



Mobilising School and Community Engagement to Implement Disability-Inclusive Education through Action Research: Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu

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Contents

Foreword.....	3
Acronyms	6
Section 1: Introduction	8
1.1 Scope of the action research study.....	8
1.2 Background information	9
Section 2: Research methodology and design	12
2.1 Research overview	12
2.2 Methodological approach	13
2.2.1 Index for Inclusion.....	14
2.3 Research stages and timelines.....	16
2.4 Action research cycles.....	21
Section 3: Action research profile of Fiji	23
3.1 Background and context	23
3.2 Phase 1: Getting started	25
3.3 Phase 2: Finding out about the school.....	26
3.3.1 Teacher's voice.....	26
3.3.2 School governance and leadership	27
3.4 Phase 3: Producing a plan	28
3.4.1 Dimension A: Creating inclusive cultures.....	28
3.4.2 Dimension C: Evolving inclusive practices	29
3.5 Phase 4: Taking action.....	29
3.5.1 Progress on action research projects (Dimension A: Creating inclusive cultures)	29
3.5.2 Professional development and interviews (Dimension C: Evolving inclusive practices)	30
3.5.3 Surveys of teachers, parents and students (Dimension A: Creating inclusive cultures and Dimension C: Evolving inclusive practices)	31
3.6 Phase 5: Reflecting on progress.....	36
3.7 The way forward	37
Section 4: Action research profile of Samoa.....	39
4.1 Background and context	39
4.2 Phase 1: Getting started	40
4.3 Phase 2: Finding out about the school.....	42
4.4 Phase 3: Producing a plan	43
4.5 Phase 4: Taking action.....	44

4.6 Phase 5: Reflecting on progress	45
4.7 The way forward	45
Section 5: Action research profile of Solomon Islands	46
5.1 Background and context	46
5.2 Phase 1: Getting started	47
5.3 Phase 2: Finding out about the school – Setting priorities and gathering information	49
5.4 Phase 3: Producing a plan	49
5.5 Phase 4: Taking action.....	50
5.6 Phase 5: Reflecting on progress	51
5.7 The way forward	51
Section 6: Action research profile of Vanuatu	53
6.1 Background and context	53
6.2 Phase 1: Getting started	55
6.3 Phase 2: Finding out about the school.....	57
6.4 Phase 3: Producing a plan	57
6.5 Phase 4: Taking action.....	58
6.6 Phase 5: Reflecting on progress	62
6.7 The way forward	63
Section 7: Conclusion and recommendations	64
7.1 Background and contextual issues.....	64
7.2 Building awareness for disability-inclusive education	64
7.3 Partnerships with other organisations and engaging the community	65
7.4 Building infrastructure and overcoming institutional challenges.....	66
7.5 Developing human resources	67
7.6 Challenges	67
7.7 Final thoughts	68
7.8 Recommendations	69
References	70

A CD including a User Guide for school communities is included at the back of this book.

Foreword

The international movement towards inclusive schooling has been challenging for developing countries to implement. While most developing countries have or are in the process of adopting international declarations and rights-based conventions to improve schooling for children with disabilities, general access to education for all children is still extremely limited. Education for children with disabilities is compounded in developing countries where class sizes remain large, there are many out of school children, poverty is rampant, infrastructure is limited and there is a huge gap between urban and rural opportunities for schooling. Of critical importance is the lack of well trained teachers, with very limited experience and who have little understanding of how to support students with disabilities within regular classrooms. Considering the challenges thus faced by developing countries as they aim to embrace a more disability-inclusive schooling system, this monograph is extremely opportune and will provide an excellent resource for schools and education systems to assist them in this move.

As signatories to the international declarations promoting inclusive education, the Pacific Islands are now actively engaged with embracing a disability-inclusive approach to education. As early as 2002, Pacific countries committed themselves to a philosophy of education for all. Since then, Pacific forum leaders have been moving towards this by developing frameworks and policies for action. This has seen considerable effort across the Pacific Island countries to advance the implementation of policy for enabling this to happen and to identify indicators for measuring progress. The emphasis to date, therefore, has been on building capacity with local governments and education systems to create system-wide procedures for enhancing disability-inclusive education. There has, however, been a large policy-practice gap with limited and only spasmodic enactment of the policy at the local school level across all regions. This monograph is extremely important, therefore, as it aims to fill this gap by focusing on local school communities and providing a process for them to support the implementation of government policy.

Even though the Pacific Island countries have strongly adopted this move towards disability-inclusive education, there is still limited evidence of inclusive practice within schools. Some governments have now mandated that all children should attend their local school; nonetheless, there are no guidelines as to how children with disabilities are to be supported within the existing school structures, either physically or educationally. As is the case in many developing countries, decisions work best when local communities are leading them, as they are able to consider the uniqueness and diversity of their own environments and suggest and support activities that they know will be paramount for them. This is where this monograph is such a useful tool as it targets local school communities who want to become more inclusive and provides practical and evidence-based ideas for helping them to move forward.

Based on a series of action-research projects in four representative countries in the Pacific Islands, case studies explore how local school communities in Fiji, Samoa, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu work through a process informed by the *Index for Inclusion* to become more inclusive. This project has been a collaborative effort between national researchers who have the local expertise to appreciate what is possible and what needs to be done and international researchers who bring a broader perspective and who are able to help guide and support them. Of particular note is the

emphasis on local communities working together to learn about disability-inclusive education by sharing their own beliefs, values and apprehensions. There are many lessons to be learned from the different case studies across the four countries in the region.

These case studies provide a social and cultural account of how individuals and communities are able to work towards establishing disability-inclusive practices within their unique school communities. Each study proffers a detailed overview of the way teachers, parents and the local stakeholders worked collaboratively to identify changes needed and plan for action to address these. Capacity building was evident for the national researchers who will be able to maintain the process momentum and for schools who are now better equipped to move disability-inclusive education forward.

The ideas from the various case studies combined with the resources included in the CD-Rom provide very practical and cost effective ways for local schools to move towards establishing disability-inclusive educational practices. The involvement of the whole school community in each instance has been seen as essential for developing a sustainable approach to change. This has also enhanced the capacity of local community members to better understand what disability-inclusive philosophy is and how this could work within their schools. A particular strength in this methodology is that school communities have worked within their own limitations and with an in-depth knowledge of what is possible. There has not been additional funding available for resourcing so ideas have had to reflect how schools can proceed using existing structures, materials and local expertise. This approach has also ensured a collaborative and more sustainable effort and has been grounded upon a strong commitment to make the new disability-inclusive policies work in practice.

One of the major challenges concomitant with implementing disability-inclusive education within developing countries is the lack of local research that identifies not only the difficulties, but more especially provides potential local solutions for how to overcome them using a hands-on practical approach. In many developing countries there remain discriminatory attitudes towards those with disabilities with inherent traditions and beliefs leading to the alienation of people with disabilities and reluctance to adopt an inclusive approach. Overcoming these attitude barriers is a critical first step to providing good opportunities for children with disabilities to be included in regular schools. Developing disability-inclusive learning environments is a complex process, particularly when local school communities may not have experienced any good examples of what such practice might look like. While significant barriers may exist without any additional funding, limited understanding of what disability-inclusive education may look like, poor training of teachers, and a top down direction to adopt a policy that is not clearly articulated for implementation at a school level, nevertheless, these case studies illustrate just how school communities can work together to overcome potential barriers and to provide more disability-inclusive environments for their children.

Professor Chris Forlin
International Inclusive Education Consultant

29 June 2015

Acronyms

ADRAS	Australian Development Resource Award Scheme
CBR	Community-based Rehabilitation
CHS	Community high school
CI	Chief Investigator
CWD	Children with disabilities
FSB	Fiji School for the Blind
GFC	Global Financial Crisis
IE	Inclusive education
LCS	Luganville Community School (pseudonym for participating school in Luganville, Vanuatu)
MEHRD	Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (Solomon Islands)
MESC	Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture (Samoa)
MoE	Ministry of Education
MOENHCA	Ministry of Education, National Heritage, Culture and Arts (Fiji)
MOET	Ministry of Education and Training (Vanuatu)
MoH	Ministry of Health
NGO	Non-government Organisation
NR	National Researcher
PDF	Pacific Disability Forum
PIC	Pacific Islands Country
PIF	Pacific Islands Forum
PIFS	Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
PS	Primary School (pseudonym for participating primary school in Fiji)
PVCS	Port Vila Community School (pseudonym for participating school in Port Vila, Vanuatu)
QUT	Queensland University of Technology

RS	Rural School (pseudonym for participating rural school in Samoa)
Rural CHS	Rural Community High School (pseudonym for participating school in Solomon Islands)
SEN	Special education needs
SS	Secondary school (pseudonym for participating secondary school in Fiji)
Urban CHS	Urban Community High School (pseudonym for participating school in Solomon Islands)
US	Urban School (pseudonym for participating urban school in Samoa)
USP	University of the South Pacific
VITE	Vanuatu Institute of Teacher Education



Section 1: Introduction

1.1 Scope of the action research study

The purpose of this monograph is to report on the second phase of an Australian Development Research Award Scheme (ADRAS) funded research project entitled: ***Strengthening capacity for disability-inclusive education development policy formulation, implementation and monitoring in the South Pacific region***. In particular, it reports on objectives 2 and 3 of the grant.

Objective 2: To establish regional, national and local priorities with respect to disability-inclusive education.

Objective 3: To examine the contribution of action research projects to regional, national and local capacity building, and sustaining disability-inclusive development in school communities.

Four Pacific Island Countries (PICs) – Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu – participated in the study and were represented by national researchers (NRs) from the Ministry of Education (MoE) of respective countries. The NRs worked with chief investigators (CIs) from the University of the South Pacific (USP) and the Queensland University of Technology (QUT) to conduct school-based action research in each PIC to build local level capacity in working with children with disabilities.

The school level capacity development adopted an action research approach as it allowed for broader stakeholder participation. This action research approach was informed by the Index for Inclusion. The Index has been translated into 37 languages and is used in 35 countries [1]. Armstrong, Armstrong and Spandagou [2] suggest the Index is significant because ‘it adopts a systematic approach for the self-assessment of progress towards inclusion while allowing teachers themselves to specify their understanding of what inclusion means and the outcomes that will be used to evaluate progress towards their goals’ (p. 117). The adapted process of using the Index for Inclusion described in this report demonstrates that this tool can be used to engage stakeholders in a school community or education region in sharing their ideas and problem solving about ways of better meeting the needs of students in their own context. The NRs in the ADRAS project used the Index framework to encourage parents, students and education staff to learn together about disability-inclusive education by sharing values, beliefs, priorities and concerns. Specifically, what will be reported here is the action research and capacity building activities in Fiji, Samoa, Vanuatu and Solomon Islands which follow on from the national profiles showcased in the first monograph. It

documents the capacity building activities undertaken by the research team from the setup stage to completion of the first action research cycle with the schools. The key actors, processes and iterative outcomes will be described and discussed in this report. The findings of action research cycles conducted within the case study schools will be presented together with lessons learned from each country. It will include examples of disability-inclusive education implementation within each participant country and will hopefully contribute towards developing a sustainable disability-inclusive education approach with increased school and community involvement. This research publication also includes a **resource CD** with tools and tips that informed the action research work, and may be used by others as a reference when planning and delivering workshops for the school community. The individual country action research sections illustrate how some of these resources formed the basis of processes and approaches that were used in the current research.

1.2 Background information

International research [2] provides evidence that implementing disability-inclusive development interventions are best addressed through education interventions, as it not only helps develop capacities of children with disabilities, but also develops the awareness of other children and the school community towards people with a disability. Targeting education as the point of entry of these interventions ensures high success with integrating people with a disability into everyday life as they transition from the education system [3]. In 2002 it was estimated that in the Pacific Island Countries (PICs) less than 10% of children with disabilities had access to any form of education [4]. Confounding the above assertion is that in PICs there is very limited ‘verified’ data and information on people with a disability generally and especially so for children. This scarcity of recent data was noted in all four participating countries; Fiji had the most data followed by Samoa and Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu had very limited data on disability-inclusive education. This lack of data impacts on the clarity of the current status of disability-inclusive education which in turn affects making sense of what has been achieved to date and what is desired. This state of affairs can be attributed to a variety of reasons, such as multiple ministries and non-government stakeholders being involved in supporting people with disabilities, limited effort made to aggregate data, and cultural sensitivities (e.g., the level of acknowledgement of the existence of people with disabilities) [5].

The increasing demands made on shrinking education sector resources, particularly after the event of the Global Financial Crisis (GFC), makes prioritising activities within a limited resource envelope challenging. The competing demands made by the different government sectors and other agencies to support people with disabilities often results in fragmented, reactive and opportunistic policies and priorities. Considering the size of the PIC, and cognisant of economies of scale issues, realistic and sustainable policies are critical to build the commitment and empowerment of those involved with disability-inclusive education. There is a need to develop and adopt manageable interventions that may be scaled up gradually, interventions that are not just donor driven but also supported by the respective PIC governments and local communities. Currently, most activities associated with disability-inclusive education have been directed to advisory services and policy formulation, with very little being directed to the actual beneficiaries [6]. However, in the absence of a fully costed and

coherent policy framework, the funding is often compromised which results in de-motivation and a regression of the work already achieved.

The Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS), with support from Australian Aid, initiated a disability-inclusive education agenda within its member countries in 2005. At present, the PICs are at different stages of development with regard to the provisioning of disability-inclusive education [7]. Many of the PIC policy initiatives are still emerging and are in need of evidence-based research and implementation support. In many PICs, draft national policy for people with disabilities or national strategic framework have been developed but, as noted in the Universal Periodic Review report 2011 [8], little has been implemented to date. The very slow uptake of the disability-inclusive initiative requires evidence-based support for trialling innovative approaches to entice policy makers, service providers, and people with disabilities to act.

As noted above, a lack of availability of recent data, and information on successful and effective implementation approaches and outcomes, can hinder the development and implementation of disability-inclusion policies. This research report provides information on action research and capacity building activities carried out by the project in the participant countries: Fiji, Samoa, Vanuatu and Solomon Islands. The action research detailed here is intended to inform an understanding of disability-inclusive development policies, implementation capacity, and key stakeholders in the education sector in each respective country.

Some Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) countries such as Samoa have recently included disability data in their national census statistics, whereas other countries collect data from various sources including non-government organisations (NGOs), thus raising issues of coverage and reliability of the data. For meaningful policy development, planning, and resource allocation, access to reliable information and practice-based evidence is critical. Lack of high quality baseline data and real experience has always been an obstacle to aid effectiveness, as it confounds the ability of governments and donor partners to appropriately target children with disabilities [9]. This gap has been noted in reports and recommendations arising from development assistance programs and projects associated with education sector reform that have included disability-inclusive education [10].

Capacity building to date has been largely concentrated at the policy and strategy formulation with limited focus on the field staff and grassroots people associated with disability-inclusive education. The proposed action research in collaboration with the local school and community and national experts will focus on capacity building and the institutionalisation of interventions using a bottom-up approach. Theories such as work integrated learning, learning by doing, and experiential learning all emphasise the importance of a 'hands on' approach to capacity development. A learning by doing approach which is central to action research is perhaps more suited to the Pacific context which can relate to visual evidence rather than just focusing on abstract and hypothetical policy and strategy formulation discussions.

In light of the above, the Australian Development Research Award Scheme (ADRAS) provided funding as part of the ADRAS research study noted above, to design and implement the school and community-based action research to build local capacity in implementing disability-inclusive education in the four Pacific Island member countries (Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu). This is intended to complement the research study entitled *National Profiles of In-Country Capacity to Support Disability-Inclusive Education: Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu*. Developing

sustainable disability-inclusive educational policies and practices is particularly significant for these four countries because we know that young Pacific Islanders with disabilities constitute the population group most likely to be living in poverty today and in the future.

There is a CD accompanying this book which contains a suggested overview of capacity development modules (User Guide) for school communities to use when developing the knowledge and capacity of the community to engage in action research about inclusive practice. The CD also contains many documents and media files that were used in the original action research project that can be referred to or incorporated into the capacity development modules.



Section 2: Research methodology and design

2.1 Research overview

The purpose of the action research component of the ADRAS study was to implement disability-inclusive procedures and practices in two schools, preferably one secondary and one primary, in each of the four participant countries (Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu). Action research allows two key development opportunities. Firstly, it allows the research participants to deepen their knowledge of disability-inclusive education by experiencing several iterations of the chosen activities; each new iteration builds on lessons from the previous one. The second opportunity is the ability of action research to gradually expand its scope and increase stakeholder groups that are engaged in disability-inclusive education. The NRs work with staff, students and families from selected schools and communities to regions. This type of approach therefore has more success of eventually being institutionalised nationally. These two opportunities can assist to build the capacity of NRs and schools and community level practitioner-researchers in order to sustain disability-inclusive development. An overview of the research team and process is shown in Figure 2.1.

As noted in Figure 2.1, the core team of lead researchers were from QUT and USP, who between them have excellent track records in using action research as a tool for capacity development and applying the Index for Inclusion in developing countries. They established and administered the project, including negotiating with respective MoEs to NRs, and facilitated capacity building activities and research support for NRs. In Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, the NRs were staff of the MoE, while in Fiji, the NR was a retired head of the Hilton Early Intervention Centre who has excellent rapport with the Fiji MoE. The NR in Fiji was also the project research assistant located at USP. All NRs had knowledge and experience of the history and context of disability-inclusive education in their respective countries.

The NR from each participating country, in consultation with their respective MoE, selected appropriate schools to participate in the study. Given the time constraints of the project and the limited budget, convenience of access and readiness to be involved and having children with disabilities enrolled in the school were the main criteria for selection. NRs worked with head teachers/principals to establish action research teams within each school. In consultation with the head teachers/principals of selected schools, the school liaison person/s was identified and was trained by the NRs. The final level of the research involved participants from the school (teachers, children, and school management and community members) to ensure a holist understanding of the effect of the intervention. The NRs and school-based action research teams conducted the action

research to showcase how the Index for Inclusion may be applied to support disability-inclusive education within the school and nationally. Examples of some resources developed or used by NRs can be found in the accompanying resource CD and can be easily adjusted to other contexts.

