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Training and Employment of People with Disabilities: Fiji 2002

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International Labour Office

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Abstract

[Excerpt] *Training and Employment of People with Disabilities: Fiji 2002* is descriptive in nature. When the ILO commissioned the researchers for the *Country Study Series*, each was asked to follow the comprehensive research protocol appended to this document. The resulting report therefore includes country background information, statistics about people with disabilities and their organizations, a description of relevant legislation and policies and their official implementing structures, as well as the education, training and employment options available to people with disabilities. While few countries have such information readily available, researchers were asked to note the existence or lack of specific data points and to report data when it did exist.

Keywords

disability, Fiji, training, employment, public policy

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An *AbilityAsia* Country Study

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Preface

Training and Employment of People with Disabilities: Fiji 2002 is part of the *AbilityAsia Country Study Series.* The series was designed as a contribution to the end of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) Asia and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 1993-2002, and to mark the 20th anniversary of the International Labour Organization (ILO)'s Convention No. 159 Concerning Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons).

One of the primary purposes of the *Country Study Series* is to contribute to the knowledge base about people with disabilities in Asia and the Pacific region. According to World Health Organization estimates, people with disabilities represent 10 per cent of the population of developing countries. Yet, in many countries, people with disabilities are "invisible". Little reliable data exist about their numbers, needs and achievements. While they are recognized as among the poorest of poor, people with disabilities typically face barriers to the very services that might lift them out of poverty, such as education, vocational training, and employment and business development services.

A second purpose of the *Country Study Series* is to provide baseline data about the status of education, training and employment of people with disabilities. This takes on greater significance in light of the ESCAP proclamation to extend the Asia and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 1993-2002, for another decade, 2003-2012. In October 2002, governments from across the region adopted the Biwako Millennium Framework (BMF) for Action towards an Inclusive, Barrier-free and Rights-based Society for Persons with Disabilities as the regional policy guideline for the new Decade of Disabled Persons. The BMF includes targets and actions in several priority areas, including training and employment. With regard to the BMF, *Training and Employment of People with Disabilities: Fiji 2002* should prove useful as an evaluation tool since it provides a baseline description of the situation in Fiji against which progress can be compared.

The BMF includes the ILO's principle of decent work – defined as, "productive work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity for women and men everywhere". Further, the BMF's employment and training targets call upon countries to mainstream (integrate) vocational training programmes, collect reliable employment and self-employment rates for people with disabilities and consider ratification of ILO Convention No.159. The Convention, among other things, requires a national policy of vocational rehabilitation and employment based on the principles of equal treatment and equal opportunity for workers with disabilities. It should be noted that as the final changes are made to this document, it was announced that the Fiji Cabinet made a decision to ratify C.159 (September 2004) which is a most significant development for people with disabilities in the country.

Training and Employment of People with Disabilities: Fiji 2002 is descriptive in nature. When the ILO commissioned the researchers for the *Country Study Series,* each was asked to follow the comprehensive research protocol appended to this document. The resulting report therefore includes country background information, statistics about people with disabilities and their organizations, a description of

relevant legislation and policies and their official implementing structures, as well as the education, training and employment options available to people with disabilities. While few countries have such information readily available, researchers were asked to note the existence or lack of specific data points and to report data when it did exist.

Since the lack of information about people with disabilities contributes to their invisibility and social exclusion, the information itself is important. The protocol called for limited analysis and did not specifically ask for the researchers' recommendations. However, researchers were asked to report on existing plans and recommendations of significant national stakeholders.

Upon completion of the draft country studies in the series, they were shared with participants of the ILO/Japan Technical Consultation on Vocational Training and Employment of People with Disabilities, held in Bangkok in January 2003. The consultation was a regional meeting of governments and representatives of workers', employers' and disabled persons' organizations from across the region. Each country team was asked to review the country study reports and make comments with regard to accuracy, omissions and content of the report.

As noted, the main purpose of the series is to describe the employment and training situation of the country at a particular point in time. Since the data was collected in 2002, the information contained in *Training and Employment of People with Disabilities: Fiji 2002* may not be the most recent. For example, the decision to ratify C.159 was already noted. Nevertheless, this report provides a comprehensive view of the employment and training situation of people with disabilities in Fiji against which new developments can be better understood and progress assessed.

To the reader, whether you are an academic, researcher, policy maker, practitioner or an individual with a disability, we hope you will find the information you are looking for in these pages.

For more information about the *AbilityAsia Country Study Series* or to learn more about the ILO Convention No. 159 or other issues related to employment and training of people with disabilities in the region, please visit the AbilityAsia Web site: http://www.ilo.org/abilityasia.

For more information about the ESCAP Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012, visit http://www.unescap.org/esid/psis/disability/index.asp

Readers may also be interested in two recently published works by the ILO relating to employment and disability – *Moving Forward: Toward Decent Work for People with Disabilities – Examples of Good Practices in Vocational Training and Employment from Asia and the Pacific* and *Proceedings of the ILO/Japan Technical Consultation on Vocational Training and Employment of People with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific*. Copies of these and other ILO publications on disability in Asia and the Pacific can be ordered by contacting abilityasia@ilo.org.

Lin Lean Lim
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Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
BMF	Biwako Millennium Framework
CBR	Community-Based Rehabilitation
DPI	Disabled Peoples' International
DSW	Department of Social Welfare
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
FDPA	Fiji Disabled People's Association
FEF	Fiji Employers Federation
FIT	Fiji Institute of Training
FNCDP	Fiji National Council for Disabled Persons
FNTC	Fiji National Training Council
FNTTC	Fiji National Training and Technical Center
FVTTI	Fiji Vocational Training and Technical Institute
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HDI	Human Development Index
IHRD	Integrated Human Resource Development for Employment Promotion
ILO	International Labour Office
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
KRA	Key Result Area
LFPR	Labour Force Participation Rate
MOWSWPA	The Ministry of Women, Social Welfare and Poverty Alleviation
OHS	Occupational Health and Safety
PAP	Poverty Alleviation Programme
PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
SDL	Soqosoqo Duavata ni Lewenivanua
TVET	Tafe Vocational Education and Training
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USP	University of the South Pacific
WOSED	Women's Social and Economic Development Programme

Part One: Country Overview

1.1 Introduction

The Republic of Fiji, located in the Pacific Ocean midway between the equator and the South Pole, has one of the largest and most developed economies of all nearby Pacific Islands. According to the 2002 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)'s Human Development Report, Human Development Index (HDI), Fiji ranks 72 out of 173 countries. Fiji ranked 44th in the 1998 report, so its relative position has declined over recent years.

Other data from the 2002 Human Development Report include: life expectancy at birth of 69.1 years, 92.9 per cent literacy rate and 83 per cent combined primary, secondary, and tertiary gross enrolment ratio. The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita purchasing power parity (PPP) stood at US$4,668.

Fiji has been influenced by Melanesian, Polynesian, Micronesian, Indian, Chinese and European trends and developments. In the nineteenth century, it served as an independent trade centre for the South Pacific. In 1874, the British established colonial rule, which did not begin to be lifted until the1960s. Between 1889 and 1916 over 40,000 indentured servants were recruited from India, including areas now part of modern day Bangladesh and Pakistan, primarily to work on sugar plantations. Most remained in Fiji at the end of the indenture period in 1920. From that period the British colonial administration established group administrative definitions according to racial and ethnic characteristics. Britain also encouraged separate economic development policies in different communities, preventing most indigenous Fijians (as opposed to Indo-Fijians) from gaining employment in the formal wage sector of the labour force until the Second World War.[1]

Other factors of colonial rule further contributed to the ethnic tensions of modern day Fiji. One of the most significant is the issue of land. About 87 per cent of land is under the ownership of indigenous Fijians, with lesser amounts considered freehold land which is in the hands of individuals. About 5 per cent of what had formerly been State-owned land was reclassified as belonging to the indigenous population, so the share of land ownership by indigenous Fijians has risen from the often-quoted 80 per cent level.

Indigenous Fijians have commonly leased land to Indo-Fijians, particularly for the operation of sugar cane plantations, however, many indigenous Fijians are now withholding lease renewals resulting in the displacement of some Indo-Fijians and increased tensions along racial lines.[2] These and many other issues contributed to the

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[1] Prasad, Satendra, Jona Dakuvula and Darryn Snell, "Economic Development, Democracy and Ethnic Conflict in the Fiji Island, Minority Rights Group International and Citizens Constitution Forum, 2001, p.3.
[2] The withholding of lease renewals has been carried out for various reasons, a major one being the perception that land owners are not getting their fair share of the proceeds through rental of land. This is due to the Native Land Trust Board (NLTB) not reviewing rentals on a regular basis.

three 1987 coups[3] (in May, September and November) and May 2000 political crisis[4]. The Government of Fiji also owns some land.

1.2 Geography

Fiji extends over an area of 1.3 million sq km of ocean, but its landmass is only 18,333 sq km. The country is made up of 330 islands, of which only a third are inhabited. Two islands, Viti Levu and Vanua Levu, account for most of the landmass (57 per cent and 30 per cent, respectively). Most of the islands are forested or wooded (64.9 per cent) and only about 10 per cent is arable. The terrain is varied or mountainous and the interior is sparsely populated due to the rough geographic terrain.

Fiji has a tropical maritime climate. In the hottest months, the temperature ranges from 23 to 30°C and from 20 to 26 °C during the coldest. March is the wettest month when the average rainfall reaches 368 mm.

1.3 Population

In 1998, the population of Fiji was estimated to be 815,000. The 1996 Census is the most recent national population and household census, and it reported a total population of 775,077, up from 715,375 a decade earlier. Although the population of Fiji has been on the rise over the long term, the annual growth rate has been declining and is currently 1.4 per cent. According to the 1996 Census, 50.8 per cent of the population is male and 49.2 per cent female. Of the total population, 35.3 per cent is below the age of 15, 56.5 per cent between the ages of 16 and 55 and the remaining 8.2 per cent are over 55. Life expectancy is 65.5 years for men and 70.5 years for women. Infant mortality is 14.5 per 1,000. The 1996 Census also provides detailed demographic information, including information regarding people with disabilities referred to elsewhere in this report.

Indigenous Fijians account for 51 per cent of the population, while 44 per cent are Indo-Fijian. Emigration has been on the rise since 1987, with more than 70,000 people leaving the country after the coup, 90 per cent of whom were Indo-Fijians. Many of these skilled migrants were able to readily locate elsewhere. The trend seems to be continuing with ongoing political tension associated with the expiration of land leases and the 2000 political coup.[5]

Other demographic changes include a decline in the population under 15 (from a total of 41 per cent of the population in 1966 to 35 per cent in 1996), an increase in the population over 65 years old (from 2.4 per cent to 3.3 per cent between 1966 and

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[3] A group led by indigenous Fijians took over government, which had been led by an Indo-Fijian prime minister.
[4] Most of the land is owned by *Mataqali* villages and many feel they are not getting properly compensated. Land owners are being persuaded that they can get better results by tilling the land themselves. A lot of land owners are seeking financial compensation before renewal of an agreement and a lot of farmers are unable to pay.
[5] US Department of State, *Fiji Background Notes*.

1996, respectively) and an increase in the proportion of the population in the labour force from 51 per cent to 61 per cent between 1966 and 1996, creating increasing challenges for employment creation.

About 53.6 per cent of the population resides in rural areas, while 46.4 per cent are urban dwellers. As the largest island in the archipelago, Viti Levu is home to 75 per cent of the population. Suva, the capital city, is located on its southeastern shore, and the international airport at Nadi on the western shore is the entry point for most tourists who come to Fiji. Singatoka in the south and Lautoka and Ba on the northwestern corner and Rakiraki in the north are other significant population centres. The island of Vanua Levu, to the north of Viti Levu, is home to another 18 per cent of the population with the remaining 7 per cent spread across about 100 maritime islands.

Fifty-two per cent of Fiji Islanders are Christian (Methodist or Roman Catholic), 35 per cent Hindi, and 7 per cent Muslim. Fiji enjoys a high literacy rate, recorded at 91 per cent in 1997. Languages spoken include English (official), Fijian and Hindi.

1.4   Government and general development plans

Fiji chose a parliamentary form of government upon its independence from Britain in 1970. Since then, three military coups and the May 2000 political crisis have marked Fiji as one of the most politically-unstable countries in the Pacific Region. In the 16 years from 1986 to 2002, there have been 12 governments.[6] The current democratically-elected administration has been in place since the September 2001 elections.

Fiji has a powerful president, who heads the State and appoints the prime minister who heads government. The president, elected by the Great Council of Chiefs, a traditional ethnic Fijian leadership body, also appoints members of parliament to form the cabinet. The president also appoints members of the upper House of the bicameral parliament, the Senate, which has 34 members. The populace elects the 71 members of the lower House, the House of Representatives. Voting is compulsory for all citizens over the age of 21. Fiji maintains an independent judiciary consisting of a Supreme Court, a Court of Appeals, a High Court and magistrate courts. The Government of Fij has 16 ministries.

The 1997 Constitution, which replaced the 1990 Constitution, abolished the requirement that the prime minister be an indigenous Fijian, thereby preventing dominance by indigenous Fijians in parliament. The 1997 Constitution also included provisions to protect the rights of people with disabilities as noted later in this report.

Six political parties dominate the current political scene. The May 2000 coup put an end to the People's Coalition government, which was led by the Fiji Labour Party and included several other political parties. After an interim government, elections resulted in the current SDL (Soqosoqo Duavata ni Lewenivanua)-led administration,

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[6] Global Policy Network, *Overview of Current Economic Conditions in Fiji,* June 4, 2001 Report available online at: http://www.globalpolicynetwork.org

which has a strong indigenous Fijian composition and a commitment to deepening the process of structural adjustment and economic reform.

Local administration includes four major regional divisions (central, eastern, northern and western), and separate councils in urban areas. Each division is under the charge of a commissioner.

Indigenous Fijians have their own administration. The basic unit is the village, which is headed by a traditional chief. Villages are organized into districts and districts make up 14 provinces, each headed by a high chief. Councils preside over provinces, districts, and villages. The hereditary chief of each clan is a member of the Great Council of Chiefs, a powerful body that influences government and appoints the president.

1.5   Economy

The economy is vulnerable to climatic changes, such as the drought of 1998, which resulted in a fall in Gross National Product (GNP). Further, political instability resulting from the May 2000 civilian coup lead to a depressed economy, battered business confidence, and a drop in foreign and domestic investment. Tourism and the garment and textile export industry were particularly hard hit. However, by 2002 tourism figures were better than expected. Cane and sugar production remained weak due to the expiration of land leases and other factors.[7] The economy is further threatened by a so-called "brain drain", through migration overseas by a large number of skilled Indo-Fijians.[8]

Fiji is rich in natural resources, has a high level of human resource development, a dynamic class of entrepreneurs, and a strategic geographic location at the hub of economic activities for the Pacific Island region. Fiji has a relatively high income and economic development status, but, as noted previously, its position has been declining over recent years. According to the Asian Development Bank (ADB), GDP per capita stands at US$2,210, relatively high compared to other Pacific Islands.[9] Fiji's major exports are garments, sugar, fish, gold and timber. Principle imports are various manufactured goods, machinery and transport equipment, mineral fuel and other fuels.[10] However, the majority of the economy rests on a relatively narrow base and is overly dependent on tourism and the sugar sector for generating foreign exchange.

Fiji has had sustained economic growth since its independence from Britain. GDP averaged 1.2 per cent during the 1980s and improved to 2.4 per cent in the early 1990s, continuing its upward trend to average 3.1 per cent from 1995 to 1999. The ethnic tensions and political crisis of May 2000 caused economic growth to contract, recording -2.8 per cent growth in 2000 as compared to the rapid expansion of 9.7 per

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[7] Prasad, Satendra, Darryn Snell, *Globalization and Workers Rights in the South Pacific: Case Studies of the Fiji Islands, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Kiribati*, ILO, 5 February, 2002, p. 12.
[8] House, William. J. Draft Report: *Employment Planning, the Labour Market and the Nature and Impact of Skill Losses on the Fiji Economy*, ILO, Suva, December 2001, p. 11.
[9] ADB, *Asian Development Outlook, 2001, ADB Key Indicators of Developing Asia and Pacific*, 2001.
[10] Ibid.

cent in 1999.[11]   The economy slowed further to 1.5 per cent in 2001 and the underlying government deficit stood at 4.1 per cent of GDP in 2001.[12]

Table 1.1: Economic Sectors

Origins of GDP in 2000 (expressed in per cent)	
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	16.8
Mining and quarrying	2.5
Manufacturing	14.6
Construction	4.3
Electricity and water	4.3
Transport and Communications	13.3
Wholesale and retail trade, restaurants and hotels	18.8
Other services	25.4
Total	100

Source: Reserve Bank of Fiji, Quarterly Review, as quoted in Pacific Islands Country Report, March 2002, *The Economist*, Economist Intelligence Unit

1.6   Labour markets

According to the 1996 Census, the total labour force was estimated to be 297,770 with more than 20 per cent of the workers engaged in subsistence activities, therefore not invovled in the money economy. Although almost 74 per cent participated in the money economy, only 36 per cent were engaged in formal paid employment. Some 5.8 per cent were unemployed.[13] Table 1.2 provides the overall breakdown, while Table 1.3 examines trends in the Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR).

Table 1.2: Total Labour Force, including the unemployed and those relying on subsistence (1996/by gender)

	Men	Women	Total
In Money Economy	166 299	53 015	219 314
Subsistence: Without Money	24 151	37 045	61 191
Unemployed	9 602	7 663	17 265
Total Labour Force	200 052	97 718	297 770

Table 1.3: Size and Growth of the Labour Force

	Men		Women		Total	
	Number	LFPR %	Number	LFPR%	Number	LFPR%
1986	189 929	85.4	84 607	38.5	274 536	70.9
1996	200 052	79.2	97 718	39.4	297 770	66.1
2001	205 104	77.8	105 270	41.2	310 374	65.7
Increase in 2001	1 169		1 791		2 960	

Source: Bureau of Statistics and estimates of the Ministry of Planning cited in *Employment Planning,*
the Labour Market and the Nature of Skills Losses on the Economy of Fiji, Draft Report, 2001.
Note: LFPR= Labour Force Participation Rate

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[11] Templo, Horacio T. Draft Report: *Expanding Social Protection/Social Security in Fiji*, ILO, Suva, December 25, 2001.
[12] ILO Country Briefs, internal unpublished document, 2002.
[13] House, William. J, Draft Report, 1999, op. cit., p.6.

Most paid employment in 1999 was in the manufacturing (29.5 per cent), distribution, including tourism (21.2 per cent), finance, insurance, business services and other service sectors (35.3 per cent).[14]

Since 1996, it is highly likely that the unemployment rate has risen, as evidenced by redundancies due to the global economic downturn, the recent political upheaval in the country, and the subsequent decline in tourism. The Government of Fiji does not maintain unemployment data, so this cannot be officially confirmed. The labour force is expected to increase considerably and as noted later in Section 5 of this report, formal job creation will fail to match the requirements of the labour force. The gap forecast between the number of job seekers and number of anticipated job openings would have to account for 14,500 school leavers per year, belated entrants, re-entrants or laid off workers, and those who have not had a formal education. According to one scenario, there could be a shortfall of up to 7,000 jobs in the formal sector.[15] While all these projections are subject to economic shifts and more in-depth analyses, it is clear that job creation is a critical issue on the socio-economic agenda and that the subsistence and informal sectors of the economy and labour market must be considered within the total development analysis.

