

# Key recommendations

Actions that you can take to support learners, their performance, and Pacific education systems.

**The Tonga Ministry of Education (MoE) is encouraged to investigate the decline in student performance in reading.** The first suggestion is to put in place a policy that all schools have a programme where all students drop everything and read. The second suggestion is that the ministry should make every effort to strengthen the supply of books to schools.

**The MoE is encouraged to investigate and change the pattern of girls outperforming boys to and equal or almost equal proportion of achievement in numeracy, reading, and writing.** PILNA has consistently found that girls outperform boys in all PILNA domains. This gender disparity is a matter of concern, as the pattern has been the same for the last four cycles of PILNA.

**The MoE 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 MoE 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 are able to positively 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 MoE 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 Tonga.** The findings can be used to target support and intervention in the Tonga' education system, with the goal of strengthening numeracy, reading, and writing instruction, leading to improved student learning outcomes.

**Teachers are encouraged to support year four and year six students in the numeracy concepts of place value, fractions, measurements, and problem-solving.** The PILNA data highlighted the areas where students struggle; intervention strategies are needed to support these students.