

HOW TVET CHANGE HAPPENS: FIJI STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVES

FIJI MAY 2019



FOREWORD



This report is the outcome of an intensive consultation with a broad range of stakeholders in Fiji from Government, Training providers, Industry representatives and Disabled people's organisations on how TVET change will come about.

The human capital model places skills development at the centre of social and economic prosperity. TVET is a vital component of education systems that contributes to such prosperity. As policy, strategies and financial investments continue to be developed to enable a vibrant TVET system, the key question to ask is how change will come about to realise the gains sought from skills development in the Pacific Island economies.

This document captures Fiji stakeholder views and perspectives on drivers for change, barriers, opportunities and strategies that will lead to effective TVET outcomes. It represents a milestone for Fiji TVET system strengthening and reform having brought the stakeholders together to understand the local TVET landscape and what locally led approaches will be appropriate to realise change.

The Australia Pacific Training Coalition (APTC) is indebted to the stakeholders

for sharing the ideas captured herein. Achieving the change captured in this document will require sustained collective effort from all stakeholders. APTC is only one of them and is pleased that there was an opportunity to catalyse this discussion.

Many stakeholders represented in the meetings and colleagues they spoke to after the event are using these findings to inform their work. It is particularly encouraging to hear that each organisation has committed to identify how they will contribute to change where they best add value. With all of our efforts, we can contribute to a prosperous Nation and Pacific region.

Finally, APTC commits to continue supporting Fiji TVET stakeholders to regularly reflect on the progress we are jointly making on these strategies. We look forward to discussing and sharing with you, as custodians of the change in Fiji how we all are progressing toward ensuring the people of the Pacific have the skills, knowledge and attributes necessary to drive National and Regional development.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lori Banks Dutta'.

Lori Banks Dutta
Deputy Chief Executive Officer
Australia Pacific Training Coalition



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Australia Pacific Training Coalition (APTC) wishes to express its deepest appreciation to the following stakeholders for their invaluable participation in the workshops and post workshop discussions, which have shaped this document:

- 1 Catholic Education Office
- 2 Centre for Appropriate Technology & Development
- 3 Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
- 4 Fiji Commerce & Employment Federation
- 5 Fiji Disabled People's Federation
- 6 Fiji Higher Education Commission
- 7 Fiji National University
- 8 Fiji Program Support Facility
- 9 Fiji Women's Fund
- 10 Ministry of Education, Heritage & Arts
- 11 Ministry of Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations
- 12 Ministry of Women, Children & Poverty Alleviation
- 13 Monfort Boys' Town
- 14 Pacific Council of Churches
- 15 Pacific TAFE
- 16 Technical Colleges of Fiji
- 17 The Pacific Community

We also would like to thank the Institute for Human Security and Social Change, La Trobe University for their technical support with methodology, facilitation and write up of the how change happens conversations presented in this document.



INTRODUCTION

The Republic of Fiji is an island in Melanesia made of more than 330 islands, of which 110 are permanently inhabited. The two major islands, Viti levu and Vanua levu, accounts for 87% of the total population of 883,483. Fiji has one of the most developed economies in the Pacific due to factors including abundant resources, a strong tourism industry and remittances from Fijians working abroad. At the same time, Fiji has a large youth population and high levels of youth unemployment, particularly for women, and is working to deliver high quality education and training opportunities to all sectors of all sections of its population.

To support inclusive national development the Government of Fiji has put in place a long-term development plan that focuses on enhancing technical, vocational and lifelong skills training at all levels. Women, the elderly and people living with a disability are specifically targeted. Key stakeholders leading the work to improve the Technical and Vocational, Education and Training (TVET) include the Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts, the Ministry of Employment, Productivity & Industrial Relations and the Fiji Higher Education Commission. Other important stakeholders are industry and regional training providers. These include major TVET providers like the Fiji National University and the University of the South Pacific, private providers and theological providers such as the Pacific Regional Seminary.

The Australia Pacific Training Coalition (APTC) commenced in 2007 with a focus on delivery of quality TVET services to support positive employment outcomes for graduates. In the third phase of the program, the focus has expanded to consider the long-term sustainability and quality of TVET services in the Pacific region. This expanded approach proposes more considered work at country level in line with the country context. It proposes that partnerships and coalitions with in-country TVET providers and other stakeholders will lay the foundation for increased country investment in and development of TVET resources. It assumes that support to build the quality of in-country TVET providers will assist in sustaining the sector and increasing its value to industry.

The new phase of the program recognises that this approach will lead to different implementation strategies in each Pacific country. Those strategies will be best developed in response to current opportunities, as identified by local stakeholders. In response to this, APTC has invested in in-country stakeholder consultation to develop country specific theories of change, implementation approaches and accompanying monitoring and evaluation frameworks.

PROCESS

This document was developed in consultation with a wide range of Fiji stakeholders.¹ Recognising that in Fiji change is not a simple 'linear' process, the consultation work was designed to draw from local knowledge to identify the factors most likely to block or enable positive change in the TVET sector in Fiji. That is, the best ideas about how change happens or the 'theory of change' for TVET in Fiji.