Youth unemployment is of particular concern in Fiji. Although no age-specific employment data are available, it is widely believed that youth share an unfair burden related to unemployment. Young women are considered particularly vulnerable, facing higher unemployment rates than their male counterparts and having lower labour force participation rates. It is also believed that there are other disparities in unemployment rates based mainly on ethnicity and geographical location, but in the absence of appropriately disaggregated data, it is difficult to substantiate this claim. However, the continuing migration of young people from rural to urban areas highlights the absence of meaningful employment opportunities outside cities and large towns.[16] These same threats impact on young people with disabilities, who face a more severe threat from economic turmoil and of facing unemployment.

The ILO is working closely with the Government of Fiji and its Ministry of Labour to promote sustainable employment and income generation through the Integrated Human Resource Development for Employment Promotion (IHRD) programme. The programme is aimed at generating employment by seizing opportunities in the toursim, agriculture, fisheries and forestry sectors and other sectors, by promoting indigenous products through import substitution, and through the provision of vocational skills that are in demand in the labour market.

The last year poverty rates for Fiji were available was 1991. The absolute poverty rate, which refers to a lack of the basics of life such as food or shelter, stood at 25 per cent and the relative poverty rate, which points to income disparity, stood at 32.7 per cent.[17] Since unemployment is estimated to have risen since 1996, it is likely that the rate of poverty in the country has also increased.

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[14] Supplement to the 2002 Budget Address, ILO, Suva, Government of Fiji, November, 2001, as reported in the House.
[15] House, William. J, Draft Report, 1999, op. cit. p.,10.
[16] ILO, Ministry of Youth, Employment Opportunities and Sports, *Youth Employment Policy Framework: An Affirmative Action,* Preface.
[17] UNDP and Government of Fiji, *Fiji Poverty Report,* 1997, p. 32, 39.

Summary

In short, it is important when analyzing the situation in Fiji with regard to employment and training for people with disabilities to remember that the country:

- Has a new government and has only recently emerged from a period of political crisis. Concerns about stability remain
- Is a multicultural society experiencing racial tension between its two primary groups, indigenous Fijians and Indo-Fijians
- Has experienced fairly sustained economic growth, which has been hampered by internal political strife, a global economic recession and other domestic and global issues
- Is challenged by a strong need to create jobs and continue to develop formal and informal job opportunities

Part Two: People with Disabilities — Definitions, Data and Situation

2.1　Definitions of disability

As in many countries, Fiji uses multiple definitions and classification systems for disability. The 1996 Census included questions about disability and Fiji is currently planning to undertake a major survey of people with disabilities countrywide. The 1996 Census, however, was not based on a specific definition of disability and was mired with methodological problems, which has resulted in a gross underestimation of disability incidence.[18]

The Fiji National Council for Disabled Persons (FNCDP) Act is the main piece of legislation dealing exclusively with issues of people with disabilities. It establishes the National Council as the main coordinating and policymaking body for the island republic. In Part 1, Article 2 of the Act, disabled individuals are defined as people who "as a result of physical, mental or sensory impairment are restricted or lacking in ability to perform an activity in the manner considered normal for human beings". No specific categories of disability are identified in the Act.

Other disability definitions and classification systems can be found in other studies. For example, the Fiji Disabled People's Association (FDPA), a self-help organization of people with disabilities, conducted a major assessment of law and disability policy in Fiji in 1998.[19] The assessment, described elsewhere, states that, "disability applies to anybody who by virtue of their physical, mental, sensory and emotional disposition is prevented from enjoying equal opportunities and exercising the same rights as the rest of society". This is the same definition that the FDPA used for its advocacy workshop in 1997, but differed from a definition used for a 1996 study, which defined disability as "a long-term or permanent medical condition or injury that impairs the person's mobility, self-care, communication, intellectual development or socialization. It does not include respondents with temporary or minor conditions that do not impair these abilities in the long term". [20]

2.2　Disability classification systems

Fiji has no national registration system for people with disabilities and therefore does not have an official classification system for collecting data.

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[18] Walsh, Crosbie A., *Disability Counts in Fiji*, an analysis of the 1996 Census, Centre for Development Studies, School of Social and Economic Development, University of the South Pacific, Suva, 1999.

[19] Fiji Disabled People's Association, and the Institute of Justice and Applied Legal Studies, University of the South Pacific, *Disability Law and Policy: Issues Affecting the Delivery of Services and Access to Facilities for People with Disabilities,* May 1998.

[20] Fiji Disabled People's Association, *A Case study of Disability in Rural and Island Nadraoga,* Suva, Fiji, 1996.

The FNCDP Annual Report offered the following categories of disabilities (without definition or criteria or incidence figures) for the purpose of explaining to the reader the "extent of disability in the country":

- Multiply handicapped
- Developmentally delayed
- Slow learners
- Physically disabled
- Hearing Impaired
- Intellectually handicapped
- Mentally retarded
- Blind, and
- Visually impaired.

In the 1996 Census, enumerators were prompted to ask a series of questions about disability, which eventually led to a categorization of people with disabilities. The first question was:

"Does any person in this household have any disability or health problem that is long term?"

Long-term was defined as, "any condition or illness which has lasted for 6 months or more".

If the reply was yes, the enumerator was asked to pursue the impact of the problem responding to a series of questions and ticking one of ten boxes to note the severity of the impact. The questions were:

- Does this person, as a result of this condition, have difficulty with or cannot do everyday activities that people his/her age can do?
- Does the person as a result of this condition have difficulty with communication, mixing with others or socializing?
- Does the person as a result of this condition have difficulty with any other activity that people his/her age usually do?

Alternatively, the enumerator could respond affirmatively, "No difficulty with any of these".

Finally, the enumerator was asked to categorize the disability using a code that allowed for the identification of multiple disabilities. Five types were identified and the following definitions offered:

- When the person is either partially or totally blind (sight)
- When the person has only partial or no control over his mental facility (intelligence)
- When the person is either partially or fully deaf (hearing)
- When the person has a loss of motion or limbs (physical)
- When extreme old age prevents a person from performing functions
- Others

Another classification system was used by the FDPA when it collaborated with the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to produce *A Country Study on People with Disabilities,* which was released in February 2001. For purposes of analysing disability information from schools and NGOs, the study used the following categories of disability:

- Physical impairement, including all types of physical disabilities, including amputees, hemiplegia, quadriplegia and others
- Visual impairment, including low vision and blindness
- Hearing impairment, including hearing loss and speech problems
- Intellectual disability, including people with learning disabilities and those with mental health and psychiatric problems
- Multiple disabilities[21]

The Fiji Community-Based Rehabilitation Programme, under the Ministry of Health, uses these categories for classification:

- Delayed milestone
- Physical
- Speech
- Hearing
- Visual
- Intellectual
- Multiple

The system used by the special schools is similar, classifying students with disabilities as: physically disabled, intellectually handicapped, visually impaired, hearing impaired, speech impaired, and multiply handicapped.

2.3   Sources of disability information and statistics

As noted, no formal registration system exists for people with disabilities and therefore no comprehensive data is available. However, the Ministry of Health's Nurses and Community Rehabilitation Assistants, who are part of the Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) Programme, provide early identification services and make referrals of children with disabilities to schools and support organizations. Formal education and special education programmes, some NGOs, hospitals, and other groups maintain data about people with disabilities as part of their activities, as do various government agencies. However, there is no consistent approach and therefore data cannot be properly coordinated, studied or analyzed.

The following sources are described in more detail:

- 1996 Census data
- JICA report
- Ministry of Health Data

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[21] Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and FDPA Joint Project: *A Country Study on People with Disabilities: Fiji*, February 2001, unpublished.

- Other plans

1996 Census Data

The 1996 Census held some promise for providing some interesting and useful data on people with disabilities. However, as discussed earlier in this report, the strength of this data is open to question. One researcher noted that the 1996 Census numbers represent, "the tip of the iceberg",[22] adding that official rates may account for just a tenth of the country's disabled population. The same researcher cautioned, "it would be unwise, therefore, to give much credence to the disability rates"[23].

The 1996 Census officially recorded 12,000 people with disabilities, representing just 1.5 per cent of the population.

Despite the obvious constraints and limits, the 1996 Census did provide some information on the 12,000 official population of people with disabilities. The following details were provided[24]:

- With regard to the type of disability, 37 per cent reported a physical impairment, 15 per cent an impairment related to intelligence, 11 per cent to sight, 13 per cent to age, 13 per cent were classified as "other", 8 per cent to hearing, while 3 per cent were not stated
- One third (33 per cent) reported having difficulty with every day activities, 25 per cent with communication, 27 per cent with other activities, 13 per cent had no difficulty and 2 per cent did not state a level of difficulty. Many reported multiple difficulties
- Disabilities were more common among boys and men, the young and the old, but it appeared that disability might not have been fully reported or recorded for girls and women
- The ethnic composition of the disabled population was similar to the ethnic population of the total population
- Disability rates tended to be higher in rural than urban areas (161/1000 compared to 113/1000)
- People with disabilities had lower educational levels compared to the non-disabled population, while Indo-Fijians received a lower level of education than indigenous Fijians
- People with disabilities were underrepresented in both the money economy and under the category of subsistence, and were more likely to be absent from the labour force. People with a disability related to age and individuals with physical and intellectual impairments were most likely to be absent from the labour force
- The proportion of men with disabilities engaged in the money economy was three times greater than women with disabilities

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[22] Walsh, Crosbie A., *Disability Counts in Fiji,* 1999, op. cit. p. 5.
[23] Dr Walsh attributes some of the under enumeration issues related to imprecise definitions, the failure of enumerators to pursue probing questions, the addressing of questions to the head of household rather than directly to the person with a disability. Some interviewees also reported that the enumerators did not ask them any questions regarding disability. (Walsh Crosbie, A., Disability Counts in Fiji, 1999, op. cit. p. 7.)
[24] Walsh, Crosbie A., *Disability Counts in Fiji*, 1999, op. cit. p. 9.

The following tables illustrate these issues.

Table 2.1: Age and Disability-Fiji Islanders and People with Disabilties
(Per cent, by age group)

	< 20	20-29	30-44	45-59	60+
Fijians	46.2	16.6	20.7	11.4	5.1
Disabled	20.5	10.1	17.3	19.8	32.3

Table 2.2: Level of Education and Type of Disability by Gender
(Per cent)

Level	Gender	Sight	Intellectual	Hearing	Physical	Age	Others	Disabled Persons	Fiji Islanders
Never Attended	Men	8.2	8.4	8.2	6.3	17.1	10.5	10.5	14.3
	Women	16.7	11.1	16.4	18.0	27.6	17.9	18.8	15.6
	Total	11.8	9.6	11.6	13.3	23.3	13.8	14.4	14.9
Kinder-garten	Men	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.3	-	0.7	0.3	0.6
	Women	0.4	0.3	.0.2	0.3	-	0.5	0.4	0.6
	Total	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.5	-	0.6	0.4	1.2
Primary School	Men	43.5	38.2	45.1	39.0	57.4	36.3	40.7	27.1
	Women	45.8	39.7	45.9	40.5	55.0	35	42.6	26.3
	Total	44.5	38.9	45.4	39.6	56.0	35.7	41.8	26.7
Forms 1-4	Men	34.0	38.2	34.0	36.0	18.3	40.9	35.0	37.5
	Women	26.7	32.6	24.8	28.9	11.1	32.7	26.2	36.8
	Total	309.9	35.8	30.1	33.3	14.1	37.3	31.4	37.2
Forms 5-6	Men	6.1	8.5	5.6	8.7.	0.6	7.2	7.4	14.9
	Women	6.4	11.1	5.4	6.8	0.5	8.7	6.6	16.0
	Total	6.2	9.6	5.5	8.0	0.6	7.9	7.1	15.5
Diploma Certificate	Men	6.9	5.3	6.8	5.2	6.3	3.7	5.4	5.0
	Women	3.7	4.5	5.9	4.4	5.6	5.1	4.8	4.0
	Total	5.6	5	6.4	4.9	5.8	4.3	5.2	4.5

Source: *Disability Counts* in Fiji, page 24
Note from the source: Male, female and total columns do not equal 100 per cent due to omissions in Form 7. Figures for most post secondary education are not stated.

Labour force participation rates for people with disabilities are noted in Section 5 of this paper.

JICA/FDPA Report

The JICA/FDPA Country Report on Fiji tabulated data for people with disabilities from school and NGO registers, which provides a clearer view of the situation for young people with disabilities. The following charts from the Country Report show a higher incidence of disability among girls and women and a large percentage of people with physical disabilities. The category "intellectually impaired" included both individuals with intellectual impairments as well as impairments resulting from mental illness.

Table 2.3: Age-Specific Data (1999)

	Number of PWD (100%) Total	Physically Handicapped	Visually Impaired	Hearing Impaired	Intellectually Impaired	Multiple Impaired
0-5	100%	95.73%	2.67%	-	0.80%	0.80%
	496 (Men/Women) (139/357)	498 (139/359)	400 (200/200)	-	100 (100/0)	100 (100/0)
6-20	100%	85.96%	1.81%	1.31%	10.37%	0.55%
	407 (Men/Women) (178/229)	404 (181/223)	400 (197/203)	459 (147/312)	426 (160/266)	849 (116/733)
20+	100%	97.90%	0.83%	0.02%	1.23%	0.02%
	411 (Men/Women) (172/239)	411 (172/239)	429 (158/271)	100 (100/0)	413 (170/243)	533 (133/400)

Sources: From special schools and NGO registers. Cited in JICA Country Study
Note: Not all age groups of people with disabilities are included due to the different formats used in the classification records of organizations.

Table 2.4: Disability-Specific Data (1995-2000)

	Number of PWD (100%) Total number (Men/Women)	Physically Handicapped	Visually Impaired	Hearing Impaired	Intellectually Impaired	Multiple Impaired
1995	100%	94.51%	0.83%	0.25%	4.22%	0.19%
	407 (178/229)	407 (178/229)	401 (194/207)	401 (193/208)	407 (176/231)	410 (191/211)
1996	100%	93.69%	0.80%	0.10%	5.28%	0.13%
	412 (170/242)	411 (172/239)	407 (177/230)	505 (138/367)	473 (144/329)	403 (188/215)
1997	100%	94.15%	0.87%	0.08%	4.75%	0.15%
	414 (170/244)	413 (170/243)	403 (184/218)	417 (167/250)	418 (165/253)	450 (150/300)
1998	100%	93.81%	1.08%	0.06%	4.87%	0.18%
	421 (171/241)	411 (172/239)	403 (184/218)	427 (160/267)	435 (156/280)	441 (153/288)
1999	100%	96.07%	1.39%	0.04%	2.32%	0.18%
	410 (172/238)	410 (174/236)	416 (167/249)	400 (200/200)	499 (138/361)	400 (192/208)
2000	100%	95.87%	1.39%	0.23%	2.26%	0.25%
	409 (174/235)	408 (175/233)	424 (162/262)	445 (162/283)	445 (152/293)	478 (142/336)

Sources: Registers and reports from special schools cited in the JICA Country Study
Note: Records kept by organizations representing people with disabilities lack continuity both in content and systems used

Clearly, the sources of information contain very diverse data. For example, it is significant to note the high percentage of physical disabilities reported by schools and NGOs (almost 96 per cent) as compared to the 1996 Census data (37 per cent). While there could be many reasons for this discrepancy, including unreliable reporting, it does suggest that people with physical disabilities are either better served or better known to schools and NGOs than are individuals with other types of disabilities.

Ministry of Health Data

The Ministry of Health CBR data based on current caseloads offers additional information about the categories of people with disabilities. Although the programme caters to early identification, it has expanded its scope to include adults with disabilities. The Ministry of Health is composed of three main divisions and 19

medical subdivisions.[25] The CBR programme operates in twelve medical subdivisions, concentrating on individuals in rural communities. The total population from a major (large) subdivision is about 90,000 people[26]. Table 2.5 has data for 13 subdivisions.

Table 2.5: Total Number of Cases on Register
First Quarter 2002 in 13 Subdivisions

Sub-Division	Type Of Disability							
	Delayed Milestone	Physical	Speech	Hearing	Visual	Intellectual	Multiple	Total
Suva	7	62	7	11	9	55	29	180
Valelevu	12	61	10	4	10	12	24	133
Tailevu	14	52	2	5	10	11	13	106
Rewa	24	116	11	5	12	28	27	223
Naitasiri	12	74	17	13	6	22	17	161
Serua/Namosi	3	2	5	nil	3	5	14	32
Ba	25	71	7	14	13	25	37	192
Ra	14	131	7	12	17	61	21	263
Tavua	nil	93	8	10	11	25	14	161
Bua	6	86	1	5	3	10	12	123
Cakaudrove	2	40	8	9	1	40	8	109
Taveuni	5	56	3	9	12	15	5	105
Kadavu	34	100	nil	2	55	8	7	206
Total	158	859	171	99	162	317	228	1 994

Note: Figures for the six other medical subdivisions are not available.

Other

Finally, the National Rehabilitation Medicine Hospital in Tamavua catergorizes people with physical disabilities with regard to strength and functioning for medical and legal purposes. However, the equipment and system are not available elsewhere in the country for assessment or classification purposes.

Some of the NGOs and organizations representing people with disabilities collect data, which was analyzed and taken into account in the JICA study. The 1996 FNCDP Annual Report provided a long list of causes of disability in the western Pacific region. While this is enlightening in that it identifies causes that may be more prevalent in the Fijian context, it does not provide data showing the prevalence of each cause. The causes of disability listed included: communicative diseases (including leprosy, poliomyelitis, tuberculosis, etc.); parasitic diseases (such as malaria, shistosomiasis); poor heath and prenatal care, including birth injuries; degenerative diseases; national calamities such as earthquakes and typhoons; armed conflict and crisis; hereditary factors, cardiovascular disease; exposure to chemicals and poisons; accidents; substance and drug abuse; rubella; and safety hazards in the workplace. The report noted increases in disabilities related to road accidents, sports (particularly rugby) and deep sea diving.

Initial plans are underway for a collaborative effort to conduct a national survey. Partners include the Bureau of Statistics, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Women and Social Welfare, the FNCDP, the FDPA and various other NGOs with Inclusion International as international technical partner. The purpose of the survey is to identify, rather than diagnose people with disabilities on a national

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[25] Medical subdivisions are provinces or districts where hospitals are located.
[26] Ministry of Health, Suva, Fiji

basis and to collect data with regard to location, age, the condition of the disability, the cause of disability, and the requirements for education, training, employment and other services.[27] Both of these surveys hold the promise of collecting some excellent data about people with disabilities in Fiji that can be used for planning and programming purposes.

2.4   On-the-job injuries

The Ministry of Labour and Industrial Relations' Occupational Health and Safety Section maintains data on reported cases of workplace injuries and workers' compensation claims. No data is kept on return to work rates. The following data provides an overview of the situation.

