



SOLOMON ISLANDS GOVERNMENT

**Ministry of Education and Human Resource
Development**



**Education Strategic Framework
2016-2030**

FOREWORD

I am honoured to present the **Education Strategic Framework (ESF), 2016 – 2030**. This document encapsulates a trajectory for development of education in Solomon Islands for the next fifteen years. With this document, I trust that our aspirations for social stability and economic progress in this country will be realized. Our education system will play a major role to ensure this. The DCC government believes that a focused, rounded, and a well-grounded education system is vital to prepare Solomon Islanders to meet the myriad development challenges and changes that Solomon Islands faces, now, and in the future.

Solomon Islands is a maritime nation, with a youthful population. It comprises scattered islands of varied types, stretching from Shortlands in the North to Anuta in the far East, in Temotu Vatud. Indeed, Solomon Islands is a nation with diverse cultures and rich linguistic heritage.

We believe that an education system that is sensitive and attentive to the environment and the people will concentrate on equipping our people with knowledge and skills to scan and use the environment to better our lives.

The **Education Strategic Framework 2016 – 2030** assures people of Solomon Islands that the development of education in the country to make life better for all of us, is within reach.

The **Education Strategic Framework 2016 – 2030** also highlights the progress we have made and the challenges we have encountered in the education system in the previous **Education Strategic Framework 2007–2015**. It has adapted and included global expectations captured in the **Sustainable Development Goals** (SDGs) for an education system that meets the needs of Solomon Islanders.

It also affirms government's commitment to remain focused on the vision and the goals Solomon Islands has set for its education system. As expected, the **Education Strategic Framework 2016 – 2030** together with the **National Education Action Plan (NEAP) 2016 – 2020, 2021 – 2025, 2026- 2030** sets out strategic directions to reach the goals and realize our vision.

I commend this **Education Strategic Framework 2016 – 2030** to you for the advancement of Solomon Islanders and Solomon Islands, as a whole.



Hon John Moffat Fugui MP

Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development

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ACRONYMS

AWP	Annual Work Plan	SIEMIS	Solomon Islands Education Management Information System
COP	Conference of the Parties	SIG	Solomon Islands Government
DP	Development Partners	SINU	Solomon Islands National University
DFL	Distance Flexible Learning	SITESA	Solomon Islands Tertiary Education Skills Authority
ECCE	Early Childhood Care Education	SISTA	Solomon Islands Standardized Assessment
ESL	Early School Leaving	SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
EA	Education Authority	TIT	Teacher in Training
EMIS	Education Management Information System	TSHB	Teaching Service Handbook
ESF	Education Strategic Framework	TVET	Technical Vocational Education Training
FBT	Field Based Training	TWG	Technical Working Group
GDP	Gross Domestic Product	USP	University of the South Pacific
GER	Gross Enrolment Rate		
HR	Human Resources		
ICT	Information Communication Technology		
ICTSU	Information Communication Technology Support Unit		
JS	Junior Secondary		
JSS	Junior Secondary School		
MIS	Management Information System		
MTEF	Medium Term Expenditure Framework		
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding		
MEHRD	Ministry of Education and Human Resources		
MoFT	Ministry of Finance and Treasury		
NEAP	National Education Action Plan		
NQF	National Qualification Framework		
NTQF	National Teachers Qualification Framework		
NGO	Non-Government Organisation		
ODA	Oversees Development Assistance		
PAF	Performance Assessment Framework		
PAR	Performance Assessment Report		
PE	Primary Education		
PEAP	Provincial Education Action Plan		
RTC	Rural Training Centre		
SIMS	Scholarship Information Management System		
SE	Senior Education		
SMT	Senior Management Team		
SS	Senior Secondary		
S4EG	Skills for Economic Growth		
SICHE	Solomon Islands College of Higher Education		

1. Introduction

1.1 Lessons Learnt from the Previous Implementation of the ESF

There has been significant progress made to improve education access, quality and management during the period of the Education Strategic Framework 2007 – 2015. Important achievements included:

- Improved learning outcomes (the percentage of Grade 6 children achieving the expected level of literacy has increased from 29% in 2005 to 40% in 2010 and for numeracy the increase has been from 41% to 46% in 2010)
- Increased enrolments (primary 24% increase, junior secondary 70% increase; over 20,000 new students in each)¹.
- Improved transition rates for girls and boys (an increase of about 10% for both);
- Increased number of teachers (primary 29%, junior secondary 63%)
- Increased percentage of qualified teachers (primary was 8% now 64%; junior secondary was 21%; now 83%)
- Reduced student/classroom ratio in primary (26.7/classroom to 23.8)
- Significant system improvements recognised by external stakeholders including: leadership, policy and financial management

The ESF set an ambitious target for policy development, and MEHRD has achieved much of this. Policies developed during this period include:

Policies introduced during the previous ESF

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Teacher Education and Development (2007) | 10. Tertiary Education Policy (2010) |
| 2. Early Childhood Education Policy (2008) | 11. Use of Vernacular Languages and English in Education Policy (2010) |
| 3. School Grants Policy (2008 and 2012) | 12. Disaster Preparedness and Education in Emergency Situations Policy (2011) |
| 4. Education Authority Grants Policy (2008) | 13. Senior Secondary Education Policy (2011) |
| 5. Basic Education Policy (2009) | 14. School Libraries Policy (2011) |
| 6. Procurement, Warehouse Management and Distribution of Education Resources Policy (2009) | 15. National Literacy Policy (2014) |
| 7. Distance Education and Flexible Learning Policy (2010) | 16. Special Education Policy (proposed) |
| 8. Learners Assessment in School Policy (2010) | 17. Gender Policy (proposed) |
| 9. Infrastructure Policy (2010) | 18. School Establishment Policy (proposed) |

However, many of these policies were only partially implemented or not implemented at all. The main reasons why these policies did not succeed in the implementation phase are summarised in the table below. This is why the process to develop this ESF paid important attention to the problem analysis phase, and attempted to gather as many stakeholders and views as possible and engage them in a participative discussion exercise to analyse real problems and potential solutions.

The result of this collective thinking exercise was recorded in a series of complex problem analysis trees that were later transformed in the Theory of Change² that was used to govern the design of the main actions proposed in this ESF and in the NEAP 2016 - 2020. The Theory of Change analysed the preconditions, inputs, processes and outcomes to address two main educational goals: (i) how to develop inclusive access and full completion and (ii) how to obtain measurable quality improvements in student's performance.

¹ On average there were 4,617 more enrolments across Solomon Islands or an additional 27,704 students from 2009 to 2014 enrolled after introduction of grants.

² The Theory of Change diagrams used to design this ESF and NEAP are attached in the annex

Lessons Learnt from the Previous ESF Implementation Process

- ❑ In many cases, the knowledge and experience of the implementers was not fully taken into account during policy development
- ❑ The means of implementation were not sufficiently considered when policy initiatives were discussed. Sometimes the timeframes and results promised were not realistic or consistent with the existing capacity and resources
- ❑ Financial implications were not fully analysed or forecasted before the policy was approved
- ❑ Very little or no analysis of the uncertainties and underlying assumptions made in formulating the policy initiative that could affect the success of implementation
- ❑ Policies were often not adequately communicated to key stakeholders
- ❑ Monitoring of policy implementation was not systematic
- ❑ The government was not sufficiently informed of the risks, challenges and practical aspects of the policy that could have an impact on implementation
- ❑ Contingency measures to deal with implementation risks were not usually included in policy formulation
- ❑ External consultants often undertook reviews or evaluations and only limited resources were allocated to build MEHRD's internal research and evaluation capability

The problem analysis also revealed that the poor performance to achieve these goals was caused by key management limitations at the school, provincial and MEHRD levels. These limitations were also analysed with the same level of detail and were used to inform the design of the management reforms that are proposed in this ESF. The Theory of Change diagrams presented in the annex summarise the basic architecture for the design of the interventions that are proposed in this strategy and should be valuable to support the design and implementation of the different NEAPs and the evaluation of this strategy.

2. Defining Solomon Islands' response to the Sustainable Development Goals

This is no ordinary year for Solomon Islands and the global fight against poverty and a sustainable future. The approaching conclusion of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) has stimulated global moves towards crafting a more ambitious successor agenda backed by reinvigorated global partnerships. A new development agenda has emerged from two major international summits that happened in 2015: (i) the United Nations General Assembly's special summit held in September which confirmed the adoption of global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), (ii) the 21st Conference of the Parties (COP) on Climate Change that will forge new agreement on reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

This emerging post-2015 development agenda demands a vision that is broader, more holistic and more ambitious than the one used for the MDGs. The SDGs aim to complete the unfinished business of MDG targets that were not met, move beyond half way targets to get to zero on extreme poverty, and seek progress across all three dimensions of sustainable development: social, economic and environmental.

Poverty eradication, changing unsustainable and promoting sustainable patterns of consumption and production and protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development are the overarching objectives of and essential requirements for sustainable development. Education is one of the building blocks of the SDGs and it is enshrined in *Sustainable Development Goal 4: "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all"*.

This goal defines seven specific targets and three means of implementation:

SDG Education Targets

- 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
- 4.2 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

- 4.3 By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university
- 4.4 By 2030, increase by [x] per cent the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship
- 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
- 4.6 2030, ensure that all youth and at least [x] per cent of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy
- 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

Means of Implementation

- 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.b By 2020, expand by [x] per cent 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 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, increase by [x] per cent the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States

How Education affect other SDG targets

Education has a key role in the overall achievement of all the SDGs. This new structure of proposed goals and associated targets demands better integration and policy coherence across sector policies. The proposed goals and targets can be seen as a network, in which links among goals exist through targets that explicitly refer to multiple goals. The achievement of the Education Goal targets is at the core of this network:

- *Poverty Reduction.* Education is directly associated with the achievement of Goal 1: end poverty in all its forms everywhere
- *Health.* Key targets in this area are dependent on education deliverables, for example target 3.7 (By 2030, ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes)
- *Gender Equality.* Success in Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls is highly dependent on Education targets 4.1, 4.2, 4.3 and 4.6
- *Reduce Inequality.* Achievement of education target 4.7 is important to support the achievement of Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries
- *Sustainable Consumption.* Education target 4.7 is also important for Goal 12, especially target 12.8 (By 2030, ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature)
- *Climate Change.* Some of the targets for Goal 13 depend on Education outcomes, especially target 13.3 (Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning)

Solomon Islands Response to the SDGs

The SDGs are not mandatory; they describe a general global agenda, including some global public goods that cannot be implemented by any country on its own. Each country has primary responsibility for its own economic and social development and for many countries as Solomon Islands; the role of the SDGs is fundamentally aspirational. The SDGs are supposed to inform future national and sector development plans and budgets and individual countries will have to decide what better represents national priorities

amongst these goals, and make a prioritization from the 17 goals, 169 targets and more than 300 provisional indicators proposed by the SDGs.

This Education Framework is proposing ambitious goals and targets for 2030. These targets are inspired by the SDGs but they mainly reflect the key priorities and challenges of the education sector in Solomon Islands. We are a small country, with a complex geography; a small but scattered population and a territory that is prone to some of the worst effects of climate change that permanently challenge our education infrastructure and the resilience of our population. The prioritisation shown below also took into account capacity, financial and other limitations that we will have to overcome to achieve our goals.

Table 1.1. Solomon Islands response to the SDGs: our education targets for 2030

SDG targets	Solomon Islands response
4.1 Free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fee free access and full completion for primary and junior secondary • Extend fee free access to senior secondary • Focus on improving learning outcomes
4.2 All girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full enrolment for all 5 year olds • Extend access to 3-5 year olds • Focus on improving quality
4.3 Equal access to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on quality and relevance of the tertiary skills sector (covering TVET and higher education) • Reduce gender disparity in the tertiary skills sector • Increased access for underrepresented target groups
4.4 increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that secondary education include both work-related skills and transferable skills, including entrepreneurial and ICT skills • Introduce lifelong learning approaches for education and training
4.5 Eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend achievements in gender parity for ECCE and PE and improve gender balance in SS • Explore ways to measure incidence and find affordable solutions to address economic, language physical, and other forms of exclusion
4.6 Ensure that all youth and at least X per cent of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on the formal education system • Strengthen multi stakeholder approaches to extend adult literacy
4.7 ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additions to existing curricula in primary and secondary education • Coordinated actions with other ministries

This Education Strategic Framework will define our vision, goals and main strategies for all education sectors, what we identified as the main challenges that we will have to overcome in each case and the proposed way forward showing the key milestones in this process.

3. Vision, Goals and Main Strategies for Education

VISION:

Our vision is that all Solomon Islanders will develop as individuals and possess the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to earn a living and to live in harmony with others and their environment. We envisage a united and progressive society in which all can live in peace and harmony with fair and equitable opportunities for a better life.

Parents and members of the community are to develop a sense of ownership of all educational institutions

GOALS:

The long-term goals for the Solomon Islands education system over the planning period (2016 to 2030) are:

- To provide equitable access to all girls and boys to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education by 2030 and to achieve full enrolment of all 5 year olds by 2030
- To achieve full completion to quality and relevant basic education (primary and junior secondary) for all children in the Solomon Islands

- To extend equitable access and ensure quality and relevance of secondary education to deliver both work-related skills and transferable skills, including entrepreneurial and ICT skills to increase the number of youth who have relevant skills for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship
- To consolidate the establishment of a comprehensive, integrated system of Tertiary Education which provides quality education and relevant skills for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship
- To strengthen multi stakeholder approaches to extend adult literacy and gradually introduce lifelong learning approaches to education and training
- To manage education resources in an efficient, effective and transparent manner so that it promotes access and quality goals

STRATEGIES:

The overarching strategic goal is to consolidate the universal completion of basic education for all children by 2030 and provide extended access to quality secondary and technical and vocational education and training. The Government will place especial priority on refocusing education sector expenditure to providing services at primary and junior secondary schools to achieve the target of achieving universal completion of quality junior secondary by 2030. Four key strategies have therefore been developed as a focus for the period 2016 to 2030:

(i) Focus on Quality, Relevance and improving Learning. Increasing access will be accompanied by measures to improve the quality and relevance of education and improving learning: (a) to adequately and equitably resource education institutions and programmes with safe and easily-accessible facilities; (b) providing teacher policies and regulations to ensure a sufficient number of qualified, professionally-trained and well-motivated teachers who are equitably and efficiently deployed across the whole education system; (c) using learner-centred pedagogical approaches, books and other learning materials and technologies that are cost-effective and available to all learners (children, youth and adults); (d) improving systems and practices for assessment of learning outcomes in cognitive and non-cognitive domains, with on-going formative and summative assessment as an integral part of the teaching and learning process.

