

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Fact Sheet

BACKGROUND

Government continues to pursue initiatives to make education and training accessible and “free” for all Fijian students from primary to tertiary-level. The government has implemented various initiatives to enhance education provision in terms of improving inclusivity, accessibility, and affordability. The initiatives include free education grant to government funded schools, free textbooks to all primary and secondary schools, support for transportation cost such as bus fare and free boats for students from maritime areas, boarding grants, and menstrual hygiene management to support the well-being of female students. These measures underscore the government’s commitment to fostering an inclusive and supportive educational landscape for all students in Fiji.

Government’s substantial investment over the years has led to a notable increase in annual student enrollment figures with Fiji achieving near universal access to primary education with a net enrolment of 97%. Moreover, the education sector between 2014 and 2022, has contributed an average of 6% towards the real GDP, with pre - primary, primary and higher education contributing 2% each towards the GDP.

CURRENT STATUS

Fiji’s education sector is governed by numerous policies, strategies and guidelines that govern the education curriculum from the early childhood learning to tertiary level education. Within the education system there are 873 early childhood institutions, 738 primary schools and 176 secondary schools. Out of these, 13 schools are government owned while the remaining 901 are owned managed by faith-based organizations and community. This model provides opportunity for collaboration between the Government and Civil Society in the provision of education.

There are approximately 19,000 students in early childhood education, 154,744 students in primary

schools and 73,505 students in secondary schools. The annual enrolment figures demonstrate a sustainable increase, reflecting the government’s commitment to inclusive and free education for all Fijian students.

Moreover, there are currently 43 registered higher education institutions; 3 universities, 2 University College and 38 technical and vocational education training institutions. The government has introduced the grants and scholarship scheme, where a total of 2,200 grants and 8,720 scholarship and study loans have been allocated for 2024.

CHALLENGES

1. *Accessibility and equitable education:* particularly for secondary education is a concern for the government. The net enrollment for secondary education is at about 80% compared to 100% for primary education from 2013 to 2022, indicating the need to focus on improving access to secondary education.
2. *School dropout:* school dropout at all levels of education is concern for the Government, particularly at higher secondary levels and rural areas.
3. *Shortage of quality Teachers:* The shortage of quality teachers and educators poses significant pressure on the effective delivery and quality of education.
4. *Changes in the needs of the society and the job market:* Constantly changing needs of the society and the job market requires that the education system respond in a timely manner by aligning its national curriculum and delivery modalities.

FUTURE POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

- **Provide access to high quality education and relevant education programs to learners at all levels:**
 - ✓ Review and amend legislations, frameworks and policies pertaining to quality education.
 - ✓ Strengthen MATUA and TVET programmes to address school dropouts.
 - ✓ Strengthen partnership and collaboration with all Teacher Training Institutions to deliver relevant training programmes.
 - ✓ Improve teacher to student ratio.
- **Ensure equal access to quality universal Early Childhood Education and Care, primary and secondary education in an inclusive, equitable, safe, resilient and healthy environment:**
 - ✓ Develop and Implement policies and legislations that supports Early Childhood Education and Care.
 - ✓ Strengthen investment in quality Early Childhood education and including pre-school education.
 - ✓ Review and strengthen special and inclusive education programme to provide equal education opportunities to students with special needs and disabilities.
- **Revitalize TVET and life- long learning to enhance employability and entrepreneurship, sustainable socio-economic growth, equity and resilience.**
 - ✓ Strengthen legislative framework, adopt and implement the National TVET Policy.
 - ✓ Develop training programs addressing 4th industrial revolution.
 - ✓ Strengthen apprenticeship scheme.

- **Enhance student experience and strengthen research performance at the three Universities.**
 - ✓ Review and improve learning and teaching quality and educational experience.
 - ✓ Set up Fiji National Research Council to promote research initiatives.
 - ✓ Strengthen research intensity and productivity through publications produced by research active staff and higher degree research completion.