



Inclusive Education Country Profile



This information was provided by government and civil society during a regional mapping of inclusive education undertaken in 2020–2021. Led by the Inclusive Education Taskforce, the mapping supports implementation of the Pacific Regional Inclusive Education Framework (PRIEF) and the Pacific Regional Education Framework (PacREF).

Inclusive Education Policy Framework

Legislation: Constitution 2013, Act 4/2018 Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Child Welfare Decree 44/2010, Human Rights Commission Decree 2009

Inclusive Education Policy: Special and Inclusive Education Policy 2016–2020 (under review)

Operationalizing Inclusive Education: The Special and Inclusive Education Policy is operationalized through an accompanying implementation plan

Inclusive Education Standards: Fiji Schools Teachers Competency Framework 2009

Inclusive Education in the Budget

What does the budget cover? (these figures relate to pre-COVID budget cuts)

- \$\$\$\$ Transport assistance specifically for disadvantaged or disabled students
- \$\$\$ Community awareness on disability and education
- \$\$\$ Teacher aide/assistant salaries
- \$\$\$ Training for school staff
- \$\$\$ Assistive devices/technologies
- \$\$ Infrastructure funding for accessibility modifications
- \$ Outreach/itinerant support to schools by specialists

Legend: Extent to which inclusive education activities are covered in the Ministry of Education (MoE) budget:

- \$\$\$\$ = A great extent
- \$\$\$ = A lot
- \$\$ = A moderate amount
- \$ = A little
- = Not at all



Special/inclusive education a mandatory part of teacher training

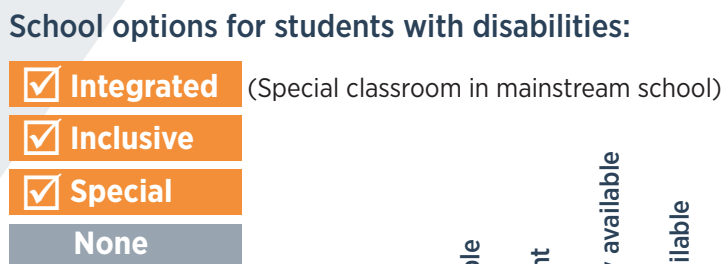
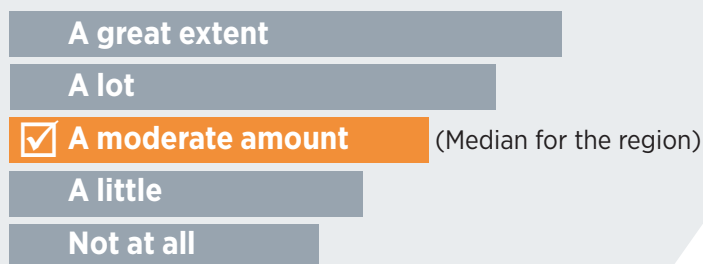
Frequency of teacher in-service training in inclusive education

- More than once a year
- Once a year
- Less than once a year
- Not sure

10% of teachers have participated in in-service training on inclusive education

Teacher aides/assistants are part of the workforce

To what extent are schools encouraged to implement strategies that support students to build a school environment that is positive for all?



Use of Individual Education Plans?

Availability of reasonable accommodations across the country:

	Not available	Small extent	Moderately available	Widely available
Student sits close to board or teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Lessons are modified or reduced in complexity based on individual student	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Enlarged printed materials are provided	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Additional time is provided during assessments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Personal assistance is provided during assessments (e.g. note-taking)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Physical education activities are modified	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Personal assistance is provided (e.g. assistance with note-taking, communication, managing behaviour)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assistive technologies are provided (e.g. magnifier, electronic devices, computers, communication boards)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Culture of inclusion: To what extent is there a culture of inclusion at all levels (national, sub-national, schools)?



What proportion of schools have...

