

SDG 4 – Quality Education

TARGETS	INDICATORS
4.1 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes	4.1.1 Proportion of children and young people: (a) in grades 2/3; (b) at the end of primary; and (c) at the end of lower secondary achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) mathematics, by sex
4.2 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education	4.2.1 Proportion of children under 5 years of age who are developmentally on track in health, learning and psychosocial well-being, by sex
	4.2.2 Participation rate in organized learning (one year before the official primary entry age), by sex
4.3 By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university	4.3.1 Participation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training in the previous 12 months, by sex
4.4 By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship	4.4.1 Proportion of youth and adults with information and communications technology (ICT) skills, by type of skill
4.5 By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations	4.5.1 Parity indices (female/male, rural/urban, bottom/top wealth quintile and others such as disability status, indigenous peoples and conflict-affected, as data become available) for all education indicators on this list that can be disaggregated
4.6 By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy	4.6.1 Percentage of population in a given age group achieving at least a fixed level of proficiency in functional (a) literacy and (b) numeracy skills, by sex
4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development	4.7.1 Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development, including gender equality and human rights, are mainstreamed at all levels in: (a) national education policies, (b) curricula, (c) teacher education and (d) student assessment
4.A Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all	4.A.1 Proportion of schools with access to: (a) electricity; (b) the Internet for pedagogical purposes; (c) computers for pedagogical purposes; (d) adapted infrastructure and materials for students with disabilities; (e) basic drinking water; (f) single-sex basic sanitation facilities; and (g) basic handwashing facilities (as per the WASH indicator definitions)
4.B By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, for enrolment in higher	4.B.1 Volume of official development assistance flows for scholarships by sector and type of study

education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programmes, in developed countries and other developing countries	
4.C By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States	4.C.1 Proportion of teachers in: (a) pre-primary; (b) primary; (c) lower secondary; and (d) upper secondary education who have received at least the minimum organized teacher training (e.g. pedagogical training) pre-service or in-service required for teaching at the relevant level in a given country

SDG 4 in the Fiji National Development Plan

- Fiji realized universal primary education (Millennium Development Goal 2) by 2013 and therefore Fiji has a high literacy rate.
- Universal access to education will be maintained helping to increase the supply of well-trained professionals that are equipped for the global job market.
- There will be investments in existing and new educational facilities and teacher-student ratios will be improved.
- Initiatives such as the bus-fare and boat-fare subsidies and free textbooks ensure that no one is deprived an education on the basis of cost.
- There is a particular focus on improving Early Childhood Education (ECE).
- Tertiary education will also be improved with a focus on the demands of the labour market.
- Educational policies are particularly important with 62% of the population below the age of 34, providing a unique opportunity to build a highly skilled workforce.
- In recent years, more money has been channelled toward education and other social services to raise the living standards of all Fijians.
- The focus on education will send positive ripples throughout the economy.

Definitions

What does literacy rate mean?

The literacy rate is the total number of literate persons in a given age group, expressed as a percentage of the total population in that age group. The adult literacy rate measures literacy among persons aged 15 years and above, and the youth literacy rate measures literacy among persons aged 15 to 24 years.

The literacy rate of countries

Chad – 22% (2016) LOWEST

Mexico – 95% (2018)

China – 97% (2018)

Fiji – 99% (2017)

Barbados, Turkmenistan, Slovenia, Russia, Armenia, Cuba, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Ukraine, among others – 100% HIGHEST

SOURCE: <http://uis.unesco.org/en/glossary-term/literacy-rate>

https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.ADT.LITR.ZS?most_recent_value_desc=false

What is Early Childhood Education?

Early childhood education consists of activities and/or experiences that are intended to effect developmental changes in children prior to their entry into primary school.

These programmes are designed to provide a footing for children in order for them to do better when they enter into primary school. It aims at the holistic development of a child's social, emotional, cognitive and physical needs in order to build a solid and broad foundation for lifelong learning and wellbeing. ECCE has the possibility to nurture caring, capable and responsible future citizens.

SOURCE: <http://www.healthofchildren.com/E-F/Early-Childhood-Education.html#ixzz6PQtQvRkX>

READING: <https://en.unesco.org/themes/early-childhood-care-and-education>

Fiji National Development Plan Target 3.1.5 – Education

The government aims to provide “quality education for all”.

