



Ministry of Education, Heritage & Arts.

**POLICY
ON
SPECIAL AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION**

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1.0 POLICY OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework that will ensure and strengthen access to quality education for all persons with disabilities in all schools throughout Fiji. Quality education reflects the spirit of equity, inclusion, access, progress and achievement of educational outcomes that will guide and direct the journey of one's lifelong learning and the opportunity to enjoy one's quality of life. While all children should be given the opportunity to learn together wherever possible in mainstream schools close to their homes regardless of difficulties, disabilities or differences, it is recognised that for some students, Special Schools are an important option. This policy will reflect on the rights of persons with disabilities according to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

2.0 POLICY

With the implementation and monitoring of this policy, the Ministry of Education, Heritage & Arts (hereinafter referred to as MoEHA) shall:

- 2.1 Strengthen and support the Special and Inclusive Education Unit (hereinafter referred to as SIEU) for improved coordination and effective service delivery.
- 2.2 Screen students in all schools to identify functional limitations / disabilities, and develop intervention and management plans to maximize learning outcomes.
- 2.3 Provide necessary supports to all schools to enable adequate staffing, teaching / learning resources and infrastructure to support inclusion of students with disabilities.
- 2.4 Implement and strengthen Early Intervention Programs in Special Schools and Early Childhood Centres to strengthen and support the

early years of foundational learning as a basis for success and further learning.

- 2.5 Support the strengthening of pre-service and in-service teacher education within Teacher Training Institutions to provide the necessary human resource support to mainstream as well as Special Schools.
- 2.6 Strengthen and support Vocational Training Programmes in Special Schools and Vocational Training Centres in order to improve access to employment opportunities and livelihoods, and to support lifelong learning of persons with disabilities.
- 2.7 Review the existing curriculum so that it is inclusive, flexible and adaptable, and reasonably accommodate the needs of persons with disabilities.
- 2.8 Improve access to quality education for all persons with disabilities at Early Childhood, Primary, Secondary, Vocational Training and Technical College levels, as well as at Special Schools as appropriate.
- 2.9 Provide educational outreach programmes in the communities as a means of sharing information and awareness on the rights of and opportunities for persons with disabilities to attend school.
- 2.10 Monitor and evaluate the implementation of the special and inclusive education policy and programmes in schools through the Special and Inclusive Education Unit (hereinafter referred to as SIEU).

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 Inclusive education has been in existence in Fiji since the 1960's, when many of the Catholic Church schools such as St Joseph's Secondary School and Marist Brothers High School enrolled students with disabilities. However, students with severe or less visible disabilities such as hearing impairment and intellectual disability were often excluded.

3.1.2 In 1967, Fiji's first Special School, Hilton Special School, was established by the Fiji Crippled Children's Society to provide education for students with severe physical and hearing impairments. Later, more Special Schools were established around the country; to date there are 15 Special Schools and two Vocational Training Centres specifically for persons with disabilities.

3.1.3 The policy for the education of students with disabilities was first endorsed in 2010. This policy was reviewed for the second time in 2016. An implementation plan is drawn for 2017 – 2020 after an extensive consultation with the key representatives from the MoEHA, Disabled People's Organisations, Teacher Training Institutions and schools, with support from the Australian government funded Access to Quality Education Program. The *Special and Inclusive Education Policy Implementation Plan 2017 - 2020* was developed to support a realistic, staged approach to implementing the Policy.

3.2 Rationale

3.2.1 Special Schools in Fiji are located only in the main town areas. Access to education for children who live in the outer islands and rural areas is therefore very limited. Including students with disabilities in mainstream educational options, known as inclusive education, is therefore vital, as it

allows children to be educated within their neighbourhood schools, close to home.

3.2.2 Inclusive education is based on the following key principles:

3.2.2.1 All children should experience a sense of belonging within their local school.

3.2.2.2 All children can learn – if they are provided with an enabling learning environment, appropriate equipment, and parental support. Learning that takes place may differ according to students' abilities, however, learning of all students can be nurtured and developed by teachers and other school staff in school settings.

3.2.2.3 All children have the right to fully participate in all school activities and their communities alongside their peers.

3.2.2.4 The process of education is a lifelong journey beginning from prenatal development right to one's twilight years, involving children, families, and teachers, school communities, local communities, non-government organizations and the Government.

3.2.3 While inclusive education is a key directive of this policy, special schools are crucial environment for students with particular disabilities, in that they enable students to learn key skills such as sign language or braille which complement their education in a mainstream environment, and provide important educational support options for students with severe or complex disabilities. Thus, this policy promotes the development of both special and inclusive education options.

4.0 DEFINITIONS

4.1 Behavioural Difficulty

Behavioural difficulties are characterised by difficulty controlling behaviour; and/or focusing and concentrating; and/or accepting changes to routine.

