

UNDP/UNICEF/AUSAID/NZODA/UNESCO/USP

BASIC EDUCATION AND LITERACY SUPPORT

RAS/97/303

REPORT OF THE TERMINAL

EVALUATION MISSION

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CHAPTER 1: PROGRAMME

RESULTS 1.1 Preamble

1. The Programme Document

The Mid Term Evaluation Mission studied the Programme Document in detail and concluded that it fully met UNDP design criteria and the Programme had been derived in a logical and comprehensive way. The Programme Objectives, Outputs, and Activities were both internally and externally consistent. In other words the Activities to be undertaken were all logically linked to the production of their relevant outputs and all the outputs to be produced would contribute to achievement of the relevant objectives. This (Terminal Evaluation) Mission is not required to conduct any further analysis of the Document and relies on the findings of the MTE in that regard.

2. Evaluation Criteria

The Mission notes the clear evaluation criteria and methods prescribed for this evaluation. The Programme Document for phase 3 states that implementation and results were intended to be monitored by:

- (a) Quantified Outputs, where applicable
- (b) Country training targets
- (c) Impact studies to assess the quality and effectiveness of outputs (and thence impacts).

3. Evaluation Methodology

The terms of reference for the Terminal Evaluation stated:

"The main objective of the terminal evaluation is review progress of the project in light of the recommendations of the mid-term evaluation held in the final quarter 1999. In addition to this, the terminal evaluation will also evaluate the project for the following: performance in general of all the components; performance in general of the management of the project; performance in general of the monitoring and management by UNDP; lessons learned about project design, implementation and management; and report on signs of potential impact and long-term sustainability of results.

The evaluation will identify areas for continued assistance where relevant and appropriate". The Mission was based in Fiji and required to undertake the following tasks:

Consult with Governments, donors, UN Agencies, and other stakeholders. Review relevant reports and studies
Conduct in-country visits
Participate in the TPR Meeting on 27 Feb 2001
Prepare a discussion draft for BELS Team and Donors
Conduct a debriefing for USP and UNDP

The Mission resolved to combine some elements of the procedures of a "traditional" UNDP evaluation with those elements in its TOR.

First, the Mission comprised basically only one person. As inputs (and participation) by Pacific Island governments was essential, the Mission Leader visited four participating

countries in the course of the (three week) Mission and in each country key National BELS personnel assisted in the evaluation in-country.

Second, the project document was quite specific about the prime evaluative tools (described above) and these had been applied by the Mid Term Evaluation. So, as with the MTE, it was not necessary to conduct a detailed examination of the status of each and every programme activity in each country.

Third, component Coordinators were well versed in reporting methodology on project level activities and outputs, so this Mission accepted their Terminal Report statements as a starting point for its own analysis subject to individual discussions with each coordinator in the light of interviews with the stakeholders. The aim of these discussions was to clarify or amend information on activities, outputs and recommendations.

1.2 Views of stakeholders

UNDP Resident Representative

Stress the importance of Government input and representation in the evaluation process.

Indications of particular potential donor support for proposed future activities would be valuable in the Mission report.

Mission should comment specifically on the applicability of a regional approach

Mission report should analyse the particular execution modality chosen and whether it has proven itself in practice.

BELS and IOE

Asked whether it was possible to assess whether any progress towards the Development Objective had been made.

The Mission should consider what role IOE might play in an ongoing way

post BELS. The format of the terminal report is unsuited to a regional

programme. Some post BELS workshops may be needed to disseminate

reports and findings.

Further and final disbursements of in-country training and literacy resources funds to some countries were pending.

Ministr of Education Fiji

Post BE S there was a need *to* continue some aspects using bilateral aid

The impact study in Fiji clearly showed the benefits for children of the literacy work by BELS but there are some schools yet to be reached.

Integration into teachers colleges curricula of BELS materials was vital for sustainability In-service training of teachers is functioning well and will continue as a Government activity.

PILL tests in Fiji have shown theneed to lift the performance by students at all levels in terms of numeracy and computational skills (indeed mathematics).

School curricula needed new priorities such as development of skills for out of school activities. In other words "life skilling" of students for whom compulsory education was their only educational experience. Such skills should be basic skills (for example, in use of materials) or in livelihood related fields.

Early childhood education was a priority

for Fiji Ministry of Education - Samoa

Four recommendations to the Government were contained in the impact study of Samoan children's literacy and all had been adopted and effectively worked on. They had, for example, obtained bilateral assistance for the writing and acquisition of further readers for children in the Samoan language.

The findings of the impact study correlated with those from their version of PILL tests (called SPELL).

There was probably an ongoing role for SPBEA to assume a backstopping role and act as a resource centre (for advice and staff training) for PILL tests.

Ministry of Education -Tonga

A large number of pupil readers were still needed in both English and Tongan. Continuation of the BELS literacy resources-component was very important.

Recognised the need for an ongoing back-up entity that would act as a resource centre and provide advice and training on PILL matters if needed.

Ministry of Education - Vanuatu

The most significant problem encountered in implementation of BELS was the high number of changes in national staff during the programme. This affected all aspects including training, assessment, and pupil testing.

Vanuatu had worked hard to integrate the BELS materials and methodology into national programmes at pre-service and in-service levels. Considered they had been quite successful and this appeared to be reflected in the impact study Findings.

Considered that BELS had been quite successful in transferring the skills and knowledge of BELS to practicing teachers and that the reading resources provided were very well received by classroom teachers and pupils.

The country faced stringent financial constraints so all educational activities had to be prioritised and funding assistance (bilateral and otherwise) was essential in the short-term.

The difficulties recognised in the impact study for Vanuatu of teachers not making good use of their in-service literacy training could be expected to decline over time as younger teachers entered teaching after pre-service training at the Teacher's College.

The inefficiency of under-performing teachers (seen in some of the impact study data) was recognised but the remedial actions were difficult and not cost-free.

Vanuatu will always have difficulty with the delivery of education and the ongoing training of teachers because of its dispersed geography. BELS did provide some recognition of this with its country specific grants for those with "remote island schools" and this was recognised.

Vanua readers were written by groups of teachers chosen for their writing abilities. The aim was to have one copy of each booklet per pupil but the current number falls well short of that. The stories are about everyday things and are very well received by the children.

Teachers College - Vanuatu

The Principal had not been informed of the outcomes of the impact study in Vanuatu or received a copy of the report.

The duration of the training programme for primary teachers in Vanuatu is currently 2

years. BELS is firmly included as a component of the curriculum but it received somewhat less time than it deserved because of the overall duration.

The "networks and coordination" associated with implementation of the BELS Programme should be maintained.

Teachers College - Lautoka

Teachers Colleges did not receive enough BELS resources for their needs.

The research evidence showed the influence on pupil attainment in language skills was highly dependent on the use of a rich book and reader environment and more should be provided post BELS.

There was a need for a simple manual or handbook on the
PILL tests. Teachers Colleges should be involved earlier in
educational Projects. Teachers College Tonga

BELS materials and methods were incorporated in their compulsory core programme of a 3 year training course.

Associate teachers were used to assess and mentor the trainees when on placement in schools and this included their competency in literacy teaching.

The College is unable to use the internet because of prohibitive costs (US\$150 per month).

The whole language approach used in BELS is critically resource dependent and without the literacy resources component improvements in pupil literacy would be minimal.

School journals from New Zealand were of limited usefulness because of their different cultural setting and their high literacy standard.

1.3 Programme Outputs

As stated earlier, the Mission did not pursue a systematic and detailed study of each programme activity for each output for each country. Instead the Mission started at the level of activities by component and reviewed Programme implementation. This section examines outputs and their production by Component.

Component 1: teaching and learning
Sub-component 1: Assessment

Output 1: The consolidation of classroom assessment initiatives to date and at least 8080 trainers, head teachers, or teachers (additional to those trained in earlier phases) trained .

Regional workshops held in 99/00 determined a firm target number of teachers for training in each country and this target number guided the consequent funding and the ensuing training programmes. The actual numbers of teachers trained are set out in the Table following:

Country	No of teachers to be trained	Number trained
Cook Islands	172	184
Fiji	3,534	2,640*
Kiribati	470	458
Marshall Islands	466	486
Nauru	150	100
Niue	17	17
Samoa	500	607
Solomon Islands	2,020	1,483**
Tokelau	39	39
Tonga	310	606
Tuvalu	70	41
Vanuatu	980	800
Total	8,728	17,461

NOTES

With the in-country unrest in Fiji in 2000 there was a sharp decline in training. This situation is expected to be made in (as) in 2001.

** Training activity was adversely affected by unrest in the country with much reduced activity being recorded in 1999/2000.

The Mission concludes that this output has been largely produced.

Output 2: The consolidation and expansion of PILL testing procedures within national assessment programmes, and the development of national policies and practices based on the information they provide.

