Organization

UPE	-	Universal Primary Education
UPNG	-	University of Papua New Guinea
VITE	-	Vanuatu Institute of Teachers Education
VERM	-	Vanuatu Education Roadmap
VESS	-	Vanuatu Education Sector Strategy
VEMIS	-	Vanuatu Education Management Information System
VNTC	-	Vanuatu National Training Council
WASC	-	Western association of Schools and Colleges
WelTec	-	Wellington Institute of Technology

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Open schooling is an idea whose time has come (Sir John Daniel, 2010)

COL President Sir John Daniel expressed that statement at the first AGM of COMOSA in Delhi last year. The statement is timely, almost prophetic, as we assess the reality of education in the PICs. The country reports in this study confirm that the provision of conventional schooling is neither adequate nor effective in fulfilling the national and regional aspirations of EFA. The reports highlight uneven access to secondary education because of too few secondary schools, large numbers of untrained teachers and the high costs of maintaining secondary education. In the midst of all this, high numbers of students continue to leave school at various levels without a secondary qualification. Low transition rates from primary to secondary and from lower to upper secondary levels are worrying in all PICs.

Open schooling, according to Sir John, “is education for the 21st century” when the concept of lifelong learning will underpin all education and training. Lifelong learning is based on the philosophy that learning is a process that is never “wrapped up” or completed once and for all. The success stories from the complementary *MATUA* program in Fiji demonstrate that it is never too soon or too late for learning.

Education in PICs appears to have come full circle because lifelong learning and learning anywhere and anytime is synonymous with the learning styles of most Pacific peoples, something that did not fit in with formal education that was introduced by the colonizers. In many traditional societies of PICs, the learning context is everyday life activities in people’s homes and communities. People *learn by living* their role-specific tasks and responsibilities. They actively learn and grow into knowledge. The *Waan Aelon* in Majel (Canoes of the Marshall Islands) program in the Marshall Islands provides vocational and life skills training for at-risk youth using the medium of traditional outrigger canoes, boat building and woodwork. The model (see page 60) demonstrates the effectiveness of a multi-pronged approach to non-formal learning.

Pacific Island Open Schooling Project (PIOSP)

The University of the South Pacific is a member of COMOSA and firmly believes that the openness and flexibility characteristics of open schooling can do for the school system what ODL has successfully achieved in tertiary education. Almost every PIC has developed strategies to address the challenges of school dropout, unemployment and

lack of skills. However the initiatives are small scale and hampered by inadequate resources and technical support, and not expected to make significant impact or change. The USP has established facilities and structures in DFL to extend the scale of OS activities. The PIOSP is expected to provide a more coordinated approach to OS development in the region by providing professional support and guidance through its regional campuses.

The PICs are at different stages in their development as they are in the manner and extent to which they have respond to dropouts and second-chance chance. A few countries like Samoa, Fiji and Solomon Islands have sound policies and workable strategies that are obviously working even if they are yet to show significant changes in the overall analysis. There is a bigger group that is still working their way through the muddle but with limited resources are yet to surface. The communities need to be convinced of the importance of TVET as a provider of life skills for employment and citizenship, initiative and self-sufficiency, and self employment. There is a need for a fundamental re-thinking of the role and place of secondary education and that TVET must be a vital part of that reform. The Pacific Island Open Schooling Project (PIOSP) will build on existing schooling and training structures and practices, as defined in the country reports, and develop new strategies where necessary to provide a framework for developing human potential and strengthening national and regional productivity.

INTRODUCTION

Open Schooling (OS) is not an entirely new phenomenon to Pacific Island countries because similar programs already exist in one form or another in most countries. Lifelong learning and learning anywhere and anytime that is aligned to the open learning philosophy of education are synonymous with the learning styles of most Pacific peoples. The important features of open schooling – flexibility, openness, unconventional pedagogies, and use of information and communication technology ICT) – offer a new, viable alternative. Whichever of the attributes is most strongly emphasized - flexibility, openness, pedagogy or technology – will determine the form of open schooling (Haughey and Stewart, 2010). Both OS approaches - the Complementary approach that replicates the curriculum of the conventional school system and the Alternative approach that has a more adult-relevant, TVET-oriented curriculum will be considered.

The Pacific Islands Open Schooling Project (PIOSP) recognizes the serious challenges that education systems and governments in the region face in providing useful learning for people and lifting the standards of communities. The PIOSP will investigate the potential of Open schooling to create, extend and enhance secondary schooling opportunities for out-of-school youths and adults in Pacific Islands Countries, and based on the findings to support the countries to develop Open Schooling as a strategy for second-chance education. It targets the many thousand school-leavers including dropouts in the Pacific island communities who need a coordinated program of study to improve their human capital and ensure more productive lives.

Technical Assistance

The Pacific Islands Open Schooling Project is a 3-phased multiple year project that commenced in March 2011 and ends in December 2013. The first phase is funded by the Commonwealth of Learning. PIOSP is implemented by a project team comprising the School of Education and the regional campuses of the University of the South Pacific (USP) in collaboration with regional stakeholders and the Commonwealth of Learning. The USP Chapter of COMOSA, when it is in place, will be the focal point of contact in the implementation process.

The technical assistance is intended to serve three broad purposes. First, the TA is to support trial open schools in Kiribati and Tonga according to country decisions. Second, it is to provide advocacy and awareness of OS through continuous dialogue and sharing information and best practice. Third, it is to provide support to PICs who need to set up open schools.

The three phases of the project are as follows:

Phase One: Situational Analysis (April – August 2011) to include preliminary desk studies on the nature and scale of school dropouts and out-of-school youths and adults, nature and scope of existing second-chance provisions and markets; canvassing of governments, institutions and communities; formation of USP Chapter of COMOSA; and feedback and agreement on Plans for Phases 2 and 3.

Phase 2: Pilot studies in Kiribati and Tonga (September 2011 – June 2013) to include the identification of study sites, training of tutors, development and adaptation of learning materials, program administration and program assessment. The Desk review report and the assessment reports of the pilot open schools are expected to provide useful information for phase 3. An important part of this phase will be the Regional OS Forum that is expected to take place in 2012 with the intention of (i) presenting key findings from the preliminary studies (ii) prioritizing of key issues and focus areas for Phase 3 of the project (iii) development of implementation plans for Phase 3, and (iv) to gain interest, support and participation of countries in the third phase.

Phase 3: Region-wide implementation (2012 – 2013) to follow the procedures as in Phase 2 and other countries could begin implementation whenever they are ready.

PIOSP Phase 1: Situational Analysis

PIOSP 1 involves the following key project activities:

1. Preliminary study reports for 11 of the 12 USP member states. This involved a desk review of key data regarding the current reality of the nature and scale of school dropouts and out-of-school youths and adults. The review also looked at the nature and scope of second-chance programs that have attempted to provide education and training for the underprivileged. There was some review of relevant policies and plans regarding dropouts and out-of-school youth; proposal for how open schooling can strengthen and improve the quality of life and marketability of disadvantaged youths were identified .

2. Canvassing the interest of Ministry of Education, education providers and communities in the region to secure support and participation in the project.

3. Formation of the USP Chapter of COMOSA with membership of all USP member countries. COMOSA membership is critical for securing professional assistance and networking with COL specialists as well as OS practitioners in Commonwealth member countries. A regional chapter of COMOSA is expected to offer PICs the ongoing support, collaboration and sharing that is vital for sustainability purposes. USP is a member of COMOSA.

Situational Analysis – The Desk Review Report

The preliminary study involved a desk review on the nature and scale of school dropouts and out-of-school youths and adults, enabling policies, nature and scope of existing second-chance provisions and possible markets in Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. The report is in two parts: Part One consists of 11 individual country reports while Part two consists of a combined overview of education in PICs together with a synthesis of the common issues and emerging patterns that arise from the country reports.

Eleven country reports are presented in this report. Nine field researchers in the countries – Rod Dixon (Cook Islands), Talica Malani (Fiji), Tereao Teingia (Kiribati), Fereti Sefeti and Pat Kuridua (Marshall Islands), Ruby Va’a (Samoa), Stanley Houma (Solomon Islands), Sela Havea (Tonga), David Manuella (Tuvalu) and Elvie Tamata and Carol Aru (Vanuatu) – put together nine reports. Project leader Salanieta Bakalevu wrote the reports for Nauru and Tokelau.

The country reports present findings in relation to the following key variables: school enrolment, retention, achievement and dropout rates; enabling legislation and policies for school leavers and disadvantaged youths; second-chance programs; community awareness and involvement; TVET provisions; possible markets and destination for graduates; support systems and sustainability of open schooling initiatives. Copies of the work assignment and table of issues that were investigated as part of the desk studies are attached as appendices.

Document analysis, questionnaire, site visits and discussions were the major tools used. It is likely that there may be other issues that have not been documented or that the identified issues have been resolved since the documents have been published. The limitations of the document analysis require further discussion and scrutiny. The planned Regional Open Schooling Forum in 2012 will be opportune time for participants from the regional countries to further deliberate on the issues presented here.

Appendix 1: WORK ASSIGNMENT

Each regional researcher will be expected to conduct the research necessary to prepare a report of up to 2500 words (approximately 5 pages) on their country that includes the following:

- A brief discussion of the education system including the structure, student enrolment and progress trends, dropout rate, post-school provisions;
- A brief analysis of the nature and scale of school dropouts, and out-of-school youths and adults;
- A brief analysis of national policies, strategies or programs that exist in the country regarding second-chance education;
- Illustrative examples of any initiatives relating to second-chance education;
- Identification and description of difficulties and constraints to the provision of second-chance education in the country;
- The researcher's own analysis of the actions and initiatives that would be helpful in facilitating the provision of second-chance education in the country;
- The sources used in the preparation of the report that include government documents, reports, websites and news reports;

Appendix 2: QUESTIONNAIRE

The following five themes and corresponding questions could provide guidance and direction. Feel free to adjust the questions according to your particular context.

Q1: School systems & structure

- What are the enrolment and transition rates?
- What are the gaps and constraints in the provision of schooling?

Q2: Nature and scale of school dropout and out-of-school youth in the country

- What age groups make up the largest numbers of out-of-school youth?
- What is the gender distribution of out-of-school youth and school dropout?
- Which level(s) of schooling records the highest numbers of school dropout?
- What three major factors contribute to school dropout?

Q3: Scope and administration of second-chance education services in the country

- What second-chance education services are available? Who are the providers?
- How accessible are the services to those who need it? How adequate are they?
- How well are services utilized? Are there differences in utilization of services?
- What are the barriers to access and utilization of services?
- What is the success rate in the utilization of these services? [Case studies]
- What employment and further education opportunities are available at the end?

Q3: National policies re school dropouts and second-chance education

- What existing policies cover these services?
- How effective and practical are the policies?
- What partnerships exist for the provision of services?

Q4: Sustainability Issues

- How sustainable is the level of national support for the services?
- What sources and level of funding are available to fund the services?
- What provisions are there for capacity building – training of workers?

Q5: Community Support

- How do the communities view school dropouts and second-chance education?
- What community involvement in second-chance education exists?
- What is the capacity of communities to support second-chance education?

Limitations of the Study

In conducting the desk review, four key limitations were experienced and are noted here as lessons learned that could assist future regional desk reviews.

1. Availability of documents

Gaining access to documents was a challenge. Official correspondence to section heads as well as emails and phone calls to various counterparts requesting assistance received limited responses. Most of the reports and documents that the researchers used came from the PRIDE Resource Centre and IOE studies. The best data came from sources at regional level that included PIFS, AUSAID, World Bank, ADB, SPC and UNESCO reports.

2. Availability of data and statistics

The currency of data and statistics was a problem. Some countries census are at least 5 years old but are the only figures available. The country statistics on enrolment, retention, achievement and dropouts were of two types – those that had kept up with the MDG reviews obviously had better analysis and reporting possibly as a result of the reporting requirements they had to follow. A few presentations of statistics were unclear and difficult to follow and the analysis was either limited or questionable.

3. Accuracy of information collected

A good number of country researchers collected information from individuals in government departments, private providers and members of communities. Some information did not fit with widely accepted sources while others appeared flawed and had obvious bias; these could be open to various interpretations.

4. Capacity and scope of the required tasks

Phase 1 was to have run for 6 months, March to August 2011. Delays in formalizing the contracts meant that the desk study did not begin until mid- March and to be completed by June, approximately 3½ months. This was a rush against time for the researchers who had fulltime jobs.

Conclusion

Bearing in mind the methodology used to collect information and the limitations of this desk review, the findings from the preliminary study are now presented. The report is intended to begin the discussions and debate about open schooling especially its relative advantage and the critical role and contribution it can play in enhancing the development and empowerment of school leavers and youths so that they can contribute effectively in society.

COUNTRY REPORTS



1. SECOND-CHANCE EDUCATION IN THE COOK ISLANDS

Rod Dixon, Cook Islands USP Campus

1.1 Introduction

The Cook Islands comprises 15 islands located in the South Pacific Ocean from 156°W to 167°W and 8°S to 23°S. The total land area of the Cook Islands is just 236.7 square kilometers but its exclusive economic zone covers an area of about 2 million square kilometers. The Cook Islands can be divided into 3 regions: Rarotonga, the Southern Group comprising seven islands and the Northern Group of six atolls. Rarotonga is the main island of economic activity and government administration. The two official languages of the Cook Islands are the indigenous *Maori*, which is used mainly in social events and English that is favored for business and administration. The people of the Cook Islands have automatic rights to New Zealand citizenship through a constitutional arrangement of “free association” with New Zealand.

The total resident population was estimated to be 12,000 in December 2009. Around 58% of the population resides on the main island Rarotonga, 29% reside in the other Southern Group Islands and 13% in the Northern Group Islands. Age distribution profiles indicate a higher proportion of children and older members of society in the outer islands. There is a predominant migration flow from the outer Islands to Rarotonga thence to New Zealand and beyond. Standards of social services, notably education and health, and variations in the local economy have been important determinants of migration.

1.2 The Education System

Education is largely provided by government institutions. In 2010 there were 9 primary schools (all of which include Early Childhood Centres), 4 secondary schools and 19 area schools. Of these, five are church schools (2 primary, 2 area and 1 secondary) and one private primary school. All church and private schools receive 100% of the equivalent allocation of funds that they otherwise would as a government school. All schools are open to both educational and financial audit.

The Cook Islands has a policy of free and compulsory basic education and the current compulsory age for schooling is 5-15 years. A bill is currently before Parliament to increase the leaving age to 16 years of age. There is no upper age limit to school enrolment. The total school enrolment for 2010 was 4186. This continues a regular annual decline over the last five years consistent with the overall decline in the Cook Islands national population (see Appendix 2). In the last two to three years, secondary schools have started to see a number of young adults (18-25) access school to “catch up” or “fill in gaps”, often only taking one or two courses to meet their needs.

Access to higher education is provided by the USP through its Cook Islands campus and by aid-funded scholarships or private means to overseas academic institutions, mainly in Australia and New Zealand. TVET training is available through a number of small training schools that include the Hospitality Tourism Training Centre (HTTC), Cook Islands Trades Training Centre (CITTC), Cook Islands Sports Academy (CISA), Cook Islands Red Cross, Cook Islands Maritime School, Cook Islands Nursing School, Cook Islands Police Service and the Cook Islands Trading Corporation. These accredited training providers are grouped under the Association for Cook Islands Tertiary Institutes (ACITI) which achieved NZQA recognition and accreditation in 2007. As a consequence, all these schools' qualifications are internationally recognized under the New Zealand Qualifications Framework.

1.3 National Policies and Strategies

Education in the Cook Islands is guided by the Cook Islands Education Master Plan 2008 – 2023, which sets goals and targets for the whole Education Sector, prioritized through a five year Statement of Intent and Annual Business Plans. The plan seeks to limit the numbers of school “drop-outs” by developing a more inclusive education system but makes the following additional statements specifically addressing the provision of second chance education:

- Achieve 90% student retention beyond the minimum leaving age either in formal schooling or another recognized course of learning
- Provide re-entry programs on all islands for people who have been away from learning
- Develop strategies for distance education, isolated students, second chance learning and adult education
- Develop technical and vocational programs including life skills programs
- Establish well equipped and resourced community learning centre on each island
- Establish and resource Community Education centres and programs

As a result of the Education Master Plan, adults in the Cook Islands will be able to:

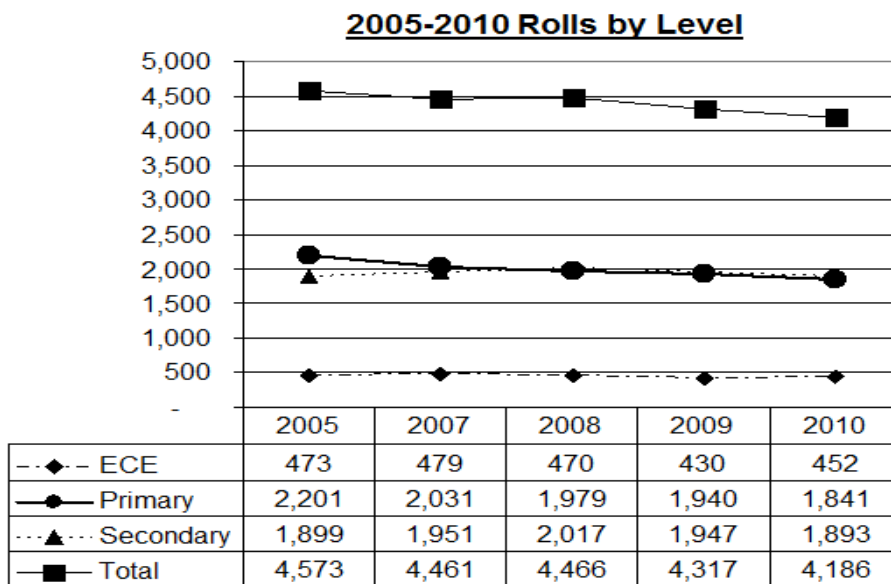
- Access opportunities for second chance learning to achieve learning skills and training
- Access a wide range of courses to equip them for career and lifestyle choices
- Access all levels of education through community education centres

1.4 The School System

Primary School “survival rates”, particularly in Rarotonga, are reported to be “high” (MOE, 2007; EFA). The few pockets of “losses” are largely attributed to migration either by Cook Islanders or contract workers finishing employment. Secondary schooling officially starts at Year 7 although a number of primary schools also offer Year 8. The core essential learning areas are compulsory to the end of Year 10. In Years 9 and 10 schools also offer semester options which permit students to explore possible courses for senior secondary school (Years 11-13). Under the New Zealand Qualifications Framework students gain credits through both internal and external assessment towards NCEA at Levels 1, 2 and 3.

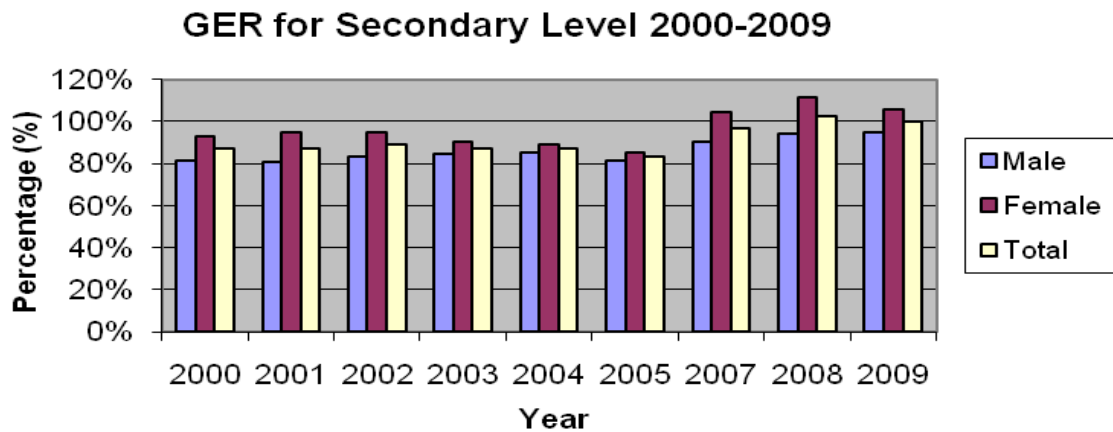
NCEA permits students to continue studying at mixed levels to complete their qualifications, thus reducing the stigma of returning to school to complete unfinished qualifications. This is thought to have contributed to higher retention rates in the senior secondary school (Cook Islands Ministry of Education 2010; 17).

Fig 1: School enrolment by levels, 2005-2010



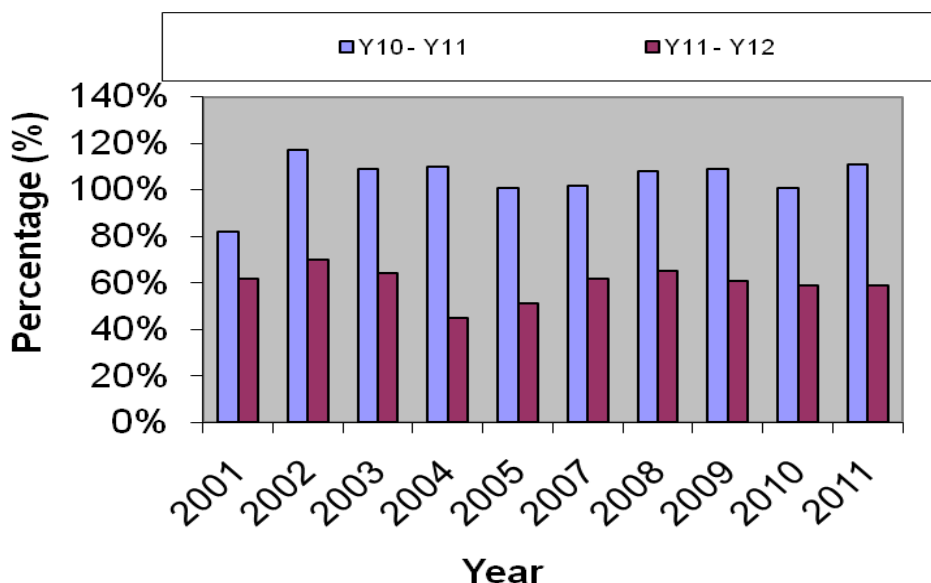
There is no available data of school children who exit before Year 10. GER data in Figure 2 indicates improving participation by 15 year olds in secondary education (particularly females). These figures can be read in conjunction with data in Figure 2 on progression from Year 10 – 11 to suggest that retention is improving beyond the end of compulsory schooling, particularly for girls but with worrying high loss rates among boys.

Figure 2 - Cook Islands Gross Enrolment Rates (Secondary) 2000 – 2009



However the data in Figure3 also suggests that retention from Year 11-12 is significantly lower at 60%, again with higher loss rates among boys. The proposed Education Bill that would raise the compulsory leaving age by one year, is expected to increase Year 11-12 retention. Meanwhile the Ministry of Education is extending the scope of subjects available at Year 12 – not only the dual pathway programs referred to above but also an increasing number of vocational school-based subjects, such as Media Studies and Tourism, at the same time increasing the number of schools offering Visual and Performing Arts and Physical Education at qualification level. The Ministry recognizes the need to widen offerings from academic to vocational if retention rates and student outcomes are to significantly improve.