4.2 Disabled Person's Organisations

Disabled Person's Organisations (DPOs) are representative self-advocacy groups of persons with disability, which are controlled by a majority of people with disability (51%) at the board and membership levels.

4.3 Early Intervention

Early intervention services are provided to young children with disabilities generally aged from birth up to six years. The earlier the children's needs are identified and appropriate intervention measures taken, the better opportunity there is for the child to succeed in the next phase of learning.

4.4 Emotional Difficulty

Emotional difficulties are characterised by high levels of sadness and/or anxiety.

4.5 Head of School

Refers to the Principal or the Head Teacher

4.6 Hearing Impairment

Hearing impairment is a partial or total inability to hear.

4.7 Inclusive Education

Inclusive Education occurs when mainstream schools accept, enrol and provide quality, appropriate educational support to persons with disabilities alongside all other students.

4.8 Intellectual impairment

Intellectual impairment is characterized by significant limitations both in intellectual functioning (reasoning, learning, problem solving) and in adaptive behaviour, which covers a range of everyday social and practical skills.

4.9 Person with disability

Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

4.10 Physical impairment

Physical impairments are difficulties in moving parts of the body, including difficulties with large movements such as walking, bending, reaching, sitting and standing, as well as smaller movements using the hands.

4.11 School

For the purposes of this Policy, schools include Early Childhood Education Centres, Primary Schools, Secondary Schools, Special Schools, and Vocational and Technical College Campuses.

4.12 Specific Learning Disability

Specific Learning Disabilities refer to problems the brain has in receiving, remembering, understanding, organizing and using verbal and/or non-verbal information, and may affect listening, thinking, speaking, writing, reading, spelling or mathematical calculation.

4.13 Special Education or Special Needs Education

Special Education or Special Needs Education is the education of persons with disabilities in a way that addresses their individual differences and needs, in a specific educational setting designed exclusively for persons with disabilities, such as a Special School.

4.14 Speech impairment

Speech and language impairments are communication disorders such as stuttering, impaired articulation, language or voice impairments.

4.15 Vision Impairment

Vision impairment is a limitation of one or more functions of the eye.

5.0 RELEVANT LEGISLATIONS AND AUTHORITIES

- 5.1 Constitution of the Republic of Fiji -2013, Chapter 2 Section 42 (1)-(3)
- 5.2 Fiji Human Rights Commission Act (1999)
- 5.3 Fiji National Council for Persons with Disabilities (FNCDP) Act 1994
- 5.4 Ministry of Education Strategic Plan - 2015-2018
- 5.5 National Policy on Persons living with Disabilities 2008 -2018
- 5.6 Peoples Charter for Change, Peace and Progress: Pillars 4 and 9 (2008)
- 5.7 Social Justice Act -2011
- 5.8 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- 5.9 United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- 5.10 Incheon Strategy to “Make the Right Real” for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific

6.0 PROCEDURES

6.1 Strengthening the Special and Inclusive Education Unit (SIEU) within the MoEHA

- 6.1.1 The SIEU shall be strengthened with increased human resources at the MoEHA to improve the coordination of service delivery.
- 6.1.2 Strengthening of working relations between the SIEU and the District Officers shall be undertaken, including through capacity building in all education districts and schools.
- 6.1.3 Collaboration towards the achievement of this Policy shall continue across and between line Ministries, Non-Government Organizations and Disabled People's Organisations.

6.2 Identification of and Support to Persons with Disabilities

- 6.2.1 The Fiji Education Management Information System (hereinafter referred to as FEMIS) Disability Disaggregation Toolkit shall be used by teachers at all schools to screen for indicators of disability.
- 6.2.2 Referrals shall be made by relevant school authorities and SIEU for medical assessment by qualified professionals as appropriate.
- 6.2.3 Educational intervention measures such as Individual Education Plans shall be utilised to support achievement of educational goals in a supported way.
- 6.2.4 Counselling support programs shall be provided for parents and caregivers of persons with disabilities.

6.3 Provision of necessary support to all schools on adequate staffing, teaching / learning resources and infrastructure towards the inclusion of students with disabilities.

6.3.1 Appropriate sanctioned support staff including but not limited to teacher aides, equipment and educational resources shall be provided to schools to assist learning and teaching.

6.3.2 School infrastructure, including classrooms, walkways, water and sanitation facilities shall be made accessible to persons with disabilities, including wheelchair users.

6.3.3 Staffing at Special Schools shall be determined by the formula in 6.3.4 / 6.3.5 and shall be revised prior to the review date of this policy.

6.3.4 Teaching one child with moderate disability is equivalent to teaching four children without disability (1:4). A person with moderate disability has a lot of difficulty with functioning in one or more domains.