Building on this assessment, stakeholders identified the opportunities essential for attaining progressive change in Fiji TVET system. Stakeholders further assisted APTC to identify opportunities where it can best add value. These opportunities were framed within the broad objectives of APTC Phase 3 and provide the APTC Fiji 'program approach'. This document summarises the outcomes of this

¹ A TOC workshop was conducted in Fiji on 2-3 May 2019 with a range of Fiji TVET, government and non-government stakeholders. Further consultations were undertaken following the workshop with additional stakeholders, including industry bodies.

process. It reviews the current situation, identifying key drivers of change and what might block that change. The document is intended to communicate the understanding by stakeholders about what needs to change in Fiji in order to achieve the outcomes sought by APTC and its partners. It also grounds the objectives of APTC in the Fiji context, with reference to current challenges and opportunities. It outlines proposed strategies for the whole of the stakeholder group, accompanying principles and areas for ongoing assessment. It

serves as the basis for the APTC in Fiji to develop its specific contribution, through a detailed strategy, going forward.

The approach to change will evolve as evidence and experience about what works becomes available. This document will therefore be reviewed annually with stakeholders. That review will include ongoing assessment of the value of APTC work and recommendations for its further improvements.

TVET IN FIJI

CURRENT SITUATION

There are a broad range of stakeholders in the Fiji TVET sector, with varying levels of involvement, interest and influence. These include those directly involved in the sector such as vocational training centres and universities; relevant government ministries such as the Ministry of Education Heritage & Arts (MEHA), Ministry of Employment Productivity & Industrial Relations, Ministry of Youth & Sports, Ministry of Women Children & Poverty Alleviation and the Prime Minister's Office; the Fiji Higher Education Commission (FHEC), which regulates the registration and operation

of all higher education institutions in Fiji; Fiji Commerce & Employers Federation, Fiji's national private sector organisation; Fiji Hotel & Tourism Association, representing voices of member hotels and tourism businesses in Fiji; those served by the sector such as current and future students and their families and communities, TVET alumni, and industry and non-government organisations; those who support the sector directly, such as international donors and indirectly, such as disability organisations, women's organisations and the media.

TVET DELIVERY

The post-school education and training sector in Fiji includes a broad range of public and private institutions. In 2018 this included two national universities, 20 theological colleges, a range of training centres run by line Ministries and nearly 50 private training providers.² Recent consultations

suggest there is a lack of collaboration between these different providers and at times unhealthy competition. Further, while the situation is improving, there continues to be duplication and lack of variety of courses on offer.

² Sustainable Skills, TVET in Fiji – An overview of the TVET system in Fiji. Accessed online at <https://sustainablekills.org/tvet-in-fiji/> on 14/8/19.

³ Maglen, L., Wall, M.W. and Rokovunisei, M. (2015) Research into the Financing of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in the Pacific: Fiji Country Report, Commonwealth of Australia.

⁴ Ministry of Economy. (2017) Fiji's 5-Year & 20-Year National Development Plan, Republic of Fiji. Accessed online at <https://www.fiji.gov.fj/getattachment/15b0ba03-825e-47f7-bf69-094ad33004dd/5-Year---20-Year-NATIONAL-DEVELOPMENT-PLAN.aspx> on 14/8/19.

⁵ Ministry for Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations. (2018) National Employment Policy Booklet. Republic of Fiji. Accessed online at <http://www.employment.gov.fj/images/National%20Employment%20Policy%20Booklet.pdf> on 15/8/19.

Of these training providers, 39 are currently registered by the Fijian Higher Education Commission (FHEC) and another 17 are recognised. This suggests some training providers continue to operate outside of the FHEC system which was set up in 2010 to provide national overview and quality assurance in the post school education and training sector, including TVET delivery, and to develop the Fiji Qualifications Framework (FQF). A 2013 review identified the need for enhanced independence and standing of FHEC, and for it to be assured adequate funding to perform its functions.³ More recent consultations suggest these needs remain current.

Fiji's 5-Year & 20-Year National Development Plan launched in November 2017 sets out the government's intention to deliver quality education for all, which includes enhancing technical, vocational and lifelong skills training at all levels.⁴ This includes people living with a disability and the elderly, who are inadequately serviced by the current TVET system, plus women who experience higher

unemployment rates despite similar educational attainment to men.⁵ According to the Plan this is produced by gender segregated industry and occupations and reinforced by training providers not doing enough to attract young women to train in occupations traditionally dominated by men.

Some of the strategies specified in the national development plan to improve education and training delivery include: establish technical colleges, recruit qualified and experienced TVET teachers, accelerate the development of the National Qualification Framework in trade areas, support and strengthen higher education institutions (including through FHEC recognition), and implement the National Accreditation Framework. These strategies are yet to be implemented and more needs to be done to create a coherent, relevant and high quality TVET delivery system in Fiji. This will require ongoing funding to develop and implement these strategies, as well as increased collaboration across the sector to drive the reform process and further leverage existing funding to amplify results.