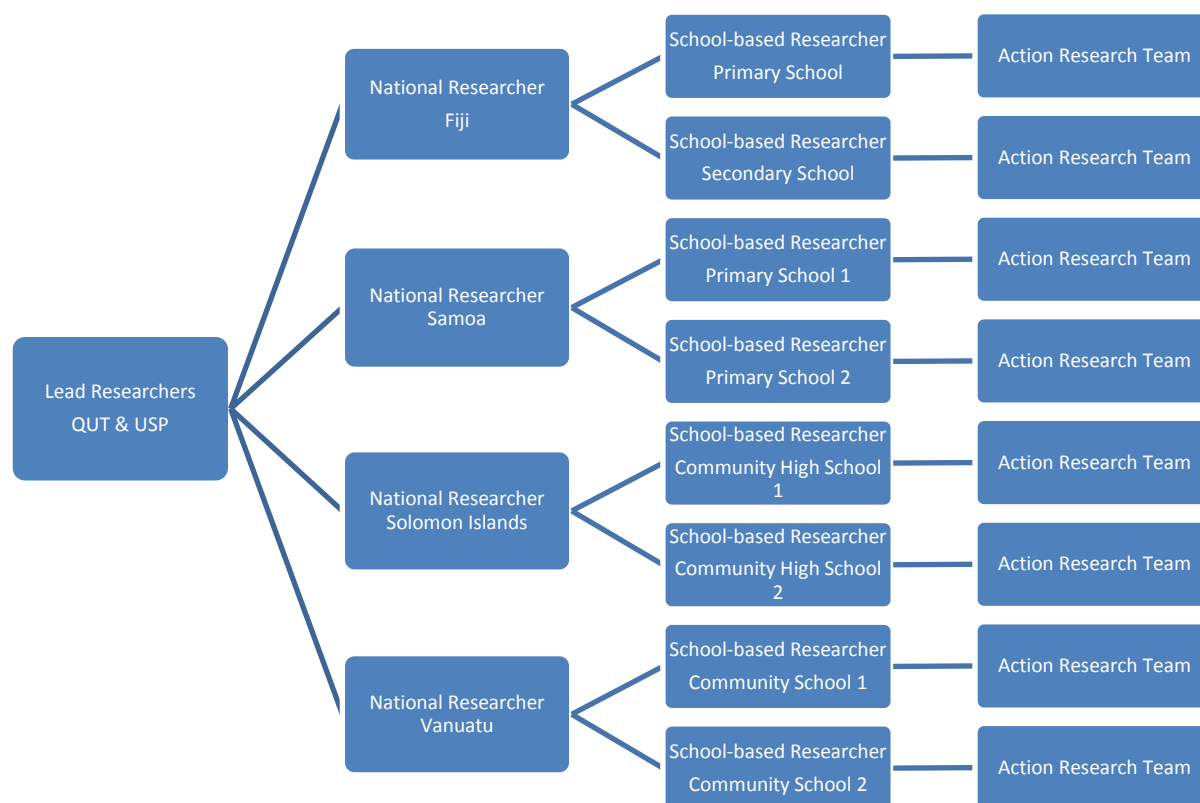


Figure 2.1. Process for action research

2.2 Methodological approach

The approach adopted in this study brings together action research methodology and the Index for Inclusion framework. An action research underpinned by social constructionist paradigm was adopted for this research project because the study focuses upon examining the processes by which key disability-inclusive education stakeholders in the participating countries have ‘come to describe the world and themselves’ [11]. We know that ‘effective change occurs when it happens from within’ [12] and that an organisation’s [community] culture shapes the energy of the people and the workplace to respond to change and reach goals [13]. The action research study reported here develops a social and cultural account of how individuals and communities across the four countries have come to understand, engage with, and approach disability-inclusive education. Included in this account are the voices of children with disabilities, their family members and their teachers in relation to current policies and practices as well as the interventions.

The action research utilised an explanatory case study design [14] where each of the four countries (Fiji, Samoa, Vanuatu and Solomon Islands) was treated as an individual case but, collectively, results

from both participating school communities within each country provide information that clarifies the complex, interconnected yet context-specific nature of disability-inclusive development in the participating countries. A synthesis of key findings from the national cases has been developed to identify common themes that may have implication beyond individual countries and inform regional stakeholders such as the Pacific Disability Forum (PDF).

As noted above, sampling was purposive to ensure easy and regular access for NRs and the willingness of schools and stakeholders to participate. Participation was voluntary for all stakeholders at the school level. However, the importance of participation by school communities including children cannot be understated in the context of small or developing countries [15] where the risk of marginalisation may occur at the macro level if the implementation of disability-inclusive education is dominated by foreign aid organisations or dictated by international policies which are not adapted for the local context [16].

Given the adoption of action research, data analysis was an iterative process driven by grounded theory, inductive data analysis, and idiographic (contextual) interpretations [17]. The data sets in all national action research comprised of a mix of school/classroom observations, documents and artefacts, and individual and focus group interviews. As in most action research, each cycle allowed deepening of the understanding of the selected issues (see Section 2.3 on research stages and timeline for more details).

Access and management of data including data security and ethics surrounding the use of data were governed by QUT's research ethics compliance. The QUT and USP research team also sought approval from the education ministries of the participating countries to conduct research in their respective countries. As part of the individual protocols of all four countries, formal letters were written to seek permission to conduct research and, where necessary, an application fee was also paid. Once the formal approval to conduct research was granted, the research team and the NRs were advised to liaise with appropriate divisions in the MoE directly to seek assistance with data collections.

2.2.1 Index for Inclusion

The Index for Inclusion [1] informed the study. The Index for Inclusion was originally designed as a framework for developing and supporting inclusive education in schools [18]. Developed by the Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education (CSIE) in the UK, the Index has been refined over the years to provide additional guidance on how schools can mobilise resources to overcome barriers to inclusion. The Index has been used successfully in a range of international contexts at various levels – from MoEs to individual schools – to support the review and development of disability-inclusive policy, culture and practice [19][20][21][22]. Lessons learned from those experiences were used to guide how to use the Index with action research procedures in the current study. The Index has been used in many countries (developed and developing) and cultures.

The Index for Inclusion has three overarching dimensions as illustrated in Figure 2.2.

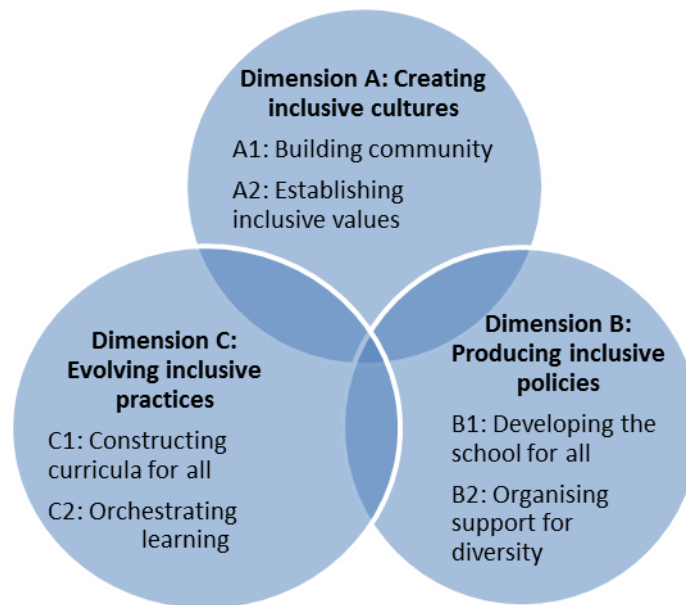


Figure 2.2. The dimensions of inclusion (Booth & Ainscow, 2011; see [1])

While the three dimensions are interrelated, one may choose to start with any dimension or combinations of the dimensions. The Index provides a framework which encourages schools and communities to review their individual context and associated issues to arrive at their own definitions and priorities based on their experiences. Each of the dimensions is supported by a list of indicators and questions (see Appendix 1) which may be used to: document current understandings of inclusion within the school; identify goals or priorities for change; and, monitor and evaluate the efficacy of strategies intended to promote inclusion [20]. The list of indicators and questions are suggestions and individuals/organisations choose and adopt appropriate indicators and questions that suit the school community context. The Index framework of inclusive values combines dimensions, indicators and questions to stimulate and support the review and development of action research cycles in schools. It is the process of engaging with students, parents and teachers that informs a commitment to the community values that inform an inclusive approach. It is important to emphasise that the Index for Inclusion is a framework to guide the research; it is not intended to be prescriptive or linear. To be able to use the Index effectively requires a good understanding of the underlying assumption that shaped the Index and confidence to implement at the school level. Hence the first phase of this action research approach was a capacity development workshop for the NRs.

This project adapted action research methodology suggested in the Index for Inclusion and allowed for the use of a cyclical approach that facilitates ongoing planning, implementation and critical reflection [23]. The cyclical approach and revisiting the indicators and questions allowed the stakeholders in the project to identify anticipated (and unanticipated) issues and outcomes, develop new interpretations of existing indicators, and be monitored over the course of the study. This perhaps represents the complexity of the evolving nature of the work in schools. Figure 2.3 illustrates five stages of the action research cycle [1] with each phase noting selected indicators and questions extracted from the Index for Inclusion. As noted above, each country identified indicators and questions appropriate to their respective situational requirement. The contents of the User Guide discussed in the accompanying resource CD are organised around the five stages of the action

research cycle noted in Figure 2.3. Seven capacity development modules are provided to assist school communities to develop understanding of the five action research stages.

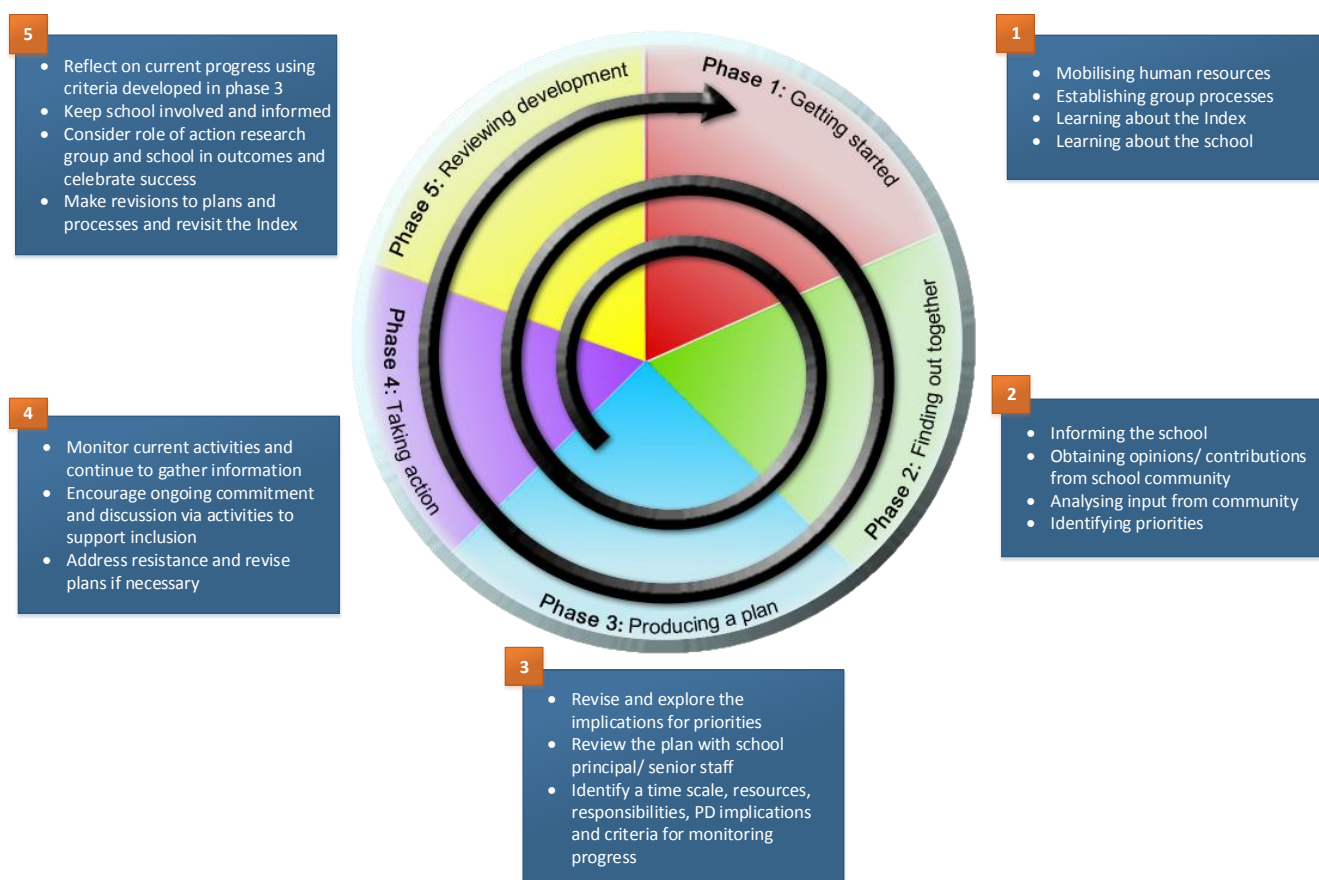


Figure 2.3. The Index for Inclusion/Action Research integrated framework

2.3 Research stages and timelines

As illustrated in Figure 2.3, the first phase of the action research cycle is *Getting started*; the indicators from the Index involve negotiating interest from stakeholders, mobilising human resources and becoming familiar with both the Index and school context in order to explore applications of the Index within the school. Booth and Ainscow [1] suggest the involvement of a ‘critical friend’, which in the case of this research was the NR and school liaison person. This is usually an individual who is aware of local issues surrounding inclusion who can assist with research and the Index process. The NRs were further supported by the core research team via a series of workshops and conference presentations and mentoring via email and Skype.

A copy of the format and content of the initial workshops are contained in the resource CD. The User Guide contains an outline of the workshops delivered in Module 1 – *Introduction to the Index for Inclusion*. Workshop participants were provided with the opportunity to explore and define disability-inclusive education; develop familiarity with the Index organisation; recognise issues with

adopting processes from other countries; and consider how the Index can be used for planning their research. It was important that participants engaged in open and honest discussion (Talanoa) about their understanding of inclusion for children with disabilities as this provided an important foundation for continued learning. Ideas and resources for facilitating this open and honest discussion is included on the resource CD in the Module 1 folder.

The second phase of the action research cycle, *Finding out together*, involves informing the school and wider community about the Index and seeking their opinions about the school. In this phase, indicators and questions focus on learning about the school. The focus is on the dimensions of culture, policy and practice. The indicators and questions in the Index can be used to frame the investigation about what is working well and what concerns students, parents and teachers have about supporting children with disabilities in their school community. This will lead to creating a plan, implementing the plan and reviewing and revising the plan in Phases 3-5. The adoption of a participatory approach is emphasised within the Index framework, suggesting that schools strive to ensure commitment and participation by all adults and children in the school. This tends to have a higher chance for achieving sustainable change. The first capacity development workshop held at USP helped the NRs to work together and share common issues faced by them in their respective countries. The knowledge and skills thus gained were transferred to school level activities.



Figure 2.4. Staff engaged in planning their research

Figure 2.4 shows a group of staff from a participant school using the Index to assist brainstorming what it means to act ethically within their local cultural and political contexts. Acting ethically when researching was a topic that was included in the capacity development Module 2 – *Introduction to action research*. The User Guide in the resource CD outlines this workshop and how answers to these questions were facilitated. Questions included: What are the likely consequences of this research?; How well do they fit with my (participants') own values and priorities?; If I were a participant, how would I want this research to be done?; and What changes might I want to make to feel comfortable as a participant? In addition to this important activity, participants in the workshop developed a

greater understanding of the action research cycle through discussion, watching videos, reading about other research projects and consulting the Index. Many examples of action research design were provided during the workshop as exemplars and are contained in the resource CD.

The third phase, *Producing a plan*, refers to creating a detailed plan to implement changes towards the priorities identified in the previous phase. It involves reviewing and revising priorities with the principal and senior staff, and creating a detailed plan including timelines, allocating resources and responsibilities, professional development implications for teachers and criteria for monitoring progress. The NRs received support from the core research team during the second workshop held at USP which focused on research methodology. It involved one-on-one consultation to consolidate and develop plans which included research questions and methods in addition to the features suggested by the Index.

The NRs were supported to implement the third phase with mentoring and through participation in the capacity development Module 3 – *Designing the study*. During this workshop, participants began to produce a plan that contained research questions, resources, activities and outcomes. They were supported to complete Program Logic plans to record their ideas. Figure 2.5 contains a photograph of an early draft of a Program Logic plan. There are a number of resources on the CD that workshop facilitators can refer to or use in their school community. During the Module 3 workshop, the NRs started to design questionnaires or other data collection methods. To do this they engaged in discussion, looked at each other's draft data collection tools and critically analysed other plans. Examples of documents created by NRs in this phase have been included in the CD in the Module 3 folder.

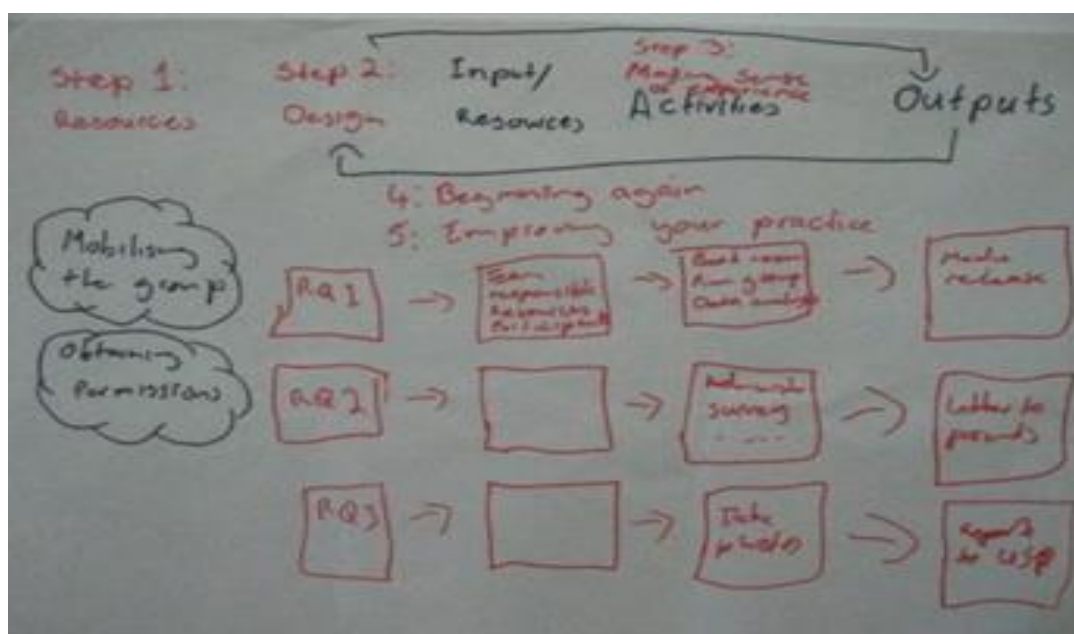


Figure 2.5. Draft research plan using Program Logic

The fourth phase, *Taking action*, details implementing the plan, monitoring school activities and continuing to collect information. Additional activities associated with this phase include facilitating

ongoing commitment and involvement from the school community, and addressing barriers and resistance to inclusion.



Figure 2.6. Collaborative storyboard created when sharing progress of research

Figure 2.6 contains a photograph illustrating a collaborative storyboard that was completed during the capacity development workshop linked to Module 4 – *Sharing progress: Data collection and analysis* in the resource CD. This module was designed and presented so that participants could share with and learn from each other about the progress of their research. The workshop was held six months after the initial workshops. Between workshops, NRs were visited by QUT staff or supported through online resources. The sharing progress (Module 4) was designed for NRs to develop knowledge of what and how data had been collected in schools, regions and countries related to disability-inclusive education; revisit the action research cycle and decide how to align progress with the cycle; and revisit the Index and discuss how they used the tools and strategies offered in the Index to direct action. To facilitate this sharing, a number of activities and resources were incorporated. These are listed in the User Guide and are contained in the Module 4 folder on the resource CD.