(ii) Strengthening Policies, Plans, Management and Systems. More work is needed to ensure stronger national legal and policy frameworks that lay the foundation and conditions for the delivery and sustainability of good quality education. Highest priority will be given to ensuring the effective implementation of these policies and to develop the management capacity of MEHRD, focusing on strengthening key central and decentralised education management functions. Appropriate institutional management arrangements, governance and accountability mechanisms, management quality assurance, planning, information systems, financing procedures and mechanisms, and general administrative systems will have to be reviewed or developed. A better use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) will be harnessed to support evidence-based decision-making, strengthen education systems and provide education services more efficiently.

(iii) Emphasizing Equity, Inclusion and Gender Equality. Cross-sector policies and plans will be reviewed or developed to address the social, cultural and economic barriers that deprive children, youth and adults of education and quality learning. This will include changes in education contents, approaches, structures and funding strategies to address the situation of groups of excluded children, youth and adults (e.g. girls, children with disability and language minorities, the poorest, and so on). Strategies to address exclusion will include: (a) reduction of cost barriers; (b) provision of second chance/re-entry programmes; (c) development of inclusive school facilities; (d) extending teacher training on inclusive education; and (e) mainstreaming use of vernacular language policies. Further gender-sensitive measures are needed to ensure that teaching and learning has an equal impact on girls and boys and to ensure the personal security of girls in and on the journey to and from education institutions. It is also necessary to develop more systematic approaches to collect analyse and use disaggregated data to measure marginalization in education and set targets for reducing inequity and to monitor progress towards these targets.

(iv) Introducing Lifelong Learning. The education systems will gradually adopt institutional strategies and policies and adequately resourced programmes to ensure opportunities for all age groups including adults. This will include special measures to address the needs of adult learners and children, youth and

adults who remain illiterate. To ensure the acquisition of new knowledge and skills, we will promote institutionalization of mechanisms and processes to assess skills requirements and ensure that curricula and education and training systems are responsive to the needs of the labour market and society. Cross-sector approaches traversing education, science and technology, family, employment, industrial and economic development, migration and integration, citizenship, social welfare and public finance policies will be used.

Establishing the Main Priorities for the next National Education Action Plans

The reforms mentioned in this Education Strategic Framework 2016-2030 will not happen overnight, and most will require sustained and consistent work oriented over a medium-term period. With this purpose in mind, the timeframe for the NEAPs was extended from three to five years. It will, therefore, require three NEAPs to complete the programming cycle of this ESF. A strategic sequencing for the implementation of these three NEAPS is also proposed, and the ESF sets key objectives for each³.

The priorities established for each NEAP are the result of a prioritisation that took into consideration the existence of three main restrictions:

- **Financial:** there are significant financial/budgetary limitations that means even sustaining the past gains will be a challenge without substantial overall improvements in efficiency, and therefore, severely restrict the scope and ambition of any new programmes
- **Capacity:** there are fundamental capacity restrictions that have not been fully addressed in the past, that if not given priority will prevent achievement of any meaningful and sustainable improvements in student learning outcomes in successive NEAPs
- **Management:** there are systemic management limitations at the school, EA and MEHRD levels that will undermine the successful implementation of each NEAP reforms unless they are addressed through well-coordinated management strengthening programmes

The resulting implementation plan proposes a phased approach that builds on the expected achievements that each NEAP should make to expand the system's financial efficiency and execution capacity. These will allow projecting further improvements of the education system. An initial draft of this prioritisation is presented in Annex 1.

4. Expected Outcomes in Education Sector Areas

4.1 Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)

Progress Achieved Since the Last ESF: policies, regulatory framework and initiatives

Several attempts to strengthen ECCE were made during the last ESF. An ECCE Policy was completed and approved by Cabinet in 2008. The new policy stated that (i) all ECCE teachers are well qualified, trained and remunerated accordingly (ii) MEHRD will allocate adequate resources for ECCE-teacher remuneration, education, training, curriculum development, infrastructure (iii) all children with the ages of 3, 4 and 5 should go through ECCE programmes before entrance to Standard One; (iv) the last year of ECCE for the 5 year old children is considered the replacement of the former 'preparatory class'. Prep classes were to be abolished on approval of the 2008 ECCE Policy.

However, as the financial implications of implementation were not costed at the time of policy approval, severe financial gaps affected the overall implementation of this policy. The phasing out of Prep was delayed and it is still used in 88% of Primary Schools and approximately 18% of the primary school salary budget is spent on Prep teachers. Related to this is the question of finding an affordable solution to provide access for 3-4 year olds. There were hopes to achieve this by expanding the provision of ECCE centres and the posting of trained teachers financed by SIG. However, a study on the financial implications of this policy performed during the last NEAP concluded that this model would not be affordable. In the meantime, a natural expansion of ECCE centres is also happening supported by communities, international NGOs and other development partners, but many of these centres may or may not meet MEHRD desired standards. A new and affordable solution to provide access to 3-4-year-olds still needs to be conceptualised, costed and developed.

³ See Annex I Phased implementation of the ESF: programmed priorities of the next three NEAPS

Improving the quality of ECCE remains a challenge for this ESF. Curricular reforms were attempted, and a new ECCE Curriculum was developed in 2008, but the required teaching and learning resources were not fully developed. There is no official curriculum for Prep classes but many teachers use a curriculum developed in the 1990s. There was an expansion of ECCE teacher training at both for pre-service and in-service mainly through field-based training (FBT). Completion of FBT entitles graduates to obtain a salary if employed in a registered ECCE Centre. The FBT programme is not a substitute for recognised qualification for ECCE teachers; the scope and quality of this programme is basic and its impact has yet to be evaluated. The numbers of teachers completing training particularly FBT and available for placement is not fully known but in some provinces this far exceeds the numbers of vacancies in registered ECCE Centres.

The systems and timeframes for ECCE Centre registration are not yet fully defined, The ECCE Policy Annexes and/or the standards outlined in the Whole School Inspection Manual are used as a basis for determining if an ECCE Centre meets the requirements. Constraints on MEHRD and Education Authority staffing numbers and skills levels has resulted in inconsistencies and inequity in the ECCE Centre registration decisions. MEHRD’s aim to expand ECCE access and quality has not been matched by resources allocated to manage this systematically and effectively. There have been many unregistered ECCE Centres established without MEHRD’s knowledge, often supported by NGOs, Development Partners and provincial governments.

In 2014, MEHRD decided to take a more systematic approach to management of ECCE opportunities. It has included recognition and provision for ECCE in the Education White Paper for a new Education Bill to replace the Education Act of 1978. For this reform the government undertook an ECCE costing exercise, a study of whether Prep should be discontinued. In late 2014, MEHRD placed a moratorium on new ECCE Centre Registration and new teacher recruitment until it was clearer about the best way forward.

Key Challenges and Proposed Way Forward:

Significant issues still need to be addressed to ensure a more systematic approach to improving ECCE access and quality. A new and affordable system still needs to be conceptualised, costed and developed. This will certainly involve the complete recycling of Prep to transform these existing services into quality pre-school education. This new system will build from current widespread enrolment for Prep to transform it into a quality, universal solution for all schools and then gradually attempt to reach other age groups.

Long term Objective (2030)

By 2030, ensure that more girls and boys have equitable access to free, quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education

Medium Term Objectives

- To achieve full enrolment of all 5 year olds by 2030
- To improve quality of teaching and learning in ECCE introducing new contents, mainstreaming use of vernacular languages, and deploying a competent teacher force fully qualified according to MEHRD standards
- Design and implement inclusive, accessible and integrated programmes and services of good quality for early childhood, covering health, nutrition, protection and education needs, especially for children with disabilities, and support families as children’s first caregivers and teachers.
- To mainstream multi-stakeholder approaches to increase co-financing and participation in organized learning (from 24 months to the official primary school entry age) for all target groups

Key Challenges	Proposed way forward: key milestones
The need to find an affordable solution for expanding supply and providing access for ECCE to all children aged (3-5)	<p>Short Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A costed strategy to promote co-financed approaches to expand access to 3-4 year olds by providing support to community ECCE centres developed by 2017

Key Challenges	Proposed way forward: key milestones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A plan to transform current Preparatory (Prep) into to quality, foundational pre-primary education and mainstreams the use of vernacular language teaching implemented from 2018 onwards <p>Long Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The complete expansion of Prep for 5 year olds achieved by 2030 • Expansion of the ECCE system partially implemented by 2030
The need to improve the quality of teaching and learning in ECCE	<p>Short Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A reviewed curriculum for quality ECCE is developed and approved by 2018 and fully implemented by 2025 • A cost-efficient plan to mainstream the use of vernacular languages in Early Childhood Education approved by 2019 <p>Long Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full recycling of teachers with FBT completed by 2025 • All teachers are fully qualified according to MEHRD standards by 2030
The need for consolidating further support from parents, development partners and civil society	<p>Short Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A national plan to mainstream multi-stakeholder approaches to increase participation in organized learning (from 24 months to the official primary school entry age) for all target groups is approved by 2018 • Strengthened and functional School Boards are operating by 2020 <p>Long Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-sector approaches for ECCE policies and strategies, supported by coordination among ministries responsible for nutrition, health, social and child protection, water/sanitation, justice and education, are piloted by 2020 and fully introduced by 2030

4.2 Primary Education

Progress Achieved Since the Last ESF: policies, regulatory framework and initiatives

The Education Strategic Framework 2007-2015 already stated that, *“The desired policy outcome is that there be universal basic education in the Solomon Islands for all children in the primary education sector that is from the Preparatory Year to the end of Standard 6. This universal basic education should meet the following criteria: (i) education should be available to all primary school children on an equitable basis; (ii) the education should be of high quality, should promote student achievement at a high level, and should meet individual and national needs; and (iii) it should be delivered by competent, qualified and motivated teachers; (iv) it should be compulsory and fee free.”* We are still abiding by those guiding principles and we propose in this period to complete the job already started and achieve the results listed above.

During the previous ESF, impressive progress was made to ensure the increase in access to primary education is matched with improved quality of teaching and learning. The percentage of qualified teachers in primary education increased from 8% in 2006 to 64% by 2014. Much of this increase is due to the increased numbers of places in teacher training institutions, particularly the Solomon Islands National University but also through the Certificate in Teaching Primary distance and flexible learning programme designed to provide opportunities for existing uncertified teachers working in schools. In future, greater emphasis will need to be given to quality assurance of teacher training (particularly the impact training has on teaching practice) and promoting on-going school based teacher professional development. Although there has been some improvement in student literacy and numeracy during the period of the ESF 2007-2015, this is recognised as the most important area where further progress is required.

Solomon Islands has a very high birth rate and the task of providing universal access and completion for basic education is a constant challenge to the capacity of the education system. A number of reforms were initiated to achieve equitable access and completion to quality education and many of them are still on going. Additional efforts are still needed to accomplish the following priorities:

Fee Free Basic Education. A new Statement and Guidelines for Basic Education in Solomon Islands was approved in 2009. This policy specifies the roles and responsibilities of education stakeholders and sets

out access, quality and management objectives for schools. It includes requirements for establishment of school boards, whole school development plans, and plans to reduce dropout rates. Annexes to this Policy further specified the requirements of schools in relation to charging of fees and the expectations on parents to contribute to school funding. Importantly, the policy states, *“No children can be pushed out from school, because of not paying fees or contributions”*. MEHRD continues to receive a significant number of complaints in 2015 about schools setting of fees and pressure being placed on parents to pay.

School Grants. A new School Policy approved in October 2008 introduced the use of School Grants to provide direct public funding to all schools. School grants fund all primary schools whether from provincial, church or private education authorities. Funding formulas are based on what it would cost to cover school operational costs that expected emphasis on supply of teaching and learning materials and school maintenance. These were updated in 2012. In 2014 more work was needed to improve administration, equity and accountability in the use of school grant.

Teacher Salaries. A new Teaching Scheme of Service now funds teacher salaries in all registered primary schools of provincial, church or private education authorities. It was expected that education authorities would meet teacher housing and travel costs. This requirement is being reviewed in 2014 and earlier than this MEHRD began subsidising teacher travel costs.

Compulsory Education Start Age The Education Strategic Framework required development of a policy on age at which attendance at school is compulsory. There is evidence of a problem with right age enrolment, particularly in more remote communities. A major reason for this problem that is too far away for younger children to safely walk or canoe to their nearest primary school. The Education White Paper 2015 recommends that the Minister be given the power to declare education compulsory for 6 to 15 years old in specified geographical areas. A decision is still needed to reduce the number of over aged children enrolling in first grade. This decision will have to take into account whether there is sufficient provision of education facilities in that location to allow all children of the compulsory education age to be accommodated.

Access to Primary Education. Since 2007 more classrooms have been built, new schools established and more students attend primary education. Most decisions to increase the number of classrooms or expand the primary school network are initiated by school communities and/or the Education Authorities. There is not yet in place adequate policy and procedures to support systematic identification and prioritisation of school network needs or to confirm whether the adequate planning and resources are available to successfully establish these new schools. The issue of students dropping out of primary school remains a problem. Although initiatives to reduce costs to parents and to improve the quality of teaching reduced drop out rates, an overall plan to prevent Early School Leaving and/or to provide compensatory measures for those who drop-out is still needed.