TVET DEMAND

In Fiji, where there are high levels of youth unemployment, there is a need to build demand for TVET among prospective students, their families and communities. To achieve this the education and training system needs to be informed by and responsive to the aspirations of young people⁶.

There is also an issue of demand from the labour market. Employer perceptions of TVET are mixed and there is a growing recognition that the TVET sector needs to engage with employers to ensure technical and further education is relevant to industry needs. Consultations for the third phase of APTC in Fiji identified that large employers prefer not to use domestic TVET systems to address their staff training needs, turning instead to offshore training and/or importing staff with existing qualifications. This is partly due to underinvestment in TVET, which means providers often lack the capacity, data and flexibility to respond adequately to industry demand. It also relates to Fiji's low post-school

qualification rate in trades-based occupations, where for example only one in 10 carpenters are qualified⁷.

The Fiji National Employment Policy 2018 suggests labour market demand for TVET graduates can be increased through the creation of much closer ties between education and training providers and employers. There are some cases where this is occurring, such as the University of the South Pacific which has an industry advisory committee that is involved in designing and reviewing training programs.

The 2018 employment policy for Fiji also identifies the potential to create 'green jobs' in the context of climate change that are based on new training and skills in new materials, technologies and working methods in construction, sustainable agriculture and fisheries, and renewable energy sources.

⁶ Ministry for Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations. (2018) National Employment Policy Booklet. Republic of Fiji. Accessed at <http://www.employment.gov.fj/images/National%20Employment%20Policy%20Booklet.pdf> on 15/8/19.

⁷ From the APTC3 Investment Design Document. Accessed online at <https://dfat.gov.au/about-us/business-opportunities/Documents/aptc3-design-document.pdf> on 14/8/19.

KEY DRIVERS/ ENABLERS OF CHANGE

Within this context the key drivers of TVET change appear to include:

National policy: as outlined above, there are national plans and policies to guide the further development and reform of the TVET sector in Fiji. Additional enabling policies are expected to flow from the TVET and apprenticeship scheme reviews, both of which are close to completion.

Civil society: Fiji has some very active civil society groups that effectively represent the interests of women, people living with a disability and other marginalised groups.⁸ While these currently have a limited role, they have potential to contribute further. Communities of practice and professional associations are also well positioned to support action and change.

Labour mobility: There are opportunities for labour mobility within the region, as well as more broadly, and several instruments in place to facilitate it.⁹

Donor support and resourcing: The Australian government supports several programs in Fiji directed at improving higher education, including TVET (see Annex One). This support, alongside that of other donors, provides resources that could assist with further development of the sector.

Key Stakeholders: there are several groups who are interested in enabling TVET development, helping to drive change. Apart from civil society these include champions within government and several of the TVET providers.

BARRIERS TO CHANGE

At the same time the context in Fiji is challenging and there are a number of barriers that could limit action for change including:

Insufficient political will: Limited political will or interest at the government level to provide the resources required to follow through on policy implementation.

Ineffective advocacy: There is a lack of effective advocacy by communities, families and students for improved TVET provision. This is related to TVET not being valued as a good option by many who see it as less desirable than a university qualification. It also relates to the lack of channels for families and communities to communicate to government on their issues and aspirations, and to raise issues such as the need for long-term planning to address youth needs.

Limited focus on TVET accreditation and quality: While the Fiji Qualifications Framework (FQF) was developed with input from industry experts to ensure quality, it is not well known and most TVET programs are delivered without accreditation. While some progress has been made in accrediting some programs under the FQF, and others like APTC's are accredited to Australian standards, accreditation is a major challenge, as is maintaining quality and standards following accreditation.

⁸ For example, NGOs such as Fiji Women Rights Movement work on building enabling environments where women can realise their full potential, including capacity building, training in trades etc. Rise Beyond the Reef implements women economic empowerment activities where women learn a skill and earn an income. FRIEND does the same. These trainings though are unaccredited.

⁹ Recruitment in Fiji has begun on hospitality and meat processing. Individual support is scheduled for later on in the year. It is widely acknowledged that other countries benefit from the 55 year retirement age in Fiji. For example, retired teachers and nurses are now recruited in Tuvalu, Nauru and Marshall Islands. We also have a big number of Fijians now working in the hospitality industry in the Cook Islands. There is also unaccounted number of Fijian women hired as domestic workers particularly in Samoa and Tonga.

Insufficient collection, use and sharing of data: Data is not being routinely collected to inform the TVET system, including in the area of current and projected skills shortages and demand. Where it is being collected, for example by the Ministry of Employment, it is not easily accessible, nor is it disaggregated making it difficult to use to tailor TVET programs. There is also limited data sharing between TVET providers.

Competition between TVET providers: While it is recognised that some competition can be healthy and collaboration is starting to occur between some of the larger TVET providers, there is a level of competition and duplication between small providers that is a barrier to achieving better TVET outcomes. There is currently limited harmonisation or collaboration among small providers and between small and large providers, which reduces the overall effectiveness of the TVET sector and constrains the potential for TVET reform.

