

To be presented @ the regional conference on
Community Learning Centres (CLCs) in Bangkok, Thailand.

ADULT EDUCATION, COMMUNITY AND NON-FORMAL LEARNING

1.0 PURPOSE :

The purpose of this paper is to:

- (i) look at the two areas in totality and explore the possibility of setting up a statutory body in Fiji to coordinate and regulate adult, community and non formal learning.
- (ii) generate discussion with the view of arriving at a consensus on the way forward.

2.0 BACKGROUND:

- 2.1 Globalisation has set forth a process of far-reaching changes that is affecting everyone, with greater interconnectivity that is nurturing the realization that we are part of a global community. This process has brought about tremendous changes in the way we work, communicate and learn. With the globalisation of production and the markets, application of new technologies, development of information society, development of economies and creation of new jobs, the impact is as such that countries have had little opportunity to adapt and change and have limited influence of powerful players in determining policies to match the changing dictates of the new economy.
- 2.2 Community Learning Centres in Fiji are, to a large extent run by the various communities, especially religious organisations such as Catholic Women's League, Methodist Youth Groups, etc and NGOs such as Fiji Association of Non-Formal Education etc. Much still has to be done to link the formal education system to the non-formal education's CLC.

3.0 How do we respond?

- 3.1 People dwell locally within nations. Fiji is part of a region that has a diverse geography, economy and demography. Therefore how we respond to globalisation is crucial in view of the context in which we live in. Moreover, the failure of economic reforms and adjustments show that the ability to respond depends on a more integrated view of interdependent economic and social objectives. Therefore an integrated approach to economic, social and political dimensions of policies is needed to effectively respond to globalisation. There is a growing recognition that globalisation has a social dimension that requires a social response.

- 3.2 ILO research shows that differences in education attainment are strongly correlated with the spread of the information economy and countries ability to benefit from globalisation. *Education and Training are components of both the economic and social response to globalisation (ILO, 2000)*. In developing countries, employment is seen as the key to creating wealth, and is the primary instrument for distributing it equitably. A knowledgeable and skilled workforce is the key to economic and technological advances and demand higher skills and adaptability of workers. The need for relevant skilled manpower is never ending as country's economy continues to expand.
- 3.3 Community learning Centre do create opportunities to acquire knowledge, skills and values for work for young people.

4.0 The Peoples Charter

- 4.1 Making Fiji a Knowledge – Based Society is Pillar 9 of the Peoples' Charter. Under this pillar, the Ministry of Education has one of its KPI, the establishment of a statutory body to manage and co-ordinate all activities community and non-formal learning. This KPI is also reflected in the Ministry of Education's Corporate Plan.

5.0 DEFINITIONS

- 5.1 Adult Education, Community and Non- Formal Learning , may be defined as the practice of teaching and educating adults in the workplace, colleges and communities through extension or continuing education where skills are learnt and personal development occurs. Given this definition, parameters of the above are not clearly demarcated and have the tendency to overlap into what we know as simply technical vocational education and training. Definition aside, there must be a realisation that educational development play an important role in the economy of Fiji.

6.0 CURRENT COMMUNITY & NON FORMAL TRAINING PROGRAMS

- 6.1 In Fiji, Training Programmes are provided through various Ministries and NGOs. There are also training centres that offers different types of training programs for Adults that can be considered as Non-Formal, and implemented in collaboration with Communities and Villages.

Ministry of National Planning	Integrated Human Resources Development Program, Walking Out Of Poverty
Department of Women , Social Welfare	Women Specific Programs, Community Training
Provincial Development	Community Training & Small Business
Ministry of Health	Adult Education
Indigenous Affairs	Community Projects/Individuals
Department of Cooperative	Small Business
Tourism	Tourism Projects

NCSMED	SM, Business Training
Forestry	Adult Education
Fisheries	Adult, Non- Formal Education
Agriculture	Non-Formal
Nabua Secondary School	Matua Programme
Ratu Navula Secondary	Matua Programme – Vocational
Methodist Church	‘Mataveitokani’
Catholic Church	‘Women’s League’
I Taukei Women	‘Soqosoqo Vakamarama’

6.2 Non-Formal education and Training comprises public and private training conducted by enterprises and corporations with varying durations and costs. Public vocational is undertaken by TPAF (now part of the Fiji National University).

7.0 MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

7.1 Within the Ministry of Education such programs are offered through programs and projects under TVET, Culture and Heritage, and Youth and Sports with oat time overlaps in target groups’ age range, similar training and programs and context with limited funds that could otherwise be used effectively, using an integrated approach for improved quality of life.

