

EDUCATION FOR ALL



COOK ISLANDS DRAFT NATIONAL ACTION PLAN

By Repeta Puna
EFA Co-ordinator
Cook Islands Ministry of Education
September 2001

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This Education for All National Plan for Cook Islands was produced by Ms Repeta Puna, the EFA Co-ordinator, under the leadership of the Ministry of Education.

In the process of producing this report, special recognition is due to the Honourable Jim Marurai, Minister of Education and Mr. Ken Matheson, Secretary of Education, whose support of the work of UNESCO and Education for All has been consistent throughout. Thanks are also extended to the Education for All National Forum members for their assistance and support.

Special thanks to the UNESCO Office for the Pacific, Apia, Samoa.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword by the Minister of Education.....	1
Executive Summary	1
Chapter one: EFA in the Cook Islands.....	2
Chapter two: National Setting	3
Chapter three: EFA Action Plan	4
<i>EFA Goal one.....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>EFA Goal two.....</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>EFA Goal three</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>EFA Goal four.....</i>	<i>21</i>
<i>EFA Goal five.....</i>	<i>24</i>
<i>EFA Goal six.....</i>	<i>25</i>
Chapter four: Framework for Monitoring and Evaluating EFA goals.....	28
Glossary of Terms	29

FOREWORD BY THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Ministry of Education is committed to developing an education system which provides quality life long learning to all, irrespective of gender, age, economic status and ability. The aim is to build the skills, knowledge, attitudes and values of the people of the Cook Islands to ensure the sustainability of economic growth, language and culture of the Cook Islands and to enable the them to put their capabilities to best use in all areas of their lives.

To meet this aim in the Cook Islands, efforts will be geared toward working in partnership with other agencies in government, civil society and the community. The key themes emerging from the EFA goals are as follows:

Goal one— that parents be better informed of the developmental stages of children, teachers better trained and appropriate resources be made available for the enhancement of the development of cognitive skills in children;

Goal two – highlights the need for the provision of compulsory education to be enforced, the provision of quality teachers, school management and the provision for education for children with special needs be improved and participation of parents in the formal education of their children to be strengthened.

Goal three - that life-skills programs be developed and promoted amongst young people and adults.

Goal four – criteria for data collection on illiteracy rates amongst adults be established together with a program to eliminate illiteracy.

Goal five – gender disparities is not a problem in the Cook Islands due to the provision of compulsory education in the Education Act 1986/87.

Goal six – focuses on the improvement of literacy and numeracy rates in school through the empowerment of teachers with the appropriate strategies.

The last chapter considers tools to enable the EFA co-ordinator to monitor the progress of each activity and to evaluate effectiveness. Donor agencies can use these tools to check the advancement of each activity and to monitor use of resources.

Initiatives in these goals, to a large extent, complement and/or further activities already carried out by the Ministry of Education, civil society and community organizations. The Cook Islands will ensure implementation of these goals are carried out in partnership with all levels of society to achieve education for everyone.

CHAPTER ONE

EFA IN THE COOK ISLANDS

In the early 1990s, the world community made a commitment, through the *World conference on Education for All: Meeting Basic Learning Needs*, to improve the accessibility and quality of education. At the World Conference in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990, the *World Declaration on Education for All* was adopted and the *Framework for Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs* approved.

Ten years after Jomtien, progress towards the achievements of the goals set was assessed and a follow up *World Education Forum* held in Dakar, Senegal in 2000. At this Forum, the international community endorsed the Dakar Framework for Action, *Education for All: Meeting our Collective Commitments*.

The *Framework for Action* commits UNESCO Member States to convene a National Education for All Forum to inform the development of a National Education for All Action Plan. This Plan will be integrated in, or complement, existing National Education Plans but will specifically address the six goals identified by the World Education Forum as contributing to the achievement of education for all.

The Cook Islands have met these commitments. In May 2001, a National EFA Forum was convened, comprising representatives of the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Internal Affairs, House of Ariki, University of the South Pacific, Students, Religious Advisory Council, Cook Islands Teachers Institute, National Human Resource Development, Outer Islands representatives, Disabled People Society and included people with specific expertise.

Invitations were sent out in March 2001 to agencies which have a direct interest in EFA initiatives. Each agency responded recommending a representative. The first meeting held in May (which was also open to observers) was to inform members of the forum about the conception of EFA and its initiatives, the EFA goals, the roles and responsibilities of the forum, the structure of the forum and how the forum was to operate. The forum was split into three working groups, each working on two goals. After the completion of one goal, the forum would meet to discuss the outcome. Decisions from those meetings were documented in minutes and compiled in the main text of this document by the EFA co-ordinator. The forum did not prioritize the goals because they believe all of the goals are of equal importance.