Undervaluing of TVET: This is an issue among young people, families and communities who devalue TVET skills due to the perception that a university degree has more value and is more likely to lead to career success and a higher salary. It is also an issue among employers which, as outlined above, have mixed views on local TVET systems linked to concerns about the quality of training and graduates it produces.

Inadequate links to industry: Linked to the issue above of employers undervaluing TVET training is the challenge of the links between TVET providers and programs and industry being limited. Inadequate collaboration between the TVET sector and industry has led to misaligned curriculums and failure to meet industry needs.

CURRENT OPPORTUNITIES

In this context of both enabling and inhibiting factors for change, the following contextual opportunities have been identified as particularly open to engagement by APTC and other collaborating organisations:

Closer collaboration with industry: There is a FHEC proposal currently being considered by the Ministry of Education to establish a skills council. This has the potential to foster closer collaboration between FHEC, TVET providers and industry by creating a mechanism for training to be developed with industry involvement.

TVET champions: FHEC is responsible for leading on standard-setting and accreditation in the higher education institutions including the TVET sector and, despite limited resourcing, is actively working to reform and improve TVET in Fiji. Other stakeholders at the political, government, non-government and community level are also working to drive reform in TVET. There is potential to identify TVET Champions and work towards a more coordinated approach, building on the connections that already exist between APTC and different parts of the sector.

Information and communication technology (ICT) and systems: Fiji now has high levels of access to telecommunication services, with 95% of its population having access to a mobile network. Further, the government recently introduced a levy on all telecommunications providers and proposed to use this to support ICT for education initiatives at the school level. Fiji also has the most advanced education management information system in the region and good data at the school level, which could be extended to include post-secondary information.¹⁰

¹⁰ Asian Development Bank. (2018) ICT for Better Education in the Pacific. Accessed online at <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/428221/ict-education-pacific.pdf> on 23/8/19.

¹¹ Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. (2018) Pacific Regional Education Framework (PacREF) 2018-2030: Moving Towards Education 2030. University of the South Pacific.

Regional initiatives: Fiji is actively involved in regional initiatives designed to improve education, employment and labour mobility outcomes, including the Pacific Regional Educational Framework and the Pacific Labour Scheme, which APTC also works closely with.¹¹ These initiatives and associated regional networks provide a platform to improve TVET outcomes in Fiji and influence TVET reform regionally and nationally.

Scholarships: The Fijian government currently provides scholarships for tertiary education, including through the Tertiary Education Loan Scheme and the TOPPERS scholarship scheme. There is the potential for more of these scholarships to be made available for TVET students, which would help increase the perceived value of technical training and incentivise students taking this path rather than a university qualification.

Closer collaboration with key TVET providers: APTC has existing formal arrangements with FNU and USP. There is an opportunity to build on this relationship in our role as convenor and broker to address issues of coordination, capability development and benchmarking to national and international standards.

Fiji labour market assessment: the Fiji Labour Market Assessment supports alignment of TVET to labour market needs and employment opportunities. With a range of stakeholders involved, with support from both MEHA and the Ministry of Employment, Productivity & Industrial Relations; the Fiji LMA creates an ongoing enabling space for continuing dialogue on labour market needs and how it can be used to strengthen the TVET system in Fiji.

Functional community structure to target negative TVET perception: in existence in Fiji is a provincial structure that link villages and communities to a provincial office that predominantly governs I-taukei development particularly for those who live in rural and outlying islands. Promotion of TVET as a tool for economic empowerment and agent of change can be realised through such existing networks.



APTC FIJI PROGRAM STRATEGY

APTC OBJECTIVES IN FIJI

In line with the overall purpose of APTC, there are three end of program outcomes expected by the end of the third phase:

1. Graduates have improved employment outcomes
2. Co-investment in skills training increases
3. Selected TVET partners demonstrate quality TVET provision

Grounding these in the present Fiji TVET context, stakeholders identified the following specific changes for the end of APTC Phase 3:

- a. Graduates will learn through both theory and practice and come out of their training with practical work experience. Graduates will have the skills and pathways to take up employment and set up their own businesses. Graduates will perform effectively in the workplace. Graduates will include people living with disability.

Underpinning this outcome is the assumption that the pathway between secondary school, training and employment will be clear and well understood. Also, that training will have a practical focus, which sets graduates up to move straight into jobs that they have the necessary skills to do. There will be a better understanding of the needs of people living with a disability and the TVET system and workplaces will cater to their needs thereby enabling them to take up employment opportunities. There will be improved links with industry which will increase the quality of training and the creation of employment opportunities.

- b. There will be a stronger commitment from government and more government resourcing of TVET. There will be more scholarships available for TVET from government, including through Tertiary Education Loan Scheme and the TOPPERS scholarship scheme for top ranked students. There will be increased apprenticeships and work attachments. There will also be tax incentives for employers who will support employee training.