The Mission notes that the activities associated with the production of this output required a review of the status of PILL tests, consolidation of PILL testing in countries

with the capability, fostering increased use by the other countries, and development of PILL testing materials for use in Teacher's Colleges. The MTE expressed some concerns about the implementation of these activities and this is considered further in the next Chapter.

The Mission notes that the situation regarding testing at the end of Phase 3 is very different from that prevailing at the end of Phase 2. There appears to be four 'country groupings':

1. Countries who continued to use PILL tests unaltered; -Fiji, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Nauru
2. Countries who used PILL concepts to develop their own tests; - Cook Islands, Samoa, Niue
3. Countries who adapted PILL to meet broader curricular aims; - Kiribati, Tonga, Vanuatu
4. Countries who reported no PILL activity;- Marshall Islands, Tokelua

The diversity of PILL usage that has developed was not envisaged at the commencement of Phase 3 or in the wording of this output. The Mission concludes that this output (as stated) has been partly produced.

Sub-Component 2: Intervention

Output 1: Teacher manuals and training programmes on intervention strategies for children defined as "at risk" by PILLS 1 tests

The MTE commented that "the intention of these activities was to devise practical responses for teachers of children found to be "at risk"". The MA E was satisfied that the activities as implemented (of grouping -teachers by class level and devising specific strategies and by preparing three specific manuals to assist teachers) were appropriate and the materials being developed will be relevant. The Mission was informed that the three intervention manuals will be published by IOE shortly. When the manuals are published and disseminated to teachers , the Mission considers this output will have been fully produced.

Sub-Component 3: Pre-service Teacher Education

Output 1: BELS materials utilised in all nine Teachers' Colleges and USP Department of Education and Psychology

The following teacher education institutions were provided with a set of BELS materials: Corpus Christi Teachers College, Lautoka Teachers College , Kiribati Teachers College, National University of Samoa, Faculty of Education, Tonga Institute of Education, and the Vanuatu Teachers College. The materials included South Pacific Literacy Education Course (SPLEC) and supplementary guides : a resource book on classroom assessment entitled *Pacific*

Initiatives in Classroom Assessment (PICA) with a training package on assessment, and a resource book on community support for education called *Community and Parents Support (CAPS)* with notes on its integration with training workshops for teachers. Feedback from the institutions was positive and no substantive revisions were suggested.

The Mission considers this output has been fully produced.

Output 2: Familiarisation of staff involved in the delivery of primary teacher education/training programmes in the nine colleges and at USP, with BELS philosophies, methodologies and materials.

The Mission notes that a concerted effort was made by the BELS team to reach all the above teacher education institutions to instil BELS in the curricula. Team activities at the institutions included consultations with lecturing staff on their pre-service courses, seminars on BELS objectives, achievements and challenges, and a series of lectures to pre-service students.

The Mission considers this output has been fully produced. **Sub-Component 4 - Impact Studies**

Output 1: A series of short-term studies investigating the impact of BELS activities in classrooms.

The Impact Studies formed a central part of this Component. The approach involved evaluating the literacy achievements by primary school children in a sample of schools in participating countries using a battery of language tests developed for the purpose. Six impact studies were completed : for Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Samoa, Tonga, Niue and Fiji. The Mission was informed that a further three countries would value a study.

The Mission considers this output has been fully produced

Output 2: A number of mid-term investigations into BELS identified questions. The Mission considers that this output was partially produced.

**Component 2: literacy
education Sub-component 1:**

Literacy Training

Output 1: Revised National Programmes for Literacy

Training. The Mission considers this output has been

fully produced Output 2: Revised Literacy Training

Materials The Mission considers this output has been

fully produced

Output 3: Expanded coverage of effective literacy training and at least 5290 literacy teachers (additional to those trained in earlier phases) trained.

<i>LITERACY : TRAINING</i>			
<i>Country</i>	<i>Total No. of Teachers to be trained</i>	<i>No of teachers trained by BELS staff</i>	<i>No of teachers trained by National Training staff</i>
<i>Cook Islands</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>108</i>
<i>Fiji</i>	<i>2290</i>	<i>218</i>	<i>500</i>
<i>Kiribati</i>	<i>170</i>	<i>138</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Marshall Islands</i>	<i>260</i>	<i>440</i>	<i>356</i>
<i>Nauru</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>110</i>	<i>36</i>
<i>Niue</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Samoa</i>	<i>700</i>	<i>740</i>	<i>101</i>
<i>Solomon Islands</i>	<i>800</i>	<i>365</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Tokelau</i>	<i>40</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Tonga</i>	<i>300</i>	<i>450</i>	<i>1962</i>
<i>Tuvalu</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Vanuatu</i>	<i>600</i>	<i>337</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>5290</i>	<i>2850</i>	<i>2455</i>

NOTE:

1. The above totals do not include at least 250 trainee teachers who participated in BELS training at teachers colleges under BELS coordinators.

2. The participation rates for training in two countries were adversely affected by civil unrest in 2000.

The Mission considers that (given the mitigating circumstances in two countries) the total training completed via BELS staff directly and by MOE staff reached the

desired target overall. This output was therefore fully produced.

Sub-Component 2: Literacy Resources

Output 1: Enriched reading environments in Pacific classrooms in years 1-6

The following table sets out the situation regarding the provision of literacy resources from 1998 up to March 2001.

Country	Allocation	Sent/Spent	Pending
Cook Islands	4,100	4,100	
Fiji	127,800	127,800	
Kiribati	8,500	8,500	
Marshall Islands	12,050	12,500	
Nauru	3,250	3,600	
Niue	3,520	3,900	
Samoa	36,450	20,500	16,300
Solomon Islands	145,000	100,000	45,000
Tokelau	3,050	350	2,700
Tonga	6,200	16,366	
Tuvalu	4,050	6,250	
Vanuatu	29,500	23,500	8,080
ALL - (workshops)	8,250	8,250	
TOTALS	401,720	335,616	72,080

Note:

The IOE intends processing the Balances owing to countries (pending) before June 2001.

The Income from UNESCO on behalf of NZODA will be completed with a final payment shortly bringing the total funds remitted to IOE to US\$410,592.

If all the pending amounts are paid as above the total disbursement to countries will be US\$407,696. IOE intends that the estimated "surplus" of \$2,896 be shared equally among the 6 countries which received less than \$10,000.00 as their original allocations; the Mission supports such a procedure.

Provided the above actions are carried out, the Mission considers this Output will be fully produced by June 2001.

Component 3: Community Support for Education Sub-Component 1- Community Support for Education

Output 1: At least 230 National trainers, 690 Head teachers and 3,300 Primary teachers who are better able to establish and maintain school/community links in support on home based learning and in coordination with community-based activities and welfare organisations.

Country	No of National Trainers		No of Head Teachers		No of Teachers	
	To be trained	No. trained	To be trained	No. trained	To be trained	No. trained
Cook Islands	10	5	20	27	200	244
Fiji	-	49	60	189	900	1,261
Kiribati	-	8	30	18	70	156
Marshall Is.	-	8	40	to	300	136
Nauru	1	5	13	18	60	251
Niue	1	4	1			28
Samoa	20	89	50	78	500	476
Solomon Is.	160	45	270	'3	940	339
Tokelau	I	I			-10	13
Tonga		48	30	132	190	909
Tuvalu	4	4	5	17	20	61
Vanuatu	30	53	180	195	150	320
TOTALS	227	319	701	768	3,380	4,199

Note: The total numbers to be trained differ slightly from those specified in the output as actual target numbers were reviewed for Nauru and Niue.

The Mission considers this Output has been fully produced.

Output 2: At least 427,000 parents (additional to those trained in earlier phases) are trained on home-based and informal community activities in support of pupil learning.

Country	No of Parents	No of Parents	No of Parents	No of Parents
	To be reached	Reached by CSrh coordinator	Reached by in-country trainers	Reached %age of d in target total
Cook Is	13,000	830	6,080	6,910 53%
Fiji	154,000	1,285	73,965	75,250 49%
Kiribati	20,000	460	8,740	9,200 46%
Marshall Is.	27,000	635	6,025	6,660 25%
Nauru	2,000	410	945	1,355 68%
Niue	1,000	310	565	875 87%
Samoa	37,000	1,140	27,795	28,935 78%
Solomon Is.	114,000	1,550	26,370	27,920 25%
Tokelau	2,000	120	964	1,084 54%
Tonga	19,000	1,379	14,956	16,335 86%
Tuvalu	2,000	350	1,290	1,640 82%
Vanuatu	38,000	1,399	27,101	28,500 75%
TOT_ES	427,000	9,868	194,796	204,664

The Mission considers that this output has been

largely produced. **Sub-Component 2: Early Childhood**

Education

Output 1: Early Childhood Education policy documents and curriculum guideline materials in all Pacific Island Countries.

Output 2: Early literacy studies incorporated in USP and Teacher

Training Courses. Output 3: Increased community understanding of

ECE

The following table summarises the activities undertaken by the ECE Coordinator from 1998/2000 covering all three outputs above. The training sessions include seminars, workshops and training for Parents and teachers. Teachers included classroom teachers, headteachers, and teacher's college students and staff.