Figure 3 – Percentage retention years 10-11 and years 11- 12 2001 – 2011



1.4.1 Dual Pathways to post-secondary

A Dual Pathway program permits Year 12 students to commence registered vocational qualifications while still at school, and credits gained at school going towards both their school-based and vocational qualification. This pathway is currently available in carpentry, automotive engineering, electronics, cookery and hospitality. Shorter “tastier courses” offering a smaller number of credits are available in Year 11.

1.4.2 Life Skills

Skills courses are also offered in schools, particularly in the more isolated islands. The courses do not count as credits for qualification but provide students and community members with an opportunity to gain useful life skills such as engine maintenance, diving, first aid and weaving. Many islands communities also provide different levels of ICT training for schools and the community. All costs, including tutor and consumables, are met by the Ministry of Education under a National Framework for accredited second chance training. Meanwhile, resources and personnel remain largely concentrated in Rarotonga with only limited provision in the outer islands.

1.5 TVET Provisions

The Department of National Human Resource Development operates the Trade Training School and the Hospitality and Tourism Training Centre, which provide training opportunities for, among others, students who have “fallen out” of the formal academic high schools system. The programs permit students to re-enter formal training for the hospitality industry, and as carpenters, automotive workers, electricians, and builders.

1.5.1 The Hospitality and Tourism Training Centre (HTTC)

HTTC offers WELTEC and London City and Guilds qualifications in Food and Beverage, Cookery, Food Safety and also Customer Services associated with the Hospitality and Tourism industries. HTTC also offers short courses designed to build skills in profession as well as night courses providing New Zealand recognised qualification.

1.5.2 The Cook Islands Trades Training Centre (CITTC)

CITC offers a wide range of courses in the trades: Electrical, Telecommunications, Automotive, Carpentry and Drain-laying and Plumbing. It also provides night courses for adults, transition courses for college students and short-term courses for outer island students. Include in this are trade courses for second-chance learners and local community groups. The Centre uses training materials from the Open Polytechnic of New Zealand, UNITEC, WINTEC, and the Building Construction Industry Training Organization of New Zealand (BCITO), and works closely with various New Zealand industry training organizations

(ITOs) to ensure that courses provided and the standard of its facilities conform to New Zealand requirements. All qualifications are recognized by NZQA and offered to trade qualification Level 4

1.5.3 The Cook Islands Sports Academy (CISA)



Students of CISA in action against the Mt Albert Grammar School's rugby league team in Auckland (Image copyright - Cook Islands News).

CISA provides a sports-based program at the post secondary education level. CISA is accredited to teach Level 2 and 3 New Zealand National Certificate in Sport and in the long term, to deliver this program to Level 5. The program is targeted at school leavers of 16-20 years and offers the opportunity to secure semi-professional careers in rugby league or rugby union. CISA started in Rarotonga in 2006 and has a branch in the outer island of Aitutaki. Twenty-five boys signed up to their program in 2010 with a further 15 in Aitutaki, including 5 girls. There have been six annual intakes on Rarotonga since the program's inception. CISA also delivers *Te Uki Tumanava* on Rarotonga, a trades-based program for youth at risk and the 2010 enrolment was 10. While both programs are still in the early stages of development, CISA's National Certificate in Sports and *Te Uki Tumanava* have been successful in providing alternative pathways to meet the needs of school leavers.

The graduate destination for 77 students enrolled in CISA from 2006-2010 is encouraging: 43% found full or part-time employment, 25% proceeded to further education, 18% secured rugby scholarships into New Zealand colleges or clubs, 10% emigrated, 4% dropped out. Likewise the graduate destination for the 47 students enrolled in *Te Uki Tumanava* from 2009 – 2010: 44% found full time or part time employment, 16% proceeded to TVET programs, 10% repeated the program, 10% returned to school, 10% in on-going detention in jail (see para below), 6% unemployed, 4% emigrated.

1.5.4 Te Rakei Toa and Te Uki Tumanava

Te Rakei Toa (to clothe young warriors for life) was developed by a concerned community group that wanted to help 11-13 year old boys who drop out of school in the transition from primary to secondary education and considered at risk. The alternative program was to transition students back into mainstream education at individually appropriate times. It is currently open only to boys, offers basic literacy and numeracy programmes and introduces students to learning success through sports, carving, agriculture and art. *Te Rakei Toa* also contains pathways that transition students to a trades-based programme called *Te Uki Tumanava* Programme, and the Cook Islands Sports Academy programmes or vocational courses. The latter are available once students reach school leaving age and have achieved basic literacy and numeracy outcomes.



Some of Te Rakei Toa students on stage with ta'unga Michael Tavioni following the screening of their DVD of Cook Islands poetry (image Cook Islands Herald, 2009)

1.5.5 Second Chance Education for Prison Inmates

The inmates at Arorangi Prison in Rarotonga receive second chance education opportunities:

- Several male prisoners participate in the *Te Uki Tumanava* Program and attend classes that include cooking, hospitality and carpentry. In 2010, seven male prisoners participated in a basic introductory course on small engine repair.
- Every Thursday morning volunteers of the Daughters of Charity gather at the Prison to provide Basic English and Mathematics classes. A new course in Film Studies will be offered in Semester 2.

The men teach each other about crafts such as *ukulele*-making to generate prisoner income. They have access to Alcoholics Anonymous meetings and receive professional guidance and up-skilling creating resumes and meeting employer demands. A proposal is currently before the Cook Islands Investment Corporation (CIIC) to renovate an old building on the Prison grounds for the purpose of education and rehabilitation. The plan is classroom space, a room for counseling, a small library, a computer room and a teacher's room. The prisons program is also seeking NZQA accreditation to enable inmates to progress towards formal NCEA programs.



Students of Te Uki Tumanava at the Atupa workshop of master carver Mike Tavioni (right) with coordinator Lloyd Matapo (left). (Image Cook Islands Herald)

1.6 The USP Cook Islands Campus

The USP offers forms of Open Schooling through its Regional Centre for Continuing and Community Education (RCCCE) and the College of Foundation Studies (CFS). The RCCCE offers TVET-based and vocational courses and programs while CFS offers academic bridging (Preliminary) programs at Year 12 and a University Entrance (Foundation) programs at Year 13. Annual enrolment at the USP Campus has increased steadily over the years and is currently around 800 with about 21% of enrolments from the outer islands. The vast majority of these students have returned to education after a period of absence.

Tables 1: Effective full time students at USP Campus

	2007		2007 Total	2008		2008 Total	2009		2009 Total	2010		2010 Total
Campus	F	M		F	M		F	M		F	M	
Cook Islands	55.7	25.6	81.4	65.4	21.9	87.3	54.2	25.2	79.5	70.2	36.6	106.8

In order to provide training for trainers, a New Zealand Level 4 Certificate of Adult Education has been offered twice to develop a cadre of adult education trainers. Also, there have been several iterations of the NZQA Unit Standards 4098 and 11281 designed to permit skilled people in the community to act as official assessors for unit standards under the NZQF. This provides a very significant opportunity for non-formal education to become formally accredited with pathways to TVET and higher education but has yet to be fully developed.

1.7 Gaps and Constraints

Second-chance education is the least developed sector of education and training in the country. Some of the major limitations are:

- Absence of a co-ordinating agency with clear responsibility for the sector;
- Absence of a policy and strategic plan for the sector;
- Absence of funding from government;
- Lack of capacity available to implement second chance education;
- Concentration of resources on the main island of Rarotonga.

All education and training agencies and NGOs acknowledge the importance of second chance education and that neglect of this sector compounds the earlier and past failures of the education system and social and economic disadvantage of school leavers and results in the inefficient use of the nation's human resources.

1.8 Summary and Recommendations

Boys experience the highest failure rates and the lowest return to formal second chance education. It is proposed that schools widen the range of subjects and teaching styles to capture the interest of students as broadly as possible, including hands-on vocational training (like sports, creative arts, music and videography as well as traditional vocational and academic subjects) in the upper primary and secondary school system. Another important item concerns the need to extend to outer islands the special programs that assist in the retention of boys who are currently leaving the education system in large numbers and who are significantly less likely than girls to return to formal education.

Second chance education in the country lies within the domain of a number of agencies and institutions, including the Ministry of Education, the Department of National Human Resources Development, the University of the South Pacific and various NGOs. All these agencies are under-resourced to manage their existing workloads, with resources largely concentrated on the main island of Rarotonga. The consequence is that second chance education currently fails to achieve the attention and resources it requires, with the outer islands the most disadvantaged. The Association of Cook Islands Tertiary Institutes (ACITI) provides a New Zealand accredited, Cook Islands based, authority for the accreditation and

co-ordination of Cook Islands specific post secondary training including second chance education programs. It is ideally situated to provide bridging pathways through the New Zealand Qualifications Framework to TVET and Higher Education for second chance students.

It is recommended that, for a set-up period of three years, NZAid provide ACITI with the funds required to (a) undertake a scoping study of second chance education needs in the Cook Islands, with particular focus on the outer islands, (b) develop policy and programs directly addressing these needs and the underlying problems that lead to school failure, particularly among boys (c) establish a small two person unit to allocate and monitor the annual funding of second chance education projects addressing these needs, and (d) co-ordinate the development of educators, trainers and assessors to meet these needs, with special emphasis on developing programs and capacities in the outer islands.

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FIJI



BACK TO SCHOOL

MATUA PROGRAM



SECOND-CHANCE

2. SECOND-CHANCE EDUCATION IN FIJI

Talica Malani, Ministry of Education, Fiji

2.1 Introduction

Fiji lies in the heart of the Pacific Ocean midway between the Equator and the South Pole 174° East and 178° West, and between 12° and 22° South. The Fiji islands comprise some 300 islands that have a total land area of 18,333 km² and are surrounded by about 1.3 million km² of the South Pacific Ocean. The two major islands are *Viti Levu* and *Vanua Levu*. The capital city Suva is on the main island *Viti Levu*.



Fiji is a multiracial and multi-cultural nation. Statistics in 2009 recorded Fiji's population at around 845,602 (Fiji Bureau of Statistics, 2009) and the following distribution: indigenous Fijians make up 50%, Indo-Fijians 47% and Others make up 3%. English is the official language while the Fijian and Hindi languages are taught in schools as part of the school curriculum. Since 1999, political unrest that stem from complex issues about land and constitutional reform has caused an uneven performance in the economy, which has affected almost every sector including education. Government recognizes the critical role that education plays in development and continues to give it the biggest portion of its annual budgetary allocation.

2.2 National Policies and Strategies

1. Section 39 of the Constitution (1997) is on Education and states that:

“Every person has the right to basic education and to equal access to educational institutions”

2. Government’s commitment to the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD) 2005– 2014 is expressed in the Educational Plan of *“a world where everyone has the opportunity to benefit from education and learn the values, behavior and lifestyles required for a sustainable future and for positive societal transformation”*.

3. The Ministry of Education has made important decisions that prescribed critical initiatives that promote equitable opportunities:

- Maintenance of fee-free education in the first 13 years of schooling;
- Abolishment of external examinations in primary and lower secondary schools to ensure all students have at least an education standard up to Year 10 (Form 4).;
- Provide free transport (bus, boat, etc) to all students in primary and secondary schools who qualify under a means test;
- Continue to work closely with non-government authorities who administer large numbers of schools.

4. The National Sector Development Programs (NSDP) provides for various targets:

- A specific national target under the National Sector Development Program:

“All young people and adults must be given the opportunity to gain the knowledge and develop the values, attitudes and skills that will enable them to develop their capacities to work, participate fully in their society, take control of their own lives and continue learning”.

- A key performance indicator is that the proportion of students successfully completing TVET courses be not less than 90% in order to meet demand
- Outcome 7 specifies numerous targets related to TVET. The outcome states that

“quality partnerships and links to industry, higher education institutions, communities, businesses and provincial councils will be enhanced and strengthened”.

2.3 Education System

Fiji has a 15 years school system that includes two years of Pre-school (4-5years), eight years primary school (6-13 years) and five years secondary school (14-18 years). The 2009 statistics indicated the following population distribution of each school level: 32,331 preschool, 125,780 primary school age and 80,277 in the secondary age group. English is the official language

although Fijian and Hindi are also taught in schools as part of the curriculum. The 2007 statistics recorded that over half of the young people between 5-19 years live in rural areas.

About 70% of the primary schools are rural-based and owned by School Committees. Similarly, most of the 160 secondary schools are owned by Committee but they are located in the urban centres. The common belief that urban schools are better has seen rural students flock to secondary education in the urban schools even though there are enough secondary schools in rural areas. Government has tried to minimize this by investing in rural development including improving the infrastructure and resources of rural schools.

Education in Fiji has had its share of persistent challenges. A major concern is the underachievement of ethnic Fijian students compared to the other groups in external examinations results - Fiji Junior Certificate (FJC), Fiji School Leaving Certificate (FSLC) and Fiji Seventh Form Certificate (FSFE). Similar gaps are also evident between rural and urban schools. The unfortunate consequence is that ethnic Fijians make up the largest number of school dropouts and out-of-school youth. Questions have been raised about the relevance of the school curriculum and school programmes and prompted calls for curriculum review and reconstruction, capacity building and effective targeting of under-performing districts and resource mobilization.

Since 2000, the Ministry of Education has implemented measures to ensure more effective and accelerated implementation of policies that promote quality education and achievement of EFA goals. Expansion of the compulsory years, development of a National Curriculum Framework, an ECER Policy and support for adult literacy are important policy initiatives. Recently, the Ministry of Education also decided to decentralize administrative and professional support to the nine Districts and four Divisional Education Offices. There has been significant improvement in education standards that has narrowed the access gap and generally improved quality.

2.3.1 Education Statistics

Statistics for 2006 (SIMS MOE, 2006) provide important information about schooling in Fiji:

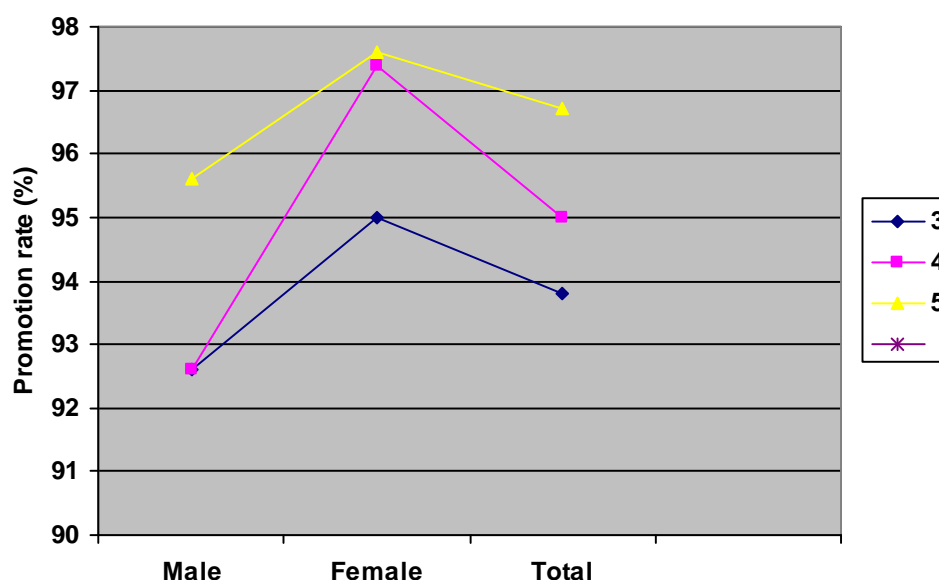
- (1) 71% of 6 year olds in the total population entered class 1 in 2006. The other 29% were probably out of school or already in class 2. Intake rate for boys was higher than girls.
- (2) GER of over 100% and NER of 94% for primary were high. This suggested there may be students either below 6 years or above 11 years still at primary, and that some 6-11 year olds may have progressed to class 7 or Form 1 or are still out of school. There was a lower net enrolment rate for girls compared to boys.
- (3) Secondary GER for secondary was 85% and NER was 73%. The former suggested that some secondary-age students were either still in primary or had progressed onto Form 7 or dropped out of school. The figure for males was lower than females showing that boys have a problem of dropout at the secondary level. The NER figure suggested that

Fiji has a problem of getting students through the education system in the specified time according to their ages, which is costly both to government and parents.

The high access rate to primary education as shown by high GERs needs to be supported by improvement in retention rates at the official ages and the right class levels. The differential in access for boys and girls at the secondary level also needs to be looked at.

- (4) Promotion rate for girls at all secondary levels were higher than for boys. This concern was confirmed by actual enrolment figures at secondary level where the numbers for females were much higher than for males (see fig ...).

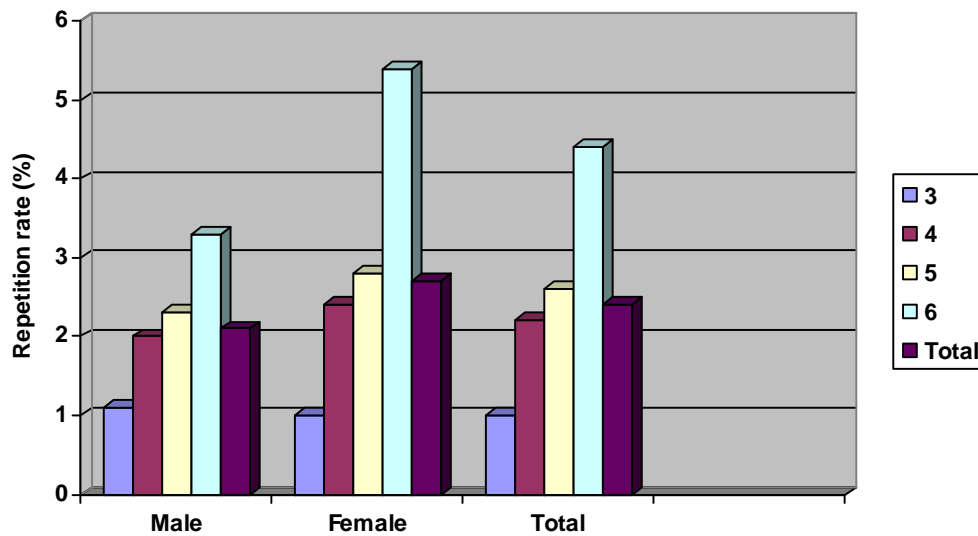
Figure 4: Promotion rate Forms 3 – 5 by gender



Source: SIMS - MOE, Fiji

- (5) Repetition rate for girls was lower than for boys at the primary level. This was reversed at secondary where girls had a higher repetition rate, and particularly high at Form 6. The lower repetition rate of girls at primary followed by their higher rate at secondary level could be explained by the theory that boys develop at a slower rate than girls. There was large number of girls at secondary level since they appeared to move faster through the system than boys.

Figure 5: Repetition rate by gender, Form 3-6



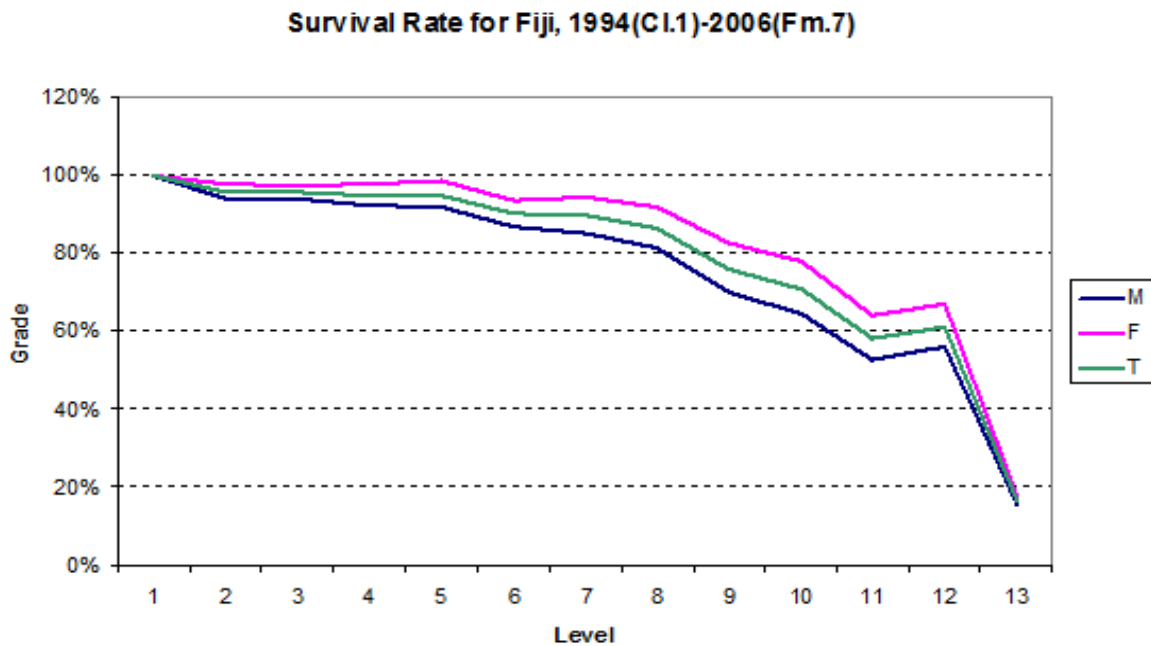
(6) Transition rate for girls was higher than that for boys in both levels.

Table 2. Primary and Secondary dropouts by Gender

	Male	Female	Total
Primary	0.8	1.8	1.3
Secondary	6.6	3.4	5.0

(7) There is a lower dropout rate overall at primary level than secondary. At the secondary level there is a marked difference in the dropout rate between boys and girls with a higher dropout rate for boys. There are definitely a number of socio-economic factors that lead to the higher dropout rate for boys.

Figure 6: Survival rate for the 1994 cohort of students



Source: SIMS - Ministry of Education, Fiji

This graph shows that only 61% of the cohort of students that started Class 1 reached Form 6 and a mere 18% reached Form 7. It is likely that some of the missing may have proceeded on to alternative pathways.

2.4 Illustrative Examples of Second Chance initiatives

Most sectors in Fijian society including government, private sector, business communities, NGO and other civil societies are involved one way or another in supporting new pathways of learning. Two groups of training for dropouts and out-of-school youths will be discussed:

- Programs that follow the conventional school curriculum and aim to give students another chance at completing a secondary school qualification;
- Programs that follow a more TVET-based curriculum that aims at life and employment skills.

There are only two known programmes under the first group – the *MATUA* programme at Nabua Secondary School and the Special Learning programme at the Champagnat Institute. Both institutions are in Suva. There are more programs that belong to the second group and include the programmes offered by the Department of Youth & Sport and various other groups.

2.4.1 MATUA Programme at Nabua Secondary School

The Fijian word *matua* literally means matured.

Six *MATUA* programs specifically set up for out-of-school youths and adults are located within exiting school premises. Five of them - Ratu Navula Secondary School *MATUA* in Nadi, Rewa Secondary School *MATUA*, Lelean Memorial School Sports Academy, Nadi Muslim College Sports Academy, Marist Brother's High School Sports Academy and John Wesley College Sports Academy - offer an *alternative model* of Open Schooling in Vocational and Sports studies. Only the *MATUA* programme at Nabua Secondary School in Suva offers the conventional program for Y11 and Y12.