The fifth phase, *Reviewing development*, consists of reviewing and celebrating progress, reflecting on the work achieved via the Index, and considering next steps and future plans for the school. All NRs were invited to present their progress to the Pacific Disability Forum Regional Conference on Disability in February 2015. This gave them the opportunity to obtain independent feedback in a research forum, and reflect on their progress with their fellow NRs and the core research team.

For this phase, three capacity development modules were developed and presented for NRs and some of the school community members to support their Phase 5 research. These were Module 5 – *Making sense of data*, Module 6 – *Celebrating success*, and Module 7 – *Maintaining our progress*. These modules were important as they collated actions of the group, celebrated their progress, and prepared the participants for the next cycle of research. Figure 2.7 contains a photograph of the

recording of progress of action research. The workshop emphasised the increased capacity for action research within and across the four participating countries.



Figure 2.7. Celebrating success through the sharing and recording of practice

Table 2.1 contains the content that was presented over the three modules to make sense of data, celebrate progress and plan future activities. Continued involvement of the whole school community was encouraged and emphasised. Ideas, activities and resources that were used in the workshops can be used in different contexts to facilitate this sharing and celebration and are outlined in the User Guide and contained on the CD.

Table 2.1. Content of Phase 5 Capacity Development modules

Module	Content
5 – Making sense of data	Determine ways in which data collected can be collated and analysed. Determine ways in which data such as photos, drawings and documents can be collated and analysed. Collaboratively develop data collection tools that ensure the voices of children are heard.
6 – Celebrating progress	Harvest and share progress generally and develop ideas for communicating the process and findings of research at the national and international level. Encouraging schools to celebrate progress at the local level and determine what is appropriate and do-able.
7 – Maintaining our progress	Create ideas for maintaining our progress and what we need to maintain our progress. Plan future actions including mentoring, resources and collaboration.

2.4 Action research cycles

During the life of the ADRAS project, two cycles of action research were achieved. The research project focused on capacity building of the NRs (action research cycle 1) which happened through a mix of face-to-face workshops held at USP and electronic communications. The second action research cycle was conducted in schools (action research cycle 2). In the first action research cycle at the project level, the lead researchers identified a NR for each participant country (see Section 2.1). While the NRs had an understanding of disability-inclusive education via their roles in their respective education ministries or experience in teaching students with disabilities, they were not familiar with the Index for Inclusion and the action research methodology. The lead researchers conducted two workshops throughout the life of the research to interact with and build capacity of the NRs to implement the Index for Inclusion. The first workshop in February 2014 introduced NRs to the project, and covered topics such as NR roles and responsibilities, assumption and underlying theoretical basis of the Index for Inclusion, and action research. This workshop prepared NRs for the first two phases of the Index. The second workshop in November 2014 provided NRs and other participants with intensive research support, including help with developing research plans and strategies for data analysis. This workshop was timed to support the NRs in analysing the data they had collected within the school community and formulating a detailed plan, which was aligned to Phases 3 and 4 of the Index. NRs were also provided with some materials and resources at the workshops, which are included on the resource CD. More specific details on the context and outcomes of these workshops are illustrated in the country case study reports in Sections 3-6 and also in the resource CD accompanying this publication.

The project has a strong focus on capacity building in the first action research cycle, which served two purposes: a) to build the knowledge and skills of the NRs and action research teams, and b) to research ways to strengthen sustainability of disability-inclusive education projects. Figure 2.3 illustrates how action research encourages revisiting of issues through a cyclic process. The gradual expansion of the cycles illustrates how the action research, in this particular case, through each cycle expanded the stakeholders—cycle 1 was for NRs and cycle 2 was NR plus the school level stakeholders. The NRs played a pivotal role in the project in knowledge transfer to support the implementation of the Index for Inclusion process. They facilitated workshops at the school level to address identified priorities, with support from lead researchers from QUT and USP. To ensure a collaborative mode of working, the NR served as a ‘critical friend’ (see Section 2.3) and helped schools to build capacity and develop ongoing relationships among the education leaders, university partners, school staff, children with disabilities and their families. This liaison and continuous support contributed to the sustainability of disability-inclusive education policy and practices in the participating countries.

Sustainable outcomes at national and regional levels are anticipated to occur as a result of capacity building and research activities in the first and second action research cycles. At a national level, it is anticipated NRs will maintain ongoing relationships with all members of the research team to sustain disability-inclusive development in school communities within their regions. Furthermore, school data may be used to inform country priorities such as the development and implementation of disability-inclusive education policies, or to inform teacher training or education practices in other

schools. On a regional level, the core research team and NRs prepared and disseminated findings and outcomes at the 2015 PDF conference [24].

The subsequent four sections outline case studies from the disability-inclusive action research projects for each of the four participating PICs – Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.



Section 3: Action research profile of Fiji

3.1 Background and context

Two schools were selected based on their proximity to USP, multicultural student population and reputation for embracing inclusion¹. These schools were a primary school (PS)² in Suva, and a secondary school (SS) in Nasinu. Suva, the capital city, and the nearby town of Nasinu have populations of 85,691 and 87,446 respectively [25]. Nasinu has a large Indian settlement comprising 40% of the town's population, while 54% identify as iTaukei. Whereas in Suva, nearly two thirds (64%) of the population is iTaukei and 30% are Indian. The remaining minorities in each region belong to a mix of other ethnic groups such as Chinese, European, Rotuman and other Pacific Islanders. Just over seventy percent (72%) of the Suva population is Christian, compared to 64% of Nasinu's citizens. Among the Indian community, 21% of people living in Suva identify as Hindu, while an additional 3.7% identify as Muslims. By contrast, 29% of Nasinu residents belong to the Hindu religion, and 6% identify as Muslims. Poverty and unemployment are significant issues in Suva and the neighbouring towns. Sixty percent of squatters in the country (49,410 people) live in the Suva-Nausori corridor where SS is located [26]. Significant economic hardship serves as a barrier to education for children, resulting in high drop-out rates and subsequent vicious circles of unemployment.

Both PS and SS were identified by the NR in consultation with the Ministry of Education, National Heritage, Culture and Arts (MOENHCA) as mainstream inclusive schools. PS is a Hindu faith (Arya Samaj) based primary school 3km from Suva. The school has a multiracial student population including many European students, who are presumably the children of expatriates. Students are of diverse levels of ability, and are well disciplined. Although it is very challenging to have children with special needs in regular classes, all staff are very supportive of each other and parents take a keen interest in their child's school work. The school observes Hindu religious values and conducts regular prayers and recites religious verses. All students are required to participate in the religious practices regardless of their own faith, which is a source of tension for some students and families.

SS is a Muslim faith based secondary college in Nasinu which is 12km out of Suva. Religion is not a focal point of the school ethos and SS has a multi-religious practice. However, the school does not include music as one of the teaching and learning components and students are not provided with any opportunities for singing or dancing due to their Muslim faith. Less than 20% of the student

¹ Personal communication with Subhas and Rukh Mani, 1st October 2014

² All participating schools in the case studies have been de-identified

population is Muslim and the majority of students are iTaukei (80%). The school is in a low socioeconomic area with a high crime rate. The school has an academic and assessment focus, with limited emphasis on athletics. However, individual classes have their sports time once a week. The school participates in competitions organised by MOENHCA, USP and other business houses that coordinates inter-competition. Table 3.1 presents a summary of key demographic indicators to help give an appreciation of the context of the two participating schools.

Table 3.1. Demographic data for participating schools

Variable	Primary School (PS)	Secondary School (SS)
Number of students	755	396
Number of staff	27	30 (26 teaching)
Number of CWD*	81 (50% learning difficulty, other disabilities include ADD, visual and hearing impairments)	26 (50% learning difficulty)
Class configuration	Three streams of classes with 35-40 students	Double stream with 30-35 students

*CWD – Children with disabilities

The principal of PS is very supportive of disability-inclusive education, and the school has a good reputation for the inclusion of children with disabilities. This is largely due to leadership initiatives by the principal, who has encouraged teachers to make accommodations for children with special needs in the classroom. While some teachers have limited experience in teaching children with special needs, parents continue to bring their children with disabilities to the school probably because of the conducive environment created by the school leadership. Particular areas of need to implement disability-inclusive education identified by the principal and head teacher include school development plans and school/classroom design. One of the issues noted during the site visit was that while the school building was double story, it did not have any wheelchair ramps. Such building design presented an accessibility challenge for everyone, and more so for individuals with visual or mobility impairments. The school has reviewed the possibility of building a ramp; however, it was found to be very costly and the school committee was unable to commit to that goal. While the school leaders of PS may have been willing to build a ramp, schools are governed by a committee which includes community members and are also accountable to MOENHCA and other stakeholders [27]. Justifying such high costs for building a ramp to benefit a small number of students with disabilities is difficult, even though building access may be mandated by disability policy. At SS, the principal was very dedicated to changing social views of people with disabilities, and noted a large gap between policy and implementation with respect to inclusion and a commitment to address this. The school participates in transitioning students from special schools to mainstream schools and currently has included two students with low vision from the Fiji School for the Blind (FSB). However, the school principal was transferred at the end of 2014, with a new principal commencing in 2015. The change in leadership at SS caused disruption to research work for this project. Along with the principal, some other teachers who were in the reference group for the school-based action research project were also transferred during the life of the research project which slowed progress.

3.2 Phase 1: Getting started

As noted in Figure 2.3, this phase involved establishing and empowering the school action research teams. The NR conducted a workshop to provide an overview of the action research process to be undertaken at both schools. The school level research team jointly developed a work plan which is shown in Figure 3.1. The activities are described in detail in the subsequent sections of this chapter.

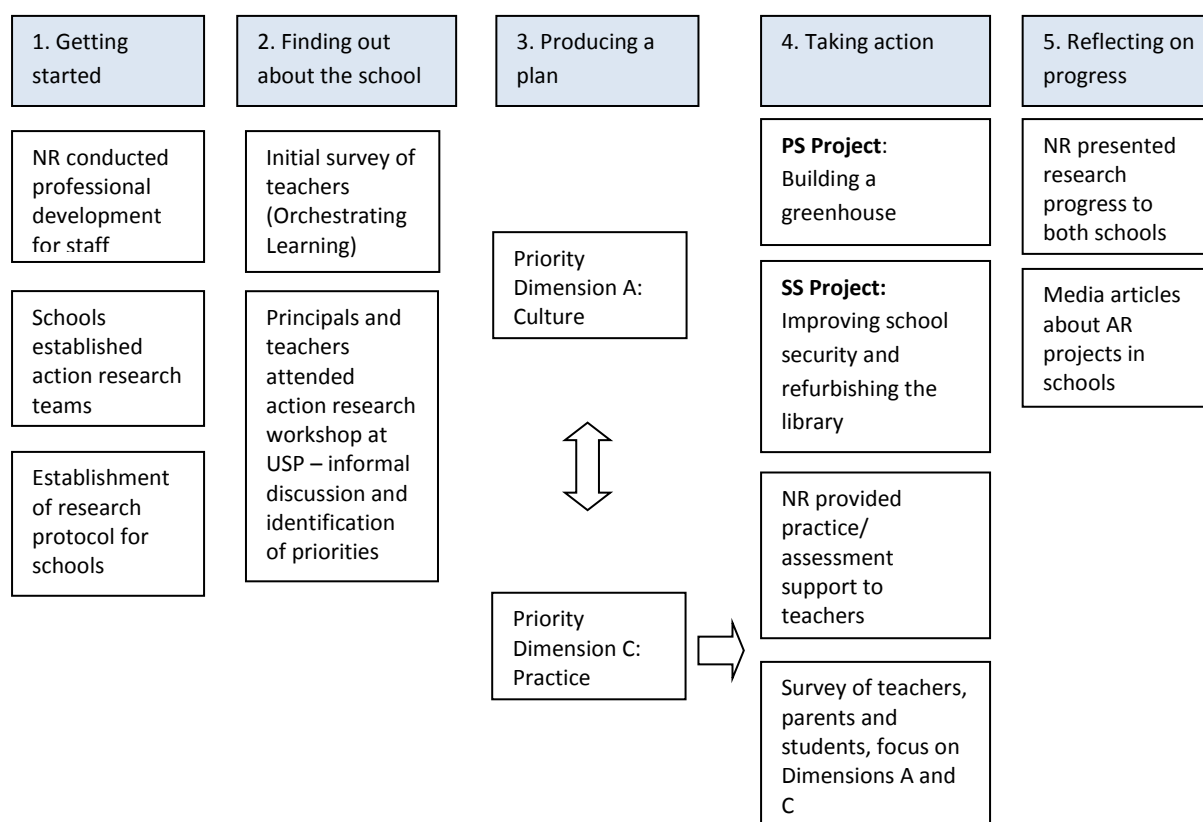


Figure 3.1. Overview of action research activities at the schools

Since action research is an iterative process, the NR provided regular professional development sessions on the ADRAS research project, the Index for Inclusion, and action research to continuously reinforce the purpose and roles of people involved in the project. However, the NR had to repeat these sessions in early 2015 at SS due to high staff turnover within the school level action research group. The new members at SS were briefed on the research progress to date as well as research plans for 2015.

The action research team at SS included students with and without disabilities, parents, four teachers and a school administrator. At PS, the action research team included an administrator, teachers and other school staff. Despite the advice of the NR to include parents in the action research team, this was never organised.

Key research activities such as planning for survey distribution and research projects were achieved via professional development sessions. The NR provided a professional development session on

distributing the information and consent sheets for data collection, and administering the surveys. Significant time was spent by the NR to build teacher capacity in the areas of disability-inclusive education. The NR maintained frequent contact and visitations to both schools to facilitate action research and build capacity in the school.

3.3 Phase 2: Finding out about the school

As shown in Figure 3.1, there were two major activities undertaken to develop a set of priorities for disability-inclusive school development and to gather information from the school community. These activities included an Orchestrating Learning Survey of school teachers to gather information about inclusive teaching practices, and the participation of principals and teachers at the QUT and USP action research workshop.

3.3.1 Teacher's voice

The Orchestrating Learning Survey was sourced from the 3rd edition of the Index for Inclusion and administered to all teachers in both schools. A total of 11 out of 22 teachers at PS and 14 out of 19 teachers from SS completed the survey, constituting response rates of 50% and 74% respectively.

Almost all teachers at PS and SS indicated positive views of general teaching practices in their school. A minority of teachers at both schools either disagreed with, or were uncertain about, several statements in the Orchestrating Learning Survey. These were: 'Assessments encourage the achievements of all children', 'Activities outside formal lessons are made available for all children' and 'Resources in the locality of the school are known and used'. In addition, there were some less favourable responses to the statement 'Children are actively involved in their own learning' at SS. These findings suggest that facilitating non-academic activities and involving the community were problematic at both schools, and that some teachers may perceive a need for improvements in child centred learning and assessment. Indeed, the NR noted that SS was very focused on academic achievement, which may account for these findings.

To clarify these findings, teachers were asked to report on the three things they liked best about learning at their school, and the three things that they would most like to change about learning at the school in an open comment format at the end of the survey. Teachers at both schools identified student diversity in terms of race and ability groups as a positive aspect of the learning environment at PS, and noted that children were generally well behaved. Teachers at SS identified mutual support amongst students and provision of equal opportunities as another positive aspect of the learning environment, while teachers at PS noted that staff were supportive of one another and that parents took an interest in children's school work.

Teachers from both schools indicated that a challenge faced in their role was to enhance student learning at their school, while teachers at SS specifically identified working with minimal resources as not an impediment to enhancing learning outcomes. Large class sizes and high volumes of

administration were identified as key areas where change was desired for both schools. Consistent with survey responses, teachers identified more extracurricular activities such as sports as something they would like to see in their schools. More resources to support disability-inclusive education were desired by teachers from both schools, especially training and development in strategies for teaching children who had disabilities. Teachers at SS further clarified a need for parent involvement, library resources, technology and multimedia. By contrast, teachers at PS reported that more teacher aides would benefit the learning environment as children with special needs require more attention.

While both schools indicated that more expertise and resources were required to facilitate the education of children in general, and particularly those with special education needs, desired responses to this issue varied between the schools. Teachers at SS, a secondary school, indicated a desire for more parental involvement, and named specific learning resources such as computers, multimedia and libraries. As noted above, the research project experienced difficulty engaging parents in action research, which corroborates the perceived need for greater parent involvement. Availability of more diverse learning resources may also help children to become more involved in their own learning and enable alternative forms of assessment, which were identified as possible weaknesses in the learning environment in the Orchestrating Learning Survey of school teachers. By contrast, PS, a primary school, was less specific about the kinds of resources that they required, and stated a need for teacher aides due to students with special needs taking up teachers' time. This may reflect the developmental stages of the children at the school, with teachers possibly more concerned about the social and behavioural aspects of primary school children's needs, rather than their academic needs.

3.3.2 School governance and leadership

As noted earlier, the principal³ of SS observed a large gap between inclusive education policy and practice in Fiji, and that implementation was a lengthy process, with students being transitioned out of special schools and into inclusive regular schools. Within her own school, she had campaigned to change school culture, creating disability awareness and changing the mindsets of staff members and parents, and cutting out discrimination and barriers to inclusion. She encouraged compassion, respect and dignity, and spoke to children with disabilities to evaluate, assess and focus on what they can do. However, she indicated that teaching children with special needs was challenging at SS due to large class sizes of 45-50 students. Therefore, teacher aides were viewed as a potential solution to assist with inclusive education for children with disabilities. The action research at SS indicated that bridging the gap between policy and practice was viewed as a significant challenge.

The principal of PS noted that the school was well known as an inclusive school for children with disabilities. Similar to the principal at SS, he was active in spreading messages about disability and inclusion to teachers. He gave an example of a child with a physical disability who was given a mattress to rest on in class as he was unable to sit at a desk. The child was subsequently the top academic achiever in his class. The deputy principal was leading the action research committee, and

³ The principal at SS was transferred in early 2015

elected to focus on orchestrating learning and differing ways of teaching and learning. The key study aim identified by PS by the conclusion of the workshop was 'To plan and design lessons in order to include all learners in learning and teaching regardless of their abilities'.

3.4 Phase 3: Producing a plan

Both schools focused on Dimension A and C of the Index: Creating Inclusive Cultures and Evolving Inclusive Practices respectively (See Figure 3.1). The action research team decided that it was critical to address culture to create a school environment where inclusive practices could take place. Therefore, the subsequent action research activities were designed to create an inclusive culture intended to facilitate more inclusive practices. At PS, this was achieved via encouraging all children to participate in building a greenhouse. The activities at SS involved improvements to the school's infrastructure which were deemed necessary to create a safer and more accessible learning environment.

3.4.1 Dimension A: Creating inclusive cultures

Activities relating to creating inclusive cultures were documented via photographs and interviews or surveys with teachers, parents, and students. Climate change and caring for the school environment was a current focus within PS, and the action research team intended to build a greenhouse for the school community. The purpose of this activity was to create a project in which all students could participate and take responsibility for, which is intended to promote social inclusion for children with disabilities. This activity matched several indicators from the Index dimension of A1: Building community: Everyone is welcomed, staff co-operate, children help each other, and staff and children respect one another. In addition, the project also contributed to some indicators from Dimension A2: Establishing inclusive values: Inclusion is viewed as increasing participation for all, and the school encourages respect for the integrity of planet Earth. Climate change and caring for the school environment was a current focus within the PS school curriculum, so the greenhouse also had the potential to enrich disability-inclusive practices via students taking a more active and participatory role in their learning.

