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PILNA's history

Previous PILNA cycles

PILNA was first administered in 2012 as a one-time snapshot to gauge the levels of literacy and numeracy in 14 Pacific Island countries. The findings provided a powerful insight into student achievement in literacy and numeracy across the region.

The impact of PILNA led a then Forum Education Ministers Meeting (now Conference of Pacific Education Ministers) to request that the assessment be repeated in 2015 with a total of 13 countries participating.

The ministers also recommended exploring the development of a long-term regional assessment, structured to provide valid and reliable results over time, to support existing efforts to improve educational outcomes.

This led to the third cycle of PILNA conducted in 15 countries in 2018 and the decision to repeat it on a three-year cycle.

PILNA 2021

Following a successful trial of processes, instruments and enhancements to PILNA in 2020, the fourth cycle of PILNA was implemented in 2021.

Students in Year 4 and Year 6 (or their equivalent school year based on each country's education system) were assessed in 15 participating countries, despite the prevalence of COVID-19 in many countries, with Fiji the last to administer it in March 2022.

Data were collected on students' literacy and numeracy outcomes, along with contextual data on students, teachers and principals/head teachers.

PILNA 2021 is the first regional large-scale study to provide information about the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and other events, such as natural disasters, on student performance in literacy and numeracy.

PILNA 2021 will be able to link students' reading, writing and numeracy proficiency outcomes ([cognitive data](#)) with [contextual information](#) provided by teachers, schools and system leaders about school closures and distance learning efforts.

This additional contextual information will help to inform strategies for stakeholders to support students who have been most affected by events of the past two years.

PILNA 2021 aims to help education systems bounce back from the impacts of education disruptions experienced in late 2019, 2020 and 2021.