CHAPTER TWO

NATIONAL SETTING

The Cook Islands consists of 15 islands located in the Pacific Ocean from 156 to 167 degrees west and from 8 to 23 degrees south. Its nearest neighbors are Samoa and Niue to the west and French Polynesia to the east. The total land area of the Cook Islands is 236.7 square kilometers but its exclusive economic zone covers a substantial area of approximately 2 million square kilometers.

The Cook Islands can be divided into three regions; Rarotonga, the Southern group and the Northern group. The island of Rarotonga is treated separately because of its dominance in terms of population size, economic activity and government administration. Rarotonga is located in the southern part of the country. The Southern group comprises 7 islands which are all located within 200 to 300 kilometers from Rarotonga. The Northern group consists of Palmerston island, located about 500 kilometers north west of Rarotonga and six other islands located between 1,000 to 1400 kilometers to the north of Rarotonga.

The Cook Islands is a self-governing country in free association with New Zealand. The resident population in 1998 was estimated at 16,800 with the majority (about 95%) being of Cook Islands Maori (Polynesian) descent. The people of the Cook Islands have automatic rights to New Zealand citizenship. In 1996, the Cook Islands faced an economic crisis that resulted in a large number of people leaving the Cook Islands in subsequent years. Cook Islands Maori is the first language for most Cook Islands people but English is also frequently used especially in secondary schools, businesses and government administration.

Free, compulsory and basic formal education began in Rarotonga in 1896 with the outer islands following suit with schools on their respective islands being established. Currently, there are 35 schools in the Cook Islands with at least one school on every permanently inhabited island. Rarotonga has 56% of the total student population, the Southern group 33% and the Northern group 11%. The majority of students (85%) attend government schools.

Education in the Cook Islands is voluntary from between the ages of 3½ to the year they turn 5 and compulsory from the ages of 5 to the end of the year in which the child turns 15. Primary school level is defined in the Education Act as being grades one to six inclusive. Students are expected to have completed grade 10 (Form 4) level. Therefore basic education refers to Grades 1-10 (Form 4) inclusive.

CHAPTER THREE

EFA ACTION PLAN

This chapter contains the EFA Action Plan that addresses all six EFA goals in the same order as they were listed in the *Country Guidelines: Preparation of national plans of action*. The people of the Cook Islands consider them all to be of equal importance. Each goal has been revised to suit the needs of education in the Cook Islands; the chapter also provides a brief background, considers the constraints and proposes activities plus budget. The Action Plan will be revised from time to time to reflect changing national needs.

EFA GOAL ONE

Existing Goal

Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children

Revised Goal

Improve the current pre-school service by making it a more collaborative and comprehensive early childhood care and education service, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.

Information about Early Childhood

For most children, education starts at age 3½ when they are deemed eligible by Ministry of Education policy to attend school on a voluntary basis as stipulated by section 31(4) of the Education Act 1986-87. Of the 29 primary schools in the Cook Islands, 27 of them have a preschool attached to the school. Pre-school students are taught by a variety of methods including the rote method. These methods prepare them for formal education at primary level. The majority of current pre-school teachers are primary trained and therefore lack the specific knowledge and skills a properly trained Early Childhood Education Teacher should have. Although there have been attempts to up-skill pre-school teachers, the attainment of learning outcomes at this level has not improved very much. Educational resources, especially in the Cook Islands Maori language are also an issue that needs to be addressed urgently. The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework is currently being developed which will identify the parameters and the learning outcomes at the ECE level.

Data for the number of eligible pre-school children accessing preschool.¹

Pre-school	Population	Enrolment	% Enrolment
Ages 3.6	697	642	92%

¹ Source: *Census of Population and Dwellings, December 2001, Statistics Office, Rarotonga.*

Project No. 1 Parent Education

Background information

Parents are the carers and first educators of children and for that reason they must be well equipped with information required for a child's development and learning. Some parents have the notion that their responsibility is to care and nurture the physical, social, cultural and spiritual development of their children and that education (mental development) is the business of teachers and schools, and that parents are not required to participate in the development of that area unless in school fundraising activities.

Constraints

- Most parents are not aware of the developmental stages of a child and therefore are not aware what they can do to foster the mental development of a child using daily activities;
- There is still a demarcation of teacher and parents roles: partnerships should be built;

Activities:

- 1.1 Inform parents on mental development of a child before, during and after pre-school;
- 1.2 Promoting activities parents can do at home to develop the foundations of literacy and numeracy;
- 1.3 Parents and teacher roles are better defined and partnerships formed;
- 1.4 Develop resources to assist parents form foundations of literacy and numeracy at home.