The *MATUA* program at Nabua Secondary School began operation in 2002 to cater for its own increasing numbers of dropouts. Since then the School has run a dual system that offered the normal school program during school hours and the *MATUA* program for youths and adults in the evenings. The two programs use the same curriculum, are taught by the same teachers, take the same examinations and offer the same qualifications. The teachers of the school volunteer their services for the evening classes and get refreshments before classes and free transport home afterwards. Enrolments to this program showed the following distribution: 80% Fijians, mostly 20-28 years old, 75% females most of them young single mothers, 15% married, 10% employed and most rely on others for financial support. The *MATUA* program is community-based and thrives on the strong partnership between the School Committee, the Parents and Teachers Association, the Nabua village community and *Matua* Taxis that operates a fleet of 100 taxis across the road. Between them this support group has sustained a project that has given many youths another chance at completing study and employment. Success stories of the school are numerous; they have been publicized widely in the media and many graduates of the school are now employed in the government civil service as well as private companies. Many have moved onto higher studies at institutions including the University of the South Pacific, Nursing School and Teachers College. The sustainability of the *MATUA* model with its strong community-base and ownership make it worth replicating.

2.4.2 Marist Champagnat Institute

This small institution caters to a younger group: the 13 year olds who drop out in the transition from primary to secondary. It aims to “empower marginalized young people with life-giving skills so they can participate effectively in their family and society” (Plan, 2010). The school caters for slow learners like those who need speech and reading therapy. The schools' annual intakes are screened into two groups:

- (i) those that drop out at the end of primary, or never attended school, or have attended a Special School,
- (ii) those that have Form3 & 4, or are 'street kids' , or are older dropouts

From the two groups the age range of students is 13-22 years. On arrival students are assessed to gauge their knowledge and skill level so they can be placed well. The primary school dropouts make up the larger group. They go through a 2-year Basic Education programme that follows the conventional curriculum to prepare them for possible entry into Form 3 in mainstream school or employment. The second group is small and follows a vocational pathway that offers a 2-year programme in vocational areas like Office skills, Tailoring, Catering, and Agriculture. When they are ready, they proceed to higher TVET/Vocational institutions or they find employment. This year they introduced a one year “Childcare” certificate to cater for much older students that had nowhere else to go. The school maintains a small roll of around 100 so the teachers can attend adequately to the diverse needs of its children and ensure better output. All teachers are qualified and registered. The school is privately funded by the Marist Brothers International.

2.4.3 Montfort Boys Town

This institution is situated 18km outside Suva and is responding to the demands of increasing unemployment and other social problems in the country. Now 12 years old the school caters only for boys, providing them with a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable them to develop their full potential. The admission conditions for this institution include (i) age between 16-18 years, (ii) minimum education of Y10, (iii) good physical and mental health, and (iv) good behavior. Interestingly, the school notes “a preference for orphans and dropouts”.

Montfort offers two forms of training: Home training that is about character formation and personality development, and 2-3 years Vocational training in areas of Building, Cabinet making, Motor vehicle mechanic, Fitting and machining, and Electrician. The students are assessed by the country’s Training & Productivity Authority of Fiji (TPAF) Class III Trade test. Montfort’s programmes have the Ministry of Education’s registration.

2.4.4 Programmes of the Ministry of Youth & Sports

It is said that young people still suffer disproportionately from a deficit of decent work opportunities. Fiji’s first National Employment Centre was launched in 2010 to be a “one stop shop” to register, train and direct Fiji’s unemployed into meaningful economic activities and boost national employment and productivity. In 2010 it targeted to train about 36% of the unemployed youths so they can be released in the formal employment sector, self-employment or starting their SMEs, overseas employment, and voluntary services. The Centre provides competency-based employment skills training, with special emphasis on green jobs, green growth and green productivity. This is part of Government’s 10 Point Plan to bring unemployment rate down from 8.6% to 4.2% by 2012.

Department of Youth Life Long Training



Poultry



Vegetable



Honey



Piggery



Fresh Water Fish



Catering



Sewing



Weaving



Knitting



Jewellery Making



Carpentry



Light Engine Repair

The Department has introduced flexible skills learning in National Youth Centres (NYC). Each Centre has an average annual intake of 40-50 youths both male and female. Training at the training centres include various basic skills training and income-generating activities such as Basic Carpentry, Basic Agriculture, Basic Pig Farming, Freshwater fish farming, Business Management, Weaving & Sewing. The Department of Youth and Sports has trained 3,025 young people from the year 2005 -2009 and they are mostly from the rural areas. Youth training and employment will continue to be an important activity to ensure sustainability of learning and activities to face challenges.

2.4.5 Yellow Ribbon Campaign, Fiji Prison Service

The Fiji Prison Services has undergone a restructure in philosophy and purpose, which emanated from the realization that many inmates are repeat offenders who are being ostracized from society after release. The Yellow Ribbon Campaign redefined jail time from a punitive measure to one of rehabilitation.

The rehabilitation is at two levels:

- During detention, inmates receive forms of training and development as they also do time for their crime. Development programs are mainly about skills training and character building. Specialist trainers are contracted to run skills training - wide-ranging literacy and numeracy courses and IT skills training. As part of character building, the inmates are given plots of land to for training in subsistence farming. Inmates are able to sell their produce – eggs, vegetables, root crops and freshly baked bread baked to the public. Their profits are kept in accounts that they can only access at the end of their prison term.
- When inmates are released, a team of officials take him/her back to their homes and communities to facilitate acceptance and getting them back into being part of the community. The rehabilitation philosophy believes in second chances for everyone and provides the necessary support for inmates who have served their term the opportunity to start afresh and contribute as useful citizens.

2.5 University of the South Pacific

At the USP a combined system of the *complementary* and *alternative* forms of Open Schooling operates very effectively through the Regional Centre for Continuing and Community Education (RCCCE) and the College of Foundation Studies (CFS). The RCCCE offers more TVET-based and vocational courses and programmes while CFS offers the academic preliminary programme at the sixth form level and the Foundation programme at seventh form as well as bridging courses for those that fail individual courses. In their own ways the two sections provide an inclusive service by offering an alternative learning pathway to various levels of learners who did not have the opportunity to progress through the traditional academic pathway. The sections serve school-age leavers and adults of different age groups.

2.6 Constraints and Gaps

Studies have shown that school dropout cases in Fiji are the result of various factors. The macro-factor identified financial problems as a major cause. Curriculum issues that include examinations, language difficulties and an overly academic focus are also causes of concern. At the micro level, many students leave school because of truancy, peer pressure and lack of interest.

Financial problems are at various levels. Firstly, most schools are owned by the communities and non-government organizations who are expected to provide for all the facilities required for the teaching and learning process. The reality in many schools is that the facilities are poor and in most instances essential equipment and textbooks are not available. While some schools have advanced into modern technology, others are still trying to provide basic facilities such as telephone, electricity and water. This is a major contributor to poor performance and poor quality of education. Secondly, many families are under severe financial constraints and cannot afford school levies, lunches and bus fares for their children. The government especially the

Ministry of Education has embarked on various assistance projects like the “free bus fare” scheme to subsidize school costs.

A major problem associated with Fijian parents is their lack of understanding about the importance of education when weighed against cultural and religious commitments. A major work being undertaken by the Ministry of Education in Fiji is community awareness. The Compulsory Education policy should allow all students to be able to have access to formal education regardless of gender, rural/urban location or any other sources of disparities.

2.7 Looking to the Future

The lack of appropriate legislations has limited the Ministry of Education’s powers in enforcing school attendance and retention of students in schools. Students’ retention in the school system can be improved through legislation to force parents to play their role in this respect.

In 2003 the Ministry of education, with AUSAID support, embarked on a \$10 million three-year Fiji Education Sector program (FESP). The program was assisting the Ministry in improving the delivery and quality of education, especially to children in disadvantaged, rural and remote communities. In terms of education service delivery, the Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET), Leadership & Management and Enterprise Education (EE) pilots have shown increased benefits to schools, students and the community at large. Such modes of education require further encouragement by having a national policy for TVET, resourcing and coordination between government and agencies with responsibility for TVET

Education remains critical for the development of the rural areas. Life skills training particularly for rural based young people, developing rural businesses and commercial agriculture and planning and coordination of rural development initiatives will be important ongoing activities. Open schooling should work well to improve the socio-economic background of the communities. Providing avenues for income generating activities will go together with having the proper infrastructure such as roads and transportation for marketing purposes. Poverty alleviation comes with effective and sound good education goals and practices that will provide real opportunities and empower people.

The many prograes that are aimed at creating awareness, improving knowledge and skills, filling the gaps and giving everyone a chance is indication of a national determination to develop human capital and improve productivity. In education, the strengthening of TVET programmes indicates peoples’ acceptance of TVET not as second-best but as important for multiskilling and the development of a strong labour force. Young people and adults who had dropped out of school without a qualification are waking up to the realization that they cannot go far without it. The present economic climate has called into question many traditional value-systems and practices. The two forms of Open Schooling augur well for the country’s needs.

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Appendix 1

Losalini, 29, is proud dux

JONA BOLA

Friday, November 02, 2007



Losalini Mawi is congratulated by husband Timoci Mawi after she was named dux at the Nabua Secondary School Form Seven graduation yesterday. "Age is no barrier to education", says Losalini Mawi, 29, who was named dux of Nabua Secondary School at a special prize-giving ceremony for seventh formers yesterday.

Mrs Mawi, who is five months pregnant with her first child, was on cloud nine after beating over 50 Form Seven students for the prize. She is a Matua Program student and was encouraged to continue her education even though she left Ratu Mara College, on Lakeba, in 1998. Mrs Mawi could not hold back her tears after her name was called. Apart from dux, the woman from Vakano, Lakeba, in Lau, took out the

History and Best Attendance prizes. Mrs Mawi won the hearts of students, teachers and parents present when husband Timoci Mawi was asked to present her History prize. The couple received accolades after Mr Mawi gave Losalini a peck on her cheek.

"This is another chapter of my life, and I am proud that I am able to achieve the dux prize of the school," she said. "It never occurred in my dreams that I would reach Form Seven and even complete it. With the Fiji Form Seven Examination only days away, I am confident that I will do well," she said.

"I left school in 1998 after failing my Form Six exam and I settled down in the village and found a husband. But an uncle of mine, Mala-kai Tadulala, came over to the village and told me there was a program where I could sit my sixth form exam again. We had to leave the island and come to Suva and in 2005 I enrolled as a Matua Program student to do Form Six.

"I passed my Form Six exam and was last year enrolled as a seventh former. I did well, but I knew that I could have done much better, so this year I am giving it another try," she said.

Mrs Mawi said she could not have asked for a better husband. "He has been behind me and is the one who is paying for all my education expenses."

Appendix 2



Mum of six tops class

Age barrier was not a problem for 43- year-old Ilisapeci Valelala and being among young childer in the classroom did not deter her ambitions. The mother of six children, of lakeba, Lau wept in tears when she was announced the Dux of the Nabua Secondary School sixth form yesterday. Ms Valelala, a *matua* student was honoured for her hardwrok and commitment to her school work despite being a mother and the sole breadwinner of the family.

Ms Veilala decided to return to school after her husband, a military officer, passed away at their chiefly home in Rakiraki in the province of Ra last year. "Life was not easy after my husband passed away and I knew I had to go back to school for the sake of my children," Ms Valelala said. She said going back to school was not hard as her children, form six and seven, assisted her in whatever way they could. Her eldest son who is currently a student at the Fiji Institute of Technology(FIT) in Samabula Campus made sure that he helped his mother with her studies and project given from school. " It was a blessin g when I studied and revised my notes with my children, especially the one in form six ," she cried.

"I am so thankful for the *Matua* Programme that has given me a second chance to utililse my capabilities".

2. SECOND-CHANCE EDUCATION IN KIRIBATI

Tereao Teingia, USP Campus Kiribati

3.1 Introduction

The Republic of Kiribati consists of 33 atolls that make up about 726 square kilometres of land and surrounded by over 5 million square kilometres of ocean space. Only 21 of the islands are inhabited. They are low-lying and many enclose a lagoon. The population is approximately 97,000 (2008) and almost half live on the south of Tarawa, the main island. Population statistics show that children in the 1-14 years range especially the 5-14 years group are the highest population group. An analysis of economic activity shows the largest percentages (35%) as unemployed. Kiribati is a member of the Commonwealth and gained independence in 1979. The country's economy is based on revenue derived mainly from fishing activities and remittances from i-Kiribati working overseas.

Kiribati faces numerous economic, social, demographic and environmental challenges. The challenge of smallness, remoteness and isolation coupled with resource poverty greatly impact its development and add to a fragile national outlook. Social problems in the health and education field, are challenging in themselves but also create additional economic burden on the country's limited resources. The increased urbanisation of the population place an extra load on limited infrastructure and accentuate many of the existing social difficulties (HIES, 2006).

3.2 Education System

The school system in Kiribati is at three levels: primary for 6-11 years, junior secondary for 12-14 years and senior secondary for 15-18 years. There are 91 primary schools, 24 junior secondary schools and 17 secondary schools. The government administers all primary and junior secondary schools. Of the 17 secondary schools, 14 are owned by the churches while the government owns three. The Kiribati government offers compulsory fee-free education to all students attending primary and junior secondary schools and students are promoted automatically from one level to the other. At senior secondary there is a condition for free-fee education - that students need to attain the grades set by government. Students who pass but do not attain this level would pay their fees and other requirements (MEYS-MOP 2005-2006, 2004:12).

Statistical data in Tables 1, 2 and 3 indicate the following trends:

- Declining numbers for boys and girls through the years
- GER 2007 figure for primary suggests the likely presence of overage children
- Declining GER at all three levels between 2007 to 2010
- Transition rate from JSS to SSS recording an overwhelming 30% drop.

Table 3: Kiribati Enrolment by Class Level & Gender, 2007-2010

Enrolments	2007		2008		2009		2010	
	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G
Primary (Y1 – Y6)	7849	7915	8079	8044	7782	7784	7764	7615
JSS (Y7-Y9)	3654	3442	3380	3471	3412	3241	3580	3277
SSS (Y10-Y13)	2475	2068	2602	2278	2311	1876	2290	1888

Source: (Republic of Kiribati, Ministry of Education–Digest of Education Statistics 2010: 6)

Table 4: Education for All Indicators – GER & NER, 2007-2010

Gross Enrolment Rate(GER)					
Net Enrolment Rate(NER)		2007	2008	2009	2010
PRIMARY	GER	101%	100%	88%	78%
	NER	93%	92%	81%	73%
JSS	GER	96%	91%	79%	50%
	NER	72%	70%	64%	38%
SSS	GER	39%	41%	35%	15%
	NER	35%	39%	33%	14%

Source: (Republic of Kiribati, Ministry of Education–Digest of Education Statistics 2010:16-17))

The enrolment trends are worrying especially when schooling is fee-free. The questions to ask are: *Where are the missing children, especially the girls? Why are they not in school?*

There are conflicting beliefs in the communities about the benefits of education. Some parents work hard and drive their children to make something of their lives. Others do not see the benefits of a good education because they themselves are able to survive without it. They are satisfied with the weekly income they derive from fishing, weaving and basic subsistence activities. It is common to see young people get married early and start a family without the concern of finding employment first or preparing for life after marriage. It is unfortunate that many young people in Kiribati generally lack the drive and desire to find employment and be successful professionals; rather there is complacency and being satisfied with the little they have. Many families however cannot afford to send their children to school and/or actually need their children to work to supplement the family's immediate income. With this mindset, schooling is perceived a waste of time and resources

Table 5: Transition Rates to JSS and SSS by Gender, 2006-2008

Transition Rates to Junior Secondary by Gender				
	05 – 06	06 – 07	07 08	Trend
Male	86.5%	88.8%	090.7%	
Female	101.9%	103.0%	88.1%	
Total	93.9%	95.1%	89.4%	
Transition to Senior Secondary by Gender				
Male	62.0%	62.7%	75.5%	
Female	67.2%	61.9%	67.5%	
Total	64.7%	62.3%	71.3%	

Source: Digest of Educational Statistics, 2008

The status of women in Kiribati is generally low because their roles are related to homecare, nurturing and providing for the family. On the other hand, men are forced to leave their homes to find work in the urban centres, overseas, or as seamen (*ADB Country Strategy & Program Update 2002-2004, 2001:4*). This could be one major reason why the number of boys at school is steady compared to girls who are likely to be asked to stay home or get married.

3.3 Policies and Strategies

The Ministry of Education is committed to increasing the capacity of secondary education and strengthening post-secondary vocational-technical education and training (Kiribati Education Policy - 2000-2003). Key Policy Area 4 in the National Development Strategies 2004 – 2007 refers to: *Equipping people to manage change*. Issue Number 2 in this policy states that “*Post-school livelihoods should involve formal, informal or self-employment, with or without tertiary qualifications*”.

The strategies for implementation include:

- ensuring secondary school organization and curricula prepare students for formal and informal employment;
- managing tertiary institutions to keep pace with the level and quantity of expected employment opportunities;
- extending the outreach of Tarawa Technical Institute (TTI) to support vocational training in the outer islands, and
- strengthening scholarship selection processes.

The key activities for the above strategies will require the balancing of training institution capacity against expected demand. Two options that the Government focused its efforts on were about (i) strengthening the non-formal sector and (ii) to place more emphasis on technical and vocational training. Unfortunately TVET has not been considered highly as most parents and their children seem to prefer the academic possibilities that lead to university and see TVET options as second-rate. They see the academic qualification as high status and greater gain. With vocational schools not popular, more funding support from government and external donors continue to be poured into the academic stream and leaving private institutions especially the churches to keep the vocational studies alive.

In 2004 the Government of Kiribati reviewed some key priorities. The major ones were (i) review of the secondary school curriculum, (ii) programs to reverse the decline in English literacy levels and (iii) the provision of skills training for informal sector employment. Children and young people account for almost 50% of the Kiribati population and a shortage of employment and livelihood opportunities for young people is a serious concern of the government (European Commission, Joint Annual Report 2004:5). However, government has acknowledged that addressing this need would require a multi-pronged approach, in particular to expand skills for productive living in rural communities whilst expanding employment opportunities.

3.4 Second-chance education Opportunities

3.4.1 Community High School Scheme (CHSS)

The Community High Schools were established by the Government in 1977 with the purpose of providing an education to prepare pupils for employment in the rural or subsistence sector of the economy and their own communities. The initiative met with strong resistance from local communities especially parents. There was general suspicion about the cultural politics of that scheme - the general public saw the project as a way to keep academic education only for the socially mobile and their children while everyone else's children are consigned to a life in the village. In a review of the CHSS, Tata (1980) noted that most parents wanted an academic type of education because that was for them the type of education that would pave the way to securing paid employment (p. 26).

3.4.2 Community Institute for Curriculum Development (CICD)

The Kiribati Protestant Church (KPC) was among the pioneering groups especially the churches that saw the importance of Community schools and established one at Morikao on Abaiang Island. The school was called the *Community Institute of Curriculum Development* (CICD) with the main purpose of training students the different traditional and modern skills considered useful and worthwhile for a successful life. Qualified teachers and experts in different local and modern skills taught at the school. A former Principal of CICD applauded the learning at CICD in providing excellent preparatory skills for useful life in the community as well as meaningful employment in the public sector. He believes *I-Kiribati* need orientation about Vocational Schooling and the benefits accrued from it. "I know of some people who had nowhere to go, came into CICD, did well in their studies and went out to find work. They have since done very well for themselves", the CICD former Principal recalled. One of these is the current Superintendent in the Electrical Department on Tarawa.

“When Mr Enoka Taumwa completed Form 3 he was unfortunate not to be able to continue to senior secondary but had a chance to attend CICD in Abaiang. He studied there for 3 years and developed an interest in mechanical and electrical skills. He received an offer by KPC to work in Nauru where he worked one and a half years. In 1989, he got married and went back to Kiribati with his new family to search for work. He found work with the Public Utility Board (PUB) in Kiribati as an electrician. In 2001, PUB gave him a promotion within the Electrical Department. In 2003, he got a NZ government scholarship to train at the Fiji Institute of Technology in Fiji towards a Trade Certificate in Electrical Engineering. He completed his Trade Certificate in 2005 and was allowed by his sponsors to progress to a Diploma in Electrical Engineering. He completed studies in 2007 and on his return to Kiribati was promoted to be the Superintendent in the Electrical Department, the position he still holds. Mr Taumwa is proud of his association and certificate from CICD that started everything for him”.

3.4.3 Santa Maria Vocational School

When the *Santa Maria Vocational School* in Bikenibeu Tarawa was first established by the Roman Catholic Church in 2008, it was not popular to most people. The Church established it for the large numbers of dropouts, to provide training that would give them another chance at becoming self-reliant and living useful lives. Yet again it was unfortunate that the community was reluctant to give support to the *Santa Maria Vocational School* for the same reasons most parents and the communities had for the Community High Schools discussed earlier – the preference was for a secondary school similar to other recognized schools and with the core teaching subjects such as English, Mathematics, Science and Commerce rather than the trade and traditional skills. In 2009 the school intake increased to 220 but this decreased just as quickly to a mere 10 when trade and traditional skills were introduced in the program. The school has since operated as a Senior Secondary School. Father Patrick who is currently in charge of the *Santa Maria Vocational School* is confident that the school will not totally lose its vocational identity and hopes it can be revived again because there is a real need for it.

Lack of financial support coupled with the lack of awareness and support for the initiative in the communities were the main constraints. The partly completed structure in the picture was built by the vocational students and stands today waiting for funds to complete the project.



3.4.4 Continuing and Community Education (CCE)

The Continuing & Community Education (CCE) Department at the USP Kiribati Campus offers vocational and adult training opportunities for employment and improved livelihoods for learners who do not meet the minimum requirements for university academic programmes. The Kiribati CCE offers a variety of short courses including basic skills courses in the Kiribati and English language, career development, various levels of computer skills, Community development and Leadership.

Two programs that have required specialist skills are the Care Giving Fundamentals programme and the Marine Engineering Class 5 programme. Most of the courses are determined and designed by local *I-Kiribati* experts and professionals. Local educators, accountants, engineers and medical personnel are some that have offered valuable service while the services of traditional elders and experts have been sought to teach traditional arts like poetry, weaving, construction and navigation. The short-term courses that focus on important life skills are more marketable and have been popularly taken up. For instance, the *Care Giving Fundamentals* was developed and is taught by a lecturer of the Kiribati Nursing School (KNS). The course runs 3 times a year and takes 3 months to complete. There are always more than 25 students each time. Care Giving Fundamentals provides knowledge and skills in the care of the elderly and the sick, something that we have always taken on as part of communal living and responsibility. This programme builds on that strength and provides additional specialist knowledge and skills up to a professional level. It opens employment opportunities for graduates into the hospitals and Homes especially in overseas countries.

3.5 Constraints & Gaps

A report by the European Commission (2004) affirms that the growing population of Kiribati is placing an increasing demand on services and the employment market. For example, 2000 students leave school each year to compete for just 500 formal sector employment and training opportunities (European Commission, Joint Annual Report 2004:4). Youth unemployment affects individuals, families and their communities as well as the wider economic stability of the country. This suggests a need to create employment opportunities or divert training opportunities to alternative livelihoods.