The action research group undertook two school refurbishment projects at SS. The first involved painting the interior of the library and creating signs to promote learning and inclusion such as 'Please maintain silence' and 'I like to learn with children with special needs and treat them equally as everyone'. This activity also involved reorganising the resource materials. Teachers, parents and students as part of the action research group contributed to make this activity a success. This activity therefore reflected the Index dimensions of A1: Building community: Staff co-operate, children help each other, staff and parents/carers collaborate; and A2: Establishing inclusive values: The school develops shared inclusive values, and inclusion is viewed as increasing participation for all. Refurbishment of the library also contributed to Dimension C2: Orchestrating learning via the indicator, resources in the locality of the school are known and used. The second project involved

upgrading school security. This activity contributes to Dimension A2: Establishing inclusive values: The school promotes non-violent interactions and resolutions to disputes.

3.4.2 Dimension C: Evolving inclusive practices

Findings from Phase 2 of the project indicated that the action research teams and teachers at both schools saw a real need to improve the quality of disability-inclusive teaching and to provide resources to support children who had disabilities. Evolving inclusive practices was addressed in two ways at the schools (see Figure 3.1). First, the NR provided ongoing assistance to teachers in supporting children with disabilities in the classroom. While professional development is viewed as a policy indicator in the Index (see Dimension B2: Organising support for diversity), the line between researcher/educator and teacher was somewhat blurred for the NR as she was a retired inclusive education (IE) teacher who knew several staff at both schools via her teaching career. Therefore, in this role she acted as a teacher rather than researcher, and she contributed to Orchestrating learning (C2) via the indicators ‘Staff plan, teach and review together’ and ‘Teaching assistants support the learning and participation of all children’. The NR conducted interviews with teachers and parents. These interviews were intended to capture the impact (or potential impact) of the action research projects on disability-inclusive practices, as well as to triangulate responses to the teacher surveys administered at Phase 2 of the project. Surveys were also conducted with students, parents and teachers. The information gathered in the interviews and from the surveys provided more in-depth information to support future planning.

3.5 Phase 4: Taking action

3.5.1 Progress on action research projects (Dimension A: Creating inclusive cultures)

At PS, students and teachers commenced planting pot plants with a view to creating a greenhouse/fernery for the students to take care of as part of a roster—working together with children with disabilities. The teachers believed that this was an appropriate way to include all students in a school improvement project.



The school security and library projects have been completed at SS. Teachers and students have commented on the enhanced safety of the school. For example, a teacher remarked, ‘we feel good and that children’s belongings will be safe and now we do not have to worry too much about our valuable items being stolen’, while a student stated ‘It is good to have burglar bars, now that the thieves won’t take our bags and mobiles when we are out playing or in the library’.

Members of the action research group and school students, including two with visual impairments, painted the interior of the library. The visually impaired students indicated that ‘we have made the library look very clean and it is a good feeling to be in the library to study’ and ‘it’s great feeling to have a nice library and we all were happy to work together to clean and put books in order to help the librarian’. The librarian also indicated that ‘we have all worked together to make the library look a peaceful and pleasant place to study and learn’. The librarian also said that some senior students helped her to design a notice sign stating ‘Please maintain silence’.



In interviews conducted by the NR, a teacher commented that ‘this school involves children with disabilities and provides more opportunities to participate in most activities’. The three parents interviewed echoed this

sentiment with the following statements: ‘I am so happy that your team has chosen SS for the ADRAS Research where my two boys are schooling. This is a good model of a disability-inclusive school and my child is treated same as his other twin brother and he receives all the support from



the teachers and his friends’ (parent of a visually impaired student); ‘This school is a great disability-inclusive school and my child participates in all activities and good culture is invested upon him by the good role model of the teachers in this school’ (parent of a visually impaired student). Another parent of a child with a disability noted, ‘I am happy that my child is learning with special students and all is recognized and respected the same. The new look of the library will be a better environment for students learning’.

3.5.2 Professional development and interviews (Dimension C: Evolving inclusive practices)

The teachers at both schools indicated a high demand for capacity building in implementing disability-inclusive education. As a result of this need, the NR shared her experiences gained from her background in special and inclusive education, and her expertise as a teacher. She provided a professional development session about inclusive education for teachers from both schools and individual support to teachers in assessing and educating students with disabilities at PS. She estimated that approximately 50% of her time at PS was used for providing capacity building to teachers. The teachers who have been involved in these professional development activities should be supported to share their learning with other teachers in the school.

At PS, the majority of teachers indicated a high level of enthusiasm to learn about special needs and to help children with disabilities in their classrooms. Parents also sought out PS as a good school for children with special needs. Teachers were also very interested in the ADRAS project and its outcomes, and asked questions such as ‘What will our project do after the research?’, ‘Will the project assist teachers to be better equipped to teach children with special needs in their classes?’

and ‘Will there be any scholarships for teachers to do tertiary training in special education?’ The teachers are not knowledgeable of disabilities or educational issues associated with disability, and are not qualified to teach children with special needs. Many teachers were, however, willing to assist students with disabilities, and invited the NR into the classroom to assist with the assessment and teaching of students with disabilities. This is a good example of how a critical friend in the Index for Inclusion approach can support the action research and learning in a school.

3.5.3 Surveys of teachers, parents and students (Dimension A: Creating inclusive cultures and Dimension C: Evolving inclusive practices)

A sample of students and parents/caregivers from both schools completed the surveys entitled ‘My School’ and ‘My Child’s School’ respectively, sourced from the 3rd version of the Index. Both of the surveys focused on Dimension A of the Index.

Student responses to the ‘My School’ survey are shown in Figure 3.2. It was encouraging to note that the majority of students indicated that they usually looked forward to coming to school, and that the teachers took an interest in their learning and helped them when needed. Students from PS generally gave less positive responses than students from SS, which may reflect differences in the management of primary and secondary aged children, or the more strictly enforced religious ethos at PS. However, there were several statements which indicated possible challenges in both schools. Many students either disagreed with these statements, or indicated uncertainty (neither agreed nor disagreed, or needed more information).

In some cases, less favourable responses from students reflected issues previously noted in the action research project. These statements were ‘I am involved in extracurricular activities’ and ‘The school and playground are safe and attractive’. Responses to these statements are consistent with issues noted by teachers in the Orchestrating Learning Survey, and observations by the NR. For instance, teachers noted limited resources and a lack of non-academic activities available to students, while the NR noted safety issues with the infrastructure at both schools.

However, student responses highlighted potential issues in both schools that were concerning with respect to inclusion. These statements were ‘Teachers and adults do not look down on children because of their background’, ‘I think teachers are fair when they praise a child’, and ‘The school has a good system for supporting children when they have problems’. Responses indicated that some students perceived unfair treatment with respect to children being either praised or ‘looked down on’, while other students may not have adequate support. These responses may reflect the socioeconomic or ethnic diversity of the student population and possible tensions that arise due to the religious ethos of the schools. The lack of support may reflect limitations in resources, which was previously expressed by teachers who identified a need for more training, teacher aides and learning resources in the Orchestrating Learning Survey and interviews with the NR.

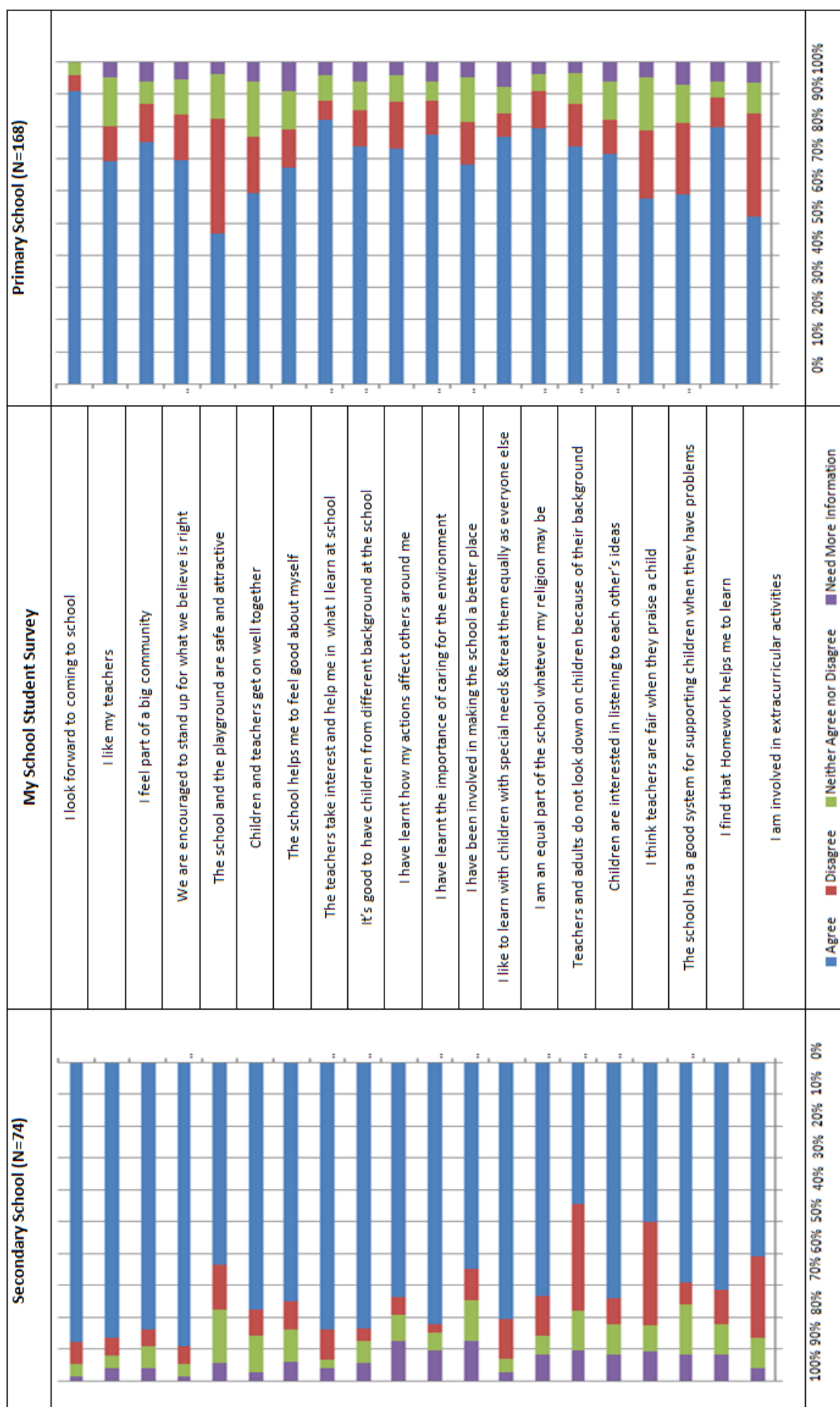


Figure 3.2. Student responses to the 'My School' student survey

Due to the small number of parents/carers who responded to the survey, there were too few cases to aggregate the data. Only 10 parents/carers from PS and 16 parents/carers from SS completed the surveys. The majority of parents/carers from both schools indicated positive views of the school community and inclusive values, represented by questions such as 'I feel part of the student community' and 'My child usually looks forward to coming to school'.

Parental responses at SS did not reflect any of the student concerns about the school, however there were two exceptions. Four parents disagreed with the statement 'Everyone respects the school culture' and seven parents disagreed with the statement 'Inclusion is viewed as increasing participation for all'. By contrast, parental responses from PS were consistent with student concerns about the school and playground facilities and fairness in praising a child, as only six parents agreed with these statements. The same number of parents agreed with the statement 'Children with special needs are accepted and respected at school', which may indicate challenges in providing appropriate support to these students. An additional concern from parents at PS was reflected by a majority disagreeing with the statement 'The school keeps me well informed about what is going on'.

Aside from the religious ethos of the schools and student diversity discussed above, responses of parents and students may also reflect an academic focus within the school. These factors may have had a stronger impact at PS, due to observation of Hindu practices in daily school life and the high value placed on education by Fijian Indians. Therefore, students with special needs, or parents/carers of children with special needs, may perceive lower levels of support in such a school environment. However, students and parents indicated an enjoyment of school, and that teachers were helpful and caring.

The approach to the teacher survey differed, as the NR consulted with the teachers from each school to construct a questionnaire from the Index for Inclusion that was most applicable in the two school settings. The questionnaire included ten indicators each from Dimension A1: Building community and Dimension A2: Establishing inclusive values, and 5 indicators each from Dimension C1: Constructing curricular for all and Dimension C2: Orchestrating learning. A total of 30 teachers from SS and 25 teachers from PS completed the survey, which indicated response rates of 93% and 100% respectively based on staff numbers listed in Table 3.1.

Teacher responses to the questions about creating inclusive cultures are shown in Table 3.2. Responses from SS indicated a very positive school culture, as few teachers disagreed with any of the building community or establishing inclusive values items. Teachers at PS also gave positive responses to these questions, however there was greater uncertainty about building community, while up to a quarter of teachers disagreed with some statements in the establishing inclusive values section. These items included 'Children are well prepared for moving to other settings', 'The school encourages respect for all human rights', 'Teaching and learning fairly support all children's learning'. These responses may reflect the significant difficulties faced by teachers at PS in accommodating students with special needs, which was evident in the Orchestrating Learning Survey, and discussions and interviews between teachers and the NR at the school.

Although responses to the Creating Inclusive Cultures questions were unanimously positive for teachers from SS, responses from students and parents indicate significant ambivalence or

disagreement with some aspects of school culture. Responses to questions about culture were generally less positive amongst teachers, parents and students at PS.

Table 3.2. Teacher responses to Dimension A: Creating inclusive cultures questionnaire items

<i>Dimension A - Creating inclusive cultures</i>	Secondary School (SS) (N = 30)				Primary School (PS) (N = 25)			
	Agr	Dis	NAND	NMI	Agr	Dis	NAND	NMI
<i>A1 Building community</i>								
Everyone is welcomed	30				22	1	1	
Staff cooperate	28	1	1		17	4	4	
Children help each other	30				16	2	5	2
Staff and children respect each other	30				19	4	2	
Staff and parents/carers collaborate	29		1		15	2	6	2
Staff and governors work well	30				13	3	8	1
The school is a model of democratic citizenship	26	2	1		10	3	8	1
Adults and children are responsive to a variety of ways of being a gender	30				20	2	3	
The school and local community develop each other	30				20	2	3	
Staff link what happens in school to children's lives at home	30				24	1		
<i>A2 Establishing inclusive values</i>								
The school develops shared inclusive values	29				21	3	1	
The school encourages respect for all human rights	27	1			15	6	3	1
Inclusive is viewed as increasing participation for all	30				19	4	2	
The school contributes to the health of children and adults	27				20	3	1	1
Children are well prepared for moving to other settings	29	1			15	6	3	1
Teaching and learning fairly support all children's learning	30				13	7	4	1
Expectations are high for all children	29	1			18	5	2	
Children are valued equally	28	1			20	3	1	1
The school encourages children and adults to feel good about themselves	26	3			19	2	3	1
The school counters all forms of discrimination	27	2			21	2	2	

Note: Agr – Agree; Dis – Disagree; NAND – Neither Agree nor Disagree; NMI – Need More Information

Responses to the Evolving Inclusive Practices survey are displayed in Table 3.3. There was a contrast between the schools in reported curricular activities. In particular, few teachers from SS indicated that students engaged with or created literature, arts and music activities, while similarly low levels of learning about ethics, power and government was noted by teachers at PS. Teacher responses likely reflect differences between primary and secondary curricula activities.

Table 3.3. Teacher responses to Dimension C: Evolving inclusive practices questionnaire items

<i>Dimension C – Evolving inclusive practices</i>	Secondary School (SS) (N = 30)				Primary School (PS) (N = 25)			
	Agr	Dis	NAND	NMI	Agr	Dis	NAND	NMI
<i>Constructing curricular for all</i>								
Children investigate importance of water	27	1	1		16	4	3	2
Children learn about health and relationship	21	2	2	2	14	6	3	2
Children study life on earth	27	1	2		13	4	4	4
Children engage with and create literature, arts and music	8	10	7	2	25			
Children learn about ethics, power and government	26	2	4	1	8	12	5	
<i>Orchestrating learning</i>								
Learning activities are planned with all children in mind	26	1	2	1	20	2	1	
Children are encouraged to be confident critical thinkers	24	2	4		20	3	1	1
Children are actively involved in their own learning	27		2	1	18	5	2	
Staff develop shared resources to support learning	28	1	1		18	4	3	
Activities outside formal lessons are made available for all children	23	3	3	1	22	3		

Note: Agr – Agree; Dis – Disagree; NAND – Neither Agree nor Disagree; NMI – Need More Information

Teachers at both schools indicated that learning activities were planned with all children in mind, and there appeared to be unique strengths at each school with respect to orchestrating learning. At SS, teachers agreed that staff developed shared resources to support learning, and that children were actively involved in their own learning. The latter statement was viewed unfavourably by some teachers in the previous Orchestrating Learning Survey, which suggests that teachers perceived an improvement in this area. Teachers at PS noted that activities outside formal lessons were available to children, which may be due to the construction of the greenhouse. Responses to the Dimension C questions were less favourable amongst PS compared to SS teachers, which may reflect the less positive views of inclusive culture at the school held by teachers, parents and students.

As discussed previously, the religious ethos and academic focus of the schools may have influenced student and parent/caregiver's views of school culture, which were sometimes negative. These factors are likely to have influenced teacher responses to the questionnaires as well. For example, fewer artistic and musical activities at SS may reflect restrictions on certain forms of dance within the Muslim religion, while daily Hindu prayers at PS might be viewed as impinging on human rights by some teachers. The strong academic focus of both schools, particularly PS as it is in a higher socioeconomic area, may contribute to teacher pressure to focus on the academic achievement of children over the diverse needs of children. At PS, there also appeared to be more limited collaboration between the school and parents or governors.

3.6 Phase 5: Reflecting on progress

The action research process involved reflection as an integrated part of the on-going work. Reflection by the action research team demonstrated several positive changes in each school which indicates progress towards appreciating what is involved in disability-inclusive education. For example, the school-based projects of building a greenhouse and refurbishing the library included not just children with disabilities but also the school community which will strengthen future disability-inclusive practices and student learning. The Index for Inclusion approach creates opportunities for people in a school community to work together and this supports greater respect for all. There have also been some steps towards advancing disability-inclusive practices via the involvement of the NR in professional development activities, and clarification of teacher and school capacity needs. These include the need for training to upgrade knowledge and skills of the teachers in teaching students with special needs in an inclusive setting; improving teacher support in the classroom setting via reduced class sizes or additional support workers; and the provision of teaching and sporting resources. Student, parent/caregiver and teacher surveys collected at the time of writing largely confirmed these needs, and raised some additional issues around building community and inclusive values within the schools. Of note, child and parent responses indicated some possible challenges regarding differential treatment of students, which may be based on socioeconomic status, ethnicity or special needs. These findings highlight a need for ongoing exploration of culture and practice involving the voices of students, parent/caregivers and teachers.