Quality of Primary Education The critical levels of underachievement in literacy and numeracy remain high: 2013 SISTA results indicate there has been some improvements in Year 4 and 6 student literacy and numeracy achievement but the issue of critical levels of underachievement remains. In 2013 MEHRD commenced planning a more systematic approach to addressing the issue of improving early grades literacy. Good progress was made until 2012 in the development of the primary education curriculum and the production of teacher guides and textbooks based on the curriculum strategic plan. A student centred approach to teaching and learning was included in the Curriculum Policy. This requires moving from an ‘academic’ subject-based approach based on the needs of the subjects towards a practical approach based on the perceived needs of the students themselves. There are concerns about loss of momentum in curriculum development; the timely production of curriculum materials and efficient and timely distribution of these materials and substantial progress has to be made to achieve the desired results.

The ability of teachers to effectively use the new curriculum and the related resources also remains a question, and a systematic plan for delivering more efficient, competence based teacher professional development in curriculum is yet to be finalised. There is some coverage of curriculum in the Certificate of Teaching – Primary for untrained primary teachers but the impact of this teacher training is still unknown.

Key Challenges and Proposed Way Forward:

There are still some issues to ensure equitable access, especially because we cannot yet systematically measure the main reasons for social, cultural and economical exclusion and understand the best policies and measures to avoid it. A renewed effort is needed to address the various factors that are limiting education quality and relevance and focus the design of future interventions with the main purpose of achieving short-term measurable results.

Long term Objective (2030)

To achieve full completion to quality and relevant basic education (primary and junior secondary) for all children in the Solomon Islands

Medium Term Objectives

- To implement effective policies to improve access for priority target groups⁴
- Focus on gender-balanced completion and develop early school leaving prevention measures
- To complete and strengthen existing reforms to improve quality of education: curriculum implementation, teacher training, availability of quality education resources and adequate school infrastructures

Key Challenges	Proposed way forward: key milestones
The need to design and implement effective policies to allow equitable access and to improve completion for priority target groups	<p>Short Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop affordable, new ways to expand access, (not just infrastructures) and specific ways to reach under-represented target groups • Fully develop the capacity to diagnose the size and main causes of exclusion for all priority target groups and to map and monitor exclusion by 2018 • A sustainable strategy to mainstream the use of vernacular languages to avoid social exclusion in education is developed and implemented by 2018 <p>Long Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical accessibility to primary schools is substantially improved and all existing schools comply with MEHRD basic physical operating conditions (including water and sanitation) to provide quality education by 2025 • Early School Leaving (ESL) policies including prevention and second chance education fully introduced by 2025 • New measures to reduce economic exclusion are piloted by 2025 and fully extended by 2030
The need to improve internal efficiency of the primary education system and reduce GER	<p>Short Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyse cost-implications of declaring education compulsory for 6-15 years old in specified geographical areas based on their capacity to accommodate all children of the compulsory education age • Develop criteria, indicators and information systems to measure and monitor internal efficiency and to support management and school improvement by 2020 <p>Long Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforce compulsory start age of all 6 years old by 2030
The need to substantially improve quality of primary education	<p>Short Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum review is completed and mainstreams the outcomes and best practices learnt from the piloted activities in the area of Literacy and Numeracy • The curriculum introduces awareness about climate, environmental, disaster, social cohesion and social protection risk management to promote adaptation, sustainability, resilience and inclusion/equity <p>Long Term</p>

⁴ Girls, children with special learning needs, those who mainly speak vernacular languages, those who live in remote or distant geographical areas and from low economic backgrounds

Key Challenges	Proposed way forward: key milestones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of the curriculum cycle is substantially improved to accelerate the introduction of content reforms in primary education

4.3 Junior Secondary Education

Progress Achieved Since the Last ESF: policies, regulatory framework and initiatives

Junior Secondary Education (Grades 7 to 9), along with Primary Education, is part of Basic Education in Solomon Islands. The ESF 2007-2015 understood that it would take longer and require greater analysis to achieve the goal of a universal access target for Junior Secondary. It recognized that: *“the policy issue is how to provide universal basic education for all Solomon Islands students of junior secondary school age (approximate ages 13 to 15) when the number of places is restricted and population growth in the age cohort is expanding.”*

The ESF proposed several actions to achieve improved access and quality for Junior Secondary: (i) provide funding for school improvement grants at community high schools, provincial secondary schools, and national secondary schools, (ii) provide additional funding support for pre-service education for training of junior secondary school teachers at the Solomon Islands National University, (iii) revise curricula and provide learning materials to cater for agriculture, industrial arts, home economics & technology ; (iv) establish pilot projects to develop technical and vocational training initiatives ; (v) undertake impact assessments of alternative service delivery modes

The significant increase in the number of students, particularly girls, now participating in junior secondary education is another success story of the implementation of the ESF 2007-2015. This is the result of a substantial expansion of the network of Community High Schools (223 schools) and Provincial Secondary Schools (16 schools) that makes it now possible to accommodate the likely number of students emerging from primary education. This expansion allowed MEHRD to plan to abolish the Year Six Examination after 2015. One of the main purposes of this examination was as a mechanism to allocate the limited number of junior secondary school places. The capacity of the system seems to be adequate now. Supply figures for the transition from Year Six to Form 1 appear to be sufficient to cope with demand.⁵ However available data is incomplete and inconclusive to measure gender biases in this transition.

Most of the funding for JSS Infrastructure is provided by communities, Education Authorities (EAs) and Provincial Governments. MEHRD has provided only limited funding for the buildings needed to expand junior secondary school places. This is why this ESF is aiming to specify further support to EAs and work in partnership with all stakeholders to develop co-financing arrangements and establish provincial access and infrastructure development plans⁶. There is still a need for improvement to ensure more equitable access and completion for both primary and JSS. The list of improvements includes:

- The system for predicting likely student numbers, identifying priorities for new classrooms and school construction, and which schools should be permitted to expand to new year levels needs substantial improvement;
- Further assessment of the need for extra schools boarding facilities to support attendance of students who do not have a Junior Secondary School in their community is a priority
- There is evidence of overcrowding in classrooms, particularly in Honiara schools, which needs to be addressed
- The internal efficiency of the system is also a matter of concern as a high proportion of students are over-aged and repetition and drop-out rates are also high
- There is a need to develop programmes to reduce dropouts and increase transition rates

The way forward also shows that a more coordinated, evidence-based policy approach will be required to address the problem of early school leaving in Junior Secondary education especially girls. Particular consideration is being given to increase boarding facilities, particularly for girls to support opportunities for children in remote areas.

⁵ See supply and demand figures in Annex 3: Passage restrictions for key education areas

⁶ These are later explained in NEAP Programme F.2: EAs and Provincial Management Strengthening

Major steps were also taken to ensure the improved access is matched with improved quality. However quality and relevance of junior secondary education largely remains an issue that will be prioritised in this ESF. The goal of providing greater options for pathways to technical and vocational training has resulted in revised curricula for agriculture, industrial arts, home economics and technology at most levels, as well as science. These require opportunities for hands on experiences for students. New agriculture tools were delivered to junior secondary schools in 2014. A comprehensive list of equipment required for the other subjects was developed and costed. However, the problem of providing specialist classrooms for these subjects where the equipment can be used is a challenge. An assessment of the specialised classroom requirements was undertaken in 2013 and there is a design for these specialist classrooms. Construction of 40 new specialised classrooms started in December 2015. Also 27 existing science laboratories have undergone repair and maintenance.

There has been a major investment in revision of the curriculum using an Outcomes Based Approach. Implementation of greater provision of specialist classrooms and equipment to promote ‘hands on’ learning experiences started in 2014. The high cost of this means progress is slower than expected. Adequate funding for this important initiative will be an on-going challenge to be addressed in this ESF.

While the government has largely been able to fund the required number of teachers to match the expansion of the junior secondary education, the issue of the overall quality of teaching remains a major challenge. Teacher content knowledge, teaching skills, teacher ability to access in-service training, the quality of the teacher training opportunities and the difficulty equitable allocation of trained and qualified teachers, particularly for remote schools has not been adequately addressed to date, and is a major focus of the work that will be developed in this ESF 2016-2030.

Key Challenges and Proposed Way Forward:

There are still many opportunities to improve equitable access, to eliminate geographical, social, and economical exclusion and to design better policies and measures to achieve it. However, a huge effort is needed to address the various factors that are limiting junior secondary education quality and relevance. This should be the main focus during this ESF as there are many unresolved issues that will demand urgent attention if we want to achieve measureable results in the long term.

Long term Objective (2030)

To achieve full completion to quality and relevant basic education (primary and junior secondary) for all children in the Solomon Islands

Medium Term Objectives

- To improve equitable access and completion to junior secondary and reduce gender, geographic social or economic exclusion
- To ensure that secondary education delivers both work-related skills and transferable skills, including entrepreneurial and ICT skills to increase the number of youth who have relevant skills for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship
- To provide greater options for pathways to technical and vocational training improving curricula for agriculture, industrial arts, home economics and technology, as well as science
- To provide an qualified teacher supply, especially for schools in distant and remote locations

Key Challenges	Proposed way forward: actions and time-bound indicators
The need to adequately resource schools and improve the quality of teaching	<p>Short Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop foundations of long term quality by outsourcing the finalisation of the curriculum for JS; review is completed by 2018 • Additional content reforms are introduced in the curricula to ensure delivery of key competences and work-related and transferable skills, including entrepreneurial and ICT skills by 2020 • A system to ensure equitable deployment of qualified teachers for all secondary education subjects is fully implemented by 2018 <p>Long Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective implementation of the outcome-based curriculum is achieved in all secondary schools by 2025 • All schools must have well-resourced specialized classrooms like library, science labs and practical subjects necessary to teach all curriculum subjects by 2025

Key Challenges	Proposed way forward: actions and time-bound indicators
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All teachers in junior secondary are fully qualified according to MEHRD standards by 2030, including those teaching in schools in remote or distant locations
The need to further improve access and completion of junior secondary	<p>Short Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define a costed plan to expand school network (national provincial and community) to ensure full, equitable and gender-balanced transition from PE to JS Develop appropriate knowledge to understand the reasons for Early School Leaving (ESL) in JS, especially for girls and design appropriate measures to prevent ESL by 2018 <p>Long Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop affordable, new ways to expand access, (not just infrastructures) and specific ways to reach under-represented target groups A strategy to introduce Early School Leaving (ESL) policies in JS including prevention and second chance education measures is fully implemented by 2025

4.4 Senior Secondary Education

Progress Achieved Since the Last ESF: policies, regulatory framework and initiatives

The ESF 2007-2015 identified a desired policy outcome *“that all young people in the senior secondary age cohort (approximate ages 16 to 18) have access to educational services appropriate to their interests and abilities”*. Emphasis was given to the expectation that, *“girls will have equal access to education alongside boys”* and, *“the relevance of skill training investments would be reflected in increased employment”*. To expand the network of schools offering senior secondary education it was considered necessary that, *“all providers (both Government and Non-Government) would have equal access to public support.”*

A key strategy to improve the management and quality of senior secondary schools was that Provincial Secondary Schools and the National Secondary Schools should become, senior secondary schools enrolling students in forms 4, 5, 6 and 7 only, while the community high schools would enrol all students in forms 1, 2 and 3. In tandem, it was signalled that there would be expanded opportunities for the secondary age cohort out of school. This envisaged public support for technical and vocational training options outside schools. Mechanisms to be considered for achieving this included a voucher or entitlement (probably a subsidy delivered to an institution) for vocational, technical or life skills training delivered by Government and non-Government providers.

The major policy response was the Senior Secondary Education Policy of 2011. Key features of the policy are: (i) to establish targets for improved access, transition and completion, including achieving gender parity for enrolments by 2015; (ii) the requirement to assess infrastructure requirements to support planning to achieve increased access targets; (iii) Phasing out of the Form 5 National Examination by 2015 and just retaining the Form 6 Examination; (iv) developing a Distance Education and Flexible Learning (DFL) in-service teacher training programmes; (v) developing and implementing a revised outcome oriented curriculum for senior secondary education that is geared towards the development of academic as well as technical and vocational knowledge, skills, positive attitudes and values; (vi) Specialist senior secondary schools; (vii) the proposal to develop a School Establishment Policy; (viii) development of a Technical and Vocational stream; (ix) an Action Planning Framework 2011-2015 with activities, allocation of responsibilities and timeframes for policy implementation.

The 2015 Education White Paper noted that the Education Act 1978 did not provide for classification of school types that needed to be addressed in the new Act. It recommended that senior secondary be for Forms 4, 5 and 6 be classified as senior secondary. Thus Form 7 is excluded and is to be considered as a year of study specifically targeted as preparation for enrolment in a higher education institution. In 2013 work commenced on the Education Gender Policy, to be submitted to Cabinet for approval in 2016.

Inclusive Access to Senior Secondary Education. Expansion of schools that offer senior secondary education has continued. By 2015 there were 12 secondary schools providing education up to form 7 level, 21 to form 6 level and 62 secondary schools provide education up to form 5 level. However, this

has not occurred as a result of systematic identification and prioritisation of the senior secondary network requirements. Expansion is mainly based on applications from Education Authorities and is for adding additional year levels to Community High Schools. The School Establishment Policy is yet to be completed. It is expected the 2015 revision of the 2010 Infrastructure Policy and the associated medium-term plan for school establishment will provide a clearer direction.

Senior Secondary Schools are permitted to charge fees to students. The extent to which this excludes students from enrolling is not researched but is likely to be significant. The School Grants Policy provides higher levels of funding to senior secondary schools than for primary or junior secondary but the impact this has in reducing costs to parents is not known. Improved and equitable access to senior secondary education is a major issue that needs to be addressed in this ESF, with MEHRD acknowledging that greater national level funding will be required. However, before new policies are approved or ambitious targets are set, any approaches that are being considered need to be costed, and the overall financial implications of expanding access must be thoroughly analysed and forecasted.

Quality and Relevance of Senior Secondary Education. The main challenges of addressing the quality of teaching in senior secondary schools were not resolved in the previous ESF and the central questions about the quality and relevance of senior secondary education remain. Only limited progress has been made in revising the senior secondary education curriculum and no new curriculum statements have been produced. There is also an issue of continuing to provide an adequate number of textbooks to students. Most text books are old and in poor condition. There is no current plan by MEHRD for reprinting any of these books and many schools photocopy existing books. Teachers often use books they own themselves to support curriculum delivery.