Table 2.6: Number of Occupational Heath and Safety Injuries by Industry Classification and Year

Industry	1998	1999	2000	2001
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing	4	9	4	2
Mining, Quarrying	0	0	1	0
Manufacturing	205	300	180	244
Electricity, Water, Gas	0	0	0	8
Building Construction	13	33	23	9
Wholesale, Retail, Trade, Restaurants, Hotels	14	35	22	148
Transport, Storage and Communication	29	29	14	19
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, Business Service	10	17	8	8
Community, Social, Personal Services	15	30	64	85
Total	290	453	352	523

2.5   Environmental factors affecting full participation

With regard to accessibility issues, Fiji has not yet adopted Draft National Building Codes, which would require the inclusion of accessibility features into new building construction. According to FNCDP, the draft is an amendment to the existing building code and therefore covers both new and existing buildings.

According to leaders of the FDPA and the Western Disabled Persons Association, the major organizations representing people with physical disabilities, issues of accessibility and transportation are major obstacles to full participation in community life for people with disabilties, including the areas of training and employment. While some of the public buildings, including those housing some of the Department of Public Welfare (DPW) offices, are accessible, many are not. Some towns have made attempts to accommodate the needs of people with disabilities, however, for the most part such barriers remain in place and are significant. For example, the main campuses of the Fiji Institute of Technology are not accessible. However, another major training institution is incorporating accessibility features into its renovations (Fiji National Training Council, Suva Campus). Transportation is also a major barrier that prevents access to training and employment. Although people with disabilities can obtain a driver's license, many require specially-adapted or specially-designed

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[27] Fact sheet provided by the Fiji Disabled People's Association, 2002.

vehicles, which they are not able to afford. Buses are not accessible and taxis are expensive.[28]

With regard to the availability of Braille, services are available through the Society for the Blind and its special school, which has a Braille printer. However, these facilities are used to support the educational development of students and young people. Other sources of Braille material or the use of Braille in other contexts are lacking.

Fiji uses the Australasian sign language. Trained interpreters are limited. In one special school, a sole teacher skilled in sign language is consistently asked to interpret for the local hospital. A group of deaf students organized a computer class provided through a private vendor and requested her interpretation services for the entire class since such services are not publicly available outside special education settings. There are no government provisions for the provision of sign language interpretation at present. The Hilton Special School runs sign language classes on Wednesday afternoons after working hours and these are open to the public.

2.6   Social factors affecting full participation

Fijians with disabilities, like those in other parts of the world, face barriers to community participation, training and employment opportunities and are thus likely to be among the poorest of the poor.[29] The 1997 Fiji Poverty Report highlighted this situation, pointing out that, "as individuals, people with disabilities are among the most disadvantaged, particularly those born with a disability. Attitudes are changing, but some people with disabilities are still treated as if they were of no value and not helped to make the best of their abilities. This contributes to their later poverty, poverty that is evident in their quality of life if not also material in nature".[30]

While it is extremely difficult to measure cultural attitudes, the impact of negative or paternalistic attitudes are usually reflected in low participation rates of people with disabilities in all aspects of community life, as well as their lack of access to all types of community and financial resources. In the process of conducting this study, the issue of cultural attitudes was posed to many Fijian villagers, both indigenous and Indo-Fijian, and to government and NGO officials. The responses varied, however, many professionals and government officials indicating that often disabilities may be viewed as the product of a curse or punishment. For example, teachers report that "some parents have negative attitudes stemming from cultural beliefs and they think that having a disabled child is a punishment for wrongdoing, or that an evil spirit is the cause".[31]

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[28] Joint publication by the Fiji Disabled People's Association and the Institute of Justice and Applied Legal Studies, *Fiji Report: Disability Law and Policy (issues affecting the delivery of services and access to facilities for People with Disabilities).* p. 96.
[29] Elwan, Ann., *Poverty and Disability, a Survey of the Literature*, World Bank, 1999.
[30] UNDP and the Government of Fiji, *Fiji Poverty Report,* 1997, p. 32 and 39.
[31] Report of the Fiji Islands Education Commission panel, *Learning Together: Directions for Education in the Fiji Islands*, November 2000, p. 236.

A major disability advocate in Fiji summarises the situation as follows:

> Even after three decades of medical, educational, social and rehabilitation measures, combined with increased *public* awareness-raising activities…massive neglect, denial, rejection or isolation [still exists] since the person with the disability brings shame and disgrace to the family; a disabled person becomes an object of pity and must be spoon-fed and overprotected; a recipient of charity and good-will as this person with a disability is totally incapacitated; and the practice of witchcraft and traditional rituals since the onset of a disability is perceived to be caused by an evil spell, curse or ancestral misdeeds. Generally, both rural and urban communities in Fiji assign huge responsibilities and set high expectations for their members, and because such demands are not equally placed on those members who may have a disability, they become unproductive and eventually end up as additional, long-term family responsibilities. Nevertheless, societal attitudes and expectations have improved during recent years and the participation of persons with disabilities in almost every walk of life is no longer a novelty.[32]

Some villagers without disabilities who were interviewed for this study said that people with disabilities are loved and cared for in their communities and they seemed to have a recognition that individuals with disabilities should be included in productive and even income-generating activities. While the information is only anecdotal, most of those asked could name several people with a disability in their own villages and identify their disabilities, which often included intellectual disabilities and mental illness, as well as more recognisable physical and sensory disabilities.

There seems to be a growing acceptance of people with disabilities according to reports from people with disabilities themselves and the comments and policies of government offices at the national, division and district level. Several human rights' and disability rights' organizations have similarly noted this development. The 1997 Fiji Poverty Report recognized these evolving attitudes. More attitudal change is required and the legacy of a history of negative or paternalistic attitudes remains. The report also noted that in rural communities, people with disabilities are often well integrated in the community.

2.7   Disabled Persons' Organizations

The primary organizations representing people with disabilities include:

The Fiji Disabled People's Association (FDPA)

This national, cross-disibility and self-help organization was established in 1980 by people with disabilities. Its objectives are to facilitate, realise, support and promote equality of opportunity and the full participation of people with disabilities by strengthening its branches and affiliates into an effective, cross-disability, gender-sensitive, service-oriented national organization. It collaborates with government, national, regional and international agencies for the efficient delivery of services,

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[32] Macanawai, S., *Policy Development: Special Education Services in Fiji,* University of New England, Armidale, NSW, Australia, 1998. Thesis towards a Master's degree (Hons) of Education Administration.

effective advocacy programmes and the promotion of an inclusive society. The FDPA is a member of Disabled Peoples' International (DPI) and currently hosts the DPI Oceania Subregional Office. About 4,000 people with disabilities have been registered with the FDPA to date.

Disabled Peoples' International (DPI) Oceania

This is one of five subregional DPI offices in Asia and the Pacific. Established in Suva in March 2000, DPI's Oceania Subregional Office covers seven countries in the subregion – Australia, the Cook Islands, Fiji, New Zealand, Samoa, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

Spinal Cord Injury Association

Established in 1993, this organization supports individuals who have become paralysed as a result of spinal cord injuries. It aims to provide information and advice on all aspects of living with a spinal cord injury and provides services to enable and encourage people living with paralysis to live independent lives. It is also committed to creating awareness and understanding of the causes and consequences of suffering a spinal cord injury. Data on membership figures is not available.

United Blind Persons of Fiji

Blind and visually impaired individuals established this self-help and advocacy group in 1991 to represent their needs at a local, national and international level. Its objectives are to advocate on behalf of blind and visually impaired people in Fiji, and to identify, inform, counsel and refer such people and their families to relevant services, as well as providing services not otherwise available to its membership. Further, the organization seeks to raise public awareness and promote blindness prevention in all areas of society. It also aims to establish affiliations and support the work of national, regional and internation disability organization and other appropriate bodies to improve the quality of life of people with disabilities in Fiji. The organization currently has 320 registered members and is affiliated to the FDPA, as well as being a full member of the World Blind Union.

The Western Disabled People's Association

Established in 1973, the Western Disabled People's Association aims to serve the interests and welfare of people with physical disabilities in the western area of the country. About 2,000 people are registered with the organization, including those disabled through spinal cord injuries, head injuries, spina bifida and multiple sclerosis.

Others

Counterstroke Fiji was established in 1988 as the national health support organization providing support to people who have suffered a stroke, as well as their families and advocates for improved services. About 2,000 people who have had a stroke are registered with the organization.

Part Three: Legislation, Policies and Institutional Structures

3.1   International policies adopted

Fiji adopted ESCAP Resolution 48/3 in July 1993, which proclaimed the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 1992-2002.

Fiji is not a signatory of ILO Convention No. 159 Concerning Vocational Rehabilitation (Disabled Persons), 1983, but the country recently completed ratification of the ILO's four Core Conventions.

3.2   National legislation

The national legislative and policy framework related to people with disabilities, which is a relatively recent development in Fiji, is formed by three pieces of legislation:

- The Fiji National Council of Disabled Persons (FNCDP) Act (1994)
- The Constitution (Amendment) Act of 1997
- The Social Justice Act 2001

The Fiji National Council of Disabled Persons (FNCDP) Act authorised the formation of a body to carry out a series of activities related to developing policies and coordinating services for people with disabilities, including employment and training services.

Recent human rights and affirmative action legislation, namely the Constitution (Amendment) Act 1997 and the Social Justice Act (2001) is inclusive of people with disabilities and includes targets relating to them. These statutory provisions hold promise for greater mainstreaming and inclusion of people with disabilities in government initiatives and society as whole, if properly implemented. There is currently no legislation based on global initiatives dealing solely with the rights of people with disabilities and their employment and training.

The Fiji National Council of Disabled Persons Act

The FNCDP is a coordinating body and not a service-delivery mechanism. The Act describes the membership, structure, committee functions and operational procedures relating to people with disabilities. The Minister of Women, Social Welfare and Poverty Alleviation (under which the FNCDP functions) also has the required leverage for establishing regulations for the purpose of carrying out provisions of the Act. The structure and activities of the FNCDP are further described in other parts of this section.

The statutory roles and functions of the FNCDP related to people with disabilities call for it to:

- Coordinate their care and rehabilitation
- Formulate national policy
- Draw up and implement a national plan of action for rehabilitation
- Seek financial assistance
- Maintain a register of organizations providing services
- Organize national seminars and workshops
- Create public awareness
- Work towards eliminating causes of disability
- Regularly inform public ministries about the needs of people with disabilities and seek solutions
- Establish a national Rehabilitation Fund
- Periodically review the national policy and national plan

The Constitution (Amendment) Act of 1997

The Constitution (Amendment) Act of 1997 includes specific references and provisions related to people with disabilities. Section 38, Chapter 4 in the Bill of Rights refers to equality specifically:

- Every person has the right to equality before the law
- A person must not be unfairly discriminated against, directly or indirectly, on the ground of his or her: (a) actual or supposed personal characteristics or circumstances, including race, ethnic origin, colour, place of origin, gender, sexual orientation, birth, primary language, economic status, age or disability; or (b) opinions or beliefs, except to the extent that those opinions or beliefs involve harm to others or the diminution of the rights or freedoms of others
- Accordingly, neither a law nor an administrative action taken under a law may directly or indirectly impose a disability or restriction on any person on a prohibited ground
- Every person has the right of access, without discrimination on a prohibited ground, to shops, hotels, lodging-houses, public restaurants
- The proprietor of a place or service referred to in subsection (4) must facilitate reasonable access for disabled persons to the extent prescribed by law
- A law, or an administrative action taken under a law, is not inconsistent with the right to freedom from discrimination on the ground of: (a) language; (b) birth; (c) economic status; (d) age; or (e) disability

The Constitution bars unfair discrimination based on disability and also requires the right to access, without discrimination, to public places, shops and related establishments. Further, it requires that proprietors facilitate reasonable access for people with disabilities to the extent described by law.

Chapter 5, Section 44 calls for social justice and affirmative action and requires that Parliament make "provision for programmes designed to achieve for all groups or categories of persons who are disadvantaged effective equality and access to: [a] education and training; and [b] land and housing and participation in commerce and in all levels and branches of services of the State".

The Social Justice Act

The Social Justice Act of 2001 provides additional legislative support specifically for Section 44 of the Constitution. According to this legislation, the Act has been developed, "to implement the Social Justice Provisions [Chapter 5] of the Constitution by establishing programmes of affirmative action and for related matters". It spells out a Schedule of Affirmative Action programmes to achieve equity of access by disadvantaged groups, including people with disabilities.

The Act defines affirmative action as, "State policies to assist groups or categories of persons who are disadvantaged, so as to enable them to achieve equality of access with groups or categories who are not disadvantaged". Equality of access is defined as, "access to education and training, to land and housing, to participation in commerce and to participation in all levels and branches of service of the State". The Act includes monitoring and reporting requirements according to prescribed indicators.

People with disabilities are specifically mentioned with regard to special education, small- and micro-enterprise development, with regard to their own care and rehabilitation, poverty alleviation and family assistance programmes. Table 3.1 (see next page) describes the requirements of the different ministries in addressing the particular programmes that refer to people with disabilities.

Table 3.1: Affirmative-Action Programmes Relating to Employment and Training for Targeted Groups of People with Disabilities

Affirmative Action Programme	Target Group	Goals	Means of Assistance	Performance Indicators
Department of Social Welfare				
Coordination of care and rehabilitation of persons with disabilities.	People with physical and mental disabilities.	Ensure that people with disabilities have access to education and training, land and housing, or participate in commerce or State services.	Inclusion of disability needs at all levels of development. Provide resources. Government grant provided to FNCDP.	Increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities. Increase recognition of people with disabilities' contributions. Increased awareness.
Poverty Alleviation Project.	Recipients of family assistance and care and protection allowance.[1]	Assist beneficiaries and ensure they have access to income-generating activities.	Cash grant of up to 5,000 Fijian dollars (US$2,350) to increase income-generating ventures.	Reduction in numbers receiving family assistance and allowance. Increase in participation among target groups in income- generating projects.
Ministry of Education				
Improvement of educational opportunities for students with disabilities (Special Education).	Students who are mentally, physically and/or intellectually impaired	To improve access to education at preschool, primary, secondary and tertiary education for young people with disabilities.	Increase in grant level. Provision of special equipment and resources. Overseas training of special teachers. Increase teacher establishment. Build more disability-friendly schools. Develop policies prioritising education needs.	Improved access. Improved standard of education provision in special schools. Raise standard of living of people with disabilities.
Ministry of Commerce, Business Development and Investment				
Small/micro enterprise development.	Women and young people with a disability (mental and physical). The unemployed and low income earners.	The establishment and development of small/micro enterprises by economically-disadvantaged groups, including women, young people, people with disabilities, the unemployed and low income earners. Provide access for targetted groups to participate successfully in economic and development activities. Establishment and development of small/mico enterprises in villages, settlements and townships	Establishment of the National Center for Small and Micro Enterprises. Provision of finances. Provision of support structure to develop small/micro enterprises. Providing assistance on finance, marketing and technology, information and other related matters. Training in entrepreneurship and business management.	More small/micro enterprises established. Increased participation of target group in business and commerce. Generating more employment opportunities. Raise the standard of living for target groups.

Note: Adapted from the Schedule, Section 4, Social Justice Act, 2001
[1] Includes people with disabilities

In addition, the development of affirmative action programmes in the following areas could also benefit people with disabilities. These include requirements that:

- The Ministry of Finance and Planning addresses small-business development, targeting certain ethnic groups by increasing available equity with the aim of providing a substantial increase in small-business development
- The Ministry of Finance and Planning also addresses the needs of young people with disabilities to participate in vocational and technical training
- The Ministry of Education addresses needs in rural areas and among disadvantaged schools by providing grants and by improving facilities

- The Ministry of Education addresses the needs of young people who are not attending school by providing opportunities for vocational and technical training, fee subsidies and other measures
- The Ministry of Youth addresses the needs of young people in rural areas in learning a trade and through the provision of employment services for them

The law addresses several other Ministries and programme areas, such as scholarships and self-help programmes that target specific ethnic groups or parts of the population, which could also benefit people with disabilities.

Other Legislation of Critical Interest to People with Disabilities

Although many of the following pieces of legislation described in Table 3.2 do not specifically identify people with disabilities, they mandate services or protection of critical interest to everyone, and therefore this also refers to people with disabilities in terms of employment and training.

Table 3.2: Additional Legislation Of Particular Relevance to the Employment and Training of People with Disabilities

	Description
Education Act, 1978	Regulates the establishment of schools, including special schools.This act spells out the government's responsibilities, including: overall administration and policy making; registering and monitoring schools and providing advisory services; designing curriculum; licensing, training and employing teachers; setting and overseeing external examinations. Local schools are operated by communities, NGOs and other entities.
Fiji National Training Act	Established the Fiji National Training Council.
Employment Act	Deals with conditions of employment in the workplace and establishes the Labour Advisory Board, which advises the Labour Minister on issues related to employment. The Act addresses the legal conditions of employment and dispute resolution.
National Provident Fund, 1995	Establishes a provident fund for workers, including old age, disability and survivor benefits. No rehabilitation provisions.
Workmen's Compensation Act, 1978	Deals with compensation for work-related injuries. Does not include any provisions related to vocational rehabilitation, job retention, accommodation or return to work.
Health and Safety at Work Act, 1996*	Relates to the health and safety of workers and establishes the National Occupational Health and Safety Advisory Board. The Act allows the Minister to dismiss a member of the board due to physical incapacity.
Small and Micro-Enterprise Development Act	Among other things, this Act established the National Center for Small and Micro-Enterprise Development, which is not fully operational at present, but will provide training and business development assistance.
Wage Council (Cap 98: Vol. V)*	According to this Act, the Permanent-Secretary may grant permits authorizing the employment of workers with disabilities at less than the statutory minimum rate of remuneration.
Draft legislation	
Industrial Relations Bill	The Industrial Relations Bill is intended to replace the Employment Act. The current draft calls for a prohibition of discrimination, including against people with disabilities, however, it also allows for exceptions based on the need for special services or facilities considered unreasonable and if there is a "risk of infecting others with illness". The current draft also calls for a 2 per cent 'quota' system for employers who hire more than 50 employees, but does not include reference to any levies, fines or consequences for non-compliance.
National Building Code	Originally developed by the then Ministry of Trade and Commerce, the code has not yet been adopted into legislation. The code deals with engineering and design standards and makes provisions for people with disabilities. If adopted, it will cover the construction of houses, public amenities and renovations[1].

Note: [1] Joint publication by the Fiji Disabled People's Association and the Institute of Justice and Applied Legal Studies (IJALS), *Fiji Report: Disability Law and Policy (issues affecting the delivery of services and access to facilities for People with Disabilities)*.
Note: * These Acts have measures that could be considered discriminatory

3.3   Disability policies and regulations

National Plan

Fiji's Task Force Report for the Preparation of the Strategic Development Plan 2002-2004 (November 2001)[33] specifically refers to people with disabilities, mainly with regard to poverty. The plan includes the following specific recommendations regarding people with disabilities.