Country	Training Sessions and Workshops	Participating Parents	Participating Teachers	Total Participants
Cook Is.	4	135	112	247
Fiji	4		153	153
Kiribati			114	114
Marshall Islands	2		46	46
Nauru		27	80	107
Niue	6	161	26	187
Samoa	6		148	148
Solomon Islands	5		118	118
Tokelau			0	0
Tonga	9		174	174
Tuvalu			0	0
Vanuatu	8	210	273	483
Total	55	533	1244	1777

The Mission considers that all three ECE outputs were fully

produced. Summary of Outputs:

Out of a total of 16 Outputs the outcome is 12 fully produced, 2 largely produced and 2

partly produced.

CHAPTER 2: PERFORMANCE

EVALUATION 2.1 Programme

Implementation

Implementation of the programme components, when viewed over the whole phase, proceeded satisfactorily. Indeed, in some programme areas the pace and quality of implementation was extremely good. Programme results, described in the previous chapter, were in most cases made possible by the quality of the implementation activities. There were two unexpected matters which adversely affected programme implementation, the quality of programme management in the first half of phase 3 and major civil unrest in two countries in the latter half.

The MTE expressed some concerns about aspects of programme implementation and these are re-examined in the light of the now completed implementation of phase 3. In addition, there are other aspects of implementation which the Mission considers merit comment either because they raise new issues or led to significant outcomes. Where components are not referred to it can be taken that implementation was satisfactory and as intended by the programme document.

1. Classroom Assessment

Implementation of this component proceeded smoothly until 2000 when civil unrest occurred in two of the larger countries. As a result training activities were curtailed but have now resumed. Consequently there is now a backlog of in-country training to be undertaken by national trainers in the two countries. However, because of the nature of disbursement of BELS training funds there are also unutilised funds available. The Mission considers it most desirable that these two countries should be treated as a special case and encouraged to complete the training originally planned. This matter is considered further under 'Funding of In-country Training'.

2. PILL Tests

In 1999 the MTE reported that implementation had been adversely affected because:

There was still limited understanding of the PILL tests and how to use the results, and consequently little follow-up-work had occurred.

Test results were often used to make judgments about teachers in preference to the prime purpose of the tests of identifying levels of literacy and numeracy.

There was a high turnover of those directly involved with the PILL tests in many countries.

The MTE stated that this activity was intended to focus on training for countries that had developed PILL capacity, appreciated the difficulties now encountered, and recognised that an element of repeat training was needed. The MTE recommended that activity for year 2000 should be restricted to the six applicable countries.

The Mission notes that implementation (post the MIL) continued to be adversely affected by the three factors but to a much lesser extent. This improved position appears to be due to the SPBEA focussing on each countries particular testing and assessment needs and providing targeted assistance. While this was not the state h the \ITE _.

nevertheless appears to have equipped most countries with operational PILL (or PILL derived) procedures.

3. Interventions

Implementation proceeded satisfactorily using two strategies involving training teachers in groups according to class levels and devising specific responses to assist children at risk in all areas of learning and in developing teacher resource manuals. The Mission notes that three manuals have been produced but too late in the programme to be further utilised within BELS. In other words the output was produced but not in a timely manner.

4. Pre-service teacher education

The MTE recommended that output 3 of this subcomponent be discontinued, and the Mission notes that this procedure was followed. Implementation of the rest of the subcomponent proceeded systematically and effectively.

5. Impact

Studies (a)

Short term

studies

A total of six studies were undertaken to evaluate the literacy achievements by primary school children in a sample of schools using a battery of language tests. The final reports have been printed and distributed. In each country experienced teachers and

literacy coordinators assisted the BELS team and undoubtedly contributed to smooth implementation.

(b) Mid-term Investigations

Initially activities for this Output got off to an enthusiastic start with 15 potential issues for investigation being identified. However, by the time of the MTE the number of issues was down to four, with firm commitments made by four country representatives to contribute to the investigations. The MTE noted that there had been unforeseen constraints on implementation of the activities (such as the non availability of student researchers). The MTE considered that this output did not have the same priority as many others, and it should be "tailored" to fit the resources and expertise available and recommended that it be confined to completion of the four study topics already underway. Subsequently, potential researchers (from USP and NRP's) did not express interest in being involved. So the final outcome was that only one topic was researched and a report made (on the characteristics of high performing schools in Fiji).

The Mission concurs with the MTE's recommendation and considers that under the circumstances (of effectively no researchers being available to the programme) one completed investigation is reasonable. The Mission does note, however, that there were many of the original (15) issues which still merit attention of educational researchers and recommends:

That the IOE and the USP review the topics identified by BELS as potential areas for useful educational research and draw them to the attention of staff and student researchers in USP and the nine Pacific Teachers Colleges.

6. CSFE - Parental involvement

The final number of parents reached by the programme was 204,664 against a target of 427,000. The Mission considers that the Output target was unrealistic as it represented the number of parents in total in all the PICs minus those reached by the earlier phases of the programme. So in effect phases I to 3 sought to contact all parents, which is clearly not feasible. Nevertheless, the 'penetration rates' (ie the numbers of parents who actually participated in this BELS activity as a percentage of the country target) achieved in some countries were close to 80% which shows an overwhelming interest in their children's education by pacific island parents. The rates for two countries were affected by civil unrest and should undoubtedly have been higher. Overall, this part of the subcomponent was implemented with much dedication and energy by the Component Coordinator and National training staff with a successful outcome in numerical terms.

The programme only set a numerical target for parental involvement and made no specific requirements regarding the duration or quality of such participation. The Mission was therefore unable to assess in any rigorous way the output quality. It must

note, however, that many people interviewed by the Mission during in-country visits commented favourably on the noticeable enthusiastic participation by parents in the BELS workshops.

7. CSFE - Workshops for parents with experienced personnel

The MTE Report found that only 3 countries had identified and trained a group of parents with relevant experience to conduct workshops for parents on health/hygiene, common nutrition and emergent literacy. Because of the small number of schools in these countries - Niue, Kiribati and Marshall Islands they were able to organize workshops for parents with relevant experience. The MTE considered that this activity, while obviously desirable, did not require high priority, and given the low implementation rate recommended that it be discontinued as from the end of 1999. The Mission notes that this recommendation appears not to have been implemented but the Terminal Report of the Coordinator reports the same situation encountered by the MTE so whatever activities were undertaken appear to have had negligible contribution to the output.

8. In-Country Training

Country	Assessment		Literacy		CSFE		• SARIS		Total to 2000		Pending 1
	All.	Dis.	Atl.	Dis.	All.	Dis.	All.	Dis.	All.	Dis.	
Cook Islands	1,221	1 2" 1	1,409	1,409	2,859	5. ~9	9,400	9 400	14,889	17.389	
Fiji	26.505	20 050	34 365	30,365	10,080	10,080	9,000	5 000	79,950	65.495	14,455
Kiribati	4,710	4 710	3,420	3,420	.407	1,407	15,209	15. 09	24,746	24,746	-
Marshall Is.	4,665	4 665	5 220	5,220	4,767	4.767	14,000	14 000	28,652	27.652	-
Nauru	2,000	2000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2000	-		6,000	6.000	
Niue	575	575		-	605	605		-	1,180	1,180	
Samoa	2,520	2 320	7,020	7,020	1 4,	-1.200			13,740	1=,7-10	
Solomon Is.	20.205	10.000	' 12,030	6,000	200 14.154		12.000	1 6.000	58.359	2(" .0C0	'1).7 -Q
Tokelau	390	-	810	-	630		3,000	-	4,830	-	4,830
Tonga	1.560	1 560	4 500	4,500	2,087	2,087	6,000	6,000	14,147	14,147	-
Tuvalu	705	705	600	600	420	420	5,000	5 000	6,725	6,725	-
Vanuatu	7,410	7 410	9,000	9,000	2 520	2,520	9,000	9 000	27,930	27,930	-

Totals	72,466	55 416	80 374	69,534	45,729	40445	82,609	63,609	281,178	235,004	46,174
Budget	73,000		83 000		55 000		85,000		296,000		

The above Table sets out by country the financial allocations for in-country training in classroom assessment, literacy, community support for education, and remote island subsidies. Disbursements based on estimates of trainee number are made. After training is implemented countries forwarded brief details to IOE (as an accountability statement). With three countries a further disbursement is pending as there was some deferment of training from 2000. The Mission notes that the Programme budget for 2001 will consequently require provision in category 030 Training of approximately \$46,200 in order to resource this priority activity. The Mission is keen to see all in-country training that was planned under BELS actually completed, and recognising the reasons for some training being deferred, recommends:

That JOE disburse the funds for in-country training held for three countries as soon as they submit firm training plans.