The lack of support for Santa Maria Vocational School and the Christian Institute for Curriculum Development (CICD) on Morikao raise important questions of stakeholder awareness and government support for vocational training. While the two vocational institutions share the same aims and objectives with the Kiribati Institute of Technology in providing high quality training that would enable graduates to find employment or proceed to higher education and training (Kiribati Education for the 21st Century; 2000:25), they have struggled to find the same level financial support from government and support from the communities to maintain their programs. The CICD was transferred to Abemama Island where it continues to offer vocational to this day. Morikao was transferred to a KPC Secondary school and now operates as Steven Whitmee High School (SWHS) just like other secondary school offering academic subjects.

The view from some sections of the community is that current schooling favors the urban residents on South Tarawa more and that the rural areas suffer great disadvantage. It is the author's opinion that cultural politics has a lot to do with the uneven distribution of privilege including access to good education. It is true that parents and the community at large do not

give support to vocational education due a lack of real understanding of vocational education. In its place the academic education is expensive and beyond the reach of the rural-based communities.

Every island in the Kiribati group has one junior secondary school. Primary school students Moreover, the islands within Kiribati are scattered apart and there is only one JSS on each island. Enrolment statistics presented earlier suggest that the number of JSS will not be enough to accommodate the flow of graduates from primary schools. This is particularly worrying for the JSS in the outer islands. Tarawa has three JSS that would be able to accommodate more students. However, attending JSS on Tarawa is not an easy option considering the high costs of travel and communications. In some cases students have opted to stay home rather than travel long distances to school every day.

3.6 Looking to the Future

There is an urgent need to find ways of keeping students in school. The offer of fee-free education may be good for parents and caregivers but it is not enough for students who need to be motivated to remain in school and the school needs to find ways to retain them. An attitude change is needed and parents, caregivers and communities at large need to be reoriented to a new understanding of their critical role in keeping children focused. The schools for their part must work in close association with parents and communities in shared responsibilities and the administration of school. The Ministry of Education needs to review the current structure and curriculum to make it work better for students. As Maclean (2009) suggested, drop-out and repeater rates are related to the internal efficiency of the education systems and how it functions in serving and supporting the student learner (p.35). The emphasis is to make secondary education look more attractive in terms of relevance and teaching methodology.

The notion that TVET is a second choice educational pathway is rife in Kiribati. This is the form of education that can serve and support the student learner that Maclean referred to. The academic and vocational arms of the school should be able to run successfully side by side and combine well to strengthen the profile of the students. While the vocational arm could continue to provide an alternative pathway for those students who do not meet the academic requirements of the core subjects, there is the possibility that even the more academic-oriented students could gain from taking technical units and become multi-skilled. Both views are worth pursuing in the interest of empowering individuals and communities as well as strengthening the national workforce.

Open schooling has much to offer education in Kiribati. The Santa Maria Vocational School provides the perfect place to begin training in important trade skills that could provide the workforce needed for the construction services in the public and private sector. The provisions could be extended to include the traditional carpentry and building skills for constructing local *maneaba* (large meeting house) and *bwia* (high stilted house. Intensive awareness and confidence-building workshops will be necessary. An informed society willing to take responsibility and ownership must be the ultimate aim. Government and all education stakeholders including the Ministry of Education, the Churches, institutions like USP and KTI, and the Commonwealth of Learning can achieve much in these islands.

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3. SECOND-CHANCE EDUCATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF MARSHALL ISLANDS

Fereti Sefeti and Pat Kuridua, USP Campus, RMI

4.1 Country Background

The Republic of Marshall Islands is home to about 60,000 people (the 1999 figures were 53,000). It is composed of 29 atolls and 5 islands covering a land area of 181 square kilometers spread over 1,231,000 km² of the North Pacific Ocean. The mean height of the land is about 2.1 m above sea level and is extremely vulnerable to rising sea levels. Majuro, the center of government and commercial activity, has several high schools, a community college and a Campus for the University of the South Pacific. Ebeye on Kwajalein Atoll is the second urban center, which also hosts the USAKA Military Base. The rest of the atolls are classified as low-lying, rural outer islands.

The country became independent in 1979. In 1986 RMI entered into a Compact of Free Association with the United States which provided substantial economic aid to the country as well as eligibility for some US federal programs. The Compact was renewed in 2003 for an additional 20 years. The government of the RMI is modeled after the British Westminster parliamentary system with a bi-cameral legislature composed of two houses; the Council of *Iroij* (Chiefs) and the *Nitijela* (Parliament). The former is a purely advisory body to the Nitijela and does not have legislative power but can comment on bills in reference to customary law and other traditional practices. The Constitution of the Marshall Islands recognizes people's right to a universal, compulsory elementary education for all children between the ages of 6 to 14 years.

4.2 Education System

The school system in RMI is structured like the US school system although there has been a major initiative to 'rethink' the system to reflect the Marshallese culture, values and tradition. There are a total of 101 primary schools of which 79 are public and 22 private school, and 20 secondary schools of which 6 are public and 14 private schools. The public schools are administered by the government while private schools belong mainly to the churches. There are seven major post-secondary institutions. Two of these are mainly academic – the College of the Marshall Islands that is administered by a Board of Regents, and the USP Campus that offers most of the University's programmes. The other five have a Vocational nature and offer a variety of courses and programs – one is owned by the government while four are privately owned.

4.2.1 Educational Issues

School enrolment figures for 2009 (MOE, 2009) were 11,886 for primary school (ages 6 to 13) and 7,501 for Secondary school (ages 14 to 18). Marshallese is the official language although English is important. Priority issues for the Ministry of Education include capacity building that includes improving teacher quality and leadership training support for Principals, curriculum and

resources development, improved quality assurance mechanisms and monitoring and evaluation. The priority challenge is teacher quality. There is a limited pool of qualified teachers in the country and there is a teacher crisis prevailing in all schools in the RMI. A Teacher Certification and Licensing Board has been tasked to enhance the certification of all teachers.

RMI has a relatively equitable system so there is little disparity in access to schooling. Access issues may only apply to those from the outer islands where transportation and communication problems limit access. In 2009 the Ministry of Education put in place the following initiatives:

- Extend its universal kindergarten plan by constructing 10 new kindergarten schools in the outer islands. The plan is to construct 12 more and bring the total to 76 (MOE, 2008;2009)
- The Marshall Islands High School (MIHS) got accreditation with the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). This was important to ensure high standards and increase the mobility of graduates into institutions elsewhere (MOE, 2009).
- Expansion of the National Vocational Training Institute (NVTI) program to include all four grades of high school and provide an alternative high school education. Graduates of NVTI can sit the RMI High School Equivalency Test for the RMI High School Equivalency Diploma (MOE, 2007).

4.3 Nature and Scale of School Dropouts

Analysis of data in Tables 1 and 2 may present a better understanding of dropouts.

Table 6. Total School Enrollment by Grade: 2005-2006 to 2009-2010

Year	Primary Schools										Secondary Schools					
	K-5	Grade 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total	9	10	11	12	Total	Grand Total
2005-06		1596	1619	1381	1277	1234	1163	1088	1045	10403	981	846	806	603	3236	13639
2006-07		1592	1459	1488	1235	1202	1194	1080	1022	10290	991	725	765	587	3068	13358
2007-08	1551	1529	1485	1464	1402	1257	1205	1127	1033	12053	1039	807	659	693	3198	15252
2008-09	1524	1489	1463	1462	1374	1402	1208	1095	1090	12107	962	865	659	558	3044	15151
2009-10	1444	1483	1429	1423	1458	1342	1333	1139	981	12032	931	838	681	575	3025	15057
<i>Average</i>		<i>1538</i>	<i>1491</i>	<i>1444</i>	<i>1349</i>	<i>1287</i>	<i>1221</i>	<i>1106</i>	<i>1034</i>		<i>981</i>	<i>816</i>	<i>714</i>	<i>603</i>	<i>3114</i>	

Source: MOE, 2009

Enrollment data in Table for the indicated period indicate that the overall dropout rate in the primary schools for the last five school years was 32.8 % and for secondary schools 38.5 %. Using the 11,886 as the base population for primary school, an equivalent of about 3,900 primary school students are perceived to have dropped out.

For secondary education, using the figure 7,501 as the base population (MOE, 2009), an equivalent of about 2,900 students have dropped out. Hence a total of about 6,800 students are pushed out from grades 1 to 12, giving an overall dropout rate over the 12 years of about 60%. This means that approximately 60% of students who start school do not complete their secondary education and only a small number continue on to tertiary institutions.

Less than half of the 1,300 students who complete grade 8 annually can be accommodated in existing high schools, and approximately 6,500 students do not continue to high school. Some “push-outs” attend upgrading programs or second-chance education programs, but most are idle, unemployable and increasingly unstable (Rethinking Education in the Marshall Islands: UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2010).

Table 7. Dropout Rates by Grade Level and Gender: 2005-2006 to 2007-2008

School Year	2005-2006		2006-2007		2007-2008		2008-2009		2009-2010	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
Grades 1-8	6.60%	3.10%	26.90%	26.40%	27.7%	28.2%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Grades 9-12	11.10%	12.50%	44.8%	5.2%	32.9%	31.9%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Source: MOE, 2008

The above table indicates that drop-out rates were steadily increasing at both elementary and high school levels. Lack of funds, poor parental support, poorly trained and absent teachers, over-crowded classrooms, poorly resourced and maintained schools, problems at home, teenage pregnancy, substance abuse, and an irrelevant curriculum all contribute to an increase in drop-out rates. “The poor quality of education outputs here in the RMI is reinforcing the community perceptions that their children will be no better off if they did not attend school in the first place” (MOE, 2003)

4.4 National Policies and Strategies

The National Training Council (NTC) is responsible for human resource development and plays a key role in enhancing the employability of out-of- school youths and adults. Its roles include the development of national training policies, coordination of national training programs, projects and activities, dissemination of training information, and the regulation of standards. For its National Training Policy the NTC targets the unemployed youths 15-24 years of age, addresses employment training needs of major development projects, and seeks funding for training programs and capacity building (NTC, 2005). There is clear indication that an unemployment crisis is looming in the RMI with national unemployment rate at 40 - 50% and youth unemployment rate around 86 % (ADB, 2005) and still rising. It is estimated that by 2014 there will be about 10,000 unemployed in a total workforce of 26,000.

4.5 Second-Chance Institutions

Four second-chance institutions and programs are discussed further.

4.5.1 The General Education Diploma (GED)

The GED Program was established by the MOE in the 1970s to cater for students who failed to secure a High School Diploma. It was an alternative pathway to an equivalent diploma that would enable students to pursue a college degree in the RMI. Student intake per semester is 250 students drawn from all over the country and with varying levels of School completion. After placement at appropriate levels they are taken through the program up to Level 5 when they sit the College Entrance Examination. Around 500 students have enrolled into this program every year making it the largest provider of second chance education in the country. The success rate is about 75% and graduates either move into College education or find employment.

As is with most educational initiatives, funding is the main barrier. In fact a recent reduction in the Program's funding allocation has caused a 50% reduction in enrolment, leaving some 600 students on the waiting list. Community support is growing as parents and students begin to realize the economic and social benefits of successfully completing a good basic education.

4.5.2 National Vocational Training Institute (NVTI)

The NVTI was established in 2003 to cater for the high number of students who missed high school for various reasons. The large numbers of dropouts at elementary levels especially at 8th grade makes this program critical. The NVTI now provides secondary education; the enrollment for 2007 was 312, recording a 41% increase of the previous year (MOE, 2008). The expansion and sustainability of this Program depends on enabling policies, good infrastructure and support services. An unmanageable teacher-student ratio that has risen to an unmanageable level, staff turnovers and teacher shortage are real problems to be addressed (MOE, 2008)

4.5.3 *Waan Aelon in Majel* (WAM)

Waan Aelon in Majel (Canoes of the Marshall Islands) provides vocational and life skills training using the medium of the traditional outrigger canoe and boat building. Its instructors are skilled Marshallese craftsmen. Other income-generating projects such as furniture and cabinet-making, administrative office skills training and counseling services are manned by qualified volunteers. This Program finds a lot of support from the local community since it involves the revival and expansion of traditional arts. "It links the new generation with the old, working together to maintain the rich and vibrant Marshallese culture, while at the same time addressing serious social problems affecting youth in modern Marshallese society" (WAM, 2010). Primary funding for the Program is sourced from the NTC. The courses run for 6 months and are offered twice a year or when funding permits. The cost of running per course is between \$60,000 and \$70,000. Each year over 200 applications are received and only a small 25 per course in the 15-25 years range are chosen. About a third of the intake is young women. Graduates of the program return to their atolls to help revive the traditional arts. Others find employment in tourism related industries. The programme is very successful with over 90 % completion rate.

4.5.4 Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) program

The USP's ESD Literacy and Life Skills Program was developed locally and offered since 2008. It is a 16 weeks program that aims to improve out-of-school youths' basic literacy and life-long learning skills, emphasizes critical thinking and problem-solving, and encourages the development of self-esteem, confidence and determination. A lot of work has gone into reviewing curriculum and training more trainers. Ultimately it is hoped that the ESD graduates will be able to move on to take the GED entrance test and then move onto the local community college or enroll through the RMI-USP Joint Education Program and begin tertiary studies. A total of 106 students have completed the program.

4.6 Constraints and Gaps

The per capita support to education and training programs in the RMI is one of the highest in the world. For example, according to the 2005 World Bank estimates, RMI spends an estimated 156 % of per capita GDP on secondary education compared to 21 % for developing countries. About a third of the formal education sector financing is directed at primary, secondary and tertiary training programs respectively. There is a need to increase efficiency and effectiveness in the provision of services.

The National Training Council (NTC) that manages the administration of non-formal education and training of unemployed youths is not the service provider itself but subcontracts service providers to offer the necessary programs. The programs include a variety of services ranging from basic education and life skills to pre-occupational skills, internships and specific occupational skills. Funding for NTC is partially from the US Compact and partly from the Non-Resident Workers Fund Levy. Still, overall resources are limited when compared to the demand. For example, in one year only 530 individuals were provided with services compared to the 7,000 out-of school youths. There is urgency to broaden the quality and quantity of NTC funded programs to cater for the huge numbers needing the services.

4.7 Sustainability Issues

The sustainability of these out-of-school programs and training hinges upon the availability of funds for which there is heavy reliance on the NTC. NTC manages the fund which provides private and publically contracted employment and training services to unemployed youth. The bulk of the budget is from the Supplementary Educational Grant (SEG) , which is part of the Compact Funds allocated to the MOE. Other sources of funding are from the Resident Workers Training account and small allocations from the General Fund as appropriated by the *Nitijela* (2005 NTC Report). The ADB Report of 2011 suggests that the current approach to financing education and training is not sustainable. The US Compact funding is decreasing and will be phased out in 2023. Also, there is great concern that the Marshall Islands Trust Fund will not be sufficient to continue the current programs (2009 Comprehensive Adjustment Program Report).

4.8 Looking to the Future

With an ever increasing youth population and an educational system that is biased towards the social-academic elite, the number of push-outs will continue to increase unless important changes are put in place. The conventional school system at its best, is not equipped to cater for those students who fail to complete elementary and secondary education. There is a definite need for an alternative to the conventional schooling system. The 'open schooling' concept which will combine both the complementary approach and the alternative approach is a logical and realistic alternative. Finally, having identified four second-chance education providers here in the RMI, there is a need to critically analyze the role and function of each entity. This would help determine its effectiveness and highlight areas that need further study for better utilization of resources. Better planning to streamline needs and intended programmes would minimise the duplication and highlight the best alternatives.

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Appendix 1

Success Story: JACKIE BOBO

Jackdrik Bobo was born in Majuro in 1988 but began his Primary education in Honolulu, Hawaii. He returned to Majuro to attend the 10th grade (Form 4) at the Marshall Islands High School. He found the work non-challenging and began missing classes until he was finally expelled. He returned, this time to Oregon in the United States where he attended McKay High School. While there, he joined the football team. Unfortunately for him, he ganged up with Pacific Islanders and before long he was skipping classes and was often suspended a week at a time. One day, at McKay High School, he was involved in a fist fight with a big Russian guy who was beating up a fellow Pacific Islander. Consequently, after a court trial, he was sent to the Bob Roberts' juvenile delinquent school where he had to go to school everyday. In 2005, he returned to Majuro and for two years he simply stayed at home. Later, he joined GED (General Education Development), a second-chance education provider but he dropped-out again for personal reasons. By this time, he had a wife and two children. However in 2010 a cousin of his informed him about a youth program being run by NTC (National Training Council) and USP. He immediately signed up for the "Education for Sustainability Development" (ESD) program and completed it within the four months. He sat for the GED test and he passed with what would be considered his high school equivalent exam. He then applied to USP and is currently enrolled in the Preliminary program and hopes to complete his Foundation in the near future before pursuing his dream career of becoming a lawyer. He is now 23 years old and has a firm hold on his career path.

4. NAURU REPORT

Salanieta Bakalevu, School of Education, USP

5.1 Introduction

Nauru is a small coral limestone atoll in the central Pacific with a population of about 10,000 people and a land area of 21 square kilometers. It is believed to be the smallest independent republic in the world. The island is remote and constrained by thin soils, scarce vegetation, poor water supply and a landscape ruined by over-mining. Nauru was well known in the early 1900s because of its rich phosphate deposits that brought the country and people a great deal of wealth. Things changed in the 1990s when phosphate sales fell dramatically and Nauru's income all but dried up – the bank collapsed, government was unable to pay its civil servants, families were hurt and found it difficult to readjust their lives. The political scene was unstable for some time and there were major constraints at most levels. Multiple problems that plagued the country over the years have left it with a limited economic base and negative economic growth.

Nauru's population was estimated at 10,163 in 2008 with most people living on the coastal strip around the southwestern corner and the small urban area. English is the language of government and school instruction but the Nauruan language is commonly used in other domains. Nauru lacks a private sector and there is little usable farm land. There is little local food production and most *Nauruans* rely on imported food. Phosphate mining resumed recently and money is again coming in. The mining program involves environmental management and land rehabilitation work which means that local food production might be possible in the future.

5.2 Education System

There are four levels of schooling in Nauru: 3 year of ECE, Primary school for Years 1 to 6, Middle school for Years 7 - 9 and Secondary for Years 10 -12. Nauru has a total of five schools: two schools offer primary education, one school offers both primary and middle school, one school offers only middle school, while Nauru Secondary School offers only Y10-Y12. Education in Nauru is compulsory and free to Year 10 or age 15 years 9 months. In spite of this there is a high absentee and truancy rate among students and teachers. The 2005 NSD Strategy reported this:

"... teaching and student learning standards are low. Truancy has been high at 60% for some schools, but the overall rate has been 34%. With prevailing economic and social conditions, student non-attendance has risen to very high levels; teacher non-attendance is also on the rise. Literacy is declining. Post secondary vocational training does not exist and success rate for tertiary studies through the USP Centre averages 10%. The majority of intending students cannot afford the financial burden of continuing education locally or overseas. Spending is not adequate to meet teacher appropriation, training and teaching resources."

5.2.1 Enrolment

Table 8 Enrolments for all school levels, 2008

	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12
Male	92	102	111	104	109	113	118	92	89	52	31	16
Female	107	107	99	97	119	93	107	90	76	69	46	32
Total	199	209	210	201	228	206	225	182	165	121	77	48

Source: Nauru Education and Training Strategic Plan 2008-2013, p 8-9

Table 1 indicates a marked drop in enrolment through the years. For example, only 48 students enrolled in Year 12 compared to 225 in Year 7 and an average of 209 students in Years 1 to 6. So the Year 12 enrolment is a retention rate of less than 25%. The Year 10 enrolment of 121 students is a retention rate of 57%. Enrolment difference between boys and girls across all year levels is 1:1.007.

Another area of major concern is the number of untrained teachers. In 2008, there were a total of 11 teachers. Of this number only 9% of have a degree, 6% a Diploma, 50% have a Certificate, and 35% have no qualifications. Only four teachers at the Secondary School have a degree. At this point in time Nauru is looking to the construction of new secondary school, a revised curriculum and training of secondary teachers to boost the retention rates.

5.3 Enabling Policies

- The Nauru government recently revised its National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS) 2005-2025, a twenty year plan and road map that “documents the reforms needed to be put in place and the strategies for implementation as the platform for a better life today and tomorrow” (NSDS, 2005; ii). The vision, goals and strategies in the NSDS were developed from four priority areas: Economic, Social, Infrastructure, Cross-cutting.

Education is one of the Social Priorities and the education statements are:

“Improve the educational system, focusing on the quality (to regional standards), scope (primary, secondary, vocational and life and trade skills) and reach (new audiences such as the mature age)”

“The highest rated attribute of the preferred long-term future is an improved educational system with a high standard of primary, secondary and vocational curriculum to international standards and an equity-based charging on ability to pay. As well as formal education, capacity building in all areas is a key feature of the future.”

In the short term this means an achievement of a notable improvement in primary and secondary student performance. The item of interest is the focus on reaching “new audiences such as mature students” and the inclusion of a ‘vocational curriculum’.

- The Nauru Education and Training Strategic Plan 2008-2013 mentions the government’s intention to increase its context of education and training from the current four levels to five

“This Strategic Plan proposes to add Youth and Adults as the fifth group to receive formal, structured learning and skills development programs” (p. 7)

5.4 Looking to the Future

The Nauru government is determined to turn its story around. It has committed itself to achieving the EFA goals as well as the MDGs and has encapsulated them in its five year Strategic Plan. It has put in place a development pathway and the strategies for achieving this. For the first time, government has acknowledged the value of its youth and has significantly upgraded its Youth Affairs program. The intention is for youth to have formal programs delivered through the country’s Learning Village facility.

The aim of the Education Department is in line with its intention for a sustainable quality of life:

“Provide a learning framework and environment that directs students on the footpath that leads them to leaving school as confident citizens able to live in, and contribute to, both Nauruan society and a complex, global, networked society.”

In a paper on sustainable livelihood and education, Gaiyabu, Teleni and Grundler (2010) make the following comments of students and the communities:

“A high proportion of students are manually gifted rather than academically-gifted. About 80% of students would fare better with life skills and TVET subjects as these knowledge and skills are practical. The learning is mostly Observe-Do, a repetition of practical exercises or competency-based training” (p. 169).

“Continued involvement of community experts in the teaching-learning process (that is, partnership between education agents and community) will be a strong guarantee of sustainability. Ideally, the community experts will be part of the teaching and learning process, forming a resource pool to be utilized by the schools” (p. 167)

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Nauru Education and Training Strategic Plan 2008-2013

Nauru National Sustainable Development Strategy 2005-2025

5. SECOND-CHANCE EDUCATION IN SAMOA

Ruby Va'a, USP Campus, Samoa

6.1 Introduction

Samoa comprises seven islands. Most people live on the two larger islands: Upolu is where the capital Apia, while Savaii has a larger land area but is less populated. The total population of Samoa is about 180,741 (2006 census), has equal numbers of males and females, and about 35% in the school age (5-19 years) category. Samoa has a very young population with over 50% between the ages of 12 and 30 years. The average age is 19.8 years. Samoan is the national language but English is used in commerce and business. Most people speak both languages. *Faasamoa* is a way of life, placing high value on the *aiga* (family), *matai* (chiefly) system, the village *fono* (council), and a social system based on family ties that look after their young and elderly. Samoa's economy is small and based on agriculture.