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[33] Ministry of Planning, Suva, Fiji

- Recommendation 1 calls for ensuring that all categories of poor people are provided with the minimum basic needs at an affordable price. For people with disabilities this includes the provision of tax incentives for workers with a disability who are subject to paying tax, and financial support for non-taxpayers who look after people with extreme disabilities who are unable to earn a living and are looked after at home
- Recommendation 4 calls for the provision of a "safety net" for poor, working-age people who are not capable of working. It urges that communities be sensitized towards people with disabilities, and that financial support be provided to people with disabilities who cannot work

Other Regulations and Policy Statements

The Department of Social Welfare (DSW) in the Ministry of Women, Social Welfare and Poverty Alleviation and the FNCDP are the government bodies tasked with facilitating and implementing policies and programmes for people with disabilities. The Ministry of Education is responsible for the policies related to education and training. The major relevant policy documents include the following:

- DSW Strategic Plan
- FNCDP documents
- The Ministry of Education's *Blueprint for Affirmative Action on Special Education*[34]

Other ministries have policy statements that are inclusive of people with disabilities and some have been noted elsewhere in this report.

According to the Social Justice Act, each Ministry, "may make regulations to give effect to the provisions of this Act", and the "Ministry may, by regulation, amend the Schedule". Many Ministries are beginning to respond with various policy documents, such as Strategic Plans or the Ministry of Education *Blueprint for Affirmative Action on Special Education.*

Department of Social Welfare (DSW)

The DSW has completed the first edition of a strategic plan titled: *A Challenge and a Promise*. The plan identifies six Key Result Areas (KRAs).

The first (KRA 1: Strategic Policy Advice) states that the DSW would facilitate and produce quality and timely research and policies in close liaison with key stakeholders in the areas of income support, strengthening families, youth at risk, income generation and self-reliance, housing for the poor, ageing, people with disabilities, poverty alleviation and support to NGOs.

Under the plan, the DSW aims to provide "national development strategies that improve the quality of life, alleviate poverty and promote social well being". The plan includes specific indicators and performance measures, and includes an active

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[34] Ministry of Education, Draft copy, *Blueprint for Affirmative Action on Special Education,* February-April 2002.

research programme, and advice to the Minister regarding policies with the aim of subsequent adoption by the Cabinet. The present plan did not specifically include people with disabilities, but will eventually do so. The DSW will oversee these efforts, according to the plan.

FNCDP Documents

The FNCDP has produced several documents related to its work and structure, such as an organizational chart that describes its internal structure, functioning and relationships to other ministries and organizations. This list of plans, however, does not constitute a national plan. In fact, one of the future plans listed in a document provided in 2002 by the FNCDP is "the formulation of the National Plan for Fiji". Currently, Fiji lacks a national plan or general policy initiative for the full participation of people with disabilities and a policy related to the vocational rehabilitation and employment and training of people with disabilities. Basically, Fiji has followed the guidance in the FNCDP Act and the Decade of Disabled Persons' (1993-2002) Targets for Action as a policy framework for working with people with disabilities.

Ministry of Education

There is no explicit policy in Fiji for special education. The *Blueprint for Affirmative Action for Special Education* is a 10- year plan to upgrade special education for people with disabilities that calls for, among other things:

- Restructuring and strengthening special education
- Redesigning buildings and infrastructure to make them more disability-friendly
- Integrating students with special needs in mainstream primary, secondary and tertiary institutions
- Upgrading teacher qualifications to promote inclusion
- Providing vocational training and employment opportunities that are responsive to the open market and subsistence living
- Encouraging and supporting the inclusion of students with disabilities/special needs in mainstream schools

The *Blueprint* is a major policy statement with regard to upgrading special education services and serves as a policy statement, strategy, as well as including performance indicators. It has already resulted in the establishment of a special education department within the Ministry of Education.

Ministry of Youth

The Ministry of Youth, Employment Opportunities and Sports launched its *Youth Employment Policy Framework: An Affirmative Action* in April 2002. One of its key recommendations is that the Ministry should take "appropriate steps to ensure that the needs of young women and other equity groups (young people with disabilities, indigenous Fijian, and rural youth) are adequately reflected in the various policies and programmes which form part of the Framework".

The document specifically identifies, "the need to increase access of disabled and disadvantaged youth to training", and calls for these young people to be given priority in the IHRD programme. It further identifies, "the need to create employment opportunities for young people with disabilities", while suggesting that supported employment, sheltered workshops and community-based rehabilitation approaches be explored. As a matter of policy, the IHRD programme's project includes people with disabilities as a target group and the influence of this policy is evident in the development of the youth framework.

However, not all government strategic plans and policy frameworks include people with disabilities. For example, *The Women's Plan of Action 1999-2008, Volumes 1 and 2* do not address the unique needs of women with disabilities and this may be true of many other strategic plans or policy documents that were not reviewed in the course of the study.

3.4   Evaluation and review of policies

Since there is no national plan regarding people with disabilities or a national plan related to vocational rehabilitation, no evaluation system is currently in place and no targets have been set.

However, the Social Justice Act calls for monitoring of programmes by the administrating department or agency in reference to the performance indicators. Table 3.1 shows those which are relevant to people with disabilities. The responsible Minister must prepare and submit reports annually to Parliament. One of the performance criteria calls for an increase in employment opportunities for people with disabilities, therefore requiring a clear legislative mandate for monitoring the employment status of people with disabilities.

3.5   Institutional structures

History

As in many other countries, charitable organizations and NGOs have been largely responsible for generating the initial interest in improving the situation for people with disabilities in Fiji. In the early 1960s, following a polio epidemic, the Red Cross rolled out a rehabilitation programme and a few years later, special education services were initiated. The first special education school was opened by the Crippled Children's Society in 1967. The Fiji Society for the Blind, and the Intellectually Handicapped Children's Society went on to open other special education schools. The Ministry of Education provided teachers and two special education teachers were recruited from Australia to provide technical assistance. This represents the backbone of the policy regarding the education of people with disabilities in Fiji today.

As children and young people with disabilities grow older, vocational needs become increasingly apparent. The Crippled Children's Society, Fiji Society for the Blind and the Intellectually Handicapped Children's Society identified the urgent need for the development of vocational training programmes for people with disabilities in 1976.

With the support of the ILO's Suva office, the Fiji Vocational Training and Technical Institute (FVTTI), commonly known as the Suva Rehabilitation Center, was established as an NGO in the early 1980s. Anecdotal evidence suggests that FVTTI achieved a good degree of success over the years. However, by 1989, ten years after the formation of the Fiji Rehabilitation Council, a seminar led to the formation of a sub-committee to address the vocational rehabilitation of people with disabilities. The sub-committee, under the guidance of the DSW, made several recommendations to the government, including the need to establish an effective coordinating and policymaking body. The recommendations reached the Cabinet and were approved, leading to the early stages of what later became the FNCDP in 1991. However, it was not until 1993 that the Council was established at Tamava Hospital under the Ministry for Health and Social Welfare. In 1994, the Council was strengthened through the enactment of the FNCDP Act , giving it the necessary power to carry out the functions listed in the Act.

Key government Ministries

The DSW, under the Ministry of Women, Social Welfare and Poverty Alleviation, is the key government body regarding research and policy formulation for people with disabilities. As noted, the DSW houses the FNCDP, which is a primary vehicle for coordination.

The three core operational areas of the DSW all relate to the employment and training of people with disabilities.

Firstly, the provision of policy advice relates directly to people with disabilities as well as poverty alleviation. Since people with disabilities are among the poorest of the poor globally[35] and the most marginalized in Fiji[36], it is a critical target group requiring the support of the DSW.

Child protection and family welfare must similarly address the needs of people with disabilities, 10 per cent of whom are thought to be receiving family assistance.[37] Since this area also deals with grants to service providers, the DSW must ensure the inclusion of people with disabilities in the activities of all grant applicants, not just organizations that are specifically aimed at people with disabilities.

Finally, community economic development includes targeted assistance to vulnerable groups, inter-sectoral collaboration, income-generating activities, self-employment for special needs groups, rural-based enterprises, training and non-formal education. In this regard, the relevance to people with disabilities can be clearly understood.

While the DSW and the FNCDP are mandated with critical policy and coordinating functions, other ministries also play important roles (see Table 3.3).

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[35] Elwan, Ann, *Poverty and Disability, A Survey of the Literature*, World Bank, 1999.
[36] UNDP and Government of Fiji, Fiji Poverty Report, 1997, p. 32, p. 39.
[37] Ibid.

Table 3.3: Key Government Ministries and Departments

Name	Responsibilities and Functions
The Ministry of Women, Social Welfare and Poverty Alleviation (MOWSWPA)	This Ministry is the primary advisor to the government on public policies that affect women, social issues and poverty alleviation programmes. The Ministry is composed of the Department of Women and Department of Public Welfare (the FNCDP operates under this department). The Department of Women deals with the social and economic development of women. One specific programme, the Women's Social and Economic Development Programme (WOSED), targets women on low incomes and is designed to develop their skills, and encourage the formation of small cooperative-type businesses of 5-6 women. Loans are provided, although they do not assist individuals. Women are encouraged to address local market demand and market analysis is provided. Through collaboration with NGOs, training in handicrafts and other skills is available. Women with disabilities have not been specifically targeted and there is an absence of women with disabilities currently participating in the programme. [1]
The Ministry of Labour	The main ILO counterpart, the Ministry of Labour is responsible for labour relations policies, health and safety issues, employment, research and development and related issues. The Ministry recently endorsed all four of the ILO's core Conventions. The Ministry does not currently operate an employment services programme. It is the lead agency coordinating the IHRD programme, a major national tripartite and inter-ministerial initiative to increase labour force skills, productivity, competitiveness, job creation, and small enterprise development.
The Ministry of Education	The Ministry of Education focuses on broad policy issues relating to all aspects of education. It administers primary (which includes special education) and secondary education, curricula, technical and vocational education and training, teacher licensing and other requirements. The newly-formed Special Education department, Technical and Vocational Education department and Fiji Institute of Technology come under the Ministry of Education.
The Ministry of Youth, Employment Opportunities and Sports	The Ministry of Youth, Employment Opportunities and Sports is responsible for the formulation and implementation of policies and programmes aimed at providing employment for young people (15-24) and helping them to achieve their full potential on many levels. In particular, the Ministry is trying to address the particular needs related to high levels of youth unemployment, launching the Youth Employment Policy Framework with the assistance of the ILO. The Ministry operates vocational training centres and camps for young people. These previously operated in 5-month training cycles, but have now been expanded to 2-year training cycles. Programmes focus on the agricultural sector and include character development, small-business development and motivational aspects. Unfortunately, no young people with disabilities are currently participating. It provides start up funds for small businesses through youth organizations and operates youth employment centres to provide counselling and job hunting skills. Recently, the Ministry installed a database (job matching system) to assist young people in finding suitable employment.
The Ministry of Health	The Ministry of Health is responsible for all medical services, including drug and other supplies, some research, public health, and the operation of three nursing homes. It also operates a community-based rehabilitation (CBR) programme. Medical care in Fiji is free, and private services are also available. The CBR programme was originally operated by Save the Children and is operational in all districts. It is beginning to address the needs of adults and various socio-economic issues, as well as its traditional role of addressing the medical and social needs of children with disabilities. St. Giles Hospital in Suva can provide help for people suffering from mental illness (240 beds). Tamavua hospital provides services for those who have suffered a spinal cord injury (a small unit), those suffering from Hansen's disease (leprosy), as well as people with prosthetic and orthotic devices. Additionally, there are two P&O professionals. The Ministry does not provide assistive devices, even of a medical nature, but refers people to the Red Cross for these services.
Ministry of Agriculture	The Ministry of Agriculture deals with agriculture and animal husbandry issues with the major goal of establishing food security and helping farmers produce more for the domestic and export markets. Its current priority is to explore different methods of food processing. The Ministry operates the agricultural extension service. It provides seeds, tools (up to F$1,000 per person [US$470]) and technical advice to those starting subsistence or food processing activities, assuming those seeking it have concrete plans. Its expanded target groups includes youth, women and people with disabilities. It has a marketing section that is tasked with providing better services. It is currently promoting vanilla production for women, but many other crops and opportunities in this area have also been identified.
Ministry of Commerce, Business Development, and Investment	The Ministry of Commerce, Business Development and Investment is responsible for the Small and Micro-Enterprise Development Act, which established the National Center for Small and Micro-Enterprise Development. Although it has yet to become fully operational at the time this study was carried out, its main activity will be to provide training in enterprise development. The Ministry will provide certification and assist trainees in getting loans from the Fiji National Development Bank. Training will be adapted to the needs of the group, and eventually a nominal fee will be required in a bid to become sustainable over the long-term. In 2003, the Micro Finance Unit tested out several loan models. The Unit has now made in excess of 3,000 loans and some of these have gone to people with disabilities. The return rate is 85 per cent for all groups. Chapter offices are located in larger towns across the country.

Note: [1] According to meetings with department official and representatives of disabled people's organizations.

The FNCDP Act is one of seven different Acts under the responsibility of the DSW. The actual membership of the FNCDP, appointed by the Minister as of January 2002, includes:

- The permanent-secretary responsible for Social Welfare
- The permanent-secretary for Education and Technology
- The permanent-secretary for National Planning
- The permanent-secretary for Regional Development
- The permanent-secretary for Labour and Industrial Relations
- The permanent-secretary for Health
- The director for Social Welfare
- The permanent-secretary for Multi-Ethnic Affairs
- The director-general for Fiji Red Cross Society
- The president of the Fiji Society for the Blind
- The president of the Intellectually Handicapped Society
- The president of the Fiji Disabled Peoples Association
- The president of the Fiji Crippled Children Society
- The executive director FNCDP

Designated members listed serve for a 2-year period.

The FNCDP structure includes a chairperson appointed by the minister, chairpersons of Divisional Committees (western, northern, central and eastern), four to seven members representing organizations that provide services to people with disabilities, permanent secretaries or their representatives from the Ministries of Health, Education, Labour and Finance, the director of Social Welfare and the FNCDP Executive Director. The minister can periodically co-opt additional members. Additionally, the structure calls for six advisory committees, of which education, vocational training and employment are three. These bodies are designed to provide specific advice, assist in the implementation of plans and make recommendations regarding relevant activities.

The divisional committees may also set up District Committees and nine such committees are currently functioning. The District Committees seem to have focused their activities mostly on awareness and accessibility issues and have had some impact locally in both areas.[38]

At the time of this study, the FNDPC had been without a director for more than one year and the council and its advisory committees had not been meeting regularly. According to several sources, the council has made significant progress in some areas.[39] While applauding its structure and potential, disability advocates feel that the

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[38] Joint publication by the Fiji Disabled People's Association and the Institute of Justice and Applied Legal Studies (IJALS), *Fiji Report: Disability Law and Policy (issues affecting the delivery of services and access to facilities for People with Disabilities),* key informant interviews with people with disabilities, district Council members and DSW staff.
[39] The Department of Social Welfare Strategic Plan 2002-2006: *Social Welfare Directions for Modern Fiji. A Challenge and a Promise.*

council ought to be more proactive in its actions and more inclusive of people with disabilities.[40]

Ministry of Education

In response to the Social Justice Act and the desire to address the special education and mainstreaming needs of students with disabilities, the Ministry established and has staffed a Special Education Section. This unit will need to address many of the actions and plans noted in the *Blueprint for Affirmative Action on Special Education,* which is the response to the Social Justice Act mandate.

3.6   Other implementing organizations

Government Relationship with NGOs

The DSW provides grants to NGOs that assist in carrying out all aspects of its mandate. With regard to vocational rehabilitation, the FVTTI is one of the major NGOs to receive funding from the DSW's NGO grant fund.

Through a legal mandate, the FNCDP must register organizations providing services to people with disabilities. At this point in time, the FNCDP has registered 25 organizations. Many are schools that provide some kind of informal vocational training. One such organization, the Fiji Rehabilitation Council, which operates the FVTTI, provides training to adults. NGOs figure strongly among the FNCDP membership and the DSW relies strongly on its partnerships with NGOs to carry out its mandate and plans to continue along this policy line.

Special schools in Fiji, often operated by NGOs and community committees, play a major role in the delivery of vocational training and some limited employment services to young people with disabilities.

With regard to vocational training and employment services, the ILO is actively involved with Ministry of Labour through the IHRD programme.

Fiji cooperates with other international NGOs. For example, the Red Cross is involved in the distribution of assistive devices, Inclusion International will assist with the planned survey of people with disabilities, and many donors, such as the European Union (EU) and the Australian Government's development arm (AusAid) are and have been involved in developing and formulating projects. With the domestic political situation improving, it is expected that donors' involvement will increase in the future.

Employers' and Trade Unions' Role in Policy Development

Currently, employers and trade unions are not members of the FNCDP, which is tasked with the development of policies relating to vocational rehabilitation. However, both employers and trade unions do have an influence in the development of legislation and policy related to people with disabilities through their influence on

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[40] Meeting with representatives of disabled people's organizations.

the development of the labour code, such as in the drafting of the Industrial Relations Bill. Recently, the ILO recommended that Fiji include employers and trade union representatives on the FNCDP in line with ILO Convention No. 159. If they chose to do so, employers and trade unions could also influence the mainstreaming of people with disabilities through their participation in the IHRD programme and/or by seizing the initiative in the areas of advocacy or programming.

Part Four: Education, Vocational Training, Self-employment and Employment Services for People with Disabilities

4.1   Education system

Fiji's education system is based on a State-community partnership. Communities and civil society organizations own most schools, apart from a small number of government-operated schools. Indeed, only two of 715 primary schools (less than 1 per cent) and 12 of 154 secondary schools (fewer than 8 per cent) are operated by the government.[41]

Government pays the tuition for the first ten years of school, and provides teachers and grants for buildings and other purposes. Elected committees are responsible for managing schools, delivering educational services and managing the physical facilities. "Controlling authorities" (which could be communities or religious, ethnic or other organizations) establish and build schools and own the buildings and equipment. The controlling authorities are also responsible for school finances, including those received from the government or raised through local, private or other sources. They must periodically submit audited financial reports, comply with Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) standards and other regulations. Theoretically, each should have a legally binding Constitution and a set organizational structure.

The structure of the education system in Fiji has changed several times over the years, however, most schools adhere to the Ministry of Education's recommendation of eight years of primary school followed by secondary school from Form 3. Since 1997, education has been compulsory for the first eight years of school (from ages 6 to 15 approximately), but the government plans to eventually extend this to 12 years. Fiji has generally enjoyed high overall rates of school attendance. Even prior to initiating compulsory primary school, the overall attendance rate was 98 per cent. However, attrition rates grew around Year 6 and the Ministry is concerned about this trend.

The following tables (Table 4.1 and 4.2) illustrate enrollment rates in primary and secondary schools based on ethnicity and gender between 1970 and 2000, where such data is available.

Table 4.1: Fiji School Enrollment, 1970–2000 by Ethnicity

Year	Total Enrollment		Enrollment by Ethnicity					
	Primary	Secondary	Primary			Secondary		
			Fijians	Indo-Fijians	Others	Fijians	Indo-Fijians	Others
1970	121,374	15,965	49,102	65,004	7,268	4,820	9,642	1,503
1975	134,971	28,072	58,368	69,525	7,078	9,330	16,827	1,915
1980	131,072	34,134	56,682	67,517	6,873	11,345	20,461	2,328
1985	127,286	41,505	59,540	61,813	5,933	16,964	21,588	2,953
1990	135,925	53,235	63,581	66,008	6,336	21,758	27,689	3,788
1995	145,147	68,278	74,934	63,379	6,834	31,060	33,392	3,826
1999	144,284	68,299	82,238	55,507	6,539	33,017	31,969	3,253
2000	n.a.	68,129	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	33,104	32,180	3,565

Source: Ministry of Education
Note: n.a. means data not available

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[41] Government of Fiji, Report of the Fiji Islands Education Commission panel, *Learning together: Directions for Education in the Fiji Islands,* November, 2000.

