11th EFA Coordinator Meeting: Cook Islands

I. Summary of the progress in meeting the EFA goals in the Cook Islands since the MDA.

Goal 1: Early Childhood Care and Education

A. Major successes and achievements:
- introduction and high uptake of ECE specific teacher training opportunities through strengthening relationship with regional provider
- introduction of ECE specific teacher/principal standards
- commitment to pay parity for ECE teachers by 2015
- continued commitment to ECE through Ministry based Advisory service to all centres
- the Te Kakaia programmes for parents to support them in supporting learning in very young children
- operational budget identified specifically for ECE
- a Media/Public Awareness campaign for ECE
- increased GER for ECE although still some communities/islands where it is of concern
- the Statement of Intent (2010-2015) identifies ECE as one of five priorities for the Ministry

B. Major Challenges:
- monitoring and evaluation of teaching practice and the provision of guidance and support often does not reach the very remote areas in the north
- some remote communities with low GER for ECE
- no set standards or monitoring of private child care services
- change in mind sets for Principals from traditional schooling model to play based model for ECE

C. The Way Forward
- use of media campaign and targeted house to house public awareness in areas of low ECE enrolment
- development of MoU with Health and Internal Affairs on the registration and monitoring of private child care services
- strengthening of compliance and policy regulations for ECE to ensure intention and integrity of programmes are maintained

GER for ECCE 2000-2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>GER for ECCE GPI for GER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>111%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>106%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>106%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Goal 2: Achieving Universal Primary/Basic Education

A. Major successes and achievements:
   • review of Inclusive Education Policy
   • teacher aide training to support students with special learning needs
   • early intervention programmes
   • provision of Lead Teacher Programmes in Literacy and Numeracy
   • significant upgrade of all school libraries

B. Major Challenges:
   • achievement in Cook Islands Maori literacy – especially on the main island where English is becoming predominant language
   • infrastructural support to remote schools – particularly in the north
   • small cohorts of students in remote schools deserving of same access and quality

C. The Way Forward:
   • identification of funding for resource production project in Cook Islands Maori
   • review of Language Policy for schools
   • development and implementation of professional development around multi level teaching to support teachers in smaller schools where composite classes are becoming increasingly utilized
   • source other regional infrastructural and transport suppliers for remote islands (utilize shipping from Hawaii and Samoa for the north)

Summary of Numeracy Achievement in Percentages for 2007 – 2009:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Rarotonga</th>
<th>Southern Group</th>
<th>Northern Group</th>
<th>National</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Below standard (Levels 1&amp;2)</td>
<td>37.8 33.9 29.1</td>
<td>37.8 33.9 29.1</td>
<td>NA 80 81.5</td>
<td>39.1 39.5 39.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At/Above standard (Levels 3&amp;4)</td>
<td>62.2 66.1 70.9</td>
<td>56.1 58 50</td>
<td>NA 20 18.5</td>
<td>60.9 60.5 60.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summary of Literacy Achievement in Percentages for 2007 – 2009:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Rarotonga</th>
<th>Southern Group</th>
<th>Northern Group</th>
<th>National</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Below standard (Levels 1&amp;2)</td>
<td>67% 70% 68%</td>
<td>67% 70% 68%</td>
<td>74% 74% 94%</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At/Above standard (Levels 3&amp;4)</td>
<td>70% 72% 74%</td>
<td>79% 81% 95%</td>
<td>81% 83% 108%</td>
<td>99%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Goal 3: Life Skills and Lifelong Learning

A. Major successes and achievements:

- increase in the number of dual pathway (academic/vocational) courses
- increase in access to dual pathway courses through change in course modality and content for isolated outer islands students
- development and implementation of alternative secondary programmes for young students at risk (particularly boys)
- identification and allocation of funding for community education centres on each island.

B. Major Challenges:

- access to tutors and resources to run programmes in remote communities
- development of framework to recognize life skills courses in the labour market
- the cooperation/coordination between different departments, Ministries, and private companies needs to be further improved to utilize all training opportunities
- data collection mechanisms between agencies, yet to be established to provide accurate and up-to-date information on skills training programs.