Actions needed	Timeframe	Person/Org Responsible	Monitoring	Result
1.1 Informing parents on mental development of a child before, during and after preschool.	2004	Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education.	EFA co-ordinator	Information pack on pre-natal, post-natal during pre-school development in place and distributed to parents
	ongoing			90% of parents or potential parents are aware of developments before birth and can positively participate in those developments.
1.2 Promoting activities parents can do	2003	Ministry of Education	EFA co-ordinator	Strategies promoted through the most effective means; television, radio and brochures.

at home to assist their children develop the foundations of literacy and numeracy	ongoing			1. 90% of parents take advantage of simple home activities to develop basic literacy and numeracy skills; 2. Improved achievement levels at G2, G4 and G6 monitoring tests.
1.3 Parents and teacher roles are better defined and partnerships formed.	2003	Ministry of Education, schools	EFA co-ordinator	1. Policy on school committee developed; 2. Policy guidelines for schools on strengthening "Home and School" partnership.
	ongoing			Relationship and partnership between parents and school improved
1.4 Develop resources to assist parents develop early literacy and numeracy skills	2003	Ministry of Education	EFA co-ordinator	Dialect resources for pre-school developed and distributed.
	ongoing			90% of students at pre-school have good foundations in literacy and numeracy.

Budget allocation (\$NZ)

Action number	2003/4		2004/5		2005/6		2006/7		2007/8	
	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor
1.1	6,500		6,700		6,900		7,100		7,200	
1.2	9,000		9,200		9,400		9,600		9,800	
1.3	2,000		2,000		0	0	0	0	0	0
1.4										

Project No. 2 In-service and pre-service training

Background information

41 percent of teachers teaching at pre-school level have a pre-school teachers qualification. This has a major impact on the quality of education provided at this level, which subsequently will result in various learning outcomes not being achieved and students disadvantaged further down the line; this is evident with the grade 4 and grade 6 diagnostic tests at primary level.

On the other hand, in-service training for pre-school teachers has not been given priority. This is due to the introduction of the new New Zealand qualifications at secondary level where in-service training is a priority. In-service training is essential at this level to ensure standards and methods of delivery, contents and assessment are equal across all pre-schools.

Constraints

- Lack of properly trained preschool teachers;
- Current pre-school curriculum needs review;
- Insufficient in-service training for pre-school teachers;
- Lack of people wanting to be ECE teachers.

Activities:

2. Ensure teachers are better trained and qualified to teach at preschool level by:
 - 2.1. Promoting qualifications available for pre-school teaching;
 - 2.2. Ensure regular up-skilling of current pre-school teachers;
 - 2.3. Ensuring teachers are trained to identify children with special needs at an early age.
 - 2.4. Media campaign to entice people into taking ECE teaching as a career;

Actions needed	Timeframe	Person/Org Responsible	Monitoring	Proposed Outcome
2.1 Promote qualifications available for pre-school teaching.	2003-2004	Ministry of Education	EFA co-ordinator	Promotion programs to target pre-school teachers.
	Ongoing			Learning achievement of pre-school students improved – reflected in the G2 monitoring tests
2.2 Regular up-skilling of current pre-school teachers.	2003-2004	Ministry of Education	EFA co-ordinator	Monthly information sharing with Pre-school teachers; Regular revision of delivery methods through pre-school association.
	Ongoing			Standard of education at preschool level improved.
2.3 Ensuring teachers are able to identify students with special learning needs at an early level.	2003-2004	Ministry of Education	EFA co-ordinator	Programs to identify children with special learning needs included in the education system.
	Ongoing			90% pre-school teachers are able to identify and manage children with special learning needs.

2.4 Promote ECE teaching as an attractive and rewarding career.	2003 - ongoing	Ministry of Education	EFA co-ordinator	People are aware of the ECE area and have between 20-30 applications for scholarships.
---	----------------	-----------------------	------------------	--

Budget Allocation (\$NZ)

Action number	2003/4		2004/5		2005/6		2006/7		2007/8	
	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor
2.1										
2.2										
2.3										
2.4										

Project No.3 Identify vulnerable and disadvantaged children

Background information

Anecdotal evidence suggests there are vulnerable and disadvantaged children in the community who need assistance from various organizations in government and in civil society. These are children who come from unstable homes where they are victims of the circumstances and are missing out on opportunities to have positive mental and social development. There are also children with special needs from homes that are not informed of methods to manage them.

Constraints

- Lack of system to identify and support children who are disadvantaged;

Activities:

3. Research was undertaken by Internal Affairs to identify vulnerable and disadvantaged children. Internal Affairs is now working towards a system to better identify their needs. This system will need to be developed in partnership with Public Health, Social Welfare, Ministry of Justice and the Vaka Councils (in Rarotonga), Island Councils (in the outer islands) and the Disability Councils on respective islands to ensure children who are vulnerable and disadvantaged are identified and supported.