Samoa gained independence from the New Zealand-administered UN Trusteeship in 1962 making it the first PIC to achieve independence. There is a Head of State (*O le Ao o le Malo*) and the Legislative Assembly comprises 49 members. The Prime Minister and 12 Cabinet Ministers lead the government. There are two female MPs and one of them is a cabinet minister. Samoa boasts a history of high achieving and notable women including "Queen" Salamasina, the only person to have held four royal titles simultaneously, the first Samoan PhD graduate and the first Samoan Rugby Sevens manager to win in Hong Kong. Samoa's judicial system is based on English common and Samoan customary law. Samoa is a member of many organizations including the United Nations (1976), the Commonwealth, the Pacific Forum Secretariat and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community.

6.2 Education System

Education at school level is provided mainly by the government in partnership with local school committees that include religious and private organizations. The country has 205 schools: 163 primary, 6 primary-secondary and 36 secondary schools, all of them located on the islands of Upolu and Savaii. Primary education (Y1 to Y8) is compulsory for children between the ages of 5-14 years. A national examination at the end of Year 8 determines entry into secondary schools.

Samoa's school curriculum and assessment systems have been influenced by New Zealand and Australia. A recent development has been the inclusion and increased emphasis on vocational subjects such as Agriculture, Design and Technology, Food and Textile studies, and a revival of other areas such as Health and Physical Education, and Visual Arts. Teacher shortage is an ongoing concern particularly at secondary level where there is demand for specialist teachers for mathematics, science and the applied sciences. Teachers continue to leave for better opportunities and conditions.

Various other changes and initiatives have taken place in recent years and included:

- School-net Project: After a successful pilot Schoolnet programme at 5 schools, Computer labs with Internet access were established in Government schools as part of the MESC Education Sector Project 2 in 2006-2007.
- School Libraries: In line with the Strategic Plan 2006-2012, all 25 Government secondary schools were updated with libraries staffed by trained Library Assistants.
- Teacher Resource Centres have been established on both main islands
- Fiafia Sports Programme for primary schools were implemented
- National Curriculum Policy Framework (NCPF) and Teacher Development Framework (TDF) have been developed
- Samoa Qualifications Authority (SQA) was established

Education for All (EFA) has been high on the agenda and a concentrated effort is being made to achieve MDG 2 of universal primary education by 2015.

6.2.1 Tertiary Institutions

Tertiary institutions include the University of the South Pacific through its *Alafua* Campus, the National University of Samoa (NUS), the Oceania University of Medicine (OUM) with mainly online medical programs and the Australian Pacific Technical College (APTC), which provides programs in the trades - automotive, construction, electrical & manufacturing, **tourism** & hospitality and health & community services. A few Vocational & TVET institutions deserve special mention for their provision of second-chance learning opportunities for dropouts and out-of school youths and adults. The Catholic Don Bosco Institute, the *Ulimasao* Marist Centre and the Methodist *Laumua-o- Punaoo* have offered trades training for many years. The church groups offer theological education at their respective theological colleges.

6.3 National Policies and Strategies

1. Three government publications: *SDS 2002-2004 Opportunities for All*, *SDS 2005-2007 Enhancing People's Choices*, and *SDS 2008-2012 Ensuring Sustainable Economic and Social Progress* have provided the national perspective on education and aspirations of the country. A review of the 2005-2007 period noted "relatively high dropout and repeater rates", and that "while enrolments have continued to rise ..." and "...more children continue past primary school, it is still the case that only around 25% of students proceed beyond year 11". In addition "transition rates from Y 13 to tertiary level have been averaging 52% in 2005-2007" (2008-2012 SDS, p.30).

2. In the 2008-2012 SDS, Goal 3: Improved Education Outcomes specified several indicators including "Dropout rate between years 8 and 9 falls (transition between primary and secondary)", that "the "percentage of students proceeding beyond year 11 increases" (p.31), and that "the ratio of boys to girls at secondary school converges" (p.31). Currently the percentage of girls is greater than that of boys. An important indicator for Goal 5: Improved Community Development: Improved Economic and Social Wellbeing and Improved Village Governance is increased youth development under the National Youth Policy.

3. Under the Ministry of Women, Community, and Social Developments (MWCSD), a National Youth Policy 2010-2015 was developed. Policy Outcome 1 aimed at “Improved accessibility of youth to vocational training and employment opportunities in both the formal and informal sector” and is specified under the following Objectives:

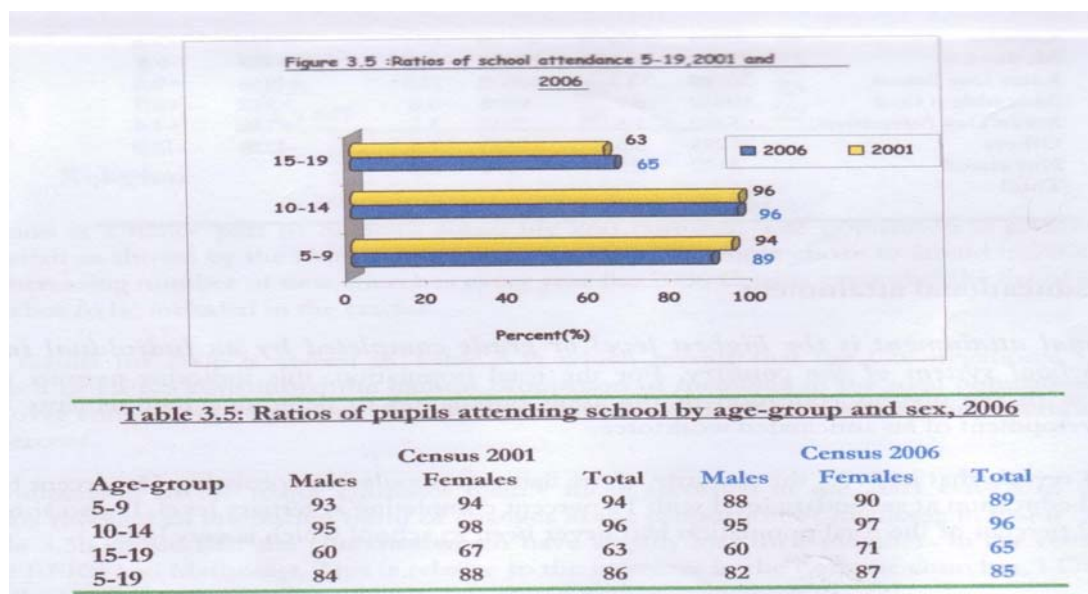
- To further realize existing policies and joint strategies, aimed at converting formal and non formal training into employment
- To improve through building on existing education sector partnerships ... increased accessibility to quality technical / vocational training opportunities
- To advocate on behalf of our youth for more equitable allocation of resources and programmes to targeted education interventions in both public and private schooling and training institutions

4. The Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture (MESC) Strategic Policies and Plan 2006-2015 highlights the “problems of dropout and repeater rates, high turnover of teachers and low literacy rates” (p.8). The five key concepts of Equity, Quality, Relevancy, Efficiency and Sustainability are the foundation of the MESC policies and practice where outcomes for both primary and secondary education are expected to show improvement in “gross enrolment, net enrolment, and reduction in dropout rates” (p.13). MESC policies at school particularly at secondary level include “teaching of vocational subjects will be strengthened to provide a wide range of options for employment and further studies” (p.22). Beyond school, post secondary education and training should “enable an improved quality of life” (p.22).

6.4 Nature and Scale of school dropouts

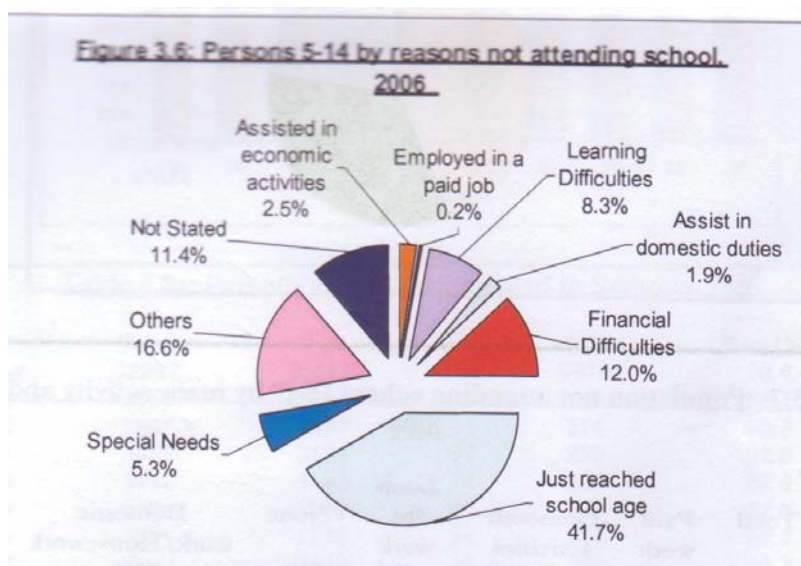
Two sets of data appear under Table 1: a graph of ratios of school attendance for the three school age groups for 2001 and 2006, and a table of the same information by age groups and sex. Attendance in the two census years varied only slightly but enrolments were highest in the middle 10-14years group but dropped by about one-third at the 15-19 years group. For this latter group though, the 2006 census showed an increase in school attendance compared to 2001, while the reverse was recorded at the early primary level. Data for the 2006 Census (p.14-16) also showed that 55% completed secondary and 11% tertiary education while only 2% percent had never been to school. For the 15-19 age group, 35% (6,094) were not attending school, a slight drop from 2001 figures. However, 19% were in paid work, 34% helped in economic activities such as subsistence ventures and 43% were occupied in domestic duties (housework and caring for the elderly).

Table 9: Ratio of school attendance, Ages 5-19 2006, 2001



The 2006 Census had also fielded questions to young people about why they were not attending schools and the results are recorded in Table 2.

Table 10: Reasons for not attending school, 2006



Schools dropout data from the MESCS Statistical Analysis (see Appendix 2)

- In all four periods (2006-07, 07-08, 08-09, 09-10) dropout rates for Government schools were consistently highest for years 12 and 13 followed by years 10 and 11. This implied that if children reached year 12, they tend to remain and continue to year 13, more than from years 8-9 and 9-10. Catholic schools dropout rates decreased slightly in 2010 compared to previous years. Check with Ruby
- Non-payment of school fees was the main reason for dropping out of school. Other reasons included family migration e.g. to Upolu or overseas, meaning a transfer to another school, overseas scholarship during the year, and employment. The problem with school fees has led to a government (MESCS) project through which financial assistance is being sought from development partners AusAID and NZAID and a special Ministry team has been tasked to coordinate this.
- Participation rates revealed that “more girls than boys are out of school at primary but the situation is reversed at the secondary level” (MWCSO Talavou Project Review, p.14).
- It is estimated that as high as 6,000+ students are not in school and therefore not likely to have skills and knowledge for gainful employment.

6.5 Scope and Administration of second-chance education services

Unemployment that is reported to be on the rise for young people poses immense challenges on the government and communities because it is not easy to create jobs to meet the continual flow of school-leavers, many of whom are looking to white-collar jobs that do not exist (EFA Midterm Report, 2007; 70). The 2001 Census showed that unemployed youths between 15-24 years accounted for 58% of the unemployed population. Male youths were more likely to be unemployed (58%) than female (42%), and the largest numbers resided in the urban area. Several institutions offer some form or other of training for those that have dropped out of the formal school system. These mostly follow a mixture of TVET-based curriculum and Non-formal education (NFE).

There is no denying the need to provide alternative learning pathways. Programs that mainly target dropouts and out-of-school youths and adults include Don Bosco Technical Centre (a vocational centre run by the Catholic church), Laumua o Puna’oa Technical Centre and Uesiliana College (run by the Methodist church) and the Ulimasao Marist Centre for Special Learning.

6.5.1 Don Bosco Technical Centre

Don Bosco Technical Centre is one of the more successful second-chance TVET institutions and offers a 2year full-time Basic Life Skills Programme followed by a further 2year specialized program. The first two years offer courses in practical trade subjects such as motor mechanics and carpentry and joinery. The final two years requires students to choose an area of specialism from one of the following: motor mechanics, metal fabrication, carpentry and joinery or

plumbing/building maintenance. In 2007, the institution reported that a 75% of their students who graduated between 2004-2006 had found permanent employment in Samoa while another 25% gained employment in other countries. Don Bosco only offers programmes to males.

6.5.2 Ulimasao Marist Centre for Special Learning

Ulimasao was a major development in 2003 to provide opportunities for youths with special needs in TVET. In 2004 the Centre recorded 109 full-time and 30 part-time students many of whom were students with special needs. An important element of the development and coordination of Don Bosco and the Ulimasao Marist Centre is that,

“the process for programme planning and implementation includes community consultation to identify target groups, developing an outcomes-based curriculum tailor-made to suit each student’s basic education and employment need, establishing linkages with workplaces for work experience and placements, and establishing linkages with mainstream providers for further education” (EFA Midterm Report, 2007; 66).

6.5.3 TALAVOU Program

An extended meaning of *Talavou* is “towards a legacy of achievement, versatility and opportunity”. It is a young people’s programme that was set up in 2006 to improve the potential development of Samoa and reduce poverty through a productive youth population. The program focuses on improvement of self-worth, skills and human development, income generation and programme management. The young people continuously run workshops and activities. They are currently involved with the Ministry of Education to develop training modules for second-chance education programmes.

6.5.4 Continuing & Community Education (CCE) programs

The USP offers open schooling opportunities through its College of Foundation Studies (CFS) and the CCE) programmes at Alafua Campus. Apart from the normal CCE courses, Alafua campus CCE also offers school tutorials for secondary students at Year 11 (preparing for the NZ School Certificate) and Year 12 (preparing for the PSSC examination. These services can be seen to play a more preventative role compared to the reactive role of second-chance education. This way the students’ chances of success are enhanced and they can face life more confidently. Many of these students have since continued to pursue USP programmes. The following case studies are of two school leavers who studied at the USP Alafua campus after they were unable to secure places at the national university.

Case Study

MS MARIE PINATI

2005 & 2006 - Enrolled in the USP CCE Schools Tutorials for Year 12 and Year 13

2007 – Did not qualify for NUS Foundation program so enrolled in USP CFS program. Enrolled in the USP CCE Inaugural Schools Library Assistant Course, 17 weeks, May-August 2007 - One of the top graduates.

2008 (October) - Appointed Library Assistant at Nelson Memorial Library. Enrolment at USP CFS program at Foundation level.

2008 - Appointed as Library Assistant, Alafua campus. Enrolled in USP Certificate in Library Information Systems program (6 courses)

2010 - Graduated in the CLIS

2011- Enrolled in the USP DLIS program. In March she was appointed to the Senior Library Assistant post.

Case Study

MR JOHN SILA

2004: Completed USP CFS (DFL) Preliminary science program

2005: Completed USP Foundation program

2006 -7: USP DTA progrme

2010 - Completed Bachelor of Agriculture

2011- Employed on family Enterprise (farm and motel)

CCE alafua school tutorial programmes are very popular and often lead to students continuing other higher level programmes. The photographs below show school students during CCE tutorials.



Non-government institutions involved in education and training offer “non-school” program that are mostly short courses that culminate in a certificate or diploma. Government Ministries providing post secondary training opportunities include MWCSD and MCIL (apprenticeships). Other institutions include the Methodist Laumua o Punaaoa, Catholic Don Bosco and the Ulimasao Marist Centre with a technical training focus and some Agriculture, Pacific Education Technology focusing on IT and music, and the Tesese Institute which provides secretarial and administration training.

6.5.5 Other Programs

NGOs and government agencies offer programmes to support income generation and entrepreneurship. The *Matuaileo'o* Environmental Trust Incorporated (METI) is working with cooperatives in production-based projects such as coconut oil and coconut soap production. The Ministry of Women (MWCSO) conducts livelihood skills programmes for women in arts like in weaving, handicrafts and sewing.

6.6 Constraints and Gaps

The programs offered outside the school system and outlined in the previous section have been developed to meet specifically defined targets. They have filled a much needed demand particularly for the large number of out-of-school youth especially males. In recent years, these efforts have been highlighted for lack of resources and funding as well as well trained teachers/tutors and their dependence on external support. Even the church programs have relied on funding from other agencies.

Some programs are now offered through the strategic development efforts of some Ministries like the MWCSO (for its youth sector) and MCIL (apprenticeship scheme). These programs are small and not able to the needs of *all* out-of-school youth especially those in the younger age groups. There are reports of regular inquiries being made by school age children who are out of school for various reasons that include pregnancies (girls), chronic illness and failure in examination, and who now want to return to try again and get a qualification.

6.7 Looking to the Future

The very large numbers of out-of school youth demands the development of programs to build capacity and find employment opportunities. There is a need to provide for the large numbers not attending school, not only for their future but also for their family, community and the country as these will be part of the economical working age group of the not too distant future. There is certainly a place for 'open schooling' in Samoa. It is suggested all possible models be examined carefully and the most suitable system for each country be considered care

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7. SECOND-CHANCE EDUCATION, SOLOMON ISLANDS

Stanley Houma

7.1 Introduction

The Solomon Islands comprise an archipelago of small islands and coral atolls covering a total land area of approximately 28,379sq km and surrounded by 1,340,000 km² of ocean. There are six main islands and nine provinces. It is located in the western Pacific and borders with Papua New Guinea on the west and Vanuatu on the east. The Solomon Islands has a population of approximately 518,338 in 2010¹ and about 79% live the rural areas².



Solomon Islands achieved political independence in 1978 after 85 years of British rule. It is demarcated into nine (9) provinces stretching from Western and Choiseul provinces in the west to Temotu province on the eastern border. The provinces have devolved authority to manage much of their own affairs.

7.2 Education System

The Solomon Islands inherited the British formal education system. English is the official language but there are some 70 native languages and many dialects. The lingua franca is Pidgin and is the preferred medium for most people especially across the language divides. Entry into formal schooling begins at ECE level at the age of 4-5 years, continues into Class 1 at primary school (age 6) and continues up to class 6 when the children sit the secondary entrance examination for entry into secondary school. Secondary education extends from form 1 to form 7. Community High Schools and Provincial secondary schools offer enrolment for forms 1 to

form 3 (where students sit the form 3 national examinations) or form 5 when they sit the Solomon Islands School Certificate (SISC) examination. Form 6 follows the South Pacific Board for Educational Assessment (SPBEA) subject prescriptions while form 7 uses the Preliminary and Foundation level studies of the University of the South Pacific.

Kuve et al (2010) record 514 early childhood centres, 514 stand-alone primary schools and 161 community schools which offer junior secondary and secondary level studies. In terms of post secondary education, the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education (SICHE) offers teacher training programmes plus other technical courses while the government's rural training centers (RTCs) provide training opportunities for early school leavers from class 6, form 3 or form 5. The country not have a national university, thus most of its university education is accessed mainly at the USP, the University of Papua New Guinea and PNG University of Technology.

7.3 National Policies and Strategies

There a number of policies that mention school dropouts and second chance education.

- The Education for Living-National TVET Policy (2005) proposed a TVET stream to the formal education structure. This was to cater for students who drop out at Form 3 from community high schools and take take them into Rural training centers where they spend the equivalent of forms 4-6 years. After 3 years, the RTC graduates can then apply for admission into SICHE's technical programmes.
- The National Distance Education and Flexible Learning Policy (2010) promotes core values of accessibility, equity and inclusiveness. This policy was to enhance the delivery of basic and skill-based education and with the DFL mode allows for the programmes to be conducted at scale to a wider school dropout and out-of-school population especially to the rural areas and remote locations.
- The Policy Statement and Guidelines for Tertiary Education in Solomon Islands 2010, the Policy Statement and Guidelines for Basic Education in Solomon Islands 2009, the National Education Action Plan (NEAP) 2010-2012, and Education Strategic Framework 2007-2015 provide strategic directions for the development and expansion of second chance education in Solomon Islands. Both NEAP (2010-2012) and the National Distance Education and Flexible Learning Policy 2010 had plans for post-basic education to include systematic analysis of the viability of open schooling for Solomon Islands.

If the policy statement and guidelines for basic education in Solomon Islands 2009 had been implemented it would see the removal of class exams. This means children will have access to basic education from class1 to form 3 leaving no class 6 dropouts. A combined systematic effort of the existing networks that include the RTCs together with the Learning Centers, USP Campus, UPNG open campus, SICHE and the secondary schools system have the potential to support the strengthening and expansion of second chance education in the country. The

Commonwealth of Learning's Open Schooling models are not new idea but its networking and support system is what this country could gain from.

7.4 School Dropouts and Out-of-school Youth.

In this study, school dropouts refer to those who exit from the formal exit points in the education system. However, many children and youth also exit at other levels because of factors such as school fees and distance to school. Out-of-school youth refer to children and young people who have not enrolled and are outside of the formal education system. For instance, in 2004, only 71.2% of the total 5-15 age group population attended primary school. This means 28.8% of eligible children in this age group did not attend primary education. Access to secondary education indicated that in 2005 only 33.8% of the total 13-19 age group population was enrolled. This meant that 66.2% did not access full secondary education. In terms of gender, only 30.4% of girls in this official secondary age group enrolled for secondary school education.

Table 11 Enrolment by education level, province and gender: 2009

Provinces	Primary			Junior Secondary			Senior Secondary		
	F	M	Total	F	M	Total	F	M	Total
Central	2776	3210	5986	452	607	1059	181	130	311
Choiseul	2684	2896	5580	554	492	1046	85	110	196
Guadalcanal	9463	10288	19751	2146	2501	4647	1024	1718	2742
Honiara	5950	6170	12120	1788	1894	3682	1510	2226	3736
Isabel	2528	2828	5356	601	666	1267	318	358	676
Makira	4165	4787	8952	860	1187	2047	407	685	1092
Malaita	17145	19384	36529	2569	3315	5884	744	1331	2075
Renbel	324	349	673	110	150	260	44	63	107
Temotu	2221	2498	4719	412	451	863	169	200	369
Western	7763	8299	16062	2043	2049	4092	897	1398	2295
Solomon Islands	55019	60709	115728	11535	13312	24847	5379	8219	13598

Source: Performance Assessment Framework 2007-2009 – MEHRD, 2010.

Generally, enrolments in 2009 at all levels compared to 2008 had slightly increased. Senior secondary enrolments for instance increased by 22% and junior secondary by 20.6%. Due to the bottleneck system in Solomon Islands education, there is a general reducing trend in enrolment figures from primary through junior secondary to senior secondary. The three provinces with high populations - Malaita, Guadalcanal and Western, plus Honiara generally had higher enrolments at all levels. Gender balance improved slightly at all levels in all provinces. In spite of these, the data still showed an increasing drop out figures particularly at senior secondary level.

Table 12: Dropout Rates by education level, province and gender - 2009

Provinces	Primary		Total	Junior Secondary		Total	Senior Secondary		Total
	F	M		F	M		F	M	
Central	13%	13%	13%	15%	20%	18%	60%	27%	46%
Choiseul	4%	3%	3%	22%	11%	17%	39%	61%	51%
Guadalcanal	10%	11%	11%	12%	-8%	1%	54%	62%	59%
Honiara	3%	3%	3%	-6%	-17%	-12%	31%	28%	29%
Isabel	11%	10%	11%	0%	3%	1%	49%	40%	44%
Makira	4%	7%	5%	8%	10%	9%	44%	48%	47%
Malaita	18%	17%	18%	18%	105	14%	60%	68%	65%
Renbel	13%	11%	12%	0%	-9%	-5%	77%	84%	81%
Temotu	12%	12%	12%	1%	-5%	-2%	49%	61%	55%
Western	10%	8%	9%	13%	-8%	2%	56%	69%	64%
Solomon Islands average	11%	11%	11%	10%	-1%	4%	48%	52%	51%

Source: Performance Assessment Framework 2007-2009 – MEHRD, 2010.