- Education is essential to create a skilled and adaptable workforce.
- The Constitution guarantees the right of every child to early-childhood, primary, secondary and further education.

Primary and Secondary education

- Universal access to primary education has been achieved and net enrolment in secondary education stands at around 80%.
- The free-education initiative, free bus fares and free textbooks have helped to increase levels of enrolment.
- Continuous hiring of teachers is helping to improve the student: teacher ratio.
- The government will support the upgrading of educational facilities.

Early childhood education (ECE)

- To achieve universal access an ECE centre will be attached to each primary school.

University and colleges

- Grant funding has helped improve education infrastructure and the quality of teaching and learning.
- Scholarships and the loan scheme have increased access and affordability.

- There has been increased investment in vocational skills and technical colleges have been established.

Curriculum

- The curriculum is continually reviewed and is used to incorporate contemporary areas such as:
 - o Gender
 - o Nutrition
 - o Respectful relationships
 - o Environment
 - o Alcohol and drugs
- It is hoped that these areas will help to overcome some of society's issues such as NCDs, drug misuse and teenage pregnancy.
- A digital literacy programme has been introduced.
- Education for those with special needs is supported through grants to special needs schools.



Figure 1: A Fijian Primary School



Figure 2: Fiji National University

FURTHER INFORMATION

Early Childhood Education

Fiji categorises all forms of education from birth to the age of 8 as a part of Early Childhood Education; this includes education at home, at religious places and pre-schools. A very high

proportion of learning takes place at this age and therefore anything taught at this age can help them to reach a more prosperous future. ECE also helps to build links between a child's home and their school.

The Fijian government believes that the provision of Early Childhood Education plays a very important role in providing high quality education and therefore in turn developing a knowledge-based workforce.

It is now mandatory in Fiji that all primary schools have an associated ECE centre, these are within vicinity of the villages to ensure that no child is left behind.

FURTHER READING:

<https://www.fnu.ac.fj/new/uncategorised/1597-why-govt-is-investing-in-early-childhood-education>

http://www.education.gov.fj/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/ECE_Policy_-_2013_Final.pdf

University Loan Scheme Provided by the Government

The Tertiary Education Loans Scheme (TELS) is a fund to provide finance to Fijian students who have qualified for higher education but are unable to support themselves financially. This provision helps to increase equitable access to higher education.

FURTHER READING: <https://www.tslb.com.fj/Home>

Digital Literacy Programme

The Ministry of Education has worked in partnership with NGO, Reach 4 Your Future Foundation to implement digital literacy in certain schools. The programme includes a Microsoft accredited course and provides an opportunity for Fijian students to fill in the skills gap.

FURTHER READING:

<https://www.fiji.gov.fj/Media-Centre/News/EDUCATION-MINISTRY-TO-IMPLEMENT-DIGITAL-LITERACY-I>

<https://www.fbcnews.com.fj/news/digital-literacy-for-fiji-students/>

Fiji National Development Plan Target 3.1.8 – Youth and Sports Development

The government aims to “empower youth to be agents of change and promote sports for development”.

Youth Development

- 62% of Fiji's population is below the age of 35 which provides great opportunities to stimulate growth and development.

- The government will ensure that educational, employment and leadership opportunities are provided for the Fijian youth.
- In the next 5 years there will be more initiatives, in part through financial support for voluntary organizations, promoting:
 - Entrepreneurship
 - Leadership
 - Climate change
 - Sexual health awareness
- Youths will be encouraged to participate in policy development through the International Youth Exchange Programme, National Youth Conference and Youth Parliament.



Figure 1: 2014 Fiji Youth Parliament

Sports Development

- Sport has helped to build social cohesion and improve Fiji's global image
- It has also generated employment opportunities and increased remittance flows from Fijian sports people overseas.
- There is potential to expand the sector further increasing its income-generation.
- Over the next 5 years there will be a focus on developing elite sports people and modernising sports facilities.
- Sport support services will be improved with increased sports education and the development of sports coaches.
- Sports psychology, sports science and sports medicine will become part of the tertiary curriculum.
- Increased participation in sports will improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce the levels of NCDs and obesity.

- Fiji will bid to host international events such as the 2026 Commonwealth Games and the government will continue to upgrade sports infrastructure.
- A National Sports Academy will be established with specialised training, coaching, management of injuries and dietary programmes.