The challenge of addressing the quality of teaching in senior secondary schools has not been addressed. There is no DFL option in place and teachers wishing to access in-service training resulting in a qualification have to enrol and attend a tertiary institution, mainly Solomon Islands National University. Even then a question remains as to whether the subject knowledge gained as part of the teacher training is sufficient to teach at the senior secondary level. There is an emerging consensus that teachers should be degree holders in their subject specialty area.

Key Challenges and Proposed Way Forward:

The issues for senior secondary are similar to those of junior secondary. During this ESF, more definitive policies are needed to improve equitable access and eliminate geographical, social, and economical exclusion. The new systems should ensure provision of all levels of secondary education (including Form 7) in all provinces. Senior secondary education quality and relevance needs substantial improvement and for this purpose a completely new curricular design is needed. This should be the main focus during this ESF.

Long term Objective (2030)

To extend equitable access to quality and relevant senior secondary education in the Solomon Islands

Medium Term Objectives (for NEAP 2016-2020)

- A completely new curriculum that ensures that senior secondary education delivers appropriate knowledge and both work-related skills and transferable skills, including entrepreneurial and ICT skills to increase the number of youth who have relevant skills for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship
- To provide greater options for pathways to technical and vocational training improving curricula for agriculture, industrial arts, home economics and technology, as well as science
- To provide certified teacher supply, especially for schools in distant and remote locations
- To substantially improve equitable access to senior secondary and reduce gender, geographic social or economic exclusion
- To deliver prevention and compensation (second chance) education solutions to provide with appropriate responses to the effects of early school leaving

Key Challenges	Proposed way forward: actions and time-bound indicators
The need to find an affordable solution for expanding junior secondary quality and relevance	<p>Short Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new curriculum for higher secondary that ensures delivery of key competences and work-related and transferable skills, including entrepreneurial and ICT skills is developed and approved by 2020

Key Challenges	Proposed way forward: actions and time-bound indicators
	<p>Long Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective implementation of the new curriculum is achieved in all secondary schools by 2025
<p>The need to adequately resource schools and improve the quality of teaching</p>	<p>Short Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A system to ensure equitable deployment of certified teachers for all secondary education subjects is fully implemented by 2018 <p>Long Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All secondary schools must have well-resourced specialized classrooms like library, science labs and practical subjects necessary to teach all curriculum subjects by 2025 • All teachers in SS are fully certified according to MEHRD standards by 2030, including those teaching in schools in remote or distant locations
<p>The need to further improve access and completion of junior secondary</p>	<p>Short Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure limitations are addressed to allow full passage from Primary to Junior Secondary by 2020 • A costed plan to further expand school network (national provincial and community) to ensure provision of all secondary levels (up to Form 7) in all provinces developed by 2020 • Develop appropriate knowledge to understand the reasons for Early School Leaving (ESL) in SS, especially for girls and design appropriate measures to prevent ESL by 2018 <p>Long Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical accessibility to all levels of secondary education is substantially improved in all provinces and all schools comply with MEHRD basic physical operating conditions (including water and sanitation) to provide quality education by 2030 • A strategy to introduce Early School Leaving (ESL) policies in primary and secondary education including prevention and compensation (second chance education) measures is piloted and developed by 2025
<p>The need to further improve access and completion of junior secondary</p>	<p>Short Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define a costed plan to expand school network (national provincial and community) to ensure provision of all secondary levels (up to Form 6) in all provinces by 2018 • Develop appropriate knowledge to understand the reasons for Early School Leaving (ESL) in secondary education, especially for girls and design appropriate measures to prevent and compensate ESL by 2018 <p>Long Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical accessibility to all levels of secondary education is substantially improved in all provinces and all schools comply with MEHRD basic physical operating conditions (including water and sanitation) to provide quality education by 2030 • A strategy to introduce Early School Leaving (ESL) policies in primary and secondary education including prevention and second chance education measures is fully implemented by 2025 • Develop affordable, new ways to expand access, and specific ways to reach under-represented target groups by 2025

4.5 Tertiary Education

The ESF 2007-2015 had ambitious goals for the delivery of quality education and skills development in the tertiary skills sector (Technical and Vocational Education and Training, -TVET- and higher education). The expected policy outcomes included a coordinated national system of post-school education and training with adequate provision to meet the needs of the Solomon Islands society and economy. The system was to be characterised by equity, quality, relevance and efficiency.

However, during this period, MEHRD lacked the resources and the internal management capacity to respond adequately to these goals. The area where the least progress has been made in achieving the ESF 2007-2015 goals is TVET. Minimal progress has been made to achieve the goal “to strengthen the delivery of TVET to improve the skills base of the country’s work force and to provide alternative pathways for young people”. Largely, this is due to an overreliance on the EU-led TVET programme,

which was planned to start in October 2007 but did not commence until March 2011. Even after starting, none of the relevant programme deliverables were properly achieved when the EU discontinued its funding in late 2013.

Consequently, during this period, Rural Training Centres (RTCs) were not able to significantly expand access or to improve the quality of education delivery. The skill development budget remains a small percentage of MEHRD's budget. This is clearly inadequate given the technical skills shortages that exist in the country. Some opportunities for skills training are now provided by the Australia Pacific Technical College, and there has been some expansion of skills development at SINU. However, the number of places and scope of training remained limited and is not part of an integrated approach to skills development. The DFAT supported Skills for Economic Growth (S4EG) programme was approved in 2015 with implementation commencing in November 2015. This will support the expansion and quality of skills training but is insufficient by itself to address the major challenges facing the national skills development sector.

A significant achievement in higher education has been the establishment of the Solomon Islands National University (SINU) through legislation passed in 2013 to replace the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education (SICHE). This development requires SINU to upgrade quality, infrastructure and management to ensure it meets international standards. A plan is in place to achieve this, and the Solomon Islands Government is allocating significant Development Budget funds to support SINU. International support is also being mobilised. At the time of writing this ESF it was too early to assess the impact that SINU is having to meet the workforce requirements of the country

Significant progress has been made to improve overall coordination of the tertiary education system since 2013. A new institutional architecture for the tertiary skills sector was designed to promote delivery of quality and relevant technical and university education and development of solid partnerships with the private sector and the labour market in the future. The restructuring of MEHRD approved in 2015, introduced the ability to resource a new organisational structure to manage the tertiary skills sector. The proposed Solomon Tertiary Education and Skills Authority (SITESA) Act will give a legal basis to an Authority, which will in future establish the policy direction and strategic planning for tertiary skills development, determine funding based on labour market requirements, have responsibility for oversight and audit of quality assurance, and manage the national merit based scholarship program.

A fundamental hope of this plan is that this new institutional arrangement will provide the right environment to develop and implement a new system for managing national and international scholarships. There has been a significant expansion of opportunities for higher education that has resulted in more degree level qualifications being awarded. There has also been a significant expansion of international scholarships funded from the MEHRD budget for eligible candidates. This management of the scholarships budget, fair allocation of places based on merit and monitoring of student performance remains problematic. From 2014 support has been provided to establish the Scholarships Management Information System (SIMS). However, whether scholarships system identifies the best-suited candidates, meets the skills requirements of the country, the needs of employers and whether the qualification holders end up working in areas relevant to their qualification is not adequately assessed. There is a risk that the huge financial allocation to scholarships does not represent value for the money spent. Therefore, this ESF aims to give continued priority to this issue.

SITESA should provide the necessary conditions to develop a demand-driven scholarship system designed to provide equitable access and coherence with national education and labour market priorities. The new scholarship management system will also consider the best value for money in the usage of resources and prioritise the allocation of scholarships to SINU as a first option instead of financing overseas studies only. The new system will also introduce ceilings for total expenditure, and prevent over-expenditures on scholarships that has been a feature of past scholarships management. Current scholarship expenditure is three-fold compared to stated objectives of the Ministry and Government. By merely bringing this into alignment with the Ministry's stated target would free up the fiscal space to fund many of the essential key reforms that are required in the sector.

A National Qualifications Framework (NQF) system (policies and procedures) will also be introduced as part of this major structural reform. The proposed SITESA Act has detailed provisions for the

introduction of the NQF which will be the way of ensuring a more systematic approach to ensuring the improved quality of tertiary skill development opportunities. It will allow the tertiary skills sector to be regulated by rigorous quality standards for the operation of public and private institutions, and the accreditation of programs. Support for tertiary skills development policy, curriculum development and resourcing, Rural Training Centre refurbishment, tutor training and student completion will be addressed through a more integrated approach.

The future looks promising, and renewed energy is now needed to revitalise this important sub-sector, which in future will see tertiary skills sector approaches coordinated and integrated. This new vision is also attracting further support from development partners. For example, the S4EG programme will provide support to raising the quality and relevance of demand driven training responses by SINU and RTCs in two provinces. In addition, it will provide support for establishing the regulatory environment all of Tertiary Educations. New Zealand is also funding tutor training and course development in a number of RTCs.

Key Challenges and Proposed Way Forward:

A significant part of the effort in this area will be dedicated to ensure that the new institutional solution is adequately implemented and that the capacity of SITESA is fully developed from an institutional, organisational and individual perspective. This will naturally reinforce the additional priority of improving quality and relevance (especially tertiary skill development) and the introduction of lifelong learning approaches and more flexible pathways. A more efficient and equitable system to manage scholarships is also needed to ensure that these resources support well-identified national strategic priorities and labour market needs.

Long term Objective (2030)

To consolidate the establishment of a comprehensive, integrated system of tertiary skills development, which provides quality education and relevant skills for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship

Medium Term Objectives (for NEAP 2016-2020)

- The capacity of the Solomon Islands Skills Tertiary Education and Skills Authority to fulfil its key leadership role for the development of tertiary skills development is fully developed by 2020
- A National Qualifications Framework (NQF) is fully developed and introduced together with the establishment of the Solomon Islands Tertiary Education and Skills Authority (SITESA)
- Quality and relevance of the programs delivered by the tertiary skills sector (both TVET and higher education) are substantially improved
- Expand supply of skill development courses in all provinces ensuring that supply is also designed to match the areas of interest of girls as well as boys
- The tertiary skills development sector is regulated by rigorous quality standards for the operation of public and private institutions and the accreditation of programs
- More rational use of scholarships is achieved ensuring transparency and accountability to well established, technical priorities

Key Challenges	Proposed way forward: actions and time-bound indicators
The need to consolidate a new institutional and governance system that is capable of delivering quality and relevant technical and university education and developing solid partnerships with the private sector and the labour market	<p>Short Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of SISQA is fully financed and implemented • A National Qualifications Framework (policies and procedures) is established and SISQA established and operating by 2017 • Unambiguous legislation, regulations, policies and procedures, are developed to achieve coherence and integration of all government agencies intervening in the tertiary skills development sector <p>Long Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SISQA achieves mutual recognition of SI qualifications by a selected number of priority country partners (Australia, Fiji, NZ, PNG) • The SI tertiary skills development sector is regulated by rigorous quality standards for the operation of public and private institutions and the accreditation of programs
The need to find an affordable model for expanding quality	<p>Short Term</p>

Key Challenges	Proposed way forward: actions and time-bound indicators
and access to skills development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full introduction of the “Skills for Economic Growth” programme to selected tertiary skills development providers in Guadalcanal, Malaita and Western by 2017 • Learn from this experience to design a costed strategy to expand tertiary skills development nationwide by 2020 <p>Long Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of the programmes provided by Rural Training Centres (RTCs) are substantially improved primarily to offer more comprehensive and attractive skill development opportunities for girls
The need to match the provision of tertiary skills development and scholarships with labour market demands and reduce over-expenditure of scholarships	<p>Short Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop appropriate information systems of monitoring, evaluation and prediction of trends in the labour market in collaboration with the private sector • A new system to mainstream the promotion of apprenticeships (nationally and abroad) is developed and piloted • New Scholarship Policy and Procedures are endorsed and Annual Scholarship Plans are developed and implemented • Effective partnerships between private and public sector employers and SISQA are developed to build a more demand-driven skills development system <p>Long Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint labour market analyses and Identification of industry standards are used for adapting training supply in priority skill demand areas • The Management Information System for recipients of scholarships is further developed and integrated with SIEMIS and other SIG decision making MIS

4.5 Cross Cutting Areas: Improving Teaching Quality

Progress Achieved Since the Last ESF: policies, regulatory framework and initiatives

The ESF 2007-2015 places considerable emphasis on, “*how to ensure that teachers in the Solomon Islands meet appropriate standards of quality*” so, “*that all teachers in the Solomon Islands are well qualified, trained, committed and competent, and are able to motivate and encourage all students to learn.*” The strategy required the “*development of a core of trained specialists in teacher education at SICHE.*” Despite significant cost and efforts, this continues to be an area of significant concern. The extensive problem analysis applied in this ESF revealed capacity restrictions that severely condition the achievement of meaningful and sustainable improvements in the quality of education, if these improvements are to be measured by student progress. The main capacity restrictions that need priority attention are:

(i) *Teacher Management.* The current system cannot ensure the adequate supply of sufficient quantities of motivated teachers, that have the necessary skills to teach and that are well deployed in all geographic areas. Evidence shows that the current system has important shortcomings that result in: (i) a widespread over-staffing and under-staffing relative to Teacher Staffing Formulas, estimated to be of +/- 100%; and (ii) high absenteeism, estimated to be around 20%, which is substantially higher than the internationally recognised standard of 2-3%. It is clear that any Investments in teacher training, instructional materials, and curriculum reform or capacity-building are unlikely to have much impact in an environment dominated by high absenteeism and poor staffing allocation. This is especially accentuated if most teachers do not even possess the minimal relevant qualifications to perform their duties. Progress in this area has been slow, as these situations are originated by a number of complex factors that not only depend on MEHRD and are addressed in Programme F: “Management Reforms” later in the NEAP 2016-2020.