The NR noted that competing priorities in the school and external obligations to MOENHCA and other stakeholders seemed to impede research, which was indicated in absences of key members of the action research team at meetings, and delays in distributing consent forms and surveys for the final questionnaires at PS. All research activities had to be conducted outside of school hours as per strict instruction by MOENHCA, and several teachers were unable to attend meetings due to other commitments such as supervising children leaving the school. It may be possible in the future to integrate the action research cycles as important components of a school's priorities and practice. Challenges with communication also affected research progress, in that SS had limited internet access, while messages were often not relayed on to the action research group at PS. This led to several oversights and, of note, the action research group at PS was advised to include parents, which did not eventuate. However, it was possible that parents were asked to join the action research group and refused due to work or other commitments.

To overcome the major issues with research prioritisation and communication, the NR contacted both schools frequently via phone or email, and conveyed important information in person, such as updates on research progress. This was time consuming but necessary to ensure that the research remained a priority and that those activities were completed. Frequent contact also helped to promote the sustainability of the project, as reporting on major achievements encouraged the research team, while reviewing progress enabled new staff to gain an understanding of the ADRAS research. This was particularly relevant at SS where a high volume of staff including the principal had been transferred.

The ADRAS project has also had national and regional impact. There have been two media outputs on the action research project in Fiji, which were a news article by Fiji Times⁴ and a segment on FijiOne news bulletin⁵. The NR also presented the research progress at the Pacific Disability Forum conference in February 2015. The study has generated a lot of interest in disability-inclusive education within the Suva area, as other schools and MOENHCA are aware that there is local research being conducted about supporting students with special needs, and this project represents the first school-based study on disability-inclusive education within Fiji. The NR has also been able to disseminate research knowledge via her contacts within special schools owing to her career background. As a result, many teachers have contacted the NR to learn more about the project. The aforementioned media releases have also sparked considerable interest in the project with educators and other interested parties.

3.7 The way forward

The outcomes of the research to date emphasise the need to enrich professional practice in both schools, which is challenging due to the limited resources available to teachers and for students in both schools. However, an alternative way to resolve the resourcing issue is to allow selected disability-inclusive education teachers who have retired to become mentors to the younger teachers who lack the training in teaching children who have disabilities. A volunteer mentor scheme to assist teachers in including students with disabilities may help to bridge the gap in expertise until current teachers are able to access training and build up their own experience. Continuing the action research using the Index for Inclusion ideas in the schools should also be a priority. This type of approach can be embedded in school planning and development. There is also a need to explore alternatives in building capacity for disability-inclusive education and teaching practices with support from teacher preparation program staff in universities.

At a national and regional level, the current research progress provided preliminary evidence on how MOENHCA could strengthen teacher capacity for special and inclusive education. This evidence includes: (1) matching schools with experienced individuals or disability organisations who can mentor and assist teachers; and, (2) involving the whole school community in projects designed to create inclusive cultures and opportunities for more inclusive teaching practices. However, more action research is needed to generate greater awareness of disability and contribute to a wider positive impact on the Fijian education system. The resources included in this monograph can be used in schools to support inclusive school development using the Index for Inclusion. The study reinforces the need for improvements in the quality of teaching and learning in mainstream schools for inclusion of children with disabilities. This requires an upgrade to current teachers' qualifications, skills and knowledge so that they are adequately trained to provide their service in the disability-inclusive schools. To facilitate this, there needs to be a scholarship or other incentives available to enable teachers from inclusive schools who are committed to further training to access professional development opportunities. In addition, school leaders need to be supported to develop a more disability-inclusive culture and practice in their school community. The ideas and resources in this

⁴ <http://fijione.tv/universities-work-together-to-raise-disability-education/>

⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KE2yyQey1PM>

monograph are ideal to support this learning. From next year, MOENHCA has indicated that they will devote more resources to the special and inclusive education department to enable greater support for teachers in inclusive schools.



Section 4: Action research profile of Samoa

4.1 Background and context

The NR, in consultation with the Ministry of Education Sports and Culture (MESC), identified two Samoan primary schools on Upolu as the case study schools. One school was a rural school (RS) and the other was an urban school (US). US primary school was the first school in Samoa to embrace inclusive education, as part of the inclusive education pilot schools project, and has featured in research reports and local news articles as an example of inclusive education [28]. Initially, inclusive education at US focused on special needs, and the principal and teachers were able to attend training workshops and adapt teaching practices utilised for ‘slow learners’ to meet the learning needs of children with disabilities. The former principal, staff and parents discussed teacher attitudes and barriers to including students with disabilities, while parents advised the school of their children’s needs [28]. Together with the involvement of a special needs advisor, two students with disabilities were enrolled in the school with lesson plans to assist the teachers in responding to student learning needs. As of 2013, there were 16 children with disabilities enrolled in the school⁶. The current principal is quite influential and some teachers have completed training in special needs at the Faculty of Education at the National University of Samoa. The school has training in sign language and Braille as a component of professional development, which is beneficial to teachers of students with visual or hearing impairments.

Initially, US and a rural primary school in Savai’i were identified for the ADRAS study. These schools were identified as they were previously involved in special education initiatives as described above. The NR for Samoa introduced the action research project to the principals of the schools during a short meeting and action research groups were established at both schools. At a subsequent meeting with two teachers from each school, the NR provided information and procedures regarding the research. Unfortunately, after this meeting, the Savai’i based rural primary school withdrew from the project due to external pressures.

The action research was slightly delayed owing to a late change in one of the schools (the Savai’i based rural primary school was replaced by a rural primary school in Upolu (RS)) and the need to translate some of the questionnaire materials and Talanoa session.

More demographic information about the schools is shown in Table 4.1.

⁶ 2013 SEN database

Table 4.1. School demography: US and RS primary schools

Variable	Urban primary school (US)	Rural primary school (RS)
Number of students	970 students	412 students
Number of staff	23 teachers (including the principal)	9 teachers (including the principal – 1 male and 8 female)
Number of CWD	16 (4 female, 12 male; 8 w/ autism, 5 speech impaired, 1 hearing impaired, 1 w/ epilepsy, 1 unspecified) ⁷	No CWD recorded in SEN database for this school, 1 student who is a wheelchair user reported by NR
Class configuration/size	Three classes for each level (40-50 students per class)	20-28 students per class

4.2 Phase 1: Getting started

To identify and establish cultural protocols and empower schools to be involved in the ADRAS study, the NR and QUT researcher (CI Duke) visited US in April 2014. The current principal indicated a strong commitment to a Christian ethos which influenced school culture. She commented: ‘We can do everything. I’m a poor person, I know nothing, my God gives me strength’ and ‘Not by might, not by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord’ and ‘Every morning, my God gives me strength’. Teachers were identified as the most important resource in disability-inclusive education. The teachers appeared friendly and open, and were resourceful in using local materials in the classroom. This caring environment could be evidenced in teachers being allowed to bring their own babies to school and keeping them in the classroom during the day.

An overview of the action research in Samoa is shown in Figure 4.1. The NR and school research committees elected to investigate Dimension A: Culture, with a focus on building inclusive communities.

Initially, US and a rural primary school on the island of Savai’i were identified for the ADRAS study. These schools were identified as they were previously involved in special education initiatives as described above. The NR for Samoa introduced the action research project to the principals of US and the rural primary school from Savai’i during a short meeting and action research groups were established at each of the schools. At a subsequent meeting with two teachers from each school, the NR provided information and procedures regarding the research. Unfortunately, after this meeting, the rural primary school from Savai’i withdrew from the project due to external pressures.

The action research was slightly delayed owing to a late change to substitute the rural primary school from Savai’i with a rural school from the main island of Upolu. The replacement rural school is coded as (RS). In parallel to the new school selection the NR translated some of the questionnaire materials and Talanoa session. RS in rural Upolu was identified as a replacement school in October 2014. The two schools’ proximity to the Apia region helped the NR to visit the schools fortnightly. At RS, the action research group consisted of five members: three teachers, the principal and a parent of a child with a disability. They brought their own beliefs and values to the group, as well as some of the challenges they face within their family or community as the parents of a child with a disability. At US, the action research group comprised of teachers, retired teachers and parents. Each group

⁷ 2013 SEN database

appointed a chairperson, secretary, parent representative, and facilitators. The NR was also actively involved in both action research groups and assisted with data collection.

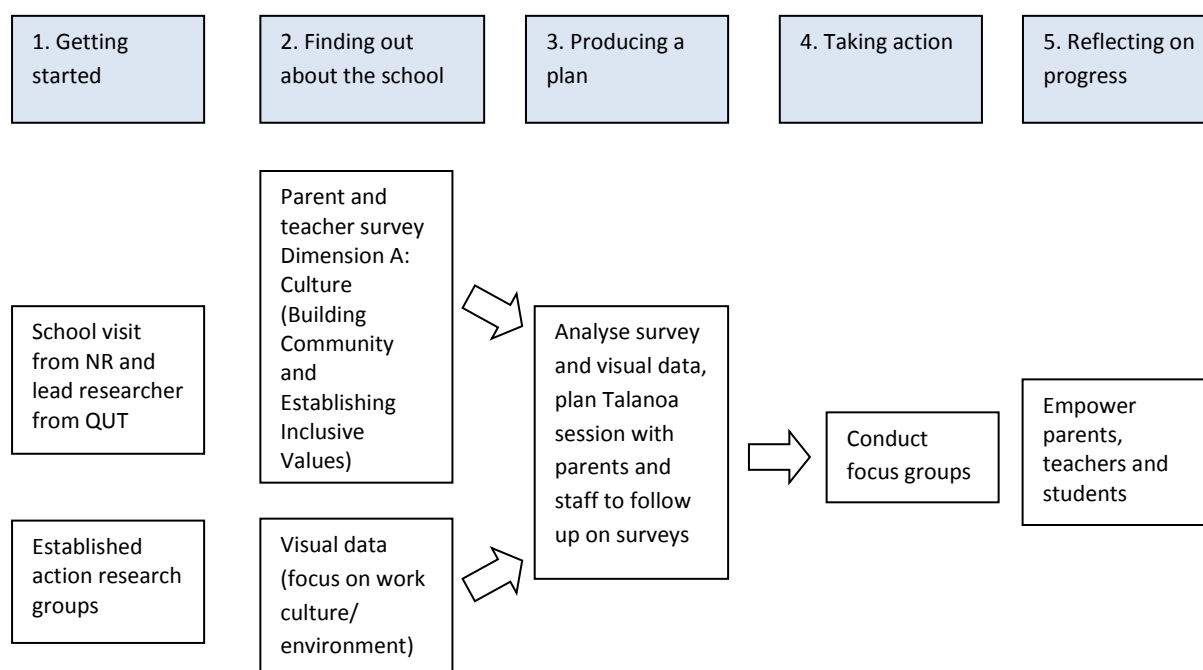


Figure 4.1. Overview of action research activities at the schools

The Index for Inclusion was introduced by the NR to the action research groups by providing a copy to each member. The NR explained that the Index was a tool to use to improve the way we teach our children, the learning environment and the value of each child. The PowerPoint presentations from the February workshop in Fiji were used as an aid in describing the project. The slides were translated into Samoan by the NR and the principal, and the NR noted that it would have been more beneficial for the schools if the whole presentation was in Samoan. The English language version of the Index was also problematic in some instances, as some of the terms used in the document were not understood by all action research members. As part of the getting to know people with disabilities and appreciate the disability-inclusive education policy, a disability advocate in the US action research group described her experiences of living with a disability which significantly influenced the group. The NR also led a discussion on the ‘faa Samoa’ (Samoan culture) in which everyone is fully included and supported since birth (e.g., a birth of a newborn is celebrated by all). The action research groups agreed that the philosophy should continue in schools, which is currently not part of school practices as schools established by missionaries did not continue this tradition. At RS, action research group members also had titles within the community which they were acknowledged for. Despite all the titles everyone holds, it was agreed that we all have to work together (be inclusive irrespective of titles) for the benefit of all children within the community. The nature of community was also acknowledged at US, and confidentiality was deemed to be of utmost importance in conversation between group members because everyone knows everyone. There was a lot of discussion about the use of the word ‘disability’ and how the person is more important than the disability.

4.3 Phase 2: Finding out about the school

In setting the priorities and gathering necessary information to develop appropriate actions, the action research groups obtained information from parents and teachers on their views of the indicators from the Index Dimension A: Creating inclusive cultures. Responses were available from 15 parents from RS, 4 parents from US, and 13 teachers from US.

Parents from RS indicated a positive view of building community, with respect to links between the school, local community and broader world. However, a few parents were ambivalent about the quality of interactions within the school in terms of mutual respect between staff and students, and cooperation between staff members and students helping one another. At US, parents gave similar positive ratings; however, the sample size was very small. Teacher ratings of building a caring community at US were very positive, although some staff members were unsure of whether school activities were linked to children's lives at home.

The majority of parents at RS indicated positive views of disability-inclusive values within the school. However, a minority of parents were unsure of whether the school countered all forms of discrimination or valued children equally. Limited responses to the survey from US indicated that parents were unsure of how the school responded to human rights or viewed disability-inclusive and general inclusive values. Teacher responses to these questions were also very positive at US.

Visual data suggests two key themes as shown in Figure 4.2. Firstly, that family members of students and staff are welcomed into the school and play a central role in supporting children with a disability. Secondly, that both schools are accessible to students who are wheelchair users. These two factors created an opportunity for students with physical disabilities to attend school with assistance from their families, as shown in one of the photos (see Figure 4.2). These photos provide examples of several indicators from Dimension A1, such as 'Everyone is welcomed', 'Staff and parents/carers collaborate' and 'The school and local communities develop each other'.

While the findings in Phase 2 were generally positive, the action research teams wanted to obtain further clarification as to whether parents and teachers were accepting of students with disabilities. This was due to some ambivalence in the survey data surrounding some of the indicators, namely A1.3 'Children help each other', A1.4 'Staff and children respect one another', A2.6 'Children are valued equally' and A2.7 'The school counters all forms of discrimination'. The action research group produced a plan, which was to undertake focus groups/Talanoa sessions to collect further data relevant to Index indicators A1.3, A1.4, A2.6 and A2.7. Initially, only the principals and teachers at the school were involved; however, the NR convinced them to include parents in the focus group/Talanoa sessions to ensure that the local community was represented.

Families of students and staff are welcome:



A student cares for a younger sibling



A teacher brings her baby to school

Both schools are accessible to wheelchair users:



A student with a physical disability is assisted in the classroom by his mother



A student with a mobility impairment

Figure 4.2. Sample visual data from US and RS primary schools

4.4 Phase 3: Producing a plan

The Index for Inclusion process of listening to the voices of the people in the school community created an ongoing plan of reflecting on the information and then developing more ways of gathering information to delve deeper into the emerging thoughts about supporting children with disabilities in their schools. The school action research groups wanted to clarify the findings from the questionnaires and visual data with respect to accepting students with disabilities as per indicators A1.3, A1.4, A2.6 and A2.7. In addition, the school committees wanted to identify strategies to empower students, parents and teachers. A selection of comments is shown in Table 4.2. The comments from principals indicated that there was a perception that children with disabilities should be attending special schools rather than regular schools. This reflects indicator A2.7 'The school counters all forms of discrimination', as principals have taken active steps to address discriminatory attitudes held by some teachers and parents. Teacher comments suggested a lack of

preparedness in managing students with challenging behaviours, although they indicated more positive views of a student with physical disabilities. Comments also reflected that a familiarity with the student and availability of assistance in the form of a parent attending with the child may have facilitated a smoother transition to disability-inclusive education for teachers. Parent comments indicated that all students should be included in local schools, although two comments indicated pity for children with disabilities. Teacher and parent comments provided evidence of indicator A1.3 'Children help one another' via comments such as 'the students enjoy pushing his chair around', and A2.6 'Children are valued equally' through comments such as '... joins with all activities'. However, the teacher and parent comments about the student with behavioural challenges suggests that there may be some issues surrounding mutual respect between staff and students (indicator A1.4 'Staff and children respect one another').

Table 4.2. Talanoa/focus group comments from principals, teachers and parents

Principals	Teachers	Parents
'I did not have a problem enrolling [student] but I had problems with some of the teachers' attitude. After talking to them they finally have an accepting attitude.'	'I got really nervous when [student] entered the room. I did not even know what to do.'	'We all know [student] and his mother. So there is nothing wrong with him coming to school but I feel sorry for him because they come from a long way.'
'Trying to make other parents understand that all children have the right to education was quite challenging. Because they want these children to go to special schools like Loto Taumafai.'	'[Student] pulls down all the books from the bookshelves so I asked the teacher aide if they want to give her time out in the library. But she likes going there to read.'	'We love [student] and my son plays with him all the time.'
	'It was easier because we knew [student] plus his mother was here all the time to help out.'	'I feel sorry for her and her parents. It must be really hard for the teachers to teach her.'
	'The students enjoy pushing his chair around. [Student] joins with all activities and he cheers the loudest during sports.'	'The government now says that all children should go to their local school. So we welcome everyone to our school.'

4.5 Phase 4: Taking action

Each school community participated in ongoing focus groups/Talanoa sessions which created opportunities for shared discussion and visioning for their school. The NR and action research groups were able to obtain the opinions of some of the elderly members of the community and pastors, and influence their thinking and beliefs through participation in action research meetings. Some barriers were the old people themselves but when persons with disabilities were invited to speak, their minds changed. As with the teachers and parents, familiarity with people with disabilities seemed to challenge their negative perceptions or fears. Most of the activities were undertaken in groups and were written down on newsprints and presented to the whole group. However, the NR noted that recording activities on video and allowing people to tell their stories instead of writing them may have been more effective.

4.6 Phase 5: Reflecting on progress

Findings from the action research study suggest that the involvement of community is an important part of fostering disability-inclusive values in regular schools in Samoa. Survey and focus group data from parents, teachers and principals suggests that acceptance of and readiness for disability-inclusive education is progressing, however some people still hold well-meaning yet discriminatory attitudes such as pity for people with disabilities, and the view that they should be catered for in special schools. However, focus group data suggested that familiarity with students who have disabilities and their families fosters deeper understanding and contributes to inclusion in the school community. This process may be easier for students with physical disabilities or conditions that do not impact learning or socio-emotional behaviour.

The NR highlighted some challenges with the research. Specifically, she reported that the action research groups were able to collate some data but not analyse it to the extent that they wished. They also did not have the opportunity to do an additional Talanoa session with one particular group such as the elders and pastors, who in the Samoan culture have significant influence on people's attitude and behaviour toward others. There were also some language barriers which required the translation of materials into Samoan, as well as translation of the open comment sections of the surveys and Talanoa/focus group sessions.

4.7 The way forward

The NR who is the inclusive education officer in the MESC has indicated that she will continue to follow up with the schools via other MESC activities later in the year. Further activities will include Talanoa sessions, and devising strategies to empower parents, teachers and students. It is intended that action research will be sustained at both schools. The case studies and resources provided in this monograph will support this ongoing work.