6.3.5 Teaching one child with severe/profound disability is equivalent to teaching six children without disability (1:6). A person with a severe or profound disability has very limited functioning domain, a lot of difficulty with functioning in two or more domains, or cannot do at all in at least one functional domain.

6.4 Strengthening of Early Intervention Programmes in all Special Schools

6.4.1 The FEMIS Disability Disaggregation Toolkit shall be used by relevant authorities to enable early identification and referral of young children with disabilities.

- 6.4.2 Early intervention programmes in all Special Schools and Early Childhood Centres shall be affirmed and strengthened, linking with existing community based programmes.
- 6.4.3 Teachers shall be appropriately trained to support the provision of early intervention services.

6.5 Strengthening Teacher Education in the area of Special and Inclusive Education

- 6.5.1 All teachers teaching in both regular and special education schools shall receive quality special / inclusive pre-service and in service training that is responsive to the needs of all students in all schools.
- 6.5.2 In-service and Pre-service Teacher Education at all teacher training institutions shall include screening and referral of students with disabilities, as well as the provision of reasonable accommodations to facilitate inclusion.
- 6.5.3 Flexible and appropriate teaching instructions shall be used for effective learning.

6.6 Strengthening of Vocational Training Programs and courses at Technical College Campuses to support the transition into employment and life skills for persons with disabilities.

- 6.6.1 Current vocational training programs in special schools and secondary vocational centres shall be reviewed to identify and address challenges faced by persons with disabilities.
- 6.6.2 Vocational Training Centres and Technical College Campuses shall be strengthened to enable equitable participation by persons with disabilities.

6.7 Adapt curriculum and assessment processes to reasonably accommodated the needs of persons with disabilities

- 6.7.1 A relevant, flexible and adaptable curriculum shall be designed to meet the needs of all students.
- 6.7.2 All persons with disabilities shall participate in standardised assessment. Reasonable accommodations to enable the participation of persons with all types of disability will be made, including provision of practical alternative assessments for persons with disabilities that affect learning at the same level as others (e.g. intellectual disabilities).
- 6.7.3 Effective teaching strategies and techniques shall be used to optimise learning and teaching.
- 6.7.4 A disability friendly learning environment, that is conducive for learning and teaching, shall be provided.

6.8 Improve access to quality education for all persons with disabilities at Early Childhood Centres, Primary, Secondary and Special Schools, and Vocational Training Programs and Technical College Campuses.

- 6.8.1 The MoEHA shall ensure that the Head of special and mainstream schools are familiar with their roles and responsibilities towards the implementation of this policy.
- 6.8.2 Scholarships and grants shall be lobbied to assist students with disabilities to access school.
- 6.8.3 Where possible and appropriate, persons with disabilities shall be supported to progress from special to mainstream schools,

and from primary, to secondary and tertiary institutions..

- 6.8.4 Partnerships between mainstream and special schools shall be maintained in order to accommodate and support referrals of students with disabilities.

6.9 Provide and support educational outreach programmes in all communities as a means of sharing information and awareness on the rights of and opportunities for persons with disabilities to attend school.

- 6.9.1 A positive image for persons with disabilities shall be promoted through:

6.9.1.1 Publications such as a website and a quarterly newsletter;

6.9.1.2 The development and strengthening of a biannual school based poster design, essay writing and oratory competition surrounding inclusive education themes.

6.9.1.3 Strengthening collaborations with persons with disability via Disabled Persons Organisations to promote special and inclusive education across community settings in Fiji.

6.10 Monitoring and evaluation on the implementation of the special and inclusive education policy and programmes in schools.

- 6.10.1 A committee shall be established to monitor implementation of this policy where SEIU takes the lead role.

6.10.2 The Head of School shall operationalise and closely administer the implementation of the FEMIS disability disaggregation package to enable monitoring of enrolment and attendance of persons with disabilities in school. She/he shall also schedule teacher professional development programmes and improve school infrastructure to measure progress against other indicators outlined within the jurisdiction of the Policy Implementation Plan.

6.10.3 The school head shall undertake a quarterly evaluation and review of the policy implementation plan through which the relevant recommendations to the MoEHA Senior Staff will be made based on the findings.