9. Literacy Resource Funding, 1998 - 2001

Country	Allocation	Sent/Spent	Pending
Cook Islands	4,100	4,100	
Fiji	127,800	127,800	
Kiribati	8,500	8,500	
Marshall Islands	12,050	12,500	
Nauru	3,250	3,600	
Niue	3,520	3,900	
Samoa	36,450	20,500	16,300
Solomon Islands	145,000	100,000	45,000
Tokelau	3,050	350	2,700
Tonga	16,200	16,366	
Tuvalu	4,050	6,250	
Vanuatu	29,500	23,500	8,080
ALL - (workshops)	8,250	8,250	
TOTALS	401,720	335,616	72,080

The Mission notes that this subcomponent has had uneven implementation. The disbursement procedures did not work efficiently; work in the Phase and the subject of recommendations by the MITE. The recommendations by the MITE and the Mission are:

IOE end of the process, has been timely. The Mission understands that the undisbursed funds shown in the table arise from tardiness in application from countries and notes that:

The IOE intends processing the Balances owing to countries (pending) before June 2001.

The Income from UNESCO on behalf of NZODA will be completed with a final payment shortly bringing the total funds remitted to IOE to US\$410,592.

If all the pending amounts-are paid as above the total disbursement to countries will be US\$407,696. IOE intends that the estimated "surplus" of \$2,896 be shared equally among the 6 countries which received less than \$10,000.00 as their original allocations; the Mission supports such a procedure and recommends:

That countries with "credit balances" in the literacy resources fund make a costed proposal to IOE urgently and that the IOE disburse the remaining funds (including any residual) as soon as possible thereafter.

10. SPBEA Contract

The contract between the IOE and SPBEA was for PILL testing services and totalled US\$150,000 over three years (\$70,50, and \$30,000). The funds were payable in advance on a six-monthly basis. The Mission examined the financial records of both USP and SPBEA and is satisfied that payments of \$55,000, \$30,000, and \$39, 297 were made in 1998-2000. This leaves a sum of US\$25,703 payable in 2001 by IOE to SPBEA to complete the contract requirements. The Director of SPBEA informed the Mission that payment of this sum would enable SPBEA to continue to offer the PILL testing advice and services to BELS countries who required them until the end of 2001. The Mission recommends:

That IOE (as implementing agency) complete the contractual payments to SPBEA; and that SPBEA, for its part, confirm in writing to IOE that it will continue to act as a "resource centre" for PILL testing until at least the end of 2001.

11 Dissemination of BELS Resources

It appears to the Mission that teachers colleges did not receive enough BELS reports, manuals, and other materials for their needs. In particular, Colleges mentioned the lack of full sets of the literacy manuals 1-6 and 6-10. They did not receive many copies of the children's readers produced by BELS and could make good use of these with student teachers. They also commented on the apparent lack of any manual or

handbook on the PILL tests and considered a simple one (with anonymous but typical data) would be an excellent teaching tool for students. The Mission recommends

That the IOE send copies of all significant BELS reports or publications, and samples pupil readers to all the Teacher's Colleges in the Region

Similar concerns to those of the Colleges were expressed by AusAID and NZODA representatives in Country posts. The Mission was informed that they had not received any information on BELS from AusAID or reports on outcomes from BELS itself. The Mission recommends:

That 10E despatch to all NZODA and AusAID posts in the Pacific Region a selection of BELS reports (such as the impact studies, newsletters, etc)

2.2 Management and

Monitoring 1. Programme

Document

The Programme Document stated, inter alia, that the programme would be managed and implemented by

A team of 3 full-time coordinators for the duration of the programme for the components assisted by either short term or consultant staff engaged for specific tasks.

The Director of the Institute of Education of USP would act as Programme Manager and be responsible for coordinated implementation.
Programme Execution would continue with USP as in Phase?

2.The BELS Advisory Committee

The role and function of an Advisory Committee was of expressed concern by stakeholders early in phase 3. The Mission notes that the Programme document stated in section 4.9 "The Vice-Chancellor of USP will have a programme Advisory committee reporting to him on matters of execution and implementation. The Vice Chancellor may vary the constitution and membership of the Committee from time to time in order to best meet the needs of the Programme and USP." The MTE studied the minutes of the two meetings of the Committee that had been held (by October 1999) and considered the membership and operation of the Committee most satisfactory.

The Mission found that the Advisory Committee had not been convened post the MTE (ie from October 99 to March 2001) a period of 18 months. The Mission

considers that an Advisory Committee meeting should have been held in March 2000 but no record of it being called was found. The Mission accepts that the civil unrest which occurred in 2000 in Fiji was not conducive to convening low priority UN meetings. However, the Mission considers there is an important issue of accountability that arises when the same agency is in effect both the executing and the implementing agency (in this case the USP). The principle of accountability would require, when this is the situation, that there be more priority (than would apply if only one function were being performed) on regular and transparent reporting on expenditure of funds, activities undertaken, and achievements made. The Mission considers there is a lesson to be learned here.

3. Reporting

The MTE noted that reports to the Advisory Committee and TPR were timely, at regular 6 monthly intervals, and reported output production per objective. The Mission notes that financial matters were sporadically reported on over the phase (eg. the Terminal report to the March 2001 TPR meeting contains little financial information). At earlier advisory or TPR meetings financial information tended to be an accounting statement from the USP Bursary. The Mission considers this an unacceptable process. The IOE was the Implementing agency and their reports should have included (based on USP accounting data) a management component that

summarised the inputs of funds, their disbursement, and estimates of future (end of year or end of project data). These procedures are well established and expected procedures used by implementing agencies and the Mission is concerned these do not seem to have been used for phase 3 of this programme.

The Mission considers that the format of the terminal report (by the Implementing Agency) is unsuited to a regional programme (eg it is not possible to get a "target group" or "Government" view when there are multiple countries that are widely dispersed). The Mission also doubts the reliability of the implementing agency designing performance indicators of success at the conclusion of a project in order to enable them to evaluate their own performance. Accordingly, the Mission recommends:

That UNDP reassess the need for the Terminal Reporting form, and if its continued use is required then its content (and logic) should be amended to improve its validity and applicability to Regional Programmes.

4. Management of Inputs

The USP as executing (and implementing) agency made use of the existing USP accounting systems. While accurate in accounting terms the reports produced for the Director of the IOE and Committee meetings were essentially expenditure statements

by category. In order to manage the funds the accounting data needed interpretation in two ways. First, as a document to compare actual expenditure with budgets with notes of explanation on significant variances. Secondly, as a forward looking document that on the basis of the year to date projects the funding situation at year end. Both of these documents should be shared with the BELS team and the Committees. The Mission notes that while programme funds were controlled they were not well managed and this weakness gave rise, in effect, to some particular financial issues during the course of phase 3.

The Mission examined the financial (accounting) statements from UNDP and found that UNDP had made appropriate and timely Budget Revisions and that USP had made appropriate and timely expenditure and funding claims to UNDP. The last UNDP and USP statement is for the 31 December 2000 so the only remaining question is how should the remaining funds (approximately \$215,000) be rephrased for 2001. In order to elucidate this question the Mission sets out in a table below the budget for 2000, the actual expenditure, and estimates of budget lines needed for 2001 in the light of recommendations made earlier. It also has assumed some ongoing expenditure up to 31 May 2001, some expenditure from 2000 coming to charge, Mission costs, and some end-of -project reporting costs.

	Budget	Actual	Possible
	2000	2000	2001
Description			
Personnel			
Specialist Teaching & Learning	64000	60996	30000
Specialist Literacy	48700	48700	20000
Specialist Community Support	48500	¹ 48500	20000
Consultants Teaching & Learning	12000	4003	1000
Consultants Literacy Education	3000	0	0
Consultants & Experts 3 w-m	3000	10	0
Admin Support Personnel	0	0	0
Support Personnel Teach & Learn	12300	4579	2500
Support Personnel Literacy	12300	2350	1000
Support Personnel Community	1000	19	0
Support Personnel Short term	15000	3454	1000
Duty Travel			
Teaching & Learning	15000	7796	2000
Literacy	10000	9080	2500
Community Support	10000	11074	2500
Support Personnel	5000	6227	1500
Mission Costs	0	0	20000
SPBEA	75000	39296	25700
Audit	2500	0	2500

Training			
Training - Teaching & Learning	73000	61461	46200
Training - Literacy (AUSAID)	83000	71949	0
Training - Community Support	55000	39298	0
Training - Teachers Coliges	5000	881	0
Training - Regional	30000	21310	0
Saris	85000	57848	0
Local Procurement			
Equipment - Teaching & Learning	3000	133	0
Equipment - Literacy (AUSAID)	3000	4260	0
- Community	3000	281	0
Reporting Costs			
Reporting Costs- Teaching & Learn	11700	1309	3000
Reporting Costs- Literacy (AUSAID)	11009	1504	3000
Reporting Costs - Community	6000	533	2000
Sundries			
Sundries - Teaching & Learning	5000	1768	500
Sundries - Literacy (AUSAID)	5000	456	100
Sundries - Community	5000	102	100
Rental & Services- Teaching & Learner	9600	9600	2500
Rental & Services - Literacy (AUSAID)	9600	9600	2500
Rental & Services - Community	9600	9600	2500
Totals	749809	537967	194600

Given the recommendations already made by the Mission relating to in-country training and the SPBEA contract it would appear that these could be actioned within a rephrased budget and staffing and reporting costs could be covered until March/April 2001. The Mission recommends:

That this programme BELS Phase 3 conclude officially not later than 30 June 2001, that all expenditure be brought to charge by USP prior to that date, and that apart from the in-country and SPBEA activity referred to earlier other programme activities cease at 31 March or on the departure of the BELS Team members.