(ii) *Management of the curriculum cycle.* The current system shows significant weaknesses in different stages of the curriculum cycle (design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation). Perhaps the most significant that historically obstructed efforts to improve education quality are those related to curriculum design, implementation and monitoring. Because of the size and relevance of particular critical problems, we have separately analysed the problems related to in-service training and teaching

materials distribution. Despite several attempts and early successes MEHRD never managed to develop a sustained capacity for curriculum design that could cope with the demands of the education system within reasonable costs and delivery times. A different solution is being considered in the NEAP 2016-2020: to explore the possibility of outsourcing the capacity for curriculum design to improve lead times and quality assurance of the final product. The capacity to support curriculum implementation and monitoring is also a systemic weakness, which suggests the need to review the roles and capacity of the inspectorate and education authorities. The School and EA management reforms also projected in the NEAP 2016-2020 will provide the opportunity to address these issues using new management performance standards, service agreements and incentives for good performance. These reforms will provide measurable targets and indicators to monitor the quality and effectiveness of these reforms.

(iii) In-Service Teacher Training. The quality and efficiency of the in-service training and professional development system has been a recurring issue in many NEAPs. The current system does not have the capacity to deliver the great number of in-service re-training that will be required by the introduction of the projected curricular reforms programmed for preparatory, primary, junior secondary and senior secondary. Current in-service programs do not provide flexible, modular and qualifications-based training conceived to produce measurable results. Such a new approach is being modelled with USP/IOE to provide training for school leaders. A national plan to deliver curriculum-related in-service training for all teachers has to be agreed in conjunction with main suppliers, DPs EAs and other stakeholders. This plan can reflect the lessons learnt from of the USP model and provide cost-effective solutions to the delivery of this key service. Other in-service approaches (like the one-year diplomas currently provided by SINU) must be reviewed in terms of their total cost-effectiveness. As most of this training is a traditional face to face course and demands the mobilisation of teachers to Honiara for long periods, the total cost for MEHRD is very high as it includes providing double salaries (supernumeraries and relief teachers) and housing allowances

(v) Quality of pre-service supply, a partnership arrangement between the Waikato University Faculty of Education and the SICHE School of Education with New Zealand funding commenced implementation in 2007. This resulted in a new pre-service teacher training curriculum, development of new trained teacher qualifications, mentoring and training of staff and support for School of Education institutional strengthening. The programme finished in 2010. An evaluation identified positive impacts but it questioned the sustainability of progress in improving teacher quality. During the establishment period of the SINU and a new Faculty of Education and Humanities to replace the School of Education there less ability to focus on improving existing teacher training capacity. However, by 2014, SINU had started major reforms specifically designed to address this. The challenge to implement these reforms remain as well as the need to develop working partnership between MEHRD and SINU so that SINU provides the teacher training services MEHRD requires and that improved quality assurances processes are in place.

(v) Teaching Materials. The current system of supplying and distributing books and curriculum educational materials is expensive and very inefficient. Substantial efforts were recently made to test new practices to achieve better value for money for book printing and distribution. A new system is being piloted for new book printing that involves the participation of the EAs in the final step of the delivery process. This system –implemented together with the Ministry of Health, may drastically reduce costs and improve quality of delivery as intermediary quality control steps are added. The delivery of new or re-printed books has to be based on these new systems and on real demand. This means that stocktaking practices at school level must be introduced to ensure coherence between demand and supply. As the new organisational structure created a new Curriculum Materials Unit, the capacity of this unit (systems, procedures and individual capacity) has to be further developed to allow MEHRD to manage these processes independently from external adviser support.

Key Challenges and Proposed Way Forward:

A significant part of the effort in this area will be dedicated to ensure that more efficiency and effectiveness is achieved by the in-service and pre-service teacher service systems. A Key priority for this ESF is to introduce the lifelong learning approaches described above to the teaching career. This will imply the introduction of competence-based teacher education and professional development curricula and new systems to measure the quality of the pre-service and In-service training and professional development system.

Long term Objective (2030)

Sufficient numbers of certified teachers who are motivated and capable to fully deliver the curricula are available for all provinces and education levels

Medium Term Objectives

- The quality of the In-Service training and professional development system is improved to be capable of producing measureable results at the classroom level, is expanded to address a greater range of teacher professional development needs and is delivered within improved timeframes
- The teacher management system is substantially improved and ensures hiring and provision of sufficient numbers of motivated and certified teachers in all disciplines and geographic areas
- MEHRD develops more efficient and effective ways to design and deliver the main curricular reforms and to monitor their implementation
- MEHRD develops more efficient and effective ways for upgrading the technical capacity of teachers to deliver new curricula
- MEHRD develops more efficient and effective ways to procure and distribute books and other teaching materials to all provinces

Key Challenges	Proposed way forward: actions and time-bound indicators
The need to substantially improve the management of the curriculum cycle to accelerate the introduction of education quality improvement reforms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outsource the process of curriculum design to reduce lead times and improve quality by 2017 • Re-design the process of curriculum implementation establishing new roles for MEHRD’s new Directorates, the Inspectorate and EAs by 2018 • The process of curriculum monitoring is substantially strengthened and clearly defines responsibilities and complementary roles for the EAs and the Inspectorate • The roles of the Inspectorate and EAs are strengthened to allow their efficient participation in key parts of the quality assurance process regarding curriculum implementation and monitoring • Further capacity development support is provided to the inspectorate and the EAs to effectively undertake these roles
The need to introduce a lifelong learning approach to the teaching career and to substantially improve the quality and efficiency of the In-service training and professional development system	<p>Short Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing and future in-service programmes are redesigned to provide more flexible, modular and qualifications-based training conceived to produce measureable results by 2018 • A national plan to deliver curriculum-related in-service training for all teachers is developed in conjunction with all providers⁷, DPs EAs and other stakeholders by 2018 and fully implemented by 2025 <p>Long Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A National Teacher Qualifications Framework (NTQF) is designed to provide coherence and a reference to validate competences and qualifications provided by the In-Service and Pre-Service training systems by 2025
The need to develop an efficient and harmonised system of education resource procurement, warehouse management, and distribution of education resources to schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consolidate and extend current practices to reduce costs for re-printing of existing books introducing demand-based systems that outsource key parts of the distribution to the suppliers • Specify and support EA participation their new education resourcing role and strengthen their capacity to perform them • Consolidate the capacity development of the new Curriculum Materials Unit to be able to manage these processes • Establish monitoring systems to provide MEHRD with appropriate tools to closely monitor the results and performance standards for the new system are designed and implemented

⁷ SINU, USP and GOROKA

5. Expected Outcomes in Education Management Areas

Ensure that core management capacities are strengthened -at MEHRD, EA and School levels- to provide the capacity to manage the strategic and administrative processes necessary to achieve the outcomes of the NEAP 2016-2020

5.1 School Management Reforms

Progress Achieved Since the Last ESF: policies, regulatory framework and initiatives

The ESF 2007-2015 recognised the importance of communities having a sense of ownership of their schools and proposed re-establishment of school boards, community awareness campaigns and proposed clarifying roles and responsibilities linked to funding of schools. It also recognised the importance of school principals as school managers but was less specific about how their role as leaders and managers would be supported.

MEHRD has undertaken a number of initiatives to support improved school management during this period. This included the requirement of Whole School Development Plans, introduction of school development standards, School Board training, and from 2014 onwards school leadership training delivered through a contract with the University of the South Pacific (USP). In addition, to assess the quality of school management, among other things, MEHRD with Development Partner support in 2014 invested in enhanced school inspection services, including an increase in the numbers of inspectors. The results of this investment in improving information about school performance are yet to be fully assessed.

However, there are strong indications that improving the quality of school management must be a major focus for the ESF 2016-2030. There is a high turnover of school leaders. Over 50% of schools had a new school leader in many Education Authorities in 2015. This was often due to the school community demanding a replacement, with concerns about the school leader's appropriate use of school funds being given as a reason. Therefore, better recruitment processes, well-organised school leader induction, practical support at the school level by Education Authorities and effective performance appraisal are required.

A key feature of this ESF and the next National Education Action Plan for 2016 to 2020 will be to place the focus on the successful development and implementation of a comprehensive School Management Strengthening Programme as a response to this major issue.

Key Challenges and Proposed Way Forward:

Significant school management issues still need to be addressed to ensure a more systematic approach to improving education access and quality. This includes: the revitalisation of the role of School Boards; a special focus on improving the management capacity and accountability of school managers and the development of more effective supervision and monitoring roles by EAs and MEHRD. School management has to be seen as one element of a more general service delivery management chain, where all the appropriate rewards, support tools and control systems are in place and are enforced in a coherent way.

Long term Objective (2030)

To achieve a systematic improvement of school management performance and education outcomes.

Medium Term Objectives

- Improved community monitoring of school management performance is provided by fully functional School Boards
- Strengthened management capacity and supervision of School Managers improves overall school management capacity
- Improved school grants and asset management increases resources available for teaching and learning
- School managers are trained to be able to perform roles in the distribution cycle as is expected (usage of School Grants to directly purchase materials using standard procurement systems)

Key Challenges	Proposed way forward: actions and time-bound indicators
The need for consolidating further support from parents, civil society and provincial governments to strengthen school management	<p>Short Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewed roles of the School Boards resulting from new Education Act and Guidelines and new School Board Training Manual produced by 2017 • EAs and MEHRD provide quality information and capacity development support to all School Boards by 2018 • Awareness campaigns to promote participation by school community in support of schools developed by EAs and implemented by schools
The need to strengthen management capacity and supervision of School Managers to ensure the implementation of existing management systems and procedures	<p>Short Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new system to reward good management based on measurable performance indicators is designed and implemented by 2017 • All schools appoint qualified school managers who receive proper induction by 2020 • A redesigned school grants system that simplifies procedures, removes unnecessary bureaucratic obstacles and withholds payments to schools who do not provide accurate and timely SIEMIS data is implemented by 2017 • A quality framework support system for managing school assets using ICT is developed and implemented <p>Long Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A zero tolerance policy and procedures system to eliminate misuse of school resources is fully enforced by 2025 • Reporting on total school financing (grants, fees, provincial government contributions, donations and other sources) is mandatory and schools are audited • Quality training and support is provided for creation and implementation of whole school development plans by 2025
The need to improve the quality of teacher management at the schools level	<p>Short Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of teacher supply and demand and teacher appointments substantially strengthened by 2018 • Reporting on student and teacher attendance is mandatory and its systems introduced to report this • Quality of teacher assessment based on application of recommended curricular practices in the classrooms performed by principals is substantially improved by 2020 <p>Long Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher absenteeism is reduced by applying stronger controls and supervision • All schools are capable of correctly resource teachers (materials, living facilities, etc.) to professionally perform their duties

5.2 Education Authority Management Reforms

Progress Achieved Since the Last ESF: policies, regulatory framework and initiatives

The ESF 2007-2015 recognised the need to strengthen the partnership with Provincial Government and Education Authorities and the need to clarify roles and responsibilities. However, it did not specify the support required for Education Authorities to improve service delivery to their schools.

The Education Authority Grants Policy enacted in 2008 allocates financial support to EAs and requires a Provincial Education Action Plan (PEAP) and annual work plans for the province and each Education Authority. However, support has not been consistently provided to EAs to assist them in the development of these plans and funding has not been allocated in a systematic way to support plan implementation.

MEHRD has endeavoured to identify ways that Education Authority service delivery can improve and a pilot between 2011 and 2013 provided valuable lessons that informed the restructuring of MEHRD. Specifically, MEHRD has established an Under Secretary for Education Authority Services with two departments to support Education Authorities with their responsibilities for teacher management and

asset management; and two new departments to evaluate Education Authority performance and to support their capacity development.

The Education Act White Paper of 2015 has further analysed the relationship between MEHRD, Education Authorities and their schools and makes proposals for a new Education Act that clarifies roles and responsibilities, and accountability mechanisms.

MEHRD recognises Education Authorities are the main organisations to support improving school performance and they must be adequately resourced to do this. Consequently, an Education Authority Management Strengthening Programme is now a key priority in the next NEAP. This programme will require support for greater coordination at the provincial level, restructuring of Education Authorities, support for planning and implementation activities, and use of performance standards, service agreements and incentives for good performance.

Key Challenges and Proposed Way Forward:

Significant management issues need to be addressed to ensure that Education Authorities perform the strategic role that is required to properly manage this highly decentralised education system and improve education access and quality in all provinces. This will include: a wider redefinition of the partnership between provincial and central government and also of the terms of the agreements between MEHRD and EAs. It will also include a revitalisation of the role of Provincial Education Boards, to be established with clear terms of reference; and a special attention on effectively improving the overall management capacity and accountability of EAs and the development of more effective capacities to supervise and monitor schools management. Education Authorities are a key component of an integrated service delivery management chain, and for that to happen, all the appropriate rewards, support tools and control systems are in place and are enforced in a coherent way.

Long term Objective (2030)

The core management capacities of all Education Authorities are strengthened to manage education resources in an efficient, effective and transparent manner so that it promotes access and quality goals

Medium Term Objectives

- A coordinated approach by key stakeholders results in the efficient and effective use of the education resources available to the province
- Education Authorities meet agreed and understood performance standards so they have the capacity to improve school management and results
- EAs ensure that schools and communities work in partnership to improve access to education and the quality of teaching and learning
- Education Authorities have access to an improved education management information system (EMIS) that supports decision making to improve school performance and student achievement
- Education Authorities manage their teaching workforce in compliance with Teaching Services Handbook (TSHB) requirements so that all schools are staffed with the right number of certified teachers
- Education Authorities meet the infrastructure needs of the province to support improved access based on assessment that any that expansion occurs will not compromise the quality of teaching and learning

Key Challenges	Proposed way forward: actions and time-bound indicators
<p>The need to develop a coordinated approach by key stakeholders to make efficient and effective use of the education resources available to the province</p>	<p>Short Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All provinces develop PEAPs that combine national, provincial, church and other resources by 2018 • Provincial Education Boards are established with clear terms of reference and supported by MEHRD by 2018 • All EAs annually develop work plans and annual reporting to Provincial Education Boards and MEHRD by 2020 <p>Long Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provincial access expansion addresses education enrolment needs at national and provincial levels and include all educational approaches, (multi-grade teaching) and all available management options (double shifts) to make optimal use of all resources

Key Challenges	Proposed way forward: actions and time-bound indicators
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality provincial infrastructure education development plans that plans integrate all available financing are adequately financed by 2025 • Evaluation systems of EA performance are a joint MEHRD and Provincial Government activity by 2025
<p>The need to substantially support the improvement of the management capacity of EAs</p>	<p>Short Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EA Management Strengthening support plans are individualised for each EA based on a capacity assessment by 2018 • Customised organisational restructuring and capacity development of all EAs to ensure they are capable to perform their duties by 2020 • EAs are audited annually to determine the sources of revenue, what activities funds were spent on, what these activities aimed to achieve and whether funds were spent efficiently by 2018 <p>Long Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EA leadership of the school management strengthening programme improves school performance and education outcomes by 2025 • Education Authorities have systems in place used to monitor and evaluate school performance and individual student achievement

5.2 MEHRD Management Reforms

Progress Achieved Since the Last ESF: policies, regulatory framework and initiatives

The ESF expected that MEHRD would be able to “*timely produce more outcome oriented and cohesive annual budgeting, planning and reporting based on SIEMIS*”. One of the most important advancements in this period was the introduction of a major organisational reform of MEHRD as a review of the administrative structure carried in 2010 highlighted that the structure of MEHRD was not well suited for the achievement of its goals.