Activities:

- 3.1 Develop an identification and support system in partnership with other stakeholders

Actions needed	Timeframe	Person/Org Responsible	Monitoring	Proposed Outcome
3.1 Develop identification and support system in partnership with other stakeholders	2003 - 2005	Public Health, Social Welfare, Ministry of Justice, Disability councils	EFA co-ordinator	System to identify and support in place.
				100% participation at pre-school level.

Budget Allocation (\$NZ)

Action number	2003/4		2004/5		2005/6		2006/7		2007/8	
	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor
3.1										

Project No.4 Appropriate resources for ECE centers

Background information

The curriculum framework for early childhood currently being developed will identify learning outcomes within which the achievement of learning programs will be outlined. Central to the achievement of those learning outcomes is the need for appropriate resources. Currently, resources used at this level are created by teachers and students themselves which they take pride in but which may not necessarily be effective in the development of children. Resources that have been proven to be effective at this level are not used for lack of knowledge about what they are and their application.

Constraints

- Insufficient resources, especially in the Cook Islands Maori language for the development of literacy at ECE level;
- Insufficient knowledge on the type of resources, which enhance cognitive development in children.

Activities:

4. Equip schools with resources to assist with the educational development of children.
 - 4.1 The school committee, parents and the school will work together to ensure ECE classes are well resourced (this activity will include research on the appropriate types of resources for cognitive development in children) and to also ensure maintenance of these equipment;
 - 4.2 The Ministry of Education will ensure appropriate ECE resources are developed to promote literacy and numeracy skills for use in schools.

Action needed	Timeframe	Person/Org Responsible	Monitoring	Proposed Outcome
4.1 Appropriate resources are developed and maintained for children at ECE level	2003-Ongoing	School committee, parents and school.	EFA co-ordinator	All Early Childhood Education centers are equipped to accommodate the educational needs of young children.
4.2 Produce reading books and other resources to develop language and number skills.	2003-2005	Ministry of Education/NGO	EFA co-ordinator	20 reading books of each type and in both languages (English and Cook Islands Maori) are available in each ECE centre.
	Ongoing when required			90% children are able to meet the learning outcomes of literacy and numeracy as stated in the Early Childhood Education Curriculum Framework.

Budget Allocation (\$NZ)

Action number	2003/4		2004/5		2005/6		2006/7		2007/8	
	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor
4.1										
4.2										

EFA GOAL TWO

Existing Goal

Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality.

Revised Goal

By 2008 all children, especially those in difficult circumstances, maintain access to primary education of good quality.

Background Information:

The Cook Islands Education Act 1986-87 makes it compulsory for any child between the ages of 5-15 to attend school. However, enforcement is weak because there is no stipulation for a specific authority to be responsible for enforcement.

Children in difficult circumstances in this goal refer to children with special learning needs and children with other needs, which makes it difficult for them to access education.

For social and economic reasons, there is no way primary education will be provided for free in the Cook Islands. Although the government heavily subsidizes primary education, (ie, through the provision of education materials, resources, buildings and teachers) parents take responsibility for the welfare and wellbeing of their children to ensure they are able to fully participate in education.

It is difficult to define the term quality due to its subjective ness; however, for this exercise, the term quality means meeting all learning outcomes as stipulated by the National Curriculum Framework for the primary level and meeting the requirements under the Ministry of Education policy on Teacher Performance, Minimum Teacher Qualifications and Guidelines for School Management.

Primary Ages	Population	Enrolment	% Enrolment
Ages 5 - 10	2127*	2227	105%

Source: *Census of population and Dwellings, 1 December 2001, Statistics Office, Rarotonga.* * - Resident population only, does not include expatriates.

Project No.1 – Enforcement of the Education Act 1986/87

Background information

Although the Education Act 1986/87 stipulates that it is compulsory for a child from age 5 – 15 years to attend school there is no provision for an enforcement agency to ensure that this part of the Act is complied with. Truancy is a problem faced by schools and the nature of truancy varies from children deliberately staying away from school to children being stopped by their parents from accessing school for various family reasons. This

responsibility is now that of the Welfare Officer at Internal Affairs, however, they are also concerned that they lack the capacity to carry out these duties as well as theirs. Truancy is also more prevalent in the northern group of the Cook Islands where the population has decreased considerably and the main economic activity is pearl farming.

Constraints

- There is no agency appointed to enforce the truancy clause of the Education Act 1986/87;
- There is no agency responsible for the follow up and the provision of support for children from homes who cannot be supported to attend school

Activities:

1. Enforcement of the Education Act
 - 1.1 Appointment of Truancy officers for Education;
 - 1.2 Work in partnership with Social Welfare to ensure other issues associated with truancy are resolved;

Action needed	Timeframe	Person/Org Responsible	Monitoring	Proposed Outcome
1.1 Appointment of Truancy Officer	2003 - ongoing	Ministry of Education	EFA co-ordinator	All truancy problems are investigated and resolved, and attendance of primary school students is close to 100%.
1.2 Work with Social Welfare agency to ensure support is provided for truants	2003 - ongoing	Ministry of Education, Social Welfare Agency.	EFA co-ordinator	All social issues relating to the cause of truancy are appropriately addressed.