Table 4.2: Fiji School Enrollment, 1970–2000 by Gender

Year	Total Enrollment		Enrollment by Gender			
	Primary	Secondary	Primary		Secondary	
			Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
1970	121,374	15,965	62,955	58,419	8,890	7,075
1975	134,971	28,072	68,840	66,131	14,246	13,826
1980	131,072	34,134	66,851	64,221	17,322	16,812
1985	127,286	41,505	65,365	61,921	20,816	20,689
1990	135,925	53,235	69,801	66,124	26,698	26,537
1995	145,147	68,278	74,627	70,520	33,477	34,801
1999	144,284	68,229	74,256	70,028	32,492	35,737
2000	n.a.	68,129	n.a.	n.a.	33,104	35,025

Source: Ministry of Education
Note: n.a. means data not available

Post secondary education usually involves the technical and vocational institutions described later in this study, as well as higher education via teaching colleges, the University of South Pacific, Fiji Agricultural College and the Fiji School of Medicine.

Educational tuition is free for the first ten years and, as of 2000, coverage was extended to Form 5 students in 55 disadvantaged and rural schools. Additional assistance is available to children from low-income families. However, schools are able to levy other fees for books and to maintain buildings. Some school principles in remote areas have noted that transportation costs can often be prohibitive.

The present system results in many disparities. Depending on income levels of a particular community and the degree of success by the operator of a school in raising funds, some schools are relatively well resourced, while others face enormous economic challenges that can effect the quality of educational services.

Urban areas have more schools than rural communities and many urban schools, particular secondary schools, have been described as being close to Western standards. In contrast, many rural schools are often under-resourced and sub-standard. This situation is also reflected when examining special schools. The Social Justice Act and the aforementioned *Blueprint for Affirmative Action on Special Education* focus on these issues.

4.2   Educational opportunities for people with disabilities

Although it was originally assumed that students with disabilities would only attend special schools in their primary years and would enter regular secondary schools thereafter, secondary schools lack accessibility features, special support services and trained teachers in the areas of special education. More significantly, a lack of policy support for integration left the decision to accept students at the secondary level to the principal or head teachers. As a result very few students become integrated in a secondary school environment or attend secondary schools.

The number of students with disabilities, except for the most minor disabilities, is actually probably very small. In fact, the Report of the Fiji Island Education Commission specifically states that, "a relatively small number of children with

disabilities attend regular schools… Secondary and tertiary education is out of reach of most disabled students".[42]

Although substantive, official data about the numbers of students who have been integrated into the formal education system is lacking, anecdotal data from some schools that are pursuing mainstreaming, such as the Hiltons Special School and Early Intervention Center in Suva, the Nadi Center for Special Education and the Fiji School for the Blind, verify that some students are in fact becoming mainstreamed in regular schools.[43] As noted in Table 4.3, according to a Ministry report seven of the 17 special schools prepare their students for mainstreaming.

Special Schools

Special schools provide the primary opportunity for young people with disabilities to get an education. However, special schools only exist at primary level. As a result, very few students become integrated into or attend secondary school. Indeed, the special primary schools are often keeping students with disabilities into young adulthood. These primary schools have also developed pre-vocational and vocational training programmes for students with disabilities and try to provide services to assist them in the transition to employment or self-employment. Like regular schools, special schools in Fiji are operated by committees or societies and are registered with the Ministry of Education as special schools if they meet certain criteria. The Fiji Society for the Blind operates the Fiji School for the Blind and the Fiji Society for Crippled Children operates several other schools. However, their management committees are seen as charitable organizations, resulting in committee members lacking expertise in special education or disability issues.[44] Currently, there are 17 special schools in Fiji; three of which are not registered. (see Table 4.3)

Table 4.3: Special School Data, 1999

School	Location	Enrollment	Disability	Hostel	Preparing for mainstream
Suva Intellectually Handicapped School	Suva	142	Intellectual impairment	-	yes
Fiji School for the Blind	Suva	30	Blind, multiple impairment	yes	yes
Hilton Special School	Suva	110	Physical/Hearing Imp.	yes	yes
Early Intervention Centre	Suva	58	Multiple impairment	-	yes
Sigatoka School for Special Education	Sigatoka	45	Multiple impairment	-	yes
Nadi Centre for Special Education	Nadi	105	Multiple impairment	-	yes
Lautoka School for Intellectually Handicapped	Lautoka	58	Intellectual impairment	-	-
Lautoka School for Special Education	Lautoka	50	Physical impairment	yes	-
Ba School for Special Education	Ba	32	Multiple impairment	-	-
Ra Society School for the Disabled	Rakiraki	43	Multiple impairment	-	-
Labasa School for Handicapped	Labasa	86	Multiple impairment	-	-
Savusavu Handicapped School	Savusavu	39	Multiple impairment	-	-
Nausori Special Education School	Nausori	26	Multiple impairment	-	-
Levuka School for Handicapped	Levuka	24	Multiple impairment	-	-
Veilomani Rehabilitation Workshop*	Ba	40	*	-	-
Vocational Training Centre	Suva	84	Multiple impairment	-	-
Gospel School for the Deaf**	Suva	19	Deaf	yes	yes
Total: 17 schools		991		4	7

Source: Ministry of Education
Note: Multiple impairments means that schools take children with various impairments.

* The centre was started for young people with disabilities, but previously did not have any students with a disability, even though it is still registered as a special school. It now has 2 students with disabilities.

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[42] Ibid., p. 237.

[43] Information provided by NCDP member and former official working in special needs.

[44] Government of Fiji, Report of the Fiji Islands Education Commission panel, *Learning together: Directions for Education in the Fiji Islands,* November, 2000, p. 235.

** This school is not yet fully recognized as a special school by the Ministry of Education, as it does not have suitable buildings. It has temporary approval. Information is for 2000.

Teacher Training

Registered schools benefit from an allocation of teachers. Among the difficulties imposed by a policy structure that maintains older students with disabilities in schools that are administratively considered primary, is the problems created for teacher training. Many of the teachers provided to the schools are only licensed teachers, which means they only completed secondary school and have no specific teacher training. Some teachers in the vocational subject areas may have technical school qualifications, but lack teacher training or a background in special education. After two years on the job, such teachers are eligible for a one-year special education course (offered by Lautoka Teachers' College). However, some schools, particularly the FVTTC for people with disabilities, have reported that a number of teachers did not report back for work after taking up this training opportunity. Further, the training is offered at primary level, and therefore teachers of older students, such as those teaching vocational subjects, do not receive age-appropriate or vocational special-needs training.

It should be noted that many of the head teachers had received international education and are quite skilled in the area of special education. Many conduct their own in-service training programmes to train teachers on the job. Some of these experienced and older teachers have pointed out that they are reluctant to retire because there are no trained teachers to take their places. According to the *Blueprint,* The Ministry of Education has plans to upgrade teacher training in special education both domestically at teachers' colleges and by sending more teachers overseas.

Special Teaching Aids and Support

Teachers developed a special education curriculum in 1995 for students with severe disabilities, but it is not relevant for students with milder disabilities. Some teachers have noted that it is not clear which curriculum should be used with their disabled students, the regular curriculum or one designed for young people with severe disabilities.[45] The special schools vary in terms of the quality and amount of equipment available, along with the availability of assistive devices or special teaching and training aids. A 1998 survey concluded that most special schools are not sufficiently equipped to deal with students who have special needs.[46] Maintaining equipment when it is available is another problem. Several wheelchairs were seen idle at one school because the school did not know how to fix them or that the Red Cross offers this service. However, the Fiji School for the Blind has the resources it needs to address the needs of blind students and has a special programme to support students in mainstream secondary schools. It uses its specialist equipment to prepare Braille documents and textbooks for students and works closely with teachers in mainstream schools to foster the integration of students with disabilities. The Fiji Society for the Blind, which operates the Fijij School for the Blind, is now supporting its first student to enter the University of the South Pacific.

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[45] Government of Fiji, Report of the Fiji Islands Education Commission panel, *Learning together: Directions for Education in the Fiji Islands,* November, 2000, p. 138.
[46] Ibid., p. 247.

Children with learning difficulties, estimated to be up to 5 per cent of all children in schools, might face particular problems because their needs have been overlooked. Their disabilities may not have been properly identified and as a result they are more likely to drop out of the education system.[47]

Rural Needs

Since all the special schools are located in urban areas, and only four of these have hostels, access for young people living in remote rural communities is limited, requiring them to relocate in order to attend school.

Assessment

Based on the four schools visited for this study, meetings with head teachers, discussions with Ministry staff and other key informants, as well as Ministry of Education documents, the current lack of structure and policies results in:

- Inequities and inconsistencies among schools depending on their fund-raising success or the financial capacity of the sponsoring charitable organization
- Inadequate teacher training in specific areas of education, particularly in areas related to vocational subjects. Teachers either lack skills for special education, technical training, or both
- Different policies and practices related to assessment, enrollment, mainstreaming and follow up. Some schools are accepting street children, while one vocational school only had two students with disabilities attending
- Students with disabilities failing to enter secondary schools and therefore lacking the very qualifications they need to advance intellectually and at a vocational level

The difference in educational quality is supported by the data in the 1996 Census, which clearly indicated that people with disabilities did not fare as well educationally as the non-disabled population. This data also suggests the retention rate of students with disabilities is lower than that for non-disabled students.

4.3   Mainstream vocational training system

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) takes place in secondary schools, at post-secondary institutions, such as the Fiji Institute of Technology (FIT), and through the Fiji National Training Council (FNTC), as well as variety of informal or non-formal training locations through ministries, institutions and NGOs. Currently, there are no formal apprenticeship programmes in Fiji.

The TVET section of the Ministry of Education develops curricula and oversees TVET training in secondary schools. Currently, there are 47 secondary schools with TVET classes. Class enrollment tends to be gender determined, with boys studying carpentry and joinery, light engineering and automotive repair, and girls studying

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[47] Ibid., p. 242.

catering and tailoring. They earn a certificate and the training is intended for employment or starting a business.[48]   Generally, however, TVET training in secondary schools is considered to be a "second chance" education and such classes or programmes are considered inferior to academic programmes.[49]

The Ministry of Education is the host Ministry for coordinating the IHRD subprogramme on vocational training. It has worked with partners in this capacity to set up an informal vocational training programme using an itinerant trainer. The trainer employs community-based approaches to identify training needs and instructors and to organize locally delivered informal courses. The skills taught reflect local job creation and income generation opportunities or needs evident in other subprogrammes, such as the one relating to tourism. To date classes in flower arranging, hosting tourists (home stays) and catering are examples of informal courses taught at the community level.

The FNTC and the FIT are the primary institutions for post secondary trade, technical and formal vocational training in Fiji, although they also offer informal and short-term vocational training.

The Fiji National Training Act established the FNTC in 1973, which is responsible to the Ministry of Labour and Industrial Relations. The Council is a tripartite body and funding comes from a one per cent levy on the gross salaries employers pay. Ninety-five per cent of these fees are returned in training costs according to the FNTC. The FNTC mission is to provide and promote training, increase productivity, and provide consultancy services in organizational improvement. The Council provides a variety of certificate-based and short-term training programmes in fields as diverse as tourism, information and telecommunications technology (ICT) and mushroom farming. Some of the courses are offered through franchises with international organizations. While most of its students are employed and sponsored by an employer (90 per cent), many pay their own way or find alternative means of sponsorship. FNTC offers reduced rates for students with disabilities.

The FIT operates under the Ministry of Education's TVET section. Like the FNTC, the FIT is trying to become financially independent. FIT serves about 5,000 students annually and the government subsidizes 3,300. FIT offers a variety of technical and trade courses that result in qualifications in areas such as building engineering, automotive, mechanical engineering, electronics, the arts, general studies, hospitality, maritime studies and others.

None of the training institutions in Fiji have conducted tracer or follow-up studies to determine what happens to trainees after they complete their training, although the FNTC plans to do so with one of its courses. However, wage data suggests that individuals, particularly artisans, realize significant wage increases as a result of vocational training, as compared to those who do not receive such training.[50] This is true in spite of the fact that Fiji lacks a comprehensive accreditation system of qualifications standards against which employers can make hiring decisions.

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[48] Discussions with the head of the Ministry of Education's TVET section.
[49] Government of Fiji, Report of the Fiji Islands Education Commission panel, *Learning together: Directions for Education in the Fiji Islands,* November, 2000, p. 138.
[50] House, William. J, Draft Report, 1999, op. cit. p.23.

As noted, informal training is coordinated by the IHRD programme and is conducted by several ministries. Table 3.3 provides some of the examples of informal training. The Ministry of Youth is currently developing a database of all the non-formal training options in Fiji. The main training institutions also provide non-formal training in response to specific needs, income-generation opportunities and lifelong-learning philosophy. FNTC offers an interesting example. The FNTC is also involved in the green productivity movement and is experimenting with using the by-product of sugar production, called *baggaise*, as a fertiliser for mushroom production. FIT offers evening classes in response to local demands.

Various NGOs also provide vocational training, particularly in the area of non-formal education. Many are religious organizations that receive government funding for the training they provide. Some of the NGOs involved in vocational training include the Marist Training Center on Taveuni, Monfort Boys Town and the Chevalier Farm Training Center, as well as various adult education centres and agricultural schools. Some of these institutions have evolved into providing formal, certificate-based courses, making the distinction between formal and non-formal training institutions unclear in some cases.[51]

Non-formal education is increasingly important to the overall economy, which cannot accommodate the needs of job seekers in the formal labour market. In a 1998 study of eight of the major non-formal training programmes found that there were twice as many applicants seeking places as spaces available.

The University of the South Pacific makes some of its degree courses available through distance-learning modalities. With donor funding, its three campuses in Suva, Port Vila and Apia and its extension campuses on other islands are connected online. Courses related specifically to disability studies are noted elsewhere in this paper and are offered on a correspondence basis.

4.4   Mainstream vocational training opportunities for people with disabilities

Because of physical and transportation barriers, a lack of integration policies within institutions concerned, and the fact that as a group students with disabilities are unlikely to access secondary education and thereby acquire the necessary entry level requirements, the chances of young people with disabilities entering formal and tertiary vocational training institutions are extremely slim. Except in a few instances, people with disabilities have had virtually no access to the two primary vocational training institutions. However, recent legislative developments and other indicators suggest the institutions and the programmes they offer would become more inclusive.

While the FNTC has not served many students with disabilities over the years, all recent renovations, including to the bathrooms, have included accessibility features at its main Suva campus as a result of accepting a student with a disability at an earlier

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[51] Government of Fiji, Report of the Fiji Islands Education Commission panel, *Learning together: Directions for Education in the Fiji Islands,* November, 2000, p. 156.

point in time. It is encouraging to find that the FNTC's IT manager has expressed a strong desire to serve people with disabilities. Although the facility is located in a two-storey building, most ICT and electronics classes are located on the first floor. The FNTC is ready to accept students with a physical disability now and is open to serving other students. However, it will be necessary to provide some orientation to staff and support to students to ensure the success of a mainstreaming effort, especially for students with other types of disabilities.

The Suva campus of FIT on the other hand is not sufficiently accessible. The building is multi-story, but lacks elevators. While the director says there is no official policy barring anybody from entry, they are not able to provide special accommodation for people with disabilities. During the last graduation, only one student out of 600 graduates was known to have a disability.

Non-formal and community-based approaches might be more accessible to people with disabilities, particularly those living in rural areas, however, based on conversations with people involved in the delivery of some of these programmes, figures on the participation of people with disabilities have not been recorded. Anecdotal evidence suggests the number of people with disabilities participating in these programmes is probably very low. The Ministry of Youth organizes skills training for young unemployed people those who are not attending formal education through the National Youth Service and the Youth Employment Option Centres. While the training is delivered successfully, the problem has been providing an enabling environment for business development, including areas such as seed funding, marketing outlets and micro finance. As noted in Table 3.3, many other ministries participate in non-formal training, especially with regard to self-employment.

Scholarships are available through the Ministry of Multi-Ethnic Affairs and the Ministry of Fijian Affairs for formal vocational training and higher education. As part of the study, we spoke with the Ministry of Multi-Ethnic Affairs, who pointed out that people with disabilities have been identified as a target group for the scholarships and are given a certain degree of priority. However, to date only two applicants with disabilities have applied, and only one made the cut off.

4.5 Segregated vocational training opportunities for people with disabilities

Segregated vocational training opportunities are provided through the special schools and the Fiji National Training and Technical Center (FNTTC) for People with Disabilities.

The FNTTC opened in 1979 and is operated by the Fiji Rehabilitation Council. It was intended to serve all students graduating from special and secondary schools as a technical training and comprehensive vocational rehabilitation centre. The objectives of the FNTTC are:[52]

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[52] According to a proposal submitted to the government for additional equipment and provided by the FVTTC manager, and verified by the author of this report from two visits to the centre.

- Providing vocational training for young disabled adults who have completed their formal training
- Providing sheltered employment for the intellectually disabled and the severely handicapped
- Developing skills for self-employment
- Training and equipping disabled employees with the knowledge and skills to help them find gainful employment in open industry

While it would take an in-depth assessment to determine at what level the centre is meeting these objectives, a cursory visit clearly suggests that it is currently underresourced in terms of finances, human resources, professional capacity, and equipment.[53] The FNTTC is registered with the Ministry of Education's TVET as a technical training centre for people with disabilities. As a result of this registration it is entitled to and receives teachers from the Ministry of Education, although the quality of the teachers provided was a subject of considerable concern to the centre's administrator.

The FNTTC currently has 125 individuals registered as students, although only about 70 to 80 people attend on an average day. Most are participating in programmes classified as training, sheltered employment or semi-production. Eight are employed in the bookbinding section (classified as semi-production).[54] Transportation is provided using two disability-friendly vans. No residential facilities are available. The age range is 16 to 46. The FNTTC serves all types of people with disabilities, although many appeared to have severe physical disabilities and others are described as intellectually disabled. The three blind students enrolled have not been attending, and no deaf and or deaf/mute people are currently participating. Some students are not able to read or write.

According to a proposal submitted to the government for additional funds, the centre's current training programmes include courses on general woodworking, offset printing and bookbinding, screen printing, dark-room techniques, sewing and home economics, indigenous crafts, horticulture, agriculture, computer studies, screen printing, physical education, music and arts and crafts. The sheltered workshop includes daily living skills, independent living/social skills, horticulture/nursery skills, leisure and sports activities, crafts and subcontract work. While the printing section is still operational and is run by a deaf instructor who the administrator describes as skilled, it lacks the necessary equipment required for sophisticated work.

The sewing centre only has one operational machine, although at one time this unit thrived and many deaf women were able to get jobs as machine operators in garment factories.[55] The computer training is not operational because the FNTTC lacks a qualified teacher. All training areas require assessment to determine the use of curriculum, skills taught, methods, student achievement and outcomes.

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[53] This cursory analysis is supported by reports from the manager of the centre and a letter sent to the Board Chairman by the Fiji Disabled People's Association dated March 25, 2002.

[54] Proposal submitted to the DSW for funding.

[55] Labour market information and school visits suggest that many jobs and training opportunities are determined by gender along traditional lines, with women typically taught sewing and home economics skills, and men taught woodworking, auto repair, welding and similar trades.

