

**COUNTRY REPORT: SOLOMON ISLANDS**  
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**Government**

**1. How much support does your government give to each of the following?**

- UNESCO's Millennium Development Goals
- Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper – (International Monetary Fund, IMF and World Bank)
- UNESCO's "Education for All Children by 2015" campaign
- Blindness Prevention Programs, eg Vision2020

I am Sorry I don't have much update on these issues, however I'll try to find out and give feedback later.

Vision 2020 – there has been campaigns joining on during World Sight Day each year.

**2a. What (a) government legislation, (b) policies, and (c) programs are in place to ensure access and full participation in education for children with vision impairments?**

- Solomon Islands National Policy on Disability was launched on the 28<sup>th</sup> of July 2006 that include in all types of disability and that includes the visually impaired clients.
- Also programs are up and running to ensure that all visually impaired and the blind patients / clients are fully assessed from birth to old age and those from 0 – to 5yrs are enrolled in the early intervention centre and there is full participation in education for all visually impaired that are attending school.
- Legislation Bill still in Draft

**2b. What evaluation mechanisms exist for these government legislation, policies, and programs?**

- Legislation still in draft
- Solomon Islands National Policy on Disability already launched on the 28<sup>th</sup> of July 2006, however still needs funding for implementation on major areas, Awareness still need to go out in the provinces.
- Simple activities have been implemented already by the community based rehabilitation workers in the provinces except the major ones that need government sectors involvement.

**3. Does your country have a National Education Plan, and if so, does the Plan:**  
**(a) focus on inclusive education, and**  
**(b) include provision for children with disabilities, including children with vision impairments?**

Yes, But still needs to go through the curriculum. However with CBR Activities under blind services, we have been doing enlarge prints and Braille text books for our visually impaired students so that they have accessibility to education.

Also we are working on integrating them into a normal school that also includes all types of disability.

### **Country-wide data**

#### **4. Are there national data on the number of children and adults with disabilities, including those with vision impairments?**

There is with the 2004 - 2005 Nationwide survey they found out 14,403 people with disabilities including those with vision impairment in all age groups.

#### **5. Are there national data on the number of pre-school and school-age children with vision impairments who:**

- a. are **enrolled** in education settings (mainstream and special school) – full-time and part-time?
- b. are **not enrolled** in education settings?
- c. have **“dropped-out”** of schooling (retention rates)
- d. receive community-based rehabilitation (**CBR**) services in their communities?

- Plan: to do nationwide school survey to find out children who are visually impaired.
- Only few visually impaired and blind people in two provinces and in Honiara that we are currently working with have received CBR services in the communities which the figure is less than twenty adult and children.

### **Organisations providing support and services**

#### **6. Is there an association of blind citizens? Is it an active group?**

- We don't have an association of blind citizens but an active group of high school students and blind people meeting fortnightly to discuss issues encountered in class rooms and with class teachers and also to attend Braille and computer lessons. The computer lesson is very helpful because the visually impaired can have their assignments done on computer.

#### **7a. What national and international government and non-government development organisations (NGDOs) provide support to your country in the area of vision impairment?**

- No international government or non-government organization provide support for program and activities for visually impaired and blind people but Solomon Island government (SIG) with an allocation budgeted for under the CBR program's budget each year.

**7b. What types of support do they provide (please list)?**

- The SIG provide financial support to cater for local staff to make touring to provinces to provide assessment and working with visually impaired and blind people in their own communities.

**8. What training and professional development opportunities currently exist for teachers and CBR workers in the area of disability and special education?**

*For example, national and international university and college courses, braille courses, O&M courses, etc. Please list organizations /agencies that provide training and other support.*

- None of the training and professional development opportunities exist for teacher and CBR workers in the area of disability and special education. Our staff need training and to be specialize in the field of visually impaired and blind people.

**9. What are some examples of “best practice” in education of children with disabilities, including children with vision impairments, in your country? Please describe how these “best practices” came about.**

- In the Solomon Islands all children with disability are integrated in the main stream schools.

**10. Can you identify any deficiencies in the current provision of education services for children and youth with vision impairments?**

For example, curriculum and class activities.

- Discussions are under way with the Curriculum Dept at the Ministry of Education that they do enlargements for school text books for visually impaired children attending primary and high schools. Currently Services for Visually Impaired and Blind People is doing it under the CBR program.

**11. What are your country’s priorities for improving access to schools, curriculum, and programs for children with vision impairments?**

- Awareness in schools for more children with vision impairment to have access to education, have class rooms door Braille for easy identification, enlargement of school text books and assist the unemployed parents and carers to seek financial assistance from business houses, NGO organizations and individuals to meet school fees for their visually impaired children who are in high schools to enable them complete their education.

**Resources**

**12. What types of resources are needed to support (a) teachers, (b) children and adults with vision impairments, (c) their parents and carers, (d) volunteers, and (e) others working in the field of vision impairment?**

*Please identify specific human, financial, and physical resources.*

- Staff need proper training to be specialize in the field of vision impairment and to do the trainings we need financial assistance to be capable to do the training from overseas.

**13a. Is there a resource centre or facility for the provision of resources for (a) pre-school and (b) school-age children with vision impairments?**

*For example, centre for braille production, provision of low-tech and high-tech adaptive technology, including low vision aids.*

- Such resources are not available locally but plans are under way to set up a resources centre and to ask for donations from organizations like Rotary and others that are willing and committed to support visually impaired and blind people with adaptive technology and low vision aids.

**13b. If yes, what organisation or agency provides this resource centre?**

- We are still negotiating with organization however Ministry of Health and Medical Services is still supporting in bits and pieces as parts of Community Based Rehabilitation core business within Ministry of Health and Medical Services

**Education services**

**14. What educational options currently exist for (a) pre-school and (b) school-age children with vision impairments?**

*Please include regular school and special school options.*

- Plans are under way to set up a pre-school for visually impaired and blind children and hopefully will start early 2007. This children will later integrated in to the mainstream education.

**15a. How many teachers and CBR workers provide services to children with vision impairments, including children with additional disabilities?**

- Services for Visually Impaired and Blind People (SVIBP) have 3 staff, CBR workers have 17 Aides, CBR Head Office have 5 staff and Teachers we have 1 but not specialize in the field of vision impairment.

**15b. Where are these teachers and CBR workers located? (eg regular school, special centre, special school)**

- CBR workers are located in their respective communities back in the province and the teacher will be located at pre-school for visually impaired and blind children.

**16. What is the background and level of training (qualifications) of these teachers working in the field of vision impairment?**

- The teacher is a qualified high school diploma graduate but not specialize in the field of vision impairment.

**17. What are the training/professional development needs of teachers, CBR workers, parents, and education volunteers?**

*Please include needs in the areas of vision impairment and additional disabilities.*

Important: They need training on Braille, O&M, ADL and counseling.

**18. Can you recommend ways of promoting the Education for All Children with Vision Impairment (EFA-VI) campaign in your country?**

- Campaign and awareness in schools and communities are on going but we have financial constrains and transport difficulties to get this done as expected. However **manpower** with good educational background on vision impairment is also lacking.

**19. Can you suggest ways of increasing demand for education of children with vision impairments, including children with additional disabilities?**

- Here in Solomon Islands is through community education because 80% of the population live in the rural areas whereby they do not have access to information that has been given out in the main capital which is Honiara.
- With this community awareness our CBR Worker can also do assessments to any one that has been identified. Or they can make their own way to find our place in their own timing.