Budget Allocation (\$NZ)

Action number	2003/4		2004/5		2005/6		2006/7		2007/8	
	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor
1.1										35,000
1.2										10,000

Project No.2 Improve school management

Background information

The success in the delivery of education programs is to a large extent dependent on how well schools are managed. Principals and Deputy Principals are appointed to these management positions without management training, and these deficiencies are reflected in the school roll and teacher retention.

Project No 2 Provision of quality teachers and education programs for children with special learning needs.

Background information

Programs for children with special learning needs is a new concept to the Cook Islands. The Te Apii Apiianga Pororo is located at Avarua school and caters for children who have a physical and mental disability as well as a special learning need. The outer islands do not have a facility to cater for children with special learning needs; in fact, they are mainstreamed and stay home when they feel they cannot cope with the school work.

There have been courses conducted for primary school teachers on special needs education; however, the course proved to be ineffective due to teachers failing to apply the skills acquired in the course.

Constraints

- Teachers are not properly trained to cater for the needs of children with special needs;
- No monitoring of application of skills acquired by teachers;
- Parents are not encouraged to be involved in the education of their children with special learning needs.

Activities:

4. Provision of quality teachers and education for children with special needs
 - 4.1 All teachers at all levels be properly trained to accommodate the needs of children with special learning needs and special needs;
 - 4.2 Schools work in partnership with parents to help them with the learning needs of their children.

Other needs

- 4.3 Guidance Counselor for primary and secondary school students

Action needed	Timeframe	Person/Org Responsible	Monitoring	Proposed Outcome
4.1 Teacher training to cater for the needs of children with special learning needs and children with special needs	2003 –2005	Ministry of Education, NGO	EFA co-ordinator	Teacher training program in place.
	ongoing			70% of children with special learning needs participate at various levels of society.
4.2 Parents are educated on how to assist with the	2003 - 2005	schools	EFA co-ordinator	Parents education program ready for delivery

education of their children with special learning needs and special needs.	ongoing			90% of parents participate in the education of their children.
4.3 Employ a Guidance Counselor for primary and secondary school students.	2003/04	Ministry of Education	EFA co-ordinator	Guidance counselor employed with conditions of employment included in performance contract
	ongoing			That 100% of children with special needs are able to take part in the learning process

Budget Allocation (\$NZ)

Action number	2003/4		2004/5		2005/6		2006/7		2007/8	
	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor
4.1		20,000		20,000		5,000		5,000		5,000
4.2		20,000		20,000		5,000		5,000		5,000
4.3		40,000		35,000		35,000		35,000		35,000

Project No.5 Parents participate in the education of their children.

Background information

Parents play a major role in influencing the education of their children, therefore they need to understand that their responsibilities do not end once their children enter formal education. Parents have often said they have no understanding of the modern syllabus used in schools today and therefore cannot adequately support their children.

Constraints

- Parents have no support for assisting their children with formal education
- Parents have no understanding of modern syllabus

Activities:

5. Parents participation in the education of their children.

5.1 Encourage and strengthen partnership and good working relationships between teachers and parents to ensure parents have full information about the education of their children through regular meetings like parents' evenings or individual meetings or other avenues.

Action needed	Timeframe	Person/Org Responsible	Monitoring	Proposed Outcome
5.1 Regular parents/teacher meetings and monthly publication of educational newsletters.	2003 - ongoing	Ministry of Education, schools, parents	EFA co-ordinator	6 parents evenings and 9 newsletters per year
				Teachers and parents are able to share information about the education of their children through various avenues

Budget Allocations (\$NZ)

Action number	2003/4		2004/5		2005/6		2006/7		2007/8	
	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor
5.1		5,000		5,000		5,000		5,000		5,000

EFA GOAL THREE

Original Goal:

Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programs.

Revised Goal:

1. To develop learning opportunities to meet better the needs of young people and adults through life skills programs;
2. To ensure every young person and adult has an equal opportunity to life-skills programs.
3. To develop and deliver healthy living programs for the community and to ensure the Cook Islands is kept free from HIV and other social related diseases.

Background information

It is estimated that 84% of students drop out of school during the last four years of senior secondary education. These young people either look for employment or migrate out of the country. Opportunities for them after formal secondary education to acquire new skills are limited.

It is difficult to ascertain the definition of life-skills; however, in this exercise, life-skills means equipping a young person with the skills and knowledge to survive and participate fully in society.