The current study indicates a need for teachers' and principals' capacity building in the area of disability-inclusive education for students with special learning needs. This was exemplified by teacher comments in the Talanoa session, which indicated a lack of preparedness for teaching and behavioural management for students with challenging behaviours. While Samoa has an inclusive education policy and it is a government mandate that all children should attend local schools, there are no guidelines as to how children with disabilities and their families are to approach or access schooling, and regular schools may struggle to teach and manage such students. The key contribution of this study was the importance of involving parents and community members in fostering inclusion of students with disabilities.



Section 5: Action research profile of Solomon Islands

5.1 Background and context

Two community high schools (CHS) were selected as research sites for the Solomon Islands disability-inclusive action research project. A community high school provides education at both primary and secondary levels, and is built and managed by the local community with management support from churches or the provincial government [29].

The first school, Urban CHS, is located in an urban region of Guadalcanal province and has an enrolment of 750 students. Teachers at Urban CHS have undergone professional development in terms of literacy training as of February 2015. Nearly one fifth (18%) of Solomon Islanders reside in Guadalcanal, with the region's population in 2009 estimated as 93,613 individuals [30]. Approximately two thirds of the population is in the labour force (63.4%), although the majority appear to live a subsistence lifestyle, and either work for their families or produce goods for sale or personal use [30]. Despite being in an urban area, the socio-economic status of the majority of the school community is subsistence living. Languages in the region consist of English and Pidgin as the main languages but there are several other languages/dialects spoken in the country which are not specified. The most commonly practiced religions in the region are Roman Catholic (38%), followed by the Church of Melanesia (24%) and South Sea Evangelical Church (18%) or Seventh Day Adventists (12%). The majority of persons aged over 15 years are literate (82.9%) and have some level of formal schooling (81.1%).

The second school, Rural CHS, has 710 students and is situated in a rural region of Malaita province. Just over a quarter (27%) of the total population of Solomon Islands resides in Malaita province, with a total population of 137,596 as of 2009 [31]. Again, similar to the first school community, approximately two thirds of the population is in the labour force (66.8%) with a high proportion indicating a subsistence lifestyle [31]. Main languages in the region consist of English, spoken by 56% of the population, Pidgin or local languages, spoken by about 52% of the population, and other unspecified languages spoken by 15% of the population. The most commonly practiced religions in the region are the South Sea Evangelical Church (31%), the Church of Melanesia (26%) and Roman Catholic (24%). Seventy percent of persons aged over 15 years are literate, and nearly three quarters of persons aged over 12 years have some level of formal schooling (73.3%). A high percentage (10%)

of the population reported some form of disability in an Inclusive Policy workshop that was held in the region during the latter months of 2014⁸.

A lower proportion of primary and junior secondary students attend school in Malaita province compared to Guadalcanal. The 2007-2009 Malaita Education Action Plan identified several challenges in equitable access to education. These were related to cultural beliefs surrounding the roles of girls in providing childcare to younger siblings; economic issues such as an inability to pay school fees or requiring children to work for the family's income; social problems such as family breakdown, teenage pregnancy or peer pressure; geographic challenges such as family migration or distance of schools from remote villages; and administrative issues such as teacher absence. There is a marked discrepancy in access to secondary education for boys and girls due to cultural attitudes towards the value of educating girls, early marriage and teenage pregnancy, and lack of guidance from parents and teachers⁹. A needs analysis to address special education was also acknowledged, with a view to surveying students with disabilities. A subsequent study of the barriers to education in several provinces including Malaita identified that many children with disabilities were unable to attend regular schools due to the child's inability to 'cope' with schooling and the school's inability to meet the needs of children with disabilities [32]. As of 2011, there were 849 children with disabilities enrolled in primary schools in Malaita province, 113 children with disabilities (CWD) enrolled in junior secondary education, and 63 CWD enrolled in senior secondary schools. School demography for Urban CHS and Rural CHS are shown in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1. School demography: Urban and Rural CHS

Variable	Urban CHS	Rural CHS
Number of students	785 (primary) 592 (secondary)	545 (primary) 132 (secondary)
Number of teachers	21 (primary) 17 (secondary) Total: 39	Primary: 10 trained, 3 TiT (teacher in training); Secondary: 8 trained, 1 TiT; Total: 22
Number of CWD	6 (primary) 2 (secondary) Total: 8	2 (primary) 3 (secondary) Total: 5
Class size	Primary: 35 - 40 Secondary: 30 - 40	Primary: 30 - 40 Secondary: 30 - 40
Catchment villages	16	10
Estimated population	3,000	2,400
Community support	Urban CHS is supported by the Catholic Church and is built on church land	Community is strongly SSEC, Catholic, SDA and Anglican

5.2 Phase 1: Getting started

This phase involved establishing and empowering the school community and the school-based researchers. An overview of the action research process undertaken at both schools is shown in Figure 5.1. As the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (MEHRD) has been developing a national IE policy for some time, with the guidance of the NR, the school communities were encouraged to focus on raising awareness about inclusive education and supporting children

⁸ Personal communication, Benedict Esibaea, 15.10.2014

⁹ Malaita Education Action Plan, 2007-2009

with disabilities to attend school. The MEHRD have a priority to strengthen the development and introduction of a disability-inclusive education policy in the Solomon Islands. The action research in both schools focused on Dimension B of the Index, which is Producing Inclusive Policies. Key research activities are described in detail in the subsequent sections of this chapter.

During the initial meeting, the NR met with the principal and teachers at both community high schools to introduce the concept of inclusive education and the ADRAS research project. Disability-inclusive education is not well understood by principals or teachers in the Solomon Islands. The NR shared a personal story of his experiences as the parent of a child with a hearing impairment, and how he and his wife opted to home school their son rather than send him to a special school which would have required living away from home. These introductory meetings generated significant interest and enthusiasm about the project and disability-inclusive education became the ‘talk of the day’. Action research committees were established in each school. The action research committees in both schools incorporated parents, teachers and students in order to represent the different groups within the school community.

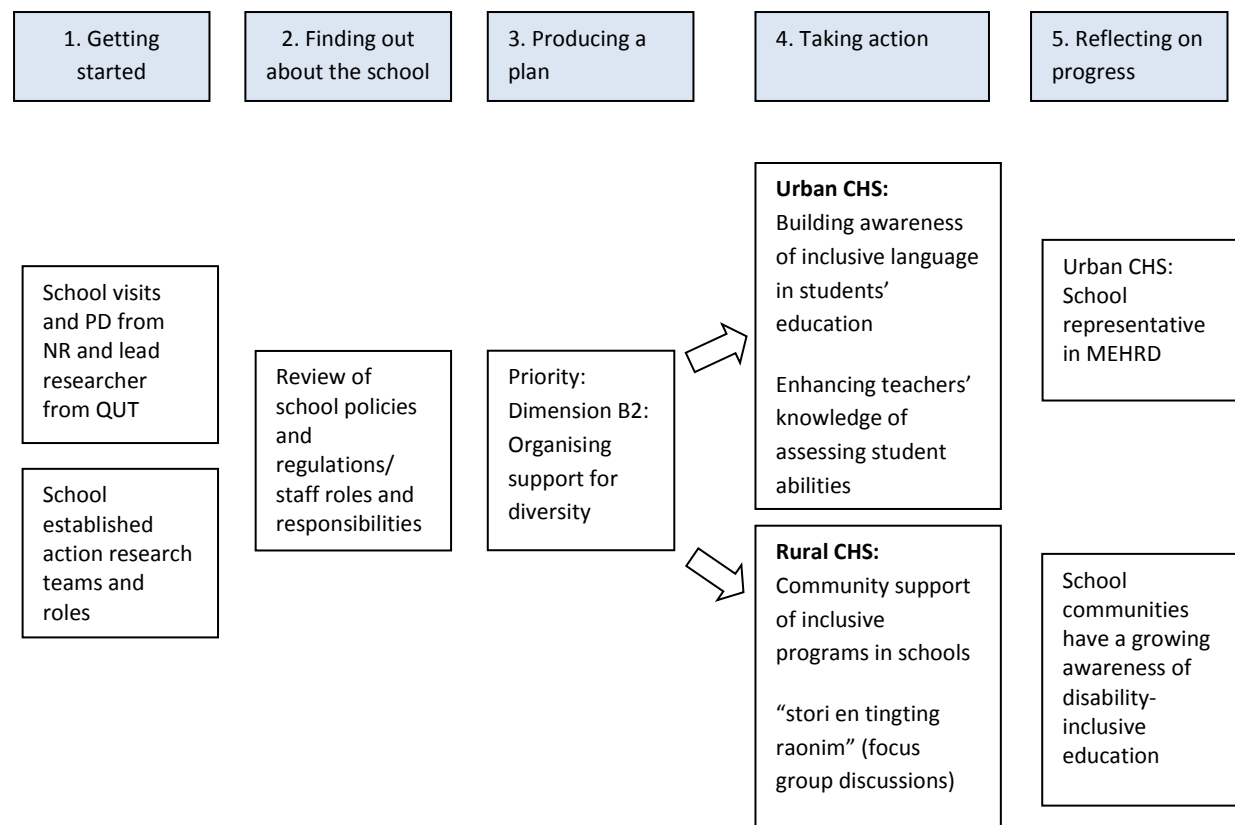


Figure 5.1. Overview of action research activities at the schools

5.3 Phase 2: Finding out about the school – Setting priorities and gathering information

This phase focussed on setting priorities and gathering pertinent information related to the current status of disability-inclusive education within the country and especially within the communities involved in the study. The activities surrounding finding out about the school were informed by Index Dimension B1 ‘Developing the school for all’, and Dimension B2 ‘Organising support for diversity’. Key indicators relevant in this process were B1.1 ‘The school has a participatory development process’, B1.4 ‘Staff expertise is known and used’ and B2.5 ‘The school ensures that policies about “special educational needs” support inclusion’. Both action research teams underwent reviews of their respective schools.

At Urban CHS, the school action research team examined the school and its staff roles and responsibilities with respect to supporting disability-inclusion. Through gaining an understanding of current capabilities and practises in disability-inclusion education, a significant need for awareness and capacity development was identified. By contrast, at Rural CHS, the action research group supported the establishment of a taskforce to review school policies and regulations to determine inclusivity.

5.4 Phase 3: Producing a plan

Action research groups at both schools developed school plans to inform disability-inclusive policy, as noted in Figure 5.1. However, the focus for each school was slightly different, with Urban CHS concentrating on developing policy for building capacity in the staff and school community for supporting disability-inclusion, while at Rural CHS, the plan was to focus on supporting raising awareness of disability-inclusion education.

In Phase 2, Urban CHS focused on Dimension B1.4 ‘Staff expertise is known and used’, which was reflected in the review of roles and responsibilities surrounding disability-inclusion at the school. Consequently, their action research plan for Phase 3 focused on raising awareness and capacity development, which is exemplified by indicator B2.2 ‘Professional development activities help staff respond to diversity’. However, it is noteworthy that the school extended the roles and responsibilities in supporting disability-inclusion to the whole school community, not just staff. A key strategy for this school was to connect with the MEHRD via staff representation in the Inclusive Education Committee.

The action research group at Rural CHS focused on Dimension B2.5 ‘The school ensures that policies about “special education needs” support inclusion’ in Phase 2. Their research plan for Phase 3 was to widen the scope of the review to the entire school community. This involved staff and students discussing and reflecting on special groups via their ‘stori en tingting raonim’ and engaging support from the wider community to support disability-inclusive education in the school. These focus group discussions enabled members of the school community to share views and ideas about supporting children with disabilities in their school.

5.5 Phase 4: Taking action

To strengthen the link between the school and MEHRD, a staff member at Urban CHS joined the Inclusive Education committee within the MEHRD. Through this network, they were able to attend workshops on inclusive education and subsequently transfer their expertise to the school. As a result, teachers at Urban CHS are now able to work with their classes in identifying students' abilities and needs in a more inclusive way. The action research team initiated general awareness of disability-inclusive education, with a focus on educating children about respectful language used to describe children and young people with special needs. Comments from the principal, head teacher and a senior teacher at Urban CHS describe the impact of the ADRAS project, specifically with respect to indicator B2.2 'Professional development activities help staff respond to diversity' (See Table 5.2). Discussion surrounding disability-inclusive education and meeting special needs is ongoing at Rural CHS, with staff and students committed to disability-inclusive education.

Table 5.2. Comments from administrative/teaching staff on inclusive education at Urban CHS

Position	Comment
Principal	School Admin recommends to the Ministry of Education to work closely with the school to establish Inclusive Education for students with special needs. This awareness makes us teachers to realise how unprepared we are to take on Inclusive Education and recognize its impacts on the community.
Class teacher/ Head teacher	I am very concerned since attending an awareness talk on Inclusive Education by Mr. Benedict Esibaea, National Researcher on IE. I come to understand the importance of Inclusive Education and reflected on the 'White paper, education for what and education for all'. This does not meet the needs of those with special needs. Many children are not attending school because they are either vision, hearing impaired or physically disable. I have started to change my teaching approaches since and seen changes children responded to me in my class. My teachers have challenged to apply inclusive education and build quality relationship with all children in my school.
Senior teacher	My experience when I first heard about Inclusive Education was when my teacher colleague told me something about Inclusive Education in our daily interaction. I thought he was telling me and my students to come to school every day. It took me some time to think about me and my students and many a time we just quarrel about the same things in class. It was fun sometimes when I realized, I was being teacher centered and asked myself, when is the best time for the children to learn? In 2015 Mr. Benedict Esibaea came to our school and gave very dramatic session on inclusive education, why it is important considering there are children in our school or out there in the community that need special attention as much as others. In the talk was emphasized, education is for everyone. Me as a teacher must be a teacher for every one too. I cannot thank Benedict and my teacher colleague for their encouragement and explaining what disability and inclusive education is all about. The movie, 'like stars on Earth' was very emotional and I felt being a child is very special and unique. The needs of those children are our needs too, when we take the front seat and address them. I realised, there is a lot of unrealistic abuses of the world is still at hand. I believe, Inclusive education will eradicate them, especially the right of each one to education. I have changed my attitudes and will continue to involve myself in this inclusive education program in my school. Thank you Benedict and my teacher colleague for this opportunity given us to look at ourselves and do things with concern for others and be inclusive in my teaching.

There is also emerging evidence of attitudinal change towards children with disabilities in the community. For example, one father of a 13-year-old girl with a physical disability now carries his daughter to school to ensure that she can attend classes. In the Solomon Islands, girls with disabilities are marginalised in society, and it is a cultural taboo for a father to physically touch his adolescent daughter, even to provide necessary care. This is an example of the conviction of one individual to change the cultural stereotype and to enable young people who have disabilities to attend their local school.

5.6 Phase 5: Reflecting on progress

The Solomon Islands has been lagging in adopting disability-inclusive education and as yet has not developed a policy on inclusive education. There has been significant progress more recently with the establishment of a National Learning Support Resource Centre to support children who have disabilities and their teachers and families. Proximity to Honiara and the NR's connections to the MEHRD were advantageous to Urban CHS in building a network to support capacity development in disability-inclusive education. In both schools, community support for disability-inclusive education has been established and it is hoped that the research will be sustained.

Unfortunately, there were significant delays to the research due to severe flooding in Guadalcanal province which resulted in Urban CHS serving as an evacuation centre in April 2014. This prevented deepening the disability-inclusive education action research. Also, travel to Malaita province to visit Rural CHS was frequently delayed due to weather and suspension of domestic travel services. Political and industrial disputes also hindered research progress.

Nevertheless, despite these challenges, the research findings provide some evidence to support the development of an inclusive education policy in the Solomon Islands. Current efforts towards the development of an inclusive education policy have adopted a 'bottom-up' approach, that is, existing culture and practices will inform a culturally appropriate policy. Findings from the current study suggest that: 1) community engagement and involvement are important to change attitudes towards the value of education for people with disabilities; and 2) links with the MEHRD and other external resources help to develop capacity for inclusive education in schools.

5.7 The way forward

Inclusion of children with disabilities in schools in the Solomon Islands is a recent initiative. Senior staff and some regional staff in MEHRD have been involved in learning and development activities to support inclusive culture, policy and practice. Both schools in this project are enthusiastic to continue in their action research to build further evidence to support a disability-inclusive education policy. This will involve strengthening community involvement and support for disability-inclusive education within schools, and ongoing involvement of Urban CHS with activities in the MEHRD such as the National Learning Support Resource Centre. By sustaining the action research project and

embedding cycles of review and development as supported by the Index for Inclusion, school communities will make progress. The ideas from the various case studies combined with the resources included in this monograph can be used by MEHRD staff and school leaders to support the development of inclusion in the Solomon Islands.



Section 6: Action research profile of Vanuatu

6.1 Background and context

A community school based in Luganville (LCS) in Sanma province and a community school in Port Vila (PVCS) in Shefa province were selected to serve as research sites in Vanuatu. Shefa is located in the nation's capital, Port Vila, the most populous province where 34% of the nation resides. PVCS is located in an urban area near Port Vila. One fifth of the population lives in Sanma, and LCS is situated in Luganville, an urban region of the province. Residents in urban areas of Vanuatu are more likely to be living in poverty than residents in rural areas, with 18.4% of the population in Port Vila and 23.6% of the population in Luganville living below the poverty line in 2010, compared to 10% of the rural population [33]. There are more opportunities for unskilled work in rural areas, where the major source of income (75%) is a subsistence lifestyle [33]. By contrast, paid employment in the public or private sector provides the bulk of employment in urban areas, and education is critical to securing such employment [33].

Vanuatu has a dual education system in some areas with separate schools for Anglophone and Francophone students. As of 2012, the net enrolment rate for primary school students was 89% for Sanma and 88% for Shefa, while the rates for secondary enrolments in the same time period were 40% and 48% respectively [34]. Approximately 59% of teachers in Vanuatu are trained and certified [34]. Access to schooling is problematic for children with disabilities as they must attend regular schools which are under resourced and poorly equipped to meet special needs. Vanuatu has had an inclusive education policy since 2011, which took several years of consultation to ensure that the policy was relevant to the Vanuatu context. Despite these efforts, implementation has suffered due to a lack of infrastructure and resources to implement the policy.

LCS utilises the dual language system, and has a kindergarten school with 112 Anglophone and 56 Francophone students, and a primary school with 635 Anglophone and 279 Francophone students [34]. PVCS is classified by the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) as a primary school with a total of 501 students [34]; however, it was the first school to amalgamate its Anglophone and Francophone schools into a single school campus in 1989. This enables more economical use of school resources, and the school offers Anglophone and Francophone classes for students from kindergarten to year six, and Anglophone classes only for secondary students [35].

Each school has a large number of students who have been identified as having a disability according to the VEMIS data (see Table 6.1). However, it should be noted that learning or social and emotional disabilities may be over diagnosed by untrained staff. For instance, PVCS has a total of 186 students

with disabilities, 58% of whom have been classified as having ‘emotional, social problems’ or ‘learning disability’. Similarly, one third of the 83 students with disabilities at LCS have been identified with similar disabilities. Other common disabilities include sight or hearing impairments, and speech or physical disabilities at LCS, or Down Syndrome at PVCS. There were also three girls with disabilities aged between 10 and 16 years in the PVCS locale who were known to the principal but were not attending school.