Program	Target Groups	Course	Duration
FANFE	Parents	Parenting/Literacy	Workshops/Short Courses
Youth & Sports	15 - 35	Skill Training	Short Courses
Culture & Heritage	all	Community Based Training	Short Courses
LED/TREE-AVT (IHRDP)	Unemployed	Based on LMIA/TNA/MOS	4-6 months (Institutional/OJT)
Matua Program	School Leavers	FSLC,FSFE, and Vocational	1 – 2 years

8.0 TRAINING OUTCOMES

- 8.1 In evaluating the training offered it can be said that adult education and non-formal learning programs are scattered and uncoordinated.
- 8.2 In addition, many people in the rural areas have gained many certificates which do not give any clear pathways to employment. This may imply that the training offered and certificates gained do not meet

standards required by employers. Using the Benefit-Cost Ratio (BCR) would be important to determine the financial return on these programs. By comparing their benefits and costs the following will have to be assessed.

Benefits	Costs
Time Savings	Course Development or purchase
Increase productivity	Instructional materials
Improved quality of Output and /or	Equipment and or facilities
Enhanced personnel performance	Salaries of instructors and staff and/or
	Lost productivity due to training attendance.

- 8.3 This BCR ratio will determine whether these training have been value for money. At present there is no accountability on the trainings offered by these agencies.

9.0 LABOUR MARKET

- 9.1 The trends of trade and open labour markets, rapidly changing technologies and mass unemployment resulting from the recent economic crisis, are expected to continue in the 21st Century. This trend will foster rapidly paced changes in future industrial structures and employment patterns.
- 9.2 The effects on changes in the labour market are that some jobs are declining in significance, others are growing in importance and others still require completely new or different skills. The size of the workforce employed in the service and technology industries, where a high level education and skills are required, will increase; while the demand for low-skilled workers will shrink. Many employees are likely to change jobs and possibly even careers, several times during their working lives. The changing nature of labour market trends has significant implication for education, implying *inter alia* **the need to provide lifelong learning, continuing education and recurrent technical vocational education and continued upgrading of knowledge and skills** : High population growth rates (2%) – ‘youth bulge’, low level of investment and job creation, less economic benefits, excess supply of labour, significant ‘brain drain’, large informal and subsistence sector and lack of commercialisation of economic activities.
- 9.3 **This is more critical for Fiji with, shortage of skilled workers (construction, apprenticeships, tourism middle level managers, low-skilled positions, air conditioning, refrigeration, and automotive mechanics), limited employment opportunities, public sector domination, constraints in the business environment, insufficient absorption of new labour market entrants and emigration (LMDS,2008).**

Econometric Forests of Labour Demand in Fiji (Annual Percent Changes)

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Mean
Transport & Services	3.73	5.62	6.84	8.34	10.36	12.41	14.49	16.54	9.79
Aggregate	3.61	4.48	4.93	4.64	4.68	4.89	5.04	5.16	4.68
Manufacturing	2.21	-0.11	-0.29	1.47	1.66	1.31	2.53	2.74	2.75
Mining	-8.90	10.38	-8.97	-6.42	-4.89	-3.36	-1.29	1.13	-5.39
Agriculture	-1.91	-1.01	-3.79	-1.99	-5.19	-3.67	-6.45	-5.08	-3.64
Building & Construction	-2.26	-2.02	-1.62	-1.59	-0.02	0.51	0.87	0.58	0.58
Electricity & Commerce	2.49	1.05	0.88	1.56	1.79	1.36	2.91	3.19	3.19

9.4 For labour markets to function properly, for more jobs to be created and work to become more decent, for poverty to be alleviated, social stability and employment-intensive economic growth are essential conditions. In this context, Training assumes critical proportions as part of whatever investment strategies that may be appropriate.

10.0 THE WAY FORWARD

10.1 To respond well to the emerging challenges of the 21st century labour market demands, the Ministry of Education may need to rethink strategies to implement that are responsive to these changes in the global and local market. Our intention must be to produce a flexible, demand driven, well-qualified labour force necessary to create a sustainable future and improved quality of life of our people.

10.2 One of these strategies would be to enhance Adult, Community and Non-Formal Education to facilitate development of knowledge, skills and attitude for the future workforce that is responsive to change and global employment trends? To do this, it is suggested that the Ministry concerned consider improved co-ordination and accreditation of the Adult, Community and Non-Formal Education Sector within the Ministry and other government agencies. This paper proposes the following:

- A Governance Structure/ Mechanism (Regulatory Body)
- Policies, Standards, Regulations and Guidelines
- Programs
- Quality Assurance and Accreditation
- Costs and Changes be made to accommodate these developments

11.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 11.1 In view of the above, it is suggested that a statutory body under the Ministry of Education or Ministry of Labour be established to bring together training programs and account for the return on investment on government expenditure on training /education in non-formal learning context to bring about greater effectiveness and value for money.
- 11.2 Also that the present structures already established in various communities and religious and youth groups be utilised and links strengthened with the government departments and agencies.
- 11.3 Apart from that the creation of Community Learning Centres should be of the Non-Formal Education work in the next five years; using the present structures mentioned in 9.2.