Achieving this outcome assumes that it is possible to influence government to allocate more resources to TVET through using entry points, champions and coalitions who can create more interest and support for TVET. It also assumes that specific lobbying of government will result in more TVET scholarships and apprenticeships, as well as tax incentives for employers. Another assumption is that industry priorities and drivers will be understood so that effective strategies that incentivise industry to invest in and employ local people can be designed.

- c. There will be national accreditation of large and small TVET providers. These providers will employ capable trainers who use best practice teaching methods and deliver quality training. TVET providers will be supported by industry to design and delivery quality training.

This outcome assumes that the national accreditation system under FHEC will be adequately resourced and implemented on an ongoing basis. It assumes sufficient and competent trainers across relevant areas and a system capable of delivering these quality trainers. Finally, it assumes collaboration between large and small TVET providers, and the TVET sector and industry, based on a commitment to improving the reputation of the sector.

APTC APPROACH

Taking into account the complex Fijian context, APTC will work with a range of stakeholders to bring about change towards its intended outcomes. It will recognise the current drivers and work with others to address the key barriers and take advantage of key opportunities. APTC will be one player within the wider system and seek to leverage broader change through its relationships and collaborations with others.

Making use of existing resources and in line with the overall program approach, APTC will work together with other interested TVET stakeholders, using the following core strategies¹² :

1. TVET providers to continue to deliver high quality training programs as core business.
2. Work to model effective industry engagement through the development of training programs that respond directly to industry needs. This will also be done by collaborating with industry to lobby the government to address data gaps and needs, including in areas industry identifies having skills shortages.
3. Building the collaboration and coordination among TVET providers, and between the TVET sector, government and industry, drawing on the strengths of respective partners to achieve shared interests in reforming the Fiji TVET sector.
4. Advocate for the establishment of a skills council as proposed by FHEC. Support the work of the skills council so that it can serve as a central point in designing training programs that ensure required skills are built into each qualification.
5. Advocate for and support FHEC to deliver on its key mandate to engage with TVET providers and other key stakeholders to provide quality assurance and consistent standards for all TVET training.
6. Improve the collection, quality, accessibility and use of data to improve education, training and employment outcomes by working closely with key stakeholders. This includes attention to current and projected labour market trends.
7. Work to sensitise and promote the value of TVET, starting with students well before they leave secondary school, and using champions who can share their career success stories.

Four key principles that will promote the effective implementation of these strategies and their potential to contribute to the overall end of program outcomes in Fiji are:

1. Regular consultation with all key stakeholders, particularly industry, the community, and TVET alumni.
2. A focus on gender and social inclusion to ensure that training and employment are available to all.
3. A commitment to quality TVET design and delivery.
4. The importance of connecting graduates to decent work opportunities and encourage entrepreneurship (graduates creating own income-generating opportunities).

¹² APTC will lead on a subset of these agreed strategies, as well as add value through collaborating with other interested stakeholders leading on the remaining ones.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring and evaluation will focus on changes achieved in three outcome areas with particular attention to the following:

- How the enhancement of current mechanisms (FHEC) and the creation of new ones (skills council), working in close collaboration with key partners, furthers the development of standards and graduate outcomes.
- Partnerships and engagement with industry and the degree to which this helps shape quality curriculum and training; creates broader opportunities for graduate employment; and, increases industry commitment to investing in quality training as an enabler of productivity and giving back to communities as part of their corporate social responsibility.
- How larger, established TVET providers can collaboratively support smaller, emerging providers to deliver quality training programs.
- Collaborative and strategic advocacy for the value of TVET and the degree to which this influences industry, families, communities and government towards further support for the sector.
- Government reform processes, such as tax incentives, and increased TVET sector resourcing, and the degree to which these support increased standards, quality and the potential for co-investment.
- The contribution that students (and alumni alike) make to their communities during their training through work placements and volunteering.
- The progression of graduates following TVET training, in terms of their employment and career advancement.



Outcomes

Strong Govt. commitment & resourcing

Graduates with theoretical & practical knowledge & skills to perform effectively in an inclusive workplace or business.

Quality TVET delivery by both large & small TVET providers driven by Industry



Strategies

Collaboration & Coordination among TVET institutions/ Government & Industry

Sensitisation & Champions to Promote TVET

Industry Engagement to influence government

Skills Council Establishment

Information / Data Research

Continue delivering TVET Qualifications

Enabling/ Supporting FHEC



Assumptions

The national accreditation system under FHEC will be adequately resourced and implemented resulting in sufficient and competent trainers across relevant areas.

Industry priorities and drivers will be understood so that effective strategies that incentivise industry to invest in and employ local people can be designed.

Collaboration between large and small TVET providers, the TVET sector and industry, based on a commitment to improving the reputation of the sector.

Pathway between secondary school, training to employment is clear & well understood and training focused on required standard that allow graduates to go straight into jobs.

Specific lobbying of government will result in more TVET scholarships and apprenticeships, as well as tax incentives for employers.

Influence on government to allocate more resources to TVET through entry points, champions and coalitions.