6.11 Student Placement

6.11.1 Where possible, students shall be enrolled in age-appropriate classes. However, at times persons with disabilities will require flexible learning options, and reasonable accommodations may need to be made to enable students to be placed in classes with younger children, according to their learning needs. The basic corresponding ages for Year levels are as follows:

- a. Birth to 8years: Early Childhood Education
- b. 6 years – 10 years: Junior Class
- c. 10 years – 14 years: Intermediate Class
- d. 15 – 18 years Senior Class
- e. 19 years – 30 years Vocational Studies

7.0 EFFECTIVE DATE: 29 /11/16

8.0 REVIEW DATE: 29 /11/ 20

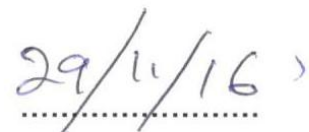
9.0 KEY SEARCH WORDS

Early Intervention, Inclusive Education, Persons with Disabilities, Special Education,

10.0 APPROVED BY THE HONOURABLE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION, HERITAGE & ARTS, DR. MAHENDRA REDDY



Signature



Date

**Special and Inclusive
Education Policy
Implementation Plan
2017 - 2020**

Ministry of Education Heritage and Arts

Department of Education

Our Vision

Quality Education for Change, Peace and Progress

Our Mission

To provide a holistic, innovative, responsive, inclusive and empowering education system that enables all children to realise and appreciate their inheritance and potential contributing to peaceful and sustainable Fiji.

Our Values

The Ministry's values are derived from Fiji's 2013 Constitution and are relative to Administration, Citizenship and Character. These are:

Accountability, Transparency, Fairness, Honesty, Integrity, Commitment, Impartiality, Loyalty, Teamwork, Patriotism, Peace, Perseverance, Compassion, Cooperation, Respect, Tolerance, Civic Pride and Environmental Ethics.

Guiding Principles

In education, the child is the centre of everything that we do. In all other services we provide, our customers are of high priority. The delivery of all services is guided by our commitment to:

- Recognise the importance of strong and healthy partnerships with all stakeholders
- Maintain a high level of professionalism in all that we do
- Ensure relevance and responsiveness as required characteristics of all endeavours
- Maintain high levels of quality and excellence
- Improve access, equity, accountability and transparency in education and respect our constitutional rights and responsibilities.

Our Roles and Responsibilities

We are specifically tasked to conduct and deliver education services to the following: Pre-schools, Primary and Secondary, Special Schools for children with special needs and Vocational Schools, students in the years of compulsory schooling (Year 1 – Year 12) and those participating in Year 13 studies, students in vocational education and training programmes, teaching personnel, school management committees and controlling authorities.

Together with the above, the Ministry also looks after the Implementation of the Higher Education Promulgation 2008 (through the Fiji Higher Education Commission), Coordination of the Culture Sector in the country and responsible for the preservation and promotion of Fiji's cultural diversity and unique heritages, Identification and address problems arising out of drug and substance abuse (through the National Substance Abuse Advisory Council), provision of library services to schools and communities and Modernisation and provision of archival services to government and citizens of Fiji.

Background

Children with disabilities living in low- and middle-income countries are more likely to be out of school compared to other children (1). The exclusion of children with disabilities from education limits life opportunities and choices, reduces future earning potential, and prevents their full participation in communities (2). There has been international recognition of the right to accessible and quality education for children with disabilities with the inclusion of disability in the Sustainable Development Goal Number 4 (3).

As a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Government of Fiji provides a framework to ensure access to quality education for all children with disabilities through the Special and Inclusive Education Policy 2017 - 2020 (4). This policy seeks to improve options for students with disabilities to attend mainstream schools, while supporting Special Schools to continue to play a key role as technical agencies, and supportive school options for the students who may need them.

In Fiji, inclusive education is an emerging model, which aims to include children with disabilities in mainstream schools. In the past, education for most children with disabilities has been provided by special schools, which have given children with particular disabilities opportunities to learn skills such as Braille and sign language. However, children with disabilities living in rural locations or villages far from town centres, where most special schools are located, are unable to access the schools due to barriers of distance and transport.

The Special and Inclusive Education Unit at the Ministry of Education Heritage and Arts (MoEHA) has been working to introduce and test an alternative model of inclusive education that allows children with disabilities to attend school close to their home. Lessons from this work have informed a review of the former Policy on Effective Implementation of Special Education in Fiji 2013 - 16, development of the MoEHA's Special and Inclusive Education Policy 2017 - 2020, and development of this corresponding Implementation Plan. These efforts have been supported by the Access to Quality Education Program (AQEP), which is funded by the Australian Government through the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Policy on Special and Inclusive Education 2017-2020

The Special and Inclusive Education Policy and Implementation Plan 2017 - 2020 was developed following extensive consultations with MoEHA and Ministry of Health representatives, Head Teachers and Teachers, AQEP staff and representatives of Disabled People's Organisations (please see annex A for a full list). Consultation workshops were held with stakeholders in May and October 2015, with follow up discussions held with key groups and individuals in 2016.