The drop rate at primary level (class1- class 6) is highest for Malaita Province. Central, Renbel and Temotu Provincial data also showed relatively high dropout rates. At junior secondary level, girls showed higher dropout rates At this level dropout rates are highest for Central, Choiseul and Malaita provinces.

The 2009 dropout numbers were highest for senior secondary levels (Forms 4 - 6) and for males. In terms of official age range, this is the 17-20 years age group. At this level, more boys than girls drop out than girls. The highest rates are in Renbel followed by Malaita and Western provinces. However, many students who drop out at Form 5 and Form 6 have the opportunity to enroll into anyone of the programmes at the Rural Training centers (RTCs), Solomon Islands College of Higher Education (SICHE) certificate and diploma programmes, UPNG open campus CTCS programme and the University of the South Pacific (USP) continuing education and pre-degree programmes. The 2010 USP data for Solomon Islands campus showed that 312 students enrolled for pre-degree courses. Many of these students are form 6 dropouts who got another opportunity to try for the academic studies through USP's full and preliminary and bridging programmes.

Three key factors contribute to this national scenario. First, the level of fees charged to students is beyond the affordability level of parents. Even school building fund and parent contributions are unaffordable for many. Secondly, many parents are not in a position to support their children's education which is beyond their formal education and income level. Thirdly, formal education in Solomon Islands is very academically oriented. As a result many students who are strong in vocational areas such as agriculture and industrial arts drop out of secondary school.

7.5 Scope and administration of second chance education services.

Second-chance education in the Solomon Islands can be classed into two categories:

7.5.1 Rural Training Centres

TVET-oriented training is provided through the Rural Training Centers (RTCs). The RTCs are run by the churches and mostly located in rural areas where the majority of the population lives. While the RTCs are easily accessible to most of the drop outs, they are inadequately resourced and lack necessary facilities. The Don Bosco technical Institute in Honiara is one of the popular RTCs.



Don Bosco Technical Institute, Honiara – Joinery Students in the workshop.

7.5.2 SICHE

The Solomon Islands College of Higher Education (SICHE) takes in forms 5-7 students to undertake certificate and diploma programs in a variety of fields ranging from teacher training to trades, business administration, agriculture, forestry and nursing. SICHE also offers a diploma in youth development. Since 2003 all services provided by SICHE are centered in Honiara. The SICHE certificate and diploma programmes are seen as alternative pathways for forms 5-7 students. A good number of these students do pre-degree courses at USP before enrolling in SICHE programs.

7.5.3 UPNG

The University of Papua New Guinea (UPNG) Solomon Islands open campus enrolls students into Certificate in tertiary and community studies (CTCS) and targets mostly form 5 and form 6 students. The programme is equivalent to form 6 and aims to upgrade students to undertake university studies. Their services center in Honiara, although they have centers in Malaita and Western provinces.

7.5.4 USP Honiara Campus

The University of the South Pacific (USP) campus in Solomon Islands offers continuing education and pre-degree courses through the continuing education unit and college of foundation studies (CFS). Basic continuing education courses target class 6-form 3, while intermediate courses target forms 4-5 drop outs. Pre-degree programmes (preliminary and foundation) offered by CFS focus their enrolments on forms 5-7 unplaced students. USP currently has two provincial centers in Gizo and Lata and is in negotiation with Malaita province to set up a center in Auki.



Computer Lab – USP-SI campus students (Source: USP-SI Campus Photo Gallery).

Unfortunately due to finance and logistics problems, most of the students who dropout from urban schools have had to return to their homes in the rural areas cannot access the educational services aimed at providing second chance education for them.

7.6 Constraints and Gaps

Finance and resource constraints are key factor that limit the ability to expand existing capacity and provisions. The limited openings for employment coupled with the country's inability to expand current opportunities and create new employment opportunity particularly in rural sectors severely hinder employment and further development of normal school and second chance education graduates. A CBSI survey showed an increase of 62% in job vacancies in 2010. However, the increase was mostly from non government organizations and the public services that were urban-based and required tertiary qualifications ranging from certificate to postgraduate degrees. This means there is very little employment opportunity for forms 3, 5 and 6 school dropouts. To sustain school dropouts, employment opportunities need to be created in rural areas in sectors like agriculture, fisheries and forestry.

A major challenge for successful second chance education is sustainability. It is important that the project is integrated with existing structures of the formal education system and supported aggressively by the government, the network of education providers and local communities. According to government education policy, there is already an operating structure where the

community plays an active role in the operation and development of schools. This support structure will need to be revived, strengthened and given greater responsibility.

7.7 Looking to the Future

Second chance education services in TVET are successful. Don Bosco Technical Institute - a technical institute similar to RTCs that is based in Honiara consistently achieved an 83% success rate. It offers technical courses for students who drop out of Forms 3-6 in urban school drop outs from forms 3-6. It has an annual intake of 80% males and 20% females.

A good number of students who have been upgraded through the UPNG and USP Vocational sections have progress into formal tertiary education either at SICHE, USP or UPNG. SICHE offers an interesting combination of technical and more middle category academic programmes.

Two models of OS are worth considering in the Solomon Islands:

1. The complementary OS *MATUA* model that is used in Fiji is a good model to replicate. The use of existing secondary school structures including the curriculum, teachers and facilities to support the return of school leavers who desire to acquire a secondary academic qualification should be introduced on a wider scale across the country.
2. The *PAMUA* model - a local Solomon Islands model where a vocational strand is part of the normal academic schooling allowing all students the benefit of an academic as well as the skills of TVET structure and they co-exist on the same campus.

Any of these models would be financially sustainable because it would not over stretch the operating budget of schools. This is because the curriculum, teachers and the facilities already exist. It would merely need an injection of finance and resources to top up existing school budgets, facilities and resource needs.

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8.

8. SECOND-CHANCE EDUCATION IN TOKELAU

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8.1 Introduction

Tokelau consists of three *motu* or atolls – *Atafu* in the north, *Nukunonu* at the centre and *Fakaofu* in the south - with a total land area of about 12 square kilometres and no point exceeding 5 metres above sea level. There is a village on each island. Tokelau is closest to Samoa where its National Public Service is based and where much of its travel and shipment of supplies originate. Tokelau is relatively isolated and the only means of transport is by sea via Samoa, a trip that takes about 26 hours from *Fakaofu*. Tokelau has a small and dispersed population - the 2006 Census records a total population of 1,466. It has a youthful population with a median age of 22 years and almost the same numbers of males and females. A large proportion of the Tokelau's population lives for six months or more overseas every year and a high proportion was born overseas. The noticeable narrowing of the population structure in the 20-29 age range is most likely due to the high mobility rate of young people in search of education and employment (Tuioti and Mativa, 2010).

Tokelau is a territory of New Zealand. Tokelauans are New Zealand citizens and hold New Zealand passports. During the 1900s, New Zealand delegated administrative and legislative powers to the local General *Fono* (National Assembly). In 2004 these powers were delegated to the individual *Taupulega* (Village Council), which were recognized as the highest authority in the country. The three *Taupulega*, one for each village, then re-delegated authority for all matters of national authority to the General *Fono*. This meant that most functions of government including the operation and resourcing of schools are administered at the village level while a substantial part of key public services that have to do with policy development remained at the national level of development.

8.2 Education System

There is a school in each village (and atoll) and they offer education from early childhood (ECE) up to Senior Secondary (Yr 12 and Yr 13). The *taupulega* or village councils govern the schools on each atoll. The school population across all three villages is around 420 every year. The USP Tokelau Campus is the only tertiary education provider in the country. In 2008 a decision was made to expand secondary education to include Years 12 and 13 with the assistance of the Pacific Forum's strategy for the delivery of basic education called the Pacific Regional Initiative for the Delivery of Basic Education (PRIDE) project.

8.2.1 Enrolment Statistics

The following statistics recorded in different years provide some understanding of schooling:

- NER at primary was 100% in 2004 • Total student population was 437 in 2007
- Completion rate is between 90%-100% (2008)
- Of the 35 teachers in 2008, less than half were trained.

Education is free and compulsory in Tokelau. This means that most students progress up to Year 12. At Year 4 and Year 6, all students sit Literacy and Numeracy Standards tests. At Year 11 they sit a Preparatory Examination to assess their readiness for Year 12 study at the USP's Preliminary Studies program that is offered at the Tokelau Campus. Students who pass this test proceed to the Preliminary Studies then the pre-degree Foundation Studies and beyond, while those who fail have the opportunity to repeat the year or go through an alternative pathway. In the three years since the USP programs began in Tokelau, about 50% of students who entered its pre-degree program have successfully gone through and proceeded onto further studies or employment. Today the USP Campus is located under the Director of Education and there is a very good partnership between government and the University that is of immense benefits to students. Results at Year 12 (Preliminary) and Year 13 (Foundation) continue to increase: 2008 – 70% pass at Preliminary and 64% at Foundation; 2009 – 72% pass at Preliminary and 71% pass at Foundation. There were 12 foundation students in 2012.

8.2.2 Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

Investment in information and communication technologies (ICT) to support improved education outcomes is important for Tokelau given its remoteness and irregular transport services. It is for this reason that the Department of Education has begun investigation on how it can collaborate with existing and potential partners to support ICT infrastructure development to bring about improved learning outcomes and enhance communication options for communities (Strategic Plan, 2008-13; 8).

8.3 Nature and Scale of Dropouts and Out-of-School Youths

Tokelau's compulsory and free education in the schools has seen most students progress up to Year 12. It is at the Year 12 and Year 13 when some students are not able to continue for various reasons; inability to pay school fees being a major one. There is also a significant group of out-of-school youths who had gone through school prior to 2008 (when the USP courses were first offered) and did not complete high school qualifications. Most of this group dropped out at Year 13 and number about 70% males and 30% females. The three major factors that contribute to school dropout have to do with students' inability to cope with the requirements of studies, lack of interest and social issues. An example of social issues is parents requiring sons to work rather than struggle in school and face possible failure. At the national level, the challenges of physical

distances between the atolls and irregular sea transport services impact the provision of all services including schooling.

As New Zealand citizens, Tokelauans are able to migrate with some ease and the number of Tokelauns in New Zealand and Australia are four times more than those at home. While this could mean better opportunities it could also be problematic for a small developing nation and limited pool of skilled personnel. Staff attrition and the relatively high turnover of qualified professionals including teachers is problematic and a worrying trend.

8.4 Enabling Policies

In spite of its smallness the Tokelau government has instituted enabling policies and strategies to promote the development of its people:

- To offer free and compulsory education from ECE to Year 13 in support of greater access and quality education for everyone.
- The Tokelau Education Sector Strategic Plan 2008-2013 makes a commitment to Life-skills to address the issues like teenage pregnancy, alcohol and tobacco abuse and lifestyle choices that impact the lives of young people.

“The Life- skills programme needs to be integrated into the formal school curriculum and include TVET options which promote lifelong as well as links to the non-formal education provisions through programmes run by community groups such as *the Fatupaepae*, the *Aumanga* and the Youth and Sports group” (p. 5).

- The development of contextualized and relevant National Curriculum Statements in the core subject areas from ECE to Year 11 and a National Curriculum Framework in 2008 are milestone achievements that are paving the way for important developments in education and achieving EFA and the MDGs.
- The National Policy for Women of Tokelau aims to improve the quality of life and welfare of the women of Tokelau. It supports the work of the *Fatupaepae* or women’s groups in promoting village economic development and small business development through increased education and training opportunities. The women of Tokelau play an important role in the socio-economic development of the country. The term “*Fatupaepae*” refers to a mother or a young woman who understands her role and responsibilities for her family, village and nation.

8.4.1 Community Education Training Centre (CETC)

The Community Education Training Centre of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) provides access for Pacific women in technical vocational and livelihood areas as well as in governance and business. It is the only regional provider that specifically targets Pacific island women. It provides residential, short-term courses leadership and local governance as well as entrepreneurship training for women in middle management and supervisory positions. Women

from Tokelau have been part of the several hundred Pacific women that have benefitted from CETC courses and community development program focusing on technical–vocational and livelihood skills.

8.5 Looking to the Future

While the problem of dropouts and out-of-school youths is probably not as serious a concern in Tokelau as in other Pacific islands, the Tokelau government does acknowledge its problems with teenage pregnancy, alcohol and tobacco abuse and lifestyle choices that impact the lives of young people. A high youthful population makes it critical to expand and invest in its life-skills programmes. Open schooling that uses ICT to improve access and bring learning to the communities could work well in Tokelau. Tokelau’s youthful population with a median age of 22 years would greatly benefit from basic education programs in primary and secondary school levels, as well as relevant post-school education and training to meet the country’s human resources capacity needs.

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Tokelau Educational Strategic Plan

9. SECOND-CHANCE EDUCATION IN TONGA

Sela Kakala Havea and Elizabeth Love, USP Campus, Tonga

9.1 Introduction

The kingdom of Tonga is an archipelago located in the South Pacific Ocean, directly south of Western Samoa and about two-thirds of the way from Hawaii to New Zealand. It comprises 176 islands, 36 of them inhabited and with a total land area of some 747 square kilometers surrounded by 700, 000 square kilometer of ocean. The 2006 census recorded the population at 101,990 of which 38% was younger than 15 years and 8% over 60 years old.

Figure 1: Map of Tonga



The 'Friendly Islands' as Tonga is popularly known, was united into a Polynesian kingdom in 1845, became a constitutional monarchy in 1875 and a British protectorate in 1900.

Today the kingdom of Tonga is the only constitutional monarchy among the Pacific island countries. However, constitutional reform that included new electoral laws led to elections in 2010 that saw for the first time, the majority seats in parliament elected by universal suffrage, with the remaining nine seats reserved for members of the nobility.

9.2 Education System

Tonga has an education system that has a longstanding tradition of six years of compulsory, free primary education. There are 118 primary schools, 107 of them government and 11 church schools. The situation is reversed at secondary level where of the 41 secondary school, 72% of students study in either church schools or private schools, while the remaining 28% are enrolled in the 10 state schools. The 2006 census recorded primary school enrolment at 16,941 and 740 teachers, 14311 secondary students and 999 teachers, and fairly equal numbers of girls and boys.

English is the official language of instruction although there is a strong desire to retain the Tongan language as the expression of the Tongan culture. Post-secondary education institutions include 12 that are funded by Government (60% of the sector) with the other 40% include a variety of Church, private and industry-based providers. There is also a substantial non-formal sub-sector targeting adult groups and youth (Tonga Education Policy Framework 2004-2019).



“Ko e hakau ‘o e ‘aho ni, ko e fonua ia ‘o e ‘apongipongi”
(The reefs of today will be the islands of tomorrow)

9.3 Nature and scale of school dropout and out-of-school youth and adult:

Statistics collected from the 2006 Census record that the largest numbers of youths who have elected not to continue a traditional academic pathway are aged 14-21 and male. Most juveniles are dropping out of school at Form 5 (Appendix 1). According to figures from the 2006 Census, there is a sharp decline in enrollment rates beginning at age 15 “when more and more students dropped out of school.” An interesting piece of information in the census was the statement that about one-quarter of the population had only a primary education (15.5% from urban areas and 28.6% from rural areas). In total, 62.7% of the population had attained a secondary education. In addition, the census found that more females were persisting in school than males.

The contributing factors for discontinuing expected schooling are social factors such as family problems and social constraints. There are also a high number of early pregnancies and health issues for those youths who drop out. Additional data that were collected from one Wesleyan secondary school suggests that physical discipline from teachers may also be contributing to youths leaving school.

Table 13 Enrolment Rates, Survival & Dropout: 2005-2009

Enrolment					
PRIMARY	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
GER	111.4	110.6	112.8	112.8	113.9
NER	49.8	49.6	58.7	62.5	68.6
SECONDARY					
Lower GER	36.9	35.1	37.4	36	36.6
Lower NER	24.6	23.7	29.7	13.7	21.5
Upper GER	54.7	59.5	60.8	66.5	69.5
Upper NER	67	70.9	68.5	88.8	84.6
Survival Rates					
	94.7	89	89.9	83.4	
Transition Rates					
Class 6 – Form 1		76.7	100.2	96	83
Form 2- Form 3		85	87	81	89
Dropout Rates					
Age 14-21	207	274	150		
Class level	F5	F5	F5		
Gender	Female	Male	Male		

Source: Ministry of Education, 2005-2009

9.4 National Policies and Strategies

The Tonga Education Policy Framework (TEPF) 2004-2019 provides sets out the vision statements and big ideas, which were the outcome of a comprehensive review and stakeholder consultation process. The frameworks adopted a new vision for education and as well as a strategy for the development of the education sector over a 15-year period. It also adopted a new approach to economic and social development planning that focused on the central role of the education sector in promoting the country's growth. The key challenges being addressed include quality and access at secondary level, equity in service provision, capacity building and sustainable financing. Two of the major reforms recommended in TEPF that related to the discussions in this paper concerned the development of a National Strategic Plan for post-secondary education and training related to a national training needs analysis and the need for a wide range of initiatives to develop technical/vocational provision, including within secondary education. A more specific policy statement proposed that the education system should ensure that beyond Form 2,

Tongans would have increased options for alternative training paths and would receive partial support in identified high priority areas, that the relevance of skill training investments would be reflected in increased employment, based on tracer studies and other instruments(p. 6)

The Ministry of Education's Corporate Plan 2004- 2007 states that those who miss out on the formal education system

"need access to continuing education to develop their skills. Adult education offers a means of upskilling the population as a whole to meet the country's needs in the new century. Providing education to the adult population will require techniques and approaches that are different from those adopted in the formal education system. It may be necessary to consider diverting funding to community groups or other agencies outside the "traditional" education system in order to foster objectives such as adult literacy, parent education, or improved productivity in the workforce. The family, the neighbourhood, the churches, local authorities, the workplace, sports organisations, libraries, the media, and cultural and scientific bodies all have a part to play in the education of the whole community, young and old" (p. 10)

During a planning retreat for senior officers of the Ministry of Education in January 2011, the Minister of Education, Women's affairs and Culture set down five principles to guide activities of the Ministry for next four years. The acronym EEARS encapsulate the principles of Excellence, Equity, Access, Relevance and Sustainability.

9.5 Open Schooling Opportunities

Tongan NGOs, churches, schools, and community service agencies provide many opportunities for individuals who seek their assistance, however, the exact background of these individuals are not well known. Many of the agencies being explored for this study do not have data regarding dropouts. In their own ways, the institutions focus on specific needs and services. For

example, the Women and Children Crisis Center, Talitha Project, Catholic Women's League and Ma'a Fafine e Famili handle individual cases of youths and young adults who bring problems of abuse, family violence. As the service user presents their need the agencies go out of their way to provide service; they are rarely concerned about documentation. The Caritas Internationalis of Tonga focuses on vulnerable populations such as the impoverished and individuals who live in areas with little to no economic opportunities and work to develop youth and increase their employment prospects.

9.6 Looking to the Future

At this point in time many in the country still see TVET courses and training as 'second best' to academic studies. This mindset must change and everyone made to realize the important of these programmes in building and strengthening capacity, and sustaining the economy. The many institutions that already offer TVET programmes - the Tonga Maritime Polytechnic Institute (TMPI), the Queen Salote School of Nursing, the Tonga Institute of Education and the Community Development Centre, as well the NGO institutions which offer a range of college level trade and business programs like the 'Ahopanilolo Business College, the Commercial College, the Montfort Institute, the 'Unuaki-'o-Tonga Royal, Institute, the Hango College of Agriculture, the Tupou High School Business Centre, USP Continuing and Community Education and the Royal School of Science – all play an important in national development.

While much of Second-chance education does not seem to exist formally within Tonga, there are community resource centres that provide services to youths at risk and school dropouts. Services provided at the 'Ahopanilolo Centre, Montfort Boys Town, Tonga Maritime Polytechnic Institute, and the theological schools have a mix of TVET and non-formal education. As in most pacific countries, the churches have a lot of input – the Tonga National Centre for Women, the Catholic Women League and Talitha project are some examples. While these groups and agencies provide many opportunities for individuals who seek their assistance, very few have data regarding whether their services users are dropouts.

Tonga has all the making for developing Open schooling. With the right incentive and support systems expected to come from government, the PIOSP plan to carry out a pilot project in Tonga is timely. At this point in time the Ministry of Education is working to map and follow the progress of its student population better. The exact dropout rates and therefore the demand are as yet unclear but efforts to correct that are already underway.

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Appendix 1:

76 year old Salote during the Training in Basic Computing Skills for Women at Home



Photos from Community and Continuing Education (USP Tonga Campus)

10 SECOND-CHANCE EDUCATION IN TUVALU

David Manuella, Tuvalu USP Campus

10.1 Introduction

Tuvalu is one of the smallest countries of the USP region and is made up of nine coral atolls and reef islands. It has a land mass of 26 square kilometers. The small islands are surrounded by a large ocean space of 1 million square kilometres. The population of Tuvalu is a little more than 10,000 (Biennial Statistics Report 2008) and tends to increase in the fourth quarter as it marks the returning of residents, especially students, for the holidays and decreases in the first quarter when they depart for their country of study. The country has an elected parliament based on the main island Funafuti but the individual island councils handle all local government affairs. Tuvalu shares similar developmental challenges of small island states. It is one of the countries whose very existence is being threatened by rising sea levels. Tuvalu has a small economy and is heavily dependent on foreign aid.

The small size of Tuvalu and the large ocean space separating the islands pose challenges in terms of physical and manpower resources (ADB, 2006). In particular, distance between the outer islands and Funafuti creates communication and transportation problems and further isolates them.

10.2 Education System

Section 30 of the Tuvalu Education Act is concerned with compulsory education. In 1984 the Minister of Education (MOE) regulated that the compulsory school ages were between 7-15 years of age but allowed provision for beginning school after 5 years of age and remaining after 15 years. The current system as approved by government stipulates 6-15 years as the compulsory school age and corresponds to the completion of schooling from Class 1 to Form 4.

10.2.1 Primary Education

Tuvalu has ten primary schools and two secondary schools; the University of the South Pacific Tuvalu Campus is the only national tertiary institution. There is a primary school on each of the eight smaller islands while Funafuti, the largest island, has two primary schools. This allows for children to remain on their home island until Form 2. One of the two schools on Funafuti is administered by the Seventh Day Adventist Church; the other nine schools are co-owned by the Government of Tuvalu and the Local Government of each island. Motufoua Secondary School (MSS) on the island of Vaitupu is the Government boarding school and offers Forms 3-6. It is a coeducational institution. The other secondary school is Fetuvalu High School, a mission school located on the capital Funafuti that caters for day students only.

Table 14: Primary Enrolments 2001- 07

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Male	1055	945	968	991	1050	1049	1100	1078
Female	885	853	897	928	982	961	968	1006
Total	1940	1798	1865	1919	2082	2010	2068	2084

Source: Ministry of Education, 2006.