Improving the structure of MEHRD became an output of the NEAP 2013-15 and remains an on-going area of work until now. The process started in 2012 and after several delays is due to be completed by the end of 2016. Progress in recruiting capable and competent staff was slower than predicted and not all positions were filled yet. However, for those that were filled, competent and well-qualified candidates were appointed. A complete refurbishment of MEHRD infrastructure was also implemented in parallel and will be completed in 2016. The delay in implementation of this comprehensive restructuring has had a negative impact of MEHRD’s ability to implement key policies in the previous ESF.

Despite all these efforts, MEHRD’s management capacity is still weak and remains as a key priority to achieve overall success of the goals defined in this ESF. Several important MEHRD management functions demand strengthening and for these, visible results must be achieved during this ESF:

(i) It is necessary to improve planning quality and implementation systems. MEHRD has also made some progress to improve its planning processes. However, that there are still weaknesses in its policy and planning systems that needed to be addressed. These include: (i) the Planning and Coordination Unit lacked the staff to undertake the full extent of its responsibilities; (ii) planning capacity of under-secretariats and directorates is weak; (iii) monitoring of annual plan implementation was not systematic; (iv) the SIEMIS system was not usable to support decision making; (v) external consultants often undertook reviews or evaluations and only limited resources were allocated to build MEHRD’s internal research and evaluation capability. As a response to these important issues, and as part of its restructuring, MEHRD in 2015 created the Strategic Support Unit, which reports directly to MEHRD senior management with high-level positions for policy development, planning, monitoring, research, communication and coordination and the unit is yet to be properly staffed and trained.

(ii) The need to make better use of ICTs to support evidence-based management of education. MEHRD has experienced considerable improvement in its internal ability to use ICT. In 2013, MEHRD was proactive in signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the MOFT ICT Support Unit (ICTSU) and it now has a stronger platform for management of ICT hardware, software, security and data through SIG Connect. As part of this MoU, MEHRD financially supported the roll out of SIG Connect to Provincial Education Authorities, and is investigating how similar support can also be provided to church

and private Education Authorities and schools. Yet, the SIEMIS is not a reliable tool to support management decision-making and MEHRD does not have an electronic registrar of the students in the system that would allow tracking student enrolment and progress in a more systematic way. This issue needs to be definitively addressed if MEHRD is to be capable of monitoring whether it is on track to achieving the ambitious targets set in this framework. While improvements to the SIEMIS require some improved ICT solutions, the challenge is primarily about leadership and management of the system. It is expected that the creation of the Information Services Department will result in better ownership, planning, management and use of SIEMIS.

(iii) The need to improve Teacher Workforce Management Quality. MEHRD and Education Authorities can take credit for largely being able to ensure that schools have an adequate number of staff. However, this has been normally addressed in an ad hoc manner rather than as part of a systematic approach to management of teacher demand and supply. The result has often been that the formulas specified in the Teaching Services Handbook (TSHB) have not been complied with. This was complicated by the fact that the staffing formula for secondary schools in the 2011 TSHB was difficult to interpret. Another, significant problem for effective teacher management has been data systems. There have been separate databases used by EAs, SIEMIS, the Teaching Services Division and with the Ministry of public service payroll. These databases were not reconciled and major problems existed to know the actual numbers of teachers, where teachers in the system were placed, whether they were working, and whether they were paid accurately. Consequently, there was a large increase in the salaries budget each year and by 2013, following a series of teacher strikes, it was recognised that improved teacher management was a priority.

Since that date, a restructured Teaching Service Department is in place that is well managed. A major teacher verification project has been implemented and accurate data is now available. There is improved coordination between MEHRD, Ministry of Public Service and the Ministry of Finance and Treasury, which means that databases can now be reconciled. A Teacher Workforce Reform Strategy and Programme is in place to guide the ESF 2016-2030 and the NEAP 2016-2020. A particular focus will be support for EAs to adequately manage allocation of teachers based on clear guidelines with training in the use of those guidelines.

(iv) The need to strengthen strategic financial management. Effective financial management of MEHRD has been an on-going challenge but in recent years there have been improvements in budget setting, compliance with Financial Instructions and with the ability to make timely payments. In the past, these problems, combined with a lack of coordination between procurement and logistics has caused significant delays for MEHRD implementing its plans. A number of the problems related to internal MEHRD capacity but often these problems are made worse by the capacity at the Ministry of Finance and Treasury (MOFT) with its overly bureaucratic systems that were often not fully explained or consistently applied. This adds to a real problem for the MEHRD senior management team and heads of departments, which is they are often not clear about their actual budget allocation for essential activities and do not know whether expenditure is tracking against budget allocation.

Financial implications were not fully analysed or forecasted before policy approval mainly because MEHRD does not have the internal technical capacity to make future medium-term expenditure estimations for key areas such as salaries, school grants, infrastructure, teacher professional development and curriculum materials. This technical weakness significantly challenges the efficient administration of the resources available for education and the development of sustainable solutions.

Procurement processes are improving but significant delays are still experienced. Logistics, particularly the accurate and timely distribution of teaching and learning materials to schools, remains an on-going problem. As part of its restructuring, MEHRD has created a Corporate Services Group and has better aligned new departments under an Under Secretary. It is expected that this will improve internal coordination. There is a Public Finance Management Plan in place but this will not be fully implementable until the restructuring of Corporate Services is completed, new staff employed and technical assistance is better aligned to meet MEHRD's requirements

Key Challenges and Proposed Way Forward:

Significant core management issues still need to be addressed to ensure a more systematic approach to improving equitable education access and quality.

Long term Objective (2030)

Ensure that core management capacities are strengthened at MEHRD to provide the capacity to manage the strategic and administrative processes necessary to achieve the outcomes of the ESF 2016-2030

Medium Term Objectives

- To strengthen MEHRD core capacity at the institutional, organisational and individual levels
- Strengthened integration of planning and financial functions and substantial development of their individual management capacity
- A major improvement of utilisation of ICT for management purposes and the development of robust and reliable MIS improves education management
- The teacher workforce is administered, managed and developed effectively at MEHRD, Education Authority and school levels, making efficient use of its material, financial and human resources
- Other core management functions and practices (general administrative systems, management communications, procurement and logistics) are substantially strengthened at the institutional, organisational and individual levels

Key Challenges	Proposed way forward: actions and time-bound indicators
The need to gradually introduce management by results systems to ensure effective implementation of the plans and achievement of results	<p>Short Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New management monitoring practices are introduced to ensure smooth implementation of the NEAP by 2016 • Capacity of the Strategic Support Unit and of key Under-secretariats is fully strengthened to perform their roles by 2016 • Strengthened integration of planning and financial functions and development of integrated reporting systems by 2018 • The capacity for costing and financial modelling policy decision making is fully developed by 2018 <p>Long Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of an education Medium Term Expenditure Framework that can be used to coordinate multiannual financing in Education by government and DPs by 2025 • A flexible and well managed Sector Wide Approach (SWAp) arrangement simplifies donor's reporting and accountability needs by 2020
The need to make full utilisation of the potential generated by MEHRD's new organisational structure	<p>Short Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointment of key management and technical positions and fully strengthening their capacity to perform their roles by 2016 • General administrative systems, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are greatly improved by 2018 • Improved systems and procedures required for effective HR management of MEHRD's administrative staff are implemented and enforced by 2020 • Quality of management communications and reporting and other office management practices is substantially improved by 2018 <p>Long Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthened clarity and roles for the Internal Audit Unit • Effective internal auditing and 'zero tolerance for corruption' procedures developed and implemented
The need to make better use of ICT in management	<p>Short Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A strategy for ICT and plan is developed and defines capacity development targets for key application areas • Strengthened technical leadership and further development of the Information Services Department and its SIEMIS Unit by 2017 • An Electronic Registrar that compiles verified information about all individual students in the system -by school and by class- that individualises students by their National ID Number, is developed and fully implemented by 2019 • The organizational systems and procedures that are needed to ensure timely and reliable data for MIS are correctly addressed in all new MIS

Key Challenges	Proposed way forward: actions and time-bound indicators
	<p>designs, and current shortcomings affecting existing databases are addressed and resolved</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge-sharing systems and other basic client and intranet services are fully developed and accessible to MEHRD and EAs <p>Long Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A robust Decision Support System that integrates all existing MIS is built and provides user friendly interfaces that allow its full customisation to individual user needs

5.3 Strategic Definitions of the Management Strengthening Approach Proposed

MEHRD has identified a number of significant reforms that are needed for two primary purposes: (i) to improve the capacity of the system to deliver educational reforms and achieve a real impact in the lives of the final beneficiaries and (ii) to make a more efficient and effective usage of the resources allocated to education. These two purposes are complementary. Given the funding limitations facing the education sector to respond to projected demand explained later in Chapter 6, the improvements in effectiveness and efficiency proposed here are now an urgent priority.

This is especially the case for the major, large-size expenditures that form the core of the operational budget of MEHRD (teacher spending, school grants, scholarships, teaching materials, information, and quality assurance). Efficiency gains will generate tangible benefits that will either save substantial volumes of resources or will allow allocating more features to current expenditures (for example, more teachers hired to respond to new programs with the same original budget). These economies can be then, reinvested to finance the pressing demands to the growth of the education budget.

On the other hand, the managerial reforms described above to strengthen critical capacity aspects of EA and School Management are also needed to ensure the depth and final impact of the desired education reforms. The problem analysis carried out analysed how poor School and EA management directly affect the final implications of the main components and interventions designed to improve access and quality⁸.

The central pillar of the proposed management reforms is to strengthen the key roles that MEHRD, Education Authorities and Schools should have in this decentralised system. These roles have been intrinsically assumed in the policy reforms that were designed during the previous ESF; but they usually reflected assumptions that were not fully compatible with the actual roles and responsibilities of MEHRD, EAs and schools in the management process.

A second pillar of the management reforms that are proposed in this ESF is to define what should constitute the fundamental aspects of the School and EA Performance Standards and to provide specific targets for their implementation in each NEAP. These targets are going to be essential to guide the capacity development efforts that should be carried out during each NEAP. The management standards proposed do not only address the management of the financial, human and material resources that are needed to develop a more efficient and effective system, but also aim to address the management of the education aspects that would, at least, fulfil the essential needs that emerge from the education-oriented part of the ESF. As these are also expressed in more tangible ways and with precise targets, they will also justify a more comprehensive approach to the EA and School capacity development actions

The general management reforms proposed in this ESF start from the assumption that MEHRD should provide the following core service functions:

- **Guide** the strategic development of the whole system (based on real evidence collected at the national level)
- **Plan** and implement systemic reforms (for example teacher management)
- **Finance** critical areas that are complementary to those financed by the provincial government and EA
- **Coordinate and support** the coherent implementation of key national reforms across the country and develop the specific capacities needed by all key parties in the implementation process

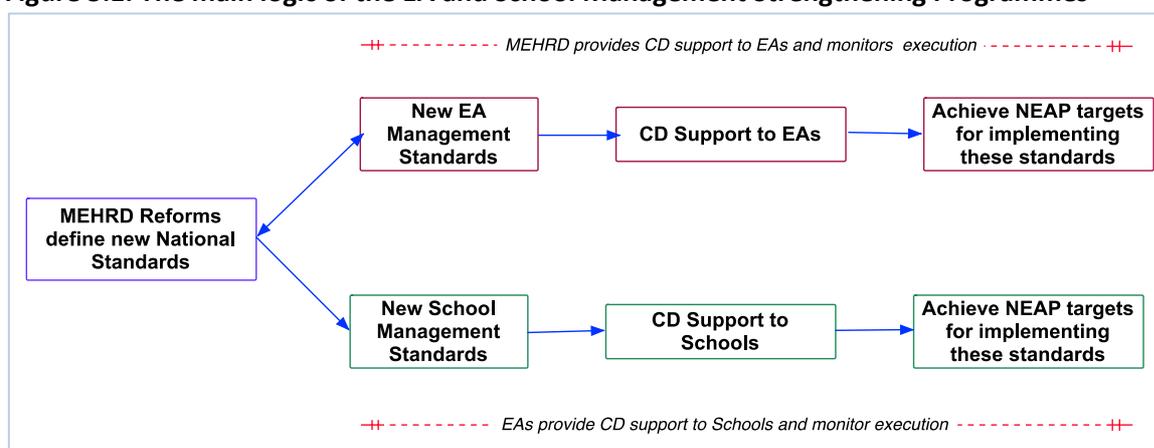
⁸ This is expressed in the Theory of Change diagrams that are attached

- **Monitor and evaluate** progress nationwide and report back to those who are implementing the necessary reforms

Many of the major management changes proposed in this ESF will start at MEHRD, but will need substantial and coordinated implementation at the EA and school level to succeed in their implementation. The strategic approach that we defined to ensure a smooth implementation of the key reforms at the school and provincial level is based on four key elements:

- **Establish a harmonised system to measure management quality at the EA and School levels**, which is defined in a set of Performance Standards for Schools and EAs
- **Define NEAP targets for the achievement of these standards by 2020.** These targets refer to a number of core functions that need to be delivered by EA and School management to achieve the educational reforms projected in the NEAP
- **Provide capacity development support** to ensure that EAs and Schools can implement the key reforms that are needed to meet these standards and targets
- **Provide supplementary financial Support if necessary.** The application of these new standards may imply the increase on operational costs that will be analysed and mainly supported through the EA grant system

Figure 5.1. The main logic of the EA and School Management Strengthening Programmes



The definition of what constitutes School and EA Performance Standards (educational and managerial) and their targets is an activity that will have to be agreed and understood by MEHRD and the EAs. The definition of these standards and targets will have to reflect, at least the main goals of this ESF presented above. The list of targets will have to be re-prioritised or re-defined after these are discussed with the main development partners, as the availability of external resources to meet the capacity development costs to implement them must be discussed and agreed.