The Special and Inclusive Education Policy 2017 - 2020 recognises the efforts made under the previous policy, Policy on Effective Implementation of Special Education in Fiji 2013 – 16, to increase MoEHA support for special schools, and pilot inclusive education within mainstream schools. This policy recognises the important contribution Special Schools continue to make to the lives of persons with disabilities in Fiji, while also promoting inclusion in mainstream schools as a critical option for persons with disabilities across the breadth and width of the country. This policy seeks to improve options for students with disabilities to attend mainstream schools, while supporting Special Schools to continue to play a key role as technical agencies, and supportive school options for the students with specific or complex disabilities who may need them.

Based on these efforts, the Special and Inclusive Education Policy 2017 - 2020 takes the MoEHA's commitment to educating students with disabilities further, by promoting the following ten policy directions:

1. Strengthen and support the Special and Inclusive Education Unit (SEIU) for improved coordination and effective service delivery.
2. Screen students in all schools to identify disabilities, and develop intervention and management plans to maximize learning outcomes.
3. Provide necessary supports to all schools to enable adequate staffing, teaching / learning resources and infrastructure to support inclusion of students with disabilities.
4. Implement and strengthen Early Intervention Programs in Special Schools and Early Childhood Centres to strengthen and support the early years of foundational learning as a basis for success and further learning.

5. Support the strengthening of pre-service and in-service teacher education within Teacher Training Institutions to provide the necessary human resource support to mainstream as well as Special Schools.
6. Strengthen and support Vocational Training Programmes in Special Schools and Vocational Training Centres in order to improve access to employment opportunities and livelihoods, and to support lifelong learning of persons with disabilities.
7. Review the existing curriculum to show inclusivity, flexibility and adaptability to reasonably accommodate the needs of persons with disabilities.
8. Improve access to quality education for all persons with disabilities at Early Childhood, Primary, Secondary, Vocational Training and Technical College levels and Special Schools.
9. Provide educational outreach programmes in the communities as a means of sharing information and awareness on the rights of and opportunities for persons with disabilities to attend school.
10. Monitor and evaluate the implementation of the special and inclusive education policy and programmes in schools

Implementation Plan

The Special and Inclusive Education Policy 2017 - 2020 is accompanied by an implementation plan, which was developed following the review of the previous policy. Participants (listed in Annex A) identified five key priority areas of action based on the Policy, and then worked together to identify strategies for their achievement.

Indicators to enable monitoring and evaluation of the Special and Inclusive Education Policy and Implementation Plan 2017 - 2020 were selected according to their relevance and ability to be measured by existing data collection mechanisms, primarily those in FEMIS. The FEMIS Disability Disaggregation Package was developed concurrently with the Policy and Implementation Plan, also by AQEP and the MoEHA, to ensure that disability data collected in FEMIS enables the MoEHA to monitor and measure progress in implementation of its policy, as well as report on progress towards disability inclusive education indicators outlined in the Sustainable Development Goals, Incheon Strategy and Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (5). The Pacific Indicators for Disability Inclusive Education guidelines (6) was an important source guide for the selection of indicators.

Purpose

The purpose of the implementation plan is to guide implementation of the Special and Inclusive Education Policy 2017 – 2020. The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework that will ensure and strengthen access to quality education for all persons with disabilities in all Schools (Early Childhood Education, Primary, Secondary, Special Schools, Vocational and Technical Colleges) throughout Fiji.

Thematic areas

The five key priority areas of action identified within the implementation plan include the following:

1. Development and implementation of school-level strategies to promote enrolment and attendance of students with disabilities at mainstream and special schools;
2. MOEHA leadership in the development of policies, standards and guidelines to promote and institutionalize inclusive education at the national and community levels;
3. Ensuring a relevant and responsive curriculum to accommodate teaching approaches that support the learning needs of all students, including those with disabilities;
4. Strengthening training for teachers in the education of students with disabilities at all levels; and
5. Provision of appropriate supports needed to enhance the education and training of students with disabilities in Fiji.

Responsibility

The implementation plan should inform MoEHA's annual planning and budget processes. This will be led by the MoEHA's Special and Inclusive Education Unit. Responsibility for implementing various aspects of this implementation plan is outlined within the plan below. Oversight of the implementation plan is the responsibility of the Special and Inclusive Education Unit (SIEU).

Monitoring and Evaluation

Indicators have been outlined within the implementation plan against which progress will be measured on an annual basis. The SIEU will convene a group of key personnel from across the MoEHA, Ministry of Health and Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs) to review progress against the indicators outlined within the implementation plan. An annual report describing progress, inhibiting factors, modifications and recommendations will be tabled by the SIEU. An evaluation of progress of the implementation plan will be undertaken in 2020.

Key Priority Area 1:

Development and implementation of school-level strategies to promote enrolment and attendance of students with disabilities at mainstream and special schools

Sustainable implementation of inclusive education within Fiji schools requires strong school ownership of inclusive education approaches amongst Head Teachers, teachers, parents and students. This objective focusses on strengthening school level processes so that they are inclusive, strengthening structures such as School Management Committees so that they engage in decision-making that is inclusive of students with disabilities, and promoting lessons from good inclusive education practices in the school community and beyond.