C. The Way Forward:

- develop partnerships with other Government and Non-government agencies to share resources (particularly human).
- develop framework/register of lifeskills programmes

Goal 4: Literacy

A. Major successes and achievements:

- NCEA Literacy Results 83% (2007)- 88% (2009)

*Nb in the absence of an adult literacy assessment tool, the Ministry uses a school based result that is taken when students are 15 or 16 years of age. As students must stay in school at least until the end of the year in which they turn 15, this captures the vast majority of the identified age cohort.*

- broadening the scope of the Te Kakaia programme to include adult literacy programmes (especially for young mothers)

B. Major Challenges:

- lack of assessment tool or base line data for adult literacy in the wider community
C. The Way Forward:
  • work with the National Statistics Office to improve the data collected on literacy through national census
  • implement Adult Literacy courses in the wider community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Literacy(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Goal 5: Gender Parity and Equality**

A. Major successes and achievements:
  • careers programmes for male and female students that target non-traditional areas eg WISAT (Women in Science and Technology) and BOZONE (Boys in Humanities)
  • development and implementation of an alternative school programme for teenage boys at risk

B. Major Challenges:

The Cook Islands has no major challenges in achieving gender parity.

C. The Way Forward:
  • continue monitoring and disaggregate data by gender so that any issues arising are identified early and required interventions put in place

**Goal 6: Quality Education**

A. Major successes and achievements:
  • improving qualification results
  • positive comparison with equivalent New Zealand schools (use identical qualifications framework and external examinations which allow for comparison)
  • increased range of subjects and pathways available to students in senior secondary school
  • increase in scholarship funding for students from outer islands to complete senior secondary school on Rarotonga
  • significant investment in student wellbeing through guidance counseling and careers education programmes
  • high involvement of teachers in ongoing qualification upgrade including an active post graduate cohort
  • development and implementation of new Professional Development System for all staff with a focus on professional standards and teacher ownership and efficacy
• development of new training pathways for teachers which do not require them to study overseas
• restructuring of Ministry to allow for greater efficiency and effectiveness in reaching the goals of the Education Master Plan
• restructuring of School Support (advisory services) to schools to ensure increased responsiveness and quality of service
• strengthening of monitoring and evaluation and policy and research within the Ministry
• implementation of new School Review procedures that target compliance and quality at all levels of schooling
• funding allocation for improving health and safety in schools
• improved connectivity, including broadband and VSAT, for all schools
• development of budget support model with donors

B. Major Challenges:
• recruitment of staff for remote schools
• recruitment of specialist staff for senior secondary school
• infrastructural and transport support for remote schools
• rapidly changing demography inhibits sound human resources planning
• cost efficiency of staffing and resourcing small schools with wide student cohorts eg ECE to Year 11 while ensuring same quality of access and programmes
• planning for and responding to adverse climatic events

C. The Way Forward
• utilize new models for teacher training with emphasis on increasing scope of specialist subjects and staffing remote schools
• continue to strengthen connectivity so that it can be utilized to deliver/support education in remote schools
• strengthen professionalism of teachers through further qualification opportunities and professional development systems
• work with Emergency Management team to put in place good practices that will minimize impact of cyclones on schools and their resources

II. Progress made in reaching the unreached and marginalized in education towards meeting the EFA Goals, focusing on specific policies and overall efforts undertaken to address the issue of marginalization in education.

i) Shift in Approach:
• change from collecting statistics for publication to data collection for monitoring and evaluation
• focus now on how data is used to identify arising issues and inform decision making and forward planning

ii) Shift in Focus:
• shift from EFA goals to the goals of our own Education Master Plan (EMP). A matrix of indicators allows for identification of both EFA and Pacific Education Development Framework (PEDF) goals with EMP reporting
• as the majority of indicators for the goals have been attained, focus is now on the quality of outcomes rather than achievement.

iii) Key Issues
• identification of the unreached and marginalized. Geographical spread and dynamic demography impact on the validity of information
• small population cohorts can skew statistical analysis
• need to strengthen evaluation process and control for causal correlation. Can use plausible link for contribution model.