5. The BELS Coordinators

The MTE questioned the need for high levels of coordinator travel between countries in the first half of this phase and stated that in the final year (2000) of the programme there should be a much reduced need for Coordinator travel. The Mission has studied the budget and actual expenditure for duty travel and is pleased to note the MTE recommendation was implemented.

6. The Role of the Programme Manager

The role of the Programme Manager was briefly referred to in section 4.9 of the Programme Document as "the Director of the TOE will coordinate and manage the Programme as part of his normal duties". The MTE considered that it was quite impractical to expect an already busy leader and manager of a University Institute to also undertake management of the diverse BELS programme as "normal duties". The MTE recommended that the Director of TOE should be provided with appropriate and adequate professional and support staff to enable him to properly perform the BELS Management role. The Mission notes that this recommendation was adopted and that significant improvements to overall programme management resulted.

2.3 Implementation modalities

The modality of implementation of Phase 3 of the Programme was set out in the Programme Document. It essentially stated that implementation was the responsibility of the TOE and the Director of TOE would act as Programme Manager (in addition to his normal USP duties). The purpose of this section of the report is to examine the alternative implementation arrangements that may have been available during programme formulation, and whether there were good reasons for the one adopted. Further, if another alternative had been adopted would the programme implementation performance have been significantly different and how does the choice of implementation modality affect sustainability.

Implementation strategy

The first phase of the BELS programme was formulated by UNESCO and subsequently executed by them. It was an intricate and comprehensive project that was seen to require considerable experience and expertise to implement. Hence, the decision was made (by UNDP and UNESCO) that UNESCO would also initially implement the project with a view to transferring that function to phase 2 (already envisaged) to the TOE. TOE was perceived as a regionally based organisation, active in the field of primary education, and one with potential for 'capacity development'. The programme document does not record any alternatives being considered during formulation.

In any event, the implementation of phase 1 was totally unsatisfactory. Due to interAgency disagreements there was a lengthy (over 1 year) delay in the appointment of a Team Leader. Lacking strong leadership the team became disparate and dysfunctional. By the end of phase 1 activities were incomplete and outputs partly produced. The Evaluation Mission of phase 1 sought to improve this situation for Phase 2 by changing the executing agency from UNESCO (with their acquiescence) to the USP. Here the reason was that if the specialist Agency was not available then 'country execution' should be considered. Policy at the time (1990's) was also to encourage country execution where possible as a means of capacity development. For a regional programme there is no "country" so a regional entity is considered. To accompany this

change the implementing agency also became the USP with the Team Leader reporting to the Vice-Chancellors Office. Essentially the same programme document

was employed for phase 2 (as amended by resolutions of the TPR's) and there appears no evidence that other implementation alternatives were considered. Phase 2 was successfully implemented, some components completed, and some new related requirements identified.

For phase 3 a new programme document was formulated with a design intended to:

"- introduce simpler and speedier funding of training
- devolve a significantly greater proportion of programme resources at Country level - focus on in-country rather than sub-regional training -
feature a minimal but effective management structure - introduce measures to monitor programme impact - introduce new elements given priority by Pacific Island Countries"

The draft programme document originally proposed a continuation of the execution/implementation arrangements that had work well in phase 2 but this was changed to become the USP/IOE on UNDP's initiative. The reason advanced was that this was more logical and in line with the original programme intention to develop institutional and regional capacities. In the formulation of the document other alternatives had also been considered. For example, the SPBEA was considered. It is a Pacific Regional body with an ongoing mandate and active in two areas (teacher assessment and student testing) of direct relevance to BELS. The Mission has studied the files and the conclusions reached at the time (1997) and considers that more study should have been given to two key considerations. First, the pre-requisites and benefits of a regional modality versus a set of national ones. Second, the nature of the institution being given 'capacity development' and the relative advantages of institutions that would assist sustainable outcomes.

With the imminent conclusion of phase 3 the Mission concludes that implementation performance was satisfactory but of variable efficiency and effectiveness. Most activities were undertaken with dedication, enthusiasm, and relevance. Having 'revisited' the history of implementation of BELS and the alternative implementation modalities available for Phase 3 the Mission concludes there is no reason to consider that had an alternative been adopted the implementation would have been significantly better. On the other hand, the Mission also concludes that there may have been some advantages to alternatives on the grounds of sustainability. This key point is developed further in the next Chapter.

CHAPTER 3: IMPACT AND

SUSTAINABILITY 3.1 The Regional

Modality

The Mission studied the 'Background and Issues Paper' produced by UNDP for the Mid-term review of the UNDP Pacific Regional Programme 1997-2001. Page 24 of this Paper referred to the 'Regional Approach' to Programmes and commented that "Regional programmes have been seen to be effective in the Pacific for a number of important reasons:

1. Regional cooperation
2. A basis for advocacy
3. Cost effectiveness
4. Common approaches to specific issues
5. Increased opportunities access to international best practices
6. Promoted information sharing
7. Avenue for joint action by donors
8. Vehicle for institutional strengthening and capacity building in regional organisations"

The BELS programme has exhibited some of these characteristics:

- Strong commitment by Pacific Governments and regional workshops were used extensively
- The training (via an augmented cascade) was cost effective in terms of numbers trained
- Common materials in literacy, testing, and training were developed and used
- Some information and expertise was shared via trainee placements in other countries
- Three donors contributed for all 3 phases (over 10 years)
- USP and SPBEA gained in capacity through the programme

The Mission considers the above indicated that the programme was overall an effective one.

The Summary Report of the Mid-term Review also commented (page 27) on the impact of Regional Programmes. "Characteristics of successful regional programmes were seen to be that they:

1. address actual needs of countries (not supply side or donor driven)
2. recognise and respect the cultural diversity of the region
3. are realistic and focussed in scope
4. are both upstream (policy inputs) and downstream (grassroots) oriented
5. link regional and national initiatives
6. are cost effective
7. pilot innovative approaches "

Again, the BELS 3 programme comes out well on these characteristics:

- the common and actual needs of children for improved literacy
- training methods were adapted to suit national and local needs
- was tightly focussed in terms of objectives and design
- included policy initiatives (ECE) and community involvement in education at village level * adapted programme activities to complement bilateral national inputs (eg PILL) * was cost effective in terms of management, overheads, and training costs introduced new self-evaluative tools (eg impact reports)

The Mission also concludes that on these (UNDP) criteria the programme can certainly be described also as a successful one.

3.2 Programme Impacts

Apart from the general conclusions about the programme that can be made about effectiveness and success there are particular aspects of the Programme that have made specific impacts. These are discussed below.

Impact studies by the Programme

Literacy was the core component of this Programme and implementation included six self-evaluative impact studies. These studies focus on achievement by pupils in literacy at two levels between years 3 to 6. The reason for studying literacy achievement by pupils was based on the assumption that BELS programme interventions in the form of promoting classroom skills of teachers, training them in literacy education, enhancing their skills in promoting parental support for children's learning at the classroom level, and increasing their participation in ECE generally, would, in the final analysis, impact on the quality of work being done in the classroom. Thus pupils' achievement in literacy in English (listening, reading and writing) was seen as a sound indicator of the impact of BELS' various interventions.

Detailed reports on each study have been composed by the IOE and four were analysed by the MTE. The findings of the remaining two, Fiji and Niue were, in summary, as follows:

Fiji Study

The achievement level of pupils whose teachers had implemented the new literacy teaching as intended were much higher when compared to those teachers who had yet to do so. The pupils who were exposed to a rich diet of reading, using shared reading and associated activities, were clearly more advanced in their command of reading comprehension, writing, grammar and listening skills.

Many pupils who had been exposed to English instruction without the benefit of a sound reading programme are making very limited progress (For example, in Year 4, 38% of those receiving an enriched literacy programme scored over 75% in both vocabulary and reading comprehension).

Many teachers had not yet adopted the principles of the BELS Programme in their teaching. Some lack enough reading materials to make such a programme viable, others had very little training or have made little effort to put their training into practice.

The usual advantage demonstrated by girls in literacy tasks did not show up in this survey.