Figure 2: The 2019 Fiji rugby team



Figure 3: Village Netball

FURTHER INFORMATION

National Youth Conference

The National Youth Conference provides an opportunity for Fijian youth to have an input in the future plans the government has with regards to youth policies. At the 2019 conference, there were around 400 youths in attendance from all across Fiji. Issues such as Human Rights, Climate Change and Entrepreneurship are discussed.

FURTHER READING:

<https://fijivillage.com/news/More-than-400-youth-delegates-applaud-youth-conference-outcomes-while-20-youths-protest-against-it-5rs9k/>

<https://fijisun.com.fj/2019/03/28/empowering-youths-by-giving-them-a-voice/>

National Sports Academy

The construction of a new Sports Academy will help the country to look after its elite athletes by combining sports science, medicine, education and psychology along with high quality strength, conditioning and coaching. In March 2019 it was announced that a piece of land had been identified to construct the Sports Academy

FURTHER READING: <https://fijisun.com.fj/2015/04/12/academy-of-sports-set-up/>

<https://www.fijivillage.com/news/Govt-has-identified-land-to-construct-a-National-Sports-Academy---Bala-rs95k2>

SDG 4 in figures

100% - the proportion of teachers who have received at least the minimum organised teacher training, primary (2012)

100% - the proportion of teachers who have received at least the minimum organised teacher training, lower secondary (2012)

90% - net enrolment in secondary education (2019)

99% - net enrolment in primary education (2019)

SDG 2019 Review

Overview

- Fiji views access to education as the most effective way of empowering ordinary citizens in improving their quality of life.
- This is in line with transitioning Fiji to become a more equal knowledge-based society where the only determinants of success are merit and achievement.
- There have been especially momentous gains for women and girls.

Early Childhood Education

- In 2007 the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) policy was introduced with the aim of achieving universal access to early childhood education.
- There has been a seven-fold increase in the completion of pre-school education and net enrolment has increased from 11.8% in 2000 to 80% in 2015.
- The aim is to maintain a student-teacher ratio of 1:24 in ECCE institutions.
- A number of grants have made these improvements possible.

Primary and Secondary Education

- Universal access to primary and secondary education has been achieved. Enrolment in primary schools stands at 99% and at secondary schools 90%.
- A national campaign to rebuild school facilities damaged by weather events, to cyclone-resilient standards is currently underway.
- Fijian Year 5 and Year 7 students achieve reasonably proficient literacy and numeracy achievement.
- Summative assessments are used to measure a student's progress in years 10, 12 and 13.

Tertiary and Technical Education

- Tertiary enrolment is at around 30%.
- There is an expanding network of tertiary institutions such as the Technical College of Fiji (TCF).

- The TCF provides training for key sectors in the Fijian economy, making for a more competitive Fijian workforce and economy and providing choice to progress to universities.

Inclusive Education

- Fiji hosts a network of speciality schools that serve the disabled.
- There are currently 17 specialised schools and 67 mainstream secondary school serving students with disabilities.
- The University of the South Pacific runs a disability research centre that provides services to foster inclusive learning environments.
- Partnerships with NGOs help to further this mission.

Gender Disparity

- There is a gender gap in Fijian schools with many young girls traditionally going without formal education due to high costs.
- Government funding is resulting in more girls being able to go to school.
- At a secondary level, female students are better represented than males.
- A number of initiatives help to support the educational aspirations of women.

Opportunities

- Around 20% of pre-school aged children remain outside of the school system and therefore there is a need to raise awareness among parents of the importance of ECCE.
- The government is currently expanding access to ECCE facilities.
- In order to achieve full enrolment among young people, Fiji is looking for new ways to engage with students through an expansion of technical and vocational educational offerings which will cater for new and existing segments of the economy.
- The educational divide between rural and urban regions is shrinking but the remoteness of rural and maritime communities makes it harder to deliver quality education. The development of telecommunications is helping to overcome these challenges. However, ensuring equal access will require steady investment.
- The Fiji Education Management System has the potential to improve the monitoring of education programs, but remains under-utilised in some ways.
- The Ministry of Education must undertake constant reviews of the curriculum to improve the competitiveness of Fiji's future workforce and adapt to new technologies.
- Fiji's schools must also impart morals and inspire national unity among the next generation.