Health promotion and the prevention of important health problems are at the core of skills-based health education. Appropriate culturally specific strategies to health education, based on community endorsement and ownership will enhance partnering relationships between the community and government organisations to ensure high level of success for these projects. Assisting the community to develop healthy social practices helps them to acquire beliefs, attitudes, values, lifeskills and services they need for emotional and psychosocial well-being as well as physical health.

Project No. 1 To develop learning opportunities to meet better the needs of young people and adults through life skills programs

Background Information

Currently, there is only one life-skill program being offered in the Cook Islands called the *Outward Bound* which teaches young people to be able to survive with minimal equipment and supervision. There is no assessment of the effectiveness of this course.

Constraints

- There is not enough variety of life-skills courses offered in the Cook Islands;

- Lack of funding for the delivery of these courses

Activities:

- 1.1 Develop and deliver appropriate life-skills courses for young people like agriculture, domestic skills, basic maintenance skills, healthy living, technology and computer skills, arts, crafts and culture;
- 1.2 Programs for people with a disability
- 1.3 Mobilize resources for delivery of programs

Action needed	Timeframe	Person/Org Responsible	Monitoring	Proposed Outcome
1.1 Develop and deliver life-skills programs	2003 -2005	National Human Resource Development, Ministry of Agriculture	EFA coordinator	The development of various life-skills programs complete.
	Ongoing			Young people are able to perform various skills to support themselves.
1.2 Develop and deliver programs for people with disability	2003 – 2005	National Human Resource Development, Ministry of Health, Internal Affairs	EFA coordinator	The development of programs for people with disability complete.
	ongoing			Young people with disability are able to participate in various levels of society.
1.3 Mobilize resources for delivery of programs	2003 - ongoing	National Human Resource Development, Respective agency	EFA coordinator	Resources are available for the provision of the above programs.

Budget Allocation (\$NZ)

Action number	2003/4		2004/5		2005/6		2006/7		2007/8	
	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor
1.1		250000		25000		250000		250000		250000
1.2		120000		12000		120000		40000		40000
1.3		5,000		5,000		5,000		5,000		5,000

Project No.2 Ensure access for everyone to life-skills programs

Background information

Life-skills programs need to be promoted to ensure that all young people who are interested in participation and will benefit from these courses have access to them.

Activity:

- 2 Ensure access for everyone to life-skills programs
 - 2.1 Media campaign to raise awareness

Action needed	Timeframe	Person/Org Responsible	Monitoring	Proposed Outcome
2.1 Media campaign to raise awareness	2003 - 2004	Ministry of Education	EFA co-coordinator	Media strategy complete. Campaign started.
	ongoing			95% of eligible young people apply and are accepted into a course

Budget Allocation (\$NZ)

Action number	2003/4		2004/5		2005/6		2006/7		2007/8	
	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor
2.1		20,000		20,000		15,000		15,000		15,000

Project No.3 Promoting healthy living

Background information

Public health education and community awareness of the issues of STI, HIV and AIDS started in the 1980s and has had a mixed bag of success. It still continues till today and particularly on the main island of Rarotonga. The effort has seen the level of awareness and understanding of people slowly increase and improve. The majority of health workers, especially Public Health Nurses are well trained with regards to their ability to provide information on the issues of HIV and healthy living. There are no known cases of HIV AIDS or Syphilis in the Cook Islands, however, the cases of Hepatitis B has decreased from 16% in 1993 to 7% in 1997. The success in controlling this disease is the result of vigorous community awareness campaigns. On the other hand, the Cook Islands on average has around 9% of its population with Gonorrhoea, Candidiasis, Trichomoniasis and Gardnerella. (*Medical Records Unit, Ministry of Health*)

Health education is part of the school curriculum in the Cook Islands for the primary level. The Ministry of Health actively promotes prevention of diseases as a result of careless social behavior (ie, sexually transmitted diseases) or lifestyle diseases (ie diabetes, high blood pressure, etc...) to secondary school students (ie, from form 1-7). This is done on a regular basis (once or twice a year) in all schools and continues to draw

discussions from teachers and parents alike regarding the contents of the program and its implications.

Constraints

1. Lack of project follow-up in the community;
2. Parents not willing to discuss sexual issues with their children at home or allow teachers or health educators to discuss them at school;
3. Promote the importance of healthy social values among school children and young people.

Activities

- 3.1 Develop and deliver targeted educational programs to educate parents on effective strategies to bring understanding and stimulate discussions about sexual issues with their children;
- 3.2 Provide parents with resources to help them educate their children in the home on issues relating to sexual behaviour and sexually transmitted diseases;
- 3.3 Develop a system to follow up and monitor existing community health programs;
- 3.4 Employ a Counsellor to work through sports, church organisations and parent groups to train them to advise and educate young people on the value of healthy behaviour.

