

Fiji's SDG4 Review

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.

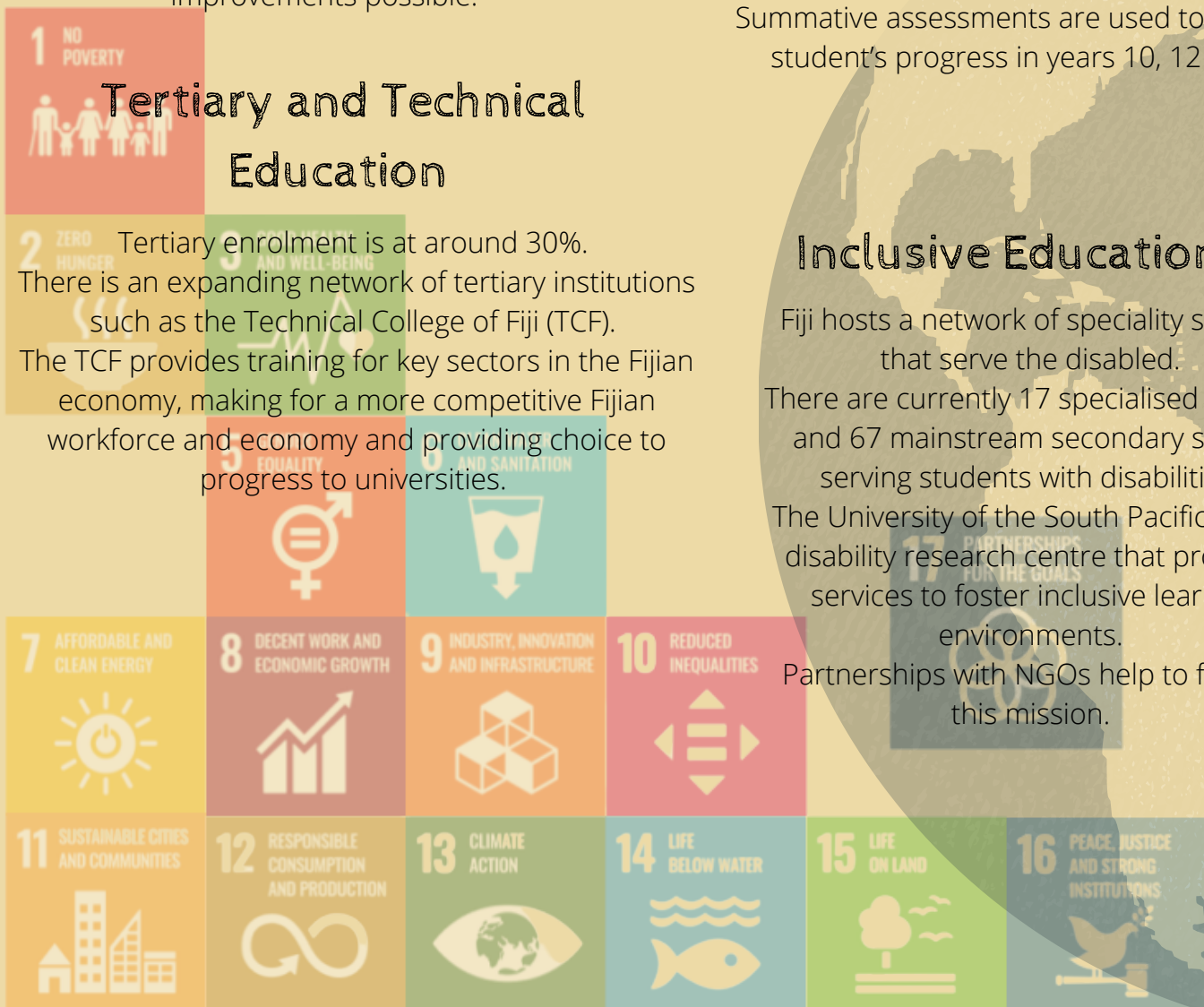
Inclusive Education

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.



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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.

