

Upcoming Regional Workshop

The SPBEA is conducting a workshop on “**Atlas and Research for PSSC, SPFSC and National Examinations Data**”, 26 – 29th May in Suva, FIJI

The main purposes of the conference are for:

1. **Government representatives from Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu to:**
 - inform the Secretariat about their current specific concerns and complaints regarding the use of Atlas in their respective countries
 - respond to Secretariat’s plans to install the new Atlas in all represented countries by the end of the 1st quarter in 2009
 - commit to specific research proposals
 - provide missing assessment data.
2. **For the Secretariat to:**
 - present the new Atlas.
 - attend to required minor modifications before the processing of results for 2008.
 - ensure that countries operational requirements and policy issues are addressed with the design and development of the new Atlas.
 - use PSSC and SPFSC data to illustrate how these can be used for research and encouraging countries to commit to such research using their own national data.

Over the past decade, countries in the region have made some progress in using National assessment data for their own internal reports. This workshop will continue work on using these data for national reporting of achievement levels.

The targeted audience for the conference is both senior and hands on personnel from the examinations units. The Secretariat has been working closely with examinations units in each country and has identified persons who are familiar with Atlas and would be able to represent their countries concerns.

For the conference, each delegation is required to provide:

1. **Information (in advance) on their concerns, complaints and future requirements of Atlas.** I would like to suggest that there be a discussion of the local requirements of Atlas prior to the workshop so that problems are understood by the Secretariat and addressed for 2008 processing and incorporated in the new version of Atlas. The aim is to provide a software package that is robust and has flexible processing and reporting functionality which are built on countries requirements. It is hoped that such system will be ready for use in all countries in 2009.
2. Any policy requirement that should be part of the processing of data.
3. Various types of reports that would be useful for schools, islands/provinces and at the national levels. These report formats can be discussed and could be ready for use on the 2008 data and will be incorporated in the new Atlas.
4. Your countries National Research policy.
5. Data gaps identified for your country are : (See attachment)
6. Types of training (especially ICTR) that are needed to improve the capacity in examination units.

All travel expenses and an adequate per diem will be provided for accepted participants. To allow enough time for the preparation, including travel booking as well as other logistical arrangements, we would appreciate receiving the list of nominations on or before **May 9th, 2008**.

A draft conference program is attached as well as the concept note for the conference and the nomination form to be completed. Completed nomination forms are to be sent to:

Ms Seni Wainiqolo: Fax (679)3302898, Email: swainiqolo@spbea.org.fj, South Pacific Board for Educational Assessment, no later than Monday 9th May 2008.

For further details and queries on the conference please contact Dr Richard Wah on Phone: (679) 3315600. Email: rwah@spbea.org.fj.

DRAFT CONFERENCE PROGRAM
“Atlas and Research for PSSC, SPFSC and National Examinations Data”,
Fiji Teacher Union Building, Suva
26th – 29th May, 2008

Days	Topic	Sessions		
		AM	AM	PM
1	Current Atlas – processes and concerns	Presentation/discussions of the Atlas sequence of processes - I	Presentation/discussions of the Atlas sequence of processes - II	Presentation/discussions of the Atlas sequence of processes - III
2	Current Atlas – processes and concerns	Presentation/discussions of the Atlas sequence of processes - IV	Presentation/discussions of the Atlas sequence of processes - V	Presentation/discussions of the Atlas sequence of processes - VI
3	The new Atlas	The concept	Interconnectivity and Policy	Resolutions
4	Research	Reports for PSSC and SPFSC that countries want for use at National, provincial and school levels	In country research based on PSSC data	Intervention Strategies

CONFERENCE BRIEF

“Atlas and Research for PSSC, SPFSC and National Examinations Data”

Atlas has been in operation for almost two decades. It has stood the test of time and greatly improved the processing of SPBEA's and member countries National Examinations. Maintenance and modification of ATLAS has been done by an external consultant and also by the resident programmer. Last year the SPBEA Board agreed to improvements being made to Atlas to improve its connectivity to other data sources of SPBEA. Not long after the project started, it was realised that the programming tools currently available could greatly improve the efficiency of Atlas.

Funding was requested from NZAID and has recently approved to support the revamping of the Atlas system with the following objectives:

1. Re-design Atlas tables to reduce redundancies and make the database dynamic rather than static.
2. To make Atlas more robust and flexible in terms of data entry, data processing and report capabilities.
3. To include a security log in so that all changes can be traced to the person's login
4. Data on teachers, IA approvals and verification visits etc are being included into Atlas
5. Interconnectively between Atlas, Stallian, SMITE, Titan and EMIS/SMIS be an important outcome.

The increased investment in and access to basic education has raised the demand for better education outcomes from governments themselves and development partners. They want to know what public policies, investments and interventions work well, which do not, and the reasons of why. This has necessitated a strengthening of education information systems as well as capacity development of staff for monitoring and evaluation activities. Revamping Atlas will aid in this process.

Targeted Audience

This conference will bring together Assessment and Examination representatives of selected countries including: Fiji, Kiribati, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu.

Each country is requested to send a delegation of 2 -3 representatives to attend this workshop. The country team should consist of heads of assessment/examinations units and the hands-on Atlas database person.

Venue

The workshop will be held at the Fiji Teacher Union Building, quite close to the SPEBA Secretariat in Suva.

Time:

The workshop will run from 8.00 am to 4.30 pm from Monday 26th to Thursday 29th May, 2008.

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Deadline for Receipt:
9th May, 2008

Nomination Form

Head of Assessment/Examinations Unit

Name: Surname: First Name:

Title/Position:

Contact Address: email..... Fax..... Phone.....

Atlas hands-on personnel

Name: Surname: First Name:

Title/Position:

Contact Address: email..... Fax..... Phone.....

Senior Educational Officer (Only accepted Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa)

Name: Surname: First Name:

Title/Position:

Contact Address: email..... Fax..... Phone.....

Please complete this form and either email or fax to;

Seni Wainiqolo
SPBEA, Suva
FIJI
swainiqolo@spbea.org.fj
Fax: (679) 3302898