6. Monitoring Framework of this ESF

A critical aspect of the Education Strategic Framework 2016-2030 and the related planning documents (the National Education Action Plan 2016-2020 and its successors) will be the monitoring and evaluation framework that is put in place to monitor progress of the plans as they proceed, and to evaluate and modify the plans as necessary.

A robust monitoring and evaluation framework must include performance indicators of quality, quantity, timeliness and cost to measure performance against agreed objectives. Some preliminary performance measures have been constructed in the NEAP 2013-2015. These measures need to be further developed over time as part of the planning process to include appropriate dimensions of quality, quantity, timeliness and cost. The next NEAP should attempt to further develop these concepts and allow MEHRD to work with more detailed indicators for measuring key outcomes, for example:

(i) **Inclusive Access:** design means to better measure or estimate the coverage of the education system by level and type of education and the relative importance of the provision by different actors (public, private, community based, etc.); assess accessibility to different education services measured in physical terms (distance from schools/coverage, density), economic terms (accessibility for the poorest and cost

of schooling), cultural (language, religious or other cultural barriers to schooling) and inclusive (percentage of children with special needs).

(ii) Quality and Relevance: it is also necessary to complement present approach used until now which is predominantly focused on the quality of inputs provided and attempt to measure as well: (i) the quality of the processes taking place to transform these inputs into results, and (ii) quality measured by the results obtained by learners (for example, use of information stored in present exam databases to measure literacy and numeracy performance by education levels and geographic area).

(iii) Management. Previous NEAPs show a significant gap in the provision of specific milestones and indicators for education management outcomes and outputs that this planning exercise will attempt to address. There is already a wide list of potential elements that could be measured using existing databases, reference information and the extension of the EA survey that would be very useful to get completed

It will be also important to pay attention to the development of adequate baseline information. Taking into account current limitations for recording data and evidence, this baseline may not be fully comprehensive or totally accurate. However, an attempt should be made to collect more comprehensive and more reliable measurements than the ones presented in the previous NEAP. It will be necessary to define a plan in the first NEAP to ensure that by the end its execution there are sufficient elements to provide a good measurement system of education and management performance indicators.

The design of an appropriate monitoring framework is an essential part for the future implementation of this strategic framework. The monitoring system we are proposing for this ESF will require the development on a few management tools:

- *Performance Assessment Framework.* This framework will have to be agreed in dialogue with the development partners and should present a subset of the output and outcome indicators provided in the NEAP Implementation Matrixes. The subset of the PAF should be concise but representative enough to allow quality monitoring the overall progress of each NEAP. For all indicators presented in the PAF, accurate baseline measurements must be provided to allow monitoring and evaluation.
- *Annual Performance Assessment Reports (PAR).* These reports should annually report on progress in the indicators contained in the PAF and will be critical to inform annual joint reviews with development partners and other stakeholders. A new type of PAR is needed to ensure consistent measurement of all the indicators selected in the PAF, showing progress to NEAP baselines and comparing progress towards the planned target values.
- *Annual Work Plans (AWPs).* Annual work plans must define main milestones and the expected sequencing and dependency of the core activities. This information should be presented as a Gantt Diagram showing the calendars of the key milestones and implementation responsibilities. The AWP should also relate expenditures (domestic and external) with particular priority programs, results and activities.

An adequate use of periodic monitoring events must be decided upon and planned. This decision may consider using some of the following possibilities: (i) monthly monitoring of the NEAP implementation within each Under Secretariat; (ii) monthly monitoring of the main implementation issues by the SMT; (iii) joint reviews with EAs and development partners on the implementation of the NEAP. As some of these exercises are time-consuming, a proper balance must be achieved to provide sufficient monitoring quality and, at the same time, avoid diverting the scarce energy and attention of the teams away from the implementation.

7. Financing this Education Strategic Framework

The Solomon Islands allocates an unusually high share of GDP to education, and receives a high level of ODA. According to World Bank statistics, Solomon Islands is the second largest in terms of the share of GDP it allocates to education. Moreover, the country has had the highest increase in the share of GDP allocated to education over 2006 – 2012. Overall spending on education as a percent of nominal GDP grew from 8.7% in 2011 to 10.9% in 2013, with 2014 allocations to MEHRD accounting for 12.3% of projected GDP.

Recurrent expenditure pressures to cope with expanding enrolment, school grants distribution and teacher numbers have been the primary driver of this increased spending. Actual spending on education was higher than original allocations in the SIG budget in the years 2011-2013, driven by overspending on the recurrent side. The recurrent budget was consistently overspent in these 3 years, by an annual average of 12.9%. Over the same period, the development budget was consistently underspent, by an annual average of -16.1%. In 2014, MEHRD continued to account for the largest share of the recurrent budget (SI\$ 810.3 million, or 28.4%)

ODA for Education is also high and has also grown rapidly over the last 10 years. The provision of sector budget support to the education sector has increased substantially since it was first introduced in 2007. Between 2007 and 2013, sector budget support to MEHRD increased from \$32.5 million to \$175.6 million, or 440.7%, and averaged around 10.9% of the ministry's total recurrent expenditure. Between 2011 and 2013, sector budget support, as a share of total MEHRD recurrent spending, increased from 11.1% to 23.6%. The education sector remains the second highest recipient of sector budget support from development partners behind the health sector.

Aid dependency limits longer-term financial sustainability, making it unwise of the SIG to implement policies under which financing education's recurrent budget was dependent on external sources. Aside from longer-term issues, there are risks to relying on development assistance to fill key recurrent expenditure gaps. The 2014 budget saw a reduction of external sector financing provided to MEHRD, including due to the under-spending of sector budget support in previous years. For example, in 2013, only 54.7% of sector budget support was spent.

A study carried out by the World Bank⁹ to estimate the cost implications of the potential reforms proposed in this ESF showed that with limited expected government fiscal revenue growth or growth in aid revenue, recurrent cost pressures of current policy commitments will create a financing gap. Given the high current allocation to education as a proportion of GDP, it seems unlikely that the MEHRD can expect to see further increases in its budget, relative to GDP. Furthermore, receipt of full sector budget support commitments from donors will require MEHRD's full execution of development funds, which has been a challenge, and implementation of partnership principles. The cost projections estimated in the WB report, while subject to improved data availability, highlight an emerging fiscal gap in meeting current policy commitments; and a lack of fiscal space to roll out additional development initiatives expanding access, quality and management.

7.1 Medium Term Approach to Finance Government Resources

The main underlying assumption adopted in this ESF is that all developments proposed to the education system that results in increases in core recurrent costs should be sustainably financed using government resources. Strengthened fiscal discipline is needed to ensure long-term operational budget sustainability. The financial stability of the current system is severely in doubt, even without the introduction of new reforms that would put pressure on the operational budget. To build the fiscal space that would be required to maintain current policies and introduce new ones, a few essential reforms must be successfully carried out in the short-term. These include: (i) a more efficient management of the teacher workforce; (ii) a more balanced allocation of the resources spent on international scholarships to other educational areas (iii) increase the value for money of the expenditure in scholarships with a more balanced allocation between national and international scholarships; (iv) the correct utilisation of school grants and EA grants to serve the purpose for which they were created for; (v) the development of more accurate information systems to inform MEHRD policies with reliable evidence; (vi) the introduction of medium term financial costing and modelling to pre-calculate the effects of future policy measures.

The reforms and targets proposed in the first NEAP 2016-2020 are significantly limited as they follow this primary assumption that additional fiscal space must be built before more optimistic expansions can be feasible. All the fundamental reforms that are needed to develop the necessary efficiencies and financial space to accommodate more ambitious goals are also proposed in the NEAP 2016-2020 and with high priority. Their success is critical, but these reforms must produce visible results, as these

⁹ Close, S and Levine, V "Costing NEAP 2015-2020 and ESF 2015-2030: "A Framework for Assessing Policy Options and Trade-offs", WB, 2015

results will dictate the final fate of important areas that should be expanded and consolidated in the following two NEAPs. Even the implementation of some of the very modest goals proposed in the first NEAP regarding access and quality will depend to some extent on the success achieved by the reforms that aim to build more efficiency into the system.

7.2 The role of International Cooperation

External support will undoubtedly be needed to meet many of the transitional costs required by key sector reforms proposed in the ESF. These may be reflected as multi-year investments in some areas such as management capacity development, curricular changes, curricular-related in-service training. From a longer-term perspective, they should be primarily seen as “once-off” development investments. An additional key premise of this ESF finance strategy is to make sure that this last statement remains true. Lack of significant (or sustainable) results for many of the investments already supported with development partner finance in these areas generated an on-going dependency for support that is not healthy for both parties. Therefore, the few large-scale reforms proposed in this ESF that would require substantial development investments from the development partners were designed to: (i) provide measurable quality results in the short term and (ii) ensure there is sufficient capacity to adequately implement them.

For example, the programmes to strengthen the management capacity of Schools and EAs are based on the adoption of measurable management standards for each. For these standards, measurable targets are provided to monitor on-going progress in both programmes. This design will help to narrow down the specific targets for the development partner support that is going to allow these capacity improvements to happen. It will also make a more visible correspondence with the agenda of other priority reforms proposed for MEHRD mentioned above (teacher, financial and asset management).

Basic costing estimates were made to validate that the size of the development investments proposed is also compatible with the financial capacity of the main development partners. Otherwise, these would not be feasible; however, more detailed costing and feasibility studies will be necessary during the first NEAP implementation phase. The main proposed reforms are also in concordance with their perception of the allocative efficiency of the usage of their resources and aligned with their main priorities. It will be necessary to produce more systematic approaches to estimate the costs of implementing the proposed education reform package outlined in this Framework. To do this, it is proposed that a Medium Term Expenditure Framework be developed in the first NEAP in order to provide a basis for medium-term MEHRD and DP budgeting.

7.3 The way ahead: addressing further costing needs of this strategy

The subsequent planning stages of the NEAPs will need further work to produce the costing estimates for key areas mentioned in this ESF. The ESF/NEAP implementation team will also have to take into consideration the emerging issues that may arise from the costing exercise especially the limitations to work with evidence-based policies that will require interventions that should be addressed by the plans. Further analytical work will be necessary to define, some of the areas that will need to be projected later on as a consequence of the implementation of this framework. For many of these there is no baseline and available knowledge, and therefore, specialised studies and cost modelling projections and metrics need to be developed. This list includes, but is not limited to the following:

School Grants Costing Formulas. Previous studies pointed out that the present formula used is an oversimplification that does not properly cover all the situations and an alternative, more complex formula was provided. This formula was never costed and as there are no numeric references to compare the proposed solution with present expenditure figures.

Deeper understanding of total school finance and the costs (and affordability) of fee-free education. MEHRD does not know the total volume of resources that are gathered by schools from different sources (MEHRD, Provincial Government, School Fees, NGOs, and others). There are probably duplications and inefficiencies in the present system that needs to be surveyed and reviewed. It would be important to inform the NEAPs with more precise ideas of the costs of fee-free education. Fee-based education is not just contradicting existing MEHRD policies but also challenge a key area proposed in the SDGs (to provide fee free education for early childhood, basic and secondary education). However, with present levels of inefficiency, fee-free education may be a luxury that this system cannot yet afford.

Further analysis of the specific costs of Equity. Another key area for which there is no quantitative information is related with equity. It would be important to analyse the costs of eliminating certain access barriers for the following cases: (i) people living in extreme poverty, and their capacity to afford the ‘hidden costs’ of education (materials, uniforms, transportation, etc.), (ii) people living in remote locations and analyse alternatives to the present model based on boarding for remote students with the provision of local education services; (iii) inclusive education and the costs of providing education for children with different types of disabilities; (iv) social exclusion and the scope of costs of different options for providing education in vernacular languages (teaching materials, teacher training) and of their application in different education levels (pre-school, primary).

Understanding the Costs of Inefficiency. Efficiency was already signalled as a priority area in the previous ESF, but no significant action was taken to implement these recommendations. Other sources of inefficiency were also detected more recently and for which there are no quantitative estimates to assess their magnitude. This is the case, for example of the costs related with: (i) poor teacher management (teacher absenteeism, excessive school staffing; fulltime teacher salaries paid for part time or idle teachers); (ii) poor school management (misuse of school grants; lack of infrastructure preventive maintenance management and duration of schools, book management, (iii) poor selection of school site locations (no water or sanitation that later require tanks, schools located areas that are prone to flooding) and others (iv) the additional costs generated by the poor internal efficiency of the education process (high repetition rates, high incidence of overage students) .

As the SDGs will put substantial pressure to expand financing of education, this ESF exercise will need to analyse sustainable solutions for this expansion. Costing estimates that show the present baselines and quantitative benefits of reducing different types of inefficiencies would be necessary to take into account when modelling the future expansion of the education sector investment and for selecting short-term intervention priorities. This is also important from an ethical perspective. With the current system, it may not be affordable to offer fee-free education for all education areas. Therefore, an essential paradox emerges: it would also be unethical to ask the citizens to co-finance the costs of inefficiency that generated the incapacity to provide fee-free education.

Costing the consequences of some SDG Target for Enrolment-Retention. The new SDGs propose full enrolment and completion of primary and secondary education. The projection of this expansion of access should also show different scenarios linked to some of the formulas defined in the previous list (fee-free access and costs of equity); and known demographic growth estimations. Retention may pose threats for the size of the existing secondary education service infrastructure. Decisions to estimate the targets for expanding equal access to other educational areas (e.g. Tertiary Skills Development) will also require support from more precise cost modelling especially for the provision of these services outside Honiara and Guadalcanal.