Action Needed	Timeframe	Person/Org Responsible	Monitoring	Proposed Outcome
3.1 Educate parents	2003- ongoing	Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education	EFA co-ordinator, Health Educator	80-90% of parents are able to educate their children at home on healthy social behavior.
3.2 Provide parents with resources	2003 - ongoing	Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education	EFA co-ordinator, Health Educator	Parents have the means to make their children's education more effective.
3.3 Monitor community programs	2003 - ongoing	Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education	EFA co-ordinator, Health Educator	Community programs are continuously improved to meet the changing needs of the community.

3.4 Counselor for healthy behavior.	2003 - ongoing	Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education	EFA co-ordinator, Health Educator	At risk young people are helped to curb risk-taking behaviour.
-------------------------------------	----------------	--	--------------------------------------	--

Budget Allocation

Action number	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6	2006/7	2007/8
3.1	25,000	30,000	35,000	40,000	45,000
3.2	40,000	45,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
3.3	15,000	18,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
3.4	\$50,000	\$55,000	\$60,000	\$65,000	\$70,000

Government contributions are included in the above figures.

EFA GOAL FOUR

Original Goal:

Achieving a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.

Revised Goal

1. To identify illiteracy rate among adults;
2. To achieve an 80% improvement on the adult illiteracy rate by providing equitable access to basic and continuing education.

Background information

There is no data available on the rate of illiteracy among adults in the Cook Islands. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that there are adults who cannot read, write, speak or understand one language.

Project No 1. Develop criteria for identifying and assessing illiteracy.

Background information:

Illiteracy data for the Cook Islands is not available because such information is not collected for lack of knowledge about collecting them.

Constraint

- No tool available for collecting data on illiteracy

Activity:

1. Criteria for identifying and assessing illiteracy must be developed. The criteria must include speaking, reading, writing and understanding either English or Cook Islands Maori (including any one of the Cook Islands Maori dialects).

Action needed	Timeframe	Person/Org Responsible	Monitoring	Proposed Outcomes
1. Criteria for identifying and assessing adult illiteracy	2003-2005	Ministry of Education	EFA co-coordinator	Comprehensive criteria are developed to identify and assess illiteracy rate amongst adults.

Budget Allocations (\$NZ)

Action number	2003/4		2004/5		2005/6		2006/7		2007/8	
	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor
1.		20,000		20,000		20,000		nil		nil

Project No. 2 Program to eliminate stigma around illiteracy in the community**Background information**

Illiterate adults share the same stigma status as people with a mental illness; they do not like to admit to being illiterate and therefore are unwilling to address their problems.

Constraints

- Stigma around illiteracy hinders people who are illiterate from asking for help.

Activities:

2. There need to be strategies developed to eliminate the stigma of being illiterate through:
 - 2.1. media promotion;
 - 2.2. community awareness programs to generate acceptance of people who are illiterate;
 - 2.3. developing and delivering educational programs to address the various illiteracy problems of adults.

Action needed	Timeframe	Person/Org Responsible	Monitoring	Proposed Outcomes
2.1 Media promotion	2003 - 2005	Ministry of Education, media	EFA co-ordinator	Media strategy complete. Campaign started.
2.2 Community awareness programs	2003 – 2004	Ministry of Education, Vaka and Island councils	EFA co-ordinator	Community awareness program in place.
	2004 - 2005			3 community programs conducted in each Vaka on Rarotonga and 4 on each of the respective islands.
	2005 – ongoing, if required			Communities are aware of the problem and will positively contribute to the encouragement of people who are illiterate to seek help.
2.3 Develop and deliver literacy programs	2003 - 2008	Ministry of Education, NGO	EFA co-ordinator	80% or more increase of literacy rate among adults

Budget Allocations

Action number	2003/4		2004/5		2005/6		2006/7		2007/8	
	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor
2.1		20,000		20,000		15,000		15,000		15,000
2.2		nil		10,000		10,000		nil		nil
2.3		50,000		50,000		50,000		40,000		40,000

Project No. 3 Evaluate project to ensure target is reached**Background information**

To ensure target of 80% is achieved at the end of 2008, it is essential that evaluation of the effectiveness and impact of this project is carried out.

Activity

- Evaluate the project to check that an 80% improvement is achieved on the adult literacy rate.

Action needed	Timeframe	Person/Org Responsible	Monitoring	Proposed Outcomes
3. Monitor and evaluate project to ensure target is achieved.	2005 - 2008	NGO	EFA co-coordinator	The target of 80% or better of people who took the course has been achieved.

Budget Allocation

Action number	2003/4		2004/5		2005/6		2006/7		2007/8	
	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor
3.		nil		nil		5,000		5,000		5,000

EFA GOAL FIVE

Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality.