	No schools	Small proportion of schools	About half of all schools	Most schools	All schools
classrooms that are accessible and safe for all? (people with difficulties moving and seeing can get in and around)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
handwashing facilities that are accessible and safe for all?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
sanitation (toilet) facilities that are accessible and safe for all?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
menstrual hygiene management facilities that are accessible and safe for all?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
a disaster response plan in place that is inclusive of all students?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
measures to address bullying?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Encouraging retention

- School-based retention programmes to reduce the likelihood of students dropping out include strengthening parental engagement through home visits, provision of counselling for both parents and children, and the CAROLS programme (Children At Risk Of Leaving Schools).

Encouraging transition

- There are no specific programmes to support the transition of students from one year level to the next. Current practice is that students automatically progress to subsequent grades without a hurdle requirement of a final examination.
- The MoE supports and encourages special schools to transition students into inclusive schools where possible.

Supporting out-of-school children

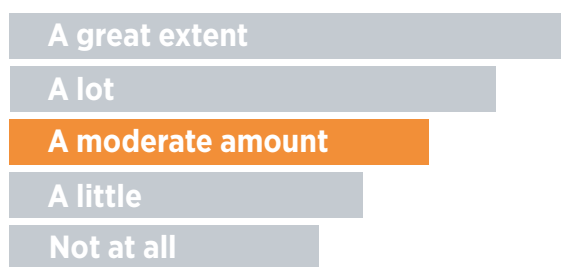
- Enrolment of out-of-school children occurs based on availability of space in schools, and age appropriateness of the child. However, there is no defined MoE guideline.

Supporting post-school pathways

- Life skills training is embedded in the special schools, delivered according to Individual Educational Plans.
- Several secondary and vocational training institutions provide education that is inclusive of students with disabilities. Fiji National University runs 14 technical colleges which include students with disabilities.
- Many special schools run Work Ready programmes with local employers who provide training and employment for special school graduates.

Partnerships for Inclusive Education

How much are school committees or working groups encouraged to support inclusive education (e.g. student associations, school boards, parent-teacher associations)?



Inclusive education coordination mechanism

- Is there a national stakeholder group made up of government and civil society representatives that meets regularly to progress inclusive education commitments?

Monitoring Inclusive Education

Does the Education Management Information System (EMIS) include data on the following:

- | Response | Questions |
|----------|---|
| YES | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disability? • Rural/remote? • Socioeconomic status/poverty? • Students who have dropped out? |
| NO | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural, linguistic or ethnic minorities? |





Looking Forward

ENABLERS:

- Acts/legislation and policies to promote inclusive education are in place.
- Disability data collection and entry into Fiji's Education Management Information System (FEMIS) allows schools to understand how to optimize the inclusion of students with disabilities in classrooms. This also enables the MoE to provide evidence-based resourcing to schools to support the costs of inclusion.
- There is a standard IEP and it is consistently used across special schools.
- Reasonable accommodations are applied in classrooms, including to enable the completion of exams by people with disabilities.
- The MoE has a dedicated special and inclusive education officer in the Curriculum Advisory Services Team.
- A Disability-Inclusive Education Handbook for Teachers is available in all primary and secondary schools.
- Additional staff to support special and inclusive education is provided through a partnership between the MoE and the Australian aid programme.
- Resources to support inclusive and differentiated use of the national curriculum framework are being developed in response to a curriculum review.

CHALLENGES:

- Persistent negative attitudes towards the education of children with disabilities keep them out of school.
- Special and inclusive education is managed by one person at the MoE; Collaborative input is needed across MoE.
- Skilled and confident human resources are lacking at the Ministry and in schools, which limits the effective implementation of inclusive education.
- The work required to support special and inclusive education nationally is huge and requires collaborative input across the MoE.
- Budgetary impacts of COVID are restricting the ability of schools to employ teacher aides.

FUTURE PRIORITIES:

- Curriculum needs review and redevelopment so that it can be adapted for children depending on their learning needs.
- Compliance with mandated acts & policies in schools, including the Child Protection Policy and all other policies, needs to be boosted.
- Expanded professional development in inclusive education, including online teacher training modules.