Building on good practice examples and lessons from the Ministry of Education's cluster inclusion schools, and AQEP's Inclusive Education Demonstration Schools, this priority area supports strengthening the capacity of teachers to enable them to:

- (a) Identify students with disabilities who are and are not attending school,
- (b) Assess learning needs of students with disabilities and develop individual education plans that enable them to learn in a mainstream environment wherever possible;
- (c) Raise awareness of education options for children with disabilities within school communities and support parents and community members to ensure students with disabilities attend school; and
- (d) Adjust their teaching methods so that they reach all students.

Outcome	Activity	Outcome Indicator	Means of Verification	Responsibility	Timeframe
1.1 School Management Committees (SMCs) promote Inclusive Education	Training for all School Management Committees in the Special and Inclusive Education Policy.	Proportion of which refer to the Special and Inclusive Education Policy.	School Management Committees annual plans	Special and Inclusive Education Unit District Education Offices	2020
	School Management Committees develop annual plans which refer to the Special and Inclusive Education Policy.			School Management Committees District Education Offices	2020
1.2 Students with disabilities who attend and are out of school are identified and supported to attend school (see also 2.2)	Training for Teachers and Head Teachers in the use of the FEMIS Disability Disaggregation Package to identify students with disabilities.	Number and proportion of children with disabilities enrolled in school (disaggregated by type of school, sex and impairment)	FEMIS	Counsellors District Education Offices Supported by referrals from Ministry of Health (public health officers, nursing stations, Community Rehabilitation Assistants, sub-divisional hospitals)	2017
	All schools use the FEMIS Disability Disaggregation Package to identify students with disabilities.	Number of proportion of children with disabilities completing primary school (disaggregated by type of school, sex and impairment)		Teachers Head Teachers	Annually from 2017
	Training for Teachers in the use of Individual Education Plans and the Toolkit for Disability Inclusive Education to plan and implement inclusive education strategies.			Special and Inclusive Education Unit District Education Offices	Annually from 2016

	Teachers utilise Individual Education Plans and the Toolkit for Disability Inclusive to plan and implement inclusive education strategies.			Teachers Head Teachers Special and Inclusive Education Unit	Annually from 2017
1.3 Communities support education of students with disabilities.	Inclusive Education community awareness raising activities held at all schools.	Number of community awareness programs focussed on out of school children with disabilities.	FEMIS	Head Teachers School Management Committees Special and Inclusive Education Unit Disabled People's Organisations	Annually

Key Priority Area 2:

MOEHA leadership in the development of policies, standards and guidelines to promote and institutionalize inclusive education at the national and community levels

Sustained implementation of inclusive education across Fiji requires continued leadership by the Ministry of Education across a variety of areas. These areas include policy-making, development of standards and guidelines and promotion of inclusive education at the national and community levels, as well as monitoring and evaluation of efforts.

Outcome	Activity	Indicator	Means of Verification	Responsibility	Timeframe
2.1 Special and Inclusive Education Unit receives increased annual budget allocation and increased human resources capacity.	Establishment of 2 Education Officer posts at the MoE, & 1 post in each of the divisions	By 2018, SIE Section established with 2 Education Officers and 1 Education Officer in each division, and appropriate budget.	Fiji Education Staff Appointment (FESA)	Finance Human Resources Special and Inclusive Education Unit	2017
	Establishment of a Special and Inclusive Education Section with a Director				2018
2.2 Data regarding students with disabilities is collected, analysed and reported (see also 1.2).	Training for Teachers and Head Teachers in the use of the FEMIS Disability Disaggregation Package to identify students with disabilities.	Number and proportion of schools which have entered disability data within FEMIS.	FEMIS	Counsellors District Education Offices Supported by referrals from Ministry of Health (public health officers, nursing stations, Community Rehabilitation Assistants, sub-divisional hospitals)	2017
	All schools use the FEMIS Disability Disaggregation Package annually to identify students with disabilities.			Teachers Head Teachers	Annually from 2017
	MoEHA reports on inclusive education efforts for students with disability annually using FEMIS disability data			FEMIS team Special and Inclusive Education Unit	Annually from 2017
2.3 All new and refurbished school infrastructure is accessible to people with disabilities.	Insert accessibility criteria into policies and contracts with refurbishment companies, external contractors and donors.	Number and proportion of schools with accessible infrastructure.	FEMIS	Assets and Monitoring Special and Inclusive Education Unit	Ongoing
	Develop minimum standards for accessibility and ensure all new and refurbished school infrastructure meets these.			Assets and Monitoring Special and Inclusive Education Unit	2017
	Include disability access in the infrastructure policy for establishment of new schools.			Assets and Monitoring Special and Inclusive Education Unit	2017
2.4 Lessons from Inclusive Education efforts are analysed and shared.	Undertake evaluation of the Special and Inclusive Education Policy Implementation plan and share findings across MoEHA and schools.	Mid-point review completed and recommendations incorporated.	Reports circulated.	Special and Inclusive Education Unit MoEHA Research team	2018