Clear & well understood pathway between secondary school training and employment with improved links with industry.



Principles

Focus on Employment pathways & entrepreneurship

Regular consultation with key stakeholders

Commitment to TVET quality

Focus on GESI

Enablers and Disablers for Success

DRIVERS



National Policy: Existing national plans/policies to guide further development and reform.

Civil Society: Active civil society groups with the potential to effectively represent the interests of women, disability & other marginalised groups.

Labour Mobility: Opportunities for labour mobility both regionally and more broadly and with several instruments in place to facilitate it.

Donor Support & Resourcing: Australian government support alongside that of other donors provide resources that could assist further development of the TVET sector.

Key Stakeholders: Apart from civil society, there are several other groups including champions within government and TVET providers who are interested in driving change.

OPPORTUNITIES



TVET Champions & Use of Community Structures: FHEC active in reforming Fiji TVET including foster closer collaboration with industry. Potential to identify other TVET champions & use of existing provincial structures as link to community to promote TVET.

National & Regional Initiatives: PacRef & PLS provide platform to improve TVET outcomes in Fiji and influence TVET reform regionally and nationally.

Scholarships: Potential for government scholarships for TVET students under the TOPPERS and TELS scholarship schemes.

ICT & Systems: High level access to ICT services with 95% coverage - introduced government levy on ICT to go towards support for ICT for education initiatives.

Fiji Labour Market Assessment: creates ongoing enabling space for continuing dialogue on labour market needs and how it can strengthen the TVET system in Fiji.

BARRIERS



Insufficient Political Will & Advocacy: Limited interest at government level to provide resources needed for policy implementation.

Limited focus on TVET Quality: Most TVET programs delivered without accreditation & difficult to maintain quality standards following accreditation.

Competition between TVET providers: There's a level of competition and duplication between small providers that is a barrier to achieving better TVET outcomes.

Undervaluing of TVET: lack of effective advocacy for communities/families/students to raise TVET profile and improve TVET provision.

Insufficient collection, use & Data sharing: Data not routinely collected to inform TVET system (including current & projected skills shortages & demand) and shared where it's being collected.

Inadequate Links between TVET providers & Industry: has led to misaligned curriculums & failure to meet industry needs. Also linked to employers under-valuing TVET.

DONOR	SUB-SECTOR	INVESTMENT/ AGREEMENT/ ACTIVITY	OBJECTIVES / KEY ACTIVITY
Australian Government (DFAT)			
Education	Fiji Program Support Facility, A\$66 million, 2017-2021	The Fiji Program Support Facility (FPSF) was established in 2017 to administer the education, health and scholarship programs in Fiji. The Facility, managed by Coffey on behalf of the Australian Government, also supports the integration of crosscutting themes into programs, such as gender equality, civil society engagement, disability inclusiveness, child protection, and disaster risk reduction. Education (up to \$25 million, 2018-2022): Helping to improve education opportunities in Fiji by supporting the Ministry of Education's strategic priorities of literacy and numeracy, inclusive education, school leadership/management and professional development. Scholarships: Providing scholarships through the Australia Awards program in priority sectors identified by the Fiji Government and the private sector.	
	Access to Quality Education Program (AQEP), \$64 million, 2011-2018	The Access to Quality Education Program aimed to reduce the barriers for children in accessing education in Fiji. The program helped maintain gains made in education through reducing the negative impacts of the financial crisis on the poorest families and settlements in Fiji. The program comprised three components: i) increased access to schools; ii) improved school facilities and learning environments; and iii) support to the Ministry of Education (MoE) to improve education quality and analysis. AQEP also undertook major rebuilding of school infrastructure in up to 40 schools following TC Winston in February 2016.	
New Zealand Government (MFAT)			
Education	NZ Development Cooperation with Fiji	Recent activities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support to improve the quality of higher education and skills training through interventions to increase access, and improve curriculum, teaching and organisational quality. 	
United States			
Youth engagement	Community Youth Empowerment Project (Peace Corps)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Community Youth Empowerment Project focuses on behaviour change promotion and capacity-building activities to empower youth to live more healthy lives, make healthy decisions, and gain access to programs that support positive youth development. <p>Depending on community need, volunteers work in several settings, including schools, communities, district government offices, or youth training centres. Activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementing health programming for schools and life skills training for at-risk youth. Training and supporting youth to implement community projects around self-identified topics. Providing training for teachers, community health workers, and community members to engage youth. Facilitating discussions for parents, caregivers, and service providers to increase their knowledge of health and wellness. Encouraging environmental awareness in communities, including improving water, sanitation, and hygiene practices. 	
Japan			
Education/Training	Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects (GGP)	Japan's GGP aims to aid self-supporting socio-economic development activities that benefit sectors at the grassroots level. This includes: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Building and repairing school buildings in rural areas and schools with poor educational environments. Building and repairing training centre buildings for human resource development and community development. 	

¹³ From the ATPC3 Investment Design Document. Accessed at <https://dfat.gov.au/about-us/business-opportunities/Documents/aptc3-design-document.pdf> on 14/8/19.