Table 6.1. Children with disabilities in the research schools¹⁰

Disability type	Port Vila Community School (PVCS)	Luganville Community School (LCS)	Disability type	Port Vila Community School (PVCS)	Luganville Community School (LCS)
Sight impairment	34	15	Emotional, social problems	60	8
Hearing impairment	10	12	Mental disability	1	0
Speech impairment	5	14	Learning disability	47	18
Physical disability	5	11	Other	1	2
Down Syndrome	19	3	Multiple disabilities	4	0
Total				186	83

LCS is known as the first inclusive school in Vanuatu and children with disabilities come from many regions to attend the school. The school has its own disability-inclusive education policy, a program to support teachers, and wheelchair ramps. Inclusion applies to the whole school, with a view to developing a greater understanding of diversity.

PVCS also includes children with disabilities; however, the principal notes that it is difficult for children with special needs to achieve academically in common classrooms. Teachers at the school identify a number of students as ‘slow learners’, including a case of a ‘child who draws only’. Some class sizes are large with 45 students. The principal is committed to inclusive education, stating that ‘it was the right time to implement’ with a view to improving the achievement of ‘slow learners’ via teacher aide involvement and modification to teaching plans and processes. It must be noted that ‘slow learner’ does not necessarily mean that the child has an intellectual disability.

¹⁰ VEMIS data, 2014

6.2 Phase 1: Getting started

The NR was a highly respected MOET officer and had the advantage in motivating and engaging staff in the school community. He formally invited two schools to participate in the ADRAS project with the support and assistance of the National Inclusive Coordinator at the MOET in July 2014. The school-based action research teams were established in each school. The teams identified group members, designated roles and responsibilities via terms of reference documentation, and agreed on dates for school visits by the core research team to provide support and consultation.

Action research group members were selected in an attempt to represent the diversity of the school and local community. Examples include school administration, teaching staff, students and disabled people's organisations within the community (see Table 6.2).

Table 6.2. Action research committees

Port Vila Community School (PVCS)	Luganville Community School (LCS)
<p>There were nine members in the PVCS committee who represented the following groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School administration (2) • Teachers (3) • Parents (2) • Community stakeholders (2) 	<p>There were eight members in the LCS committee who represented the following groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School administration (1) • Anglophone primary (2) • Francophone primary (1) • Kindergarten (1) • Student (1) • Community stakeholder (1) • School council (1)

Through the guidance of the NR, the action research committees in both schools elected to investigate the implementation of disability-inclusive education policy in their respective schools using the Index for Inclusion. The focus in both case study schools was therefore two-fold: (a) To contextualise the processes noted in the Index to fit the Vanuatu context; and (b) to establish disability-inclusive schools based on the outcome of (a). Figure 6.1 illustrates the three dimensions of the Index. It assumed that the pre-existing disability-inclusive education policy (Dimension B) provided guidelines for disability-inclusive practice (Dimension C) and culture (Dimension A) in schools. Furthermore, school practices were thought to be an expression of school culture.

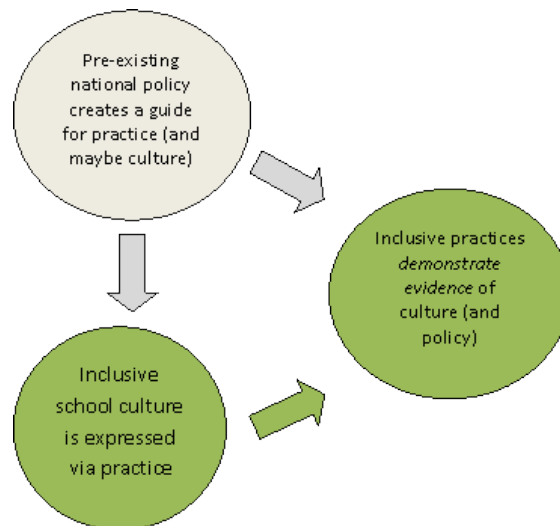


Figure 6.1. Model of policy, culture and practice

The school-based action research team adopted three data collection approaches to investigate the dimensions of culture and practice within a school setting. School culture was explored via surveys and interviews, while practices were captured through visual data such as photographs of practice and collections of work samples in classrooms. The findings were reported in an interim report supplied to the lead researchers, and at the PDF conference in February 2015. Specific indicators explored in the current study will be elaborated on in Phase 3: Producing a plan.

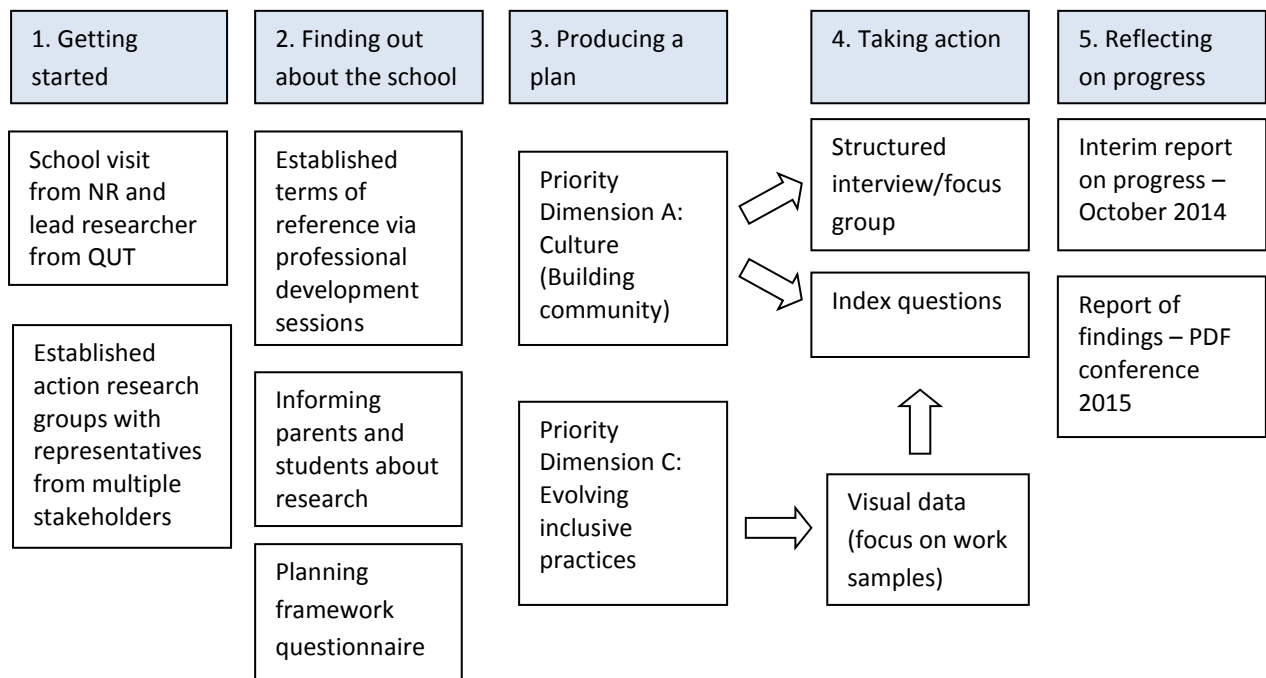


Figure 6.2. Overview of action research activities at the schools

6.3 Phase 2: Finding out about the school

This phase involved setting priorities and gathering information about the school and the school community. The NR shared the terms of reference for the action research via two workshops at LCS (one in Anglophone and the second in Francophone), and a single workshop at PVCS. The session consisted of a definition of disability-inclusive education, roles of the action research team, short and long term goals of the action research, and governance, resources and budget for the research. Additional information included details about relevant existing policies in Vanuatu, and an outline of research strategies and resources. As per the Index for Inclusion, schools were instructed to keep a diary of action research team activities. Parents and students were informed of the action research via letters and a special school assembly respectively.

In October 2014, planning framework questionnaires that were developed using ideas from the Index for Inclusion were completed by a sample of 14 students, 12 parents, 21 teachers and 2 ancillary staff. A sub-sample of five responses from a cross section of students, parents, teachers and teacher aides suggested that participants generally agreed with or neither agreed nor disagreed with the majority of statements within the planning framework. The open comments revealed several positive aspects associated with disability-inclusive education activities in the schools, as well as areas in need of improvement, as follows:

Positive aspects of the school

- Good cooperation between staff
- Resources e.g., training for teachers
- Supportive and friendly school community

Areas in need of improvement

- Reducing the class sizes
- Need for practical inclusive education/special education teacher/special education classroom
- Need for sports ground

The comments surrounding the education of children with disabilities suggested that the school community had a limited understanding of disability-inclusive education, as some responses were indicative of special education and segregating students with disabilities.

6.4 Phase 3: Producing a plan

Based on the above initial survey, detailed design for the collection of data via questionnaire, focus group and visual data was developed and implemented from October 2014 onwards. The action research group was divided into three sub-groups, who each took responsibility for one type of data collection and analysis. An example of the visual data protocol is included in Table 6.3.

Table 6.3. Visual data collection protocol

Activity: Study the table below and see how much your committee has included in your plan for this particular research activity. We will discuss details next week (11-15 August).

Index dimension	Index indicator	Questions	Participants
Evolving inclusive practices	C1.5 Children consider how and why people move around their locality and the world.	Participants decide what they feel is important to record at school and in their community.	Schools to determine which participants collect data for each indicator; e.g., students collect data about how and why people move around their locality
C1. Constructing curricula for all.	C1.11 Children engage with, and create, literature, arts and music.		
	C1.12 Children learn about work and link to the development of their interests.		
C2. Orchestrating learning	C2.5 Children learn from each other.		
	C2.13 Activities outside school lessons involve all children.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students • Teachers • Parents
	C2.14 Resources in the locality of the school are known and used.		
C1. Constructing curricula for all			
C1.5 Children consider how and why people move around their locality and the world.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get teachers and students to choose photographs to be taken 			
C2 Orchestrating learning			
C2.5 Children learn from each other.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get students to choose photographs to be taken – teachers take control 			







As shown in Table 6.3, the visual data protocol was intended to capture Dimension C of the Index, namely several indicators from C1 ‘Constructing curricula for all’ and C2 ‘Orchestrating learning’. The questionnaires and focus groups both focused on Dimension A1 of the Index, ‘Building community’, specifically indicators A1.3 ‘Children help each other’ and A1.4 ‘Staff and children respect one another’.

6.5 Phase 4: Taking action

Following the data collection, the NR guided the team to review and analyse the data, and develop and implement appropriate actions. Examples of the activities undertaken by teachers are captured in the visual data activity shown in Table 6.4. The majority of the visual data illustrated the Index indicator C1.11 ‘Children engage with, and create, literature, arts and music’ as singing, clapping or miming was depicted in five of the photos. The pictures also demonstrated Dimension C2 of the Index, ‘Orchestrating learning’. For instance, the children miming a song being sung by other children illustrates indicator C2.5 ‘Children learn from each other’ whereas the picture depicting two children (one with a disability) greeting each other provides an example of indicator C2.13 ‘Activities outside school lessons involve all children’. Several images also depict children using learning resources such as a text book, which provides evidence of indicator C2.14 ‘Resources in the locality of the school are known and used’. While this is an excellent start by teachers to implement disability-inclusive education, it reinforces the importance of capacity development and providing appropriate resources. The Index for Inclusion provides ideas to support review and development

processes in a school community. The activities described in this section can then provide opportunities for teachers to share and discuss ways of being more inclusive in their classrooms.

Table 6.4. Examples of visual data collection of activities in the classrooms

Class	Type of activity	Type of disability	Photo	Comments
2	Singing	Student on the right side is moderately deaf and student on the left is a very slow learner		The two students are trying to learn a new song while clapping their hands.
2	Singing	Slow learner		These two students were singing a custom miming song (Shepherds Group).
2	Singing	Student on the right side is moderately deaf and student on the left is a slow learner		These two students were singing a counting song. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 Once I got ...
2	Doing English exercise from blackboard	Mild vision impairment – squint the right eye to see the blackboard		These two students are trying to concentrate on a lesson by looking at and listening to the teacher.
2	Miming song	Student on the right side is moderately deaf and student on the left is a slow learner		These two students were greeting each other first thing in the morning.
2	Miming song	Slow learner		These two students were miming on a song sung by the rest of the class.




2	Miming song	Child on the left is moderately deaf		These two students were also miming on a different song sung by the class.
7	Listening to the teacher's explanation of Maths symmetrical concepts	A student with a heart problem		This particular student has a heart problem. He tries his best to sit in a comfortable position so he could breathe well and concentrate.
2	Doing English exercise from textbook	The student in the middle is moderately deaf		This particular individual is trying his best to listen and understand what is being instructed by the teacher.

Table 6.5. Focus group interview responses to building community questions – A1.3 'Children help each other'

Creating inclusive cultures. A1. Building community	Primary teacher with 38 children in the class, including slow learners and one student with a hearing impairment	Secondary teacher with 42 children in the class including slow learners and one student with 'abnormal growth'	Primary teacher with 50 children in the class including 10 very slow learners	Primary teacher with 78 children in the class including students with hearing and visual problems and slow learners
Are children aware of the things they can do to help others?	No, because others just look down on them. Even if I call out for one to provide an answer on the board, but others would say, why them when they do not know? So I separate them according to their abilities.	Yes, I don't know but their parents might know.	I don't think so because they depend on others to do things for them, most of the time.	No, because they are children. When they are like that, they won't be able to help others.
Do children willingly share their knowledge and skills?	Yes, but they contribute very little. I do not know but in group work especially I do not know whether these children manage to contribute or not. Those who are able to contribute are put in pairs. I see pair work is good for them.	Yes, they discuss in group work.	Just a little because they cannot think by themselves that is, they are slow to think and slow to talk and do things it is a concern because I spent my time teaching the whole class and no individual time. Also I do not like to neglect them but I do not have time to be with them.	Yes, they tell stories with their friends, but they find it hard to complete tasks. They co-operate very well with their friends.
Do children offer help to each other when they think it is needed without expecting anything in return?	Yes, they offer help only when the children work in pairs. When tests are given I allow the good ability ones to do the test on their own, while the slow ones, I provide them questions and if the child does not respond well, I will have to explain in Bislama.	Yes.	Never see them helping others because they keep to themselves. In group work when they were asked to do an activity, they wouldn't do it. They seem quiet most of the time. During the oral discussion they are quiet. Whenever I ask a question to them, I have to ask and ask, but I get very little response from them. They are just like the kindy children.	Yes, they are asked to share their books/ give out exercise books or sweep the floor, etc. Teacher says 'Thank You'.

Table 6.6. Focus group interview responses to building community questions – A1.4 ‘Staff and children respect each other’

Creating inclusive cultures. A1. Building community	Primary teacher with 38 children in the class, including slow learners and one student with a hearing impairment.	Secondary teacher with 42 children in the class including slow learners and one student with ‘abnormal growth’	Primary teacher with 50 children in the class including 10 very slow learners	Primary teacher with 78 children in the class, including students with hearing and visual problems, and slow learners
Do children know who to see when they have a problem?	They ask help from their friends but sometimes one or two would raise their hands up and ask help from me. With marking of a lesson activity, I mark the weak ones activity wrongly, I would send the bright ones to help them.	Yes, subject teachers.	Most of the time, they will not indicate but I, as a teacher, walk around and find this myself.	I think it is only the parents. I, as a teacher finds that the children have a problem. The parents do not let me know also.
Are children confident that when they say they have a problem it is taken seriously?	Yes, that is why I put them into two groups, the bright ones and the weak ones – putting them in groups. For the weak ones, I have to sit with them and explain. I see they improve.	Not really – because they seem to look healthy and fit.	Yes, but their feedback is very poor. I can help them, but I need more and more time. I tried to separate them in Term 1, but I do not have a helper. I can only help them a little in the classroom.	Once when I find out, I talk to the parents to check them up – ear check up, eye check up. The slow learners really need help, not only in the classroom but parents should help them. [Student] – ear problem – has to face me and see my mouth moving. Those with eye problems, need to wear eye glasses, otherwise they wouldn’t see clearly – [student] and [student].
When staff are cross and frustrated do they still continue to speak to children with respect?	If it is to do with academic or lesson work, I will not get angry. I only get angry by shouting when they make a lot of noise. When they are disrespectful, at first I get angry and do not have time for them, but today I have to treat them well. If we do not treat someone in the way he should be treated then it is bad, we should help those who are in need.	Yes, I keep on and show them respect.	Yes, I never lose that one. I never show my anger in front of them. I have to correct them with respect. Then we discuss together and find their opinions. Then I give them the last words.	Yes, if I don’t respect them they will feel out of place or feel neglected.

The teacher interviews from four primary and secondary teachers are displayed in Tables 6.5 and 6.6¹¹. When teachers implemented learning activities, children who were identified as slow learners were fairly limited in terms of their abilities to share and work with other students. Two primary teachers went further to experiment and found that these children were capable of helping other students in situations where they were friends. The shared learning experience also worked when it was done in a structured classroom activity. One teacher indicated that their students with disabilities did not interact with other children when the teachers were not directly involved. As a

¹¹ All comments in Tables 6.5 and 6.6 are direct quotes

teacher, they felt they were unable to spend time on one-on-one instruction with children identified as slow learners. Three of the four teachers were at the primary level and teachers often adopt a more pastoral role in caring for, as well as educating, the students, and therefore students may not be expected to help one another. The process of discussing a range of teaching strategies to support children who have disabilities creates opportunities for sharing challenges and solutions in the classroom. These types of facilitated conversations can also promote the language of inclusion by raising awareness of the learning needs of children who have disabilities.

Teachers' responses to Index indicator A1.4 'Staff and children respect each other' (see Table 6.6) were more positive than their responses to children helping one another (see Table 6.5). For instance, they indicated that most children would be able to seek help from a friend or teacher if required, and that teachers made the effort to treat children with respect. The responses to the question on student concerns being taken seriously were more varied. Primary teachers indicated that children were directed to help one another by the teacher if possible, or teachers who identify potential learning problems with the child will discuss the issue with parents. However, one primary teacher indicated that they lacked sufficient time to adequately respond to student concerns, while the secondary teacher suggested that children with learning difficulties or other invisible disabilities would be taken less seriously than a student with a visible disability or physical illness.

6.6 Phase 5: Reflecting on progress

The two schools participating in the study both had a significant number of children with disabilities enrolled, and the schools had the infrastructure to include children with physical disabilities. However, examples of building disability-inclusive communities and practicing disability-inclusive practices were more common at the primary level than the secondary level. This can be evidenced in the visual data provided by the schools being sourced exclusively from the infant level. However, disability-inclusive education practices may be sustained from school-based disability-inclusive policies, which are derived from a caring environment, teaching to all and accepting school management.

Teacher aides and the classroom learning environment require greater government commitment in terms of budget and teacher preparedness. It is recommended that further action research be undertaken within these demonstration schools, and that the government focuses on implementing the inclusive education policy with a focus on inclusive teaching. The Index for Inclusion framework and the case studies in this monograph can be used to support these developments in Vanuatu. The resources provide practical examples for Ministry and school leaders to facilitate more inclusive schooling.