	Review and redevelop Policy and Implementation Plan based on lessons learned.	Evaluation of lessons learned at the completion of the plan.		Special and Inclusive Education Unit	2020
2.5 Awareness of the rights of children with disabilities to attend school exists at the national level.	Invite people with disability to present to the education forum	Number of national awareness programs held.	Publications, reports, media stories	Special and Inclusive Education Unit District Education Offices Disabled People's Organisations Fiji National Council of Disabled People Sporting bodies	Annually
	Hold a special & inclusive education week				Annually
	Update website with news and events				Ongoing
	Promote the use of the Toolkit for Disability Inclusive Education at all schools				Ongoing
	Coordinate an annual Inclusive Education awareness raising campaign at the national level, including use of national media such as TV, radio, newspapers etc.				Annually

Key Priority Area 3:

Ensuring a relevant and responsive curriculum and assessment, to accommodate approaches that support the learning needs of all students, including those with disabilities.

A curriculum which guides differentiated learning can support teachers to ensure they are teaching all children in a classroom regardless of their disability. This objective provides a blueprint for how curriculum can be adapted over time to support teachers to employ differentiated teaching and learning techniques, enabling smooth transition between primary, secondary and vocational education levels. In order to support and enable transition, assessment processes including the Literacy and Numeracy Assessment (LANA) must be inclusive and accessible to students with disability. This key priority area guides development of assessment processes which enable the participation of students with disability.

Outcome	Activity	Indicator	Means of Verification	Responsibility	Timeframe
3.1 Assessment policies and processes are disability inclusive.	Review assessment policies and processes as they relate to children with disability, in particular LANA processes.	Number and proportion of students with disabilities who sit standardised assessments with reasonable accommodations.	FEMIS	Exams and Assessment Curriculum Advisory Service Special and Inclusive Education Unit	2018
	Develop assessment options for students with disability that allow for differentiated assessment, which focus on the ongoing (formative) assessment of learning in a user-friendly and accessible way. ¹			Exams and Assessment Curriculum Advisory Service Special and Inclusive Education Unit	2018
3.2 Curriculum allows for differentiated learning.	Review and redevelop curriculum so that it allows for differentiated learning.	Number and proportion of children with disabilities being assessed against a national curriculum that allows for differentiated learning.	FEMIS	Curriculum Advisory Service Special and Inclusive Education Unit	2020
	Develop pathways between Early Childhood Education, Primary, Secondary and Vocational Education which enable progression by students with disability.			Exams and Assessment Curriculum Advisory Service Primary Secondary Special and Inclusive Education Unit	2020
	Create resources and texts that are accessible and inclusive, and seek support from specialists to enable this.			Early Childhood Education Special and Inclusive Education Unit	2020
3.3 MoEHA has adequate human resources to enable revised curriculum and assessment processes.	Establish a position within the Curriculum team for a Senior Education Officer Special and Inclusive Education, linked with SIEU, to enable oversight of curriculum and assessment revisions.			Curriculum Advisory Service Corporate Services Special and Inclusive Education Unit	2018

¹ For example: Develop accessible assessment options for students with vision impairment, for example braille or computerised examinations, access to support people to read exam questions and assist in documenting answers etc.

Key Priority Area 4:

Strengthening capacity of teachers to educate students with disabilities at all levels.

Evidence indicates that when teachers have access to pre- and in-service training regarding disability inclusive education, their confidence and skills increase, and their attitudes towards teaching students with disability improve (7). Teachers with foundational training in how to teach students with disability, and access to an ongoing training program are one of the fundamental keys to implementing inclusive education in schools. In addition to ensuring teachers are well trained, a study focussing on lessons from AQEP's Inclusive Education Demonstration Schools has highlighted the necessity of resourcing schools with Teacher Aides to support inclusion of students with disabilities in schools (8). This key priority area provides an overview regarding how the MoEHA will strengthen the capacity of school staff to include students with disabilities.