The table shows that enrolment for boys are consistently higher than for girls. This is consistent with the country's demographic characteristics with the 2002 population recording 15.7% more males than females between the ages of 0-19. The figures also point to an increase of 7.3% in primary enrolments by 2007. A detailed analysis of students per school (per island) over the last decade has shown that urban migration had caused serious problems for Nauti Primary School on Funafuti and prompted the government to work with development partners like the EU to extend primary school facilities on the outer islands. Since then the enrolments for the Funafuti schools have increased by 4.3% and for the outer islands it was 10%.

10.2.3 Secondary Education

Students sit the first national examination at Class 8 and as a result they have to travel to Funafuti, Vaitupu or overseas for secondary education. This is the point where most students are pushed out as many fail to qualify. The Examination results determine how students progress - the best students get into MSS and then the EKT School, and students who did not pass enter the Community Training Centres (CTCs) on each island. When these Centres closed down temporarily students simply repeated Form 2 or dropped out altogether. Over the years the Funafuti primary school has consistently scored the best overall pass rate at about 45%. In 2005 the national pass rate in the entrance 2 examination was 43.8% signaling a large dropout rate. Of about 200 students who sit this examination annually, around 90 students get in to the government secondary school and another 50-60 students are taken in at the EKT secondary school. The issue of repeaters both first time and second time repeaters has created further challenges. This is reflected in the large rolls at Form 2 at primary level and Form 4 at secondary level. In 2009 the student roll at Motufoua Secondary School was 550.

Table 15: Motufua Enrolment 2000-2006

Year	Form 3	Form 4	Form 5	Form 6	Form 7 (USP Campus)
2000	117	198	90	48	-
2001	206	180	95	67	-
2002	154	155	33	83	-
2003	172	179	91	38	-
2004	78	166	108	80	23
2005	137	110	120	86	49
2006	127	145	101	83	44

Source: Tuvalu: Education Sector Reform and Development Project report, *ADB, 2006*

The reintroduction of the Form 2 examination in 2003 is reflected in the low Form 3 enrolment in 2004 and subsequent Form 5 and Form 6 enrolments thereafter.

At secondary school students sit the Fiji Junior Certificate at Form 4, the Tuvaluan School Certificate (TSC) in Form 5, and the PSSC in Form 6. It is estimated that annually an average 40% of students at the Government school and 50% at the EKT school are unsuccessful in the FJC examination and therefore do not enter Form 5. The examination at sixth form reduces these numbers further. Informal indicators suggest that about 120 students annually complete secondary school at the Form 6 level, and at most 80 progress to pre-degree level studies. An important development in 2009 was the introduction of a vocational stream at Year 12 at MSS.

While it is the 16 year olds and above which make up the largest number of out-of-school youths, the actual drop begins earlier at the end of primary (14 years) and continues thereafter. By the Sixth Form year, an estimated sixty percent (60%) of students are likely to have left formal education and are back in the islands. This is indeed a worrying trend.

10.3 Second-Chance Education Services

One of the objectives in the current Education Strategic Plan is 'Increasing access and student participation,' in education. This includes providing access for those who may have been pushed out because they failed to meet the requirements of tests and examinations and others who simply cannot cope with the academic curriculum. The recent introduction of a vocational stream both at primary and secondary levels is a positive development as is the possible introduction of TVET courses through the Fiji National University. Meanwhile, some opportunities are already in place to cater for dropouts and out-of school youths and adults.

10.3.1 Community Training Centre (CTC)

The first CTCs were established within the primary schools to cater for the large numbers of students who were being pushed out at Class 8 because they failed the entry qualifications Secondary or were pushed out for other reasons. The schools offer training in basic carpentry, gardening and farming, sewing and cooking, which would help them develop opportunities for a better life. At one stage the CTCs were closed because of concerns and resistance from the communities about Vocational training as second-best. The Government was forced to re-establish them when the dropout problem became serious. While they are still attached to the Primary Schools and continue to meet the needs of Class 8 graduates, the CTCs also offer opportunities to out-of-school-youths and adults who had dropped out of the system earlier, either from primary or secondary school. At the end of their studies the graduates of CTC can apply to continue studies either at Motufoua Secondary School or the Government Maritime School, or they may decide to seek employment or go back and do something with their learning in their communities.

10.3.2 Vocational Studies

Government has established a Vocational Studies stream at the MSS. This will offer various skills-based courses that provide 'hands on' learning, specialist trade courses and life-skills training. In recent years, people who graduated from the CTCs have enrolled into the Vocational Studies stream at Motufoua. Like CTCs the Vocational studies are filling important gaps and expected to gain momentum and continue to grow in the programs and courses they offer. The training is closely monitored by the Department of Education and is constantly being reviewed. After secondary school students have the opportunity for further studies at the various institutions in Fiji including USP, the National University of Fiji, NZPTC and TPAF. This pathway will become more pronounced and more mainstream in the future. Any open schooling developments in Tuvalu are best located within the premises of the CTCs or the Vocational Studies stream at Motufoua.

10.4 National Policies of School Dropouts and Second –Chance Education

Under the existing Education Strategic Plan the Education Department is readjusting its TVET reform to complement the Education Act. The decision to introduce TVET subjects from Form 4 makes good economic sense and should be given urgent priority. Discussions have already begun with institutions in Fiji and elsewhere region about identifying the best programmes and courses, placements for Tuvalu students, and technical assistance to the local schools.

Government is working closely with the Island councils and non-government organizations in the country with regards to development of resources, both human and physical. There is also awareness and advocacy to stakeholders and the communities about this reform; and important element of this has to do with changing people's perception of TVET as 'second class' education. That TVET is important for developing life and trade skills for employment and a better life must be the message.

10.5 Looking to the Future

Improving the standard of primary education, developing TVET options at secondary level and addressing the high failure rate at Form 2 are high priority areas for the Tuvalu government. Against this is the prevailing support of an academic education that would lead to white collar jobs among families and the community at large. For them, TVET is second best because it offers only manual and menial jobs. The CTCs closed in the 1980s because of this strong resentment of TVET. Government will need all partners to work together in advocacy and increasing awareness about TVET and workshops with parents and communities will be of paramount importance. TVET options should be established at both the secondary schools while the vocational activities should be strengthened at the CTCs

Tuvalu could benefit from using both the Complementary and Alternative models of OS. The former could address the longstanding need of the large number of youths and adults who would need to complete Forms 4, 5 and 6 qualifications previously denied to them. On the other hand, the Alternative model of Open Schooling will strengthen and expand government's activities at the Community Training Centres and Vocational Studies at the two secondary schools. MSS has the facilities to cater for more programmes and students. TVET and Open Schooling opportunities have the potential to develop a good-skilled workforce that could strengthen economic growth and provide adequate public goods and services to the country's population.

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11. SECOND- CHANCE EDUCATION IN VANUATU

Elvie Tamata (VITE) & Carol Aru (Emalus Campus)

11.1 Introduction

The Republic of Vanuatu is a Y-shaped archipelago of mainly volcanic islands that cover a total land area of 12,189 kilometres surrounded by some 860,000 sq km of ocean. Vanuatu has a population of about 234, 023 (2009 census), about 43% classified as youth, and mainly *Ni-Vanuatu* who are of Melanesian descent. The population is predominantly (80%) rural although the two main urban centres, Port Vila and Luganville, have populations in the tens of thousands and account for the rest. Vanuatu has more than 105 different vernacular languages but the national language of Vanuatu is the pidgin *Bislama*. The official languages are *Bislama*, English and French. French and English are the languages of instruction.

Vanuatu has a unique political history in being colonized by both the Britain and France after signing an agreement in 1906. Prior to independence, education was largely provided by the churches with the sole purpose of spreading the gospel. In the early 1960s French and English languages were used in schools and educational materials were imported from either France or England and other countries. The current dual education system that uses both English and French as medium of instruction is a legacy of that political history. This profile of Vanuatu defines the challenges of smallness, scattered islands, remoteness, isolation and linguistic and cultural diversity that is common to other islands in the region (Niroa et al, 2010)

11.2 Education System

Vanuatu's unique political history has seen the development of two educational traditions side by side, one anglo- and the other francophone, and therefore two languages of instruction. The French and English schools follow a uniform curriculum up to Year 10 (Form 4), after which the English-speaking schools offer their own curriculum for Years 11-13, and the French-speaking, their own Years 11-14. The primary school population is about 39,000 with both groups offering basic education for Years 1-8 under a common curriculum. The secondary school population is about 10,000 students.

The Vanuatu Education Master Plan of 1999 within the mandate of the Comprehensive Reform Program (CRP) envisaged a need for increasing access to basic education and other types of education including secondary, vocational and technical education as well as non-formal education. Also included is the provision of a second chance opportunity through distance education for students who for various reasons did not complete a secondary school qualification. Vocational and technical education was to provide a balance between technical education for the formal sector while vocational and life skills targeted school leavers who need to find employment (MOE,2006).

The Ministry of Education became convinced that distance learning was critical to increasing access to formal and non-formal education opportunities for people of all ages so in 1999 a Distance Education Draft Policy was developed. The Open and Distance Learning Policy became effective in 2006 with the vision to provide opportunities for ni-Vanuatu to better prepare themselves for entry and re-entry into the structured education system or continue life-long learning at their own place and time¹. Straightaway two positions were created for Distance Education and located at the Curriculum Development Unit where they worked with the Ministry of Education's Distance Education Committee. Unfortunately these positions only existed for a short period of time.

11.3 VESS & VERM

When the government realised that it was making little progress towards the achievement of the EFA goals that it had committed to, an in-depth sector analysis and a broad round of provincial consultations were undertaken. These culminated in an education summit in 2006 and subsequently the development of the Vanuatu Education Sector Strategy (VESS) for the period 2007-2016. VESS sets out four policy goals:

- to improve access to education and ensure gender and rural–urban balance
- to raise the quality and relevance of education
- to improve planning, fiscal and financial management of the sector
- to develop a distinctively Vanuatu education system.

Between 2006-7, the government together with key development partners put in place its first sector-wide approach (SWAp) to guide the directions of the sector and the implementation of VESS. In 2009 the Vanuatu Education Road Map (VERM), a medium-term framework and set of priorities for achieving the key strategic goals of VESS was developed. The Road Map is now the key driver of change in Vanuatu's education system. VESS and VERM were developed in a context marked by poor access and decreasing enrolment trends especially in the first six years of basic education. For its part the government recently implemented a fee-free education policy supported by additional funding through school grants.

Table 1 shows consistently high male enrolments for Year 1 to Year 6 during the last four years for Years 1 to 8 and Years 10 to 13. Overall there are more male enrolments than females however in 2008 to 2010 more females were enrolled in Year 14 than males. Similarly in 2009 in Year 12, the number of female enrollments exceeded that of the males and in 2010 there was a high enrollment of females in Years 10 to 14.

Table 1: The enrolment figures from 2007 to 2010

Level	2007			2008			2009			2010		
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
Year 1	3651	4063	7714	3829	4217	8046	3619	3987	7606	4285	4607	8892
Year 2	3054	3492	6546	3279	3662	6941	3281	3741	7022	3386	3828	7214
Year 3	2934	3291	6225	3061	3484	6545	3068	3491	6559	3298	3743	7041
Year 4	2756	3085	5841	2880	3207	6087	2784	3226	6010	2998	3386	6384
Year 5	2345	2523	4868	2702	2891	5593	2622	2820	5442	2718	3132	5850
Year 6	2230	2310	4540	2306	2391	4697	2409	2658	5067	2544	2750	5294
Year 7	1814	1700	3514	2036	2129	4165	1919	1835	3754	1954	2144	4098
Year 8	1667	1733	3400	1724	1635	3359	1734	1739	3473	1783	1712	3492
Year 9	1006	1050	2056	1531	1581	3112	1630	1478	3108	1582	1628	3210
Year 10	920	914	1834	1038	1006	2044	1326	1345	2671	1309	1228	2537
Year 11	708	826	1534	356	882	1238	928	944	1872	817	800	1617
Year 12	558	589	1147	588	753	1341	653	579	1232	654	622	1276
Year 13	243	236	479	316	302	618	268	291	559	269	257	526
Year 14	31	37	68	63	44	107	49	38	87	73	66	139

Source: Source: VEMIS System Analysis Workbook Enrolment Table, Survey Year 2010.

The high student population and the large numbers of school-age children leaving the formal school system early is a real concern for the future of Vanuatu, because post-school activities will need to be found for the high numbers. If nothing is done, the country will be facing a large school leaver population with nowhere to go and likely to be unprepared to contribute effectively and efficiently to the development of the country. Furthermore, these people will not be able to improve their lives. According to the data collected by the VEMIS from 2007 to 2010, the three most common factors that contribute to school dropouts are:

- financial problems and inability to pay fees despite the fee-free education policy
- students' lack of interest in school
- family commitments that require students to stay at home for home help.

The Vanuatu Education Management Information System (VEMIS) is an important database that is managed by the Ministry of Education was started in 2007. Every year schools are required to

provide specific information to the Ministry Education which will assist the Ministry with planning, budgeting and other important decisions the ministry needs to make. Prior to the establishment of VEMIS it was difficult to access any kind of educational data in Vanuatu. The information on the following page shows the school enrolments and dropouts in the last four years (MOE,2007-2010).

11.4 Scope and Administration of Second-Chance Education Services

11.4.1 Vanuatu National Training Council

Vanuatu has a relatively long experience with TVET. In 1999, the Vanuatu National Training Council (VNTC) was established to ensure the standard of TVET qualifications and oversee the accreditation of TVET providers. The VNTC has developed a Vanuatu Qualifications Framework and the Vanuatu Quality Training Standards that it uses to ensure that training providers provide quality trainings and that all qualifications are recognized nationally in technical and vocational education and training within Vanuatu. The pathway in the Qualification Framework ranges from students graduating with a Vanuatu Community Certificate to an Advanced Diploma which is the highest qualification a student can achieve. The period of training varies as some providers offer one or two years and at the end students seek employment in the local industries and if they are fortunate they could be employed as mechanics, carpenters or waiters and waitresses in hotels or restaurants or shop keepers. Others however, may opt to be self-employed if they have the available resources. The rest could be on a daily rated payment in various companies whenever a job is available. Other types of open schooling opportunities are offered by the Churches, Non Government Organisations (NGOs) as well as private institutions mainly of the non-formal or vocational and technical types and their courses are registered under the VNTC.

11.4.2 Rural Training Centres

Vanuatu also has community-based Rural Training Centres (RTC) that are active in providing training in rural areas. Some churches that provide opportunities for students to have a second chance in attending a formal education institution which follows a different curriculum to what the Vanuatu formal education system offers.

11.4.3 USP Distance Learning programs

Although the government's Open and Distance Learning Policy was developed in 2006, it is yet to be implemented. For now though, it is the University of the South Pacific's Emalus Campus that offers coordinated distance education programmes of study through its extension services as well as through some private and government secondary schools. Only those students who drop out of years 10-13 are able to enroll in a variety of the distance education courses while those who drop off earlier are yet to be accounted for.

11.4.4 Francophone Second-chance program

The Francophone Second Chance program that is located at the USP Emalus Campus caters for students who failed Year 12 & 13 examinations in the Francophone Senior Secondary Schools and wish to re-take an examination. If successful in the national examination they are accepted back into the formal system. This program was established in 2006 through an agreement between the USP and the French Embassy in Vanuatu. The courses taken are French, Mathematics, Physics, History, Biology, Geography, Civics and Computer Studies, similar to those of the Francophone Senior Secondary Schools but offered in two semesters. Initially the number of teaching hours was similar to the schools but have since been reduced to two hours per week for each subject to coincide with the DFL teaching hours. The students in the program have an added advantage in being enrolled in two USP language courses LLP13 and LLF11. Overall, the performance of students in this program has been encouraging and prompted an increase in the enrollment over the years. Students in the program are between 17 to 25 years.

Table 2: Enrolment 2007-10, Francophone Second-chance Programme

Year	No of enrollments	Number sitting the examination	Pass	Fail
2007	35	27	13	14
2008	100	41	23	18
2009	99	83	56	27
2010	72	58	29	29

The programme has an average pass rate of about 35%, with the best results attained in 2009 following its worst results in 2008. Table 3 shows the number of students enrolled in the Francophone Second Chance Programme from 2006 to 2010. It also shows the total number of students sitting the national examination and also the number of those who passed or failed the examination.

11.5 Constraints and Gaps

The constraints that the Francophone Second Chance Programme students normally encounter are:

- Lesser teaching hours
- The teaching rooms keep changing depending on their availability and the availability of a tutor.
- Students have different academic abilities because they come from different secondary schools
- Financial difficulties to pay school fees
- Lack of full time teachers to provide assistance to students
- Lack of a full time programme coordinator
- Lack of support from the Ministry of Education.

Initially the project was funded by the French Embassy but this was only for a year. Since then students have had to pay full costs, which poses a lot of problems for the many that have financial difficulties.

On the whole, the overall constraint faced by students undergoing the above mentioned programmes, is finding an available employment. Under the VNTC Qualification Framework, those graduating with a Community Certificate can only end up in a low paid employment if they are lucky while others may not be so fortunate. Those who perform well academically and are financially secure may continue their studies up to a higher level, for example, completing the Foundation Courses at USP and moving on to a Degree level.

11.6 Looking to the Future

Available statistics indicate that students are dropping out of school even in the early years of education and the highest numbers are male students. It is hoped that the Ministry of Education's fee-free education policy and additional funding through school grants will take care of the financial constraints. In addition, the Ministry will need to endorse and implement its Open and Distance Learning Policy, because it has the potential to provide greater access to a wider sector of the population and also an opportunity for re-entry for second-chance purposes. Currently these mechanisms are largely inadequate and inaccessible.

An important point of consideration is that successful Francophone Second Chance programme is only open to the Francophone or French-speaking students at the upper secondary school level. The Anglophone students and the lower level francophone dropouts do not have any such opportunities. There is indeed a great need for 'open schooling' in Vanuatu to cater for those who drop out at the basic level and upper secondary to provide them with a "Second Chance" to re-enter into the formal system of education as well as provide them an opportunity for life skills training. The Government through the Ministry of Education should take a leading role in ensuring that the current Open and Distance Learning policy is endorsed and implemented or have it revised to cater for an 'Open schooling' system in Vanuatu.

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**BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER:
A REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE OF
OPEN SCHOOLING IN PICS**

12. A REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE OF OPEN SCHOOLING

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12.1 Introduction

Open Schooling is not an entirely new phenomenon to Pacific Island countries because similar programs already exist in one form or another in most countries. Lifelong learning and learning anywhere and anytime, which are synonymous with the learning styles of most Pacific peoples are aligned to the open learning philosophy of education. In many traditional societies of the Pacific Island Countries (PICs), the learning context is everyday life activities in people's homes and communities. People *learn by living* their role-specific tasks and responsibilities. They actively learn and grow into knowledge. In the formal education sense, lifelong learning (LLL) is broad-based, encompassing education and training in both the formal and informal sectors (Veramu, 2008). It is broad in character, extensive in coverage and diverse in content, methodology and participants (Kedrayate, 1997; 33).

The Pacific is a very large geographical region comprising thousands of small islands scattered over 30 million square kilometers of ocean. It is an expensive region to deliver services (AusAid, 2009). The PICs face unique challenges that are related to the geographic spread and the vulnerable characteristics of the region especially climate change and weather-related events as well as the global economic and financial crisis. The lives of the Pacific's 7 million people and communities revolve around the sea. Hau'ofa (1993) describes 'a sea of islands' (p.37) and Pacific people as people of the ocean. Pacific people view their world differently from the global thinking of islands isolated and separated by great distances. For them the sea is not a barrier because it is their livelihood and highway. In thinking about the 'ocean within us' there is a sense of connectedness to nature (in this case, the ocean) as well as a sense of connectedness to all other people who share the same ocean. The vast ocean links them to one another and to their common aspirations for a better and more secure, prosperous future. It is for this reason that a regional approach to development works best for the PICs.

The country reports use the term "second-chance education" in their analysis of the opportunities provided for school dropouts and out of school youths and adults. The countries are at different stages of educational development and likewise with second-chance education activities. The progress in each country is a result of interrelated factors including physical geography (location and size), communication and transportation, urbanization, economic and political systems.

12.2 Regional Governance of Pacific Education

The Pacific region has been well served by the collective effort of the regional governments and development partners. The Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) was established in 1971 to coordinate regional development on political issues of significance to the newly independent states of the Pacific. The Forum Basic Education Action Plan (FBEAP) was adopted in 2001 and covered a broad range of areas in formal and informal education including life skills. Its Vision reaffirmed commitment to the EFA goals:

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 lifelong learning. These when combined with enhanced employment opportunities create a higher level of personal and societal security and development.

12.2.1 The PRIDE Project

The Pacific Regional Initiative for the Delivery of Basic Education (PRIDE) project was launched in 2004 to be the implementing strategy of the FBEAP, was funded by the European Union and NZAID and housed at the USP. The PRIDE project the 14 countries of the Pacific Forum – Fiji, Samoa, Tonga, Cook Islands, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Marshall Islands, Kiribati, Tuvalu, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea and the Federated States of Micronesia – by strengthening the capacity of each Ministry of Education to plan and deliver high quality basic education. The areas covered under PRIDE's mandate included ECE, elementary, primary and secondary education, and TVET, for both the formal and informal sectors.

12.2.2 The Pacific Educational Framework (PEDF)

The FBEAP was reviewed in 2008 and replaced by the Pacific Education Development Framework (PEDF) in 2009 as the coordinating agency of regional activities in education and providing advocacy and a leadership role in policy dialogue at the regional level. The PEDF is grounded in two sets of imperatives: firstly, the commitments made by Pacific countries to global education calls such as the EFA agenda and goals, the MDGs that relate to education and the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development. The second imperative is the national and regional response to the educational needs and challenges in the Pacific region especially in relation to the training, employment and economic agenda that was referred from an Economic Ministers' forum.

There is a strong perception amongst education stakeholders in the region that current education and training systems are not addressing the needs of local, regional and international markets. The academic and exam-oriented curriculum that dominates the schools is no longer relevant because it is pushing out many students and producing others not equipped for the white collar employment in administrative positions. The concern is with secondary education because of its perceived lack of coherence. The need for more vocationally and technically focused training cannot be over-emphasized and all countries needed to make every effort to ride with the TVET Strategy defined in the PEDF. This demands a fundamental rethinking of the role and place of secondary education and that TVET be a vital part of that reform.