The FNTTC has some contracts to provide printing, bookbinding and screen-printing. It also produces clothes hangers and envelopes. In the sheltered work area, individuals with disabilities engage in craft activities, work on a contract to affix labels to ice cream container lids, produce craft items and engage in social and recreational activities. Many of the individuals said they have not been paid. Apparently it is the policy of the FNTTC to pay participants once a year based on funds available.

The FNCDP's last Annual Report (1996) described the situation at the FNTTC as follows:

> The failure of the Fiji Rehabilitation Council, which was established in 1979 to be the organization responsible for vocational programmes had affected the progress and effectiveness of the training centre…Eighteen years from the establishment…it continues to face a gloomy future…The FNDCP sees great potential in the centre, especially if it becomes a national training institution with positive input from the Ministry of Education…As a result of the problems…and its inability to service senior students from the disabled schools…most of the schools have started
> their own vocational programmes.

Government officials, Board members of the centre, advocates, and the management share this opinion, although two government entities, the DSW and the Ministry of Education, are providing support to the centre. No individual with a disability has been successfully placed in employment through the centre since 1997. The centre does not have any vocational guidance, job placement or related services.

As noted in the FNCDP Annual Report, many special schools are providing pre-vocational and vocational training. This is done within the context of their primary-school status. Classes vary from school to school but tend to focus on traditional skills for boys, such as welding, woodworking and auto repair, and sewing and crafts for girls. Horticulture, agriculture and some more creative courses like beekeeping are being provided. Some schools have computer access, although limited, are starting to provide training in ICT and office skills. Others have secured contracts to teach basic work-adjustment skills or to provide real work opportunities.

At least one "primary" school visited as part of the study collaborated with local business in administering a vocational training curriculum and used private-sector internships to supplement school-based training.

4.6 Self-help and peer vocational training opportunities for people with disabilities

The Fiji Disabled Persons Association (FDPA) has also started some training programmes in stone masonry and leatherwork. While the stone masonry programme has resulted in more than 200 individuals receiving training at some level (three levels of training are offered), there is no follow-up to determine the effectiveness of the training as an income-generating activity.

4.7 Mainstream employment services

Fiji lacks a formal mainstream employment services programme to provide vocational guidance and job matching services for job seekers. The only mainstream job matching or employment services are offered by Ministry of Youth and these job-matching services are in a nascent stage. No comprehensive data is currently available about its impact and outcomes. Job finding assistance may be offered as part of vocational training programmes, but the services tends to be informal and based on personal networks rather than a strategic job finding service. The Ministry of Labour through the Strategic Human Resources Project completed the Internet-based Computerized Human Resource Information System (Chris). A complementary "job-matching" e-mail-based system is being planned to help match supply with demand.[56]

4.8 Mainstream employment-services opportunities for people with disabilities

Since mainstream services are virtually non-existent, people with disabilities have not been integrated. However, as noted, the Ministry of Youth and IHRD policy frameworks call for inclusion of people with disabilities but to date, no data is kept on their participation.

4.9 Special employment and employment-support services for people with disabilities

It is difficult to assess the nature of special employment services offered to people with disabilities, however, it is fair to say that they are limited and mainly found in schools. Individual schools conduct special employment and support services but no comprehensive national data is kept on these services or the outcomes of such services. However, based on the fact that no students have moved on to formal employment from the FVTTI since 1997, and the paucity of data and programmes, it is estimated that the uncoordinated, mainly school-based efforts that do exist probably only reach a very small percentage of the population that could benefit from such services.

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[56] Internal ILO brief on Fiji prepared by the ILO's Suva office.

4.10 Mainstream support for self-employment and income generation

Many ministries and programmes address the issue of self-employment and income generation. The Ministry of Youth is actively engaged in identifying self-employment and income generating programmes and has identified a total of 14. In conducting research for this paper, meetings were arranged with eight ministries that were involved in some form of income generation or self-employment activity. Some of the most significant activities have been covered in Table 3.3.

Of major significance is the passage of the Small and Micro Enterprise Act, which will establish a National Centre under the Ministry of Commerce, Business Development, and Investment to provide training and credit. In order to effectively implement the act, a Small and Micro-enterprise Policy Framework was developed. The National Centre for Small and Micro-Enterprise Development will take the lead in coordinating assistance to all micro and small enterprises under an integrated approach.

It will offer a three-week course, focusing on starting a business and including business plans, plan assessment, how to secure credit and related topics. Currently, business development training is provided on an ad hoc basis, but under the new National Center, a training certificate will be issued to graduates who successfully complete a competancy-based course. This will demonstrate to the Fiji Development Bank that the applicant for credit has completed the necessary training. Trainees will also be required to pay a small fee since eventually the programme hopes to become self-sufficient.

The Ministry of Commerce, Business Development and Investment's Micro Finance Unit is currently testing different credit models. In the past, the it reported an 85 per cent return rate based on 3,000 loans. Some have reportedly been to people with disabilities, including those who are amputees or have a mental illness.

Credit is currently offered through this programme, the Women's Social and Economic Development (WOSED) scheme (for women), the Poverty Alleviation Programme (PAP under the DSW), and others. The WOSED scheme, for example, provides up to a maximum of F$200 ($94) per applicant at an interest rate of 15 per cent per annum for group projects. The project has successfully increased the incomes and improved the status of many poor women in urban and rural areas.

4.11 Mainstream support for self-employment and income generation for people with disabilities

No data is kept on the involvement of people with disabilities in mainstream income-generation programmes. However, based on interviews with key informants, such as people with disabilities, government officials from the ministries that administer some of these programmes, other government officials, and villages, the numbers of people with disabilities participating is extremely low. One government official said it was up to the DSW to assist people with disabilities with income generation, whereas a Ministry of Commerce official said that some people with disabilities have accessed loans through its programmes and that they were fully accessible to people with

disabilities. Most government officials showed an awareness about the needs of people with disabilities in interviews and a desire to make their programme sufficiently accessible. However, none were keeping data or conducting any special outreach or support services for people with disabilities. However, many settings are inaccessible and some staff were not prepared to work with blind and deaf students.

4.12 Self-employment and income generation support services for people with disabilities

Currently, no programmes exist to specifically address the needs of people with disabilities. Those who are recipients of family assistance grants, however, do have access to poverty-alleviation grants.

4.13 Poverty alleviation

The current government approach to poverty alleviation is three-fold:

- Providing income-earning opportunities
- Ensuring that the poor have the means (capacity) to take advantage of job opportunities; and
- Providing a safety net for those in greater need

The programmes in place for achieving these objectives include family assistance allowance; (amounts to a minimum of F$30 [$ 14.10] to a maximum of F$ 110 [$ 51.70] per month)[57] subsidizing education, health and housing costs; self-help projects; youth programmes and the provision of assistance for micro- and small-business development. The DSW also provides grants for poverty alleviation projects (PAP), which are implemented by NGOs. These projects are designed to improve the coping abilities of people receiving family assistance. Micro-finance is one of the reasons that PAP grants are offered. To qualify, people must be a recipient of Family Assistance, the Care and Protection Fund, or meet other criteria. Since people with disabilities are estimated to account for 10 per cent of those receiving the family assistance allowance, many are eligible for PAP grants, yet few access them, according to government officials.

4.14 Staff training for vocational rehabilitation

Fiji suffers from a lack of trained personnel in all aspects of rehabilitation, including speech and occupation therapy, sign language interpreters and others.[58] The critical need for special education teachers and the lack of vocational special-needs teachers has already been noted. Many individuals who have been sent overseas for specialized training that is not available in Fiji have failed to return home. In general, the country faces what is commonly known as a "brain drain" with trained professionals often leaving the country to secure better jobs and pay elsewhere.

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[57] The poverty line in Fiji stands at F$58.
[58] JICA and FDPA Joint Project, *A Country Study on People with Disabilities: Fiji,* February, 2001, unpublished.

Fiji has the benefit of two regional institutions, the Fiji School of Medicine and the University of the South Pacific (USP), which is located in Suva and serves the Pacific Island region. Of particular interest is the fact that USP offers two programmes related to people with disabilities. One is a diploma programme, the second a non-credit programme. The latter programme, offered by the University Extension Unit is a non-credit, distance-learning, three-course certificate-based training programme designed for caregivers, including community workers, social workers, nurses, teachers, parents and individuals working in NGOs. According to an extension official, many people with disabilities also participate in the programme. Since 1985, when the programme began, more than 500 people have completed the three-course programme. It covers an introduction to disability issues, applied knowledge and skills for special impairment/disability and skills for working within the community. The course is designed not only to impart knowledge and develop skills, but also to promote social change, reduce conditions that can lead to disability and develop awareness about disability.

The eight-course diploma programme in Special and Diverse Education Needs is housed within the Department of Education and Psychology. It is designed to, "provide teachers with the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to enable them to work more effectively with children who have special and diverse learning needs, whether they are in special or regular schools". Courses focus on general principles of psychology and human development, as well as teaching theory and practice related to special needs students. The programme is primarily geared to qualified teachers who have two or more years teaching experience, although some exceptions are made.

The development of training and employment services has been and will continue to be hampered by a lack of available and trained personnel, including occupational and speech therapists, special education teachers, adult education teachers, and particularly those knowledgeable about special needs students. However, significant resources exist in the country to train more teachers and professionals and for improving the nature and quality of the training offered.

4.15   Barriers and gaps

The recent Social Justice Act offers some significant policy support to address the barriers people with disabilities face in accessing training and employment services. Nevertheless, the barriers and gaps in services are significant, and can be summarized as:

- Accessibility: While there has been some progress in certain towns and with regard to some government buildings, accessibility, including physical barriers for those with physical disabilities, communication barriers for those who are deaf and/or blind and attitudinal barriers facing people with disabilities, regardless of the type of disability, remain significant obstacles to receiving services. For example, some DSW offices have steps, while the vocational training centre discussed earlier in the paper is largely inaccessible

- Psycho-social issues: The fact that people with disabilities have been marginalized and excluded in the past will make integration difficult due to psychosocial and adjustment issues
- Limited access to assistive devices and technology: The Red Cross is the only entity supplying wheelchairs and assistive devices and often they charge a fee for these
- Lack of information dissemination: People with disabilities, especially those living in rural or maritime areas, do not have access to information about what is available. Even one of the special schools did not know that the Red Cross provided wheelchair repairs
- Political instability: The political instability and recent crisis brought Fiji to a standstill and significantly affected the economy, making progress within the social agenda more difficult to realize
- Geography: Geography poses a major barrier to people with disabilities who live in maritime and rural areas where services are non-existent or difficult to access
- Policy: Policy gaps include the lack of a national plan for the training and employment of people with disabilities and a strong position with regard to mainstreaming and the inclusion of people with disabilities in all education and training programmes. School policies which place special education within the primary school category also pose a hurdle
- Personnel and capacity: There is a lack of trained teachers, and trained personnel in issues related to vocational rehabilitation
- Staffing: The lack of an executive director at the FNCDP has significantly hampered developments of this critical body
- Data and research: There is a lack of information and concrete data about the number and needs of people with disabilities, and their participation in existing programmes

From the perspective of training and employment of people with disabilities, significant gaps exist both in the mainstream system and in specialist areas, but these particularly impact on people with disabilities. Without inclusion in mainstream programmes, the services on offer to people with disabilities are presently limited and sub-standard. The gaps include:

- A lack of employment services for the general population or specialized services for people with disabilities
- A lack of services for those who become injured or disabled as adults
- A lack of services for those who are severely disabled
- No vocational services to meet the unique needs of those suffering from mental illness
- Limited or inadequate services in the form of the FNTTC main service programme for people with severe disabilities
- DSW services are only available for people with disabilities who are poor or those who are recipients of family assistance
- A lack of services in rural areas

On the bright side, the recent policy framework and plans for a major study of people with disabilities in partnership with Inclusion International should lay the political

groundwork and provide the necessary information for some well-planned interventions and developments.

Part Five: Employment Opportunities for People with Disabilities

5.1   Open employment opportunities for people with disabilities

Overall Opportunities

People with disabilities face the same significant constraints that non-disabled people face in securing employment in Fiji. Currently, the situation is a challenge for all job seekers except for the most highly skilled. Like all Fiji Islanders, people with disabilities must contend with an economic engine that is not producing sufficient jobs in the formal sector to satisfy the demand created by new entrants to the job market.

It is estimated that the unemployment rate in Fiji has risen since 1996 due to redundancies relating to the global economic downturn, and to the political strife in Fiji and its subsequent negative impact on the tourism sector. It should be pointed out that Fiji does not maintain regular labour force participation and unemployment data, so it is clearly difficult to truly assess the degree to which these events have had on the employment situation. However, it is patently clear that the economy will not be able to generate sufficient formal employment opportunities to satisfy a growing number of job seekers, which includes some 14,500 school leavers per year, belated entrants to the job market, re-entrants or laid-off workers, and those who have not received a formal education.

According to one scenario, an estimated 7,000 people per year will not be able to secure employment in the formal sector.[59] While all these projections are subject to economic shifts and more in-depth analysis, it is clear that job creation is a critical issue on the socio-economic agenda and that the subsistence and informal sectors of the economy and labour market must be considered within the total development analysis.

As noted in Section 1.6, most paid job opportunities in the open labour market are in the manufacturing (29.5 per cent), distribution (including tourism, 21.2 per cent) and finance, insurance and business service and other services (35.3 per cent) sectors. Manufacturing largely revolves around the garment and footwear industries. Many of the service sector jobs require business and computer skills, and training for these skills is not readily available to people with disabilities.

The Number of People with Disabilities Employed

No ongoing data source exists with regard to the participation of people with disabilities in the labour force.

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[59] House, William. J, Draft Report, 1999, op. cit. p.10.

The 1996 Census provided data with regard to participation of people with disabilities in the labour force at that point in time. Again, however, the reader should be cautious with regard to the methodological issues related to people with disabilities, as discussed previously in Part Two of the report. Table 5.1 highlights the inequity when comparing labour force participation rates of people with disabilities with the general population of workers, while Table 5.2 refers to types of disability among the workforce, as well as including rates for men and women. The tables and information included have been adapted from the publication *Disability Counts*.

Table 5.1: The Labour Force: Disabled Persons and the General Population

Sector	Per cent to the sector	
	Disabled Persons	**General Population**
Money Economy	18.1	29.5
Subsistence	13.1	29.9
Not in labour force	67.6	40.6
Numbers	8,626	500,913

Note: Adapted from *Disability Counts*, p. 29.

The data supports that which is found in many countries, and which illustrates a large absence of people with disabilities from the labour force. Table 5.2 illustrates the types of persons with disabilities in the labour force and provides a gender breakdown. Of particular significance is that the data indicates that:

- People with disabilities related to limitations in intellectual capacity or to ageing and physical impairments were less likely to be in the labour force than those with other types of disabilities
- Men were over three times more likely than women to be participating in the money economy (25.7 per cent compared with 7.9 per cent, respectively)

Table 5.2: Disabled Labour Force Participants by Disability Type and Gender aged 15 and up. Figures in per cent, except where other wise noted

	Gender	Sight	Intelligence	Hearing	Physical	Age	Other	Not stated	Disabled	Total number
Part Time		1.8	0.6	0.6	1.9	2.1	2.3	4.0	1.8	87
		1.3		0.9	0.9	0.8	1.4	1.8	0.9	33
Full Time	Men	9.2	5.0	12.0	7.2	1.4	18.6	14.6	8.5	413
	Women	2.9	0.7	6.2	2.3	0.6	5.8	7.9	2.6	97
Money economy + subsistence	Men	23.1	5.0	12.0	7.2	1.4	18.6	14.6	8.5	413
	Women	6.5	1.3	4.8	1.8	1.5	2.4	3.5	2.4	89
Unemployed	Men	3.7	5.1	3.3	3.2	0.6	3.6	3.3	3.2	157
	Women	13.0	4.5	2.6	2.7	0.8	2.8	0.9	2.0	86
Subsistence Only	Men	19.2	15.4	17.2	13.5	13.5	10.5	15.9	14.1	689
	Women	14	8.3	17.2	13.1	8.5	14.7	11.4	11.9	445
Not in Labour Force	Men	41.3	66.4	44.0	61.6	76.8	45	52.3	58.6	2 863
	Women	73.4	84.5	67.4	78.5	87.4	72.5	74.6	79.4	2 968
Money Economy Total	Men	37.8	15.7	37.6	23.2	8.4	42.8	31.8	25.7	1255
	Women	12.0	6.5	14.5	7.8	3.7	12.4	14.1	7.9	305
Labour Force Total	Men	57.0	31.1	54.8	36.7	21.9	53.3	47.7	39.8	1 944
	Women	26.0	14.8	31.7	20.9	12.2	27.1	25.5	19.8	750
Not Started	Men	1.6	2.8	1.2	1.6	1.1	1.7	-	1.6	79
	Women	0.6	0.7	0.9	0.7	0.4	0.4	-	0.6	22
Total Numbers	Men	433	544	332	2 160	621	645	151	-	4 886
	Women	308	445	227	1 241	907	498	114	-	3 740

Other Census data suggests a slightly higher proportion of Indo-Fijians (19.2 per cent) engaged in the money economy compared to indigenous Fijians (16.7 per cent). No data exists with regard to the types of jobs, wages, benefits, and career advancement potential of those people with disabilities, except from anecdotal evidence.

Some people with disabilities work in the civil service, but the Government maintains no data regarding this. Some people with disabilities report that the Public Service Commission requires medical exam screens for people with disabilities considered for employment.[60]

NGOs are reportedly more open to hiring people with disabilities. Special schools and the FVTTC have hired people with disabilities as teachers. In the private sector some banks, including Westpac and ANZ, have reportedly hired blind telephone operators, and Punja and Company, a food processing firm, also hires people with disabilities. The garment industry has hired women with hearing impairments in the past; especially those trained at the FVTTI and many are still employed by companies in this sector. There are other examples of hiring individual people with a disability. However, the information is anecdotal and cannot be verified.

No information is available to suggest that home-based or telecommuting jobs exist or are available to people with disabilities in the formal, paid job market. Certainly, many subsistence or self-employment opportunities exist. No studies exist that address the issue of the impact of IT with regard to employment of people with disabilities, although many people with disabilities have learned to use computers and the Internet in urban centres.

The Government of Fiji is working closely with the ILO to address many of these employment challenges, especially related to job creation in both the formal and informal sectors, for open and self-employment opportunities. It is a tripartite approach that engages six key ministries as advisors on a peak body and includes seven sub programmes that are aimed at employment promotion through an integrated approach. The sub programmes include policy and cooperation, small- and micro-enterprise development, eco-tourism development, cooperative development, labour administration and productivity improvement, human resource development for the hotel and tourism industry and advanced vocational training. A different ministry hosts each of these programmes. The main focus is the creation of sustainable employment and income generation. The programme seeks to create job opportunities related to tourism, agriculture, fisheries, forestry, indigenous products, import substitution and other areas. While the programme targets people with disabilities as a special group, their representatives, including the DSW, the FNCDP and representatives of organizations and associations for people with disabilities should be included in IHRDEP planning to ensure the representation of people with disabilities' needs and their participation and inclusion in programmes.