PACIFIC REGIONAL

DONOR	SUB-SECTOR	INVESTMENT/ AGREEMENT/ ACTIVITY	OBJECTIVES / KEY ACTIVITY
Australian Government (DFAT)			
TVET/Skills development	APTC Phase 3	<p>As Australia's flagship TVET investment in the Pacific region, APTC works collaboratively with national governments, development partners, the private sector, organisations for people living with disabilities, civil society organisations and Pacific TVET institutions regionally and across nine Pacific Island countries to support skills development and the improved quality of Pacific TVET systems. APTC activities in Fiji include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A total of 4065 Fijians (1634 women) have graduated. • Around 14 Australian qualifications are delivered in 7 trainings sites in Suva, Fiji targeting the region. • An MOU with the Fiji Higher Education Commission (FHEC), Construction Industry Council and FNU to revise training packages on carpentry and develop a national qualification if needed. The national qualification has been developed and conversation is ongoing with both FHEC and FNU for the delivery. • Since 2007, APTC has had formal agreements with the 2 key higher education providers in Fiji, the Fiji National University and the University of the South Pacific focusing on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Fiji National University - TVET system strengthening; Capability development of staff, Aligning FNU TVET qualifications with Australian standards, TVET advocacy, FNU TVET Strategy. ii. University of the South Pacific – Co-location of the Hospitality/Cookery program, Capability development of staff. • In consultation with FHEC, FNU and USP, APTC's TVET training programs match Fiji's 9 employment sectors – Construction, electricity, gas, steam, air conditioning supply, wholesale and retail, repair of motor vehicles and motorcycle, accommodation and food service activities, human health and social work activities, education, manufacturing and other service activities. • A labour market assessment for Fiji to better inform our training profile and that it is in line with the Government of Fiji's development commitments. Key areas identified have been in agriculture, hospitality and aged care. • In response to the growing regional concern on language, literacy and numeracy, APTC introduced the Certificate II Skills for Work and Vocational Pathways this semester. This program targets those who may have not met the requirements of a high school certificate. It is an ideal pathway to getting a job or attain a higher certificate and then get a job. All 14 students are women, 4 of whom are fully deaf. • A Theory of Change Workshop held in May 2019 has resulted in the development of a Fiji Country Strategy focusing on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> iii. Supporting TVET providers to deliver high quality training programs in response to the needs of industries as well as the employment market. An integral part to this is supporting the development of pathways between different institutions once standardised training across different TVET disciplines is established. iv. Support advocacy to promote the value of TVET in employment and economic development. v. Support the improvement on collection, quality, accessibility and use of data to improve education, training and employment opportunities. 	
Education	Partnership with Educational Quality and Assessment Program (EQAP) \$2.13 million, 2016-2018	EQAP is the regional institution mandated to improve education quality in the Pacific. Situated in the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), EQAP provides a range of services to member countries such as regional assessments of literacy and numeracy, and support to national education assessments and education management information systems. Australia is a long-term partner of EQAP and provides funding towards implementation of EQAP's Business Plan.	

TVET	Pacific Register of Qualification Standards (PRQS) \$2.7 million, 2009-2016	Situated in the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), the PRQS was established to facilitate benchmarking of Pacific qualifications against international standards, and to facilitate Pacific learner and labour mobility into further educational opportunities or entry into the global labour market.
Education	University of the South Pacific Partnership 2014-2018, \$70 million	The USP-Government of Australia Partnership is aligned with the USP Strategic Plan 2013–2018 and is focused on achieving improved outcomes in Learning and Teaching, Research, Information and Communication Technology, and Regional Engagement. DFAT is designing the next phase of support to commence in early 2019.
Scholarships	Australia Awards	Australia Awards Scholarships and Australia Awards Pacific Scholarships contribute to human resource development in Fiji by providing opportunities for Fijians to undertake vocational, graduate and postgraduate study in Australia and the Pacific. In 2019, Australia awarded 85 new Australia Awards to scholars from Fiji to study in tertiary institutions in Australia and the Pacific, and 60 Australian Volunteers worked in Fiji across 34 organisations in 2018-19.
Employment	Seasonal Worker Program (Department of Education, Skills and Employment)	Australia's Seasonal Worker Program connects Pacific island workers with Australian employers experiencing labour shortages, typically in rural and remote areas. Since 2015, 1,264 Fijian workers (132 women and 1,132 men) have participated in the SWP.
Employment	Pacific Labour Mobility Scheme	The Pacific Labour Scheme commenced on 1st July 2018. Building on the success of the Seasonal Worker Program, the new Scheme will help meet business demand across all sectors in rural and regional Australia. Since commencing, 275 Fijian workers have participated in the scheme, with the majority working in meat processing and hospitality.
Employment	Pacific Labour Facility	The Pacific Labour Facility (the Facility) connects Australian employers with Pacific workers and supports the administration of the Pacific Labour Scheme (PLS). It also provides targeted support for the Department of Jobs and Small Business (DJSB) led Seasonal Worker Program (SWP). The Facility commenced in October 2018 and is focused on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing the quality of training and flow of workers to Australia. Promote the PLS with Australian employers. Provide support services for Pacific workers in Australia and support their return to local communities and economies. Monitor the social and economic impacts of Australia's labour mobility arrangements.
Employment/ Livelihoods	Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development	Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development aims to improve opportunities for the political, economic and social advancement of Pacific women. One of the four outcomes sought by the program is 'Women have expanded economic opportunities to earn an income and accumulate economic assets'. Activities under this area in Fiji include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving market governance, management, infrastructure and access to financial services to increase women's economic empowerment. Ensuring markets are more sustainable, accessible and safe for women vendors in Fiji (Markets for Change, UN Women, 2014–2020). Researching and designing an economic empowerment project to enhance Fiji women cultural industry producers' access to markets and sustainable incomes (2019–2020). WINvest Fiji - Closing the gender gap in Fiji's private sector through company peer learning, dissemination platforms and advisory engagements (International Finance Corporation, 2016–2020). Scholarships for women from low socio-economic backgrounds, rural and remote areas to complete the Certificate IV in Beauty and Spa therapy at South Pacific Academy of Beauty Therapy (2014–2020).