Similar to other impact studies, this study recommended that priority be given to increasing the supply of good reading resources in primary schools, training of teachers in the BELS type literacy programme, and promoting the writing of good quality children's literature designed especially for pupils in Fiji schools.

NIUE Study

This study, based on the country's only primary school, was essentially a survey of the achievement of years 3 to 6 pupils in English, covering listening, reading, and writing. The findings therefore relate very much to the progress of pupils in literacy learning within this particular school.

The findings showed:

That steady progress was being maintained by pupils as they moved up the year levels. That pupil's achievement in English cut across the chronological year levels.

That of the three strands tested all year levels found the reading strand most challenging That at all levels, girls performed better than boys in virtually all tests

Because of the importance of these six studies to an overall assessment of programme performance the Mission has studied the findings of each study and considers the following general conclusions can be made regarding programme impact:

•pupils in BELS programme schools achieved better results when compared to 'control' schools

• the level of implementation of BELS' components made a difference in terms of literacy achievements of pupils

• resources (good quality reading books) and the quality of teacher skills in literacy education were critically important factors in literacy achievement in pupils.

Many stakeholders commented about the importance of literacy resources for children. They appreciated the funding made available in phase 3 of BELS and the significant input of children's readers that resulted. However, a substantial need still existed at programme end. The mission considers that the provision of further literacy resources is required post BELS for the following reasons:

1. Despite the large numbers of materials supplied under BELS 3 there is still a large unsatisfied need.
2. The methodology of literacy teaching (a whole language approach) is inherently highly resource dependent for success.
3. The literacy resources component was in the original design for Phase 1 but lacked a donor and never commenced.
4. The literacy resources component was introduced for phase 3 and therefore 'trails' its associated literacy training component.
5. A strong message from impact studies is the critical need for adequate literacy resources for children to ensure continuing growth in their literacy competencies.

Accordingly, the Mission recommends

That post BELS a small Regional project to provide further literacy resources for primary schools (and Teacher's Colleges) be implemented. The project to be executed and implemented by either USP or UNESCO, and make use of the same funding distribution formulae as BELS Phase 3, and be funded by donors such as NZODA or AusAID.

PILL Tests

SPBEA informed the Mission that the PILLS data, taken overall for the Pacific Region, does not show any consistent improvement in literacy levels of children in the

Pacific Region over the period of BELS phase 1 to 3. The "average" level of literacy and numeracy appears has not to have changed significantly over the Region (while in some countries it has declined and in others increased). There have also been fluctuations in country literacy profiles over the BELS period of almost 10 years. Some countries have not undertaken any remedial responses to the PILL outcomes while others have pursued strong policy and practice reactions and the benefits of such actions are showing up in the impact studies.

The Mission wishes to stress that PILL is essentially a test of pupil literacy competencies, it is not intended as a device to measure teacher or school performance but something to help their pupils who are most 'at risk' as displayed by their competencies in literacy and numeracy. As such it is at the heart of the BELS programme and the capacity for countries to measure such an important dimension in an ongoing way is important.

The MTE noted the comment in the impact reports that some of their findings "correlate with PILL results" and considered this a significant observation. This Mission took this matter up with the Director of SPBEA and sought his view on a correlation between the two. In the Director's view the comment referred to the fact that the "high performing" schools selected for use in the impact studies were ones identified as ones where BELS methodology and materials had been actively used by a BELS trained teacher. These schools were ones who also scored well in the PILL tests. The Mission accepts this explanation, and therefore concludes that this means also there must also be a high correlation between PILL test results and impact study results.

The Mission appreciates that the impact studies were not seeking representative samples of schools in particular countries but rather .the purpose of their research was to compare the impact of BE-LS by examining samples of schools from 'high' and 'low' exposures. However, with PILL tests the Mission understands the sampling methodology does permit production of results, which reliably portray a National picture.

The MTE understood the prime purpose of PILL (identification of at risk pupils) and the undesirability of country-to-country comparisons. Nevertheless, the MTE suggested that it would be valuable (as a measure of Regional impact) to derive some regional average statistics for PILL 1 in 1993/94 and in 1998/99 for comparison purposes.

This Mission pursued the above matter further and asked SPBEA whether a regional analysis of current the PILL data was possible. It appears that such an analysis would be possible provided appropriate data was available. There was a 'regional' computation done in 1994 but it is not easy to replicate such because the available data not incomplete and the 'mix' of countries now differs from that earlier. Given that PILL testing will continue and to provide some credible and statistically reliable statement about the 'end o project" regional level of children's literacy the Mission --commends that

SPBEA undertake a Regional analysis of the PILL data on a comparable basis to the 1994 analysis within the next 18 months.

A second matter of concern to the Mission, relating to testing and impacts, remains. The BELS literacy methodology was intrinsically a high teaching resource strategy. But, as has already been pointed out by the Mission, the literacy resources were not provided until phase 3. So much of the early impact studies conducted in Phase 3 must have been at a time when teachers had little literacy resources available whatever their level of literacy training. Pupil performance in the impact studies showed a correlation with the level of implementation of BELS in terms of both training and resources. The Mission would support the idea of any further impact studies separating the two variables of training and resources to gain some insight into the relative importance of each.

Participation by Teacher's Colleges in BELS

It was suggested to the Mission by the Teacher's Colleges that they should have been involved in any project to raise educational standards right from the formulation stage. In this case Colleges had only been brought into BELS in the latter part of the programme and in "order to ensure sustain ability". The Mission considers that the professional resources of the Colleges could have been better tapped. For example, some of the experienced literacy lecturers could have been consulted during programme formulation this would have assisted the Colleges to have a sense of 'ownership' of BELS to the programmes advantage. Possibly, also the component on interventions and impact studies could have been subcontracted by IOE to some Colleges to undertake the research envisaged.

French version of BELS

The Principal of the Vanuatu Teacher's College pointed out to the Mission the inequity of BELS being available only in English and that this was a distinct and unique disadvantage to Vanuatu. He considered that the Vanua readers supplied to all Anglophone schools could be readily replicated along with the other BELS materials in the French language. There existed substantial expertise for such a task within the College and Ministry and all that was required was a donor backing (such as that already provided by NZODA in the education sector). The Principal considered that such a post-BELS activity would produce significant benefits for the other half of Vanuatu children currently unable to benefit from the successful BELS teaching methods. The Mission agrees that there is a specific need here that should be addressed post BELS and recommends:

That post BELS the pupil literacy resources entitled "Vanua Readers" be translated into French and published in sufficient numbers for the Francophone

schools of Vanuatu; this activity to either be a specific component of the Regional project on literacy resources or the subject of national bilateral assistance.

3.3 Sustainability of outcomes .

1. Incorporation of BELS in Teacher Training programmes

The importance of effective implementation of the teacher training subcomponent is that effective entrenchment of BELS philosophies, methods, and materials into pre-service education programmes is vital to ensure sustainability. The Mission has already noted that both

outputs were fully produced. In other words BELS resources have been provided to training institutions and BELS staff have conducted consultations, seminars, and lectures for College staff. One crucial aspect remains and relates to output quality and thence sustainability. To what extent are the BELS resources incorporated and taught by each institution?

This question was answered for the Mission in three ways. First, the Component Coordinator described in detail the concerted efforts made by the BELS team to interrelate with staff in institutions and to assess the 'take-up rate' of BELS resources into College curricula. He was able to assure the Mission that all nine teacher education institutions were using BELS resources in their courses.

Second, the Mission visited three teacher education institutions as part of the country visitations. Comments from them were:

Vanuatu Teachers College

The principal had attended a two week workshop conducted by the BELS team and considered that it was very well conducted and received. In particular, teachers of island schools were particularly enthusiastic, advanced many useful ideas, and created marvellous literacy teaching aids from scratch. Also notable was the participation of Francophone teachers with much interest. He considered the BELS resources were firmly entrenched in his College programme of 2 years of training.

Lautoka Teachers College

The Lautoka programme is of 2 years duration divided into 4 semesters per year. Within their programme BELS related components (assessment skills, literacy and CSFE) are included. For example literacy is integrated into the four modules (of four weeks duration) of English. While their teaching makes large use of the 'whole language approach' it also includes the traditional mode as the two complement one another.

Tonga Teacher's College

BELS materials and methods are incorporated in their compulsory core programme of a 3 year training course. Associate teachers were used to assess and mentor the trainees when on section in schools and this included studying their developing competency in literacy teaching.

Third, the Mission visited Primary schools in four countries and one question asked of Head Teachers related to the skills of new teachers they had appointed (fresh from Teacher's College). All Head Teachers considered the new teachers well prepared in terms of teaching literacy including use of SPLEC materials, pupil readers, and teachers guides.

On the basis of the above evidence, the Mission concludes that the BELS resources are successfully integrated into pre-service teacher training and thus sustainability of the teacher training components of BELS are assured.