Unfortunately, the research activity was disrupted in early 2015 when Vanuatu experienced the worst natural disaster in its history when Cyclone Pam passed along the country and affected most of the islands. Although the death toll was minimal, there was massive damage to the islands vegetation, infrastructure and shipping. The MOET is in the process of assessing the cost of repairing the nation's schools. As a result, the schools were unable to complete some of the research tasks, which involved analysis of interview data and questionnaire data.

6.7 The way forward

The findings from the action research project were very informative as they highlighted a need for capacity development at several levels including teachers. It was apparent from the research interactions that these capacities are essential to improve the implementation of disability-inclusive education in Vanuatu. This is further emphasised in the revised Vanuatu Education Act, which calls for 'inclusive teachers'. Therefore, it is suggested that inclusive education courses be institutionalised in the Vanuatu Institute of Teacher Education (VITE) curriculum and in-service unit. The resources and information developed in this project can be utilised in the future to support ongoing review and development. Given the role the Ministry of Health (MoH) has been playing in supporting children with a disability, it is prudent that staff from both MOET and MoH collaborate, particularly in relation to community-based rehabilitation (CBR) work. The outcomes for children with disabilities could be further improved via collaboration between the MoH and Nursing school for early interventions at the early childhood and primary levels.



Section 7: Conclusion and recommendations

7.1 Background and contextual issues

The action research part of the project was intended to, firstly, establish school level priorities with respect to implementing disability-inclusive education in selected communities. All NRs were cognizant of their national priorities for their respective countries as they were national IE specialists. They collaborated with school principals and school-based action research teams to establish school-based priorities. There were similarities between action research projects in the four participating countries. One common priority was that the NRs and action research teams sought to collect evidence of how inclusive education policy was enacted via school culture, practice, and school-based policy where it existed (Fiji, Samoa and Vanuatu) or, alternatively, to gather evidence in these areas to inform the development of a national policy (Solomon Islands).

Secondly, the action research, through a participatory process, initiated local capacity building to sustain the implementation of respective disability-inclusive development priorities in school communities. Although the duration of action research was approximately one year, which is short for such fundamental changes to values and beliefs, the NRs together with the school-based teams were able to see varying degrees of positive change within the school communities. If the action research is continued it will certainly get institutionalised. Some of the key changes and experiences noted as a result of the action research are described below.

7.2 Building awareness for disability-inclusive education

The action research project raised awareness of the importance of disability-inclusive education in each school site in the four countries. This was achieved via NR presentations to schools, and action research to address Dimension A: Creating Inclusive Cultures in Fiji, Samoa and Vanuatu, and Dimension B: Producing Inclusive Policies, in the Solomon Islands. The action research groups also generated awareness of the project via discussing disability-inclusive practices during student assemblies in Fiji and sending materials home to parents in Vanuatu. Action research projects in Fiji, Samoa and Solomon Islands also included an awareness component but more through the 'Talanoa process'.

In Fiji, students were socially included in the library refurbishment at SS, and the greenhouse project at PS. In Samoa, people with disabilities from the community were invited to share their stories with the school-based action research groups. The Talanoa groups made teachers and parents cognisant of the challenges faced by students with disabilities and their families. Through the discussion, teachers and parents appreciated students' needs and how to manage or assist them in the classroom. An awareness campaign was conducted in Solomon Islands, which resulted in student and teachers developing knowledge of appropriate language to describe disability and improved capacity to assess student needs respectively. In Fiji, the action research project generated national interest due to media coverage, and wide interest in the Suva region due to the NR's social network.

A greater awareness of the value of schooling for children with disabilities and the capacity of community schools to provide an education for children with special needs may result in improved relationships between the schools and children with disabilities and their parents—particularly getting over the social stigma attached to disabled people. In Solomon Islands, a parent was empowered enough to defy the years of tradition and carry his disabled daughter to school. These acceptances and changes in values occurred as a result of the awareness campaign. While initiatives to improve the quality of education for children with disabilities in the Pacific are important, these children need to access schools before they can benefit from such initiatives. The awareness activities undertaken during the action research projects are an example of a bottom-up approach, as they originated at a grassroots level. They are also informed by top-down processes, in a sense that they were initiated to spread messages to support the implementation of disability-inclusive education policy mandates.

7.3 Partnerships with other organisations and engaging the community

All schools in the action research project benefited from partnering with the NRs, who were able to lend expert support as part of their roles with the Ministries of Education in their respective countries. Being involved in the ADRAS project provided the NRs with new understandings of disability-inclusive education implementation, and empowered them to be more active and take the lead in changing attitudes and practices. They participated in initial presentations on disability-inclusive education workshops, had frequent contact with the schools and made presentations at regional conferences. The NRs maintained more frequent face-to-face contact with schools close to the nation capitals (Urban CHS (community high school) in Guadalcanal; PVCS (community school) in Port Vila; PS (primary school) in Suva; and US (urban school) primary in Apia), while for schools in rural areas (SS (secondary school) in Nasinu and RS (rural school) primary in Afega) or outer islands (LCS (community school) in Luganville and Rural CHS (community high school) in Malaita province) contact was less frequent, and it was more challenging for NRs to provide research support to these schools. As a result, the frequency and mode of contact varied from school to school, which affected the quality of research outcomes in terms of progress and impact achieved.

The NRs developed a strong ongoing partnership with the schools. At SS, the NR took an active role in directing the action research group, while at PS, she adopted an informal mentor role for the teachers. She spent approximately 50% of her time at PS counselling teachers on assessment, classroom management, or teaching practices for children with disabilities. This developed a strong sense of trust and professional relationship. At Urban CHS in the Solomon Islands, one staff member became the secondary education representative on the inclusive education committee at the MEHRD. This connection enabled the staff member to take part in workshops and share his expertise with the school community. The strengths of the community partnership was also demonstrated in the Samoa case studies, where local people with disabilities have been willing to speak with the action research teams, elders in the community, parents and students to affect change in school and home practices to support students with disabilities. Parents were also encouraged act as informal teacher aides in schools.

7.4 Building infrastructure and overcoming institutional challenges

In all four countries, unlike in Australia, schools are owned by communities. Expensive investment to accommodate a comparatively small number of children with disabilities within the school is not a high priority when increasing general access and access for girls were competing agendas. To convince the school committees to invest in disability-inclusive education required very strong and committed leaders from the school management including the head teachers and principals. Two action research schools in Samoa and Vanuatu had ramps for wheelchair access, although their means of securing resources to build the ramps differed. At RS primary school in Samoa, funding was supplied by the Samoa Inclusive Education Demonstration Project. In Vanuatu, school staff and the local community had sourced local materials and constructed the ramp themselves. The latter is an example of where community involvement can be utilised as a resource to overcoming institutional challenges (i.e., a lack of funds). The action research project undertaken at SS in Fiji demonstrates this, as staff and parents worked together to paint the interior of the library, an activity that would have proven more costly if the school had hired a contractor to complete the work.

During the life of the project, links between schools, local communities and the NR emerged, which created opportunities for knowledge sharing and the sourcing or development of resources to teach students with disabilities. In Fiji, the NR had a background in special education and knew many teachers from local special schools such as Fiji School for the Blind. Over time, more knowledge sharing may have taken place, enabling teachers from inclusive schools to access resources from special schools for instance. Formalising this knowledge and resource sharing at the national level in each country can significantly strengthen the capacity to implement disability-inclusive education. Sharing across the four countries may be coordinated through the PDF, but they need to be resourced sufficiently and be formally given the mandate to provide such services.

7.5 Developing human resources

Capacity building activities sought to address the need to develop human resources in disability-inclusive education. Since the action research project was not limited to teachers and included school leaders, parents, community members, and in some cases, the students themselves, it was seen as enacting inclusive education rather than just talking about it. While it was hoped that the outcomes of the research would inform teacher training institutes in the four countries, there were several creative examples of 'bridging the gap' in facilitating inclusive education in the absence of access to professional development. These included the mentoring role of the NR in Fiji, parental involvement for students with disabilities in Samoa, and links between the school and MEHRD in Solomon Islands.

The ADRAS research also intended to develop capacity to undertake action research as a means to be critical of one's own values, practices and choices. This project is an example of disability-inclusive research, which according to Nind [36] refers to socially just ways of knowing, involving a democratic partnership between researchers and those who are researched, with the latter occupying an active role in the research process through activities such as research planning or data collection and analysis. The research activities in Vanuatu were especially well organised. Action research team members were designated clear roles, with terms of reference documents outlining research plans and responsibilities of the team. The data collection methods were linked to the Index, and an interim report was provided. Building the research capacity of schools is important if the action research is to be sustained, and may also benefit administrative activities of the school such as reporting data on children with disabilities to the national education information systems. It is hoped that the action research at the schools has initiated the critical inquiry approach to resolving challenges.

7.6 Challenges

There were several challenges in conducting this research project due to building partnerships and unforeseen events, some of which are already mentioned in the country reports in Chapters 3 to 6. These challenges illustrate the understandings necessary to develop local research capacities within regional institutions like USP to manage large scale, multinational research projects, national researchers' capacity to be analytical and objective, and solicit commitment from school-based action research teams and the school committees. Establishing a partnership between USP and QUT was slow due to staff turnover and limited experience managing international projects. This led to delays in setting up accounts, which in turn led to the late appointment of a research assistant at USP. The NR allowances were necessary to fund travel, and thus visits to schools to set up action research teams were delayed. Delays related to establishing partnerships and administrative processes and changes to research school sites and staff turnover are characteristic of research in the Pacific and school-based research. The lead researchers provided additional support to the NRs via site visits, workshops and telecommunications to assist with these challenges.

Natural disasters also devastated the Solomon Islands (floods in April 2014) and Vanuatu (cyclone in March 2015) during the course of the project. These events caused several deaths and extensive damage to infrastructure and suspended the research for several months when all human resources were diverted, and understandably so, to other higher priority matters. Given the emergency situations in each country, educational services were suspended in some regions and action research in schools was stalled for some time. In the Solomon Islands, one of the case study schools situated in the Guadalcanal province was used as an evacuation centre for residents who had lost their homes. There were also several political events which disrupted research in the Solomon Islands, including political and industrial disputes and teacher strikes regarding housing allowances and leave.

7.7 Final thoughts

This publication represents a second key outcome related to the Australian Aid funded Australian Development Research Award Scheme project entitled: ***Strengthening capacity for disability-inclusive education development policy formulation, implementation and monitoring in the South Pacific region***. The objective was to document the activities of the project relevant to establishing sustainable action research in schools, and building local and national capacity in implementing disability-inclusive education. Across the schools, there were many examples of initiatives to raise the profile and capacity of disability-inclusive education, which were achieved with limited resources by schools and communities committed to improving outcomes for children with disabilities.

The findings of the action research confirm that it is possible to develop local capacity to mobilise communities to assist implementing disability-inclusive education in the four participating countries. Leveraging the NR's individual knowledge and skills and their networks with the Ministry of Education and other stakeholders in respective countries has demonstrated the strength of communities and government working together to provide disability-inclusive education: action research activities such as involving children with disabilities and communities to build a greenhouse and refurbish the library in Fiji; in Samoa the 'Talanoa' sessions to build disability-inclusive values through story telling by people with lived experiences of disability and their families; in Solomon Islands the focus to review and strengthen the policies, roles and responsibilities of staff to identify opportunities to improve disability-inclusion in schools; and in Vanuatu, schools explored building community and inclusive practices to document the implementation of a recently introduced national policy on inclusive education. Every one of these activities has started to have an impact, but need to be sustained for much longer before the initiatives may be institutionalised.

Finally, the research team would like to thank the Australian Development Research Award Scheme for funding the research study and the findings will make a useful contribution towards advancing disability-inclusive education in the participating countries and the South Pacific generally. The team also wish to thank the Ministries of Education of the participating countries and the Pacific Disability Forum for their support and sharing knowledge products which made this study possible.

7.8 Recommendations

As a result of the action research projects, several suggestions are made to improve disability-inclusive education in the participating countries: Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu in particular.

Recommendation #1: Use of the Index process to clarify understanding of disability-inclusive education and facilitate school planning. In each of the four countries, the action research team shared the Index with the school community and successfully assisted to evaluate culture, policy or practice. The process should be used as a key research-based activity to help other school communities develop their own disability-inclusive education priorities and actions.

Recommendation #2: Establishing and building links with local community to facilitate knowledge and resource sharing. Findings from the action research projects have illustrated that community networks and links with resources (MEHRD in Solomon Islands) have aided schools via increased awareness of disability-inclusion, overcoming institutional barriers (lack of funding/resources), and building the knowledge and capacity of teachers to assess, teach and manage the behaviour of children with disabilities. The finding provides strong evidence of what can be achieved if community support is meaningfully utilised. The process should be shared with all stakeholders to achieve similar outcomes as the ADRAS action research.

Recommendation #3: Mobilizing existing human resources to support implementation of disability-inclusive education. In all four countries included in the study, there are retired personnel from health and education sectors with suitable skills, who are willing to mentor and assist the implementation of disability-inclusive education. The governments in all four countries should seriously consider ways of utilising this human resource capacity which is currently being wasted.

Recommendation #4: Involve individuals with lived experiences of disability in capacity building activities. The findings of the Samoan action research groups regarding inviting members of the community with disabilities to share their stories to challenge the stereotypical beliefs of older people in the community was powerful. This may not be a scientific methodology; nonetheless, it had significant impact on community leaders, teachers and students. This provided a Pacific approach to dealing with developing consciousness about children and people with disabilities and should be considered when implanting other aid-funded projects.

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Appendix 1: The five phases of the Index for Inclusion and description of key activities for each phase¹²

Index phase	Description and possible strategies
Phase 1: Getting started	
1. Start when and how you can	- Use of the Index as a source of ideas to make a start towards inclusion.
2. Develop your planning group (action research team)	- Mobilise a group that reflects the school community (e.g., teaching and non-teaching staff, parents and children) including diversity (e.g., gender, ethnicity and disability) to begin a unified approach to school development.
3. Find support	- Obtain support from an expert with experience in implementing the Index in schools. - Include a critical friend in the planning group to support and challenge ideas and help with research activities.
4. Working inclusively	- Facilitate critical friendship within planning group and ensure that group members trust each other and their opinions are treated respectfully. - Ensure that the planning group serves as a good role model for the school.
5. Put yourselves in the picture	- Recognise that inclusion/exclusion is not confined to a place or group of people. - Explore own thoughts and experiences surrounding inclusion.
6. Keep a record	- Keep a record of progress for the purposes of reporting to others, documentation of school development and for eliciting shared reflection.
7. Use the indicators and questions	- Introduce the Index, indicators and questions in an early meeting. - Explore the Index to identify values, and possible priorities and problems.
8. Attend to dialogues about values	- Continue to hold discussions around the Index, focussing on values surrounding indicators of key interest.
9. Develop a common language	- Share views of the Index within the team and agree on a common language to describe inclusion, barriers, resources and support for diversity.
10. Review change and development in the school	- Use the Index to assist with reviewing or developing school plans. - Compile a list of school development activities and programs and evaluate inclusive potential.
11. Consider the integration of interventions	- Consider integrating existing interventions and evaluating whether they are in conflict with one another.
12. Explore the Planning Framework	- Use the Planning Framework (p. 175) to obtain group opinions on priorities (and questions and issues) and consider how priorities may integrate to be best supported.
13. Address barriers to using the Index	- Consider how the Index could be introduced to the school community and anticipate possible problems and solutions to introducing the Index.

¹² Adapted from Booth & Ainscow (2011, pp. 49-72); see [1].

Phase 2: Finding out together

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| 1. Raise awareness | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Inform the school prior to planning decisions. Strategies could include staff development days and information sessions.- Reassure staff that they are not expected to make all changes at once. |
| 2. Explore the ideas of staff and governors | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Obtain views from other members of staff via group sessions (may need multiple groups in large schools or for different staff levels/groups).- Consider alternate methods of data gathering, e.g., completion of Planning Framework (p. 175) as a survey.- Consider planning and holding a staff development day. |
| 3. Explore the ideas of children | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Children may identify barriers to inclusion that were not previously.- Use of questionnaires from Index adapted for children of different ages.- Elicit children's preferences/barriers to learning and assessment via teaching.- Alternate data collection methods could include classroom observations, photographs, guided walks around the school, children's maps and artwork, and children's responses to art (e.g., stories). |
| 4. Explore the ideas of parents/carers and school administrators | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Like children, parents may identify barriers to inclusion that were not previously.- Use of questionnaires from Index adapted for parents/administrators.- Consider holding meetings or events to increase parental participation and involvement and gather their opinions (e.g., school fairs, meeting parents outside of school, translating Index materials into multiple languages). |
| 5. Negotiate priorities for development | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Analyse all of the input on priorities from consultations to determine a school plan. Identify differences and similarities of different sub groups.- Involve a critical friend or outside supporter to assist with analysis.- Continue to involve the school community to reinforce ownership.- Consider gathering further information to clarify unclear issues or as part of staff development (e.g., teacher observations)- Draw up priorities, ensuring that marginalised groups, parents and children are appropriately represented. |
| 6. Integrate consultations into everyday life | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Create channels for ongoing contributions and expansions to planning for staff, parents/carers, children and school administrators.- Examples include networking with other schools for ideas, designating parent/community spaces in schools, or creating opportunities for children to participate via school work. |

Phase 3: Producing a plan

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| 1. Review priorities | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Revise and explore the implications for priorities in the context of all dimensions/sections of the Index, as outlined in the Planning Framework (p. 175).- Considerations include resources required prior to formulating a proposal. |
| 2. Put priorities into the development plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Review current school priorities and plans with the support of the school principal and senior staff, and if necessary compromise and recognise competing interests in school plans.- Identify a time scale, required resources, responsibilities and PD implications for all priorities. Include shorter term goals to help maintain sustainability and focus.- Monitor progress using criteria developed to suit each priority. |

Phase 4: Taking action

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|-------------------------------|--|
| 1. Put priorities into action | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Monitor any activities that have started prior to the emergence of a formal plan.- Further information gathering (see Phase 3) may be viewed as implementation and action research (especially if staff observe, record and reflect on practice). |
| 2. Maintain development | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Facilitate ongoing commitment to plans/priorities via activities to support and sustain better inclusive practices in the school.- Encourage discussions to address resistance with a view to possible revision of plans to increase support. |

Phase 5: Reviewing development

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|-----------------------------------|---|
| 1. Review and celebrate progress | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Ensure that priority progress is checked and recorded, and adjustments to plans are made as required.- Report on progress at specified periods (e.g., every half term) possibly through a school newsletter.- Reflect on changes using criteria: consider how to continue work and impact of normal planning processes (e.g., beginning of year).- Continue with consultation and keeping people informed.- Celebrate and communicate success (e.g., presentation of achievements, displays of work, community events). |
| 2. Reflect on work with the Index | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Review the way the Index was used and how it can best be used to support school development in the future.- Consider the planning group's role in success, e.g., how well prepared the group was for tasks, success in consultation and delegating responsibilities and how priorities were implemented.- Index supporters and critical friends may help in this process; however, group members must be willing to challenge their practices. |
| 3. Consider next steps | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Make revisions to the way Index work is coordinated and inform any new staff of processes during induction.- Consider revisiting Index for further examination of the school (i.e., return to Phase 2). |