Operational and Infrastructural costs of the projected expansion of EA Management Functions. It will also be necessary to model the expansion of the functions that should be provided by the EAs, and project MEHRD financing needs to be delivered as EA Grants taking into account all different financing sources available for EAs. At present, EAs are operating with very precarious organisation systems. A restructure of EAs is a key area that will emerge in the NEAP/PEAP. It is especially important to understand the cost implications of proper monitoring and supervision systems for Schools. Previous models piloted were dismissed because these costs were considered to be “too expensive” but there are no reference costs to compare them with. Other costs of the EA management expansion should be included, such as: (i) infrastructure development, (ii) office equipment, (iii) energy self-sufficiency (solar power/generators), (iv) additional internet connectivity.

The efforts for costing essential areas of these ESF targets should continue to inform a process of continuous prioritisation that will have to be performed during of the three successive NEAPs to provide more realistic solutions for the goals that we want to reach in the future.

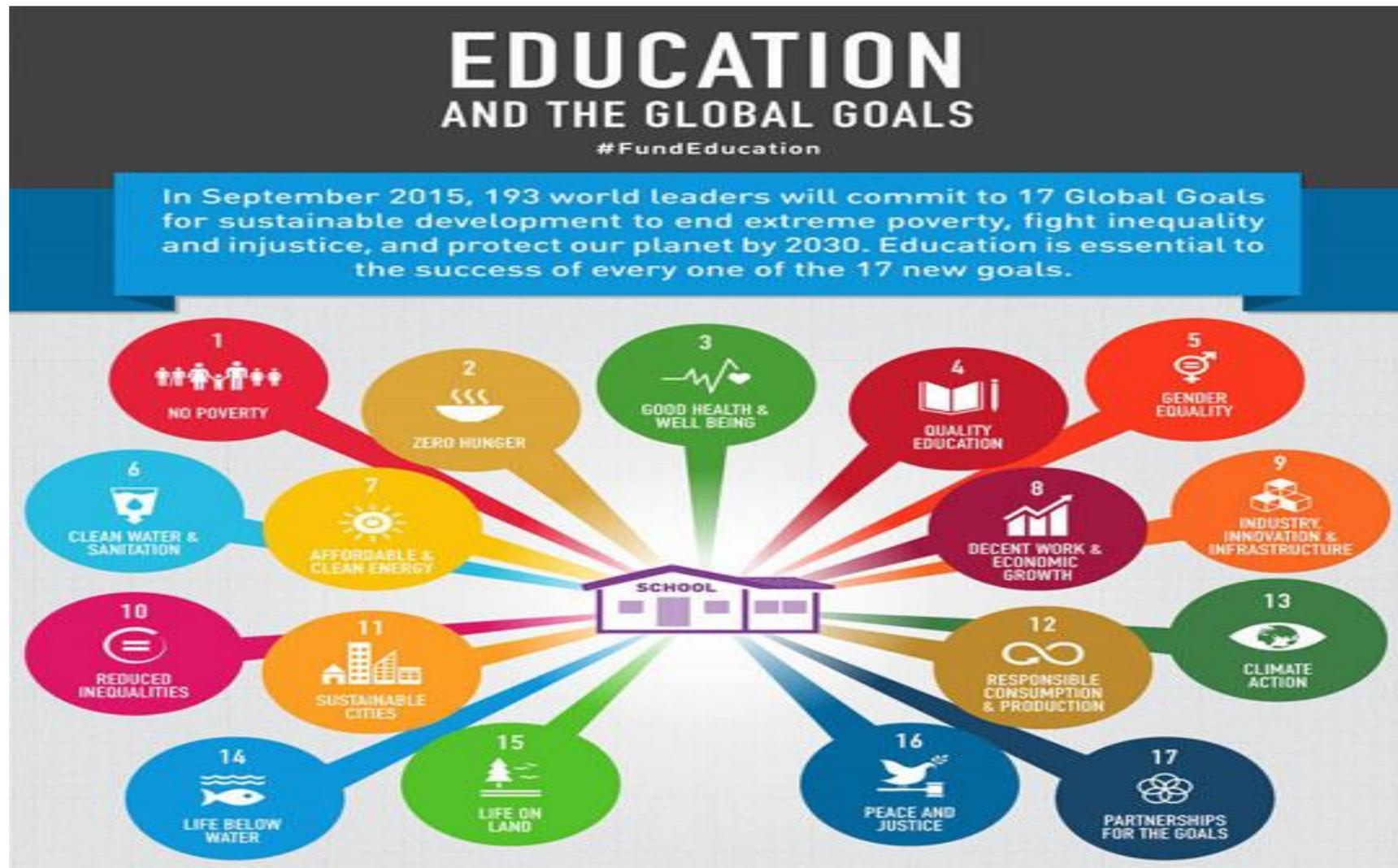
Annex I: Phased implementation of the ESF: programmed priorities of the next three NEAPS

Focus Area	NEAP 2016-2020	NEAP 2021-2025	NEAP 2026-2030
Early Childhood Education and Care (ECCE)			
Equitable access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find affordable ways to expand access to 3-4 y.o. by co-financing community centres A small expansion of Prep until its transformation is not completed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start expansion of access in prep to reach all 5-y.o. by 2030 (focus on how to reach under-represented target groups) Moderate expansion of co-financed and licensed community centres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalise access expansion in prep by reaching most under-represented target groups by 2030 Continue expansion of community centres to reach full access to 3-4 y.o. by 2040
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transform Preparatory year (5-y.o) into a quality foundational year of BE Develop new curricula and start in-service training Start overall upgrade of the teacher force 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalise curricular-related teacher training for Prep Continue recycling prep teacher force Strengthen quality assurance methods for community Centres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalise recycling Prep teacher force Start focusing on how to strengthen quality for 3-4 years old in community centres
Basic Education			
Equitable access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A limited expansion of access in primary to cope with population growth A limited expansion of JS to provide full and gender-balanced transition from PE Develop affordable, new ways to expand access, (not just infrastructures) and specific ways to reach under-represented target groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start the affordable expansion of access and implement new measures to reach specific target groups Fully address provincial and gender imbalances Stronger focus on enrolling new entrants of the right age (5 years old in prep, and 6 years old in Primary) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reach a much wider population of the right age (increasing NER from 88% to 95% in primary)
Completion and efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on gender-balanced completion and pilot ESL prevention measures for PE and JS Develop a costed strategy to address ESL for 2021-2025 Develop a new electronic registrar to strengthen ESL prevention Develop criteria, indicators and information systems to measure and monitor internal efficiency Pilot ESL prevention measures and second chance education for PE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend prevention and intervention measures to reduce ESL to all schools Develop evidence-based policy measures to improve internal efficiency Extend provision of second chance education for PE to all provinces Pilot Second chance education for JS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully implement evidence-based measures to improve internal efficiency Achieve full passage from Primary to JS Substantially increase passage from JS to SS Extend provision of second chance education for JS to all provinces
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop foundations of long term quality by outsourcing the finalisation of Curricula for PE and JS Fix key issues for curriculum implementation and monitoring Focus on short term quality by implementing a project to improve L&N in PE and JS Start curriculum-related in-service teacher training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement new curricula (PE and JS) in all schools Finalise curriculum-related in-service teacher training Extend new curriculum monitoring systems to all provinces Evaluate the L&N Project and include main experiences into new curricular activities/practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start curriculum evaluation Extend usage of L&N practices to all schools

Focus Area	NEAP 2016-2020	NEAP 2021-2025	NEAP 2026-2030
Senior Secondary Education			
Equitable access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An expansion of SS infrastructure capacity (including boarding) to provide full and gender-balanced transition from JS to SS Develop affordable models (not just infrastructures) to expand access to all levels in all provinces Review concept of affordability of fee-free secondary education and design specific measures to reach under-represented target groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start the affordable expansion of access and implement new measures to reach specific target groups Address provincial access imbalances Test new measures to reach under-represented target groups using several tools (scholarships, conditional cash transfers, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieve SE enrolment rates similar to those for Basic Education in 2015 (GER = 113%) Start focusing on completion
Completion and efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pilot ESL prevention measures to achieve gender-balanced completion Develop a costed strategy to address ESL for 2021-2025 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend prevention and intervention measures to reduce ESL to all schools Pilot second chance education for PE Open new and more flexible pathways from SS to TVET and to Tertiary Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Substantially increase passage from JS to SS (increasing transition rates from 80% to over 95%) Increase completion rate for all grades
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop foundations of long term quality by outsourcing a new Curricula for SS Fix key issues for curriculum implementation and monitoring Start curriculum-related in-service teacher training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement new curricula (PE and JS) in all schools Finalise curriculum-related in-service teacher training Extend new curriculum monitoring systems to all provinces Measure acquisition of key competences in SE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start curriculum evaluation Measure external efficiency of SS (employability of graduates)
Tertiary Skills Development Sector			
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a new institutional and governance system to provide demand-based and quality tertiary skills development New legislation, regulations, policies to achieve coherence of all agencies intervening in tertiary skills development Start development of the NQF New scholarship policy and procedures that provides ceilings to expenditure and value for money 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consolidated establishment of SITESA and the NQF provides full functionality to the new system SITESA achieves mutual recognition of SI qualifications by a selected number of priority country partners The new system to manage scholarships is fully implemented and provides equitable access based on merit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SI Tertiary and TVET education system is regulated by rigorous quality standards for the operation of public and private institutions and the accreditation of programs
Equitable access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find an affordable model for expanding quality and access to tertiary skills development. Develop a costed strategy to expand tertiary skill development nationwide by 2030 Start partnerships with private and public sector employers to build a demand-driven skills and scholarships development system Develop comprehensive and reliable statistics to measure enrolment in the tertiary skills development sector and integrate them with SIEMIS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start implementation of the strategy to expand tertiary skills development nationwide Fully develop information systems for monitoring, evaluation and prediction of trends in the labour market in collaboration with the private sector Extend access and scope of Rural Training Centres (RTCs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on extending access for quality, new programmes from SINU and other major providers Focus on extending reach and courseware of RTCs Start using the new scholarship system to provide more equitable access to tertiary skills development for specific target groups

Focus Area	NEAP 2016-2020	NEAP 2021-2025	NEAP 2026-2030
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot projects to improve quality of the Rural Training Centres (RTCs) • Pilot new initiatives to develop the quality, relevance and market orientation of SINU • Develop standardised system to measure quality in the tertiary skills development sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substantially develop the quality of the programmes provided by all Rural Training Centres (RTCs) to offer more comprehensive and attractive pathways to further study and employment opportunities • Focus on the quality development and market orientation of all TVET programmes offered by SINU 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full certification of skills and TVET allow the establishment of pathways between formal education and training • SITESA provides full quality assessment of all institutions and programmes offered in the country

Annex II: Sustainable Development Goals: Global Agenda 2016-2030



Sustainable Development Goals for Education

Sustainable Development Goal 4 - “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”

With the stand-alone Goal 4 on education and its related targets, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes that education is essential for the success of all sustainable development goals (SDGs). Education is also included in goals on health, growth and employment, sustainable consumption and production, and climate change.

UNESCO facilitated consultations of Member States and key stakeholders over the past two years on the future education agenda which culminated in the World Education Forum held in Incheon, Republic of Korea in May 2015. With the Incheon Declaration, the education community committed to Education 2030, which is encapsulated in SDG 4. The Incheon Declaration, entrusts UNESCO to lead and coordinate Education 2030.

“We know the power of education to eradicate poverty, transform lives and make breakthroughs on all the Sustainable Development Goals,” said UNESCO Director-General Irina Bokova in her opening address on that occasion.

The Incheon Declaration is an historic commitment to transform lives through a new vision for education, building on the worldwide commitment to Education for All (EFA) initiated at Jomtien in 1990 and reiterated at Dakar in 2000, while effectively addressing current and future global and national education challenges.

Proposed indicators to track the post-2015 education framework

From November 2014 to January 2015, the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) on post -2015 education indicators (TAG) conducted a global survey on its monitoring proposals.

Almost 200 organizations and individuals from 67 countries participated in the public consultation, which gathered a rich array of feedback from representatives of civil society, academia, development partners, governments and other stakeholders.

New indicators resulting from the consultation

Following the consultation, the TAG has added indicators to its original list, while others have been revised.

Major changes stemming from the public consultation include:

- Three new indicators to better capture inequalities not only in education results but also in education systems (e.g. related to language of instruction, targeting of resources to disadvantaged populations, and the share of education expenditure borne by households).
- Three new indicators to capture the curricular focus on education for sustainable development: global citizenship education, HIV and sexuality education, and human rights education.
- Two new indicators to capture the availability of information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructure in schools.
- A new indicator on the availability of infrastructure and materials for people with disabilities in schools.

- A new indicator on the number of attacks on students, personnel and institutions. In addition, the need to monitor the educational participation of children and adolescents in conflict situations, in particular among refugee and displaced populations, was recognised.

Equity, learning and education quality – more indicators needed

Most consultation participants agreed that equity is a key focus of the post-2015 measurement agenda. They stressed the need for more indicators to measure disparities in the distribution of learning opportunities, as well as the inputs and processes (e.g. trained teachers, school conditions, etc.) related to education systems. It is important to note that the TAG proposal includes disaggregation of every indicator where feasible by at least three individual characteristics that allow scope for global comparisons (i.e. sex, location and wealth).

Another major concern for the consultation participants was the measurement of learning outcomes in basic education. Some felt that the focus on two subjects (reading and mathematics) was justified, whereas others argued that it risked reducing the scope of education.

For thematic monitoring, the TAG urges a comprehensive yet pragmatic approach. Currently, measures of reading and mathematics are more widely available with greater comparability across countries. Yet the TAG also acknowledges the importance of other areas of education and strongly encourages efforts to develop measures for other subjects.

The consultation also underscored the different views on the use of national or international standards to measure learning. The TAG believes that, in order to monitor the success of the post-2015 agenda, it is necessary to develop a shared understanding of what competencies children and adolescents need to acquire at each education level drawing on a common standard.