2. Sustainability measures in-country

The Mission recognises that measures will need to be taken in-country, as well as regionally, to enhance sustainability. Thus there will be a need for maintaining the " networks

and coordination" associated with implementation of the BELS Programme. Countries, in the post-BELS situation, should ensure that there was still a 'National BELS Resource Person' and an associated network of key people able to assess needs, provide advice from experience, and perpetuate the achievements of BELS.

3. Community Support for Education

The BELS programme since its inception was not confined to just literacy training for primary teachers; it also contained a component on community support for education. This unique combination of ingredients has meant that as the literacy teaching skills of classroom teachers have increased this has been accompanied by growing awareness by parents on the importance of literacy. The parents have become increasingly able to reinforce the classroom activities by actions at home. The Mission considers this two-pronged approach to improving literacy levels makes a substantial contribution to ensuring the sustainability of BELS outcomes.

4. Improved practices by classroom teachers

Based on observation of classroom practices and field results the component coordinators reported that they had witnessed first hand teachers using methods and

techniques previously unknown to them and introduced to them by BELS, such as:

classroom tests that use descriptive statistics to help interpret

results shared teaching that allows pupils to make their own

literacy resources samples of self-made pupil and teacher "big

books", charts, and readers

5. Training models and strategies

The original "cascade model" of training has been augmented in various ways by each country. The common element that remains is that the focus of training in all cases is the classroom teacher. Training of the classroom teachers was delivered by appropriate people (such as headteachers, national trainers, zone trainers, outstanding teachers, etc) who have been trained by the BELS team. The up-skilling of the trainers is a sustainable outcome which will in turn contribute to sustainable ongoing in-service training of teachers.

6. Capacity development

The linkage established between BELS and Ministries, schools, and Teacher's Colleges has been achieved while the programme was within the JOE. There will, therefore, be an ongoing line of communication between them on BELS related matters in the years post-BELS. The Mission considers that IOE should be in a strong position to service their needs in terms of supply of advice, materials, and professional support. Accordingly, the Mission recommends

That Post BELS the IOE continue to act as resource and advice centre for literacy training and resources and seeks appropriate core funding and donor inputs to ensure this function is maintained.

The Mission considers the capacity building of the IOE, produced through its leadership of BELS programme has been significant. However, whether or not the growth in capacity will be sustained is difficult to assess. The Mission notes that none of the component coordinators are permanent staff of the IOE and therefore their experience and expertise (and growth in personal and professional capacity via BELS) may potentially be lost to the IOE.

7. PILL Testing

Post BELS the SPBEA see the need for further development of standard testing procedures which would include the PILL tests. They propose that such testing be built into the normal programme of SPBEA but some additional funding for activities on an ongoing basis would be required. As recorded earlier the SPBEA envisage that the

funds from BELS will be sufficient to maintain the activities for 2001. From 2002 onwards SPBEA would intend to continue such services with some bilateral funding assistance. The Mission recognises that continuation of literacy testing (based on PILL) is a desirable and sustainable outcome and recommends:

That Post BELS the SPBEA continue to act as resource and advice centre for literacy related testing and seeks appropriate core funding and donor inputs to ensure this function is maintained.

8. Programme Beneficiaries

One ultimate test of a project's impact is to examine the effect on the intended principal beneficiaries; in this case pupils and teachers. The Mission was fortunate to have been able to examine the classroom skills of both children and teachers during Phase 1 of this Programme. Therefore similar examinations were made during this evaluation Mission as part of the country visitations. While the schools visited were different in the two cases and this was not a systematic study, nevertheless, the changes were apparent and significant. In all classrooms visited (at various levels) the children's behaviour was attentive and participative and there was abundant evidence of literacy and numeracy materials and exercises done by the pupils themselves. By chance in one room a PILL test was being undertaken so the Mission was able at first hand to scrutinise a sample of pupil answers (in situ); they indicated a high level of results. The Mission was left in no doubt that there had been a noticeable improvement in pupil competencies and this was directly attributable to the programme.

3.4 Lessons learned about project design, implementation, and

management Project Design

Projects intended to train classroom teachers are enhanced in efficiency and effectiveness if training activities are paralleled by parent awareness activities as the two mutually reinforce one another.

Components of Regional projects need to be carefully chosen to ensure internal compatibility and overall achieveability.

Components of Regional projects should only be included if their regional implementation is expected to bring advantages over national implementation in specific ways such as economies of scale, cross fertilisation between countries, high regional pool, etc.

The design of HRD projects should include, where appropriate, self-diagnostic and self-evaluative components (as a form of performance measure) such as the intervention

and impact studies of the BELS 3 programme.

Consideration needs to be given in the design of Regional projects to the choice of implementing agency to ensure the optimum 'mix' of characteristics (such as a regional entity, experienced and reputable in the project fields, able to develop capacity, able to produce sustainable implementation)

Where capacity development is perceived to be one of the anticipated outcomes of a project or the reason for choice of a particular implementation modality some specific parameters should be set out in the project document that will enable the success (or otherwise) of the development to be assessed at project end.

Implementation

Two prerequisites for successful implementation of a regional project are strong commitment by the Governments of all participating countries and high quality project staff.

Assessment of the impact and outcomes of a project can be improved by inclusion of impact studies as an integral part of project implementation.

Management

Where project execution and implementation are undertaken by the same entity it is desirable to have a project Advisory Committee to ensure that project management is consistently efficient and effective.

The quality of project management is enhanced when there is scrupulous accountability through regular and transparent reporting on expenditure of funds, activities undertaken, and achievements made.

Chapter 4: RECOMMENDATIONS and

FINDINGS 4.1 Post BELS scenarios

Meeting Basic Learning Needs

BELS as a programme was conceived and designed in the early 1990's and pre-dated the World Conference on Education for All (WCEFA). The programme, therefore, lacks the insights and priorities that flowed from WCEFA. Indeed, the acronym BELS originally stood for "Basic Education and Life Skills" but in fact the programme contained neither. It related to Primary Education and Agriculture (at secondary level); and as such could have been called the PEA Programme. The new Programme Document for Phase 3 replaced 'life skills' with 'literacy skills' which was

an accurate descriptor of content. The Mission considers it is timely to revisit the original intent of this programme in the light of current understandings of concepts such as basic education, life skills, education for all, non-formal education, etc. In the light of this analysis the Mission will indicate a 'signpost' for potential activities Regionally post-BELS.

Humans have basic needs which must be met in order to provide sustainable livelihoods and satisfying lives. These needs include some basic learning needs such as the ability to speak, read, write, and calculate. Basic education can then be defined as 'a process for satisfying individuals basic learning needs'. Several useful consequences come from using such a definition.

First, basic education applies to all, the definition is age independent. Basic learning needs are the same for children, youth, and adults the only difference being the "mix" of needs.

Second, the definition emphasises that education is a process that develops human resources and it is clearly seen as a major component of HRD.

Third, the definition subsumes traditional distinctions in education such as primary, nonformal, continuing, second-chance, or adult education; all become facets of a common theme.

Fourth, basic learning needs include elements of social, life, and work skills. These need to be defined for each countries circumstances, culture, and priorities. However, in the majority of countries primary education (as a component of basic education) may be the first, and last, education they will receive so it is important that they be given some measure of these skills.

Fifth, the concept of 'meeting basic learning needs' brings a conceptual cohesion to programme clusters involving component projects in HRD or sustainable livelihoods.

BELS was designed as a specific response to a unanimous view expressed by Directors of Education in the Pacific Region (in 1990) that the two priority areas were literacy and life skills for children of age 6 to 13. If BELS was being designed as a project today (2001) it should have a clear conceptual focus on meeting the basic learning needs that were identified. However, a decade of effort has gone into improving the literacy needs of children and significant advances have been made but little or no efforts have been made in the other areas of need.

Therefore, this Mission suggests that if there is to be any substantive Regional Programme considered for the future the most pressing field is that of basic learning needs associated with life, work, and livelihoods and concerns both children and youth.

4.2 Recommendations made to the Mission

The following recommendations were made to the Mission either directly or indirectly and are reported `verbatim'. All are genuine attempts to respond to the Mission's request for input of ideas and proposals for the future. Some require rephrasing or editing, and several repeat the same theme. Where deemed appropriate some *Mission comment* has been made.

IOE Terminal report

1. That countries schedule personnel and funds (from national or bi-lateral sources) to complete the balance of activities scheduled for Phase 3.

Mission comment:

The Mission notes that there are a few outputs (relating to training and PILL) that require some further activity at country levels to complete the BELS requirements. The recommendations made by the Mission in that regard should ensure that there are no significant activities that remain to be undertaken in order to produce the outputs required by the Programme. That is not to say that there are many potential future activities that countries may wish to pursue, and with much merit, but in terms of the requirements of the BELS Programme there will be little left undone that was intended.

2. That an analysis of implementation by each country be made to help determine aspects of BELS that need to be re-visited and/or be included as part of pre-service and on-going inservice training programmes.

