

Priority areas for intervention: reading and formative assessment

Support is needed to improve student reading performance and formative assessment practices in the region.

The Solomon Islands' Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development (MEHRD) is to be congratulated on the improvements in the writing performance observed in the 2021 results and encouraged to continue the intervention and support that have been implemented in the years following PILNA 2015 that have contributed to those improvements. PILNA data in writing show, however, that year four and year six students are still performing below the regional level and teachers are encouraged to continue with ways to improve the students' writing skills.

The MEHRD is encouraged to investigate and narrow the gap in achievement between boys and girls in numeracy, reading, and writing. PILNA has consistently found that girls outperform boys in all the domains. This gender disparity in achievement is a matter of concern as the pattern has been the same for the last four cycles of PILNA.

The MEHRD is encouraged to provide supplementary training for teachers in the development and use of classroom-based informal and formative assessment. Teachers are to identify specific needs of students, tailor instruction to meet these needs and monitor the effectiveness of the instruction to optimise student learning.

The MEHRD is encouraged to provide training for teachers to develop items that target interpretation of information, critical thinking, and problem-solving and to ensure that students can effectively respond to these types of questions. High order thinking skills are always a challenge in students' learning. If students are provided with these types of questions in the classroom, and teachers assist the students to arrive at the desired response, there should be an encouraging result in the next cycle of PILNA.

The MEHRD is encouraged to undertake further exploration of the PILNA 2021 cognitive and contextual data sets, along with other relevant data sets, to better understand the challenges facing students and teachers in Solomon Islands. The findings can be used to target support and intervention in the Solomon Islands' education system, with the goal of strengthening numeracy, reading, and writing instruction leading to improved student learning outcomes.

The MEHRD is encouraged to further investigate the differences in the reading and writing performance between urban and non-urban schools in terms of teaching practice and resourcing to identify support that might be necessary to close the gap between the subgroups. Students in urban schools outperformed those in non-urban schools in both year levels.