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[60] Joint publication by the Fiji Disabled People's Association and the Institute of Justice and Applied Legal Studies (IJALS), *Fiji Report: Disability Law and Policy* (issues affecting the delivery of services and access to facilities for People with Disabilities).

5.2   Employment opportunities for people with disabilities in protected work environments

Although the FVTTC has a sheltered workshop programme, the work is intermittent and people are not paid regularly. Currently, no direct attempts are being made to help participants to make a transition into the workforce and nobody with a disability is reported to have moved into open employment from the FVTTC since 1997, according the manager of the centre.

No other protected work opportunities are known to exist, except those that are part of the special education programmes. For example, some of the special schools have income-generation programmes, such a making crutches at one school and a contract with Air Pacific to package headphones for in flight entertainment at another. Students at other schools and the FVTTC also make sewing and craft products, which are sold commercially. However, these types of employment opportunities are typically for educational and training purposes rather than long-term employment or economic self-sustenance. National data on these activites is not maintained. There is also no centralized data source to determine what happens to young people who leave these protected settings.

Some of the special schools have also developed innovative approaches to training, engaged business and industry in the design of their courses and/or engaged in income-generating activities that provide real work and income for students and the school. For example, the Latoka School for the Intellectually Handicapped started a small workshop that employs five of its graduates.

Many opportunities exist for developing both training and work opportunities in protected transitional settings, such as in vocational schools, the FVTTI, or through new outreach programmes to rural areas. However, these have yet to be fully utilized. Concepts such as supported employment, enclaves, government set-aside or job preferences, or social enterprises do not exist in Fiji to date.

5.3   Self-employment opportunities for people with disabilities

Throughout Fiji, self-employment, income generation and opportunities in the informal sector are being looked to as an alternative to the formal labour market. Many opportunities for income-generating activities exist and several government ministries have business development and income-generation programmes, as noted in section 4.10. However, no data is kept on the involvement of people with disabilities in these programmes and based on interviews, people with disabilities have not been involved to any large extent. With recent policy initiatives, it is hoped that this situation will change.

As discussed elsewhere, there are no special programmes to support people with disabilities in self-employment or to develop income-generating possibilities, other than those offered through the primary schools and the DSW Poverty Alleviation grants. Many of the schools report that they prepare students for self-employment in woodworking and sewing, but the reality of these claims or the viability of such businesses could not be ascertained.

Tables 5.1 and 5.2 include data on individuals who are in the money economy or engaged in subsistence activities that could yield income, including home making for women, but again there is no centralized or ongoing data source in this regard.

Based on discussions with key informants, the number of people with disabilities engaged in self-employment and income-generating activities is probably very small, due to the lack of services, other barriers and a general cultural orientation based on communal living rather than individual enterprise. For example, only one person of the hundreds trained by the FCDP is known to have a business and its success is questionable.[61]

Yet, many opportunities for individual, group, cooperative or family self-employment exists. During the process of conducting this research the following list of opportunities was drawn up:

- A chicken company has an agreement with the Fiji Development Bank to assist villages in setting up chicken raising businesses
- A flower exporter with an international market offers business start-up assistance among villagers to meet immediate market demands for cut flowers
- The spice business, including the growing of vanilla beans, offers similar market opportunities. Agricultural Extension Agents provide training and the resources for groups to start production
- The Agriculture Ministry is trying to engage villagers in food processing to provide added value. The ministry provides tools and technical expertise
- The tourism industry had an immediate need for indigenous crafts of good quality for sale to tourists
- The FNTC identified a market for mushroom production and a low budget way to provide the medium for growing mushrooms and would consider including people with disabilities[62]
- The IHRD programme has identified other employment and income-generating opportunities and is providing community-based training to develop them

These opportunities, and probably many others exist. Many of these opportunities, which have an immediate market, could be developed through introducing them to groups of people with disabilities, groups that include people with disabilities, or families that have disabled members. Training and business support venues could include mainstream outlets, extension services or itinerant teachers to reach those in remote and rural areas, at the FVTTC, or in special schools.

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[61] Interview with the FCDP president.
[62] It should be noted that the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) worked with the Royal Thai Government to develop a mushroom-farming project for people with disabilities.

5.4 Other segregated or protected employment opportunities for people with disabilities

Because Fiji's indigenous culture is based on a communal social structure, group employment or self-help groups are encouraged. For example, the Department of Women, under the Ministry of Women, Social Welfare and Poverty Alleviation (MOWSWPA) provides funds to women to establish group income-generating activities. Unfortunately, to date these have not included women with disabilities, despite the fact that these culturally-appropriate alternative structures offer opportunities for people with disabilities. Such structures are ideal for people with certain types of disabilities since they can contribute according to their abilities and others can compensate for tasks they are unable to do.

In summary, information about labour market and informal sector participation of people with disabilities is limited. Specialized programmes to foster their economic participation are limited and those that do exist appear to have minimal success. Some mainstream programmes geared to employment promotion include people with disabilities as a target group. But again, no data is kept and anecdotal information suggests that their actual inclusion is non-existent as are special outreach and support services to ensure their participation. While some do enter the labour market, it is without employment promotion policies or support services.

5.5 Barriers and gaps

Barriers to employment are similar to those described with regard to education and training. They include:

- Inaccessible workplaces
- Negative attitudes
- General lack of formal sector jobs
- Lack of access to job opportunities
- No employer incentives or employment-promotion legislation
- Lack of data and information about jobs and self-employment opportunities for people with disabilities
- Lack of systems to get people with disabilities to the labour market
- Cultural norms that are not conducive to a market approach required by self-employment and income-generation schemes
- Lack of access to credit by people with disabilities
- Lack of trained personnel in providing job accommodation, on the job support, and assistive technology.

Service Gaps

- Lack of support services for employers
- Lack of access to assistive devices and job-modification technology
- No systems for follow-up or support for people with disabilities on the job
- Lack of employment opportunities for people with severe disabilities in protected or open employment

Part Six: Employment-Promotion Activities Involving Social Partners

6.1 Government or NGO employment-promotion activities directed at employers

There are no known national initiatives or formal programmes to educate or raise awareness among employers or encourage their participation in employment and training of people with disabilities exclusively. Several ad hoc activities are evident at community level.

Some of the special education schools reported working with employers. The nature of these relationships, reported anecdotally, involves:

- Job placement activities, including providing interventions when needed
- Assessing employers needs and adapting training curricula to meet those needs
- Soliciting resources and contracts for the schools
- Securing on-the-job training and internship opportunities

However, it is not known how many schools are engaging in such activities, or what the outcomes are of such activities. Some businesses and employers also participate on community school committees, which undoubtedly results in benefits beyond the social responsibility of the business and its contribution to the community.

Some of the FNCDP's Disability District and Advisory committees in their general-awareness activities have reached employers. Some local committees have private sector representatives as members, however, as noted, there is not any formal business/employer representation on the FNCDP.

The IHRD programme, as already noted, includes employers as active participants in vocational training, job creation and employment efforts through the Fiji Employers' Federation (FEF). This project identifies people with disabilities and in the future should be more inclusive of the needs of workers with disabilities.

Subsequent to conducting this study, the FEF hired a worker with a disability and expressed its interest in working in partnership to promote the hiring of workers with disabilities.

6.2 Government or NGO employment-promotion activities directed at trade unions and workers' organizations

No formal awareness programmes currently exist with trade unions regarding people with disabilities. However, the Fiji Trades Union Congress participates in the IHRDEP programme.

6.3 Employer, trade union or workers' organization employment-promotion activities

No employer or trade union initiated partnerships currently exist related to the training and employment of people with disabilities.

Part Seven: Summary and Future Directions

7.1 Looking back

Over recent years, Fiji has made some significant policy progress in addressing the needs of people with disabilities. The formation of the FNCDP, the inclusion of questions about disability in the 1996 Census and recent legislative and policy initiatives, as discussed in Section 3 of this report, are among the most significant. Further, it appears that awareness-raising activities have had a positive impact on both the Government and the general public. Unfortunately, it does not appear that these developments have had a significant positive impact on employment opportunities for people with disabilities as yet.

Fiji is a signatory to the Asia and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 1993-2002, and has used its Targets for Action as a blueprint for addressing the needs of people with disabilities. While Fiji has experienced some progress in other target areas, there has been little progress with regard to training and employment targets. Fiji had this to say at its midpoint review (1997):

> Progress has been slow and very little has been achieved. The absence of qualified personnel and established curriculum through the Ministry of Education has been one of the main reasons for the failure of the vocational training of the disabled. Because of this the system has not been providing disabled young people with the basic knowledge and skills to allow them to enter the competitive world of employment, nor are they in a position to organize their own work or be self-employed.[63]

Based on this review, the situation seems to have changed very little in practice. However, the legislative and policy initiatives noted, and an awareness among senior government officials, as well as the advocacy work of the FDPA hold promise for the future.

7.2 Looking forward

Major Barriers and Needs

Based on this study, major barriers and needs relating to people with disabilities and employment and training are organized according to policy and services:

Policy

From a policy perspective, the required structure is in place, however, it needs to be properly developed and implemented. The Constitution and Social Justice Act provides a policy framework and the FNCDP Act an implementation framework for policy development, evaluation and coordination. However, more needs to be done in terms of legislation and policy, particularly with regard to accessibility, special education for older students who require vocational training, employment promotion

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[63] United Nations' Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) follow-up information by target areas (1997-2001), 2001.

and the development of a rehabilitation plan. Finally, anti-discrimination legislation in all sectors, public and private, employment and otherwise is needed.

Policy enforcement

The affirmative action requirements of the Social Justice Act must be enforced. Targets should be set and data collected to ensure that people with disabilities are included in targetted government programmes. New policy and legislation initiatives must also include targets, evaluation measures and consequences. Policy implementation is hampered by the lack of a rehabilitation plan.

Data and information

While Fiji plans to address the deficiencies in data collection with regard to people with disabilities in general, each ministry should track the participation rates of people with disabilities in its programmes. It is only by securing this information that effective plans and strategies can be designed. Outreach and information dissemination to people with disabilities is required so they know what services are available to meet their needs.

The FNCDP needs strengthening through effective human and financial resource allocation. The FNCDP is currently funded at the level of F$84,000 ($39,480) per year. Activities go well beyond those of vocational rehabilitation, and its impact cannot only be measured in dollars, however, a cursory analysis of its potential cost-effectiveness, based on assisting a disabled person on family assistance earning enough income to become self-sufficient, suggests that if the Council is directly or indirectly responsible for only five individuals returning to work, it has repaid the investment.[64] This clearly shows that allocating money for the training of people with disabilities is a cost-effective investment.

Services

The service delivery framework for people with disabilities from a vocational perspective consists mainly of special schools, the FTTVI, the DSW field personnel for those who are on family assistance and any activities that the District Disability Councils are able to coordinate. Unfortunately, these councils are underresourced. DSW field personnel must serve all those groups targeted under its mandate. This structure is not sufficient to meet the training and employment needs of people with disabilities, particularly those residing in rural and remote areas.

A lack of services in general and a lack of disability-specific service providers and specially trained staff also limit the services available to people with disabilities. Those injured on the job or disabled as adults are especially restricted to limited access to services. People with certain disabilities, such as those suffering from mentall illness, have no services, and the Deaf are limited by a deficit of sign language interpreters. Clearly, some of these service needs should be assessed and

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[64] The family assistance grant amounts to between F$30 (US$14) and $110 per month. The poverty line in Fiji is F$58. One person receiving F$30 per month over 50 years accounts for F$18,000 ($8,460). If five young people were removed from the rolls, the government could save F$90,000 ($42,300), F$6,000 more than the FNCDP's annual allocation.

addressed through the implementation of a rehabilitation plan. A lack of trained personnel in areas related to disability and vocational rehabilitation limits the development of vocational programmes for people with disabilities.

Strengths and opportunities

Policy

The emerging policy situation for people with disabilities in Fiji is encouraging. The political leverage evident in the Social Justice Act, the policy documents in response to it, and draft legislation such as the Building Codes and Industrial Relations Bill suggest that Fiji is moving towards international standards with regard to its legislative framework. Now is the time to ensure that government ministries do, in fact, work to implement the law. The FNCDP offers a structural framework to move within the central and local government. The Fiji Disabled Persons Association is available as a strong voice for people with disabilities.

Services

Although currently limited, the FVTTI is an institution that could be the springboard for developing comprehensive transitional services as originally intended. The fact that Fiji has not developed a separate service-delivery system for people with disabilities offers the opportunity to design inclusive systems in both employment services and self-employment, for example, while striving to make education and vocational training more responsive to the needs of students and trainees with disabilities. Mainstream service providers express interest and openness in serving people with disabilities for the most part, and many have developed policy statements.

FNCDP

The structure of the FNCDP is excellent. Not only does it have an inter-ministerial component but special advisory groups to engage the expertise of professionals and community members with regard to topics critical to the needs of people with disabilities. Further, it includes a mechanism for reaching down to district level. The FNCDP should be an excellent vehicle for meeting the policy and service needs of people with disabilities, if it is provided with capacity building in terms of human and financial resources to meet its mandate. With regard to membership, however, the Act fails to require the representation of people with disabilities or employer and trade union representatives.[65]

Personnel and capacity building

Fiji is home to the University of the South Pacific, which is a resource that can facilitate the development of professional competency for those working with people with disabilities.

Partnerships

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[65] Workers' and employers' representatives expressed an interest in working with the FNCDP, if requested to do so.

The opportunity exists to develop strategic partnerships with employers, the private sector and civil society to further the training and employment agenda and build upon existing efforts like the IHRDEP programme and the strategic plans of the Ministry of Education and DSW. It appears that considerable goodwill as well as mandated affirmative action requirements currently exist.

7.3   In-country plans and recommendations

Although Fiji has not yet developed a plan with regard to vocational rehabilitation, the list of planned activities developed by the FNCDP offers the best direction for future activities at present. The FNCDP plans to:

- Strengthen the FNCDP and fully exploit the structure of the FNCDP, including its inter-ministerial nature, the advisory committees and the Divisional and District Councils
- Fully implement the Social Justice Act
- Develop a comprehensive vocational rehabilitation plan and employment promotion policies for people with disabilities
- Address policy issues related to education, employment promotion, and accessibility
- Develop services for individuals after they leave the school system and for those who become disabled as adults
- Upgrade the FVTTC to meet the needs of those with the most severe disabilities with regard to training and transitional employment services
- Develop creative solutions for those in remote and rural areas and especially in the maritime regions
- Facilitate mainstreaming in all educational, vocational training and employment programmmes
- Upgrade the skills and competencies of the personnel who work with people with disabilities
- Establish a data collection and evaluation mechanism and specific targets for inclusion of people with disabilities in existing service-delivery systems
- Establish active partnerships with employers and other social partners
- Develop model income-generation programmes that include people with disabilities
- Facilitate the empowerment of people with disabilities by providing them with information, and by encouraging their organizations and self-help groups
- Ensure that organizations representing people with disabilities are active members of services and policy efforts to meet their needs

Fiji is in a unique position to be a model for the rest of the Pacific Region and should thereby garner the interest of international donors and organisations with an interest in developing appropriate policies and services for people with disabilities. The opportunities that currently exist should not be squandered. Although a great deal of responsibility falls on the DSW and the FNCDP, a tremendous amount of goodwill exists among partners and potential partners, including international agencies, such as the ILO, as well as certain government ministries and the community at large. Strategic partnerships will need be formed to meet the current challenges and

opportunities to address the training and employment needs of people with disabilities in Fiji and to serve as a resource and model for the Pacific Region.

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Debra Perry is the ILO's Senior Specialist in Vocational Rehabilitation for Asia and the Pacific and provides technical and policy assistance to governments, employers, workers' organizations and NGOs. She joined the ILO in 2000 but has garnered 25 years of experience in the field of vocational rehabilitation. Ten years before joining the ILO, Debra established and managed a Washington, DC-based consulting business. Her business provided training, management and technical assistance to national and international NGOs, governments, private enterprises, universities and trade unions in the areas of disability, diversity, fundraising, marketing, strategic planning and partnership development. Earlier in her career, Debra provided direct services to injured and disabled workers, including those with physical, intellectual, psychiatric and sensory disabilities. For many years, Debra worked for Goodwill Industries International, one of the world's largest private providers of vocational rehabilitation and training services for disadvantaged and disabled people. Debra graduated from Auburn University with a Masters degree in Rehabilitation Services Education. She has worked in many countries in the region and the world both during and prior to her tenure with the ILO.

Research Protocol

PART ONE: COUNTRY OVERVIEW

1.1   Introduction
- Brief history and current events
- Brief introduction to level of development and UNDP Human Development Index

1.2   Geography
- Area in square kilometers
- Topography and climate
- Rural/urban configuration

1.3   Population
- Total population
- Geographic distribution, including rural/urban
- Annual growth rate (total and by gender)
- Life expectancy (total and by gender)
- Age composition (total and by gender)
- Literacy levels (total and by gender)
- Unusual demographic patterns (e.g. declining birth rate affecting workforce, etc.)
- Primary religious groupings

1.4   Government and general development plans
- Form of government
- Political system and stability
- Structure of government, including number of ministries
- Administrative structures (i.e., central and local, including number of provinces/states and description of local government structures)
- Influence of central government vis a vis local structures and influence
- Socio-economic/development objectives and strategies (e.g. 5-10 year plans), especially in relation to training and employment and/or people with disabilities

1.5   Economic composition and status
- Economic sectors such as the size and significance of the country's primary agricultural, manufacturing and service industries
- Relative sizes of the formal and informal sectors of the economy
- Current annual GDP, GDP per capita, and annual growth rates
- Percentage of people below the international poverty level
- Impact of recent current events on0 economy, if appropriate (e.g., impact of the Asian economic crisis, political instability, etc.)
- Economic projections

1.6 Labour markets
- Labour force participation (total and by age and gender)
- Unemployment rates (total and by age and gender)
- Underemployment rates defined as less than 35 hours per week (total and by age and gender)
- Relative levels of open employment, multiple employment (individuals holding more than one job), and self-employment (total and by age and gender)
- Levels of employment in the formal and informal sectors (total and by age and gender)
- Wage levels for the primary occupations in the formal and informal sectors
- Identify and describe any special issues that impact the country labour markets (e.g. importing labour, high rates of youth unemployment, ageing workforce, etc.)

PART TWO: PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES---DEFINITIONS, DATA AND SITUATION

2.1 Identify and describe the most common definition(s) of disability used, especially the legal definition(s). If multiple definitions exist, describe them and reference their sources.

2.2 Identify and describe the primary disability classification system(s) used for official government purposes. If multiple classification systems exist, cite their sources, describe them and explain how they are used.

2.3 Identify and describe the major sources of disability information. For each, specify the
- Nature of the source (e.g., Census, national database, survey, registration for services, study, etc.)
- Definition of disability and classification system
- Data gathering procedures
- Scope (e.g., aimed at all disabled persons, a disability subgroup, a geographic part of the country, etc.)
- Primary demographics and findings to include, as available, the number of and types of disabled persons, principle causes of disability, gender, literacy level, education, employment status, and income levels
- Problems that may have existed in collecting information or that affect the validity of the available data (e.g., unclear definitions, etc.).

2.4 Cite and describe national data sources and statistics related to the number of people disabled by on the job injuries and cite return to work rates, if available.