Outcome	Activity	Indicator	Means of Verification	Responsibility	Timeframe
4.1 Teacher trainees at all levels receive pre-service training in the education of students with disabilities.	Review existing curricula at teacher training institutions and make recommendations for how special and inclusive education training can be integrated across these in a consistent and harmonised way.	Teacher training curriculum includes a mandatory course on disability inclusive education.	Teacher training curricula	MoEHA Fiji Teachers Registration Authority	2017
	Develop pre-service training in special and inclusive education to sit within all teacher trainee courses.	Teacher education programs include disability-inclusive education practicum experiences.	FEMIS	Teacher Training Institutes SIEU Fiji Education Authority	2018
4.2 Teachers regularly improve their skills and confidence to teach students with disabilities.	In-service training for teachers in special and inclusive education provided on an annual basis.	Percentages of teachers in service who have received training in the last 12 months to teach students with disabilities.	FEMIS	Special and Inclusive Education Unit District Education Offices	2018
	Key teachers in inclusive schools offered opportunities to rotate to special and inclusive schools in order to gain experience and learn skills on the job.			Special and Inclusive Education Unit District Education Offices	2019
4.3 Capacity of schools to include students with disabilities is increased.	Establish positions for Teacher Aides to support inclusion at schools with high numbers of students with disabilities.	Number of Teacher Aides who have completed accredited training programs.	Fiji Education Staff Appointment (FESA)	Special and Inclusive Education Unit	Ongoing
	Establish compulsory training for Teacher Aides to ensure consistent approach to special and inclusive education.			Special and Inclusive Education Unit	2018
	Enable access to training in sign language, braille and other key skills for selected Teacher Aides.			Special and Inclusive Education Unit	2018

Key Priority Area 5:

Provision of appropriate supports needed to enhance the education and training of students with disabilities in Fiji.

In order to enable the optimal participation of students with disability in education, strong links must exist between education and health services. For example, physiotherapy and occupational therapy services can support students with a range of disabilities to optimise their physical and functional skills, which can support greater participation in classroom activities. This objective aims to strengthen the link between these two areas at the national and community levels.

Outcome	Activity	Indicator	Means of Verification	Responsibility	Timeframe
5.1 Students with disabilities are provided with relevant assistive devices, technologies, early intervention and other support services.	Develop Memorandum of Understanding between the MoEHA and the Ministry of Health in order to strengthen school-level access to specialists such as therapists who can support children with disability in schools	Number of children with disabilities who are provided with relevant assistive devices and technologies.	FEMIS	Special and Inclusive Education Unit Ministry of Health Disabled People's Organisations	2017
	Establish regular meetings between key stakeholders to develop and oversee implementation of an action plan that guides MoEHA and MoH collaborative work in schools.	Number of schools that have used a referral system to access early intervention services.		Special and Inclusive Education Unit Ministry of Health Disabled People's Organisations	2017
	Work with the Ministry for Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation to review all policies and action plans that relate to disability and early childhood development to ensure disability inclusion.			Special and Inclusive Education Unit Disabled People's Organisations Ministry for Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation	2018
5.3 Health services and schools work together to enable early identification of disability, community awareness programs and home visits which incorporate health education.	Pilot communities selected to trial the provision of collaborative health and education services.	Number of schools that have made referrals to health and rehabilitation services.	FEMIS	Special and Inclusive Education Unit Ministry of Health	2017
	Referral protocol developed to support service provision to children with disabilities.			Special and Inclusive Education Unit Ministry of Health	2017
	Pilot reviewed and successful elements scaled up to other communities.			Special and Inclusive Education Unit Ministry of Health	2018 and ongoing
	Acknowledging the importance of access to specialist early intervention services such as braille and sign language training, develop options for access to these by students with disability in areas outside of Suva.			Special and Inclusive Education Unit	2017 and ongoing
5.4 Health and education personnel have the skills and confidence to	Train kindergarten teachers in the early identification of children with disability, and referral to maternal and child health services.			Special and Inclusive Education Unit Teacher Training Institutions	2018 and ongoing

identify, support and refer children with disabilities to receive support services.	Advocate for the initiation of local University-level courses in specialist services such as speech and occupational therapy.			MoEHA Ministry of Health Disabled People's Organisations	Ongoing
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Annex A: Consultation Participants

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10.	Serupepeli Udre	Divisional Central
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14.	Iliseva Volai	EO North
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16.	Ana Tuiova	President - WESCOSIE
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20.	Luisa Leitabu	Lecturer – Fulton College
21.	Raijieli Bulatale	USP Disability Resource Centre
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23.	Pio Bosco	Director Catholic Education
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25.	Sunil Arya	President- Arya Samaj Schools
26.	Satish Chand	Fiji National University
27.	Dr. Siti Yanuyanutawa	Fiji National Council for Disabled People
28.	Ramesh Raman	Fiji Head Teachers Association President
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44.	Ilisoni Waqa	EO Ra
45.	Sera Saladuadua	SEO Nadroga/ Navosa
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52.	Mrs Ana Tuiova	Head Teacher - Ba Special School
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Annex B: References

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