Technical assistance	Australian Volunteers International	The Australian Volunteers Program matches a broad range of skilled Australians with partner organisations in the Indo-Pacific region, to support them to achieve their own development goals. In 2018-19, 60 Australian volunteers worked in Fiji across 34 organisations.
New Zealand		
Education	Support for EQAP	The Educational Quality and Assessment Program (EQAP) at the Pacific Community (SPC) is a valued and respected partner working across the Pacific region to raise the quality of education. As the key technical agency in the region for education, EQAP supports the development of assessment practice, curriculum and teacher standards, and the effective use of data across the Pacific. We are working with Australia to jointly provide broad-based support for EQAP and their work. This is envisaged as a ten-year partnership and we have committed NZD\$5m in base funding for the first three years.
Education	E-learning for Science in Pacific Schools	Design of a program to address the shortage of teaching expertise in science through an e-learning initiative.
Scholarships	New Zealand Scholarships	Full scholarships to study in New Zealand or at a Pacific university.
Scholarships	New Zealand Short Term Training Scholarships	New Zealand Short Term Training Scholarships fund skills training and work experience for professionals from eligible Pacific countries and Timor-Leste for between a minimum of one week and up to 12 months. Scholarships are available for technical or vocational study, non-formal courses, a work placement, Diploma programs and certain maritime courses.
Employment	Recognised Seasonal Employer scheme	The Recognised Seasonal Employer scheme (RSE) allows New Zealand employers in the horticulture and viticulture industries to employ up to 12,850 migrant workers for up to seven months each year. MFAT supports Pacific Island countries to maximise participation in the RSE scheme by funding the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment to deliver capacity-building activities that improve worker selection, recruitment processes and pre-departure programs. While in New Zealand, RSE workers have access to additional training (such as English language, financial management, and business development) through Vakameasina - the RSE Worker Training Program, delivered by Fruition Limited.
Employment	New Labour Mobility Initiatives	MFAT funds the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment to pilot and implement labour mobility initiatives in sectors beyond horticulture and viticulture, and to build the capacity of Pacific Island countries to recruit and prepare their workers for New Zealand. The Pacific Trades Partnership is one new initiative that offers trained Pacific carpenters and hammer-hands the opportunity to work in New Zealand's construction industry. A labour mobility fisheries pilot is also underway, offering opportunities for graduates of the Pacific marine training centres to work on New Zealand fishing vessels.
Japan		
Scholarships	Pacific Leaders' Educational Assistance for Development of State (Pacific-LEADS), 2016-2018	Pacific-LEADS aims to foster young leaders who play a vital role towards the resolution of development challenges in Pacific island countries. Between 2016 and 2018, 120 government officials from 14 Pacific nations received scholarships to undertake Masters study in Japan.
Education	Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) scholarships	The Government of Japan through the Embassy of Japan offers scholarships for postgraduate research, undergraduate studies and diploma courses to qualified nationals of Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Tuvalu and Vanuatu for studies in Japan.

UK		
Education	Scholarships	Chevening scholarships are available for postgraduate studies in any subject at any UK university. Budget for FY 19-20 is £74,567.
ADB		
Education/Skills development	University of the South Pacific: Higher Education in the Pacific Investment Program 2012-2022	The program sought to support USP in expanding access to higher education in its 12 member Pacific island countries by improving physical environments and learning programs. The program aimed to strengthen USP's regional role and support its four priority areas: (i) improvement and expansion of the USP regional campuses and accommodation facilities in Kiribati, the Solomon Islands, and Fiji; (ii) enhancement of information and communication technology (ICT)-based learning programs and curricula; (iii) improvement of USP student services; and (iv) improvement of USP governance and management systems.



HOW TVET CHANGE HAPPENS FIJI STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVES

FIJI MAY 2019