2.5 Describe the environmental factors affecting the full social participation of people with disabilities in all aspects of life, especially their direct participation in training and employment. Note those specific to certain disability groups. For example:
- Environmental accessibility/barriers

- Communication accessibility barriers (e.g., sign language development/use, signage, use of Braille, etc.)
- Transportation accessibility/barriers
- Others.

2.6 Describe social factors that may also affect participation including
- Prevailing cultural attitudes toward disability (including religious beliefs)
- Negative attitudes or misconceptions (note disability specific attitudes)
- Societal and family expectations for people with disabilities by gender, if appropriate.

2.7 Identify and describe the primary advocacy organizations of (not for) disabled persons and their advocates. In particular, note
- If the organizations represent a single disability group or all types of disabilities
- Number of members and geographic scope
- Objectives, influence and services, especially those related to employment and training.

PART THREE: LEGISLATION, POLICIES AND INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES

3.1 International policies adopted
- Has the country ratified the Asia Pacific Decade Declaration? If so, when?
- Has the country ratified ILO Convention No. 159? If so, when? Describe any supervisory comments.

3.2 National legislation, official decrees, etc.
- Describe reference to equal rights, especially of disabled persons in the Constitution.
- Cite and describe any global disability rights or disability-specific legislation.
- Cite and describe legislation that currently influences persons with disabilities in relation to (include name, date, purpose, and disability provisions or lack thereof):
  - Education, vocational training and/or human resource development
  - Employment, wage, and labour issues
  - Income generation, self-employment and enterprise development
  - Transportation, housing and building codes, assistive devices, other.
- Cite and describe in detail any employment promotion legislation or provisions to promote employment of people with disabilities, such as quotas, levies, employer incentives, laws protecting employment rights, etc.
- Cite and describe any national legislation that discriminates against disabled persons, for example, with regard to employment in certain professions, etc.
- Cite and describe vocational rehabilitation provisions contained in the country's workers' compensation, social security and/or employment injury laws.
- Cite any other legislation that promotes or hinders the training and

employment of people with disabilities.

- Describe any draft or impending legislation that deals with disabled persons.

3.3   Disability policies and regulations

- Cite and describe the national development plan as it relates to training and employment or includes the mention of people with disabilities.
- Cite and describe significant existing regulations or policy statements to implement the legislation described in 3.2.
- Cite and describe the national plan regarding vocational rehabilitation, training and employment for disabled persons, or a general rehabilitation/disability plan that includes these issues. Include the date developed, when and how the plan was developed, who was involved in its development and if workers' and employers' organizations and people with disabilities were included, the process for developing the plan, and its significant contents.
- Cite and describe any policies and/or regulations related to the availability of vocational rehabilitation staff and their competency and training.
- Cite and describe any policies and/or regulations related to vocational rehabilitation research activities.
- Cite and describe any other policies and regulations that relate to the training and employment of people with disabilities, their equal treatment, and their access to support services to enable them to secure employment and training.

3.4   Evaluation and review of policies

- Are there measurable targets with regard to the training and employment of people with disabilities? If yes, describe these targets, including gender dimensions and requirements for joint action by all ministries (such as those responsible for employment, training, small enterprise or rural development).
- Describe methods of reviewing and evaluating national plans or policies.

3.5   Institutional structure for policy and service implementation

- Briefly describe the historical evolution of vocational rehabilitation and other strategies to foster the employment of people with disabilities.
- Identify and describe the activities of the key government ministries or semi-autonomous organizations involved in implementing the policies and overseeing the services related to the vocational rehabilitation of disabled persons.
- Identify and describe any national coordinating body [ies] in support of employment and training activities for disabled persons, including the composition, structure and functions.
- Identify and describe any inter-ministerial groups or committees in support of employment and training activities for disabled persons.
- Describe the role of local (state/provincial) government in implementing disability policy.

3.6   Other implementing organizations

- Describe the relationship between the government, the private sector and the

NGO community regarding the implementation of disability policies and vocational rehabilitation services. In particular, note the funding relationship between government and NGOs, including organizations of/for disabled persons, and how they cooperate to implement policies or deliver services in response to policies (e.g., funding arrangements, policy implementing roles, partnerships, collaborations, etc.).
* Describe any policy implementation or service provider roles for employers' groups and trade unions.

PART FOUR: EDUCATION, VOCATIONAL TRAINING PRACTICE AND EMPLOYMENT

4.1   General education system
* Describe the structures of the primary, secondary and post-secondary education systems.
* Is schooling compulsory, and if so, to what level?
* Are fees charged, and if so, how much and to what level?
* Provide enrolment data for each level of schooling (total and by gender).
* Describe any urban/rural differences in educational systems and opportunities.

4.2   Educational opportunities for persons with disabilities
* Cite data or estimate the proportions of the disabled population that receive primary, secondary and post-secondary education (by gender and disability type).
* Identify and describe the educational opportunities for disabled persons in the country's mainstream educational systems, and estimate the numbers of disabled persons enrolled at each level (by gender and disability type).
* Identify and describe NGO-sponsored educational opportunities for disabled persons, and estimate the numbers enrolled (by gender and disability type).
* Identify and describe the educational opportunities for disabled persons in other systems that may exist (e.g., community based rehabilitation programmes) and estimate the numbers enrolled (by gender and disability type).
* Estimate the retention rates for persons with disabilities in each of the above systems.
* Describe the availability of appropriate teaching aids, assistive devices and facilities for promoting successful educational outcomes for persons with disabilities.
* Describe the nature and extent of disability related teacher-training programmes for teachers in the mainstream and special educational systems.
* Describe differences in availability and/or quality of educational services related to urban and rural areas, type of disability or gender variables.
* Cite data, evaluation studies or other authoritative sources to describe the quality of education services for students with disabilities.

4.3   The mainstream vocational training system
* Describe the formal vocational training system (i.e., certificate, diploma or

qualification based), including oversight bodies, ministry or ministries involved, institutional structures, and types of training courses offered.

- Describe the informal vocational training system (i.e., provides skills training that does not result in formal qualifications), including ministries involved, institutional structures and types of training courses offered.
- Identify and describe programme[s] to provide vocational training through distance learning.
- Identify and describe work-based and apprenticeship opportunities.
- Identify completion rates (total and by gender) and outcome data (percentage who are employed or self-employed after training) that are available for the different types of training.
- Describe the availability of NGO or commercial vocational training programmes and their importance to the overall human resource development system.

4.4 Mainstream vocational training opportunities for people with disabilities
- Identify and describe any existing opportunities for mainstreaming and/or special support services for disabled trainees in the mainstream formal and informal vocational training systems.
- Identify disabled persons enrolment and completion rates (by gender and disability type) and outcome data (percentage who are employed or self-employed after training) that are available for the different types of training.
- Discuss differences in availability and/or quality of mainstream vocational training related to urban and rural areas, type of disability and gender variables.

4.5 Segregated vocational training opportunities for people with disabilities
- Identify and describe any existing segregated government and NGO-sponsored vocational training systems and programmes for persons with disabilities, including those providing formal and informal vocational training and any distance learning or apprenticeship opportunities.
- Describe special accommodations or special support services offered to students, including follow-up.
- Describe prevocational, remedial or other specialized training that may be offered.
- Describe the types of occupational skills taught, and discuss their relevance to labour market and self-employment opportunities.
- Describe the nature and extent of disability related instructor-training programmes for those in mainstream and segregated systems.
- Identify (or estimate) completion rates (total and by gender) and outcome data (percentage who are employed or self-employed after training) that are available for the different types of training.
- Discuss differences in availability and/or quality of mainstream vocational services related to urban and rural areas, type of disability and gender variables.
- Cite evaluation studies or other authoritative sources to describe the quality and responsiveness of the vocational training system to people with disabilities.

4.6 Self-help and peer vocational training opportunities for people with disabilities
- Identify and describe any existing self-help or peer vocational training programmes.
- Estimate the number of disabled persons enrolled, graduated and employed as a result of their participation by gender and by disability type.
- Discuss any differences in availability and/or types of self-help and peer vocational training related to urban and rural areas, type of disability and gender variables.

4.7 Mainstream employment services
- Identify and describe the government sponsored employment services system (i.e., providing assessment, vocational guidance and job placement services), the responsible ministry or ministries involved and particular groups targeted.
- Describe the institutional service delivery structures (e.g., schools, employment offices, and outsourcing to NGOs) and nature and extent of services provided.
- Identify significant NGO-sponsored employment programmes, the services that are offered, and the target groups (e.g. youth or women) served.
- Discuss any differences in availability and/or types of employment services based on urban/rural or gender dimensions.

4.8 Opportunities for people with disabilities in mainstream systems
- Identify and describe any existing opportunities for mainstreaming and/or special support services for disabled job seekers in the mainstream employment services.
- If mainstreaming occurs, provide data or estimate the proportion of disabled persons who use the mainstream system (s) and their success rate in terms of employment outcomes.

4.9 Special employment and employment support services for people with disabilities
- Identify and describe special employment and employment support services available to people with disabilities through government agencies, NGOs, schools or other sponsoring institutions.
- Describe the structures for delivering employment and employment support services (e.g., employment offices, work oriented rehabilitation centres or sheltered workshops, special vocational schools, etc.).
- Describe the services offered, especially disability specific employment support services (e.g., vocational assessment, peer group counseling, work experience or adjustment services, supported employment, job analysis, selective placement, etc.).
- Note if these services focus entirely on open employment, or include placement in sheltered employment, enclaves or other protected environments.
- Identify the number of persons served by gender and disability type and the number placed in employment (open employment, protected employment or self-employment) by gender and by disability type.

4.10 Mainstream support for self-employment and income generation
- Identify any government sponsored self-employment and income generation services and the responsible ministries.
- Describe the services offered (e.g., business planning, business development training, access to credit. etc.) and target groups.
- Identify any NGO sponsored self-employment and income generation programmes.
- Describe the services offered (e.g., business planning, business development training, access to credit, etc.) and target groups.

4.11 Mainstream support for self-employment and income generation for disabled persons
- Describe opportunities for inclusion of people with disabilities in self-employment programmes by identifying mainstreaming policies and special outreach and support services.
- Describe the extent to which people with disabilities are included in such programmes by citing or estimating participation and outcome rates

4.12 Self-employment and income generation support services for people with disabilities
- Identify support programmes for self-employment and income generation for people with disabilities sponsored by governments, NGOs or special schools and training facilities.
- Describe the services offered and target groups.
- Identify the participation and outcome data (number starting businesses) by gender and by disability type.

4.13 Poverty alleviation programmes
- Describe any major poverty alleviation programmes and their sponsors and related ministries (if not identified in 4.11 or 4.12).
- Identify policies and practices related to the inclusion of people with disabilities.
- Identify or estimate the participation rates of people with disabilities in such programmes.

4.14 Staff training for vocational rehabilitation
- Identify and describe training programmes for professionals providing vocational rehabilitation and training and employment services for people with disabilities.
- Describe the availability of competent trained personnel related to vocational rehabilitation practice (e.g. trained rehabilitation counselors, vocational assessors, vocational counselors, job placement specialists, etc.). Cite data, if available, and estimate the proportion of disabled persons.

4.15 Barriers/gaps related to services
- Identify specific barriers that people with disabilities face in accessing or benefiting from educational, vocational training, employment and self-employment and income generation services, both mainstream and segregated (e.g., related to accessibility, transportation, support services,

availability of assistive devices, trained instructors, policy support, etc.).

- Note gaps in services that may exist (e.g., such as for those with certain types of disabilities, age, ethnic or gender groups, those residing in certain geographic areas, etc.).
- Whenever possible, identify data or a rationale to support the identification of these barriers or gaps.

PART FIVE: EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

5.1 Open employment
- Identify and describe open employment opportunities for people with disabilities in the public, for profit and not for profit sub sectors.

- Estimate or provide data related to the number employed (by gender and by disability type) especially in relation to the types of jobs, wages, benefits, and career advancement potentials in the open labour market.
- Identify and describe any teleworking, home-based or other non-traditional employment structures in the open market.
- Identify and describe employment opportunities that have developed because of advances in information technology, the Internet and the computer industry.
- Identify and describe any decreases in open employment opportunities, especially related to employment of disabled persons, such job loss due to technology, trade or globalization issues, the impact of transition economies, etc.

5.2 Employment opportunities for people with disabilities in protected work environments
- Describe the available employment opportunities in protected work environments designed for people with disabilities including the following:
- Government set-aside job programmes (i.e., jobs that are set aside or give priority to people with disabilities, such as sale of lottery tickets in Thailand)
- Sheltered workshops and work centres for people with disabilities.
- Supported employment programmes
- Enclaves (segregated work setting for people with disabilities within larger companies)
- Other.
- For each type of protected job opportunity, provide data or estimate the number of people employed (by gender and by disability type), especially in relation to the types of jobs, wages, benefits and rehabilitation services that are available to participants in these protected work programmes.
- Explain and describe opportunities and specific services for transitioning workers with disabilities from protected employment to open employment.
- Cite data or estimate the numbers or proportions of people with disabilities who transition from protected to open employment.

5.3 Self-employment opportunities for persons with disabilities
- Identify and describe self-employment opportunities for disabled persons in

the formal sector, and estimate the numbers of people employed and the incomes of self-employed people with disabilities in the formal sector.

- Identify and describe self-employment opportunities for disabled persons in the informal sector, and estimate the numbers of people employed and the incomes of self-employed people with disabilities in the informal sector.
- Identify any special government or NGO programmes to support or assist people with disabilities in self-employment, such as special marketing schemes, tax breaks, etc.

5.4 Identify and describe other segregated or protected employment opportunities that may exist, such as disabled persons cooperatives, welfare enterprises, etc. and estimate the number of persons employed, types of job opportunities, wages, and number and types of disabled persons served.

5.5 Barriers and Gaps
- Identify specific barriers that people with disabilities face in accessing or benefiting from employment opportunities including those in open, formal, informal and protected environments (e.g., related to accessibility, transportation, support services, availability of assistive devices, discriminatory practices, lack of policy support, etc.).
- Note specific gaps to accessing employment opportunities that may exist (e.g., such as for those with certain types of disabilities, age, ethnic or gender groups, those residing in certain geographic areas, etc.).
- Whenever possible, identify data or a rationale to support the identification of these barriers or gaps.

PART SIX: ACTIVITIES INVOLVING SOCIAL PARTNERS

6.1 Identify and describe any government or NGO initiatives specifically designed to educate, raise awareness in, or provide supports and encouragement to, employers who are involved in the training or employment of people with disabilities.

6.2 Identify and describe any government or NGO initiatives specifically designed to educate, raise awareness or provide supports and encouragement to trade unions or workers' organizations that are involved in the training or employment of people with disabilities.

6.3 Describe any employer or trade union initiated activities, partnerships, or liaisons with government or NGOs that are specifically designed to promote the training and employment of people with disabilities.

PART SEVEN: SUMMARY AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

7.1 Looking back over the past decade 1992-2002
- Describe significant changes in policy and practice over the past decade.
- Describe specific progress or lack of progress.

7.2   Looking forward
- Describe major barrier needs related to policies and practices for equal opportunity and treatment of people with disabilities in regard to training and employment.
- Describe major strengths or opportunities related to policies or practices in regard to training and employment of people with disabilities.

7.3   Plans and recommendations from in-country
- Cite and describe goals, directions, and targets from official government planning documents related to training and employment policies and practices and specify time frames.
- Cite and describe any current recommendations made by advocacy or disability organizations related to the future of employment and training policies and practices.
- Cite and describe any other recommendations, studies or analyses within the country that pose specific recommendations about the future of policies and practices for the training and employment of people with disabilities.
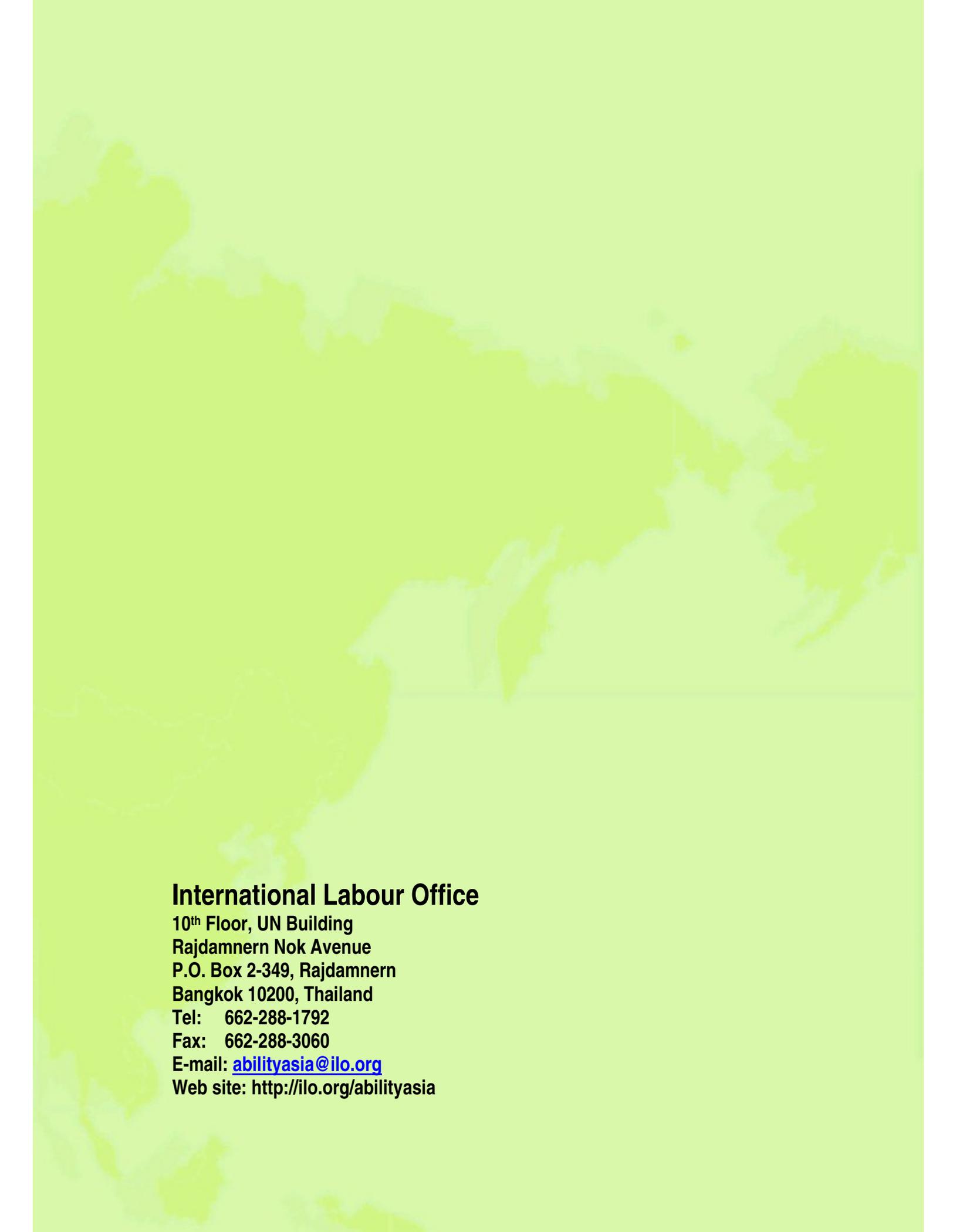
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