Mission comment:

The procedure of regular regional `stocktaking' was specifically included in the design and Implementation of this Phase of BELS via regular "annual regional workshops for key personnel. It was also stressed as a necessity by the MTE. It would be most desirable that such regular reviews (particularly at country level) continue. .

3. That, in order to enhance the sustainability of BELS training philosophies/ methodologies, the following strategies be considered by the member countries: the adoption/adaptation of BELS ideas and materials at the training institutions and their use in the national in-service training programme.

IOE to service the needs of the individual countries in matters arising out of BELS 10E, in collaboration with the SPBEA, act as a clearinghouse on BELS ideas and materials.

Mission comment:

The Mission supports the thrust of these suggestions and will reflect them in its own recommendations.

BELS Component

Coordinators Teaching

and Learning

That countries consider incorporating a full range of classroom skills (assessment, approaches to teaching, understanding the curriculum, motivation, questioning) in their future national inservice programmes in order to further strengthen the overall repertoire of teacher skills in the region.

Mission comment:

The Mission supports this proposed strategy to enhance teacher skills and effectiveness

That PILL tests be adopted as a normal part of monitoring standards in basic education in each country.

Mission comment:

The question of PILL 'purity' has been analysed elsewhere in this report. The Mission favours staying with the original parameters of PILL as far as possible and for countries to use the methodology regularly and usefully. The Mission considers that the intention of the BELS programme was to provide and focus analysis of literacy proficiency at country level on common instruments and common needs.

That Impact Studies be seen as providing additional information to supplement the data from PILL tests on literacy levels in the BELS member countries.

Literacy Education

That Pacific Island Countries should continue to make use of BELS materials and methodology in ongoing pre and in-service training of teachers.

Mission comment:

The Mission supports this statement of principle

That Pacific Island Countries follow-up impact study recommendations as soon as practicable

That the continuation or sustainability of the BELS literacy type development can only be effective if the trained personnel continue their task post BELS.

That any planned in-country training or development in place is allowed to take its course. That TOE continue to be involved in any literacy education or training post BELS

Mission comment:

The 'mix' of involvements post BELS by interested parties in literacy will clearly involve the IOE.

That children's book production and the production of teacher's manuals is pursued with TOE as a post BELS activity.

Mission comment:

The Mission sees the IOE playing a significant role in publishing literacy resources.

That a remedial reading programme/project is also pursued with IOE as a post BELS activity.

That there be continuation of the development and provision of literacy resources to countries

Mission comment:

This development has widespread support from countries.

Community Support for Education

That countries analyse the progress made so far and attempt to complete their schedules on meetings with parents at the various levels

That countries firmly establish school-based training programmes for parents and other members of the school community and encourage their active involvement in all facets of school life,

That countries continue to refine and contextualise relevant aspects of CAPS and guidelines produced under BELS

Mission comment:

The Mission thinks this is a desirable suggestion but would like it put in simple language to countries

That countries include relevant Community Support training material in their curricula and teacher training programmes to help sustainability

That further programmes in parental awareness and involvement in emergent and early literacy be developed.

That an awareness of a deeper knowledge on parental involvement in emergent and early literacy learning of children be a priority with the countries via bilateral assistance with ICE and USP. The urgent need to further educate Pacific Islands parents on their responsibility in focusing on the issues of emergent and early literacy development in the homes, has been a very crucial spin-off from the CSFE component.

That there is a continuing need to reach out to teachers, parents, and the complex communities in this vast region, via in-service training and this is fundamental.

That donor assistance be sought to continue the CSI-E activities from phase 3 of BELS in association with IOE/USP.

Mission comment

The recommendations of the Mission will reflect the need for donor inputs.

Early Childhood Education

That follow-up activities be carried out in-country to assist and encourage the formulation and official government ratification/recognition of ECE policy and curriculum guidelines

That countries utilise the knowledge and experience of national BELS team members in the revision of and formulation of ECE curricula for use in ECE centres and training institutions and appropriate training, in their application;

That countries conduct national awareness programmes on ECE through the media (radio, TV, newspapers), together with workshops and conferences.

Mission comment:

The Mission agrees with these three suggestions.

4.3 Recommendations made by the Mission

Recommendations regarding conclusion of BELS implementation

That the IOE and the USP review the topics identified by BELS as potential areas for useful educational research and draw them to the attention of staff and student researchers in USP and the nine Pacific Teachers Colleges.

That IOE disburse the funds for in-country training held for three countries as soon as they submit firm training plans.

That countries with "credit balances" in the literacy resources fund make a costed proposal to IOE urgently and that the IOE disburse the remaining funds (including any residual) as soon as possible thereafter.

That IOE (as implementing agency) complete the contractual payments to SPBEA; and that SPBEA, for its part, confirm in writing to IOE that it will continue to act as a "resource centre" for PILL testing until at least the end of 2001

That the IOE send copies of all significant BELS reports or publications, and samples pupil readers to all the Teacher's Colleges in the Region

That IOE despatch to all NZODA and AusAID posts in the Pacific Region a selection of BELS reports (such as the impact studies, newsletters, etc)

That UNDP reassess the need for the Terminal Reporting form, and if its continued use is required then its content (and logic) should be amended to improve its validity and applicability to Regional Programmes.

That this programme BELS Phase 3 conclude officially not later than 30 June 2001, that all expenditure be brought to charge by USP prior to that date, and that apart from the in-country and SPBEA activity referred to earlier other programme activities cease at 31 March or on the departure of the BELS Team members.

Recommendations to PICs regarding in-country policies or activities that do not require bilateral donor funding

That countries recognise the need to continue the use and adaptation of BELS ideas and materials in both pre-service training institutions and national in-service training programmes.

That countries recognise that IOE, in collaboration with the SPBEA, will act as a clearinghouse on BELS ideas and materials.

That countries consider incorporating a full range of classroom skills (assessment, approaches to teaching, understanding the curriculum, motivation, questioning) in their future national inservice programmes in order to further strengthen the overall repertoire of teacher skills in the region.

That countries continue to refine and use aspects of CAPS and its guidelines produced under BELS

That countries continue to include relevant Community Support training material in

training programmes for teachers both pre and in-service.

Recommendations to PICs regarding in-country policies or activities that may require bilateral donor funding

That follow-up activities be carried out in-country to assist and encourage the formulation and official government ratification/recognition of ECE policy and curriculum guidelines

That countries utilise the knowledge and experience of national BELS team members in the revision of and formulation of ECE curricula for use in ECE centres and training institutions and appropriate training in their application;

Recommendations regarding future Regional activities

That post BELS a small Regional project to provide further literacy resources for primary schools (and Teacher's Colleges) be implemented. The project to be executed and implemented by USP or UNESCO, and make use of the same funding distribution formulae as BELS Phase 3, and be funded by donors such as NZODA or AusAID.

That Post BELS the IOE continue to act as resource and advice centre for literacy training and resources and seeks appropriate core funding and donor inputs to ensure this function is maintained.

That post BELS the pupil literacy resources entitled "Vanua Readers" be translated into French and published in sufficient numbers for the Francophone schools of Vanuatu; this activity to either be a specific component of the Regional project on literacy resources or the subject of national bilateral assistance.

That Post BELS the SPBEA continue to act as resource and advice centre for literacy related testing and seeks appropriate core funding and donor inputs to ensure this function is maintained.

That SPBEA undertake a Regional analysis of the PILL data on a comparable basis to the 1994 analysis within the next 18 months.

4.3 Mission Findings

1. Programme implementation was satisfactory overall and most activities were undertaken in a timely and efficient manner..
2. 1,5 or the 16 outputs *were* hilly produc_-J' and 3 were at a reduced level.
3. The Programme achieved the four immediate objectives set.

4. The programme has produced a wealth of relevant and practical training materials
5. There is compelling evidence that the programme has had a major impact in the majority of participating countries in bringing about large improvements in skill levels of primary teachers and literacy levels of pupils.
6. The programme has contributed to a steady growth in parent awareness of the interdependence of homes and classrooms and of ways to assist growth in literacy of their youngsters.
7. The programme has developed several sustainable outcomes. These outcomes are seen in, for example, the enhanced performance of teachers, the wide-spread use of BELS materials, ongoing pre-service training of teachers.
8. There are some follow-up activities necessary in countries and regional activities in literacy resources and literacy testing should attract new donor funding and continue post BELS.

9. Significant reasons for the successful outcomes were:

- the high quality of Programme professional staff
- the impact of better trained and better resourced classroom teachers
- significant achievements in all three components in most countries
- a high level of commitment by participating Pacific Island Governments
- the impact of PILLS results on in-country priorities and actions
- the good quality of training materials produced
- effective attempts to reach remote Pacific schools
- the provision of large numbers of readers and books for pupils

10. Significant reasons for less successful features:

- * the efficiency of programme management was not constant
- the training at school levels did not always reach expectations
- the intended model of training delivery (an augmented cascade) was not always followed

* funding flows to countries for training and resources were at times slow

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