12.3 Pacific Education, MDGS and EFA

Education remains the single most powerful instrument and an indispensable aspect of human resources development for creating upward mobility and promotion of equity in society. Two critical indicators, UNESCO's EFA and the UN's MDGs have assisted developing countries like PICs to move closer to achieving universal basic education. As countries race towards achieving the goals, in particular MDG 2, a lot of success has been measured. The following observations of the EFA Global Monitoring report (2008) are relevant to PIOSP:

1. Globally, primary school enrolment rose from 647 million to 688 million (6.4%) between 1999 and 2005. *Most of the PICs are among those with NER above 90%;*
2. Demand for secondary education is growing as more countries progress toward UPE. A 17% increase in secondary enrolment worldwide was recorded from 1999-2005. *The Pacific along with Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia record two-thirds or more of secondary school age students enrolled in secondary schools.*
3. The transition from lower to upper secondary was a significant dropout point with a GER of 79% in lower secondary compared to 53% in upper secondary. *The Pacific is among countries that recorded high differing participation rates between the two levels. Kiribati is one example.*
4. The percentage of students enrolled in secondary TVET programs has declined slightly since 1999. *The relative share of secondary-level TVET enrolments was recorded in the Pacific.*

The AUSAID Tracking Development in Governance in the Pacific (2009) focused on individual country's progress on the MDGs. Its second tracking report showed that Samoa and Tonga were the on track to achieve four MDGs Fiji, Niue and Vanuatu on track to achieve 3 MDGs; while Cook Islands, Kiribati, Marshall islands, Nauru, Solomon Islands and Tuvalu were likely to achieve very few. Nauru's progress was the most worrying.

The AUSAID Tracking Assessment of MDG 1, 2 and 3 are relevant to this project:

- MDG 1 indicators were the most concerning with about one-third of Pacific peoples living below poverty line especially those living in urban areas. Vanuatu's large rural population where subsistence economy and food security remain strong has worked in its favor and it is the only country on track to meet the target. PICs obviously need faster growth to reduce poverty but growth needs to be pro-poor. This requires policies that support the "development of sectors which have both market growth potential and high human development potential".
- MDG 2 indicators showed that more children are entering school *but many do not remain to complete primary education*. Fiji, Niue, Samoa, Tonga and Tuvalu are on track to achieve UPE while Nauru with only about 60% NPE and the group unlikely to finish primary school is of concern. Low completion rates are noted for Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Cook Islands and Kiribati. It is noted that children particularly at risk of not completing primary school are those living in remote communities, those with disability and those from poorer families.
- MDG 3 indicators were mixed. Seven countries – Fiji, Vanuatu, Samoa, Tonga, Kiribati, Marshall Islands and Nauru are on track to achieve gender balance while Solomon Islands is off track. More girls are seen to be progressing to secondary education while more boys are leaving school for employment. For Solomon Islands, the low enrolment of girls in primary education tends to widen the gender gap in secondary and tertiary education, and in turn affect their employment prospects. The poor achievement of boys at secondary level is worrying particularly in Tuvalu.

"As governments stretch their resources to make progress towards Universal Primary Education by 2015, it is unlikely that expansion of traditional secondary provision will be a key priority. And even if one new secondary school were to be built every month for the next 10 years, the increased demand will not be met. What choices do policy makers have?"

(Daniel, 2008)

12.4 Open Schooling

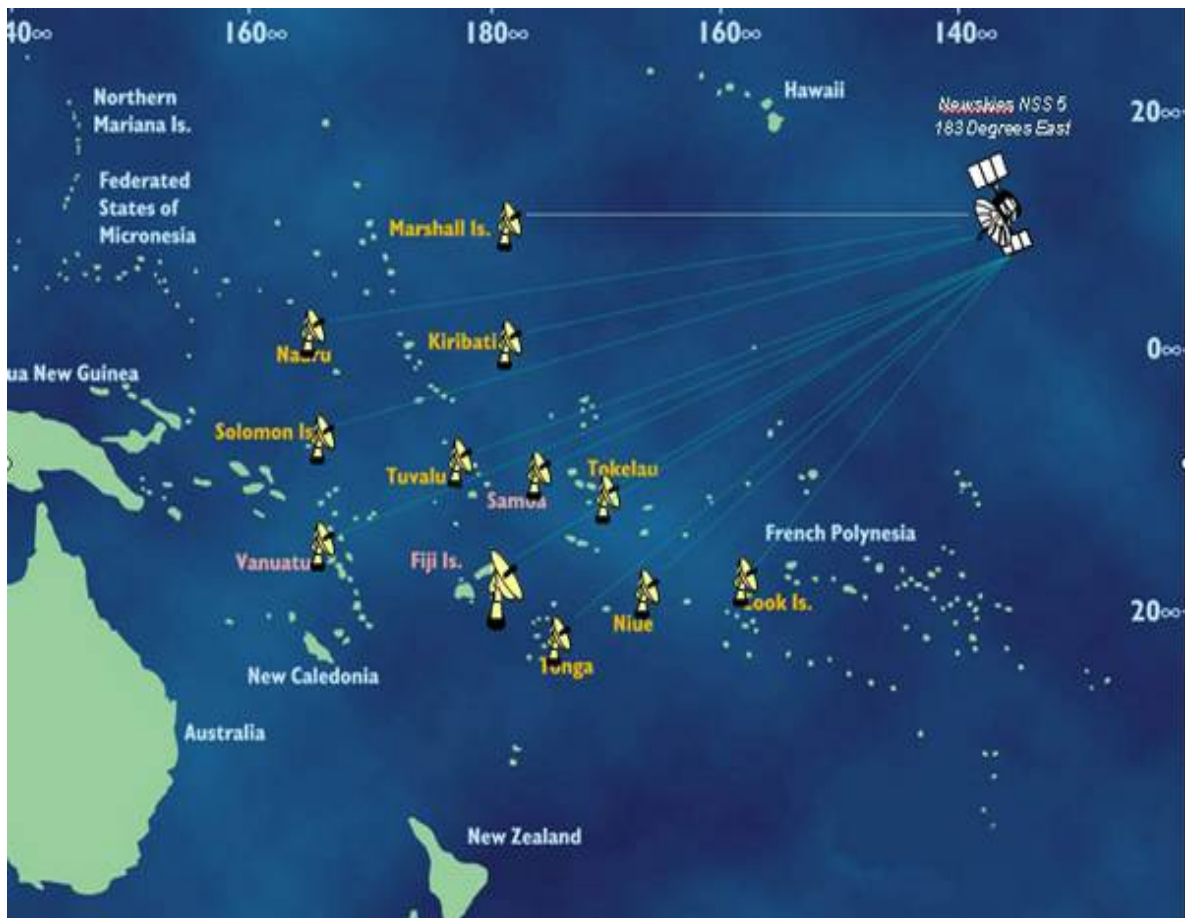
Open schooling is defined as “the physical separation of the school-level learner from the teacher, and the use of unconventional teaching methodologies, and information and communication technologies (ICTs) to bridge the separation and provide the education and training” (Phillips, 2006; 9). The important features of open schooling – flexibility, openness, unconventional pedagogies, and use of information and communication technology ICT) – offers a new, viable alternative. Whichever of the attributes is most strongly emphasized - flexibility, openness, pedagogy or technology – will determine the form of open schooling (Haughey and Stewart, 2010). Two approaches have been successful: a Complementary approach that replicates the curriculum of the conventional school system and an Alternative approach that has a more adult-relevant, TVET-oriented curriculum. Multiple use of ICT has contributed to the cost effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and scalability of the NIOS programs. Open schooling promises to improve access to secondary schooling in the same way that ODL has done for students requiring access to tertiary education (Abrioux, 2010).

1.5 The University of the South Pacific

The USP is a regional institution that serves 12 Pacific Island countries – Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu – which traverse a large ocean mass and five time zones. The geographical isolation of the small island nations together with the sharp information differential in the region have made DFL the logical and most convenient delivery approach at USP. The University has pioneered distance and flexible learning and teaching since the 1970s and continues to provide the best quality of education for the people even as the circumstances of the region continued to change. It has been an active partner in the total development of its member countries and the region in the last forty years.

The University’s DFL courses are designed for independent study. From the traditional print materials of the early years, most courses are now designed for a blended approach to teaching and progressively moving towards an online environment. Further review of DFL activities has seen the mainstreaming of DFL, which means that what used to be a separate administration of distance and flexible learning has now become integrated with the academic activities of the faculties and it is the Deans and faculty that now drive the DFL processes.

Map of the USP Region



The establishment of Campuses in the 12 USP countries and the strengthening of the private satellite network *USPNet* are major developments that have created greater access. Today its multi-modal approach uses a range of media including video broadcasting, audio and audio-graphics and video teleconferencing, audio and video tapes, CDROMS and DVDs. In 2006 the University's LMS migrated from WeBCT to Moodle. The infrastructure and support systems that are available through *USPNet* will be equally important in the development of OS in the region

12.5.1 Open Schooling at USP

At the University, a combined system of the complementary and alternative forms of Open schooling operates through the Continuing and Community Education Centre (CCEC) and the College of Foundation Studies (CFS). In different ways the two sections provide an inclusive service by offering an alternative learning pathway to various levels of learners who failed to

progress through the traditional academic pathway. All country reports in this study identify the programs and courses of the CFS and CCEC as major providers of open schooling.

Complementary OS at the College of Foundation Studies (CFS)

The activities of the CFS can be classified as the complementary model of Open schooling. The college functions like a senior secondary school in preparing students for University study at the USP and elsewhere. Its two main programs of study are the Preliminary Studies that is the equivalent of the Sixth form or Year 12, and the Foundation Studies that is equivalent to the Seventh Form (Year 13). Some PICs like Fiji have their own equivalent programs but also use the CFS provisions, while many other countries rely solely on the CFS programs.

The services of the CFS are not limited only to ‘successful’ school leavers because it also caters for school-age learners who have not been successful at Form 6 and Form 7 and require bridging in a select number of courses to bring them up to par. In addition, mature-age learners wanting university entrance qualifications can enroll in the same programs.

The tutors at CFS are subject specialists who develop course materials and support students through the normal DFL system of the University. They work closely with senior secondary systems in the region so that there is better alignment of work in the two systems. A new dimension of the CFS that is being trialed is the franchise of its programs to secondary schools that prefer better alignment to University studies.

Alternative OS at the Regional Continuing and Community Education Centre (RCCEC)

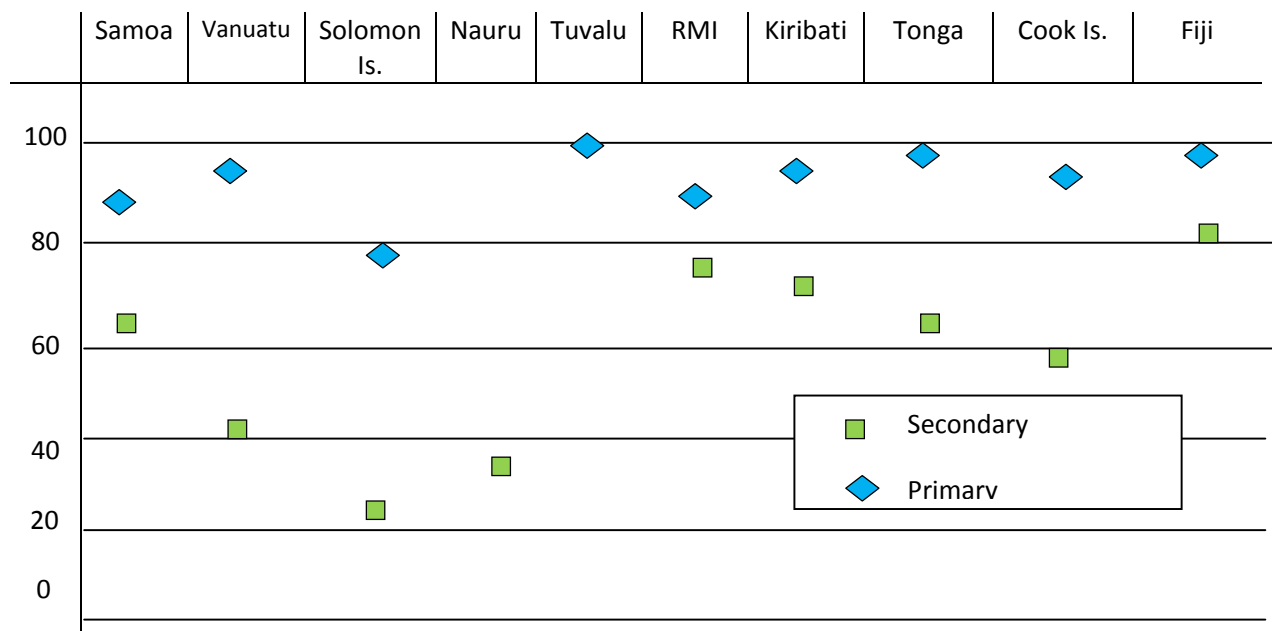
The mission of the RCCEC is to “deliver excellence in continuing and community education that empowers and enables individuals and communities in the region to be able to sustain themselves” (RCCE, 2009). The Centre offers a wide variety of courses and programs that focus on life skills and work-related content. With flexibility and openness in terms of course duration, requirement and study times the courses are very appealing. Generally the duration of CCE courses varies from 10 to 32 hours of teaching spread over a number of weeks. The courses cover a wide array of subjects such as computer skills, languages, bookkeeping, mathematics, business studies, economics, creative writing, community development skills, literature, handicrafts, floral arts, fabric arts, woodcarving, fine arts, carving, poetry, music, video production, leadership skills, health studies, public teaching, problem solving and general literacy skills. They are classified under seven major types: (i) Career Development Training, (ii) Sales and Marketing Training; (iii) Supervisors and Managers Training; (iv) Human Resources Training; (v) IT Training; (vi) Community Training; and (vii) Other Professional Trainings.

The RCCEC at the main Laucala Campus in Suva also coordinates four non-credit Certificate Programs from time to time through DFL. One of these, the Certificate in Early Childhood Education (CECE), is currently on offer. The minimum entry requirement to the program is completion of Year 10 education. The program comprises three courses, which students can complete in 3 semesters. The CECE graduates can proceed to do the Diploma in ECE and BED (ECE) In-Service programs at the School of Education. With early childhood education now formally recognized as the beginning stage of formal schooling in many PICs, a big demand for trained ECE teachers is expected.

12.6 Schooling Realities in PICs: What do the country reports indicate?

Reliable and up-to-date statistics and data is seriously lacking in many Pacific countries making it difficult to monitor progress, improve development and make responsible predictions. However one thing is clear, secondary education is the weak link in the education chain: primary education is strong and tertiary education is effective, but the bridge between the two that is secondary education lacks coherence. The UNESCO Delors Report (1996) is critical of secondary education in “being too egalitarian and not sufficiently open to the outside world and, generally failing to prepare adolescents not only for higher education, but also for the world of work” (p. 125).

Figure 1: Primary and Secondary School Enrollments



Source: PIFS Skilling the Pacific, 2008, 164

Severely limited secondary schooling places, problems with national assessment systems, limited post-secondary opportunities, and increasing numbers of untrained teachers are worrying trends that have led to high numbers of school dropouts. Many students fail the qualifying national examinations while others drop out because of financial and other family problems. The academic curriculum is itself limiting and many students find studying very stressful and opt to look for employment early.

The continual flow of dropouts in all countries is of great concern because they continually add to the already large numbers of out-of-school youths and the unemployed in the communities. With continued low economic growth projections this situation is likely to become worse. The related concern is that unchecked large numbers of uneducated school-leavers and dropouts in the communities could add to the social and health problems.

Figure 2: Unemployment Rates



Source: Source: PIFS Skilling the Pacific, 2008; 169

12.7 Open Schooling Possibilities in PICs

12.7.1 Complementary Open Schools

Every country has provision of some form of second-chance provision. Church organizations, non-governmental organizations and School Committees run the majority of these operations that include both Complementary and Alternative types of OS. The *Francophone second-chance* program in Vanuatu, the *MATUA* program in Fiji and the General Education Diploma program in Marshall Islands can be classified as complementary OS because they follow the curriculum of the conventional school system. The programs service secondary school-age learners who desire a high school qualification to improve their chance of further studies and/or employment.

Francophone Second-chance program, Vanuatu

This program is located at the USP Emalus Campus and caters for students who wish to retake the Year 12 & 13 examinations. Students take the same subjects as those taught at the Francophone Senior Secondary Schools - French, Mathematics, Physics, History, Biology, Geography, Civics and Computer Studies. Initially the number of teaching hours was similar to the schools but have since been reduced to two hours per week for each subject to coincide with the DFL teaching hours at the USP campus. The courses are now offered in two semesters. The students in the program have an added advantage in being enrolled in two USP language courses LLP13 and LLF11. Overall, the performance of students in this second-chance program has been very encouraging and has prompted an increase in the enrollment over the years. Students in the program are between 17 to 25 years. The program has its share of challenges that are a mix of academic, administrative and financial.

MATUA Program, Fiji

The *MATUA* program in Fiji can be classified as a Complementary OS approach. It has been operating successfully for well over 10 years. *MATUA* caters for school leavers and out of school youth who wish to return to school and complete a secondary school qualification so they can lead more productive lives. Many factors have worked in favor of this program: (i) it is located within an existing secondary school that has facilities and resources (ii) there are qualified teachers of the school who volunteer their time for the OS (iii) learning material like textbooks are available (iv) very strong community support (v) OS is recognized by the Ministry of Education and is registered. The strong community support for the program is its greatest asset and factor in sustainability. What began in 2003 as a school project for its own school leavers has since become a haven for hundreds of school leavers and adults from around the country

seeking a second chance at acquiring secondary school qualifications. The achievements of the *MATUA* program is widely known; many success stories continue to be publicized especially of single mothers and struggling widows whose lives have been remarkably turned around since enrolling in the program. Many have progressed to further studies at tertiary institutions like the University of the South Pacific or found employment.

General Education Diploma (GED) program, Marshall Islands

The GED program was established by the MOE in the 1970s to cater for students who failed to secure a High School Diploma. It is an alternative pathway to an equivalent diploma that would enable students to pursue a college degree in the RMI. Student intake per semester is 250 students drawn from all over the country and with varying levels of School completion. After placement at appropriate levels the students are taken through the program up to Level 5 when they sit the College Entrance Examination. Around 500 students have enrolled into this program every year making it the largest provider of second chance education in the country. The success rate is about 75% and graduates either move into College education or find employment.

12.7.2 TVET IN PICS

Skills development has been highlighted repeatedly at various Pacific Forums but very little change was recorded as the countries and their communities continued to focus on the academic curriculum and sidelining TVET as second best. Meanwhile with diversification of trade and the labor market the region is facing severe labor market demand and supply problems and school leavers have been found to be lacking in important employment skills. EFA Goal 3 that referred to ‘ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programs’ included education for employability.

Some PICs do not have policies and strategies on TVET. The vocational activities continue to be driven by civil societies especially the churches, are on a small scale and lack resource support. Governments need to show great determination and leadership in the development of national policies on TVET to facilitate and drive the sharing of the training resources within the countries and throughout the region. In this regard the national and regional institutions like USP, FIT, FNU, SPC and NUS will need to pull their resources together to change the nature of TVET delivery and development in the region. PATVET is expected to be the regional arm of this integration.

The country reports indicate mixed reactions to TVET amongst Pacific communities. For example, reports from Kiribati and Tuvalu recorded strong resistance to TVET and caused the closure of vocational centres. Other countries like Fiji, Samoa, Vanuatu and Marshall Islands are dealing well with similar objections and moving on with implementing TVET in schools as well as special vocational institutions.

12.7.3 Alternative OS Types

Waan Aelon in Majel (WAM), Marshall Islands

Waan Aelon in Majel (Canoes of the Marshall Islands) offers a special model of open schooling. Its use of a traditional medium to offer vocational skills training to at risk youths serves multi-purpose in developing life skills and reviving traditional culture. That the instructors are skilled Marshallese craftsmen who have expertise in the art of canoe building demonstrates the traditional context of learning and teaching where the elders as repositories of knowledge instruct the young who learn by observation and imitation. That some graduates return to their own communities to pass on their newly acquired knowledge and skills is important for maintaining culture and keeping knowledge and tradition alive.

The Community Schools (CICD) in Kiribati that were established by the Protestant Church for the main purpose of training students the different traditional and modern life skills follows the same model. Trainers for the programs were qualified teachers and experts in different local and modern skills.

Montfort Boys town, Fiji

The Montfort Boys town in Fiji is special in providing a home to school dropouts and disadvantaged young people. Its vision is “to enable school dropouts, economically poor and disadvantage youth to regain self esteem and to find means of livelihood and their place in society as nation builders”. It is probably the only institution around that lists criteria for entry as (i) must be a dropout, and (ii) must be unemployed, and “prefers orphans”. In the two years of training, the boys receive home training that involves character formation and personality development as well as vocational skills training in five trades that prepares students for employment. This is another model worth replicating.

Second Chance Education for Prison Inmates, Cook Is and Fiji

Prison inmates, like everyone else, deserve a second chance – that is the message from the prison services in Fiji and Cook Islands. The face of detention in the prison services is changing in at least two PICs, Cook islands and Fiji. The new-look Prison Services in Fiji and Cook Islands, jail time has taken a new look that is about learning and personal development. Jail time, in this

scenario, is about rehabilitation and not punitive. So the prison inmates get to serve their time as laid down by the courts and in the process also receive programs in character development and up-skilling to empower and prepare them better for life after detention. In the Cook Islands, inmates participate in vocational courses that include cooking, hospitality and carpentry. In 2010, seven male prisoners participated in a basic introductory course on small engine repair. In both countries, prison inmates have access to basic numeracy and literacy courses. A course in Film Studies at Aorangi prison in the Cook Islands like the subsistence farming skills in Fiji that include poultry farming and vegetable farming create important knowledge and support systems that inmates can use and draw from later.

PALUA TVET model in Solomon Islands

The PALUA model of TVET in the Solomon Islands is special in its attempt at vocationalizing the secondary education. Adding a vocational strand as part of the normal academic schooling allows all students the benefit of an academic as well as the skills of TVET structure and they co-exist on the same campus. Student gain immensely from this model because they not only a variety of vocational skills, but also begin to understand the value of work. This model is holistic and all encompassing.

12.8 Looking to the Future

Several key items stand out in the country reports and deserve serious consideration.

With regards to the problem with dropouts, it is important to acknowledge that the students are being pushed out by a system that is not working for them. Therefore there is a critical need to examine the quality and relevance of the education we offer our secondary schools. There must an improvement in the bridge between education and the world of work.

Educational reform must be total and not piecemeal. Research has shown that students involved in TVET courses at secondary level have far lower drop-out and repeater rates than students in the pure academic streams (Maclean, 2009; 35). However, instead of simply focusing on curriculum choice Maclean proposes a total curriculum reform that includes a reform of teacher education also. After all “good schools require good teachers” (Delors, 1996).

The Pacific has a long history of regionalism and regional cooperation and integration must continue to be the direction for development. The PEDF reflects the Pacific concept of regionalism where countries work together for their joint and individual benefit. The justification for any regional strategies advocated in the PEDF is that they add value to national efforts. The PIOSP is expected to add value to national efforts and also enhance the development of the region.

Open schools have the advantage of being less expensive compared to the conventional school system (Daniel and Ferreira, 2008; Maclean, 2009). With innovative teacher training that integrates the areas of material development, learner support and the use of ICT (Daniel and Ferreira, 2008; 10), open schooling provides opportunities that can begin almost immediately anywhere and anytime. This is exactly what the PICs need.

The country reports suggest several models of OS that can be considered by the countries. The *MATUA* model in Fiji was developed by the school community has a strong community base; that is one of its strongest pillars. This model clearly shows that where there is a will there is way. The *PALUA* model of vocationalisation of the secondary curriculum has the benefit of preparing students to face the world of work, work ethics and life. The *Waan Aelon in Majel* model from Marshall Islands shows an attempt to meld the modern and the cultural aspects of life and learning.

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