Fiji

Population: 900,000  
Schools: 700 schools  
ICT Access: Moderate  
Approx 50% of secondary schools have at least one PC  
Approx 20% of secondary schools have access to the WWW

Background
The Ministry of Education has been undergoing a period of reform and curriculum redevelopment since the early 1990’s in order to improve school service and provide rural schools and community centers with upgraded facilities and improved science and technology teaching.

In 2002, over half of Fiji’s 156 secondary schools provided some form of computing or information technology courses. About 20% of these schools have Internet access, the majority of which are in urban areas. Some schools have independently adopted a more progressive, systematic strategy to incorporate ICT in school administration, teacher development, and the broader curriculum.

Policy
The notable policy goals for the Fiji education sector are to improve student skills at both primary and high school level, develop more effective teacher training programs, seek out partnerships with the telecom service to provide cost-effective access for schools, secure increased funding required to bring ICTs into schools, and conduct a research programme to determine the effectiveness and needs for Icts in education. Currently, the Ministry of Education is building district ICT centers for improved access in rural areas.

Challenges
- The high cost of ICTs
- Need to reduce the costs of access and end the telecom monopoly
- Schools maintained by semi-independent religious NGOs under financial pressure
- Outdated curriculum
- Lack of access to ICT equipment
- Limited learning materials
- Job insecurity for teachers, limited professional development opportunities
- Limited collaboration and networking among teachers and other stakeholders
Recommendations

- Revise curriculum to include ICT across subject areas
- Offer ICT studies at all secondary schools
- Improve job security and training opportunities for teachers
- Build capacity in relevant depts. of Min of Education, esp CDU and TVET.
- Build ICT awareness, ICT literacy & skills for teachers, school admin and students
- Research implications of ICT use in schools
- Improve community involvement in ICT in schools