Background information

This goal is not a priority for the Cook Islands. The Education Act 1986/87 stipulates that it is compulsory for all children aged between 5 and 15 to attend school. Girls make up 46% of the preschool and primary school (G1-G6) enrolment respectively. However, 51% of secondary (F1-F7) students are girls who dominate at the senior secondary (F5-F7) level accounting for 56% of the enrolment (compare Cook Islands Statistics Digest 2000, p. 8). Ministry of Education research has shown that girls achieve higher than boys at primary and lower secondary level; however, boys' achievements improve at the senior secondary. International research has shown this to be an international trend, and somehow linked to natural development of children (exact title of research still to be found and properly sourced).

EFA GOAL SIX

Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

Revised Goal:

Improving the quality of education and ensuring excellence for all especially in literacy and numeracy.

Background information

The Cook Islands does not have an official language. English is widely used especially on Rarotonga and preferred by most local parents to be their children's first language of instruction at schools. As a result, materials of instruction, which were in Cook Islands Maori are no longer used and missing and others in English are now being used. However, children are also spoken to in Cook Islands Maori in community, cultural, family and sometimes religious gatherings and are expected to participate in those activities. This process does not provide a child with a firm grounding in their first language, which research has shown, makes the development (teaching and achievement) of literacy much harder. This problem is more prevalent amongst children in Rarotonga whereas children in the outer islands use their Cook Islands Maori dialect as their first language before English is introduced.

Furthermore, a local survey has shown (get proper name of survey) that teachers lack the knowledge to teach literacy and numeracy properly and the ability to use available resources effectively. The Ministry has been alerted to this problem and is in the process of employing two Reading Recovery Teachers to provide advice and assistance to teachers and students in schools but the problem with numeracy still has to be addressed.

Constraints

- Students are not achieving a high level of literacy and numeracy by the time they finish primary education;
- Teachers are most likely to be unaware of best teaching practices, eg. what teaching strategies are most effective in teaching literacy and numeracy;
- Reading is not promoted by teachers as an enjoyable and worthwhile activity because teachers do not value reading;
- Students are unable to use effective strategies to help them to read, write and work with numbers;
- Limited resources (reading for beginners) in the Cook Islands language;
- There is no ongoing professional development for teachers in the area of literacy and numeracy;

- The Diagnostic Tests conducted annually clearly identify children who are at risk but no recovery program is undertaken to help these children.

Activities:

1. Develop appropriate resources for the improvement of literacy and numeracy skills;
2. Empower Curriculum Advisors to advise and train teachers on the development of literacy and numeracy skills;
3. Develop a pre-service training program for teaching literacy and numeracy.

Actions needed	Timeframe	Person/Org Responsible	Monitoring	Proposed Outcome
1. Develop resources to improve literacy and numeracy skills	2003 - 2005	Parents, schools and NGO	EFA co-ordinator	Literacy and numeracy resources developed
	ongoing			All schools have appropriate resources for the development of literacy and numeracy skills
2. Empower Curriculum Advisors to monitor and train teachers to teach literacy and numeracy skills	2003-2005	Ministry of Education, parents	EFA co-ordinator	Program for empowerment complete.
	ongoing			By 2005 all Curriculum Advisors know how to teach and develop effective strategies for developing literacy and numeracy skills
3. Develop a pre-service training program for teaching literacy and numeracy.	2003 -2004	Ministry of Education	EFA co-ordinator	Program for developing literacy and numeracy skills is included in the Cook Islands Teachers College Curriculum Framework

Budget Allocations

Action number	2003/4		2004/5		2005/6		2006/7		2007/8	
	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor	Govt.	Donor
1.		500000		500000		500000		200000		200000
2.		20,000		20,000		20,000		5,000		5,000
3.		5,000		5,000		nil		nil		nil

Secondary Ages	Population	Enrolment	% Enrolment
Ages 11 - 17	2528	1692	67%

Compulsory Ages	Population	Enrolment	% Enrolment
Ages 5 - 15	3996	3331	83%

Source: Census of Population and Dwellings, 1 December 1996, Statistics Office, Rarotonga. Data on population may be distorted due to visitor numbers being counted.

CHAPTER FOUR

FRAMEWORK FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATING EFA GOALS

Monitoring Framework: (For accountability)
(draw graph)

1. Investment components
2. Progress indicators – Proposed Outcome
3. Project effectiveness components (evaluation)
4. Administrative components
5. Reporting component

Monitoring tools

Activity	Timeframe		Finance (*)		Progress Indicator
	Original	New	Act. Cost	Balance	

(*) For each activity, invoices and receipts must be attached.

Evaluation tools

Activity Delivered	Timeframe	Impact on Audience	Improvement to activity delivered	Progress to Outcome

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Early Childhood Care

Early Childhood Education

Pre-school

Disadvantaged Children

Vulnerable Children

Basic Education (goal 5)

Adult

Lifeskills

Vaka Council

Island Council

Monitoring tools

Evaluation tools